



# Wellbeing for LGBTQ+ individuals

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 35%** of LGBTQ+ 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 in a **civil partnership** are the most well demographic group on average

LGBTQ+ respondents' **physical or mental health** is the biggest barrier to wellbeing

Those who are **unable to work** are the least well demographic group on average

**56%** don't feel they have enough of a sense of security in their lives



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## 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 be replenished by better meeting the Need for Privacy

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

# Key Findings

Just 35.03% of LGBTQ+ respondents\* are meeting their Needs well overall. This is a bit lower than the Suffolk-wide average, where 41.12% of respondents are meeting their Needs well overall. The average score is statistically significantly lower for LGBTQ+ people than it is for Suffolk overall, on average, with scores of 0.32 and 0.57, respectively (on a scale of -3 to 3).

However, LGBTQ+ people are meeting the same number of Needs well (4 out of 15), on average, as the average for the general population of Suffolk.

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

These are:

## 1. Community

**59%** of LGBTQ+ respondents are not meeting this Need well\*\*

### **The biggest barrier to this Need being met?**

Respondents' physical and/or mental health

### **The biggest supporting factor?**

People's relationships

## 2. Security

**56%** 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 home environments

## 3. Control

**55%** of respondents are not meeting this Need well

### **The biggest barrier to this Need being met?**

Respondents' physical and/or mental health

### **The biggest supporting factor?**

People's home and day-to-day environments

*\* Please refer to Appendix 1 to see the definitions for this group.*

*\*\* 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](http://www.suffolkmind.org.uk/emotional-needs-resources)

# Key Findings

## 4. Physical Needs

**71%** of LGBTQ+ respondents are not meeting their Need for **Sleep** well

**60%** 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 and/or mental health

### **The biggest supporting factors?**

People's home environments and their hobbies or interests

Some groups of LGBTQ+ people are notably more or less well than the average. Those in civil partnerships are the most well group on average, meeting 10 of the 15 Needs well on average.

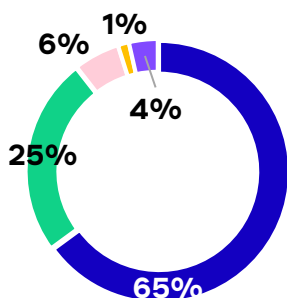
Those least well on average are people who are unable to work. This group is not meeting any of their Needs well on average.

*Any questions about our findings? Please contact us on [Research@suffolkmind.org.uk](mailto:Research@suffolkmind.org.uk)*

## Engagement from LGBTQ+ people

We received 1,413 responses from LGBTQ+ individuals from 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to 17<sup>th</sup> 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 other 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:



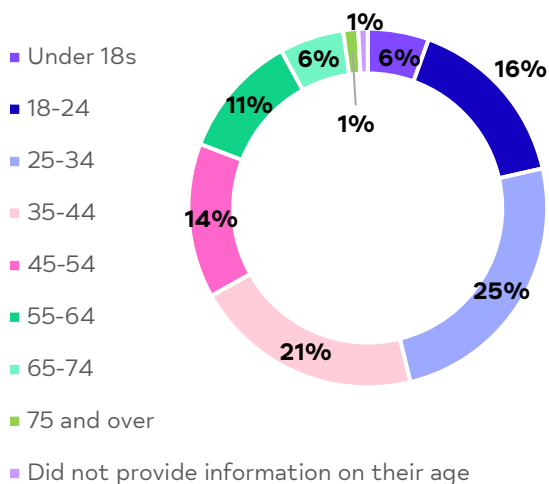
- 65% of respondents were women (including trans women)
- 25% were men (including trans men)
- 6% were non-binary or gender fluid
- 1% preferred to self-describe
- 4% chose not to provide information on their gender

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, LGBTQ+ men’s wellbeing is slightly higher than women’s (average overall score of 0.67 for men, compared with 0.23 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 twice the size than that for men. 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](mailto:Research@suffolkmind.org.uk)*

### Response rates by age:

We heard the most from those aged between 18 and 44 years old, which is a significantly younger age distribution than our overall Suffolk data. This aligns with national data showing that younger people are more likely to identify as LGBTQ+. It’s worth bearing in mind that the fewer responses we have for a group, the less reliable the conclusions we’re drawing are.

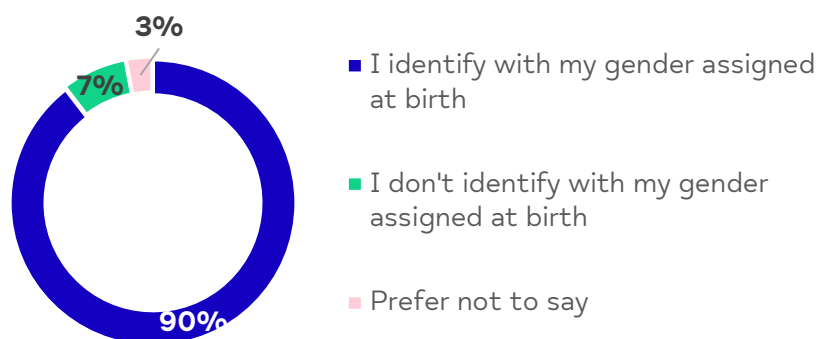


*Where we receive fewer than 3 responses per reportable group, we do not report on the average wellbeing of this group – to ensure all responses remain anonymous.*

## Engagement from LGBTQ+ people

Since we are looking at LGBTQ+ respondents, it may be interesting to look at the distribution of different identities.

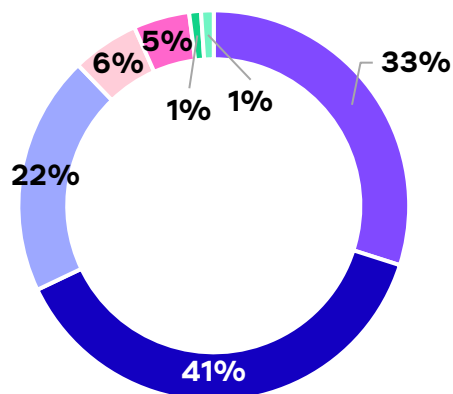
### Response rates by identification with gender assigned at birth:



As we saw on the previous page, 6% of our LGBTQ+ respondents are non-binary or gender fluid. We also know that 7% of LGBTQ+ respondents don't identify with their gender assigned at birth. In terms of cross-over between these two questions, 3.5% of respondents identified with both groups.

### Response rates by sexuality:

- Asexual
- Bisexual or pansexual
- Gay/lesbian
- Heterosexual /straight
- Queer
- Prefer to self-describe
- Prefer not to say



The largest portion of our LGBTQ+ respondents are bisexual or pansexual, followed by asexual respondents, and then those who identify as gay or lesbian. Respondents are able to tick as many of these options as they feel applies to them.

