Wellbeing in Brandon & Mildenhall

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

August 2023

Only 37% of Brandon & Mildenhall 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 **work in the Education sector** are the most well demographic group on average

Brandon & Mildenhall's **physical and mental health** is the biggest barrier to wellbeing

Those with **mental ill-health diagnoses** are the demographic group meeting Needs the least well on average

51% don't feel they have enough of a sense of security

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 36.72% of respondents in Brandon & Mildenhall* are meeting their Needs well overall. The average score is 0.45 (on a scale of -3 to 3), and respondents are meeting 4 out of the 15 Needs well on average.

Alongside the three physical Needs, there are three emotional Needs that are particularly less well met amongst Brandon & Mildenhall on average, and that could therefore benefit from targeted interventions to better support residents to meet these Needs.

These are:

1. **Community**

    63% of Brandon & Mildenhall respondents are not meeting this Need well**

    The biggest barrier to this Need being met?

    Respondents' physical or mental health

    The biggest supporting factor?

    People's relationships and community involvement

2. **Status**

    57% of respondents are not meeting this Need well

    The biggest barrier to this Need being met?

    Respondents' physical or mental health

    The biggest supporting factor?

    People's relationships

3. **Security**

    51% of respondents are not meeting this Need well

    The biggest barrier to this Need being met?

    Respondents' physical or mental health

    The biggest supporting factor?

    People's relationships

* Throughout this report 'Brandon & Mildenhall' refers to responses received from residents living in the following postcode areas: IP27 (Brandon) and IP28 (Mildenhall).

** 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

4. Physical Needs

73% of respondents are not meeting their Need for **Sleep** well

64% are not meeting their Need for **Movement** well

60% are not meeting their Need for **Food & Drink** well

The biggest barrier to these Needs being met?

Respondents' physical or mental health

The biggest supporting factors?

People's home environments, their day-to-day environments, their hobbies or interests, and their access to the outdoors

Some groups of people within Brandon & Mildenhall are notably more or less well than the average. Those who work in the Education sector are the most well group on average, meeting 9 of the 15 Needs well on average.

Those meeting their Needs least well on average are those who have mental ill-health diagnoses. This group is not meeting any of their Needs well, on average.

Engagement from Brandon & Mildenhall residents

We received 335 responses from those living in Brandon & Mildenhall from 13th June 2022 to 7th August 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.

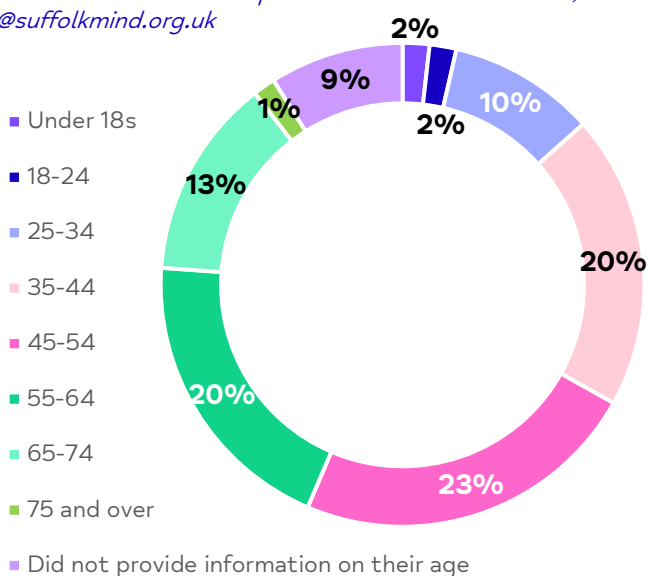## Response rates by gender:
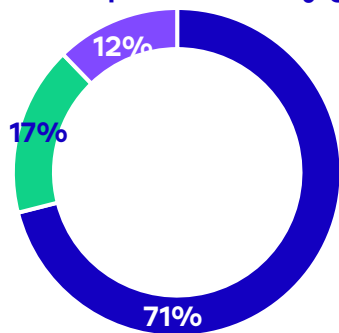
- 71% of respondents were women (including trans women)

- 17% were men (including trans men)

- 12% 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 Brandon & Mildenhall is slightly lower than women's (average overall score of 0.38 for men, compared with 0.48 for women – 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 women is over 4 times larger than is for men.

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 aged between 35 and 64 years old. Just 1% of respondents were over 75 years old, which also happens to be our most well age group on average. It's therefore worth bearing in mind that the fewer responses we have for a group, the less reliable the conclusions we're drawing are.

Legend:
- Under 18s
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75 and over
- Did not provide information on their age

