

GREATER MANCHESTER BIG MENTAL WELLBEING CONVERSATION

Report of findings



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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Greater Manchester Conversation aimed to hear from people and communities across Greater Manchester about what’s important for their mental wellbeing.

The objective is to use the information to understand what matters and to shape future initiatives to improve mental wellbeing, making sure they reflect the needs of local people.

METHODOLOGY

The research consisted of a survey about individuals mental wellbeing with over 4000 people responding from the local communities and 9 online focus groups to explore people’s views in more depth, which took place between August and November 2020.

The Wellbeing Conversation was publicised via Greater Manchester Health and Social Care

Partnership and the Independent Mental Health Network websites. It was promoted further through sponsored social media advertising, targeted engagement with a range of diverse communities, mailouts and writing to all MP’s and local councillors in Greater Manchester.

Some statistics are below to demonstrate breadth of reach:

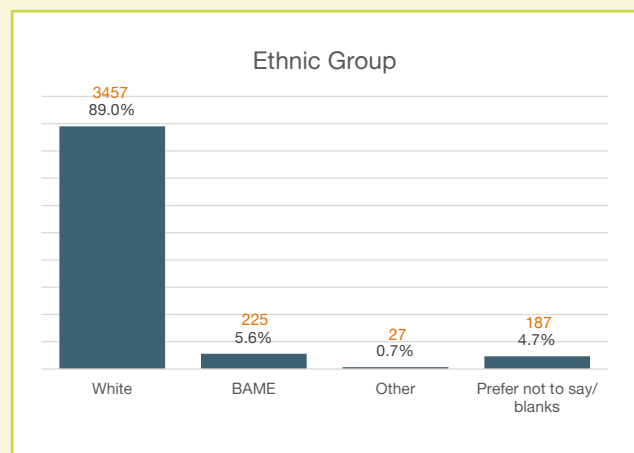
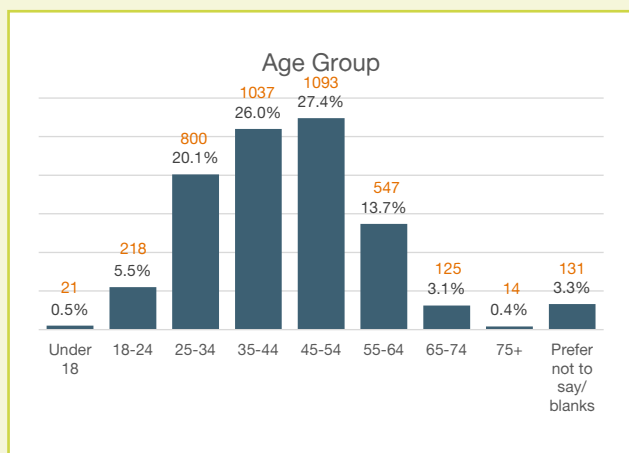
- Dedicated Facebook posts: 26
- Total Facebook post combined reach: 221,258
- Total Facebook post combined engagement (clicks, shares, reacts, comments): 3463
- Total dedicated Tweets: 50
- Total Tweet combined impressions: 18433
- Total Tweet combined engagement: 480

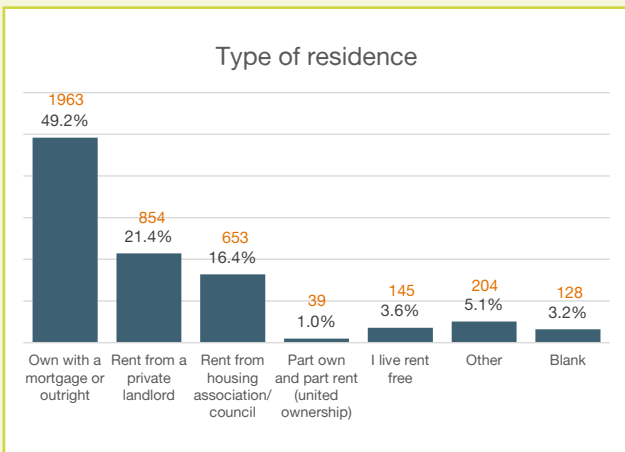
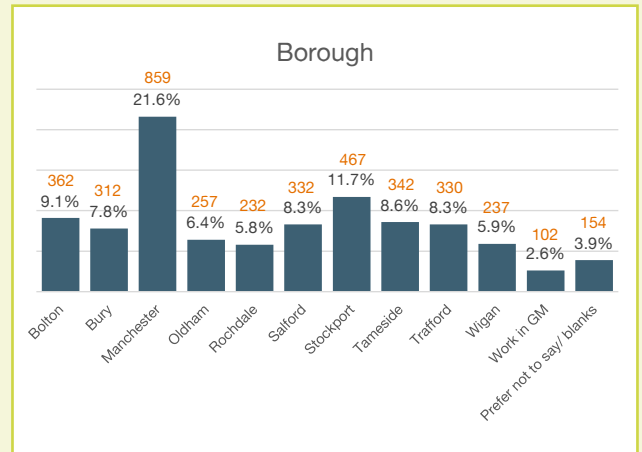
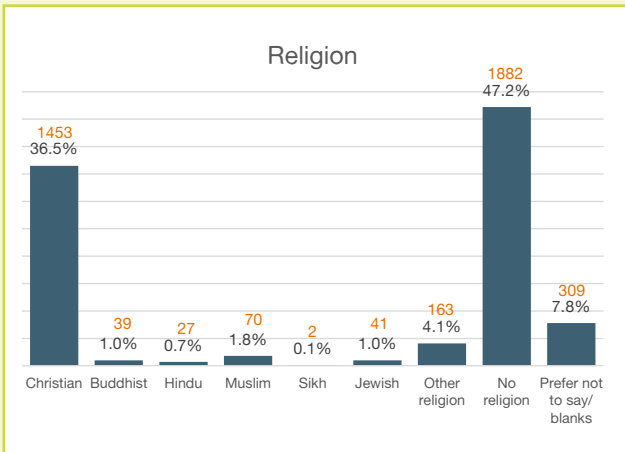
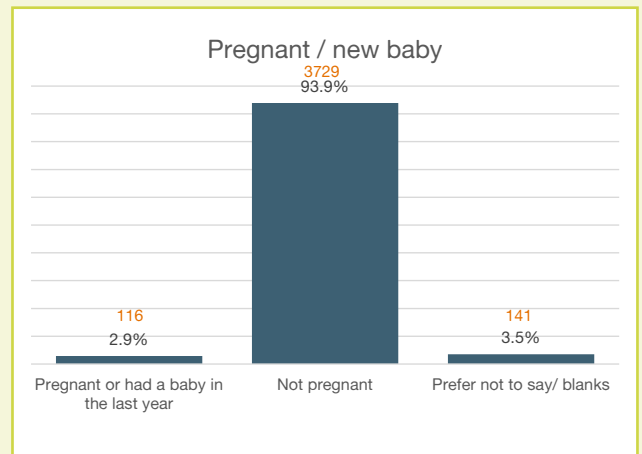
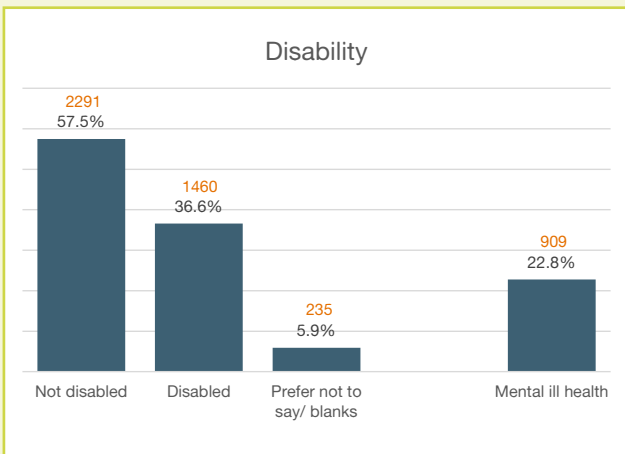
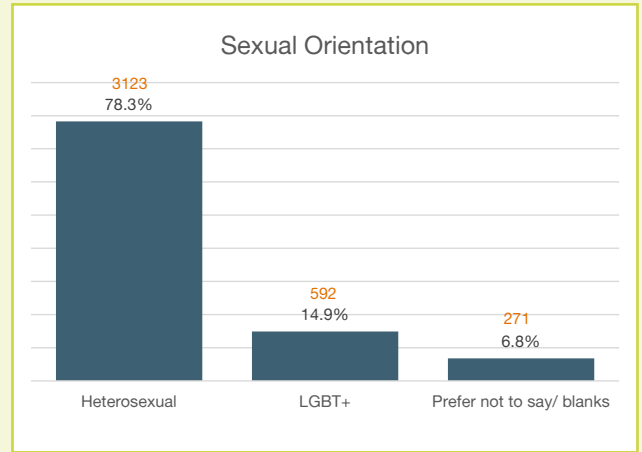
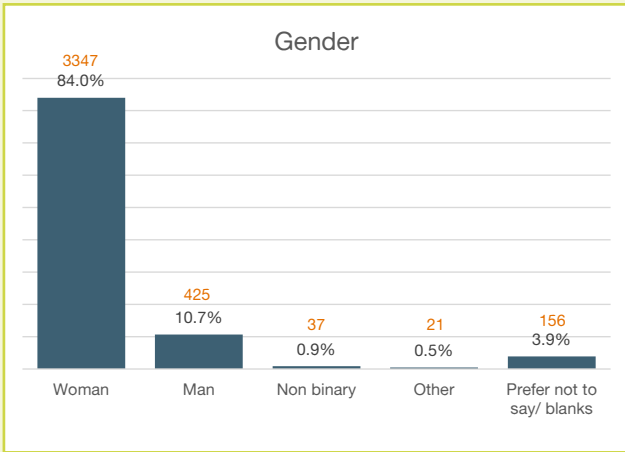
This report summarises the main findings from the research.