*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 for LGBTQ+ people



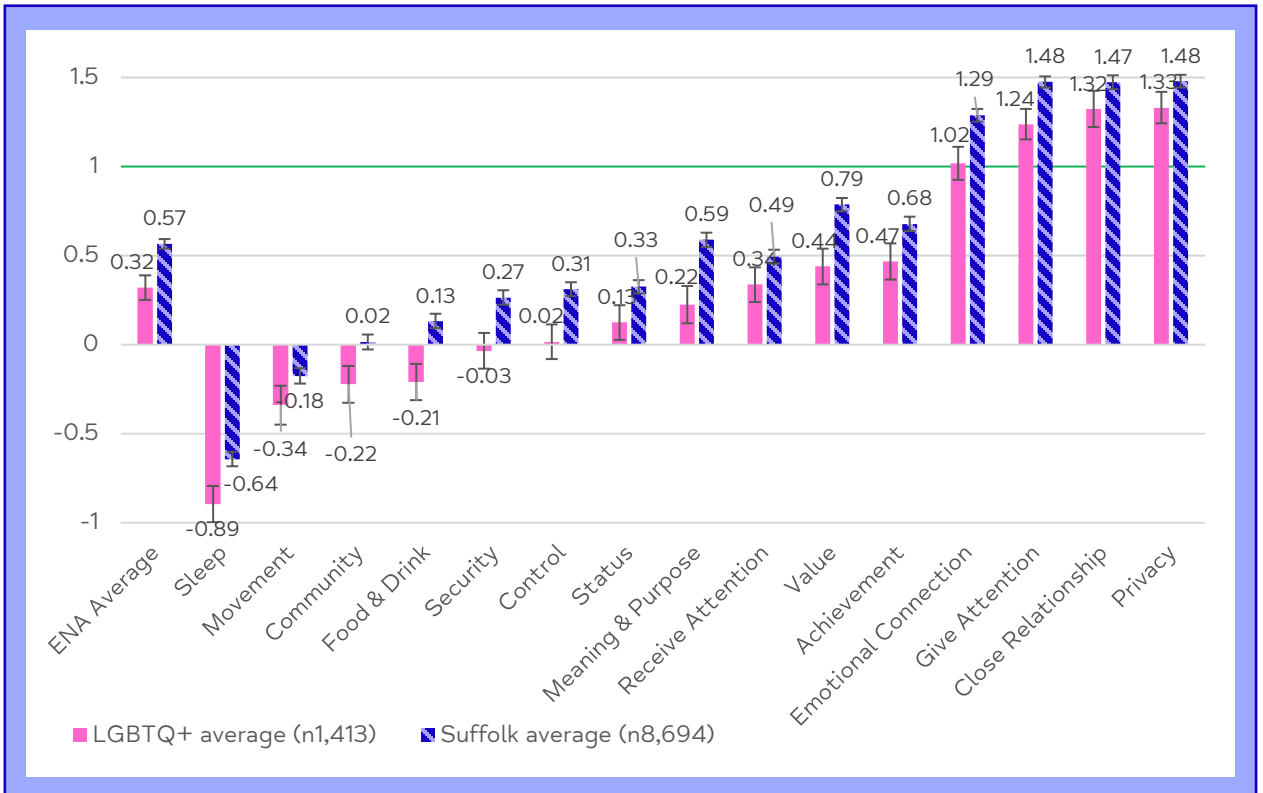
Here we have the average results from the Emotional Needs Audit for LGBTQ+ people in Suffolk. The Emotional Needs are along the bottom on the x axis, arranged from least to best met on average from left to right, with the average of all Needs combined on the far left. How well the Needs are met is shown 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 1.5 (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 LGBTQ+ people 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 LGBTQ+ individuals on average, with an overall average score of 0.32. 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 35.03% of LGBTQ+ respondents (or 495 out of 1413 respondents) are meeting their Needs well overall. Therefore, just 35% are classed as being in wellbeing on the mental health continuum. This is slightly 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 demographic groups which we knew to be less well, and therefore anticipated slightly lower wellbeing amongst LGBTQ+ people on average. We will also see on the following page that, on average, LGBTQ+ respondents are meeting their Needs statistically significantly worse than Suffolk respondents as a whole. Our findings allow us to prioritise Needs and interventions with the aim of improving wellbeing for LGBTQ+ people in Suffolk.

## How does this compare to Suffolk's average?



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 LGBTQ+ individuals with the Suffolk-wide data gathered as part of this research. These results are compared with the Suffolk average, based on data gathered between 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023. There were 8,694 responses within that time period for Suffolk as a whole, which we can compare with the 1,413 responses from LGBTQ+ people.

Here, we can see that the confidence intervals do not overlap between the LGBTQ+ overall average and the Suffolk-wide overall average. Therefore, we can deduce that LGBTQ+ individuals in Suffolk are meeting their Needs statistically significantly worse than Suffolk as a whole, on average, based on a 95% confidence interval. In fact, Suffolk-wide respondents are meeting every Need statistically significantly better, on average, than LGBTQ+ respondents.

Interestingly, despite the differences, we can still see a similar trend in terms of the least and best met Needs across all data sets – with Sleep being the worst met Need on average, and Privacy being the best met Need on average. To analyse the results further, we can separate the Needs into four groups based on similarities in theme.



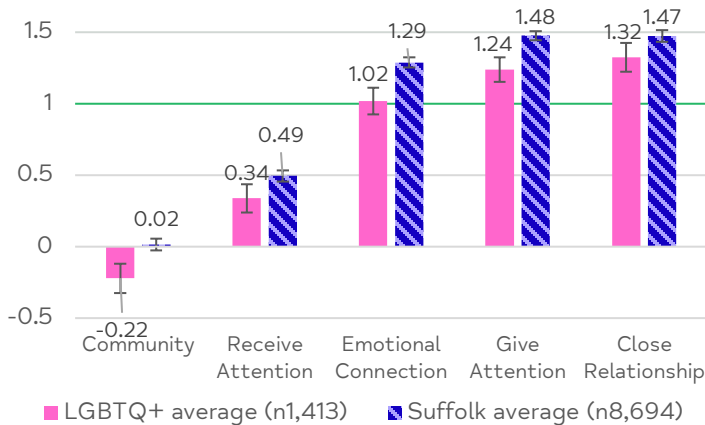
## Interpersonal Relationship Needs

We can see that the Need for a **Close Relationship** is well met on average, with a score of 1.32 (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 1.02, 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 LGBTQ+ people, with an average score of -0.22. 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.

Another well met Need for LGBTQ+ respondents, on average, is **Giving Attention**, with a score of 1.24. For both the LGBTQ+ and Suffolk average, Giving Attention scores much more highly than **Receiving Attention**, which has an average score of only 0.34 among LGBTQ+ respondents. This shows that people feel they give others more attention than they receive back. We asked LGBTQ+ people 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.



