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HEREFORDSHIRE QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

HEADLINE RESULTS 2018



**4 DATA
GOOD**
BETTER DATA BETTER LIVES





CONTEXT

This report gives the key headlines from a 'quality of life' survey of Herefordshire residents in spring 2018 - the first in a series of reports of the results. The survey is part of a project called 'Better data, better lives' and is unique as it has been entirely driven and managed by the community and voluntary sector in Herefordshire. It will fill gaps where there is currently no recent data available for the county, so that hundreds of voluntary and community organisations can target their services and resources to the people and places most in need. The survey was posted out to a random sample of 4,125 households in Herefordshire. It included questions designed to allow comparison with national indicators, for which data was last collected in the county in 2012. The data will be published as open data as part of the Sustainable Route Map and our local 'Data4Good' campaign.

Thanks go to all our funders and partners: the Brightspace Foundation, Awards for All, Great Places, E F Bulmer Benevolent fund and Herefordshire Community Foundation. A big thanks to residents who completed the survey and to the Data Orchard staff who have worked on it.

Madeleine Spinks & Max Bassett





ABOUT YOUR *LOCAL AREA

In relation to their local area, most respondents (80% or more):

- Are satisfied with the local area as a place to live
- Are satisfied with their home as a place to live
- Feel safe when outside in their local area during the day (however this drops to 70% after dark)
- Say there is not a problem with people treating each other with respect, dignity and consideration

A lower proportion (67%) felt that:

- The local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
- The local area is safe for children to play outside

The top aspects residents felt is most important in making somewhere a good place to live are:

- Access to nature/green space
- Health services
- Clean and litter free
- Level of crime
- Affordable decent housing

This is similar to the pattern found in the 2012 survey, except that access to nature was not part of the top five aspects in importance.

And most in need of improvement are:

- Road and pavement repairs
- Activities for teenagers
- Affordable decent housing
- Level of traffic congestion
- Broadband and mobile phone connectivity

This is similar to 2012 with the exception that job prospects are no longer in the top five aspects needing improvement.

In terms of influencing local decision-making in their local area, just over a quarter of respondents felt they could do so and a fifth had been part of a local decision-making group (similar to 2012). A fifth would like to be more involved in the decisions that affect their local area and a further two thirds would like to be more involved depending on the issue.



ACCESS TO SERVICES & FACILITIES

Access to services and facilities are a key issue in Herefordshire due to the sparsity of the population.

High proportions of respondents found the following services easy to access:

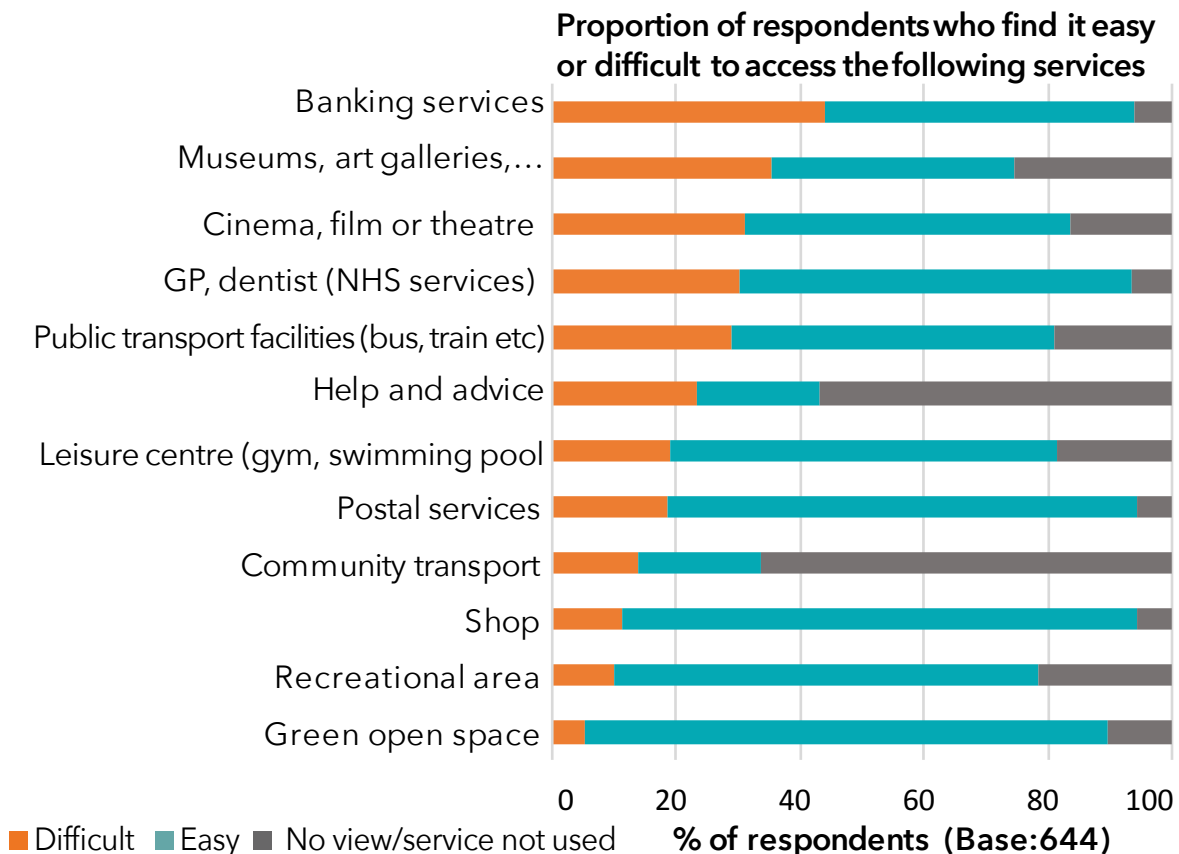
- Green open space (85%)
- Shop (83%)
- Postal services (76%)

Services that respondents found difficult to access:

- Banking services (44%)
- Museums, art galleries, cultural/heritage centre (35%)
- Cinema, film or theatre (31%)

Some services had similar proportions who found it as difficult to access as found it easy, reflecting differences in experiences depending on the individual. They services/facilities are:

- Help and advice
- Museums, art galleries, cultural/heritage centres
- Banking services
- Community transport



The three most common barriers were: transport, parking and opening hours.



ARTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE, OUTDOORS & WELL-BEING

High proportions of respondents had visited the following places **at least once** over the past year:

- Natural heritage place i.e. park or garden (78%)
- Film or play (77%)
- Historic place e.g. historic house or museum (68%)

The following places were visited more frequently (**at least every few months**):

- Films or plays (62%)
- A natural heritage place (63%)

The events/places that most had **not** been to over the past year were:

- A live dance event (75%)
- Live sports event (61%)

60% of respondents spent time outdoors daily

(excluding shopping trips/chores or time spent in their garden).

This compares with 13% who spent no time outdoors in the last seven days. Middle aged people spent more time outdoors than younger people.

The activities that most respondents **did at least once** over the past year were:

- A walk of at least 10 minutes (97%)
- Reading (95%)
- Gardening (89%)
- Sport or fitness activity (74%)

Over 90% of those that had taken part in these activities, felt that it 'made them feel better' both physically and mentally.

The activities that most respondents **had not done** over the past year:

- Taken part in a performance e.g. dance, film, poetry, theatre (88%)
- Creative writing (83%)
- Created music (82%)
- Digital creative activity e.g. blogging, vlogging, gaming (74%)



SOCIAL CAPITAL

Volunteering rates remain similar to 2012 levels but are still higher than national rates.

- **32% volunteered regularly at least once a month** i.e. gave unpaid help to a group, club or organisation.
- **20% volunteered at least once a week.**
- **Overall 45% volunteered at least once over the last year.** A further 16 % gave help as an individual.

The most common types of volunteering are for charity, community events and fund-raising and/or campaigning.