Who responded to the GM survey?

There were 4016 responses to the survey. 30, (0.7% total sample), were excluded as they did not meet the survey criteria of living or working within Greater Manchester

=> Results are based on 3986 responses from people who live and / or work in Greater Manchester, broken down as follows:





Numbers in Orange are absolute sample size

Sample sizes for most demographic groups were sufficient to explore for difference and although the sample was bias to women, there was still a robust sample of men, (425), represented.

Who attended focus groups?

- Group 1 – 24 Sept 2020 – 1-2.30pm – 4 attendees from different boroughs in Greater Manchester
- Group 2 – 23 Sept 2020 – 5-6.30pm – 5 attendees from different boroughs in Greater Manchester
- Group 3 – 28 Sept 2020 – 2-4pm – 7 attendees from different boroughs in Greater Manchester
- Group 4 – 28 Sept 2020 – 4-6pm – 7 attendees from different boroughs in Greater Manchester
- Group 5 – 5 Oct 2020 – 2-4pm – 11 attendees from different boroughs in Greater Manchester
- Group 6 – 9 Oct 2020 – 2-3pm – 18 attendees from GM BME Network
- Group 7 – 3 Nov 2020 – 6.30-8pm – 18 attendees from Caribbean & African Health Network
- Group 8 – 10 Nov 2020 – 1-3pm – 10 attendees from Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People
- Group 9 – 12 Nov 2020 – 3-5pm – 4 attendees from Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People

A note about Significant Differences

A statistical significance test gives us a formal process for using sample data to evaluate the likelihood of some claim about a population value. When a finding is significant, it means you can feel confident that's it real, not that it was due to chance in choosing the sample. The confidence level expresses how sure we are that, if we were to repeat a study using another population sample, we would get the same results.

- **99% confidence level** – there is a 1% chance that, if a study was repeated using a different population sample, the results would not be the same
- **95% confidence level** – there is a 5% chance that, if a study was repeated using a different population sample, the results would not be the same
- **90% confidence level** – there is a 10% chance that, if a study was repeated using a different population sample, the results would not be the same

WHAT IS MENTAL WELLBEING

Mental wellbeing describes how we are feeling and how well we cope with everyday life. All of us have mental wellbeing. If we have good mental wellbeing, we;

- feel relatively confident in ourselves,
- can build and maintain positive relationships with other people and enjoy making a contribution to our communities,
- cope with everyday stresses and manage life's ups and downs.

Although mental wellbeing can be defined differently depending on circumstances, it is generally agreed that it is about finding balance and being able to cope with whatever life throws at you, creating a life that is enjoyable and worth living. Across the focus groups there was consistency of voice which related to people's own ability / capacity rather than external factors.

“Mental wellbeing is about having the strength to deal with change and challenge and enjoying life.”

“It's different for each and every person. So, it's getting a balance of the things that work well in society, but also work well for you. And it's a balance where you've got things that make you happy, things that make you satisfied, things that give you a sense of accomplishment, what they also refer to as quality of life. It's having that sense of things going right in your life.”

“Mental wellbeing is very much about creating a life that is worth living, that meets your needs.”

PART 2: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS - HOW HAPPY ARE GREATER MANCHESTER RESIDENTS?

- The majority, (97%), of Greater Manchester citizens think that mental wellbeing is important or very important.
- The people surveyed highlight that too many people are not very happy (5.2/10), do not find life satisfying (5.1/10) and worthwhile (5.7/10) and have fairly high levels of anxiety (5.6/10).
- Most people claim they stay well day to day through non-medical interventions. Popular strategies are:
 - ensuring they take part in some form of activity, be that physical such as exercise, sport or walking or non-physical such as reading, listening to music, doing something creative or other hobbies
 - maintaining contact with friends and family
 - having good diet
 - getting outdoors
 - taking time out to relax
 - practicing mindfulness, meditation, breathing exercises or some other learned coping strategy
 - ensuring sufficient rest and sleep.
- Work (and/or college) is the single biggest factor associated with poor mental wellbeing and cited by around 1/3 of all respondents, followed by existing mental health illnesses and / or disabilities. Other key areas affecting a significant proportion of those surveyed were worries about family, friends, relationships or caring responsibilities, financial problems and the current COVID19 pandemic and associated restrictions impacting day to day life.
 - The question exploring concern over key factors impacting wellbeing supported the open-ended findings and found friends & family, income, safety, employment and finance to be top areas of concern. Even amongst those for whom they are relevant Public Transport and Education are not a cause for concern in relation to wellbeing.
- Whilst it is clear that better health services could improve people's mental wellbeing, there are also issues in people's work and personal lives, which if resolved, would aid wellness
 - 27% think that some form of therapy, group support or increased healthcare services or support would help improve their wellbeing. However, there are also a high level of non-medical interventions that are suggested below these that already featured strongly in the lists of strategies for staying well and things that get in the way of mental wellbeing. The responses to this question clearly indicated that there is no one single solution. Improving mental wellbeing across the population will require a whole system approach which involves everyone working together to bring about sustainable long term system change
- Whilst significantly more people know what to do if they wanted to improve their mental wellbeing, (58%), there are 32% who are unsure and a further 10% who have no idea. Of most concern are the people who claim they do know, but are still struggling and not seeking support, (16% surveyed).
 - Those who claim to know what to do to improve their mental wellbeing are much more likely to take positive action – get support, meet & talk with friends / family, use coping strategies, take exercise, go to therapy, have me time.
- Whilst people feel that learning & embracing new experiences are important and willingly give support to others, they do not feel connected to their communities.

