Wellbeing in Stowmarket

This report has been produced based on findings from the Public Mental Health and Emotional Needs project, in collaboration with Suffolk County Council.

April 2023

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Only 42% of Stowmarket respondents are meeting their Needs well overall
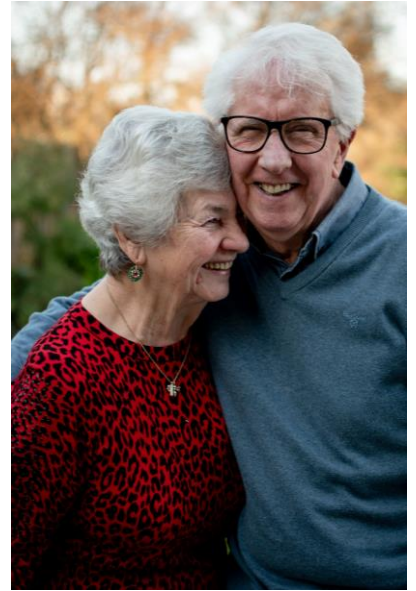
Sleep is the worst met Need on average

Community is the least met emotional Need on average

Those who are in the **VCSE sector** are the most well demographic group on average

Stowmarket's **physical and mental health** is the biggest barrier to wellbeing

Individuals with **mental health conditions** are the least well demographic groups on average

49% don't feel they have enough control over their lives

Contents

The Emotional Needs

Sleep helps calm emotions and repairs our body. We can tell our Need for Sleep is met when we feel rested after waking up

Food & Drink is about feeling you get energy, nutrition and pleasure from your diet – however that looks for you

Control is feeling we are free to make choices for ourselves, and part of meeting this Need is recognising that there are things we can't control

Meaning & Purpose is feeling motivated and that there is a point to getting out of bed in the morning. This can be met through meeting our Need for Achievement, through helping other people, or by being part of something bigger than ourselves

Achievement is met by feeling stretched and challenged by the things we do

Emotional Connection is about feeling connected in smaller, more intimate groups. **Close Relationships** is about feeling we can be completely ourselves around at least one other person (or a pet!)

Movement isn't just about going to the gym or out for a run. Getting our heart rate above resting level just three to four times a week – whether that's a brisk walk, dancing or hoovering – is enough to trigger an endorphin release equivalent in its effect to anti-depressant medication

Security is to do with our need to feel safe and secure in our surroundings. Some examples of where we meet our Need for Security is in our housing situation, financially or in relationships

Privacy is about being able to get time away from distractions and have time to process our thoughts and emotions

Status is met by feeling appreciated and respected as a person. **Value** is about feeling appreciated for our actions and contributions

Giving and Receiving Attention is about exchanging positive attention with those around us. It is a finite resource, but can replenished by better meeting the Need for Privacy

Community is met when we feel we're part of a group

Key Findings

Just 42.02% of Stowmarket respondents are meeting their Needs well overall. This is very similar to the Suffolk-wide average, where 41.12% of respondents are meeting their Needs well overall.

Stowmarket is also meeting the same number of Needs well (4 out of 15), on average, as the general population of Suffolk. It even has the same overall average score as the Suffolk-wide average, both scoring 0.57 (on a scale of -3 to 3).

Alongside the three physical Needs, there are three emotional Needs that are particularly less well met amongst those who live in Stowmarket on average, and that could therefore benefit from targeted interventions to better support residents to meet these Needs.

These are:

1. Community

52% of Stowmarket respondents are not meeting this Need well**

The biggest barrier to this Need being met?

Stowmarket's physical or mental health

The biggest supporting factor?

Respondents' community involvement

2. Control

49% of Stowmarket respondents are not meeting this Need well

The biggest barrier to this Need being met?

Stowmarket's physical or mental health

The biggest supporting factor?

Respondents' home environment and day-to-day environment

* Throughout this report 'Stowmarket' is defined as being within the IP14 postcode area.

** We define a Need as being 'well met' when it has a score of 1 or more, out of a scale of -3 to 3. For more information on our methodology, please refer to Appendix 1.

For more information on our Emotional Needs & Resources approach, visit our website: www.suffolkmind.org.uk/emotional-needs-resources

Key Findings

3. Security

49% of Stowmarket respondents are not meeting this Need well

The biggest barrier to this Need being met?

Stowmarket's physical or mental health

The biggest supporting factor?

Respondents' relationships

4. Physical Needs

70% of Stowmarket respondents are not meeting their Need for **Sleep** well

58% are not meeting their Need for **Movement** well

55% are not meeting their Need for **Food & Drink** well

The biggest barrier to these Needs being met?

Stowmarket's physical or mental health

The biggest supporting factors?

People's home environments, hobbies & interests and access to nature and the outdoors.

Some groups of people within Stowmarket are notably more or less well than the average. Those working in the VCSE sector are the most well group in Stowmarket on average, meeting 12 of the 15 Needs well on average.

Those least well on average are those with mental health conditions. This group is not meeting any of their Needs well.

Any questions about our findings? Please contact us on Research@suffolkmind.org.uk

Engagement from Stowmarket residents

We received 526 responses from residents of Stowmarket from 13th June 2022 to 3rd April 2023. We collect information on a number of demographic factors, alongside the Emotional Needs Audit (ENA) data, including gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity and nationality, economic status, and income. Of the demographic groups, this report focuses on age and economic status in particular – due to the biggest disparities in wellbeing existing amongst these groups.

Response rates by gender:
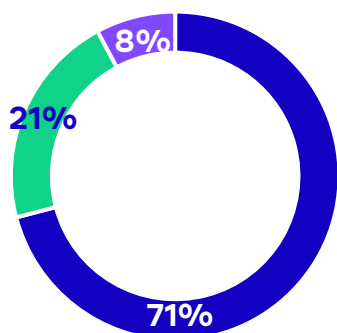
- 71% of respondents were women (including trans women)

- 21% were men (including trans men)

- 8% chose not to provide information on their gender

We often struggle to collect information on men's wellbeing compared with women, and this is worth keeping in mind as it can affect our results. For instance, men's average wellbeing in Stowmarket is marginally better than women's (average overall score of 0.61 for women, compared with 0.62 for men – on a scale of -3 to 3). However, we don't know the extent to which this is influenced by the fact that our sample size for men is over 3 times smaller than it is for women. It is also possible that men who do choose to answer our survey *may* be generally more well than those who don't.

Could you help us connect with individuals who are less represented in our data? If so, please reach out to us on Research@suffolkmind.org.uk

Response rates by age:

We heard the most from those between 35 and 64. We had the fewest responses from those aged 75 and over, and those under 18, with each of these making up just 2% of responses. Since respondents aged 75 and over are amongst our most well demographic groups in Stowmarket, on average, it is worth bearing in mind that the fewer responses we have for a group, the less reliable the conclusions we're drawing are.
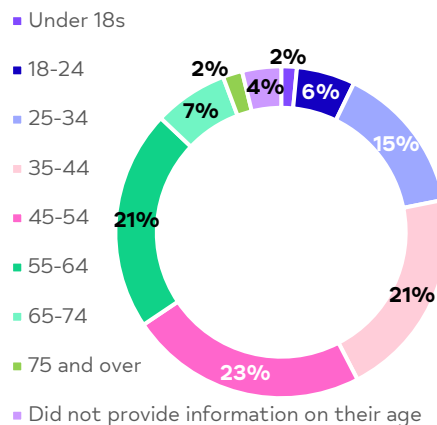
Where we receive fewer than 3 responses per reportable group, we do not report on the average wellbeing of this group – to ensure all responses remain anonymous.

