

Geography Coursework

Introduction

My geography coursework is to investigate if "Portobello road is going through a period of change". These changes are gentrification, meaning the way that the area has improved in a good way or bad. Portobello Road was chosen to investigate changes because the changes taking place show how this can affect other areas environmentally and what Portobello Road is heading towards in the future. Portobello road has been affected by this change Gentrification, buildings and other residential areas have been improved. This coursework will prove if the hypothesis "Portobello road is going through a period of change" is true or not.

The area of my study is located in central London in the area of Notting Hill. This is a well-known place because of Portobello Road, which is famous for its market, local shops and restaurants. It runs through the heart of Notting Hill and is visited by hundreds of people everyday. Portobello road is in the borough Kensington and Chelsea, which is in the west of London. The road is very long and goes under the West Way Bridge in Notting Hill.

Here are a few key questions regarding Portobello Road, these will help in the investigation, as they tell you what the past was like/ the future and the present time of Portobello Road.

What was Portobello Road like in the past?

What is Portobello Road like today?

What changes have occurred?

Why is Portobello Road changing?

What do people think about these changes?

These are just a few of the questions, more will be mentioned below. To answer these key questions I would have to make a survey and go up and down the road asking as many people I can these questions. The people's attitudes at the road were mixed there were some people who were willing to answer the questions and others who didn't want to be disturbed from what they were doing. The type of data I will be getting from this survey would be primary because I am getting the data myself from a survey. E.g. Questionnaires, The Secondary sources I will be using which I have not collected myself and have been given to me are stories from the past from the people of Portobello Road.

Background Information

"Many years ago Notting Hill was described as a massive slum, full of multi-occupied houses, crawling with rats and rubbish; and was populated by offshoots of the Soho vice and crime rackets. These insalubrious dwellings become home to a large contingent of afro- Caribbean immigrants, who had to compete for jobs and living space with the area's similarly down trodden white residents, now the

region has been gentrified with media folk having taken over large houses in the leafy crescents and trendy bars and restaurants springing up all over.”

This quote above refers to the changes, which have happened to the area known as Notting Hill which has been made famous by the film of the same name starring Hugh Grant and Julia Roberts, Famous people who live there include Jamie Theakston and Natalie Imbrulia. However, it was not long ago that the area was known for its race riots and drugs.

While the area appears now to be a desirable place, which is prospering, concern and conflict is beginning to occur. Many smaller independent shops are beings forced to close as their rents become too high taking there place are chain stores and coffee bars such as Starbucks. In the past there was outcry as McDonalds applied for planning permission. A huge influx of tourists, especially after the film infuriates stallholders as they continue to gape and ask stupid questions. Property prices continue to rise. One-bedroom apartments can cost hundreds of thousands of pounds. Now, few of the local residents remain.

The houses were terraced houses, which were shared with 2 – 3 families total of about 10 – 12 people living there. As in the past, the majority of the people in Portobello Road were Afro Caribbean; these people were insulted and harassed. Landlords were allowed to charge what ever they wanted as rent.

Today the area is much better. New larger houses have been built, meaning more people living there, it has also become cleaner, and the property prices have increased greatly. The types of people living there have changed too, there are more rich and famous people. As the property prices have increased this would mean people would need high income to continue living in Portobello Road.

Methodology

Land Use Classification

The way the Land use Classification was used was by working with a partner, one person would have the classification sheet, which has numbers of types of shops corresponding to a number. The other person would have the map of Portobello road. You would both walk up the road and at every shop check what type of shop it is. On the land use classification sheet would be different categories and in the categories would be different shops like bank, grocer etc and each shop would have a different number you would have to find the number which is corresponding to the shop and write that number down on the land use map.

Some problems that had occurred with the Land use classification map were that there were only limited types of shops. I had were the land use classification sheet didn't have all the different types of shops. Some shops were being refurbished. To improve and overcome these problems you could add a new category and number.

The map on the next page shows the different category shops. The map and coloring makes it easier to see where all the different types of shops are located. The convenience shops are greatly at the start of the road (going left to right), the comparison shops are at the start and the end of the road, the services are at the start to the middle of the road, the entertainment is in the middle of the road and the other shops are spread around the road.

Environmental Quality Survey

On the environmental quality map, Portobello Road was divided into 12 different sections of the road. Each section had its own survey with questions regarding how appealing the environment looked. Using the total marks for that section we would shade in the environmental survey map according to the darkest shade been given the highest mark and the lightest shade given the lowest mark.