A third of respondents provide unpaid care, similar to 2012 levels:

- 22% of respondents provide unpaid care for between 1-19 hours a week.
- 9% provide unpaid care for 50 hours a week or more.

WELL-BEING

Levels of **contact with family, friends or neighbours** and loneliness remain level with 2012 and national rates.

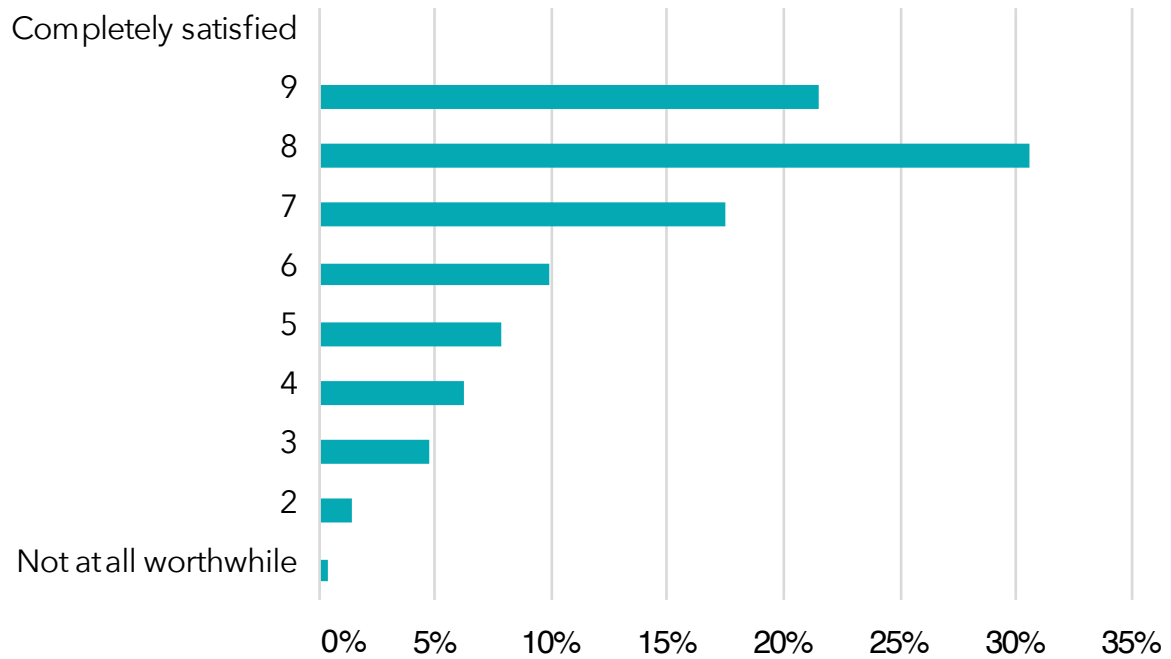
- 60% of respondents were in contact with family, friends or neighbours most days; 34% at least weekly but 6% were only in contact once a month or less. This did not vary with age.
- 26% of respondents **felt lonely some** of the time during the past week.
- **8% felt lonely most or all of the time.**

Self-reported measures of how people are feeling give an indication of personal well-being. Here we present the results of measures at either end of the answer scale ranging from zero (not at all) to ten (completely).

10% of respondents gave low **life satisfaction** scores compared to 5% cent in the UK. 31% gave very high **life satisfaction** scores, similar to the UK. On average life satisfaction in the county is similar to nationally.

13% of respondents gave low ratings of **how worthwhile they feel their life is**, considerably above the UK rate of 4%; and 21% gave high ratings, much lower than the UK rate of 35%. Overall this indicates lower levels of how worthwhile people in Herefordshire feel their life is compared to national levels.