Wellbeing in Stowmarket
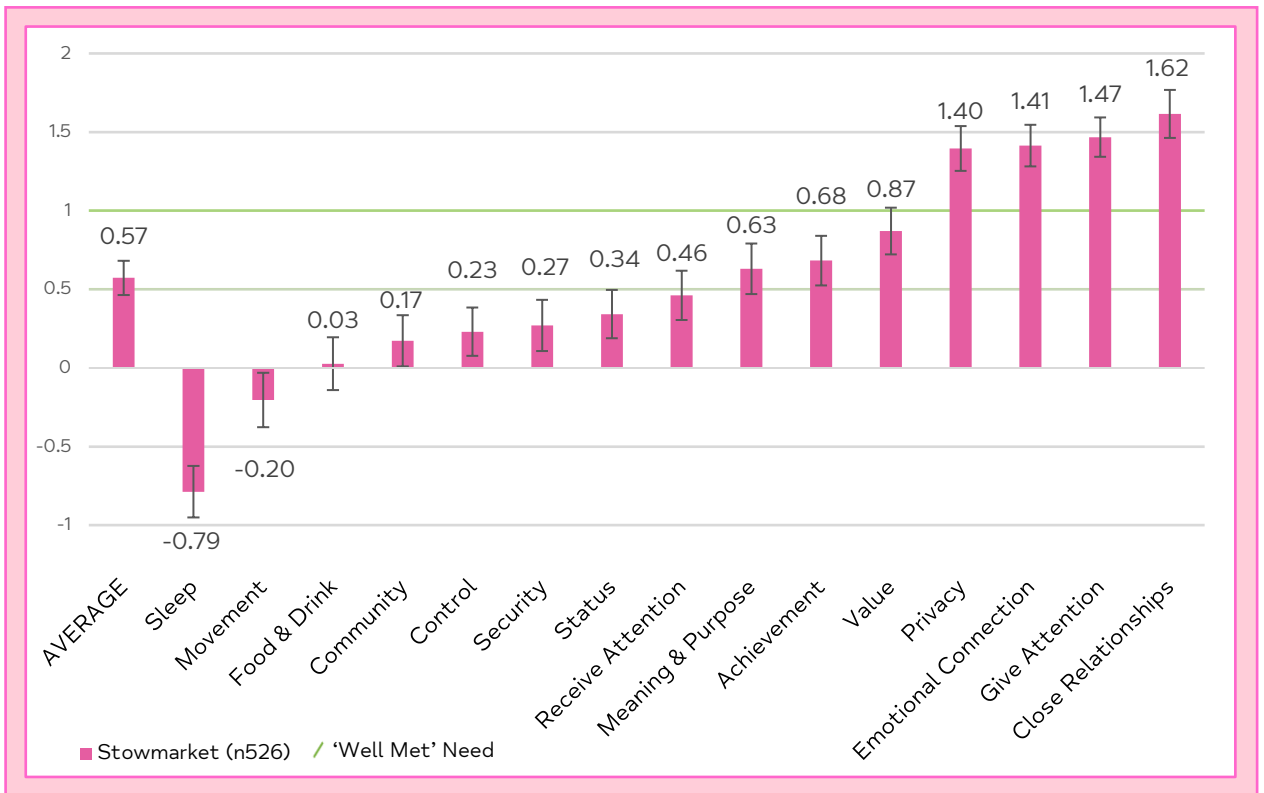
To view this graph on the full scale (-3 to 3), see Appendix 2.

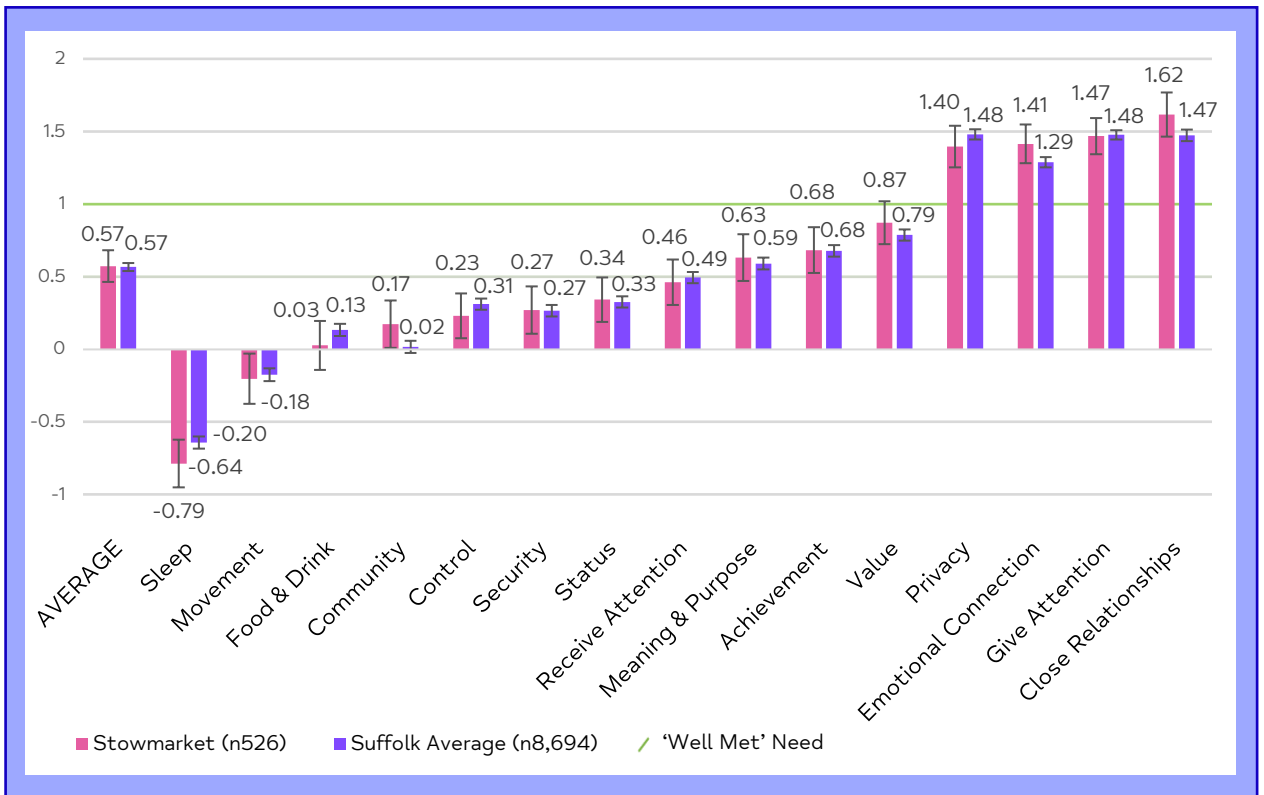Here we have Stowmarket's average results from the Emotional Needs Audit. The Emotional Needs are along the bottom on the x axis, arranged from least to best met on average from left to right, with the average of all Needs combined on the far left. How well the Needs are met is shown on the y axis. Within the audit, each Need can be scored from -3 to 3, however, from this graph, we can see that the averages land between -1 and 2 (a view of the results on the full scale can be found in Appendix 2).

The error bars indicate the values we would expect our averages to fall within if we repeated this research. We used a 95% confidence interval; therefore, we can be 95% certain that the averages would fall within these ranges, if we were to collect data on the wellbeing of those living in Stowmarket again in future.

The green line shows where we define a Need to be 'well met' – a score of 1 or more. At a glance, we can see that Needs are not well met by Stowmarket on average, with an overall average score of 0.57. Similarly, only 4 of the 15 Needs are well met overall.