Some problems that had occurred with the Environmental quality survey was sometimes the rating I required to give that particular section was in between two numbers so I would have to choose one or the other. To improve this survey I could have added more questions so it would make it easier what it's worth.

Poor Quality

Ugly buildings 1 2 3 4 5
Parking facilities nearby 1 2 3 4 5

High Quality

Attractive buildings
Easy to park

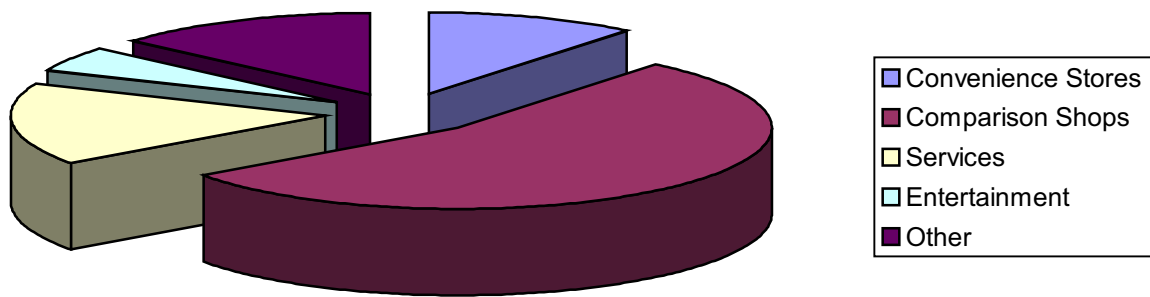
Questionnaires

With the questionnaires I had to approach different people asking them to fill in my questionnaire, regarding changes of Portobello road, and their opinions. The questionnaire that was given to me I felt that there were limited questions so I made one of my own, which was very helpful.

Some problems that had occurred with the questionnaires was that not everyone wanted to answer the questions and some people were discourteous, there was also not a lot of people on the street, that hadn't been asked to fill in the questionnaires already by the previous groups. Also some people were enabling to give more than one answer. To overcome this problem I asked many shop keepers to fill in my questionnaire as they had the time.

Results

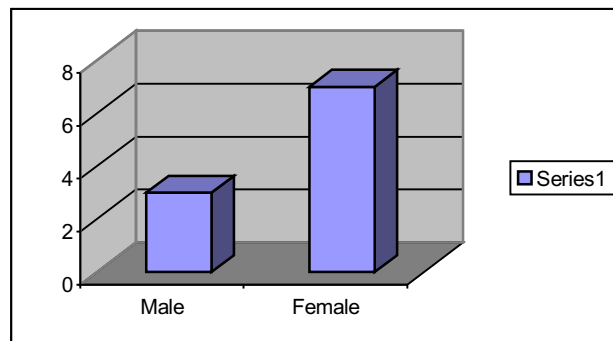
Shop Group	Total Number
Convenience Stores	15
Comparison Shops	76
Services	23
Entertainment	7
Other	19



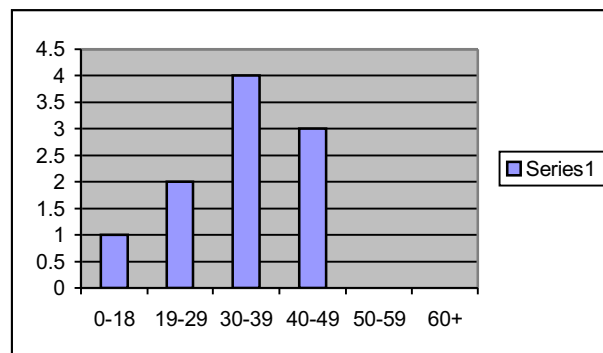
The graph above shows the amount of stores in the different categories in Portobello road in 2003. This graph informs us that the most shops are comparison shops, and the least shops are entertainment. The reasons the most amount of stores are in the comparison category because most people who shop there want to only buy things like clothes, and antiques that's why there are a lot of those shops.

The graph below shows that the majority of the people asked to fill in my questionnaire were females.