**Community is the lowest met emotional Need**

Since the confidence intervals do not overlap between the LGBTQ+ data and the data on Suffolk as a whole, we know that LGBTQ+ people are meeting all their interpersonal Needs statistically significantly worse than the general population, based on a 95% confidence interval. Looking at why this might be, one thing to consider is that LGBTQ+ respondents’ marital status seems to be having more of an effect on their wellbeing than in the general population, with single respondents especially meeting their interpersonal relationship Needs less well. This could align with comments from respondents lamenting a lack of a queer scene in Suffolk, which could make it difficult for single LGBTQ+ people to find a partner or other LGBTQ+ friends.

Looking at the Need for Community, LGBTQ+ respondents report slightly different supporting factors for meeting this need, compared to Suffolk as a whole. The general Suffolk population is more likely to report their work and home as supporting them, whereas LGBTQ+ people are more likely to report their hobbies and technology as being supporting factors. This difference in where people are meeting this Need could account for LGBTQ+ people having less of a sense of community than the general Suffolk population, if they’re relying more on extra factors such as hobbies and technology, rather than the every-day stability of their work and home situations.

### 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:

- 65% (n190) believed that their physical or mental health presented an obstacle
- 34% (n98) reported that the cost of living presented a barrier
- 29% (n85) viewed their work situation 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:

- 51% (n37) viewed their relationships as enabling them to meet this Need well
- 50% (n36) selected their hobbies or interests
- 49% (n35) identified their community involvement as a supporting factor

## What helps people's wellbeing?

**"I do help in the community as a volunteer which I enjoy – working with a number of different age groups in support of their activities"**

**"Technology helps to create a sense of community with Facebook etc"**

## What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

**"Lack of a queer scene in Suffolk is hard sometimes"**

**"Parents and family who are unsupportive and close minded"**

**"Wanting to join social groups out of work hours but not knowing what is available, or being brave enough to go alone"**

## What could be done to improve wellbeing?

**"More community projects, especially for teenagers"**

**"We need more mental health groups for young people, give them space to talk to other people about their mental health experiences"**

**"Social groups that are not during the day"**

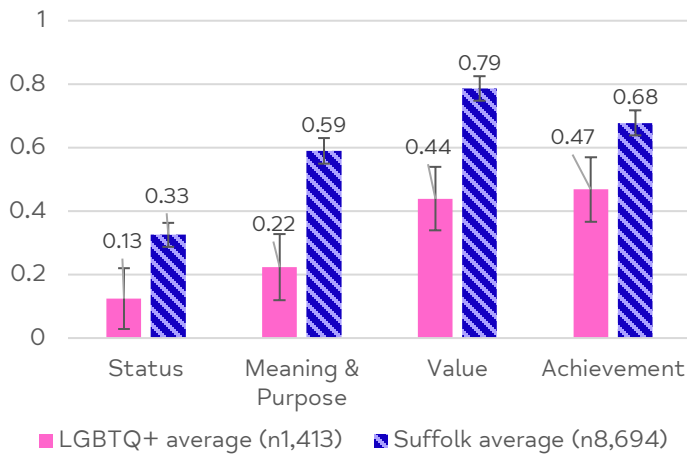


## Achievement and Value Needs

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). People's work situations can affect their ability to meet this Need well, with over half of respondents not meeting this Need well identifying it as a barrier. This also comes across looking demographically, as if we look at results by economic status, we can see that Achievement is least well met by those who are unable to work (-1.10) or unemployed (-0.88) on average.

**Meaning & Purpose** is strongly correlated to Achievement within the LGBTQ+ 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 LGBTQ+ respondents, with a score of 0.22, showing that respondents may not always be feeling purposeful about their actions.

As with the other Needs, **Value** is also not well met on average, at 0.44. Value indicates how much people feel others appreciate them for their actions and contributions. Therefore, since LGBTQ+ respondents aren'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 statistically significantly less well met than Value, with an average score of 0.12. 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** is one of the **lowest** met Needs

Once again, the confidence intervals do not overlap between the LGBTQ+ data and the data on Suffolk as a whole, so we know that LGBTQ+ people are meeting all their achievement and value based Needs statistically significantly worse than the general population, based on a 95% confidence interval.

It's worth noting that different areas of privilege seem to be particularly influential for these Needs. For example, LGBTQ+ respondents who are male, older, cis-gendered, white, or have a higher household income are all meeting their Needs for Achievement and Status better than those who aren't. Intersectionality between LGBTQ+ identity and other demographic groups who are discriminated against is having an impact on how these individuals are able to meet their Needs.

### Barriers

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

- 58% (n152) stated that their physical or mental health prevented them from meeting this Need
- 45% (n118) attributed not meeting this Need well to their work situation
- 32% (n83) identified their relationships as an obstacle

### Supporting factors

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

- 64% (n56) felt supported to meet this Need due to their work situation
- 57% (n50) saw their relationships as a supporting factor
- 41% (n36) believed that their home environments enabled them to meet this Need well

## What helps people's wellbeing?

**“Volunteering and helping other people in general gives me the greatest sense of purpose”**

**“I get a huge sense of wellbeing from working as a support worker, especially for mental health and through achieving good feedback from education”**

## What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

**“Whilst some work environments try to create a control of support for staff, not all managers act in that way, particularly when they are under pressure/stress themselves”**

**“I miss the provision of evening classes, to have the chance to pursue hobbies and have social contact in a specific setting”**

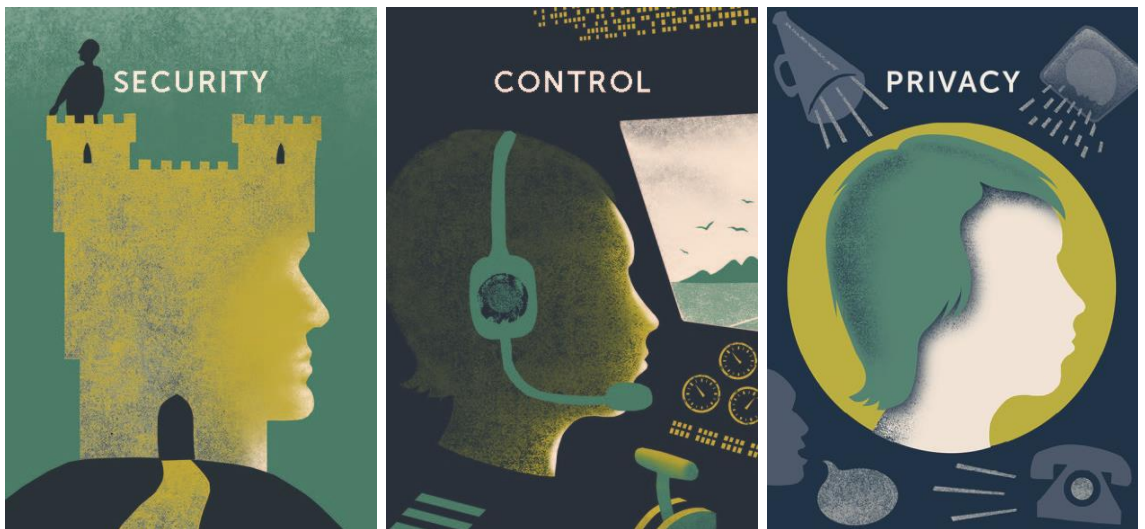
**“Fall behind at work -> get stressed and anxious -> can't focus or concentrate -> fall behind at work - it's a downward spiral”**