On an individual level, we deem someone to be meeting their Needs well overall if they have an average score of 1 or more across all their Needs. We can see that 42.02% of Stowmarket respondents (or 221 out of 526 respondents) are meeting their Needs well overall. Therefore, just 42% are classed as being in wellbeing on the mental health continuum. This is marginally better than Suffolk's average wellbeing, based on fixed dates of 13 June 2022 to 8 March 2023 for the Suffolk-wide comparison point throughout this research, for which 41.12% of respondents are meeting their Needs well overall. For this project we chose to focus on geographic areas which we knew to be less well, and therefore anticipated slightly lower wellbeing amongst those in Stowmarket on average. Although, as we will see on the following page, wellbeing amongst Stowmarket and the Suffolk average is not statistically significantly different, our findings allow us to prioritise Needs and interventions with the aim of further improving wellbeing in Stowmarket.

How does this compare to Suffolk's average?

Legend: ■ Stowmarket (n526) ■ Suffolk Average (n8,694) ╱ 'Well Met' Need

Chart values by Need (Stowmarket / Suffolk Average):
- AVERAGE: 0.57 / 0.57
- Sleep: -0.79 / -0.64
- Movement: -0.20 / -0.18
- Food & Drink: 0.03 / 0.13
- Community: 0.17 / 0.02
- Control: 0.23 / 0.31
- Security: 0.27 / 0.27
- Status: 0.34 / 0.33
- Receive Attention: 0.46 / 0.49
- Meaning & Purpose: 0.63 / 0.59
- Achievement: 0.68 / 0.68
- Value: 0.87 / 0.79
- Privacy: 1.40 / 1.48
- Emotional Connection: 1.41 / 1.29
- Give Attention: 1.47 / 1.48
- Close Relationships: 1.62 / 1.47

To view this graph on the full scale (-3 to 3), see Appendix 2.

We can make a comparison between the data we have collected on Stowmarket with the Suffolk-wide data gathered as part of this research. These results are compared with the Suffolk average, based on data gathered between 13th June 2022 and 8th March 2023. There were 8,694 responses within that time period for Suffolk as a whole, which we can compare with the 526 responses from Stowmarket.

Here, we can see that the confidence intervals overlap between the Stowmarket overall average and the Suffolk-wide overall average. Therefore, we *cannot* deduce that the difference between how well Needs are met overall amongst Stowmarket respondents and the Suffolk-wide average is statistically significant.

This is unsurprising, given the overall average score for both Stowmarket and the Suffolk average is 0.57 (on a scale of -3 to 3). The same number of Needs are also well met on average, with both groups meeting 4 of the 15 Needs well. As has been discussed, the percentage of respondents meeting their Needs well overall is another similarity across both datasets – with 42% of Stowmarket respondents meeting their Needs well and 41% meeting their Needs well among the Suffolk respondents. We can also see a similar trend across both data sets in terms of how well each Need is met – with Sleep being the worst met Need on average, and Giving Attention being among the best met Needs on average for both. To analyse the results further, we can separate the Needs into four groups based on similarities in theme.
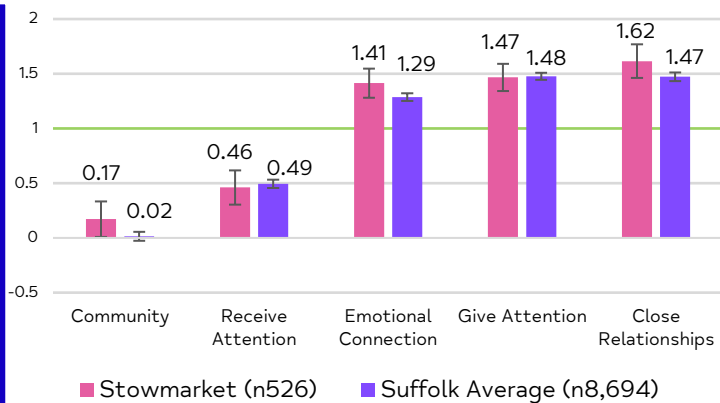
Interpersonal Relationship Needs

The best met Need among Stowmarket respondents, on average, is the Need for a **Close Relationship**, and this is well met on average, with a score of 1.62 (on a scale of -3 to 3), showing that people are feeling accepted for who they are by at least one person in their lives. **Emotional Connection** is also high on average, being a well met Need with a score of 1.41, suggesting that respondents are feeling connected in small, intimate groups.

It's helpful to compare these two Needs to **Community**, as this reflects the difference between feeling connected in smaller groups compared with bigger groups. Community is the least well met emotional Need on average for Stowmarket, with an average score of just 0.17. This suggests that people aren't feeling as well connected in larger, less intimate settings.

The Need for Community has taken a considerable hit in recent years, with Suffolk's average score for Community reaching an all time low during Summer 2022 compared to previous years. Community was, therefore, one of the Needs focused on during action planning.

We can see that the Need for **Giving Attention** is well met on average, with a score of 1.47. For both the Stowmarket and Suffolk average, Giving Attention scores much more highly than **Receiving Attention**, which is among the less well met Needs on average. This shows that people feel they give others more attention than they receive back. We asked those who weren't meeting this Need (i.e. scoring less than 0) to identify any barriers that prevent them from doing so, and respondents' top barriers were their relationships and their physical or mental health.

Chart showing emotional needs met, comparing Stowmarket and Suffolk Average:
- Community: Stowmarket 0.17, Suffolk Average 0.02
- Receive Attention: Stowmarket 0.46, Suffolk Average 0.49
- Emotional Connection: Stowmarket 1.41, Suffolk Average 1.29
- Give Attention: Stowmarket 1.47, Suffolk Average 1.48
- Close Relationships: Stowmarket 1.62, Suffolk Average 1.47

Legend: Stowmarket (n526), Suffolk Average (n8,694)

Community is the **lowest** met emotional Need

Despite some of these Needs being slightly more or less well met, on average, by Stowmarket than Suffolk, since the confidence intervals overlap, we cannot say that these differences are statistically significant. However, using feedback gained from Stowmarket respondents and case study participants, we can hypothesise about why some Needs are less well met than others among Stowmarket respondents. The Need for Community is the least met emotional Need on average, and one case study respondent said that more group activities in the evening would support wellbeing, as the majority of local groups are held during the day, and this restricts accessibility for some people to build a sense of community. There were also a few comments requesting improved public transport links, as people in villages feel cut off from wider connections.

Barriers

Respondents who weren't meeting their Need for Community (scoring below 0) were asked to identify barriers that prevent them from doing so. Of the respondents who chose to identify barriers:

- 49% (n47) believed that their physical or mental health presented an obstacle
- 36% (n34) reported that work situations presented a barrier
- 26% (n25) viewed their relationships as getting in the way

Supporting factors

Respondents who were meeting their Need for Community very well (scoring 2 or more) were asked to identify factors that support them to do so. Of those who provided information on supporting factors:

- 57% (n26) viewed their community involvement as enabling them to meet this Need well
- 50% (n23) selected their relationships or hobbies & interests
- 46% (n21) identified their work situations as a supporting factor

What helps people's wellbeing?

"I belong to an NHS retirement group, who are very supportive, especially when I lost my husband."

"All family members live within an hour of where I live and I get to spend time with them on a regular basis."

"What works are friendships, faith community, community involvement albeit unpaid, and family."

What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

"I feel there are no services for active retired people for socialising that do not carry the stigma of old age."

"There are no real facilities in the area for people alone who could do with a meet up"

"I think mental health support is really hard to find in Suffolk & when you do get it - it's very inconsistent which becomes stressful & really unhelpful."