Male	3
Female	7



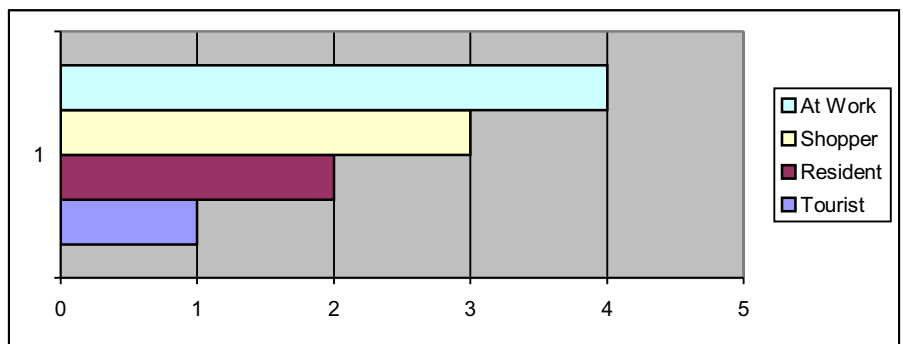
Age	Count
0-18	1
19-29	2
30-39	4
40-49	3
50-59	0
60+	0



The graph above shows the ages of people, who were asked to fill in the questionnaire, it also shows that the majority of the people were aged 30- 39.

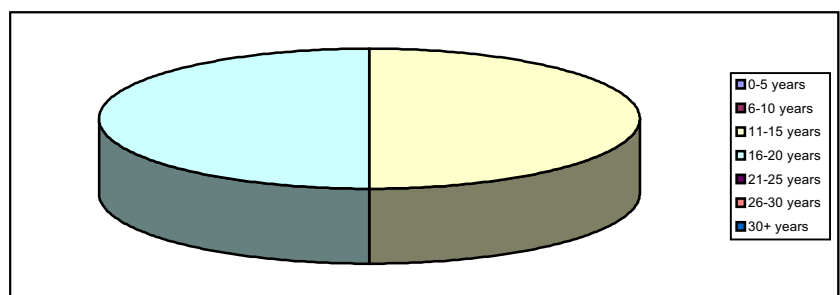
The graph above shows the ages of the people who were interviewed. The graph tells us that the people who were there at the time were mostly between the ages 0 – 39.

Are you a	
Tourist	1
Resident	2
Shopper	3
At Work	4



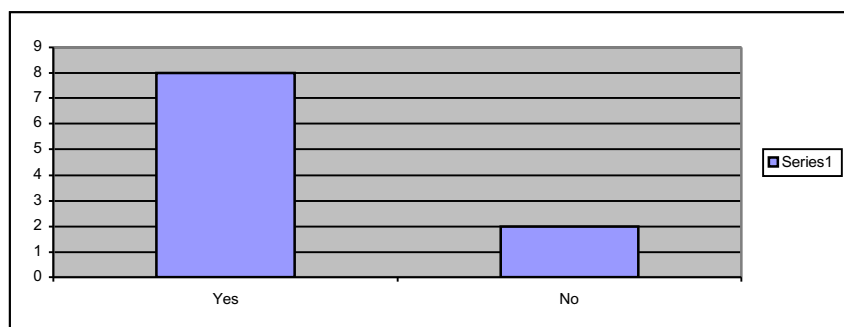
The graph above shows what the people who I asked were either a tourist, resident, shopper or at work. The graph shows that the majority of the people were at work.

If you are a resident how long have you lived in this area?	
0-5 years	0
6-10 years	0
11-15 years	1
16-20 years	1
21-25 years	0
26-30 years	0
30+ years	0



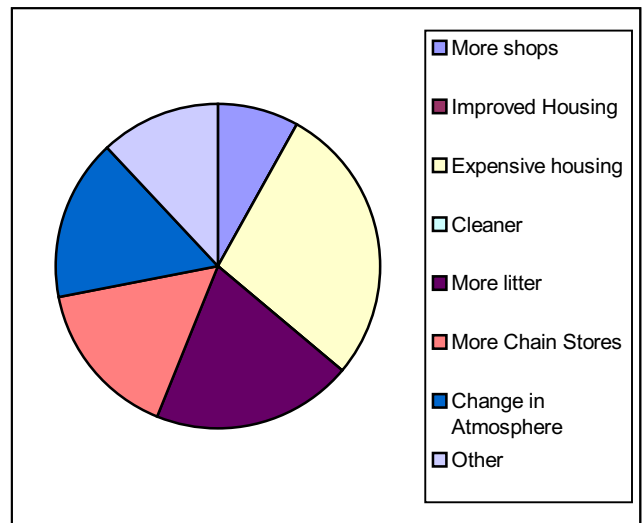
The graph above shows that the residents I asked of Portobello Road lived in that area for a duration of years. The graph shows how many people I asked were residents of Portobello road. By looking at the graph I can see that there were only one in each year for 11-15 and 16-20.