## What would people like to see done to improve wellbeing?

**“The job centres really need to ally with organisations that can provide [support for people who have been out of work for a long time due to illness]**

**“I wish there was more put money into our local bus services. They are so important and the only way some of us can get out & travel.”**





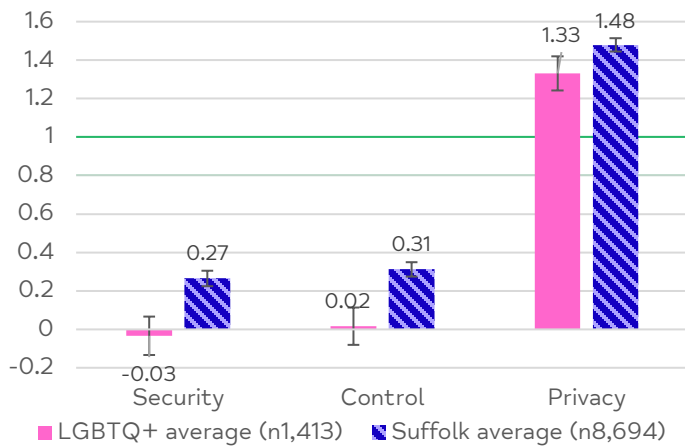
## Security and Control Needs

**Security** is the second least met emotional Need on average for LGBTQ+ respondents, with a score of -0.04 (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 LGBTQ+ people meeting their Need for Security is individuals' physical or mental health, the cost of living, and people's financial situations. In terms of physical or mental health, respondents mentioned the lack of support for neurodivergence and a lack of accessible mental health care as significant barriers, as well as accessibility issues due to uneven paths and drop curbs.

**Control** is another less well met Need on average, being the third least well met emotional Need and having an average score of 0.28. This suggests that these respondents do not feel like they have enough control over their lives or their surroundings. As with Security, financial concerns and current economic uncertainty are presenting real obstacles to individuals meeting their Need for Control – with people's finances and the cost of living being among the top barriers identified by respondents. Security and Control were therefore Needs that were focused on during action planning.

There is also a difference between genders for Security and Control, with men meeting these Needs significantly better than any other gender, and even better than the general Suffolk population. Male LGBTQ+ respondents are also reporting their financial situation as a barrier a lot less than the overall LGBTQ+ group.

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 LGBTQ+ respondents meeting this Need well being people's home environments.



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

As we can see, all three of these Needs are statistically significantly worse met by LGBTQ+ respondents than the general Suffolk population, on average. Looking at the barriers identified by respondents to meeting their Needs for Security and Control, we can see that the UK political situation, current affairs and climate change have all been reported significantly more by this group than by the general population. This is also coming through in comments, with respondents reporting that homophobia and transphobia in the government and the media is making them feel less safe, as well as respondents reporting that the climate catastrophe is affecting their mental health.

## Barriers

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

- 68% (n227) viewed their physical or mental health as a barrier
- 54% (n182) identified the cost-of-living crisis as an obstacle
- 47% (n157) 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:

- 61% (n65) believed their home environments support them to meet this Need
- 60% (n64) felt their day-to-day environments enable them to feel safe and secure
- 59% (n63) viewed their relationships as a supporting factor

## What helps people's wellbeing?

**“Having access to therapists who have received the necessary training and are experienced in what they do”**

**“A supportive and healthy work environment”**

## What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

**“Lack of accessible mental health care easily, and also lack of face to face support”**

**“Not enough job opportunities for people with little experience”**

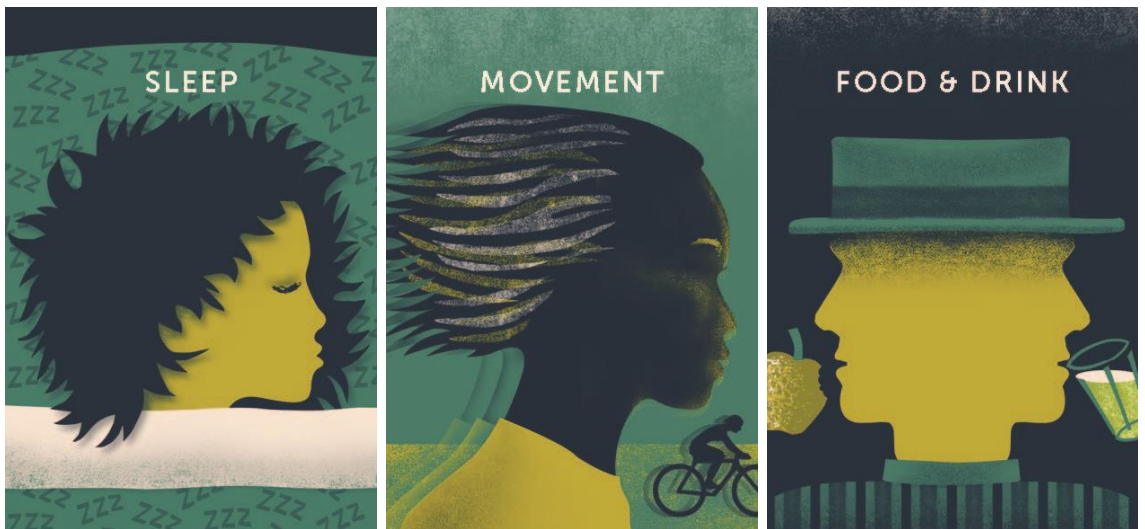
**“The attacks on trans people and general transphobia exhibited by most of the media”**

## What would people like to see done to improve wellbeing?

**“Police shouldn't be sent out instead of the crisis team”**

**“Mental health resources in schools/colleges/universities are essential to build a resilient society who know where to go or who to go to if health begins to decline”**

**“Teachers, doctors, nurses and anyone in an important public facing role should have proper training in neurodivergence”**