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 Brandon & Mildenhall
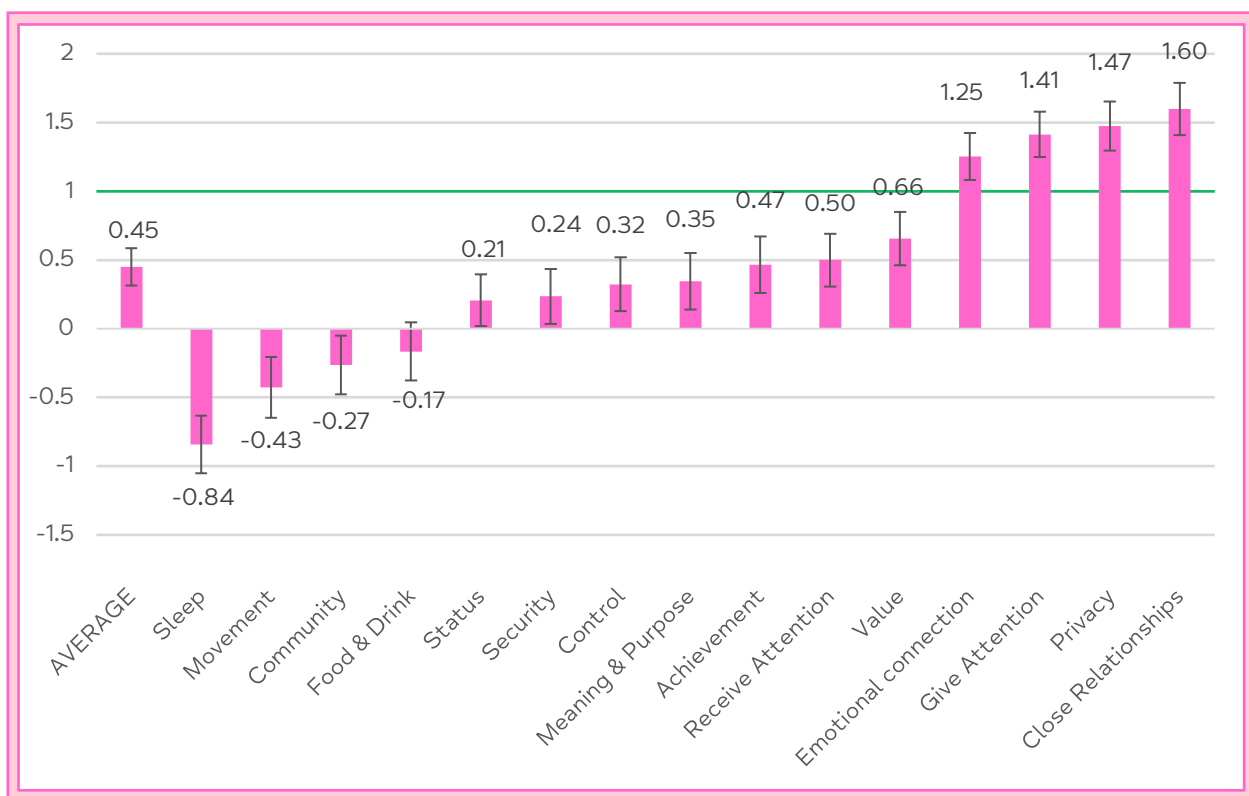
Here we have Brandon & Mildenhall's average results from the Emotional Needs Audit, gathered between 13th June 2022 and 7th August 2023. The Emotional Needs are along the bottom on the x axis, arranged from least to best met on average from left to right, with the average of all Needs combined on the 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 -1.5 and 2 (a view of the results on the full scale can be found in Appendix 2).
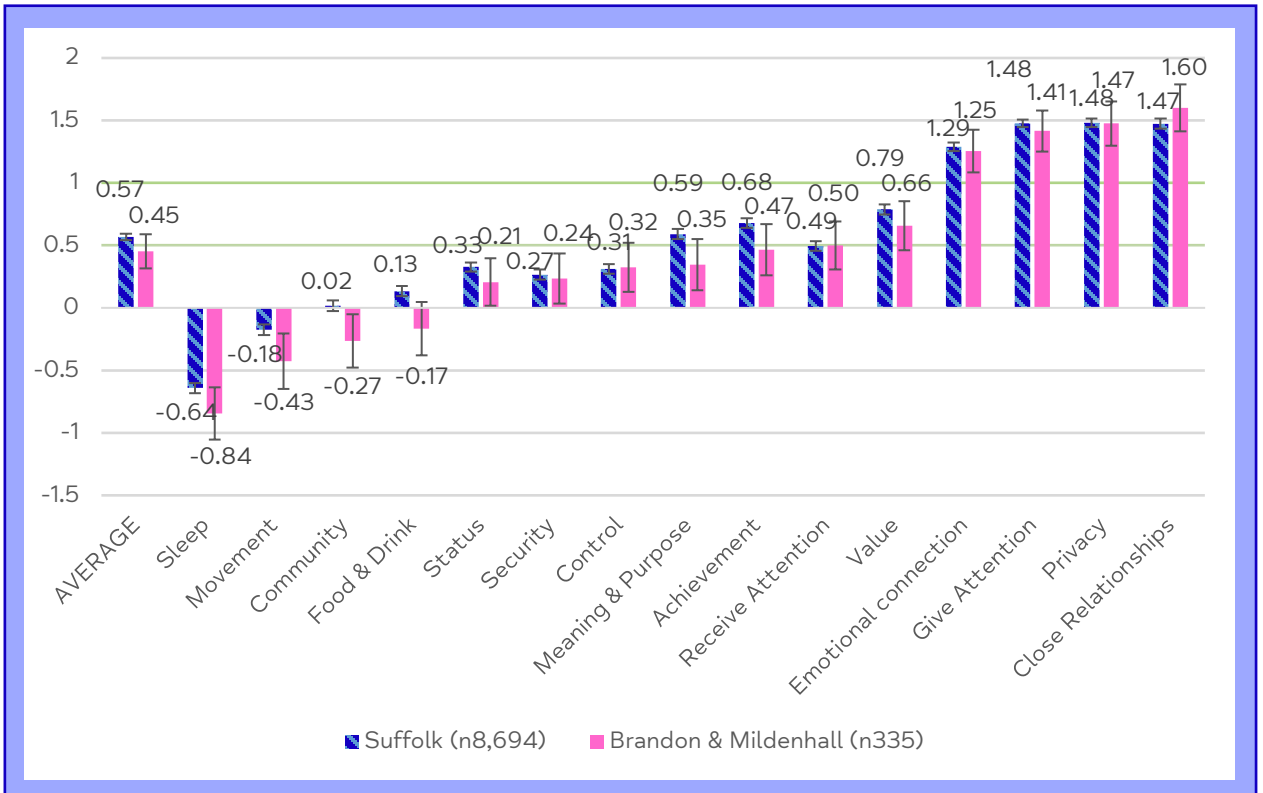
The error bars indicate the values we would expect our averages to fall within if we repeated this research. We used a 95% confidence interval; therefore, we can be 95% certain that the averages would fall within these ranges, if we were to collect data on the wellbeing of those living in Brandon & Mildenhall 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 Brandon & Mildenhall on average, with an overall average score of 0.45. 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 36.72% of Brandon & Mildenhall respondents (or 123 out of 335 respondents) are meeting their Needs well overall. Therefore, just 37% are classed as being in wellbeing on the mental health continuum. This is marginally worse 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 Brandon & Mildenhall on average. Although, as we will see on the following page, the difference between average wellbeing in Brandon & Mildenhall and Suffolk as a whole is not statistically significant, our findings still allow us to prioritise Needs and interventions with the aim of further improving wellbeing in Brandon & Mildenhall.

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

How does this compare to Suffolk's average?

Bar chart legend: ▨ Suffolk (n8,694) ■ Brandon & Mildenhall (n335)

Values shown (Suffolk / Brandon & Mildenhall):
- AVERAGE: 0.57 / 0.45
- Sleep: -0.64 / -0.84
- Movement: -0.18 / -0.43
- Community: 0.02 / -0.27
- Food & Drink: 0.13 / -0.17
- Status: 0.33 / 0.21
- Security: 0.27 / 0.24
- Control: 0.32 / 0.31
- Meaning & Purpose: 0.59 / 0.35
- Achievement: 0.68 / 0.47
- Receive Attention: 0.50 / 0.49
- Value: 0.79 / 0.66
- Emotional connection: 1.29 / 1.25
- Give Attention: 1.48 / 1.41
- Privacy: 1.48 / 1.47
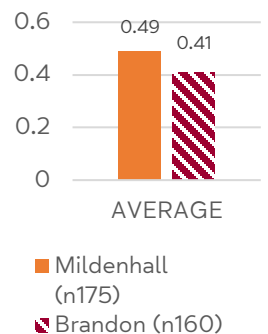- Close Relationships: 1.47 / 1.60

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 Brandon & Mildenhall 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 335 responses from Brandon & Mildenhall.

Here, we can see that the confidence intervals overlap between the Brandon & Mildenhall overall average and the Suffolk-wide overall average. Therefore, we *cannot* deduce that the difference between how well Needs are met overall amongst Brandon & Mildenhall respondents and the Suffolk-wide average is statistically significant. Only the Needs for Community and Food & Drink are statistically significantly worse met by Brandon & Mildenhall than the Suffolk-wide average.

If we look at the average scores, there is a difference of 0.12 between Brandon & Mildenhall's average and the Suffolk average. The same number of Needs are well met on average, with both groups meeting the same 4 of the 15 Needs well. We can 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 Privacy being among the best met Needs on average for both.