What could be done to improve wellbeing?

"Have an afternoon film, crafts etc, or book exchange and so on similar to the Gateway project at Bury St Edmunds."

"I think it would be very beneficial for older children (age 8+) to be able to access youth clubs in rural communities."

ACHIEVEMENT   MEANING & PURPOSE   STATUS

Achievement and Value Needs

We can see that people are feeling some internal achievement about their actions but may not be feeling stretched as **Achievement** is a less well met Need on average, scoring 0.68 (on a scale of -3 to 3). People's work situations can affect their ability to meet this Need well, with it being by far the biggest barrier identified by respondents who weren't meeting this Need well. If we look at results by economic status, we can see that Achievement is least well met by those who are unable to work (-0.83) or unemployed (-0.74) on average.

Meaning & Purpose is strongly positively correlated to Achievement within the Stowmarket data, meaning that on average we'd expect to see that if Achievement is high, then so is Meaning & Purpose (and vice versa). It's therefore unsurprising that Meaning & Purpose is also less well met on average for Stowmarket, with a score of 0.63, showing that respondents may not always be feeling purposeful about their actions. Contributing towards something bigger than ourselves can enable us to better meet our Need for Meaning & Purpose, and this is reflected by the fact that those working in the VCSE sector are meeting their Need for Meaning & Purpose statistically significantly better than the Stowmarket average, with an average score of 2.31.

As with the other Needs in this group, **Value** is also not well met on average, at 0.87. Value indicates how much people feel others appreciate them for their actions and contributions. Therefore, since Stowmarket isn't meeting this Need well on average, this suggests that individuals may not be feeling as valued for their actions and contributions as they would like. **Status**, on the other hand, tells us how much people feel other appreciate and respect them as a person. Status is significantly less well met than Value, with an average score of 0.34. This shows that the appreciation and value people may at times feel for their actions doesn't always translate to them feeling valued as a person.

Stowmarket (n526) ■ Suffolk Average (n8,694)
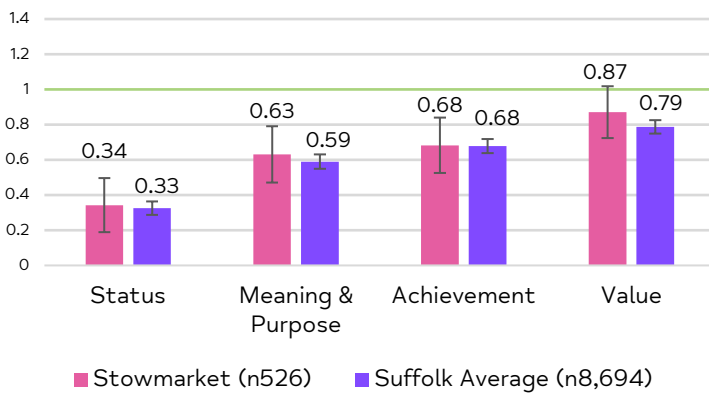
Although at first glance Stowmarket appears to be meeting its Needs for Achievement and Value better than Suffolk on average, since the confidence intervals overlap once again, we can't say with confidence that these differences are statically significant. Status is the least well met Need out of the Achievement and Value Needs group, and this is reflected in the comments we received from respondents as well, which showed that individuals sometimes feel invisible or unappreciated by those around them. There were also comments around being moved around waiting lists for different services, making people feel forgotten. Respondents' work situations is also likely impacting upon their ability to meet this Need, as it was among the biggest barriers selected by Stowmarket residents. Looking at economic status, again we can see that those unable to work are meeting this Need the least well, with an average of -0.83.

Barriers

Of the respondents who chose to identify barriers to meeting their Need for Status:

- 52% (n55) stated that their physical or mental health prevented them from meeting this Need

- 48% (n51) identified their work situation as an obstacle

- 34% (n36) attributed not meeting this Need well due to their financial situation

Supporting factors

Of the respondents who chose to identify supporting factors to meeting their Need for Status:

- 68% (n23) felt supported to meet this Need due to their work situation

- 59% (n20) saw their relationships as a supporting factor

- 29% (n10) believed that their home or day-to-day environments enabled them to meet this Need well

What helps people's wellbeing?

"I am fortunate to have a job I love that supports vulnerable adults in the communities I work across; this brings both personal and professional satisfaction."

"I love Suffolk Mind's goal to find a unified language to discuss mental health and wellbeing."

"I am very grateful I've been able to return to work after 11 months maternity leave. Returning to work I have noticed a huge improvement in my mental health and well being."

What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

"The barrier is there is limited opportunity to speak to someone related to mental health work."

"Working in primary education is tough, tougher than its ever been."

"There is no help for adults with autism and no long term help for depression, it's all a quick fix."

What would people like to see done to improve wellbeing?

"Cancer support groups."

"Eating disorder support available. It's only available if low bmi. Its definitely not available for those who work and do shifts."
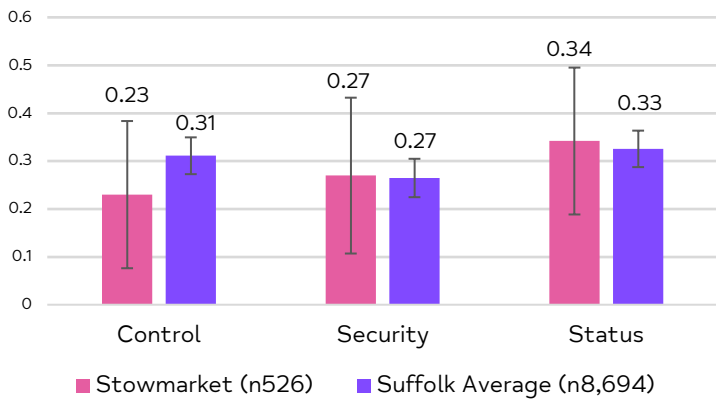
SECURITY   CONTROL   PRIVACY
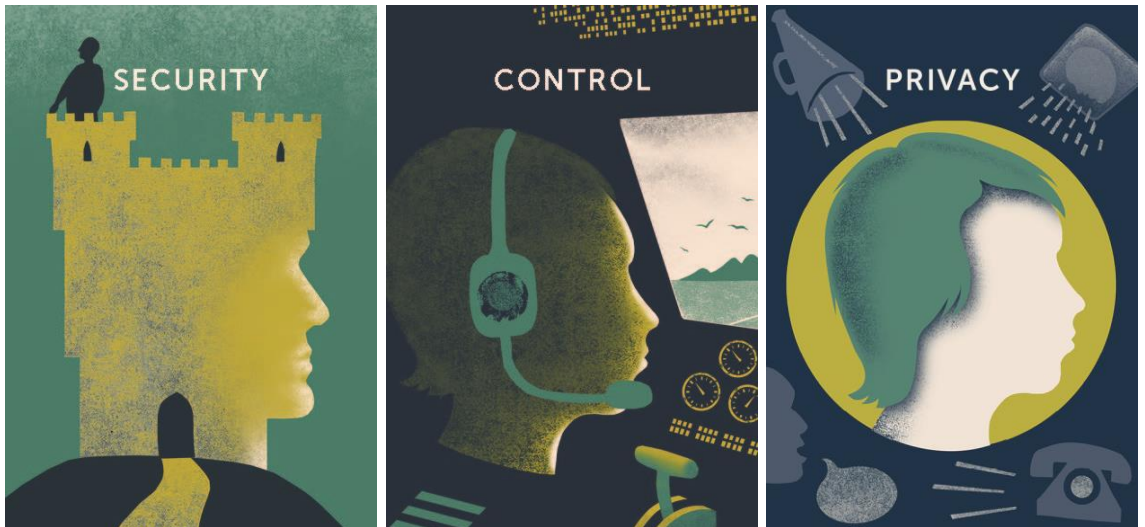
Security and Control Needs

Security is the third least met emotional Need on average for Stowmarket, with a score of 0.27 (on a scale of -3 to 3). This shows that individuals may not always be feeling as safe and secure in their lives as they would like to. The biggest barriers to Stowmarket meeting its Need for Security is individuals' physical or mental health, the cost of living, and people's work situations. Respondents commented that affordable services not being available outside of working hours makes them feel there isn't anything they can access.