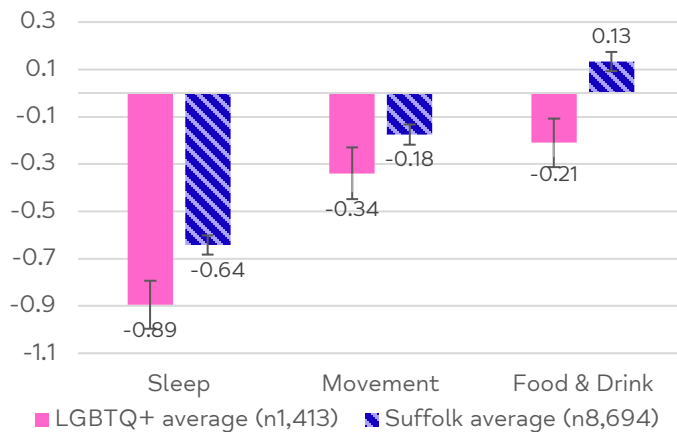


## Physical Needs

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 LGBTQ+ respondents, with Sleep being the worst met Need on average. The average score for Sleep is -0.90, and whilst there doesn't always feel like there is a huge amount we can do to improve our sleep, our LGBTQ+ data set shows that there is a strong positive correlation between Sleep and the Needs for Security and 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 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 -0.34 and -0.21, respectively. Work situation is a significant barrier for those not meeting their Need for Movement, which could either mean respondents are in work but sat at desks and don't have the opportunity to get as much movement as they'd like, or maybe they're out of work and don't have the motivation or meaning and purpose to prioritise their movement. With Food & Drink, we're again seeing the cost of living and respondents' financial situations coming up as significant barriers, with a respondent reporting that food prices rising has had a big impact on their wellbeing.



All three **Physical Needs** are **unmet**

The three physical Needs are all less well met Needs amongst LGBTQ+ respondents on average, and all statistically significantly less well met than the general Suffolk population, on average. Sleep in particular is the worst met Need in this group and, similar to the Needs for Security and Control, we can again see barriers of the UK political situation and current affairs being reported much more by LGBTQ+ respondents not meeting their Need for Sleep, compared to those in the general Suffolk population. It's unsurprising that LGBTQ+ respondents who may feel unsafe due to current anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric in the government and media may worry about this and therefore feel less rested after they sleep.

## Barriers

Of the respondents who chose to identify barriers:

- 66% (n314) viewed their physical or mental health as a barrier to Sleep, while 70% (n266) identified this as barrier to Movement and 64% (n207) for Food & Drink
- 40% (n129) of people voiced that the cost-of-living crisis was preventing them from meeting their Need for Food & Drink
- 30% (n115) viewed their work situation as a barrier to their Need for Movement
- 30% (n142) 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:

- 60% (n31) viewed their home environment as a supporting factor for Sleep
- 49% (n47) attributed meeting their Need for Food & Drink well to their home environments
- 47% (n49) of respondents saw their hobbies or interests as a supporting factor for Movement

## What helps people's wellbeing?

**“I try to go for a walk along the seafront for my mental wellbeing on a daily basis”**

**“I am very fortunate to have a sports centre close and accessible”**

**“Really appreciate the access to abundant countryside and nature, it helps so much to be able to walk and enjoy beautiful scenery and fresh air.”**

## What are specific barriers to wellbeing?

**“Gym and food prices sharply risen”**

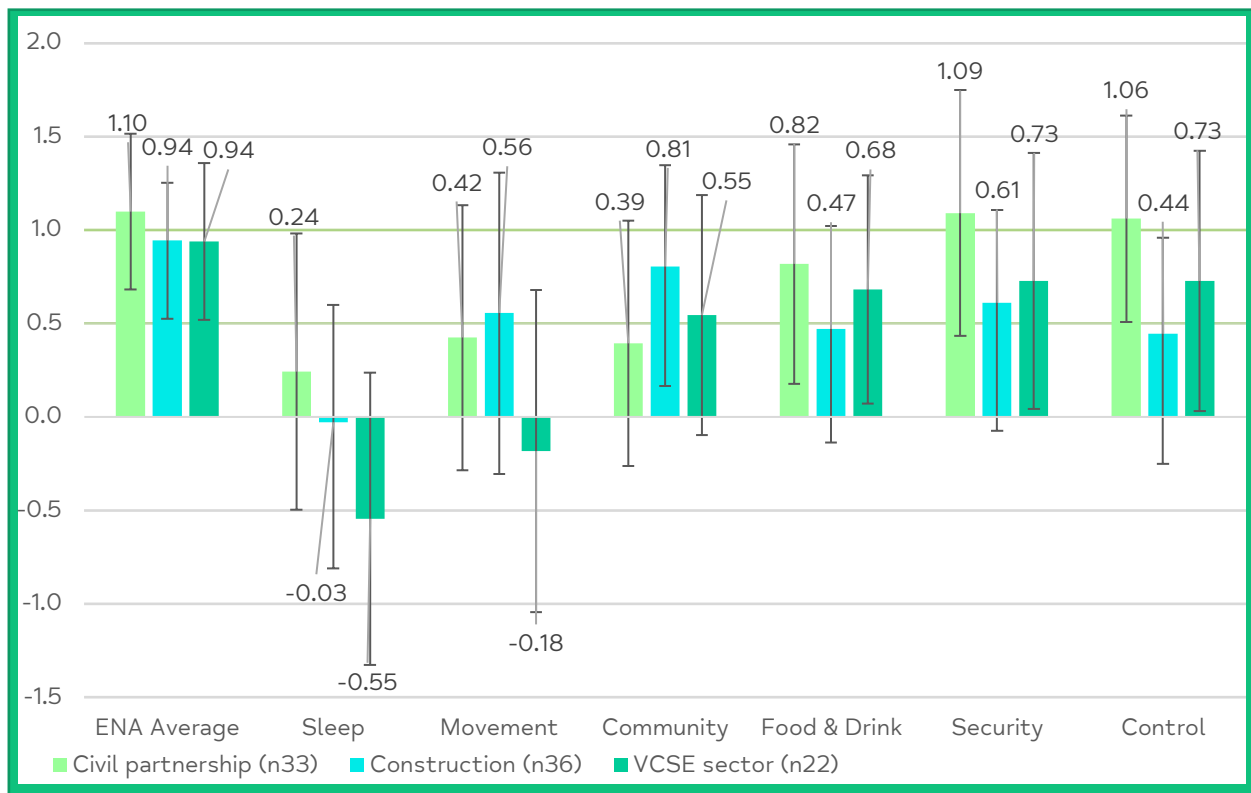
**“Excessive workload and very long working hours”**

## What would people like to see done to improve wellbeing?

**“More areas for walking would be the main thing I'd always advocate for in improving my wellbeing locally”**

**“I think the county needs to do more to support night time economy as the hospitality industry is in decline”**

## Who are the most well groups on average?



The graph above focuses on the most well met Needs amongst LGBTQ+ 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 LGBTQ+ respondents.\*

