Geography coursework

How Quality of life varies in Windsor

Introduction

Windsor is a large town located in the south east of England, and is roughly 20 miles to the west of London. It is famous for having both Legoland (a theme park) and, more importantly, Windsor castle- a huge historical building, home to the Queen and the Royal family. Both of these tourist attractions are listed in the UK's top twenty. Windsor is unique in having an area of parkland, the Windsor Great Park, significantly bigger than the town itself. The Queen owns Windsor Great Park and many parts of it remain private. However, much of the park is open to the public, who enjoy visiting the area especially in the summer. Windsor is a nice place to live due to it being in a riverside location (next to the river Thames); the river, with its cruise boats, other traffic and wildlife is yet another of Windsor's many attractions.

Due to Windsor's many tourist attractions (some have been mentioned above), it is a popular tourist town. Those who choose to live in Windsor have to pay a higher price for their houses than they would in neighbouring towns of Slough (a major industrial town) and Maidenhead. Windsor has a thriving town centre with many popular shops largely located in the High street and Peascod Street. It is well served by two train stations providing good rail connections with Slough (and from there to London Paddington, Reading, Oxford and beyond) and London Waterloo.

In theory Windsor could be a dormitory town in which people commute to work elsewhere. Windsor has many qualities, it could be strongly considered as a place to move in to. Those who work in London, but want to get away from all the pollution, traffic and noise found in London would find the relative peace and quiet of Windsor a big pull factor. Information found on the R.B.W.M -Royal borough of Windsor and Maidenhead- website, contradicted this assumption (see appendix 1). See appendix 2 for statistics on tourism in the royal borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

Windsor's position in the UK

Quality of life

This is the happiness and well being of people. Among the many factors that influence "quality of life" are:

- the person's family
- access to services
- community
- education
- health
- environment

Quality of life is sometimes confused with "standard of living" which is different. Standard of living is about possessions and money. A good standard of living doesn't guarantee a good quality of life but it can help. Factors that influence standard of living are:

- salary
- house
- car
- computer and other possessions

In this first piece of geography coursework we will look at possible differences in "quality of life" in different parts of Windsor. The differences in "quality of life" will be seen, by identifying:

- the differences in housing quality (condition , type, plot size)
- the differences in age of housing
- the differences in environmental quality (road and paving, litter, dereliction, street furniture, wirescape, advertisements, air and noise pollution, nuisance, vegetation, parking and safety)
- the differences in access to services.

To find out these differences we will be working in-groups of two or three and will be responsible for collecting the necessary data along a given route or "transect" in Windsor. Studying quality of life in Windsor will teach us about how quality of life varies in different parts of cities or large towns such as Windsor.

Hypothesis

In Windsor:

1. Quality of life is greater in suburbia than it is in the CBD (central business district), because there is less traffic and a better environment, i.e. better schools and parks in suburbia than in the CBD. The quality of houses is also higher in suburbia, the houses are larger and better equipped and have bigger gardens, and they often have more off road parking.
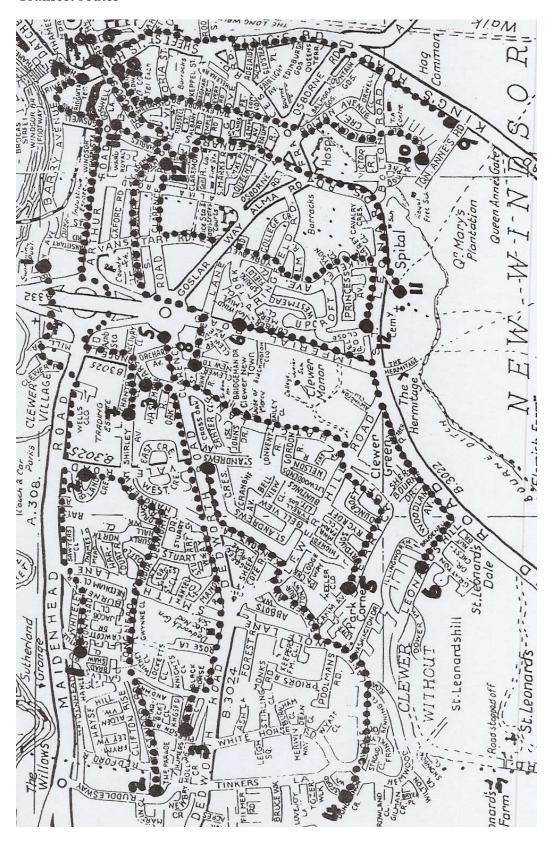
2. Quality of life is greater in residential areas away from main roads than it is on main roads, as noise and air pollution is high near main roads whereas residential areas away from main roads have peace and quiet.

