

## Mental health

**'Communities**  
- have a massive impact  
on mental and physical wellbeing.  
Smaller tight knit communities tend  
to look after each other and offer  
support networks'

We  
found  
that

**Meeting people  
and socialising is  
important for our  
mental wellbeing**

- Socialising helps reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation.
- There are a lot of activities and groups taking place in local community spaces like libraries.
- People who met in groups and were out and about said they had good mental health, but transport can be an issue to get to these activities.
- Covid and not being able to socialise has had an impact on our mental health "It's been a really hard 2 years without properly seeing friends and family, so I think we need to get back to being able to do that. I know my mental health has suffered and I've had times when I've felt quite alone"

We  
found  
that

**We think mental  
health services  
could work better**

- Understanding where to look for help, accessing to mental health services, and waiting times can be an issue. Many services moved online to continue or provide support during Covid. This helped some people, but excluded others.
- There is concern about young people's mental health and the impact of Covid on them and their future.
- There are a range of services here that can offer early support with mental health worries e.g. Mental Health Matters, Community Hubs

We  
found  
that

- Data tells us that mental well-being in the area is improving but inequalities are a challenge.
- Rates of mental ill health are higher in the least affluent areas.
- Worrying about money is one of the biggest contributors for poor well-being and can have a wide range of impacts including physical health.

**Poverty and mental  
health are an issue**

We  
found  
that

**Awareness and  
understanding  
of mental health  
need to improve**

- 'It has taken years to finally get the help I needed whereby both my mental and physical health have improved beyond my wildest expectations thus elevating pressure on the NHS.'
- Young people said there was a need for education to manage mental health issues for all pupils.
- Everyone can be impacted by mental ill health: older people talked about dementia, young people about anxiety, veterans about PTSD and BAME about isolation.

We  
found  
that

**Our young  
people want to  
be resilient**

- Covid has been especially challenging for our younger generations.
- Anger, anxiety, family, self-worth and stress are the most common reasons for young people being referred to school counselling services or accessing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Having safe spaces to socialise is something that was often discussed, as well as chance to change how some people think badly of them.
- They want to be listened to, taken seriously and for their opinion to matter.

- The impact of Covid and the restrictions in place meant a lot of us spent more time in our local natural environment.
- We felt this helped our mental well-being but we need to think about how we make sure everyone use the spaces around us.

We  
found  
that

**Our local area is  
good for mental  
well-being**