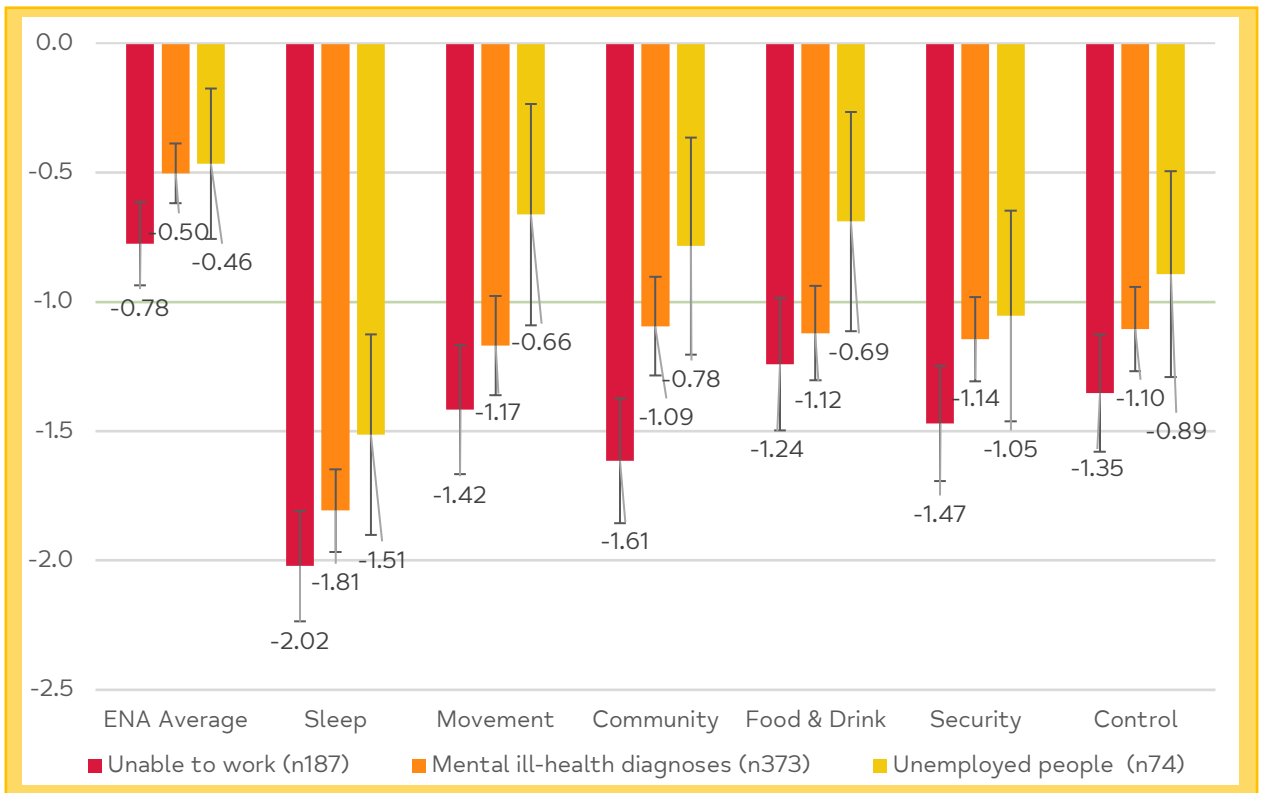
We can see that those in a civil partnership have the highest overall average score, at 1.10 (on a scale of -3 to 3). This is followed by respondents who work in construction and those who work in the VCSE sector, who both score an average of 0.94. All three of these groups are statistically significantly more well than the LGBTQ+ average.

These groups align with other information mentioned earlier on in this report. We saw that respondents who are in relationships are more likely to be meeting their interpersonal Needs better, and so it is perhaps unsurprising that those who are in civil partnerships are meeting their Needs the best overall. Those who are in civil partnerships are, on average, significantly older than the overall LGBTQ+ data set too, with 58% of respondents in civil partnerships being aged between 45 and 74, compared to only 31% of the overall data set being within this age range. This could also be impacting the average wellbeing of this group, since we know that older people are generally more well than younger people.

We've also mentioned how work situation is having an impact on Needs, and so it makes sense that the industry you work in could help you meet your Needs better. Both of these groups are particularly meeting their Needs for Achievement and Meaning and Purpose better than the overall LGBTQ+ average, and it's possible that the type of work done in these industries particularly lends itself to these Needs more than others.

*\*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 LGBTQ+ respondents on average. To view the full graph, with each Need shown, see Appendix 3.

If we look at the least well groups on average among LGBTQ+ respondents, we can see that people who are unable to work (either permanently or temporarily) are the least well on average, with an overall score of -0.78 (on a scale of -3 to 3). This is followed by individuals with mental ill-health diagnoses and those who are unemployed, with average scores of -0.50 and -0.46 respectively. All three of these least well groups are statistically significantly less well than the LGBTQ+ average. Again, this follows patterns we have seen elsewhere in the report of being out of work having a negative impact on Needs being met, as well as physical or mental health being a significant barrier to a lot of the Needs.

Considering the two groups of those out of employment, work situation is a significant supporting factor across a few different Needs – most notably Status, Value, Achievement and Meaning and Purpose. It's therefore not altogether surprising that those who are out of work will be struggling to meet their Needs as well. Respondents mentioned that they felt there aren't enough job opportunities for those with little experience. The majority (54%) of those in the unemployed group are under 35, with 30% of these being under 25. This is quite different to the overall Suffolk data, where only 13% are under 25. The age bracket of this data set could be contributing towards having more people with less work experience who are struggling to get into work. It also could be that LGBTQ+ respondents are having to be more picky about where they work to find an LGBTQ+ safe space, or sacrifice their personal safety to get a job when they need one.

In terms of those who are unable to work, there were also a few comments from respondents around having support getting back into work after being out for a long time due to illness, and also around having more supportive work environments to prevent people becoming unwell due to their work.





## 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 for LGBTQ+ people in Suffolk on average. Therefore, targeting interventions to better meet these Needs could help to improve wellbeing for this group.

When asked about things that could be done to better meet their Needs, respondents had a number of suggestions, including:

- More mental health support groups, especially for young people and those in work
- More direct support for LGBTQ+ people, and encouraging a queer scene in the county
- Social groups not during working hours
- More training, support and awareness of neurodivergence
- Resources around mental health accessible from a young age
- More help and knowledge of where to go and who to contact for support
- Improved local public transport services
- Improved access to green spaces and space to walk

Our data and feedback collected on LGBTQ+ people has been fed back to key individuals within Suffolk County Council as well as individuals who work closely with this group across the county. Based on our findings, discussions have now begun regarding the types of interventions that could be implemented to improve LGBTQ+ wellbeing in Suffolk.

