



PRESS RELEASE

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CIVIC VOICE LAUNCHES WITH LOVE LOCAL CAMPAIGN New charity heralds grassroots awakening of civic pride

Civic Voice¹ – the new national charity for the civic movement – is launched today (Saturday) with fresh evidence of our passion for making the places where we all live more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive. More than three in four people surveyed identify something valued in their local area which is at risk.

The first results of Civic Voice's new Love Local campaign² are attached. The campaign is now open to the public and everyone is being invited to say what they love about where they live and why by visiting Civic Voice's website (www.civicvoice.org.uk), completing a survey and providing images. Civic Voice pledges to campaign on the issues people identify.

GET INVOLVED IN THE LOVE LOCAL CAMPAIGN

Civic Voice is asking people to complete a short online survey to provide examples and digital images of what makes them proud about the place where they live, what they feel is at risk and to share their feelings. Civic Voice pledges to campaign on the issues people identify.

www.civicvoice.org.uk

Speaking at the launch of Civic Voice, Griff Rhys Jones said, "Civic Voice is being launched as the nation debates its political future and communities are campaigning for more control over what happens in their local area. With three in four people identifying

something valued locally which is at risk, the time is ripe for a powerful new grassroots voice. Civic Voice will turn local action into a national movement to make the places where we all live more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive. By joining in with the Love Local campaign everyone can play a part in building pride in their community.”

The first results of Civic Voice’s Love Local campaign are based on a survey of 250 local civic volunteers, revealing the top 5 things that people love about where they live as:

1. Lots of open space and gardens
2. Having a natural setting and views
3. A friendly and spirited community
4. Well cared for historic buildings
5. A range of cultural and community activities

People in the survey are most fearful they will lose historic buildings and street patterns, green fields and open spaces and the independent shops and markets that they love about their area.

Civic Voice is now asking everyone to join the Love Local campaign to see if they agree with these results and to inform its campaign priorities.

Tony Burton, Director of Civic Voice said, “Everyone has the right to live somewhere they can be proud of. The civic movement should be in the driving seat of a new politics which responds to the pride people have in the place where they live. Civic Voice will campaign nationally and work locally to protect the local places we can be proud of and to improve those which should offer more to their communities.”

Paula Ridley, the new Chair of Civic Voice said, “We now recognise that local communities are ready to take a much stronger role in shaping the future of their area. The civic movement has so much to offer and it is both an honour and a challenge to lead Civic Voice in developing a new role in promoting civic pride. As the first results of the Love Local campaign show – people have a passion and pride for their local place and a concern for its future. We want to extend this passion to others.”

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. Civic Voice works to make the places where everyone lives more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive. We speak up for civic societies and local communities across England. We promote civic pride. We are the new national charity for the civic movement and have a strong local presence. We believe everyone has the right to live somewhere they can be proud of. We know how people feel about places because we feel the same way.

There are over 1,000 civic societies with more than 250,000 members and roots going back to the 1840s. Further information is available at www.civicvoice.org.uk (live from Saturday 17 April) including how to join Civic Voice (£10 individuals) and contact details for local civic societies. Civic Voice is launched today (Saturday 17 April) at the Building Centre in central London with support from Griff Rhys Jones and Sir Terry Farrell. A background note on Civic Voice is attached.

2. Love Local is Civic Voice's campaign to uncover the local DNA of different places which make them distinctive and people proud to live there. Further details of how people can get involved and why are attached along with the early results of an initial survey of 250 civic volunteers. The results include Griff Rhys Jones views on what he loves about where he lives in Fitzrovia, London. Some early images can be viewed at www.civicvoice.org.uk/lovelocal. Civic Voice will build a digital mosaic of England showing what people love about where they live across the country for the first time and pledges to campaign on the issues people identify. The full website www.civicvoice.org.uk goes live on Saturday 17th April. Images can also be uploaded and viewed at Civic Voice's Flickr site www.flickr.com/photos/civicvoice. The initial survey of 250 civic volunteers shows that 78% (196) identify something they care about in their area which is at risk.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Tony Burton, Director, Civic Voice

**(m) 07810 657729
(t) 020 7981 2881**

Ian Harvey, Co-ordinator, Civic Voice

**(t) 0151 708 9920
(m) 07877 096968**