Method

In this investigation we have been working in-groups of two or three and have collected necessary data along a given route or "transect" in Windsor. There are twelve transects all together in this investigation, each one is approximately 2 km long. Each group has collected data on four transects, two in west Windsor and two in east Windsor. Transects radiate from the CBD. Data was recorded, on the two sheets provided, at 200 metre intervals- ten collecting points for each transect. Data was recorded starting from sample point 1, nearest to the CBD, and ending at sample point 10, farthest from the CBD. Data recording sheets were required for this task, which was completed in one school day. In the morning, from 9 a.m. to 12 a.m., we worked out in Windsor, before returning to school so that all the results could be pooled together in a table. In the afternoon, from 1 p.m. to 3.30 p.m., we finished recording any unfinished results in Windsor. The main data-recording sheet is explained:

HOUSING QUALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY RECORDING SHEET		
Name: _____	Transect number: _____	

	MAXIMUM VALUE	QUALITY SCORE AT SAMPLE POINTS
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
HOUSING QUALITY:		
Building condition	5	
Boundary walls / fences	5	
...		
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY:		
Paving and road	10	
Litter	10	
Dereliction	5	
Street furniture	10	
Wirescape	10	
Advertisements	10	
Air pollution	5	
Nuisance	5	
Landscape / vegetation	10	
Traffic parking	5	
Traffic safety	10	
Total (out of 100) for each of the 10 sample points :		

SAMPLE No. 1. Name of street: _____ location_____
SAMPLE No. 2. Name of street: _____ location_____
SAMPLE No. 3. Name of street: _____ location_____
SAMPLE No. 4. Name of street: _____ location_____
SAMPLE No. 5. Name of street: _____ location_____
SAMPLE No. 6. Name of street: _____ location_____
SAMPLE No. 7. Name of street: _____ location_____
SAMPLE No. 8. Name of street: _____ location_____
SAMPLE No. 9. Name of street: _____ location_____
SAMPLE No.10. Name of street: _____ location_____

Transect routes

Route descriptions

Written from points 1 to 10, going away from the CBD.

TRANSECT ONE

Swimming pool, Clewer Park, Maidenhead Road (south side), Aston Mead to Gallys Road.

TRANSECT TWO

Vale Road (at Buckland Cresent), Hanover Way, Tudor Way, Longmead, Testwood Road (to Ruddlesway)

TRANSECT THREE

Parsonage Lane (at Haslemere Road), Dedworth Road (north side), Gallys Road, end of Butlers Close.

TRANSECT FOUR

Dedworth road (south side) at St Andrews Avenue, Kentons Lane, Foster Avenue, Wolf Lane, Duncannon Cresent.

TRANSECT FIVE

North side Clarence Road, Hatch Lane to Perrycroft.

TRANSECT SIX

Imperial road (junction with Springfield Road) East Side, Winkfield Road, St Leonard's Road, and St Leonard's Hill.

TRANSECT SEVEN

High Street (station), River Street, Goswell Road, Arthur Road (north side), Parsonage Lane, end of Chantry Close.

TRANSECT EIGHT

Top of Peascod Street, Clarence Road, Clarence Cresent, Bexley Street, Albert Street, Imperial Road, Green Lane (west0

TRANSECT NINE

High street (Queen Victoria's statue), Sheet Street (East Side), Kings Road (west side) to Queen Anne's Road.

TRANSECT TEN

Peascod Street (Queen Victoria's statue), William Street, Alexandra Road, Bolton Avenue, Bolton Cresent, Wood Close.

TRANSECT ELEVEN

Charles Street (north end, Ward Royal side), Trinity Palace, St Leonards Road to Spital.

TRANSECT TWELVE

Clarence Road (from Trinity Palace), Vansittart Road (underpass), York Avenue, Bulkely Avenue, St Leonard's Road to junction with peel Close.

Analysis of results

I will be concentrating on transects 1, 3 and 4, outside the CBD and transects 10, 11 and 12 inside the CBD. My analysis supports both hypotheses made at the start of this investigation. This will help me to draw my conclusions later on.

Hypothesis1

 My first hypothesis was:

Quality of life is greater in suburbia than it is in the CBD.

Transects1, 3, 4(outside the CBD), 10, 11 and 12 (inside the CBD) support this hypothesis.