# 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 interventions 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 people who are Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and other identities. This is defined to be anyone who responded 'non-binary or gender fluid' when asked their gender identity, those who said they didn't identify with their gender assigned at birth, and anyone who responded as any of 'asexual', 'bisexual or pansexual', 'gay/lesbian' or 'queer' when asked about their sexual orientation, based on data gathered from 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to 17<sup>th</sup> 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 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

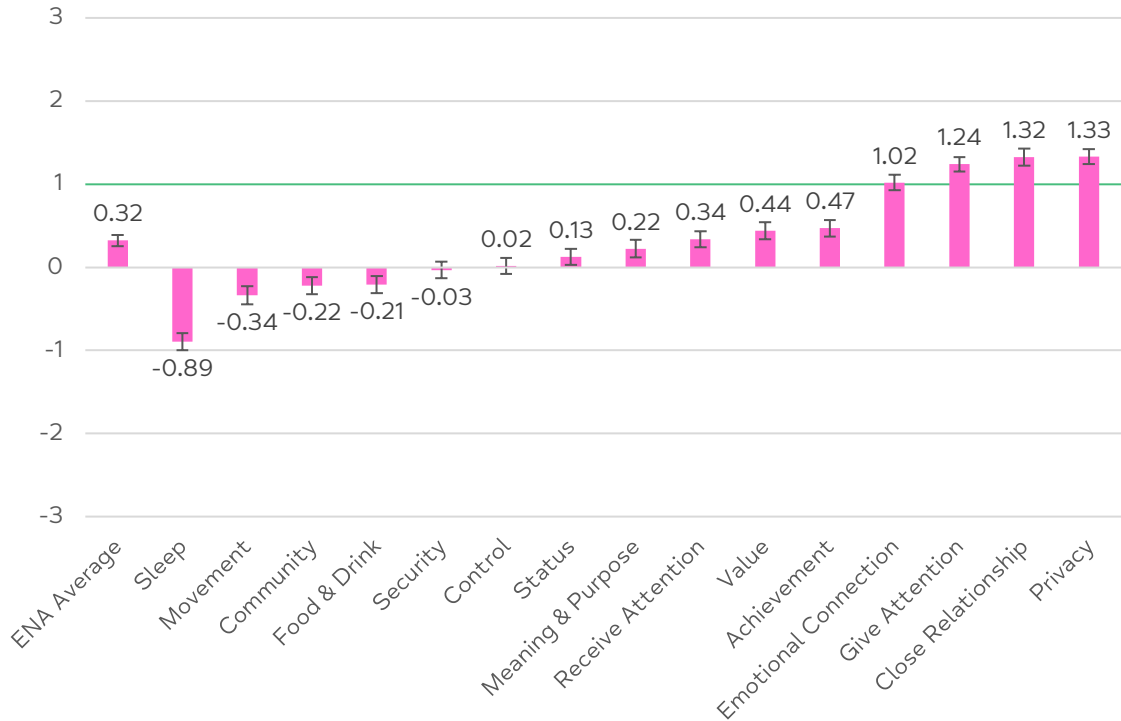
## Methodology

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.

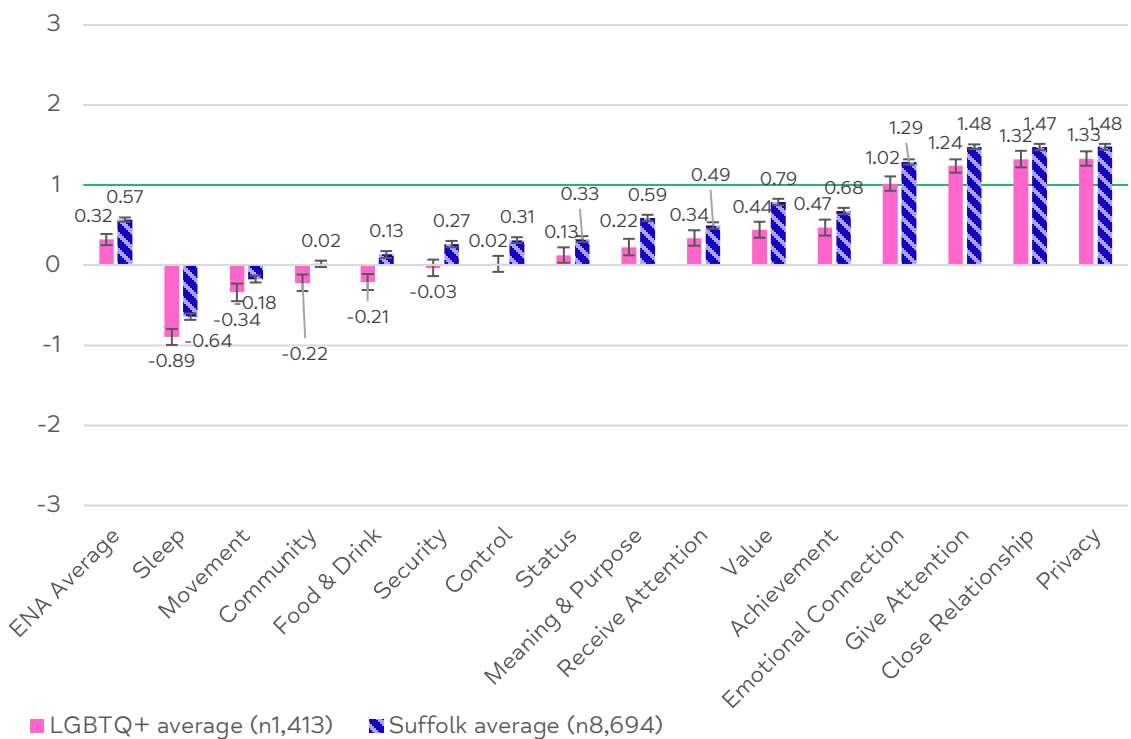
In the ENA, we ask 15 questions that encompass all elements of the 12 Needs, containing both emotional and physical aspects. These are scored on a scale from -3 (not at all met) to +3 (very well met). We also ask respondents to identify any environmental barriers that may prevent them from meeting their 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 LGBTQ+ individuals:

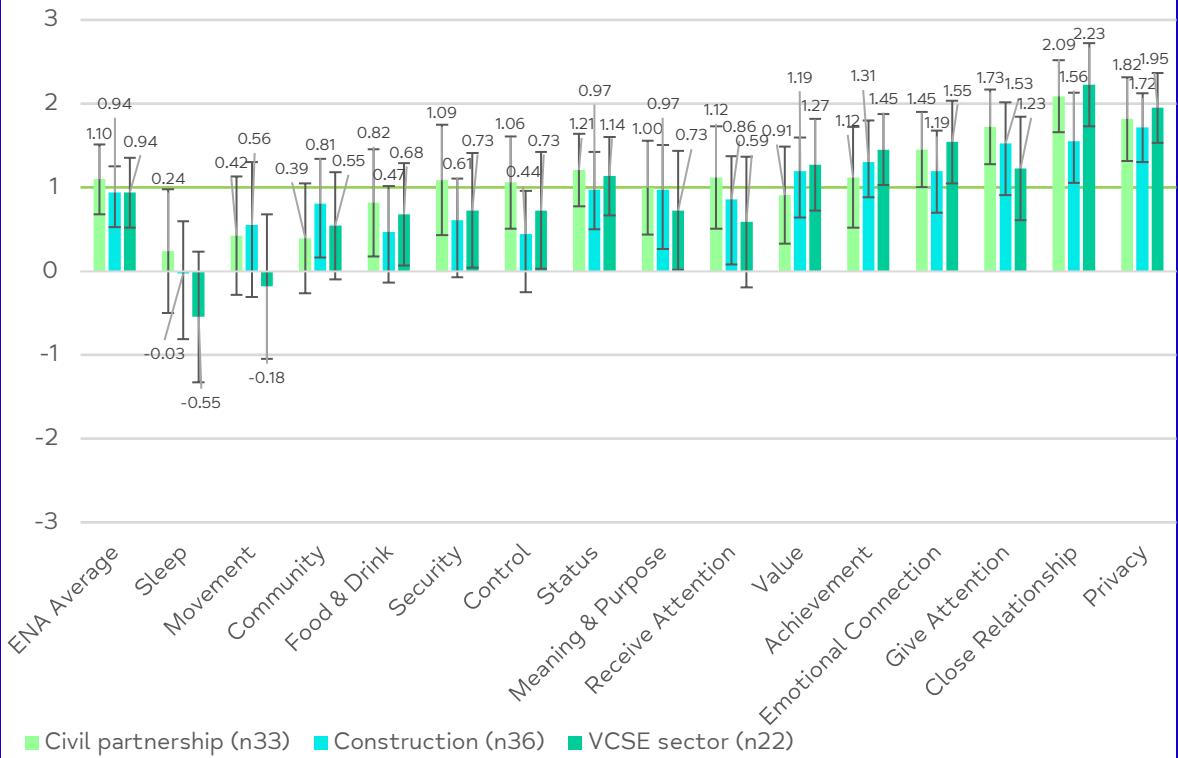


Average wellbeing compared with the Suffolk average:

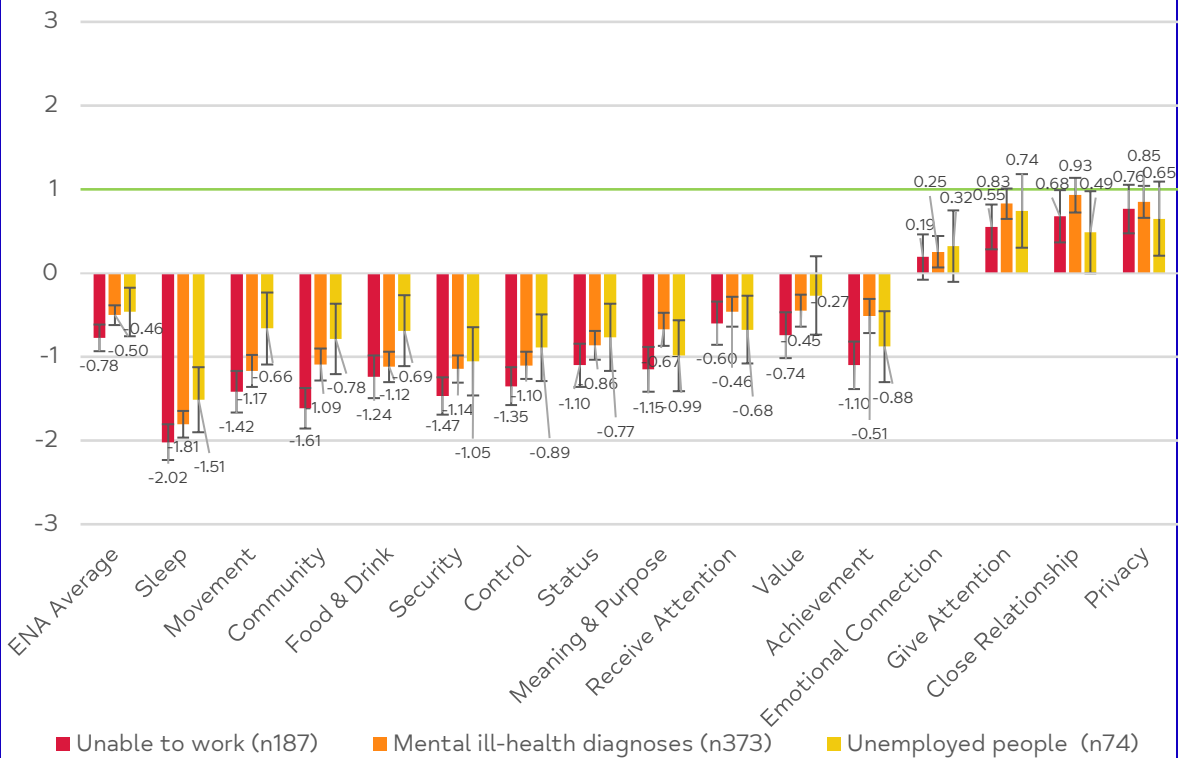


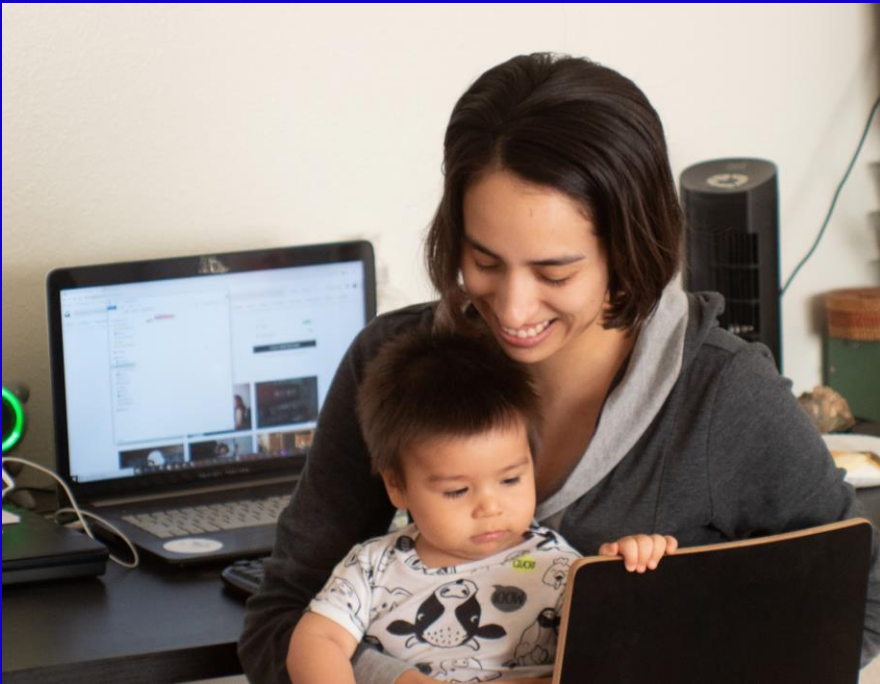
# Appendix 3 – Most & Least Well Graphs

The most well groups on average:



The least well groups on average:





 mind Suffolk

 **Suffolk**  
County Council