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To Parliamentary Enquiry-- Retaining Young People in Rural Towns and communities

CEO Lilian Topic

Young people leaving small towns rob the community of its greatest asset and opportunity of sustainability and viability and in many cases the desire to 'escape' is a natural instinct and learned from the first totally independent adventures in his /her home town , the pushbike or scooter freedom raises expectations of safety and consideration the playground and swings signified and now with some freedom the expectations are of community consideration and love must be here somewhere? its my hometown I love and am safe here so where are the facilities for me and my ideas and values ? I'm ten and very aware of fairness and money and adult mores and am learning consequences and just about to understand the 'as if' generations and the basis of social disconnection . I 'm the product of love and the communities greatest asset and hope with so much expected of me yet alienated at my most impressionistic stage of life by the lack of facilities and respect I'd assumed everyone got that , not if your ten to fifteen years old ,the dream is to wait to drive away and wait quietly, never to bond with the place you thought you loved and loved you and dreamt amongst your mates the 'as if 'dream of "wouldn't it be great if we had a skatepark or a place from the rain or some piles of dirt etc "as if".

And so towns bleed their best and brightest who never feel part of the whole and are contemptuous of their home town and the death of inclusion which it signified , confidence didn't grow there nor talents recognized or fostered there" no-one cared mate" unless your sporty or lucky '

Whilst this may seem pessimistic the historic lack of recognition ,established dialogue and opportunity for input into their issues and directions have created a credibility gap between the young and adult world and we need to first restore some equality by supplying them with the needs they have always asked for, safe appropriate play environments and in in time thru the growing of a sense of ownership dialogue will be a natural thing once equality is restored and youth will feel safe in proposing new ways and options and new industry from the mundane to the inspirational.

This is the challenge to create new assumptions language and attitudes to the value of youth's experience in their home town or community ,resulting in the assumption that home can offer opportunities in life as well. To make our communities viable sustainable and reflective of connection and care we must help our young at the most formative and impressionable stage of their life and save our small communities by creating an environment they feel proud to own and call home

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CITIZEN.