- Better support and involvement, good facilities & events and social groups are key elements that would make people feel more part of their community. However, a high proportion show no interest (18% nothing / don't know, 4% not sure if want to be part of it).
- Green open space, the ambiance of the surroundings, good facilities & events and people behaving in a more supportive 'community' way would meet most people's needs, (63%) for a place of positive wellbeing. The responses to this question emphasize that we need to focus on shaping places to be conducive to health. Improving mental wellbeing is as much about shaping places as it is about engaging people.

SUMMARY OF KEY DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

BAME vs white

The BAME demographic group are happier and less anxious than the white demographic.

Whilst both demographics top answer for staying well is to exercise, BAME more likely to cite good diet to stay well and be more likely than white to use some form of controlled approach such as mindfulness, meditation or learned coping strategies.

Both groups view work as the top issue that gets in the way of mental wellbeing. Whilst white cite general anxiety / depression as the second issue that gets in the way of mental wellbeing, for BAME this comes below financial problems, which are more likely to get in the way of mental wellbeing than they are for the white group.

The question exploring concern over key factors impacting wellbeing supported the open-ended findings and found BAME are more concerned about finance and when prompted the housing situation and education.

Top answers to help improve wellbeing for both BAME and white are the same as the overall sample, (therapy, group support or increased healthcare services or support). BAME are also more likely say increased exercise would help. Overall White and BAME equally likely to know what to do to improve their mental wellbeing

BAME feel that learning & embracing new experiences are less important and feel less connected to their families, but do feel that they take notice of the simple things that give them joy more than the white demographic group

Good community facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, local community events and places to walk) would be more likely to make BAME than white demographic feel more part of the community.

Top things to make their local area a place of positive wellbeing are the same as the total sample for both the white and BAME demographic groups: Green open space, the ambiance of the surroundings, (such as stress free, clean areas with less traffic, no pollution and drugs), good facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, accessible parking, local community events and places to walk) and people behaving in a more supportive 'community' way. White demographic group endorsing top positive wellbeing attributes more than BAME.

Disabled vs non-disabled

Non-disabled are happier, feel more satisfied with their lives, feel things they do are more worthwhile and feel less anxious than disabled.

Non-disabled more likely to stay well by exercising including walking, spending time with or talking to family / friends, ensuring a good diet, spending time outdoors, or having relaxation time where they might read and / or sleep. Disabled do rate exercise as the top factor, but are much more likely to do non sport activities, use controlled approaches, (such as mindfulness, meditation or learned coping strategies), take medication or attend therapy than the non-disabled group.

For non-disabled work / college tops the list of things that gets in the way of mental wellbeing and this, along with family / friends' issues are more of a concern for them than the disabled group. For the disabled group general anxiety / depression / mental illness is the biggest concern and cited much more than for the non-disabled group.

The question exploring concern over key factors impacting wellbeing supported the open-ended findings and found disabled are more concerned about income, safety, employment, finance, creativity, the housing situation, public transport and education.

To help improve wellbeing disabled more likely to cite use of professional help, whilst non-disabled most likely to try to seek support from family & friends and look to get more me time / down time. Overall non-disabled more likely than disabled to know what to do if they wanted to improve their mental wellbeing.

Disabled have lower agreement with all the attitude statements than non-disabled, meaning they feel learning & embracing new experiences are less important, feel less connected to their families & friends, feel that they take less notice of the simple things that give them joy, feel they give less time to support others, feel less physically active daily and even less connected with their communities than non-disabled.

Good community facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, local community events and places to walk), would be more likely to make non-disabled than disabled feel more part of the community.

Top things to make their local area a place of positive wellbeing are the same as the total sample for both the non-disabled and disabled demographic groups: Green open space, the ambiance of the surroundings, (such as stress free, clean areas with less traffic, no pollution and drugs), good facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, accessible parking, local community events and places to walk) and people behaving in a more supportive 'community' way. Non-disabled group endorsing top 2 positive wellbeing attributes more than disabled.

Men vs women

Women rate the "things they do in their life are worthwhile" higher than men do.

Whilst both demographics top answer for staying well is to exercise, women more likely than men

to cite good diet, spending time with or talking to friends/ family and / or having relaxation time where they might read and / or sleep to stay well.

Work issues tops the list of things that gets in the way of mental wellbeing for both genders. However, for women, work along with family / friends' issues get in the way of mental wellbeing more than they do for men.

The question exploring concern over key factors impacting wellbeing supported the open-ended findings and found women are more concerned about family & friends, and when prompted safety, green spaces, creativity and education, whilst men are more concerned about finance.

To help improve wellbeing women more likely to cite use of professional help than men as well as being most likely to seek support from family & friends and look to get more me time / down time. Men more likely than women to cite greater financial security as a means of improving wellbeing. Overall women, are more likely than men to know what to do if they wanted to improve their mental wellbeing.

Women feel that learning & embracing new experiences are more important, they feel more connected to their families & friends, give more time to support others, and feel that they take notice of the simple things that give them joy than men.

Top things to make both men and women feel more a part of the community are the same as the total sample – good community facilities and events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, local community events and places to walk), and better community, support and involvement. However, women also more likely to favour more social groups than men as a way to improve their community.

Most popular elements to make their local area a place of positive wellbeing are the same as the total sample for both women and men: Green open space, the ambiance of the surroundings, (such as stress free, clean areas with less traffic, no pollution and drugs), good facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment

in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, accessible parking, local community events and places to walk) and people behaving in a more supportive 'community' way. Women endorsing top positive wellbeing attributes more than men.

Younger vs older

Although they see mental wellbeing as very important, 55+ do not rate it as highly as their younger counterparts with 96% saying mental wellbeing is very important / important amongst under 55's VS 98% amongst younger age group.

Under 55s are more anxious than their older counterparts.

Over 55s more likely to stay well than Under 55s through walking, getting outdoors, reading or just keeping themselves occupied / busy. Under 55s more likely to exercise, spend time with family / friends or try to have time to themselves.

Over 55s have similar concerns to their younger counterparts, but with the exception of health and loneliness where impact on mental wellbeing is higher, many factors (especially work / college, general anxiety or mental illness and/ or financial problems) are not having such a big impact on their mental wellbeing as that of the under 55s.

