

## **The Human Tide: How Population Shaped the Modern World – Paul Morland**

Morland is an academic and a renowned authority on demography; which is concerned with the numbers of people born, their survival into adulthood, the number of children they in turn have, the age at which they die and likelihood of their moving region, country or continent. The majority of those discussing this book found it both interesting and fascinating. Morland writes well and illustrates his arguments with data enlivened by remarkable facts and anecdotes which help to establish his thesis about the importance of demographic factors in how humans live their lives. For example, in nineteenth century Britain the birth rate began to fall as people left the land, where children were viewed as economic assets for labour, to towns and cities to work in factories, where children were regarded as economic burdens to be fed and clothed. Japan's falling birth rate in the twentieth century has made it a country with one of the oldest populations and currently 8 million empty houses.

As one of our group commented, Morland has given us yet another lens through which we can view the impact on societies of a variety of factors that our group has explored previously, in other books. His exploration of ageing societies and some potential benefits of immigration would give many, including some current British politicians, food for thought.