Do you think Portobello road has changed?	
Yes	10
No	0



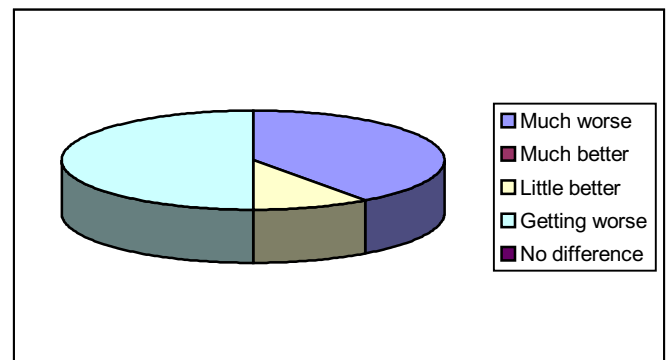
The graph shows the majority of people thought that Portobello Road has changed but still 2 people think it hasn't.

How do you think Portobello road has changed?	
More shops	2
Improved Housing	0
Expensive housing	7
Cleaner	0
More litter	5
More Chain Stores	4
Change in Atmosphere	4
Other	3



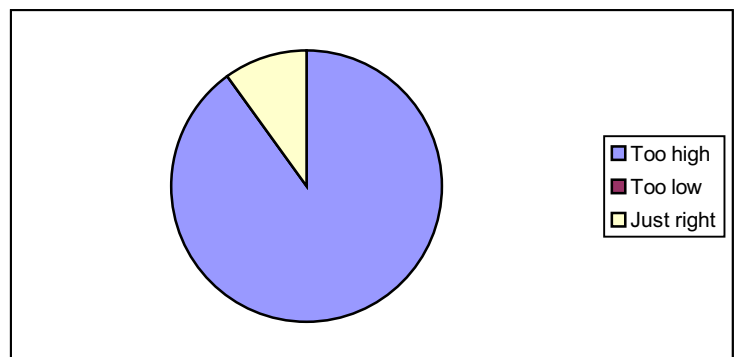
The graph above shows how the people I asked think Portobello road has changed. The change that every person said was “expensive housing”. I think prices have gone up because there is good pay work around those areas so the people selling the houses think that people can still afford them.

How do you feel about these changes?	
Much worse	4
Much better	0
Little better	1
Getting worse	5
No difference	0



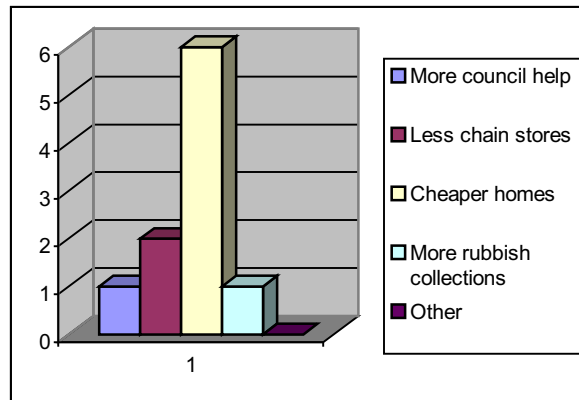
The graph above shows what people think about the changes that have happened to the road. Half the amount of people I interviewed thinks that the changes that have happened are much worse. This tells us that people there don't want changes like these to happen. If they want changes they want certain types of changes.

Do you think the property prices are:	
Too high	9
Too low	0
Just right	1



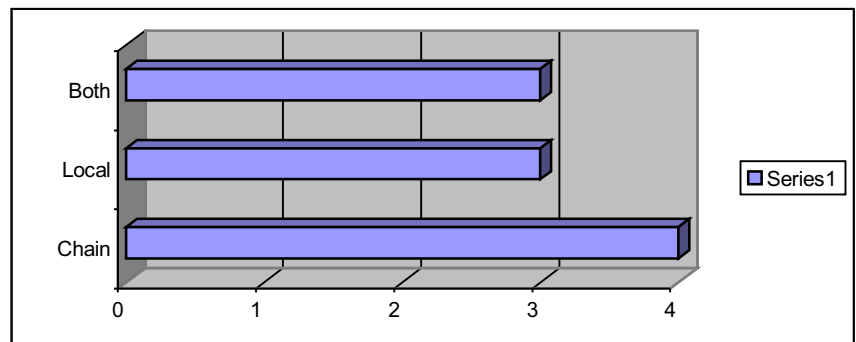
The graph on the previous page tells us that most people think that the property prices in Portobello Road are too high. Having high property prices also shows that the council will need to lower their prices if they want people to live in the properties. The property prices could be too high for the reason that of the type of work and money earned by the people who work their.