The question exploring concern over key factors impacting wellbeing supported the open-ended findings and found under 55s are more concerned about income, safety, employment, finance, the housing situation and education.

In pursuit of improved wellbeing under 55s more likely to cite use of professional help increased financial security, more down time, more exercise and increased use of controlled approaches, (mindfulness, meditation & coping strategies), than their counterparts, whilst over 55s say they'd see more of family and friends and feel things would improve with the end of COVID and restrictions. Overall, the over 35s, are more likely than the under 35s to know what to do if they wanted to improve their mental wellbeing.

Whilst all ages do not feel connected to their community, younger people feel even less connected. New experiences are embraced more by younger people, whilst older people feel they get more joy from simple things.

Good community facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, local community events and places to walk), more community support, more social groups and better communication about events and facilities would be even more likely to make under 55s than over 55s feel more part of the community. Over 55s more likely than under 55s to say that the end of COVID and restrictions or better adherence to COVID rules would make them feel more part of the community.

Whilst for all age groups green open space tops the list of positive wellbeing factors, 55+ more likely to want more pleasant surroundings than their younger counterparts who want good community facilities and events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, accessible parking, local community events and places to walk).

Heterosexual vs LGBT+

Heterosexuals are happier, feel that life is more satisfying and worthwhile and are less anxious than LGBT+.

Heterosexuals more likely than LGBT+ to stay well by spending time with family and / or go walking whilst LGBT+ more likely to choose a non-sporting activity, (mostly creative such as art & crafts or writing), or controlled approaches such as meditation and mindfulness.

Work is the top factor getting in the way of wellbeing for both Heterosexual and LGBT+ groups. However, for LGBT+ depression/ anxiety / mental ill health is a very close second and along with financial problems much more of a concern than they are for the heterosexual group.

The question exploring concern over key factors impacting wellbeing supported the open-ended findings and found LGBT+ are more concerned about employment, finance, creativity, the housing situation and public transport, but less concerned about education than heterosexuals.

To help improve wellbeing LGBT+ more likely to cite use of professional help than their counterpart whilst heterosexuals more likely to seek more me time. Overall heterosexuals more

likely than LGBT+ to know what to do if they wanted to improve their mental wellbeing.

LGBT+ have lower agreement with all statements than heterosexuals except learning and embracing new experiences, meaning they feel less connected to their families & friends, feel that they take less notice of the simple things that give them joy, feel they give less time to support others, feel less physically active daily and even less connected with their communities than heterosexuals.

Good community facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, local community events and places to walk),

would be more likely to make LGBT+ than Heterosexual feel more part of the community.

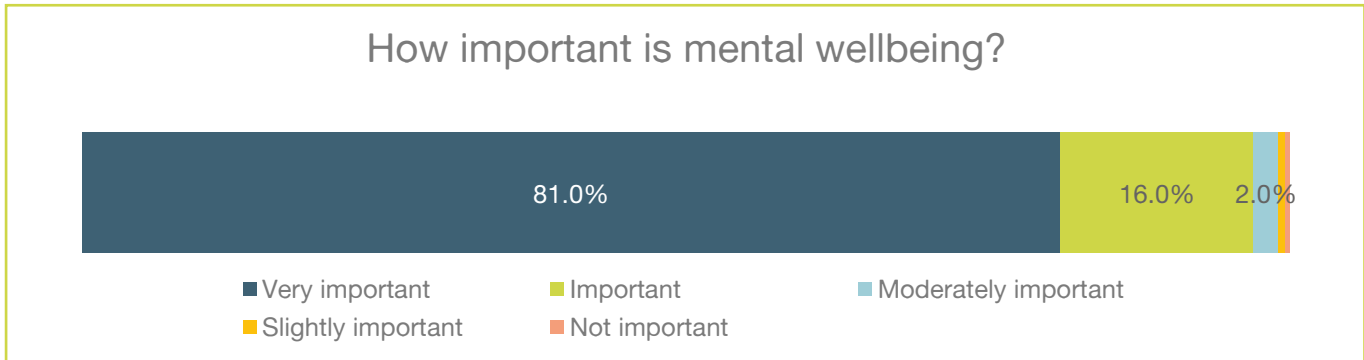
Most popular elements to make their local area a place of positive wellbeing are the same as the total sample for both Heterosexuals and LGBT+ - Green open space, the ambiance of the surroundings, (such as stress free, clean areas with less traffic, no pollution and drugs), good facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, accessible parking, local community events and places to walk), and people behaving in a more supportive 'community' way. However, heterosexuals endorsing top positive wellbeing factor – green open space - more highly than LGBT+.



PART 3: LOOKING AFTER OUR MENTAL WELLBEING

WHAT IS THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER?

The majority, (97%), of Greater Manchester citizens think that mental wellbeing is important or very important.

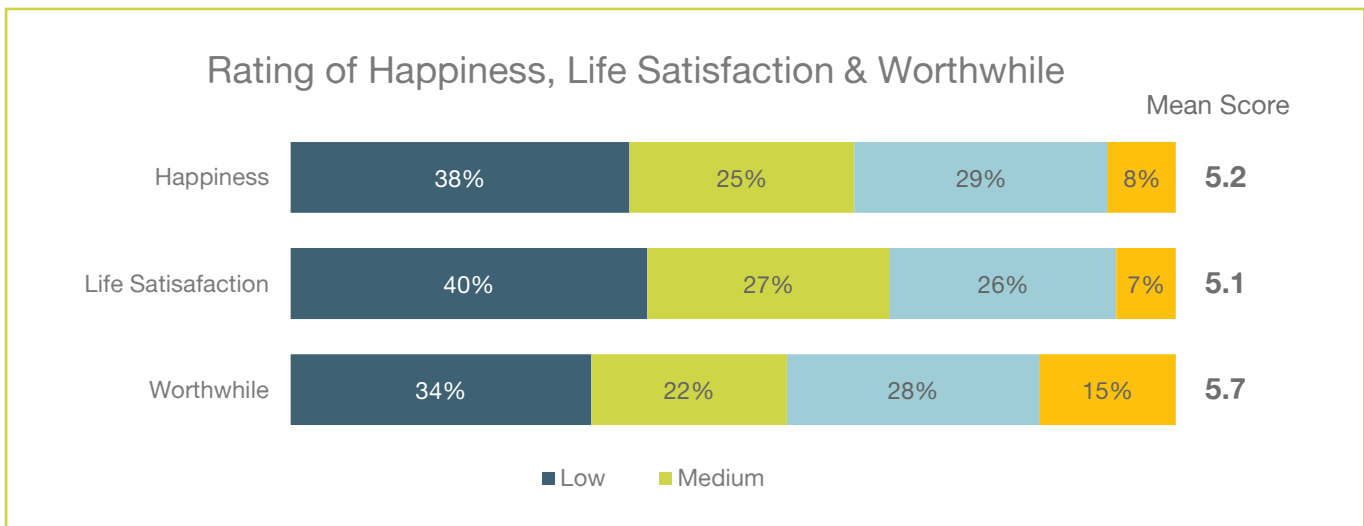


Although they see mental wellbeing as very important, 55+ do not rate it as highly as their younger counterparts.