It's also worth acknowledging that average wellbeing between Brandon and Mildenhall is slightly different, as shown in the figure to the right. For a full graph showing the difference between the two areas, see Appendix 2. Mildenhall is meeting it's Needs very slightly better than Brandon, however, this difference is not statistically significant, and therefore we can continue to look at the two areas together as one group.

To analyse the results further, we can separate the Needs into four groups based on similarities in theme.

AVERAGE: Mildenhall 0.49 / Brandon 0.41

Legend: ■ Mildenhall (n175) ▨ Brandon (n160)

EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

COMMUNITY

ATTENTION

Interpersonal Relationship Needs

We can see that the Need for a **Close Relationship** is well met on average, with a score of 1.60 (on a scale of -3 to 3) and is the best met Need for Brandon & Mildenhall on average, 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 1.25, 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 those in Brandon & Mildenhall, with an average score of -0.27. This suggests that people aren't feeling 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.

Among the best met Needs for Brandon & Mildenhall respondents, on average, is **Giving Attention,** with a score of 1.41 making it a well met Need. For both the Brandon & Mildenhall and Suffolk as a whole, Giving Attention scores much more highly than **Receiving Attention**, on average, 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 in Brandon & Mildenhall 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 physical or mental health and their relationships.

Suffolk (n8,694)   Brandon & Mildenhall (n335)
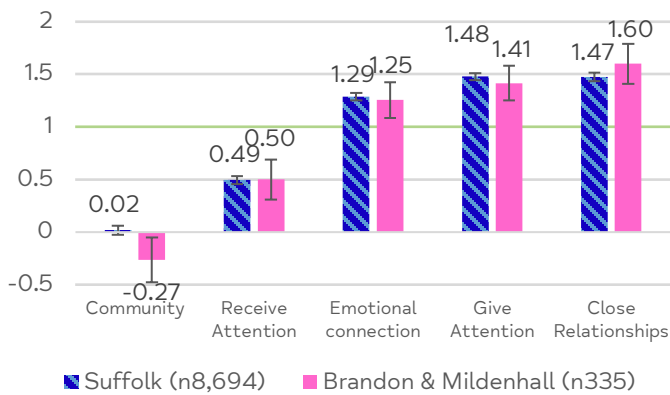
Community is the **lowest** met emotional Need

Despite these Needs being slightly more or less well met, on average, by Brandon & Mildenhall than Suffolk on average, since the confidence intervals overlap for most of the Needs, we cannot say that these differences are statistically significant. However, the confidence intervals do not overlap for the Need for Community, and we can therefore say that Brandon & Mildenhall are meeting their Need for Community statistically significantly worse than Suffolk as a whole, on average. Using feedback gained from Brandon & Mildenhall respondents and case study participants, we can hypothesise about why some Needs are less well met than others among Brandon & Mildenhall respondents.

Among the top barriers to individuals in Brandon & Mildenhall meeting their Need for Community well is their financial situation and the cost of living. Comments from respondents show us that some people feel that community activities and local facilities available are too costly. A few respondents also told us that rising costs have dampened community spirit, as people can't take care of each other anymore in the way they once could.

Geographical isolation also seems to be a factor, with respondents reporting that poor transport links mean it's difficult for them to be able to go to services they are referred to in other towns, such as Bury. This could account for part of the reason Community in Brandon & Mildenhall is lower than that in Suffolk as a whole.

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:

- 63% (n54) believed that their physical or mental health presented an obstacle
- 24% (n21) reported that their financial situation presented a barrier
- 23% (n20) viewed the cost of living as getting in the way
- 23% (n20) reported that their caring responsibilities were a barrier

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% (n13) viewed their community involvement as enabling them to meet this Need well
- 57% (n13) selected their relationships as a contributing aid
- 48% (n11) identified their hobbies or interests as supporting factors

What helps people's wellbeing?

"Friendship and good neighbourliness are important."

"I am an active member of my church community; this makes a solid, positive contribution to my life"

What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

"There isn't much to do in the village I live in, and public transport is not much use at all"

"There are more empty shops than occupied ones, and only places to go at night are pubs or restaurants"

What could be done to improve wellbeing?

"More needs to be done to help people take children out that doesn't cost the earth"

"More social groups that are affordable"

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 0.47 (on a scale of -3 to 3). Achievement is quite a bit less well met by Brandon & Mildenhall than Suffolk-wide respondents, on average; however, since the confidence intervals overlap, we can't say this difference is statistically significant. People's work situations can affect their ability to meet this Need well, with over half of respondents in Brandon & Mildenhall who weren't meeting this Need well identifying it as a barrier. Looking at results by economic status, we can see that Achievement is least well met by those who are unemployed (-1.71) or unable to work (-1.08) on average. Those on lower household incomes are also meeting this Need the least well on average, with those with a household income less than £17,000 per year having an average score of -0.43 compared to those with a household income above £40,000, with a score of 1.22 on average.

Meaning & Purpose is strongly positively correlated to Achievement within the Brandon & Mildenhall 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 for Brandon & Mildenhall on average, with a score of 0.35, showing that respondents may not always be feeling purposeful about their actions.

As with the other Needs in this group, **Value** is also not well met on average, at 0.66. Value indicates how much people feel others appreciate them for their actions and contributions. Therefore, since Brandon & Mildenhall 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 others appreciate and respect them as a person. Status is significantly less well met than Value, with an average score of 0.21. 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. Status was one of the Needs focused on in action planning.
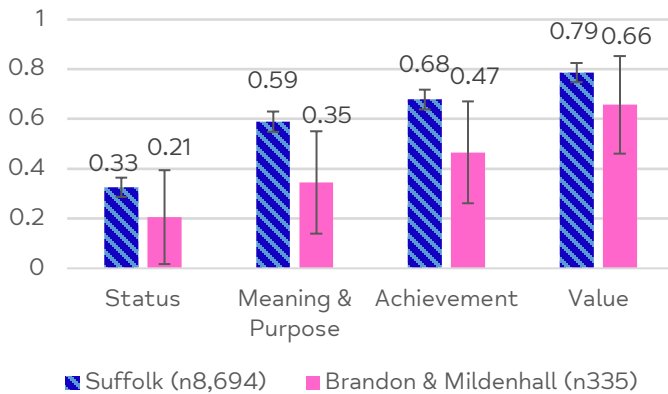
Status is one of the **lowest** met Needs

Despite differences in how well Needs are met among Brandon & Mildenhall and Suffolk-wide respondents, since the confidence intervals overlap we can't say with confidence that these differences are statically significant. As Status is the least well met Need out of the Achievement and Value Needs group, we'll take a look at factors that can prevent or enable Brandon & Mildenhall residents to meet this Need well. There is a general implication that the towns themselves don't have status, partly due to resources being put in elsewhere, like Bury, and Brandon & Mildenhall feeling like an afterthought. Work is also presenting a barrier to some, but not to others. For example, those working in public administration and defence are scoring highly for Status on average (1.78, on a scale from -3 to 3), which could be linked to the strong military presence locally. On the other hand, Status has a very low average amongst those who are unable to work (-1.33), unemployed (-1.29), and/or have mental ill-health diagnoses (-1.03). Comments relating to these mention stigma, a lack of support and not being considered enough.