Control is another less well met Need on average, being the second least well met emotional Need and having an average score of 0.23. This suggests that respondents do not feel like they have enough control over their lives or their surroundings. As with Security, financial concerns, work situations and current economic uncertainty are presenting real obstacles to individuals meeting their Need for Control. Looking at comments from respondents, there are a number telling us that the cost of living is a significant stressor, with some residents stating that money worries are significantly impacting upon their mental health. Security and Control were therefore Needs that were focused on during action planning.

On the other hand, **Privacy** is a well met Need on average. This is positive, since it reflects the fact that respondents feel able to take time to themselves when they need it – with the top supporting factor for Stowmarket respondents meeting this Need well being people's home environments.

Stowmarket (n526) Suffolk Average (n8,694)

Chart data:
- Control: 0.23, 0.31
- Security: 0.27, 0.27
- Status: 0.34, 0.33

Control is the **second least** met emotional Need

Across both the Stowmarket and Suffolk-wide data, those on the lowest household incomes are meeting their Need for Control the least well on average, compared with those from higher income households. Those with household incomes below £17,000 were meeting their Need for Control considerably worse than those with household incomes over £40,000, with average scores of -0.23 and 0.50 respectively. Respondents who are unable to work and unemployed are also meeting their Need for Control the least well out of all economic statuses, with average scores of -1.22 and -0.32, respectively, on average. This is also reflected in the comments from Stowmarket respondents, where people reported feeling worried about being unemployed and not having enough money with rising costs.

Barriers

Of the respondents who chose to identify barriers to meeting their Need for Control:

• 64% (n70) view their physical or mental health as a barrier

• 39% (n42) identified their work situation as an obstacle

• 33% (n36) believed their relationships prevent them from meeting this Need

Supporting factors

Of the respondents who chose to identify supporting factors to meeting their Need for Control:

• 55% (n22) feel their day-to-day or home environments enable them to feel in control of their lives

• 40% (n16) believe their work situation supports them to meet this Need

• 38% (n15) view their access to nature or their hobbies and interests as supporting factors

What helps people's wellbeing?

"Anglia health care trust have been superb in supporting me with my BPD"

"What works for me is access to support via charities on the internet"

What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

"The current cost of living crisis is having a detrimental effect on my mental health. I am terrified that I will not be able to pay my mortgage"

"The primary cause of my difficulties is being unemployed and having no money"

"Cost of living, stress of prices. Unable to live independently due to this."

What would people like to see done to improve wellbeing?

"Having a child with a disability is tough and time consuming. More understanding around this would be good – meeting with other parents etc "

"I think more accessible counselling should be made available."
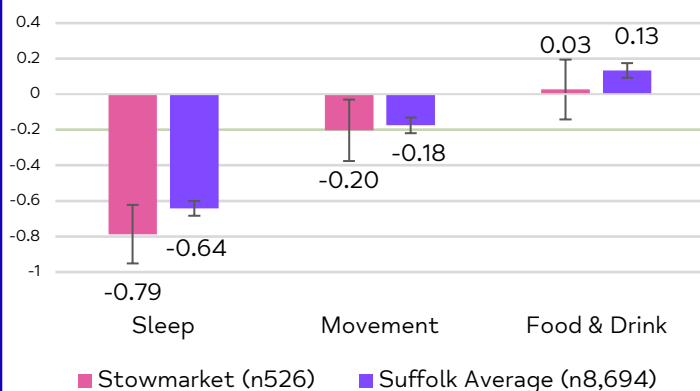
SLEEP

MOVEMENT

FOOD & DRINK
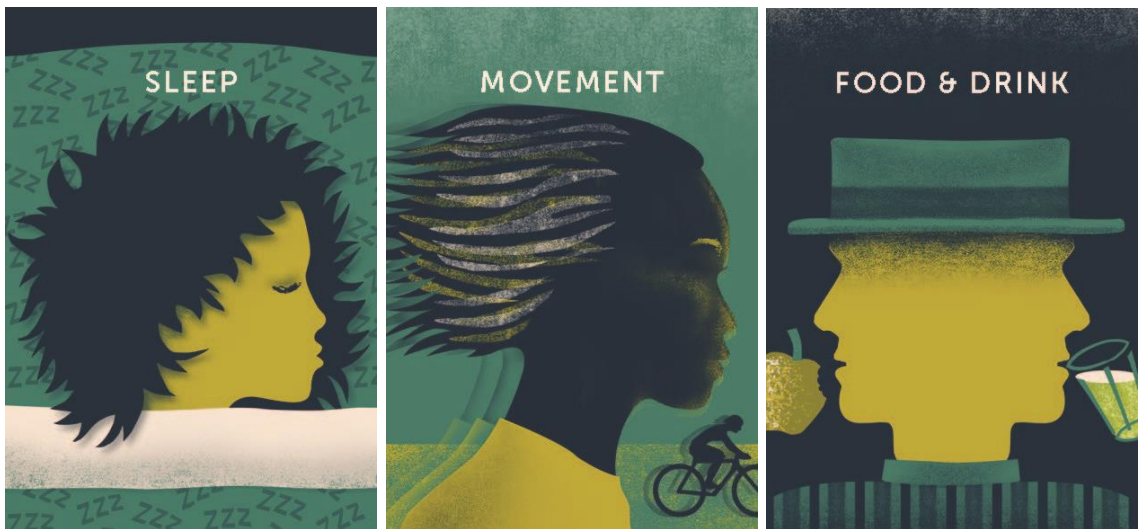
Physical Needs

As for the physical Needs, it can seem like these aren't as connected to wellbeing as some of our emotional Needs. However, there are many connections between our emotional Needs and physical Needs, and what happens during the waking day can have a significant impact on our physical Needs, even **Sleep**.

We can see that none of the three physical Needs are well met on average among Stowmarket respondents, with Sleep being the worst met Need on average. The average score for Sleep is -0.79, and whilst there doesn't always feel like there is a huge amount we can do to improve our sleep, our Stowmarket data shows that there is a strong positive correlation between Sleep and the Need for Control. Therefore, if someone's worrying about the control they have over their finances, for example, this may impact upon the quality of their sleep. Hence, if we make changes to better meet people's Need for Control, we may see that their Need for Sleep also becomes better met. Sleep can also be a good indicator of when people are starting to move down the mental health continuum, so it is important to keep an eye on.

Movement and **Food & Drink** are also not well met on average, having average scores of -0.20 and 0.03, respectively. These two Needs are strongly positively correlated with each other, which implies that, for Stowmarket respondents, feeling more able to get a balance of energy, nutrition and pleasure from their diet could help them feel that they are doing enough physical activity, and vice versa. Food & Drink is also strongly positively correlated to the Need for Control within the Stowmarket data, so enabling residents to feel more in control of their lives and surroundings may, in turn, support them to feel better able to get a balance of energy, nutrition and pleasure from their diet.

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Chart values: Sleep — Stowmarket -0.79, Suffolk Average -0.64; Movement — Stowmarket -0.20, Suffolk Average -0.18; Food & Drink — Stowmarket 0.03, Suffolk Average 0.13.