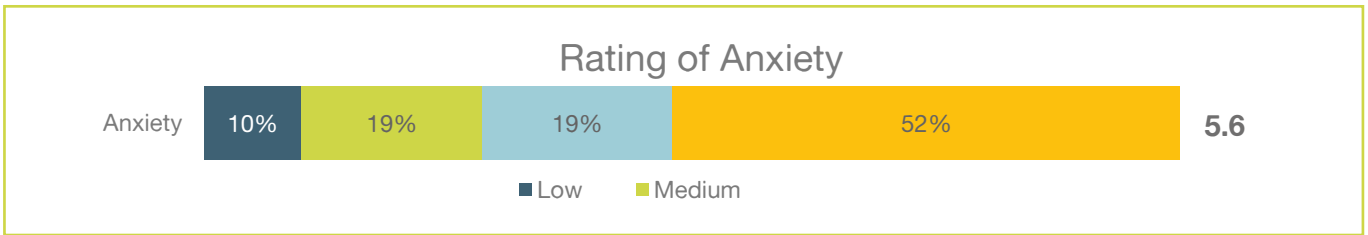
How important is Mental Wellbeing?

Age (sample size)	% rating as Very Important / Important
Total Sample	97%
Under 35 (1039)	97%
35-44 (1037)	97%
45-54 (1093)	98%
55+ (868)	96%

Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q1



The people surveyed claim to be not very happy, do not find life satisfying, and worthwhile and have fairly high levels of anxiety.

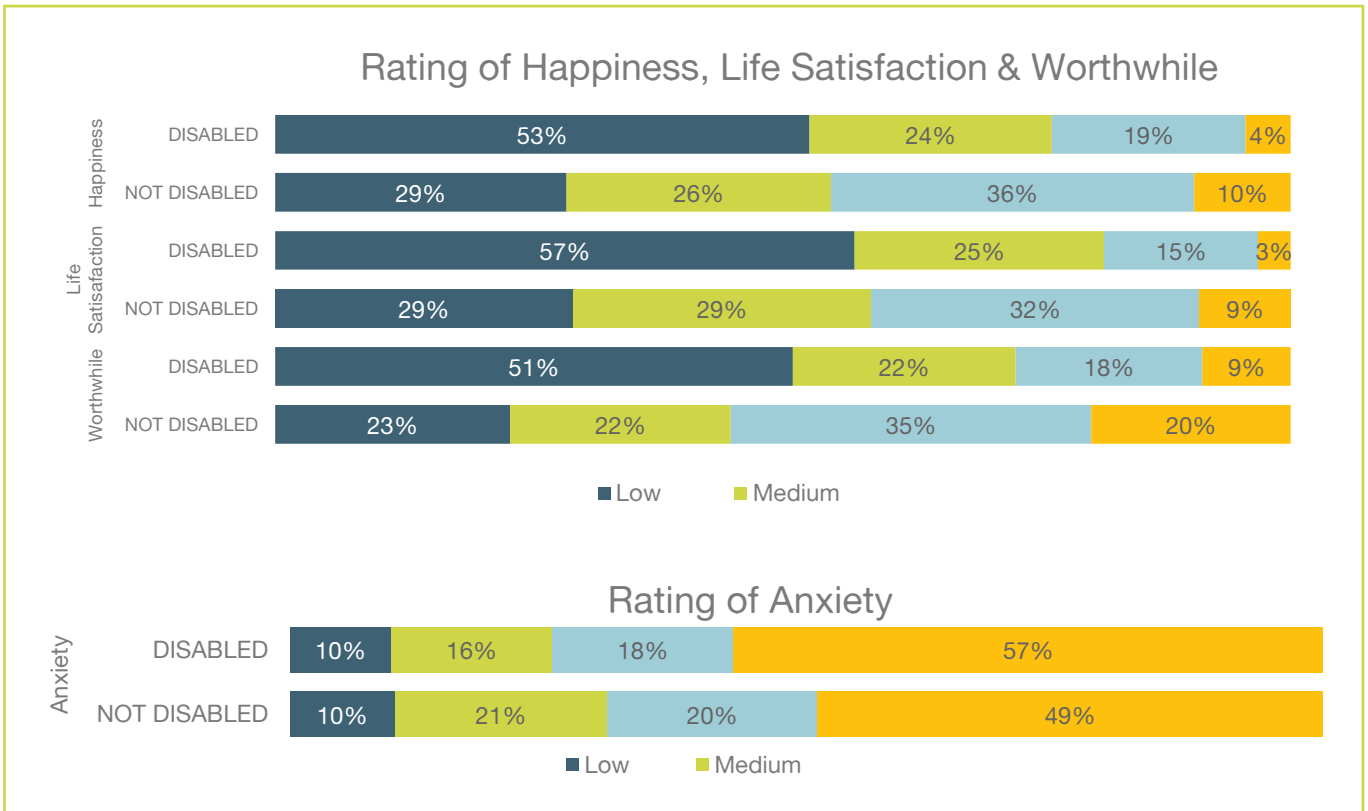


Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q7 on a scale of 1-10

For Happiness, Life satisfaction & Worthwhile Low = 1-4; Medium - 5-6; High = 7-8; Very High = 9-10

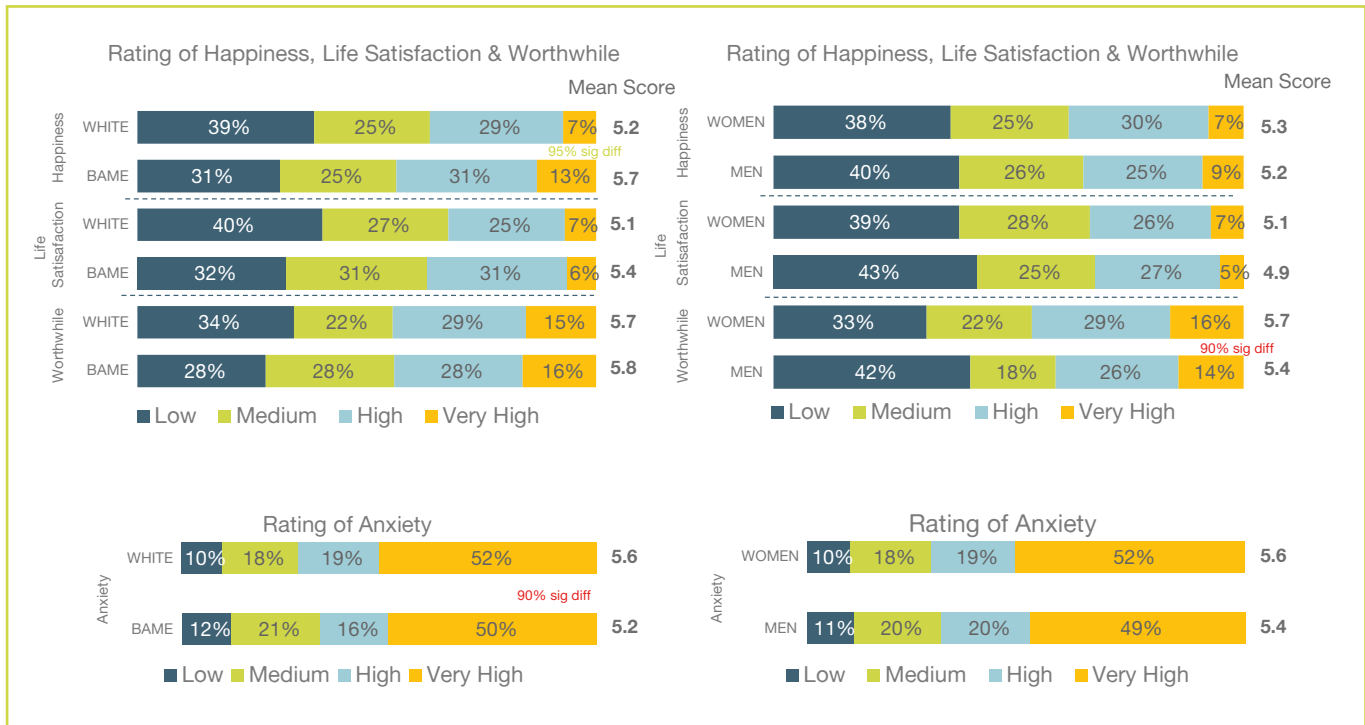
For Anxiety Low = 1; Medium = 2-3; High = 4-5; Very High = 6-10

