

6.5 Emotional health and wellbeing

Wellbeing has two essential elements: feeling good and functioning well. This includes contentedness, enjoyment of life, positive relationships, having a degree of control over one's life and a sense of purpose. Just as five portions of fruit and vegetables a day are good for physical health, so the essential nutrients for good mental health and wellbeing can be distilled into five elements, which have been described as the 'five ways to wellbeing':

- *connect with people - family, friends, colleagues, neighbours*
- *be active - walk, cycle, dance, play a game that you enjoy*
- *take notice - reflect on the beauty of the world around you*
- *keep learning - try a new challenge, learn to do something new*
- *give - volunteer your time, do a favour, look out for someone in need*

Work can enhance mental wellbeing as it gives a sense of purpose and creates social relationships. Conversely unemployment and workplace stress can both impair mental health.

One in six adults has a mental health problem at any one time, and many people do not seek help because of stigma. Benefits of improved population wellbeing include improved mental health, greater resilience against mental health problems, less discrimination and stigmatisation in the workplace and reduction in suicides.

Brief interventions in primary care and improved access to psychological therapies offer a one-to-one service to improve resilience and wellbeing. Particular subgroups may benefit in particular, for instance depression is common in patients who are diabetic. The 'five ways to wellbeing' initiative, described above gives a set of evidence based actions which promote well being and can be an effective tool for individuals to assess and review themselves.

Indicator:

There is very little information on the mental wellbeing of our local population. For the first time in early 2012 the Your Place, your wellbeing: Walsall Household and Lifestyle Survey is asking a series of questions on mental health and wellbeing, including the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale. This will provide a very useful baseline indicator of wellbeing across Walsall for future reference.

Wellbeing is a key issue for the Government and ONS are leading a programme of work to develop new measures of national wellbeing. People with higher wellbeing have lower rates of illness, recover more quickly and for longer, and generally have better physical and mental health. Local data on wellbeing is likely to be a key component of local Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and form an important part of the work of local Health and Wellbeing Boards.

The government launched the Integrated Household Survey in 2010, which is a composite survey combining questions asked in a number of Office for National Statistics (ONS) social surveys to gather basic information for a very large number of households. It covers a variety of topics, with Health & Disability being included. The first full year data from these questions was published by ONS in July 2012 and are being treated as experimental statistics. From a Health & Wellbeing perspective, there are 4 indicators which can be used. These are part of the latest Health and Wellbeing strategy for Walsall and are shown in **Error! Reference source not found.** below together with a West Midlands and England comparator. The percentage shown refers to the proportion of survey respondents.

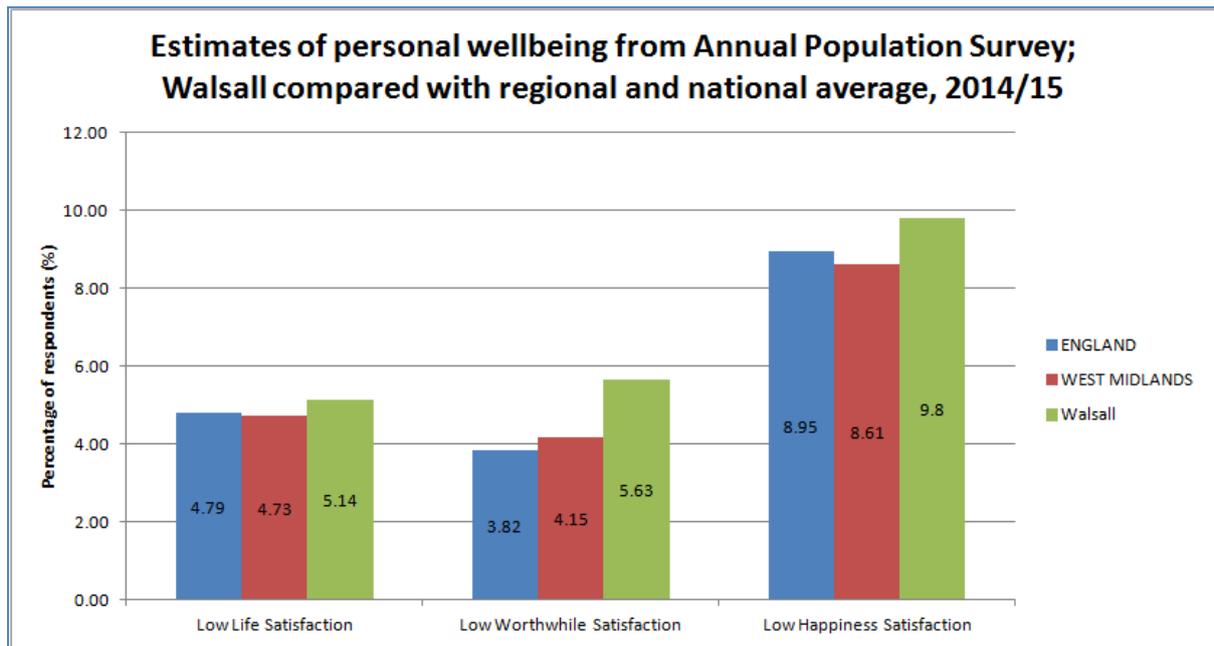


Figure 1 Self-reported wellbeing indicators (Source: ONS 2014/15)

From this survey, it can be seen that Walsall (of respondents), 5.6% report low levels of satisfaction with life, 5.1% report low levels of life worth and 9.8% report low levels of happiness. Although all of these indicators are higher than regional and national averages. Walsall's residents are not as happy as the rest of the country which can be seen when self reported wellbeing results are higher than national and regional averages.

Priorities for action:

A borough wide strategy to improve population mental health and wellbeing should be designed and implemented. This should cover the 'five ways to wellbeing'. Some results from the 2012 lifestyle survey are shown below and will be used to inform interventions targeted in particular areas or in particular groups within our population (for example, those who are unemployed). This survey should be repeated in subsequent years to enable changes in mental health and wellbeing to be tracked.

Click the link below to access the full needs assessment.

[Link to CYP Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Needs Assessment](#)

[Link to Adult Mental Health Needs Assessment](#)