■ Stowmarket (n526)   ■ Suffolk Average (n8,694)

All three Physical Needs are unmet

The three physical Needs are all less well met Needs amongst Stowmarket respondents on average. People's financial situations and work situations are likely impacting upon their ability to meet these Needs well, with these being identified among the top barriers by those not meeting their Needs. Some comments from respondents have been criticising the lack of opportunities to stay active in Stowmarket. When asked what Stowmarket could do to improve wellbeing, respondents asked for more outdoor activities for working people – such as group walks, to get people out and about while also addressing feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Barriers

Of the respondents who chose to identify barriers:

- 63% (n107) viewed their physical or mental health as a barrier to Sleep, while 58% (n90) identified this as barrier to Movement and 55% (n62) for Food & Drink

- 34% (n38) of people voiced that the cost of living crisis was preventing them from meeting their Need for Food & Drink

- 39% (n60) viewed their work situation as a barrier to their Need for Movement

- 34% (n58) identified their work situation as being an obstacle to feeling well rested after sleep

Supporting factors

Of the respondents who chose to identify supporting factors:

- 62% (n13) viewed their home environment as a supporting factor for Sleep

- 56% (n29) attributed meeting their Need for Food & Drink well to their home environments

- 64% (n25) of respondents saw their hobbies and interests as supporting factors for Movement

What helps people's wellbeing?

"My wellbeing is helped by having a local gym which is affordable."

"Strong family relationships and friends. Hobbies such as yoga, playing in a wind band and long-distance walks."

"Due to lack of energy and tiredness, not travelling to work is a huge benefit and working from home means I have more time to get out for walks."

What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

"I am considering moving because, apart from cost of living, all main shops now require transport. Almost all buses have been stopped in the area I live in."

"Access to more outside places e.g. woods and forests. As I have to use mobility scooter or wheelchair, I haven't found anywhere that I can access this."

What would people like to see done to improve wellbeing?

"Free community based, local activity for me and my family, to connect with other people without cost being a worry."

"Reduction of noisy vehicles, for cleaner air & quieter environment."

Who are the most well groups on average?
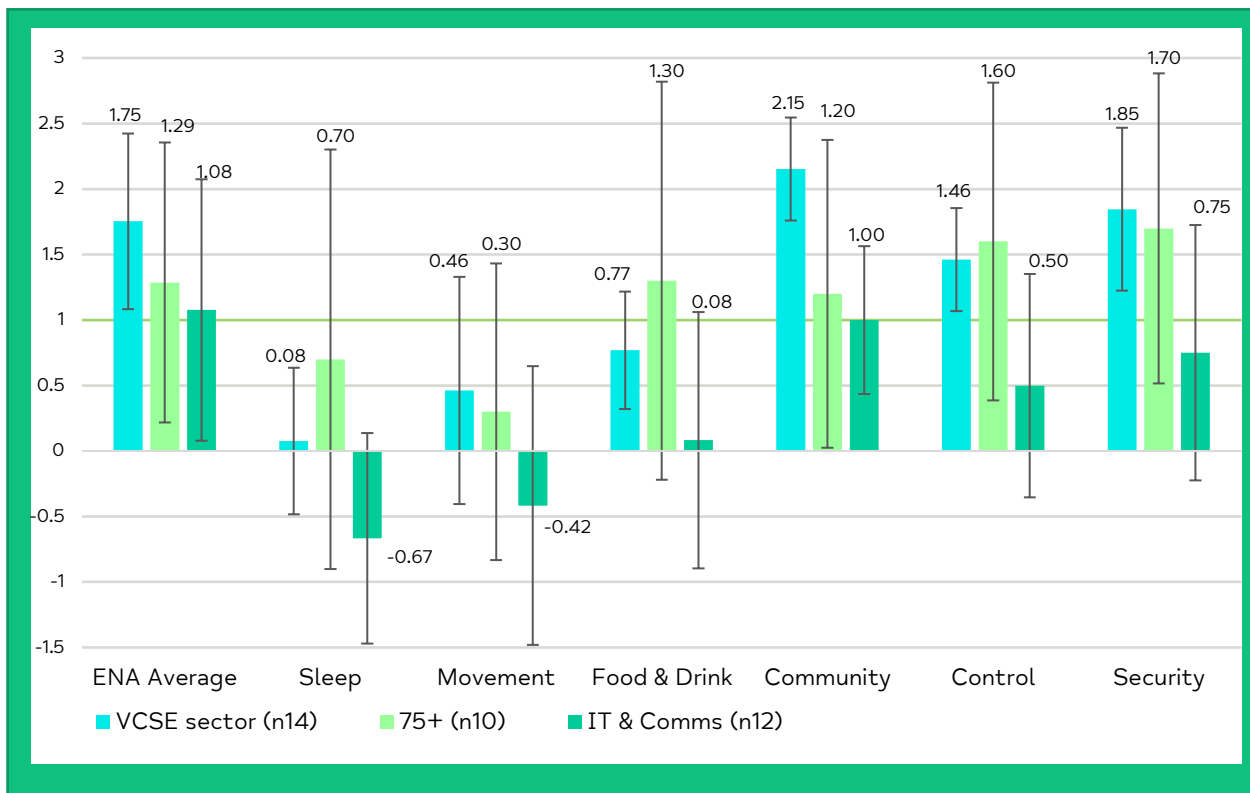
The graph above focuses on the most well met Needs amongst Stowmarket respondents on average. To view the full graph, with each Need shown, see Appendix 3.

Drawing on the demographic information we collect alongside the ENA, we can identify which demographic groups are notably more or less well than the average respondent. Here, we have the demographic groups with the highest average scores among Stowmarket respondents.*

Those who work in the VCSE sector have the highest wellbeing overall, with a score of 1.75 (on a scale of -3 to 3). This is followed by those who are over 75 years of age, who have an average score of 1.29, and those in the IT and Communications sector, with a score of 1.08 on average. However, only those working in the VCSE sector are meeting their Needs, on average, statistically significantly better than the Stowmarket average.

Those working in the VCSE sector are meeting 12 of the 15 Needs well on average, compared with the Stowmarket average of 4 of 15. However, as the above graph demonstrates, even the most well groups aren't meeting some of the average least met Needs well. Sleep and Movement are both less well met by these groups. However, these groups are meeting some of these Needs statistically significantly better than the Stowmarket average. For example, those in the VCSE sector and over 75s are meeting the Need for Security statistically significantly better than the Stowmarket average.

Community is well met by all three groups. It is particularly well met by the VCSE sector, with this being statistically significantly better than the Stowmarket average, with people's work situations being a top supporting factor for this. We have seen from the comments received from VCSE sector employees that people feel supported by those around them and feel able to support others at work – helping them to meet their Community Needs well.

Respondents who are over 75 are meeting their Need for Security statistically significantly better than the Stowmarket average. Looking at supporting factors reported, respondents have identified that their access to nature or the outdoors, and their hobbies or interests are the biggest factors enabling them to meet their Need for Security, with 80% of respondents over 75 who were meeting this Need selecting each of these options. One case study respondent said that the accessible countryside supports their mental wellbeing.

*It is worth noting that we have focused on demographic groups with a minimum of 10 respondents per group, to ensure the sample size is as representative as possible. Therefore, there may be some groups that are more or less well on average but that have been excluded from this report's analysis due to having a very small sample size.