Non-disabled are happier, feel more satisfied with their lives, feel things they do are more worthwhile and feel less anxious than disabled.



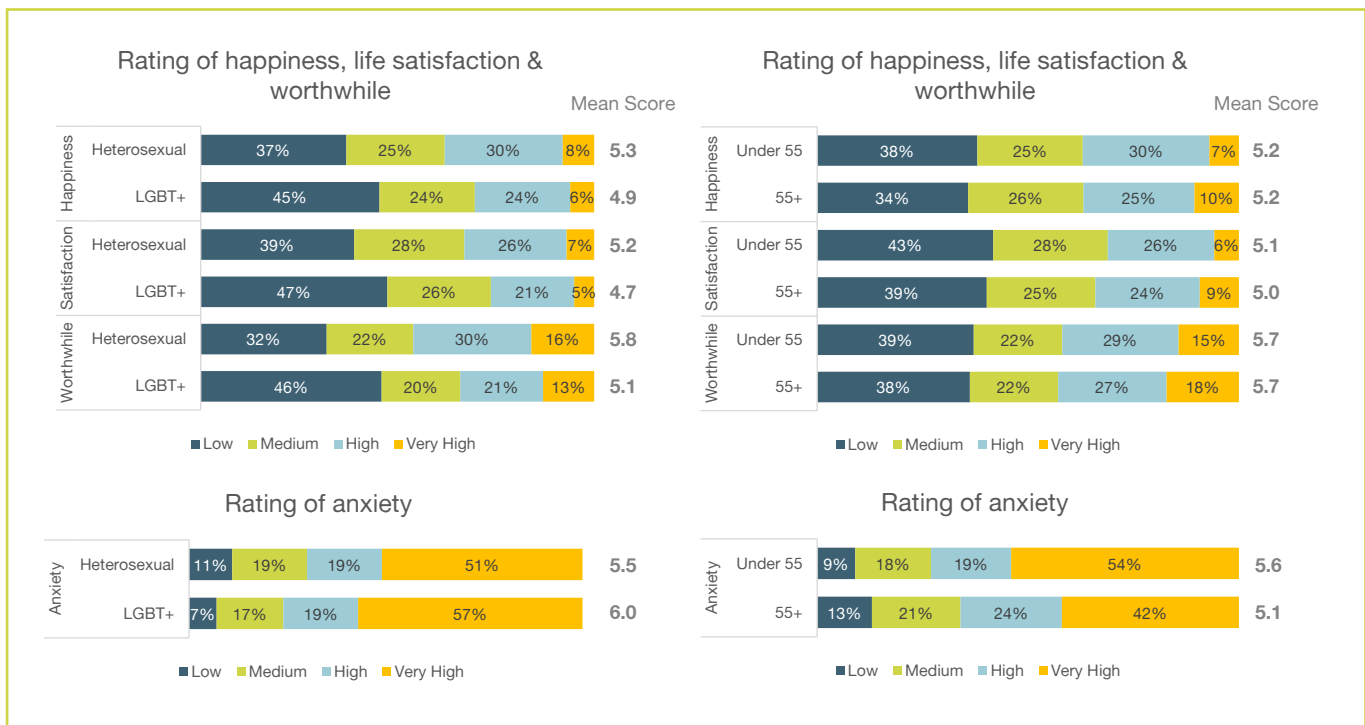
Source: Q7 on a scale of 1-10; Non-Disabled 2291 people, Disabled 1460 people

BAME are happier and less anxious than white, whilst women rate the “things they do in their life are worthwhile” higher than men do.



Source: Q7 on a scale of 1-10; White 3547 people, BAME 225 people; Women 3347 people, Men 425 people

Heterosexuals are happier, feel that life is more satisfying and worthwhile and are less anxious than LGBT+. Under 55s are more anxious than their older counterparts.

