

## Extending Localisation– *in brief*

*Extending localisation*<sup>1</sup> is a practical response to the challenges of climate change, diminishing natural resources and erratic global financial markets. This first exploratory report is offered as a stimulus to generate discussion and action about local supply chains and money flow within the region.

*Local* is defined as the nearest available source that meets one's requirements. The benefits of a more localised approach are:

- Lower energy usage, emissions and waste in transporting goods, people and materials
- More robust local economies through the circulation of local money, sustaining local jobs and services in a turbulent financial environment
- The re-balance of power and decision-making back to local stakeholders.

Localise West Midlands is promoting localisation through identifying good practice within the region and exploring the policy changes, support mechanisms and removal of 'roadblocks' that are required for localisation to travel from 'niche' to 'norm'.

Five initial sectors for localisation are examined in this report. For each we highlight positive and negative trends, examples of localised activity and potential recommendations.

**Manufacturing and resources** – an internationally exposed sector, the region's resources are: reclaimed materials from household waste and commercial processes; food crops; fuel crops; textile crops; landfill gas, minerals and aggregates. We look at ways to build our manufacturing economy on local assets, skills and markets, minimise incineration of useful materials; promote repair industries; and pursue the low carbon approach.

**Food** – the area of most need, capacity and interest in localisation. To create food security, reduce food-related emissions and protect rural livelihoods, we look at ways to decentralise supply chains, use public procurement assist producer collaboration; and promote seasonality.

**Retail** – aiming for a retail environment in which the values of diversity, distinctiveness and social capital are properly recognised and protected, shoppers have walkable journeys, and food deserts are reduced. We look at, for example, schemes in urban and rural parts of the region that protect local shops and models for inclusive town centre management.

**Energy** – energy efficiency; decentralisation; local ownership; footprint awareness; job creation. We look at reinvigorating the economy by energy measures; the region's biomass potential and community ownership models.

**Finance** – we investigate the potential for banking centred on productive work and real assets; people's savings and borrowings safeguarded from the global casino; investment in local infrastructure, more co-operative or public interest financing; and regionally representative central banking.

We also look at some overarching issues around appropriate indicators and the potential challenges of the government's efficiency agenda.

These are initial areas for investigation, not firm recommendations. They are outlined in a little more detail in the full report. In the next stage LWM will take a closer look at what is happening around the region and develop these ideas into firmer strategies for extending localisation, within and beyond the West Midlands.

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