In the future do you think that there should be:	
More council help	1
Less chain stores	2
Cheaper homes	6
More rubbish collections	1
Other	0



The above graph shows what people want as the changes in the future of Portobello Road. The majority of the people would like in the future for cheaper homes, as the property prices are too high.

Do you prefer to shop in chain stores, the local market or independent shops?	
Chain	4
Local	3
Both	3



The graph above tells us that people don't really mind where they shop either chain stores or local stores. I think people don't mind because chain stores are around everywhere so they can get good items from there but independent shops are the shops which are not around everywhere only in some places.

The results above show how the key questions mentioned before on how they relate to the views and opinions of people of Portobello Road.

Conclusion

Portobello road in the past was a very slum road, it has people there with different ethnicities, it had rubbish lying around everywhere, rats crawling around which was a health risk, Portobello Road was not well looked after. Houses were being shared with 2-3 different families, being a major problem when it comes to using lavatories, the kitchen, and bathroom.

Portobello road today has changed from what it was in the past. It now has much more chain stores and less rubbish than it had in the past. The racism that took place many years ago has decreased greatly. People that live there now are mostly rich and famous people. The prices of houses and flats have gone up and crime rates still haven't gone down. Portobello road is a very expensive place to live, as you have to be earning a lot of money to live there.

The changes that have occurred in Portobello Road are there are much more chain stores developing in the road, property prices have increased greatly, the rubbish had reduced a little but the council have still a lot more to do to make Portobello Road more cleaner

I think that Portobello road is changing because of the people in the area who migrate into this area. They change the real appearance of the road, and change its history of the road, they may think its for the good but people who have lived their for a long while may like the way it was and keep it that way, hoping nothing would change the road. People trying to change the road maybe rich people as they have the money to make this a better place in their own way

Most people in the area at the moment think that the changes that have happened are for the worse, as they feel the true history behind the road is changing.

I think that Portobello is being overrun by chain stores; I feel that it is a bad change because having chain stores ruins the true history behind the road, even though having chain stores around would mean better quality in items, and more variety in purchases.

I think that the changes that are occurring are changing the characteristics and losing its true identification of the road because all of these changes this road is starting to turn into any other road, that have lots of chain stores etc

The changes that have taken place in Portobello Road have resulted in some conflicts as some residents feel that the changes been made are ruining the road, and some people feel that these changes have improved the road for the best.

I think that Portobello Road is being overrun by chain stores I feel this way because there are more chain stores moving into this area as they are more desirable, enclose all necessities at cheaper prices, and shops becoming known nation wide.

I think the future of Portobello Road is going to maintain taking changes in the road, increasing in chain stores, reducing in litter, increasing in property prices, due to the high property prices more rich and famous people will migrate into this area. Also meaning that the residents that used to live there moving away as they can't afford the high prices of the properties.

I recommend that Portobello Road should modify in the way that all the residents are happy with, hence Portobello road becoming a much better place to live. There should be more help from the council, e.g., by having more rubbish collections. Also there should be a decrease in property prices.

The Old and the New land use maps I used showed a great significance in vary, the surroundings of old shops, and the new. The old land use map shows that shops of that time were more convenience store based, the new land use maps shows convenience/ entertainment stores. The change shown from the old to the new land use maps makes us see that Portobello Road and its changes affecting the people's views and opinions, which are shown from the results of the questionnaire.

The borough plans Kensington and Chelsea have three main elements in their strategies, which are firstly strategic framework, secondly area profiles and lastly action plans for priority areas. Last year the K&C Partnership developed a set of objectives, which if jointly pursued by all services will make a real contribution locally to bringing closer the national vision " that within 10 to 20 years, no one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live".

Evaluation

I think that the research methods I used was accurate enough to give me good data to show my end results, I was able to give all answers to provided questions and felt that the people participating in my questionnaires had no problems with it too. Problems I had with my results is that I could have used the people of Portobello to get more accurate information If I was there for a longer. I could also have used more research methods.

The hypothesis " Portobello Road is going through a period of change". I have found that this statement is true. From all the research that I have done it shows the new changes the road has been going through and heading towards in the future.