Who are the least well groups on average?
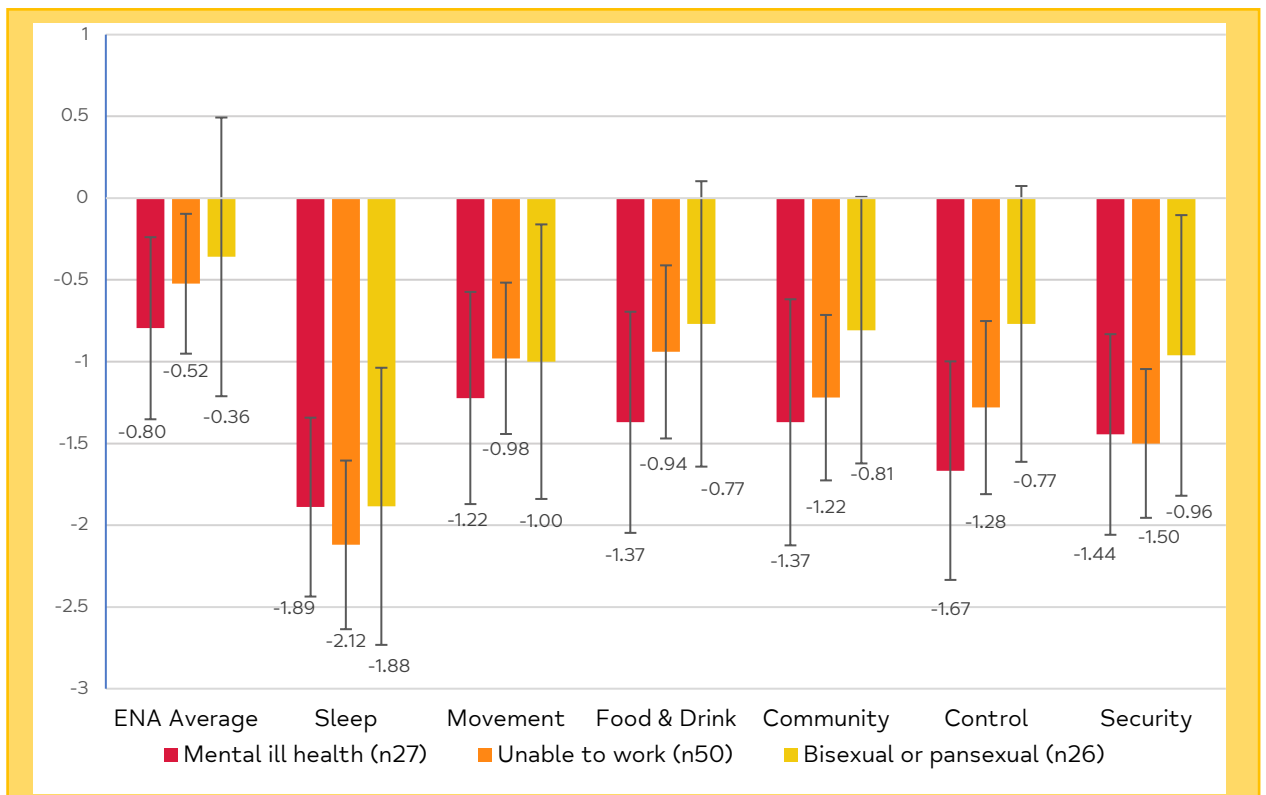
The graph above focuses on the least well met Needs amongst Stowmarket respondents on average. To view the full graph, with each Need shown, see Appendix 3.

If we look at the least well groups in Stowmarket, on average, we can see that people who have indicated that they have a mental health condition are the least well on average, with an score of -0.79 (on a scale of -3 to 3). This is followed by those with those who are unable to work (-0.52 on average) and those who are bisexual or pansexual (-0.36 on average).

All three of these least well groups are statistically significantly less well than the Stowmarket average. Those with mental health conditions and who are unable to work are also meeting all of the least met Needs (outlined in the graph above) statistically significantly less well than the Stowmarket average.

The Need for Sleep is statistically significantly less well met than the Stowmarket average for all three groups. The biggest barrier experienced by these demographic groups to them meeting their Need for Sleep, and their other physical Needs, was their physical or mental health. With the Need for Sleep being strongly positively correlated with the Need for Control, it is unsurprising that the largest barrier for Control for these groups is also their physical or mental health. There are a few comments from those with mental health conditions and those unable to work around struggling to access the support they need, and worrying about where they might be able to get support from.

If we look at Community Needs, those with mental health conditions are meeting this Need the least well on average. From the comments we've received from these individuals, they have indicated that they are getting insufficient support for their mental health that has led some to feeling isolated from their local community. Work also often contributes towards people meeting their Need for Community well, with it being a top supporting factors amongst Stowmarket respondents on average – therefore, being unable to work can present a barrier to building a community. With nearly half of our respondents with mental health conditions also being unable to work, this may be affecting their Community Needs. This is supported by the fact that amongst those with mental health conditions who are unable to work, a top barrier to Community is their work situation.

SLEEP

MOVEMENT

FOOD & DRINK

What conclusions can we draw from these results?

Our research has revealed that the Needs for Community, Security, and Control, alongside the three physical Needs, are the least well met Needs in Stowmarket on average. Therefore, targeting local interventions to better meet these Needs could help to improve wellbeing in Stowmarket.

When asked what they would change about Stowmarket, if they could change just one thing, case study respondents had a number of suggestions, including:

- Improved transport services and access

- Increase in support groups and services at appropriate times for working people

- More community events and activities

Our data and feedback collected on Stowmarket has been fed back to key individuals within Suffolk County Council and the local area. Based on our findings, discussions have now begun regarding the types of interventions that could be implemented to improve wellbeing in Stowmarket.

Appendix 1

Purpose of Report

Suffolk Mind and Suffolk County Council have embarked on an ambitious project to gain more insight into the mental health of Suffolk's population. The insight gained will be used to guide decision-making by Suffolk County Council on the inventions needed to improve public mental health. This research was conducted using our validated mental health measure, the Emotional Needs Audit (ENA), which has been distributed widely online, on foot by trained data collectors, and by mail drop to Suffolk residents' homes.

As well as analysing Suffolk-wide wellbeing, this research has paid particular attention to groups and locations in Suffolk that have worse mental health outcomes, according to pre-existing data gathered by Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Mind. This report focuses on the average wellbeing of those in Stowmarket, throughout this report defined by the IP14 postcode area. Based on data gathered from 13th June 2022 to 3rd April 2023. This data is compared with the Suffolk-wide average, which includes all responses from those who identified that they live in the county of Suffolk and completed the ENA between 13th June 2022 and 8th March 2023.
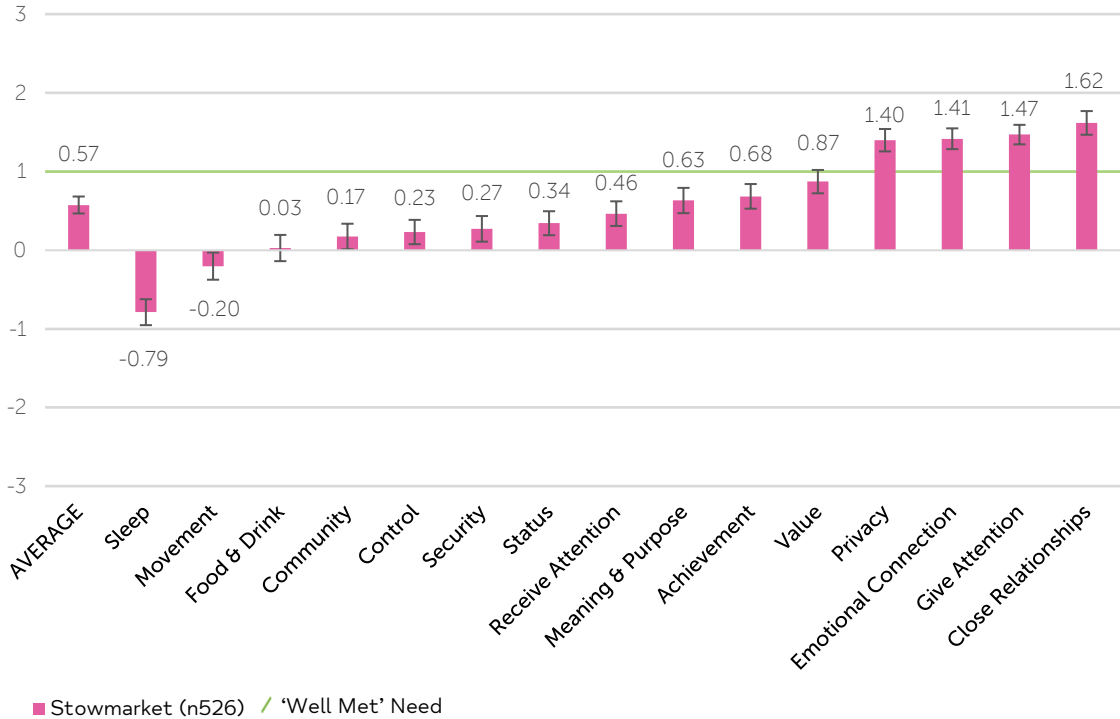
Methodology