Barriers

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

- 64% (n37) stated that their physical or mental health prevented them from meeting this Need

- 33% (n19) identified their relationships as an obstacle

- 31% (n18) attributed not meeting this Need well to their financial situation

Supporting factors

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

- 57% (n12) felt supported to meet this Need due to the relationships in their lives

- 48% (n10) saw their work situation as a supporting factor

- 29% (n6) believed that their home environments enabled them to meet this Need well

What helps people's wellbeing?

"The sports pavilion and millennium centre have a variety of classes and groups."

"There's a lot that people can join in with in Brandon"

What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

"Workplaces need to be more aware of how they support (or don't) people's emotional well-being."

"All the meets and events are during the day so I can never attend due to work."

"I think youngsters and more senior, 70s plus, have clubs, activities, etc, but there seems to be a gap for folks in between those ages"

What would people like to see done to improve wellbeing?

"I'd like to see more adult evening/weekend craft-based activities."

"Promotion of what activities there may already be, maybe an online directory."

"More learning/hobby classes that are affordable."
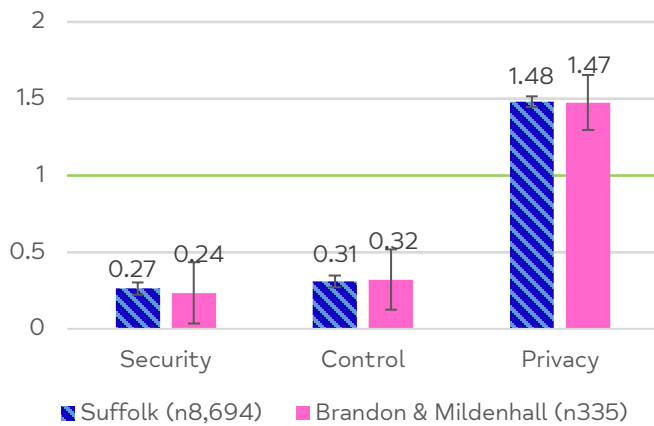
SECURITY CONTROL PRIVACY
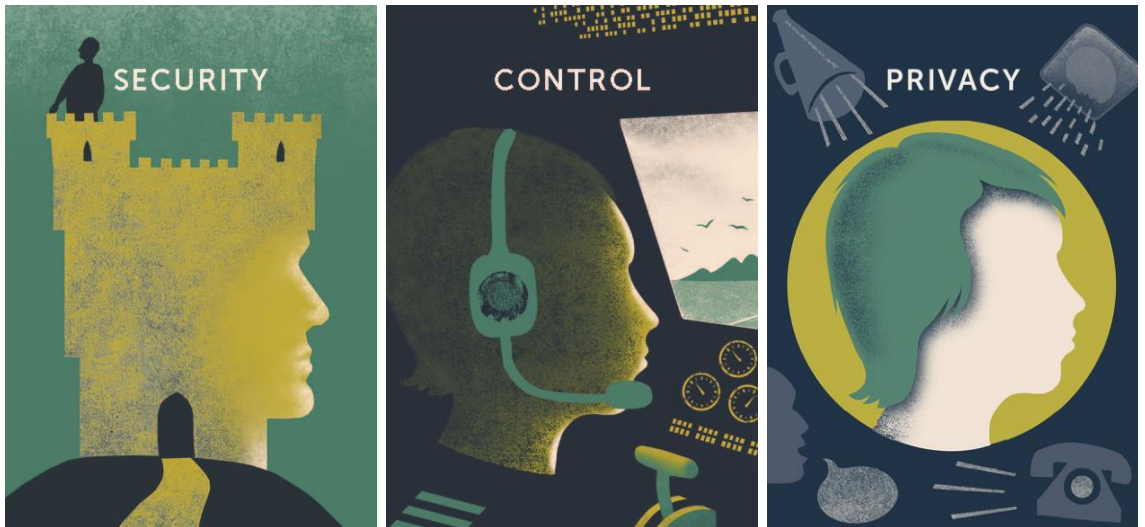
Security and Control Needs

Security is the third least met emotional Need on average for those living in Brandon & Mildenhall, with a score of 0.24 (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 barrier to Brandon & Mildenhall meeting its Need for Security is individuals' physical or mental health, with 61% of those not meeting this Need reporting this as a barrier. A lack of information on accessible resources or services was mentioned multiple times across the comments, with respondents saying that this prevents people getting early treatment and support for problems, as well as meaning that people feel like there is no support out there for them. Security was therefore a Need that was focused on during action planning.

Control is another less well met Need on average, with an average score of 0.32. This suggests that these respondents do not feel like they have enough control over their lives or their surroundings. Financial concerns and current economic uncertainty are presenting real obstacles to individuals meeting their Need for Control – with the cost of living and people's finances being among the top barriers identified by respondents not meeting this Need well.

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 Brandon & Mildenhall respondents meeting this Need well being people's home environments.

Chart showing scores for Security, Control, and Privacy:
- Security: Suffolk 0.27, Brandon & Mildenhall 0.24
- Control: Suffolk 0.31, Brandon & Mildenhall 0.32
- Privacy: Suffolk 1.48, Brandon & Mildenhall 1.47

Legend: Suffolk (n8,694), Brandon & Mildenhall (n335)

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

Across both the Brandon & Mildenhall 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. Among Brandon & Mildenhall respondents, those with household incomes below £17,000 weren't meeting their Need for Control on average (scoring -0.37). However, those with household earnings of over £40,000 per year were meeting this Need well on average (scoring 1.09). Based on the comments we've received from Brandon & Mildenhall respondents, it's evident that more financial assistance and advice would significantly improve their sense of control. Since, in this data set, Control is strongly positively correlated with Security, we can infer that making these improvements would meet respondents' Need for Security better, too.

Barriers

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

- 61% (n45) identified their physical or mental health as an obstacle
- 46% (n34) viewed the cost of living as a barrier
- 45% (n33) believed their financial situation prevents them from meeting this Need well

Supporting factors

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

- 85% (n22) felt their relationships enable them to feel safe and secure
- 73% (n19) believed their home environment supports them to meet this Need
- 38% (n10) viewed their work situation as a supporting factor
- 38% (n10) said their day-to-day environment helps them meet this Need

What helps people's wellbeing?

"Great outdoor areas – e.g. Branson Park, RSPB Lakenheath Fen – where long walks help me to relax and refresh me mentally"

"I have learned to meditate to control anxiety and stress"

What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

"There is no support offered in my area for mental health / neurodiversity"

"Lack of information on wait times for support"

"Lack of information and resources to promote good mental health in the area prevent people with problems getting early treatment and help"

What would people like to see done to improve wellbeing?

"I think more should be done to support single working parents."