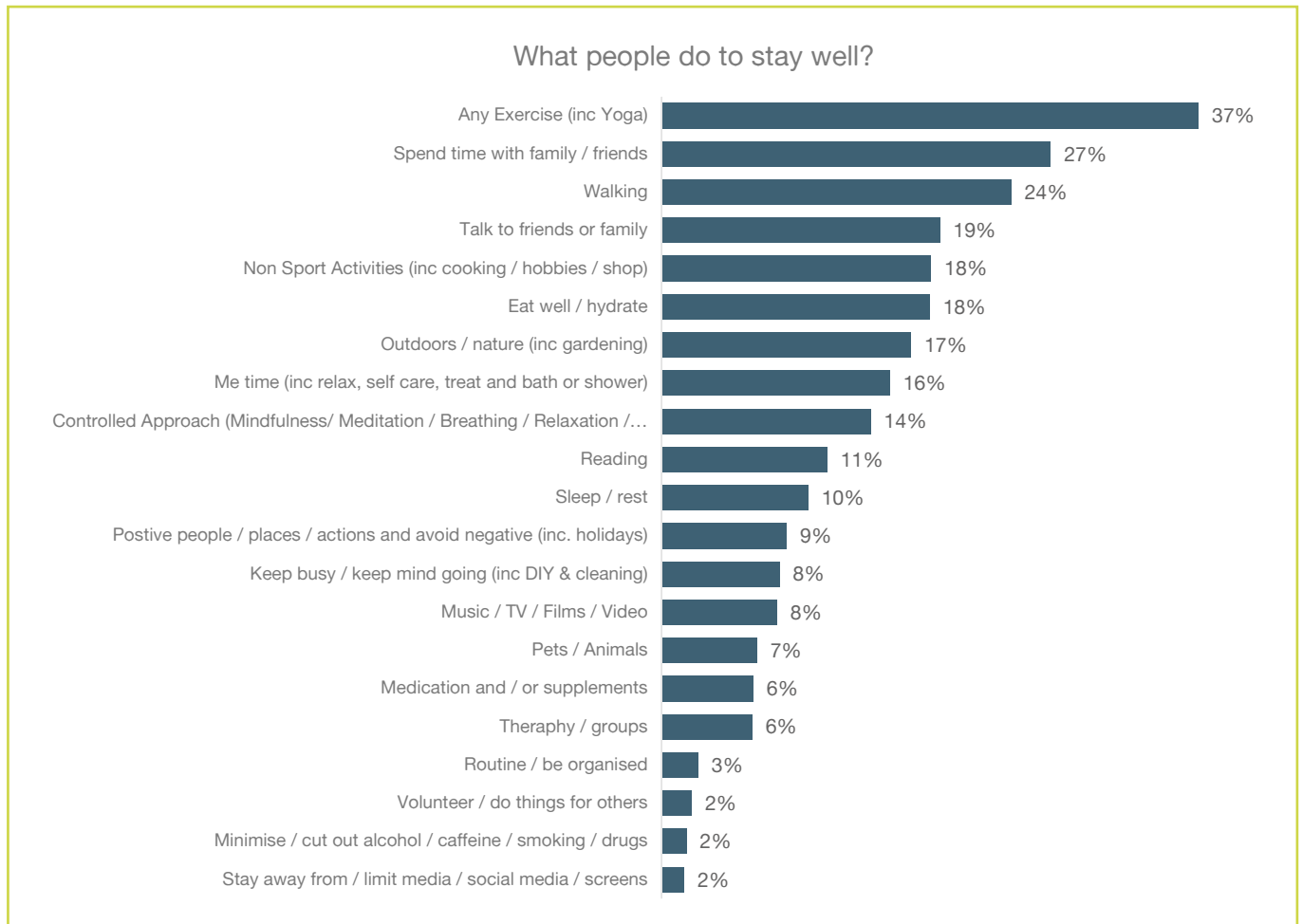


Source: Q7 on a scale of 1-10; 3123 Heterosexual, 592 LGBT+; 3169 Under 55, 686 55+

STRATEGIES FOR PROTECTING MENTAL WELLBEING

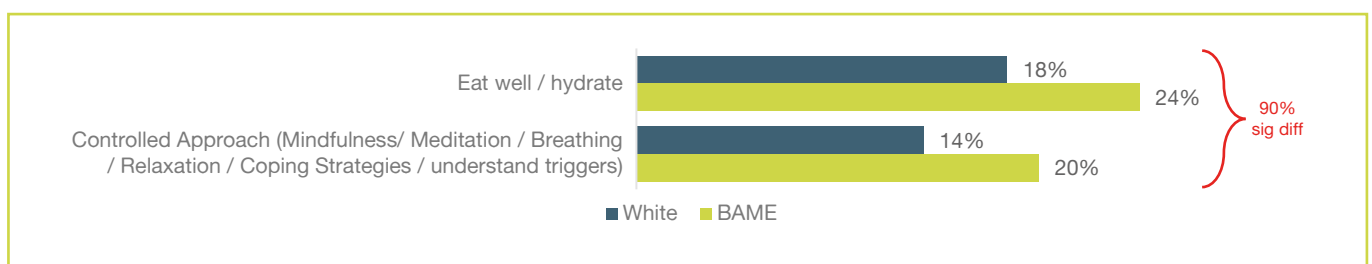
What do people do to stay well?

Most people claim they stay well day to day through non-medical interventions such as ensuring they take part in some form of activity, be that physical such as exercise, sport or walking or non-physical such as reading, listening to music, something creative or other hobbies, maintaining contact with friends and family, having good diet, getting outdoors, taking time out to relax, practicing mindfulness, meditation, breathing exercises or some other learned coping strategy and / or ensuring sufficient rest and sleep.



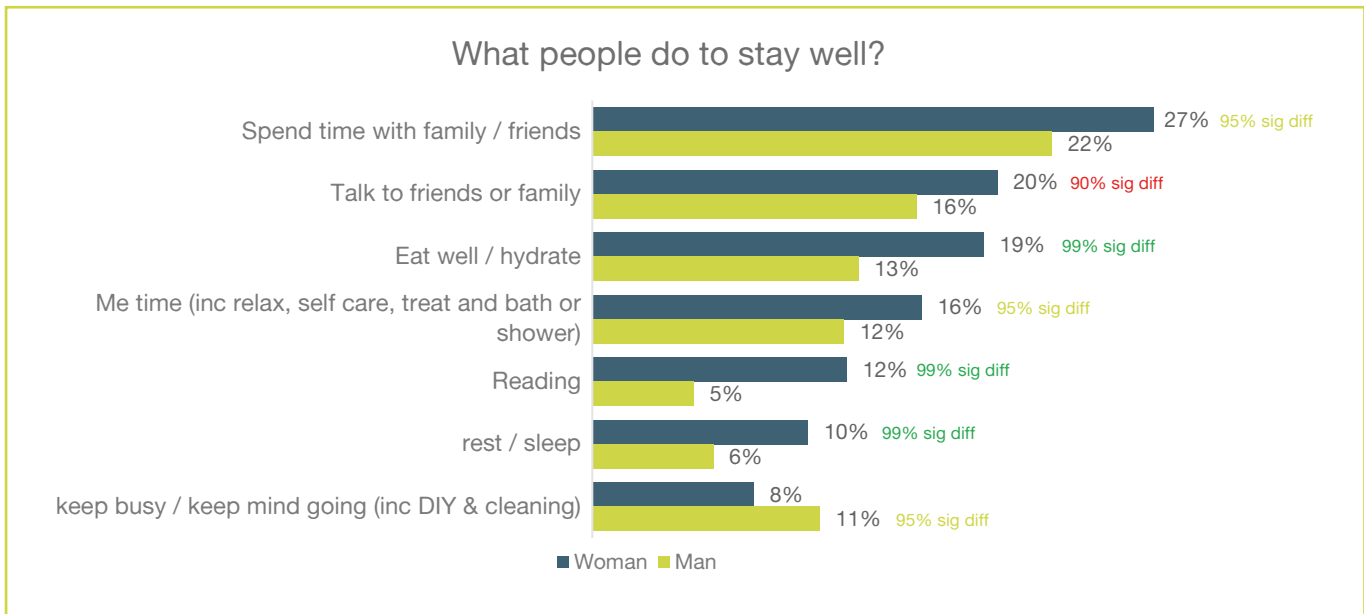
Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q2

Top answer are the same for all demographic groups: stay well through some form of exercise. However, BAME and women more likely to cite good diet to stay well. In addition, BAME claim to be more likely to use some form of controlled approach, (such as mindfulness, meditation or learned coping strategies), whilst women spend time with or talk to friends/ family, have relaxation time where they might read and / or sleep.