This research is based on the Emotional Needs and Resources approach, which outlines the 12 innate Emotional Needs that we must meet, in balance, in order to be mentally well. This approach can be used to provide a useful direction to help improve mental wellbeing, allowing us to identify when a specific Need is not met and enabling us to make changes to meet that Need and improve wellbeing. This idea applies to individuals, but also to groups of people, including samples of the population. Looking at which Needs are generally unmet in a sample population can help identify areas to work on to make Suffolk a healthier and happier place to live. If you'd like more explanation on each of the Emotional Needs, see the Suffolk Mind website.

In the ENA, we ask 15 questions that encompass all elements of the 12 Needs, containing both emotional and physical aspects. These are scored on a scale from -3 (not at all met) to +3 (very well met). We also ask respondents to identify any environmental barriers that may prevent them from meeting their Needs, as well as any factors that support them to meet Needs well. We also collected data on demographic factors, such as age and gender identity, to determine how these factors affect wellbeing. Respondents were given the opportunity to participate in case studies to support this research and allow us to gain a deeper understanding of factors that may prevent or enable individuals to meet their Needs.

Appendix 2 – Overall Wellbeing Graphs

Average wellbeing amongst those in Stowmarket:

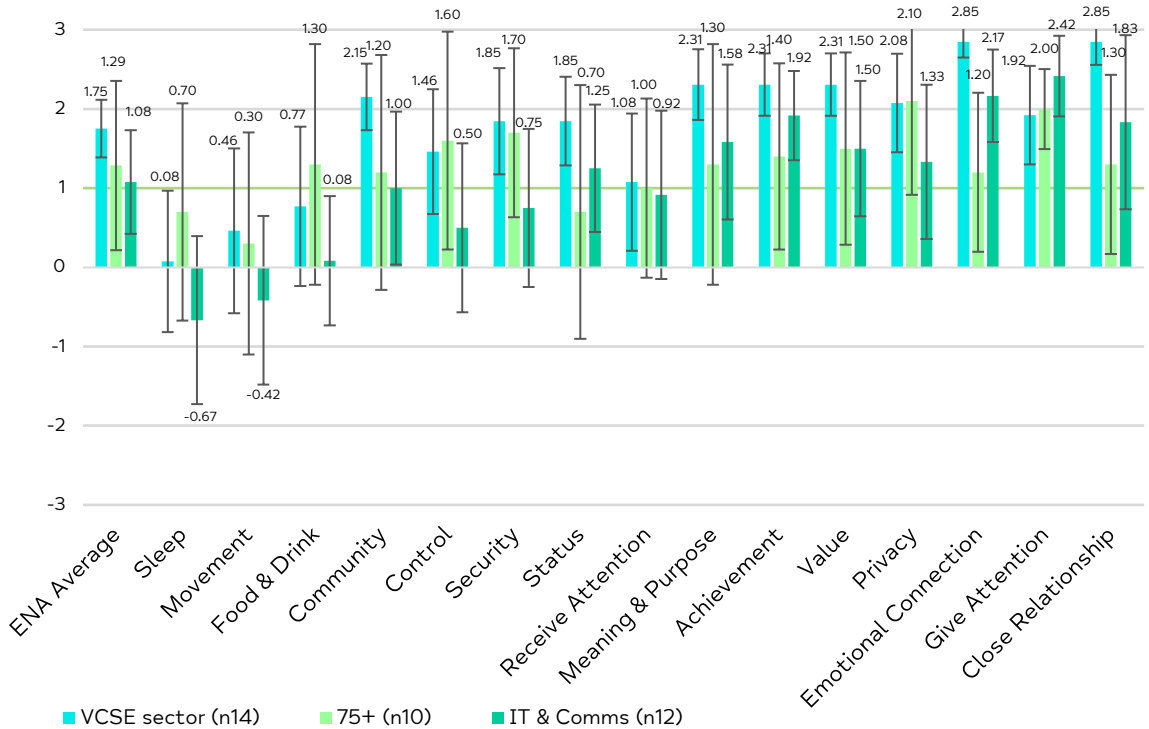Values shown above bars: AVERAGE 0.57, Sleep -0.79, Movement -0.20, Food & Drink 0.03, Community 0.17, Control 0.23, Security 0.27, Status 0.34, Receive Attention 0.46, Meaning & Purpose 0.63, Achievement 0.68, Value 0.87, Privacy 1.40, Emotional Connection 1.41, Give Attention 1.47, Close Relationships 1.62

■ Stowmarket (n526) ╱ 'Well Met' Need

Average wellbeing compared with the Suffolk average:

Stowmarket values: AVERAGE 0.57, Sleep -0.79, Movement -0.20, Food & Drink 0.03, Community 0.17, Control 0.23, Security 0.27, Status 0.34, Receive Attention 0.46, Meaning & Purpose 0.63, Achievement 0.68, Value 0.87, Privacy 1.40, Emotional Connection 1.41, Give Attention 1.47, Close Relationships 1.62

Suffolk Average values: AVERAGE 0.57, Sleep -0.64, Movement -0.18, Food & Drink 0.13, Community 0.02, Control 0.31, Security 0.27, Status 0.33, Receive Attention 0.49, Meaning & Purpose 0.59, Achievement 0.68, Value 0.79, Privacy 1.48, Emotional Connection 1.29, Give Attention 1.48, Close Relationships 1.47

■ Stowmarket (n526) ■ Suffolk Average (n8,694) ╱ 'Well Met' Need

Appendix 3 – Most & Least Well Graphs

The most well groups on average:

Legend: VCSE sector (n14), 75+ (n10), IT & Comms (n12)

Categories: ENA Average, Sleep, Movement, Food & Drink, Community, Control, Security, Status, Receive Attention, Meaning & Purpose, Achievement, Value, Privacy, Emotional Connection, Give Attention, Close Relationship

The least well groups on average:

Legend: Mental ill health (n27), Unable to work (n50), Bisexual or pansexual (n26)

Categories: ENA Average, Sleep, Movement, Food & Drink, Community, Control, Security, Status, Receive Attention, Meaning & Purpose, Achievement, Value, Privacy, Emotional Connection, Give Attention, Close Relationship