"Practical help, more financial help and actual face to face, one to one therapy, as well as resources specifically for neurodivergent people"

"Home carers should be given more financial assistance"
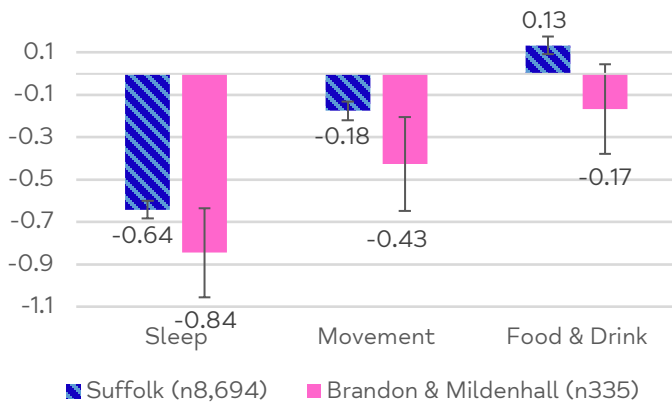
SLEEP | MOVEMENT | FOOD & DRINK
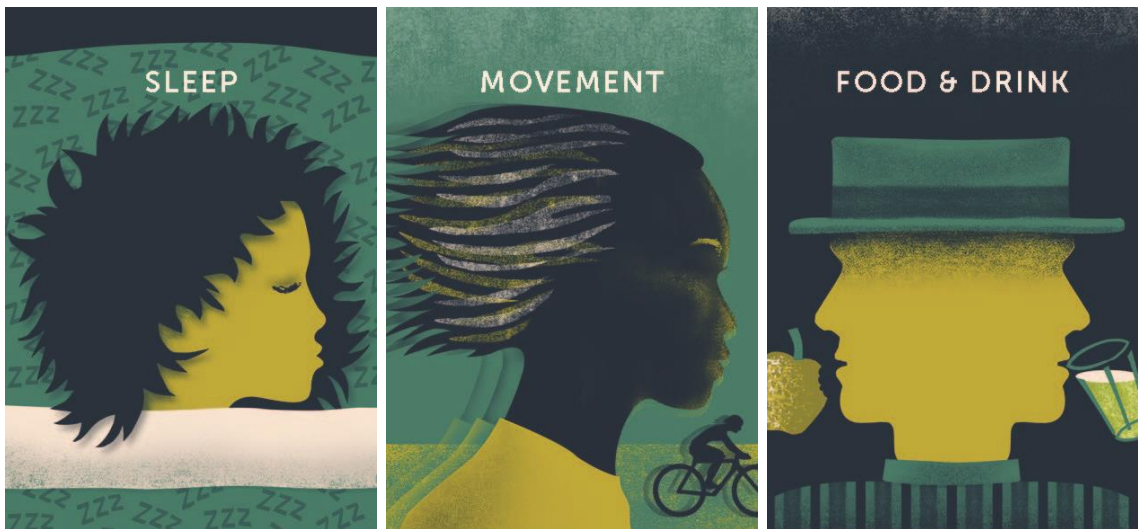
Physical Needs

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 met on average among Brandon & Mildenhall respondents, with Sleep being the worst met Need on average. The average score for Sleep is -0.84, and whilst there doesn't always feel like there is a huge amount we can do to improve our sleep, our Brandon & Mildenhall data shows that there is a strong positive correlation between Sleep and the Needs for Security and Control. Therefore, if someone is worrying about their security and 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 Needs for Security and 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 -0.43 and -0.17, respectively. These two Needs are also strongly positively correlated with each other in the Brandon & Mildenhall data, implying that it's possible that respondents who aren't getting a balance of energy, nutrition and pleasure from their diets also don't feel they're able to do enough physical activity, and vice versa. This also means that it's possible that supporting people to meet one of these Needs will also help them meet the other one too.

Chart axis values (left to right):
- 0.1, -0.1, -0.3, -0.5, -0.7, -0.9, -1.1

Data labels:
- Sleep: -0.64, -0.84
- Movement: -0.18, -0.43
- Food & Drink: 0.13, -0.17

Legend: Suffolk (n8,694), Brandon & Mildenhall (n335)

All three Physical Needs are unmet

All three physical Needs are worse met amongst Brandon & Mildenhall respondents than Suffolk-wide respondents on average. This difference is not statistically significant for Movement or Sleep, but Brandon & Mildenhall are meeting their Need for Food & Drink statistically significantly worse than Suffolk as a whole, on average. Based on comments we've received from Brandon & Mildenhall respondents, it's clear that some are struggling to eat well due to their finances, while others feel unable to join a gym due to rising costs. Residents expressed that they'd like more affordable gym facilities and exercise classes, including some asking for outdoor gym equipment to be included alongside play areas in parks.

Barriers

Of the respondents who chose to identify barriers:

- 64% (n63) viewed their physical or mental health as a barrier to Sleep, while 64% (n58) identified this as barrier to Movement and 52% (n37) for Food & Drink

- 30% (n21) of people voiced that the cost-of-living crisis was preventing them from meeting their Need for Food & Drink

- 29% (n26) viewed their work situation as a barrier to their Need for Movement

- 23% (n23) identified the cost of living or their financial situation as being an obstacle to feeling well rested after sleep

Supporting factors

Of the respondents who chose to identify supporting factors:

- 93% (n13) viewed their home environment as a supporting factor for Sleep

- 70% (n16) attributed meeting their Need for Food & Drink well to their home environments

- 55% (n16) of respondents saw their access to nature or the outdoors as supporting factors for Movement

What helps people's wellbeing?

"The countryside and natural spaces in the area give me a great deal of pleasure and promote my wellness."

"I am very fortunate to have a sports centre close and accessible."

"Outdoor swimming locally has been so crucial"

What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

"I'd like to eat more healthily but I work long hours and am too tired to cook healthier food."

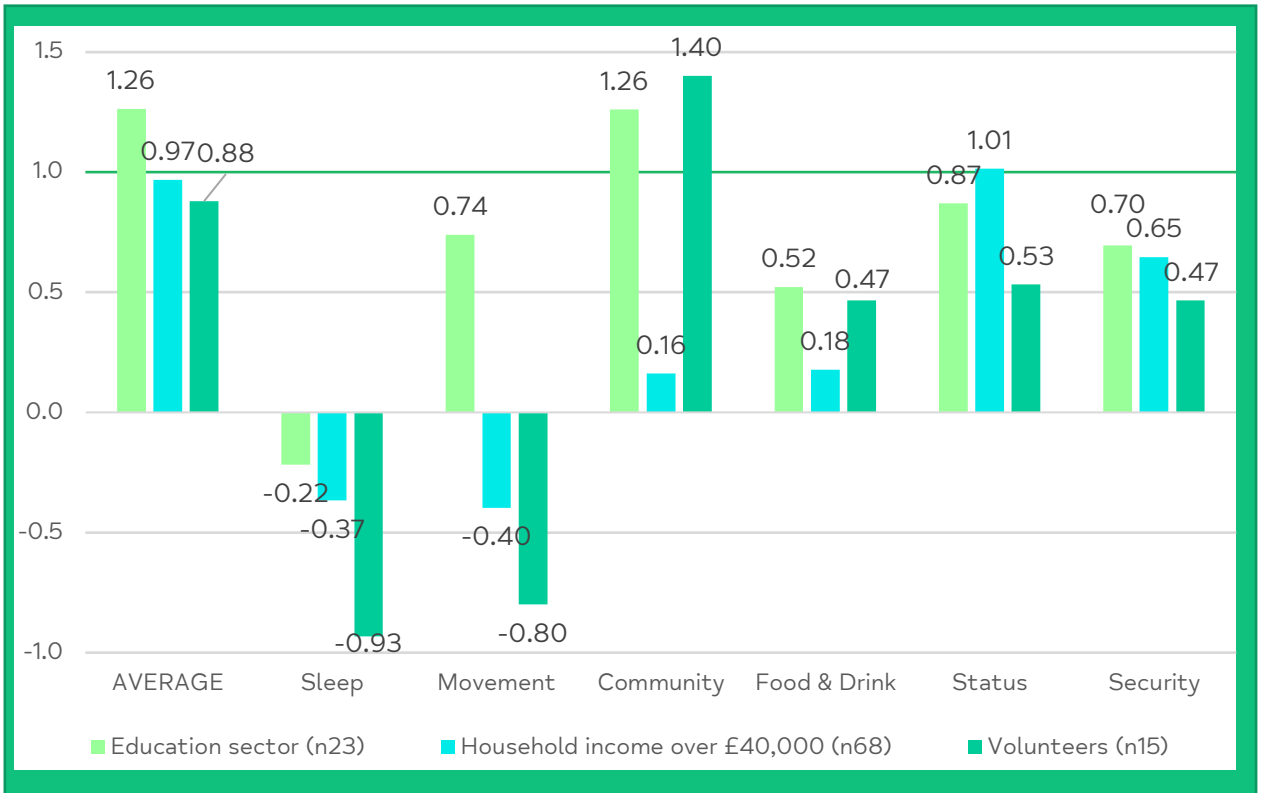"Not enough gym classes which are accessible due to times or always oversubscribed"