Transect 1 stretches from sample point 1, at Windsor Leisure Centre and goes through Clewer Park, Maidenhead Road (south side) and Aston Mead. It ends at sample point 10 at Gallys Rd. It radiates away from the CBD in this order (sample point 1 is always nearest to the CBD for every transect). The results from transect 1 show an increase in quality of life, from 61 to 87 quality of life points. However, the results fluctuate at sample points 2,6 and 10- they go down rather than up at these sample points. Sample point 2 is the first fluctuation, this may be because there is a large roundabout forming a junction for the A332, coming from Slough, with Maidenhead road. This roundabout causes there to be more litter, less street furniture, no parking, more traffic and less safety and therefore 3 less quality of life points have been awarded to sample point 2. I would expect there to also be more nuisance and air pollution at the roundabout, but this is not the case. Sample point 6 is the second fluctuation, this may be because the local authority has invested less money. As an outcome of this sample point 6 has lower quality roads, more telephone and electricity cables and less traffic safety and therefore 4 less quality of life points have been awarded to sample point 6. Sample point 10 is the third fluctuation. This may be because there is a row of shops nearby. Therefore there is more litter and more advertisements and 4 less quality of life points have been awarded to sample point 10. Nevertheless due to there being 7 of the 10 results in the predicted direction (in transect 1), this evidence proves hypothesis 1 is true for areas outside the CBD. The above relationships are shown in graph 1and in the proportional bar graph.

Transect 10 stretches from sample point 1, at Peascod Street (Queen Victoria's Statue) and goes through William Street, Alexandra Road, Bolton Avenue and Bolton Cresent. It ends at sample point 10, at Wood Close. The results from transect 10 also show an increase in quality of life. However, the results fluctuate at sample points 3, 5, 7 and 10. Sample point 3 is the first fluctuation, this may be because of the Barracks taking away street life and limiting street beauty meaning there need not be any street furniture on sample point 3 as no one would want to sit there. Therefore 11 less quality of life points have been awarded to sample point 3. Sample points 5 and 7 are small fluctuations, they go down by only 2 quality of life points, and are difficult to explain. Sample point 10 is the fourth fluctuation, this may be because it is a side street with little street life and beauty and therefore sample point 10 loses out on 5 quality of life points for street furniture. Anyhow, due to there being 6 of the 10 results in the predicted direction (in transect 10), this evidence suggests that hypothesis 1 may be true for areas inside the CBD. But because there are 4 anomalous results, the evidence for hypothesis 1 being true in areas inside the CBD is weaker than the evidence for hypothesis 1 being true for areas outside the CBD. The above relationships are shown in graph 2 and in the proportional bar graph.

Both transect 4 and 12 are found away from main roads. Transect 4 is outside the CBD whereas transect 12 is inside the CBD. Transect 4 has a quality of life (average of 79.6 quality of life points) which is markedly higher than the quality of life of transect 12 (average of 69.5 quality of life points). Transect 4 scores 10.1 more quality of life points than transect 12, on average. In addition to this, transect 4 has a higher quality of life in 8 out of the 10 sample points. This proves that hypothesis 1(quality of life is greater in suburbia than in the CBD) is true for areas away from main roads. The above relationships are shown in graph 3.

Both transect 3 and 11 run along main roads; transect 3 runs along Dedworth Road, and transect 11 runs along St Leonard's Road. Transect 3 is outside the CBD whereas transect 11 is inside the CBD. Transect 3 has a quality of life (average of 69.6 quality of life points) which is higher than transect 11 (average of 61.7 quality of life points). Transect 3 scores 7.9 more quality of life points than transect 11, on average. This suggests that hypothesis 1 may also be true for main roads. But because there is a

small difference of only 7.9 sample points between transects 3 and 11, the evidence for hypothesis 1 being true for areas on the main road is relatively weak. The above relationships are shown in graph 4.

Hypothesis 2

My second hypothesis was:

Quality of life is greater in residential areas away from main roads than it is on main roads.

The transect pairs 3 and 4 (outside of the CBD) and 11 and 12 (inside the CBD) support this hypothesis.

Both transect 3 and transect 4 are situated outside the CBD. Transect 3 runs primarily along Dedworth Road. This is a main road and therefore transect 3 generally has a lower quality of life than transect 4 which runs through residential areas away from main roads. Transect 3 has an average total of 69.6 quality of life points, whereas transect 4 has an average total of 79.6 quality of life points. This difference of 10 quality of life points proves hypothesis 2 is true for areas outside of the CBD.