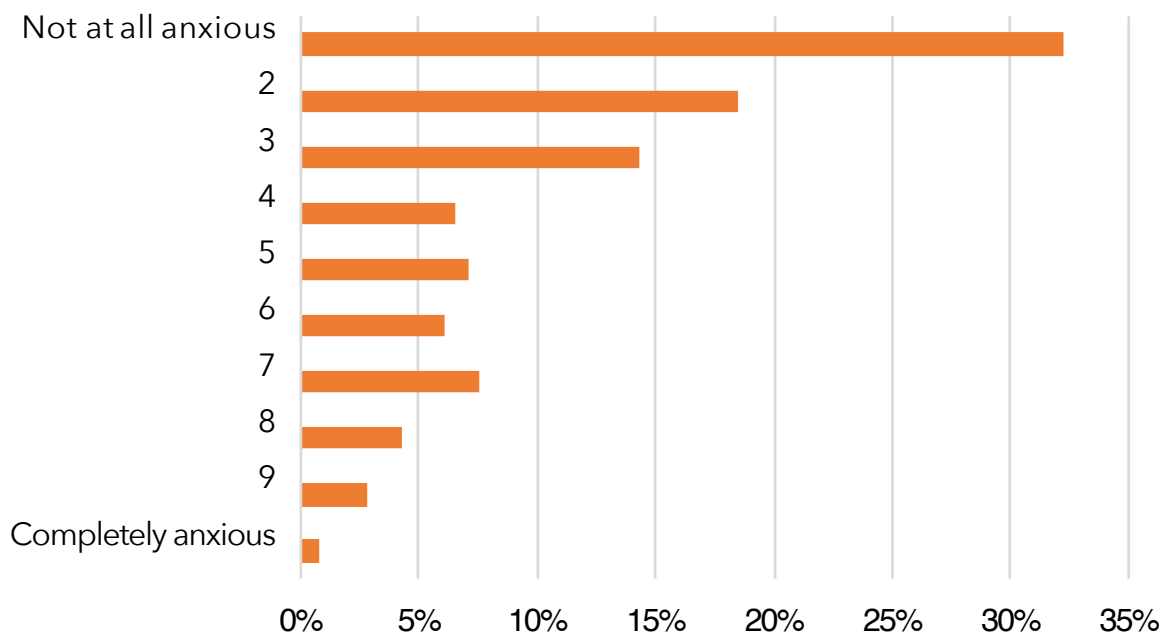
Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?



9% of respondents gave low happiness scores, similar to the UK (8% in 2017). 40% of respondents gave very high **happiness** scores, compared to the UK rate of 35%. Overall this indicates slightly higher levels of happiness in the county compared to nationally.

4% of respondents had very high **anxiety levels**. 22% had some anxiety and 51% had very low anxiety scores. On average levels of anxiety in Herefordshire are similar to UK levels.

Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?





ABOUT YOU & YOUR HOUSEHOLD

644 residents of Herefordshire returned the questionnaire. There was an over-representation of older respondents compared with the resident population, and results were weighted to account for this.

Nearly 70% who responded lived in a two or three-person household; approximately lived in a household with children aged 17 years old or under. The majority of respondents were either retired or working full time, followed by those working part-time, looking after the home or family or were self-employed. Half of those working worked set hours with little or no flexibility and a third worked flexibly where they generally set their own hours.

For those that work or used to work, the majority **felt that education at school or college** was useful to them in getting a job or running a business compared to other aspects.

52% of the respondents were happy with the amount of time they spent working, whereas 44% wanted to work less.

In terms of managing everyday costs, 63% never have to choose between paying mortgage/rental costs, energy costs, transport cost, food and clothing costs. However, 16% did have to choose about once a year, 15% did so monthly and 5% had to choose between these costs weekly or daily.

The majority (56%) of respondents felt their health was **good**,

A quarter thought it was fair and 20% reported their health to be **bad**.

38% of respondents said they have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity compared with 26% in 2012.

Other demographic information about the respondents:

- 90% identified as white British (compared with 94% at the 2011 Census)
- For nationality, 61% identified as English and 24% as British (compared with 72% as English and 21% as British in 2012).
- 94% identified as heterosexual or straight.
- 60% identified as Christian and 28% had no religion/belief (compared with 68% as Christian and 23% as no religion/belief in 2012).



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