What would people like to see done to improve wellbeing?

"Cheaper access to gym facilities is essential"

"More accessibility to other areas that do not require a car – public transport, cycle paths and walking tracks to other villages."

"I would like a wider choice of exercise classes at the local leisure centre in the evenings"

Who are the most well groups on average?

Chart values:

	Education sector (n23)	Household income over £40,000 (n68)	Volunteers (n15)
AVERAGE	1.26	0.97	0.88
Sleep	-0.22	-0.37	-0.93
Movement	0.74	-0.40	-0.80
Community	1.26	0.16	1.40
Food & Drink	0.52	0.18	0.47
Status	0.87	1.01	0.53
Security	0.70	0.65	0.47

The graph above focuses on the least well met Needs amongst Brandon & Mildenhall 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 particularly more or less well than the average. Here, we have the demographic groups with the highest average scores among Brandon & Mildenhall respondents.* We can see that those who work in the Education sector have the highest overall average score, at 1.26 (on a scale of -3 to 3). This is followed by respondents have a household income over £40,000 a year, scoring an average of 0.97, and those who volunteer, who have an average of 0.88.

Those who work in education are meeting 9 of the 15 Needs well on average, compared with the Brandon & Mildenhall 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, Movement, Food & Drink and Security are all less well met by all three groups.
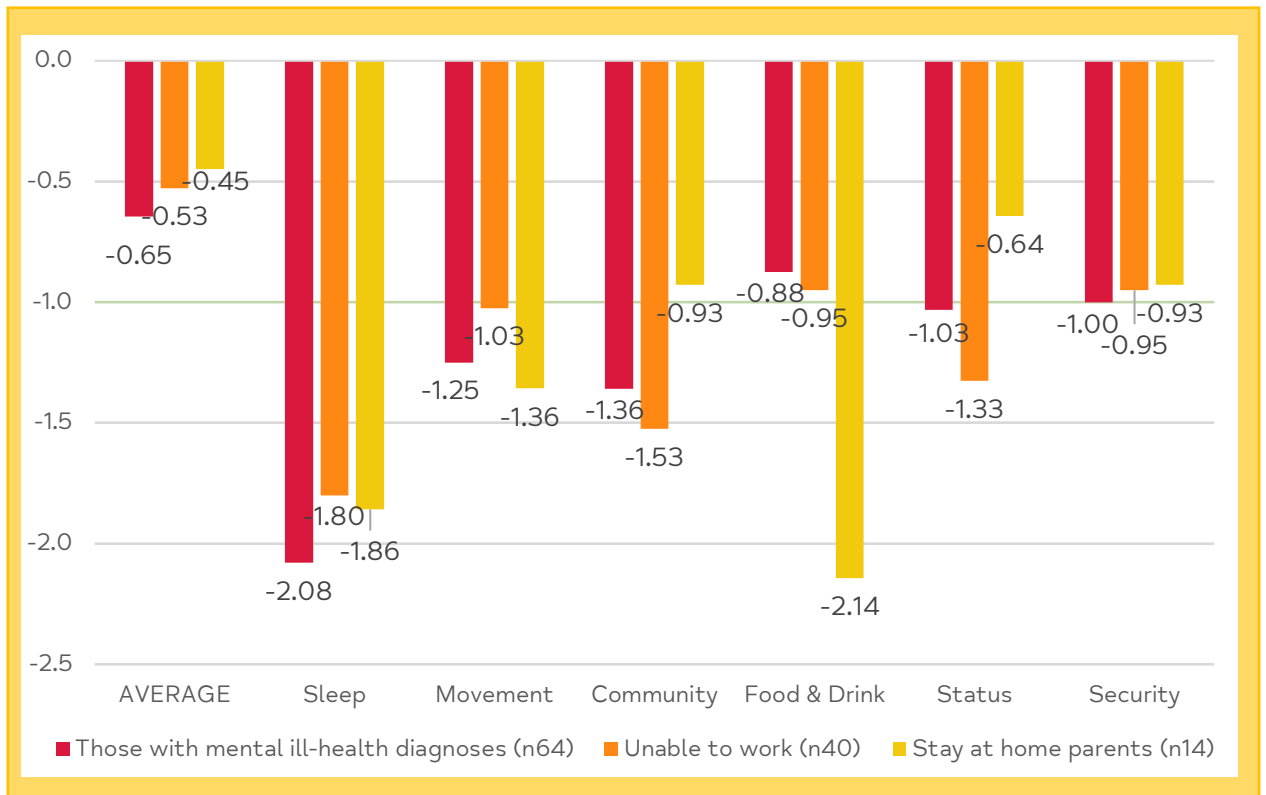
Those working in education are particularly meeting their Need for Meaning & Purpose better than any other demographic group, and 43% of those meeting this Need say their work situation supports them to meet it. It also could be that this is a naturally more sociable and connected job, which allows for the Need for Community to be met during work, where other jobs and the rural location may be a barrier for others.

Since the cost-of-living crisis and financial worries have been coming up regularly across Brandon & Mildenhall as barriers to meeting their Needs, it's perhaps unsurprising that those in the highest income bracket we measure are among the groups meeting their Needs the best.

As for volunteers, it is well documented that volunteering has a positive impact on wellbeing, with this group meeting their Needs for Community, Meaning & Purpose and Achievement particularly better than the Brandon & Mildenhall average. More activities, including volunteering opportunities, in the area could help further improve wellbeing in Brandon & Mildenhall.

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 groups meeting Needs least well on average?

Chart showing least well met Needs by group. Y-axis ranges from 0.0 to -2.5. Categories on X-axis: AVERAGE, Sleep, Movement, Community, Food & Drink, Status, Security.