Certain factors of quality of life, in transects 3 and 4 change as would be expected. I would expect there to be less quality of life points awarded for litter, air pollution, nuisance, landscape/vegetation, traffic parking and traffic safety on transect 3 than on transect 4. This is because transect 3 runs primarily along a main road (Dedworth Road). Table 1 demonstrates this.

Table 1: Transect 3 (main road) has a lower quality of life than transect 4 (away from main road)

Factors	Transect 3 (average quality of life points)	Transect 4 (average quality of life points)	Difference (average quality of life points)
Litter (max 10)	5.4	7.2	1.8
Air Pollution (max 5)	2.5	3.9	1.4
Nuisance (max 5)	2.4	3.8	1.4
Landscape/Vegetation (max 10)	4.5	7.1	2.6
Traffic Parking (max 5)	2.9	3.9	1
Traffic Safety (max 10)	7.6	8.1	0.5
Total (max 45)	25.3	34	8.7

Both transect 11 and transect 12 are in the CBD. Transect 11 runs primarily along St Leonard's Road. This is a main road and therefore transect 11 generally has a lower quality of life than transect 12 which runs through residential areas away from main roads. Transect 11 has a total of 61.7 quality of life points, whereas transect 12 has an average total of 69.5 quality of life points. This difference of 7.8 quality of life points suggests hypothesis 2 may be true for areas outside the CBD.

Certain factors of quality of life, in transects 11 and 12 change as would be expected. I would expect there to be less quality of life points awarded for air pollution, nuisance, traffic parking and traffic safety on transect 11 than on transect 12. This is because transect 11 runs primarily along a main road (St Leonard's Road). I would also expect there to be less quality of life points awarded for litter on transect 11 as a large population use main roads and will therefore drop litter around main roads especially if they are near the town centre or CBD as St Leonard's Road is. This is not the case. A possible explanation for this could be that transect 11 ends in a quiet side street in which fewer people live. Table 2 demonstrates this:

Table 2: Transect 11 (main road) has a lower quality of life than transect 12

Factors	Transect 11 (average quality of life points)	Transect 12 (average quality of life points)	Difference (average quality of life points)
Air pollution (max 5)	1.7	2.2	0.5
Nuisance (max 5)	1.7	3	1.3
Traffic parking (max 5)	2	4.3	2.3
Traffic safety (max 10)	5.3	8.5	3.2
Total (max 35)	10.7	18	7.3

Conclusion

The purpose of this investigation was to find quality of life patterns in Windsor. My hypotheses, made at the start of this investigation, were:

1. Quality of life near the CBD is poorer than in the suburbs
2. Quality of life in residential areas away from main roads is greater than quality of life on main roads.

My hypotheses were proved correct on the whole. I have concluded that there is an overall trend in that the quality of life increases as you go away from the CBD, Central Business District, this was found both in residential areas away from main roads and on the main roads themselves. I have also found out that quality of life is greater in residential areas away from main roads than it is on main roads and have identified certain factors within quality of life that most cause this trend. The factors largely responsible for this were litter, air pollution, nuisance, traffic parking, and traffic safety, areas on main roads scored less quality of life points in these domains. To fully prove these ideas further investigation is required.

Evaluation

This investigation can be improved by:

1. Covering a wider range of domains, for example we could have covered housing density, housing privacy, garden size and garden quality.
2. Covering a wider range of areas and identifying which areas have advantages and disadvantages in certain domains. For example an out of town suburb might have less nuisance and less air pollution, but it would also have less of the buzz you get in the CBD of a busy town like Windsor.
3. Carefully observing quality of life and making sure every area has had accurate marking. In this way we would obtain more reliable results.
4. Investigating the standard of living as well as the quality of life.
5. Giving questionnaires to the public about quality of life

Bibliography

For this investigation I used the text books:
1. 'The New Wider World' by David Waugh
2. 'Heinemann Geography- People And Place' by Gary Chambers and Stuart Currie

I also found information and maps on the Internet using:
1. The Royal Borough Of Windsor And Maidenhead site
2. Up My Street site (for maps)

My geography teacher Mr Bainbridge was also very helpful

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Appendix

1. People that go to work from Windsor
   By car- 45,161   By Public Transport- 5,732
2. Tourism in the RBWM (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead) is worth £360,000,000 per year (10% of the Borough's GDP-Gross Domestic Product).

   Tourism in the RBWM employs roughly 11,000 people

   Approximately 1,000,000 people visit an attraction in Windsor every year

   200,000 attend Ascot racecourse every year

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