Legend:
- Those with mental ill-health diagnoses (n64) — red
- Unable to work (n40) — orange
- Stay at home parents (n14) — yellow

Values:
- AVERAGE: -0.65, -0.53, -0.45
- Sleep: -2.08, -1.80, -1.86
- Movement: -1.25, -1.03, -1.36
- Community: -1.36, -1.53, -0.93
- Food & Drink: -0.88, -0.95, -2.14
- Status: -1.03, -1.33, -0.64
- Security: -1.00, -0.95, -0.93

The graph above focuses on the least well met Needs amongst Brandon & Mildenhall respondents on average. To view the full graph, with each Need shown, see Appendix 3.

If we look at the groups meeting Needs least well on average among Brandon & Mildenhall respondents, we can see that people who have mental ill-health diagnoses have the lowest scores on average, with an overall score of -0.65 (on a scale of -3 to 3). This is followed by individuals who are unable to work (either temporarily or permanently) and those who are stay-at-home parents, with average scores of -0.53 and -0.45, respectively.

There is a theme of isolation across all three of these groups, which we can partly see from the Need for Community being considerably less well met than in Brandon & Mildenhall on average.

For those with mental ill-health, from the comments we can see that some respondents are stuck in their homes due to things like agoraphobia, and others have unresolved and prolonged trauma that they've been unable to get support for. Respondents reported on disjointed and lengthy referral processes and having to wait for support and diagnoses for too long. These will all be significant barriers to respondents being able to meet their Needs.

Looking at those who are unable to work, some of these also told us that they were family carers. Whilst proud of the care they give their loved one, they feel a lack of support locally – including from their local MP. This may be contributing towards lower scores for Status, as individuals feel their concerns aren't listened to. Also linked to this was carers being given inadequate financial support, with Carer's Allowances being too stringent. This may, in turn, be leading to less security and more stress, knocking on to worsen their quality of sleep.

This theme with carers may also extend to those who are stay-at-home parents. Over a quarter of these respondents told us they cared for a child with additional needs. As well as the knock-on effects this has as mentioned above, there was also another mention of being left behind and the parents' needs not being considered enough. The Need for Food & Drink is clearly considerably worse met by stay-at-home parents compared to any other demographic group. The cost-of-living crisis and caring responsibilities were both significant barriers to this group meeting this Need, with themes in comments from parents around a lack of time and money to spend on healthy, fulfilling food. This could also suggest that those who are stay-at-home parents are having to prioritise the needs of others, like their children, over their own.

SLEEP MOVEMENT FOOD & DRINK
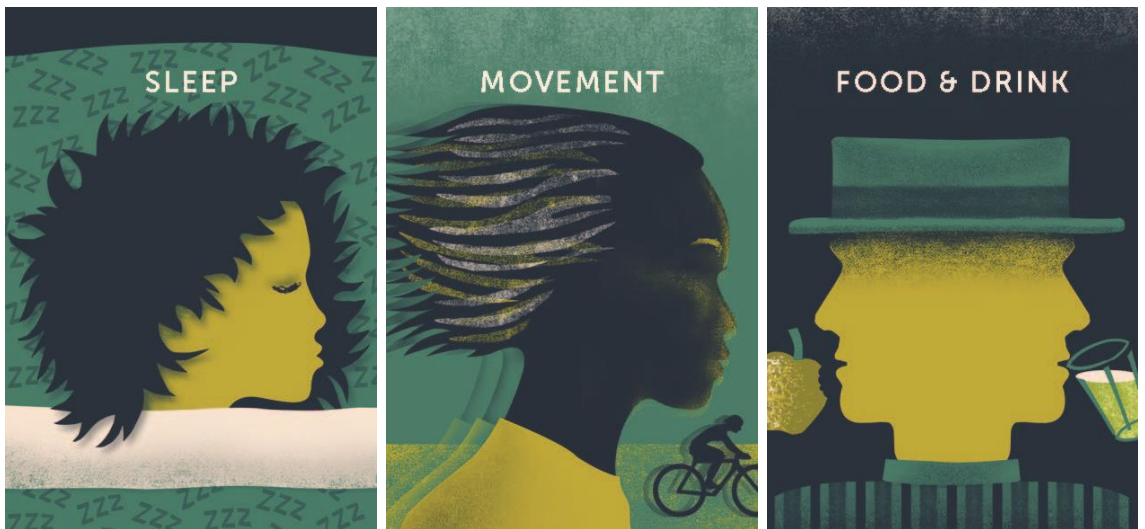
What conclusions can we draw from these results?

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

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

- Proactive rather than reactive mental health support

- Bypass to preserve the high street

- More community and upkeep of the area

- A subsidised car park scheme to encourage local people to visit different villages and utilise the facilities

- More inclusiveness for those who work or who are new to the area

- Better accessibility to information of resources across the county

- Better facilities to enable people to be active and better public transport so facilities in other towns can be accessed

Our data and feedback collected on Brandon & Mildenhall 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 Brandon & Mildenhall.

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 Brandon & Mildenhall, throughout this report defined by the postcode areas IP27 (Brandon) and IP28 (Mildenhall area), based on data gathered from 13th June 2022 to 7th August 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.
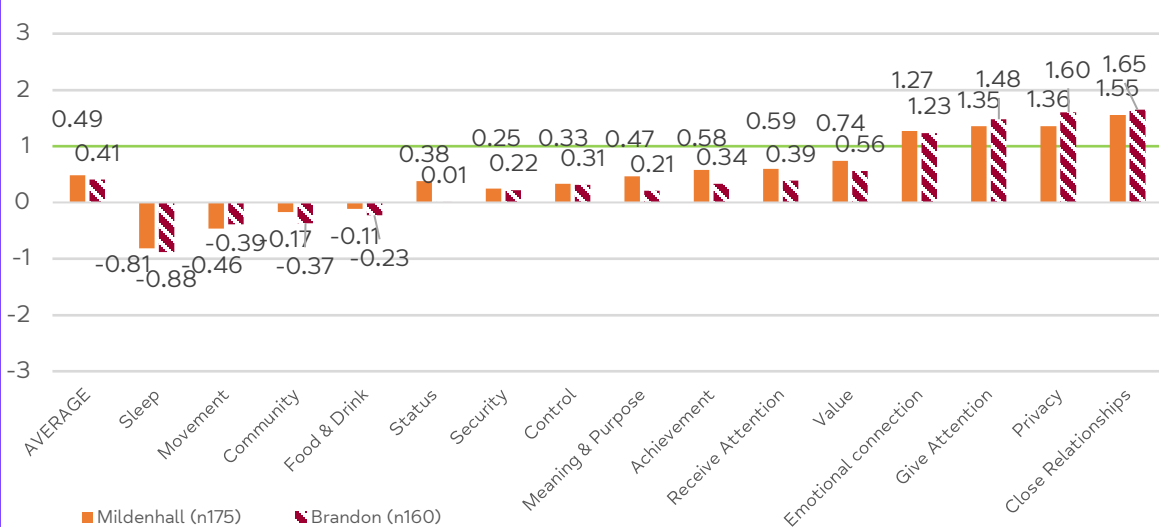
Appendix 2 – Overall Wellbeing Graphs

Average wellbeing amongst those in Brandon & Mildenhall:

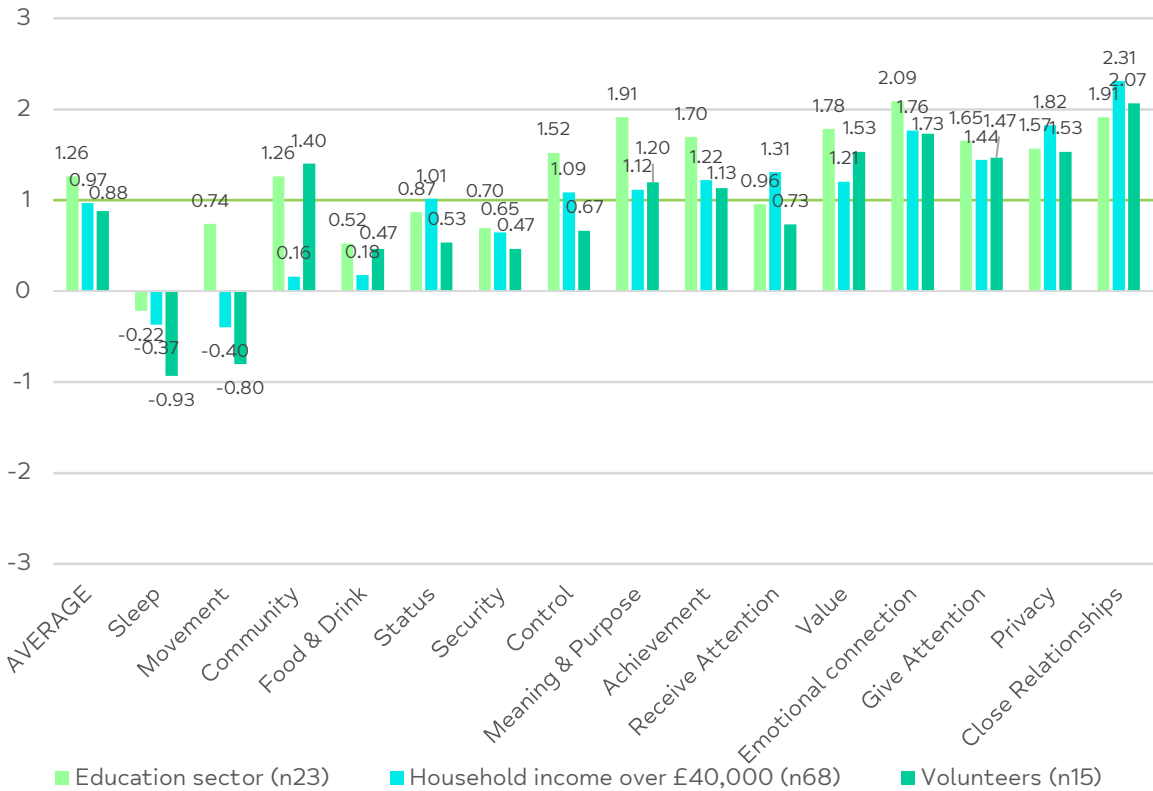## Average wellbeing compared with the Suffolk average:

■ Suffolk (n8,694)   ■ Brandon & Mildenhall (n335)
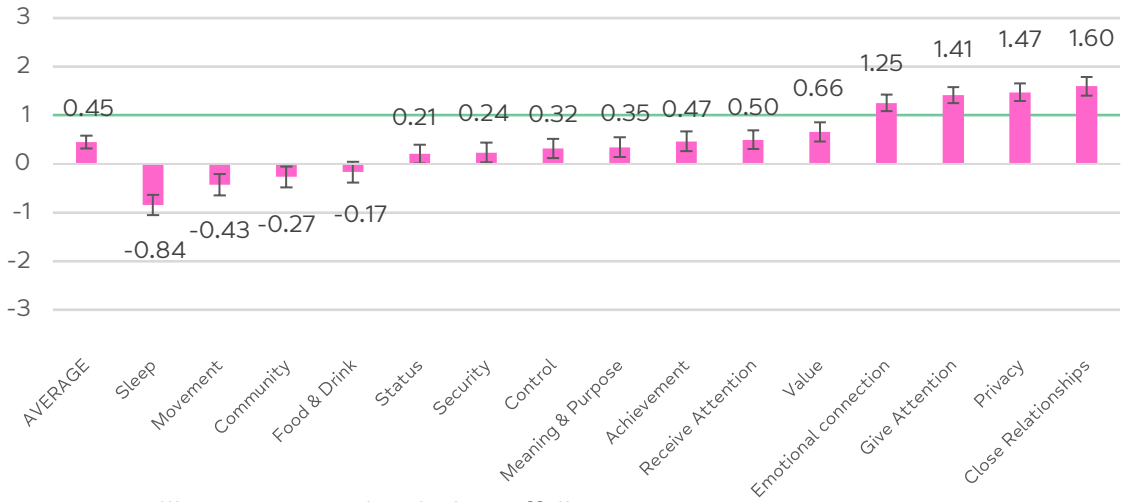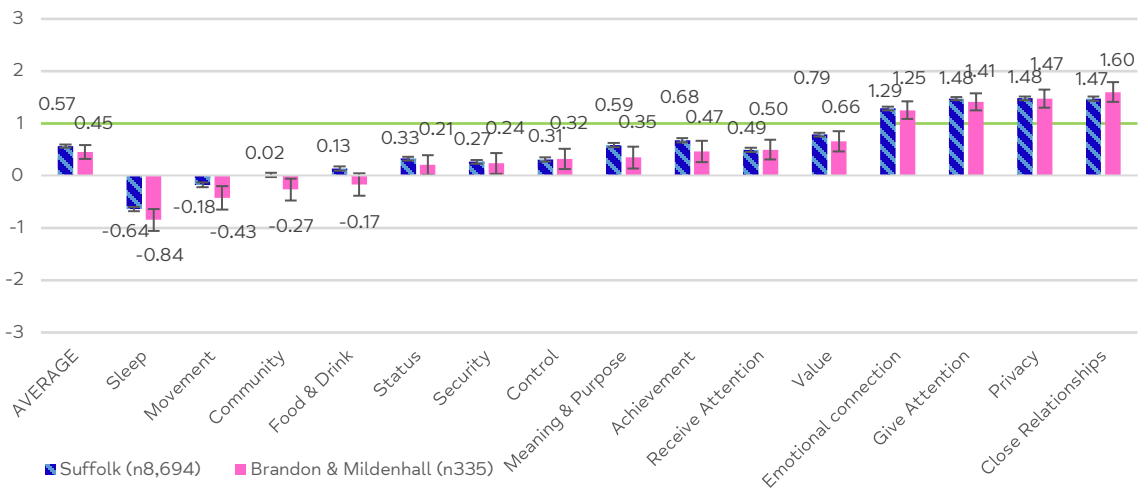
Average wellbeing comparing Brandon and Mildenhall:

■ Mildenhall (n175)   ■ Brandon (n160)

Appendix 3 – Most & Least Well Graphs

The groups meeting Needs the most well on average:

Legend: Education sector (n23) | Household income over £40,000 (n68) | Volunteers (n15)

The groups meeting Needs least well on average:

Legend: Those with mental ill-health diagnoses (n64) | Unable to work (n40) | Stay at home parents (n14)