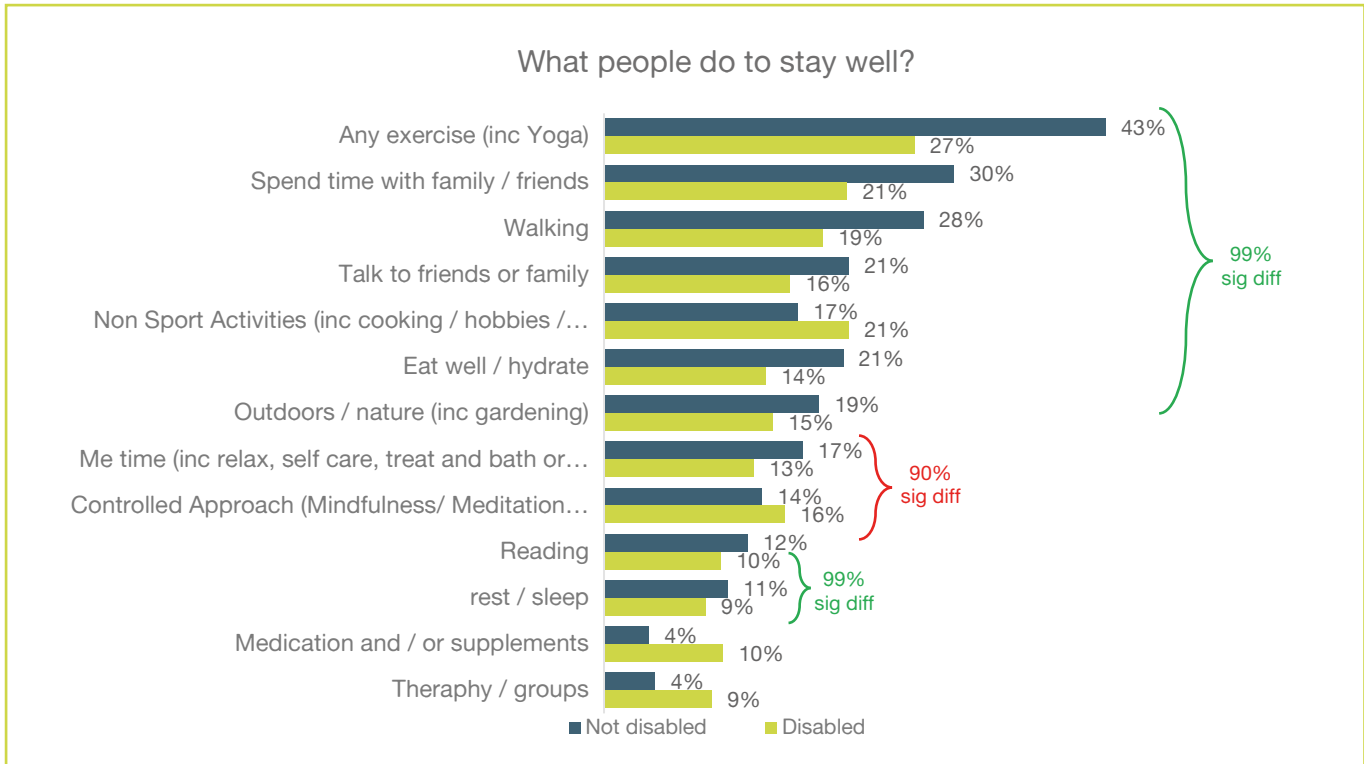
Source: Q2, White 3547 people, BAME 225 people

Men, on the other hand, are more likely to say they keep busy



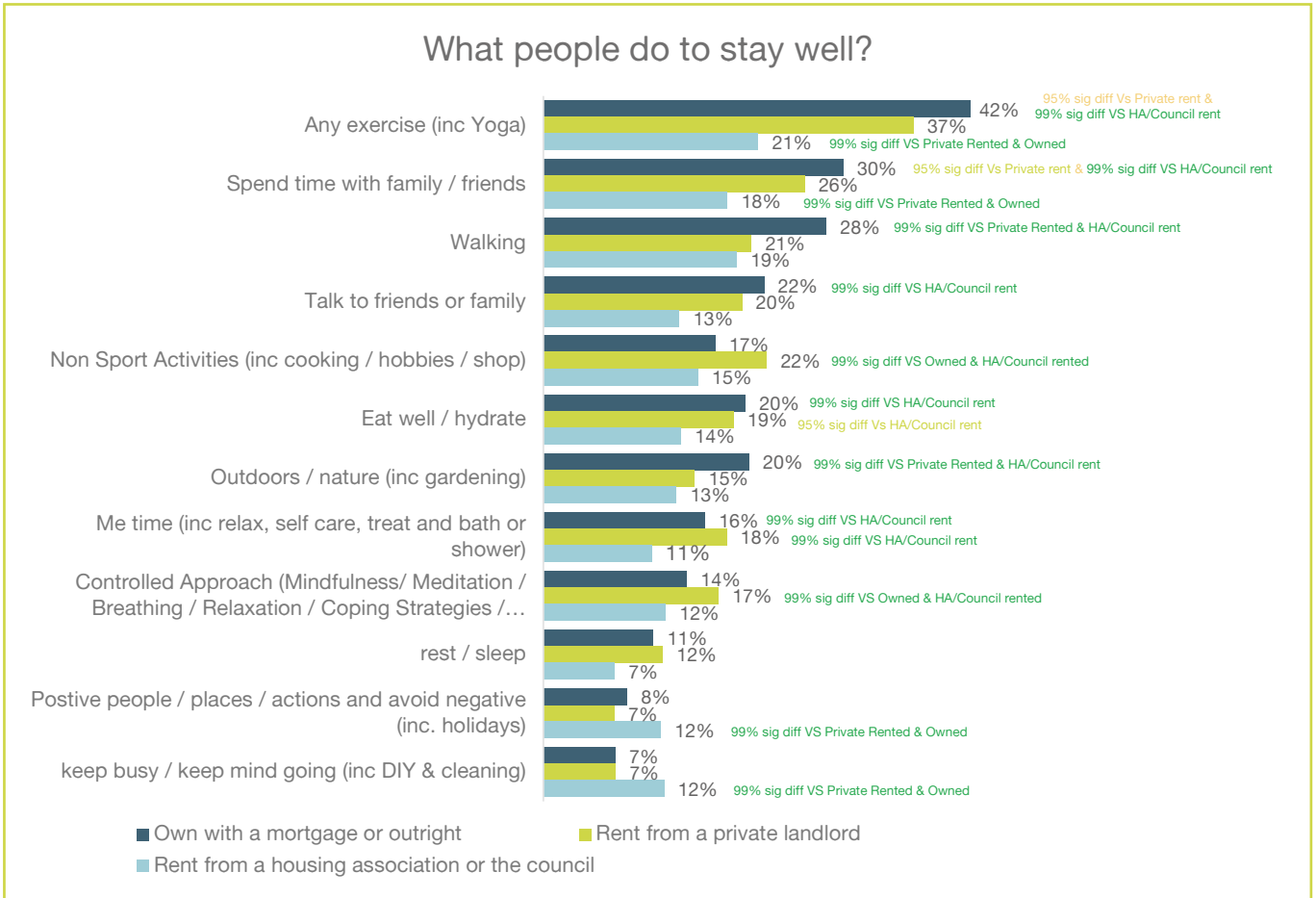
Source: Q2, Women 3347 people, Men 425 people

Non-disabled more likely to stay well by exercising including walking, spending time with or talking to family / friends, ensuring a good diet, spending time outdoors, or having relaxation time where they might read and / or sleep. Disabled do rate exercise as the top factor, but are much more likely to do non sport activities, use controlled approaches, take medication or attend therapy.



Source: Q2, Non-Disabled 2291 people, Disabled 1460 people

Top answer for all groups is exercise. However, home owners even more likely to take exercise, (including walking), spend time with or talk to family / friends than those in rented to stay well. Those who rent from a private landlord are more likely to partake in non-sporting activities and controlled coping approaches such as mindfulness whilst those who rent from a Housing Association or the Council are more likely try to avoid negative people, places or activities and try to stay positive and /or keep busy.



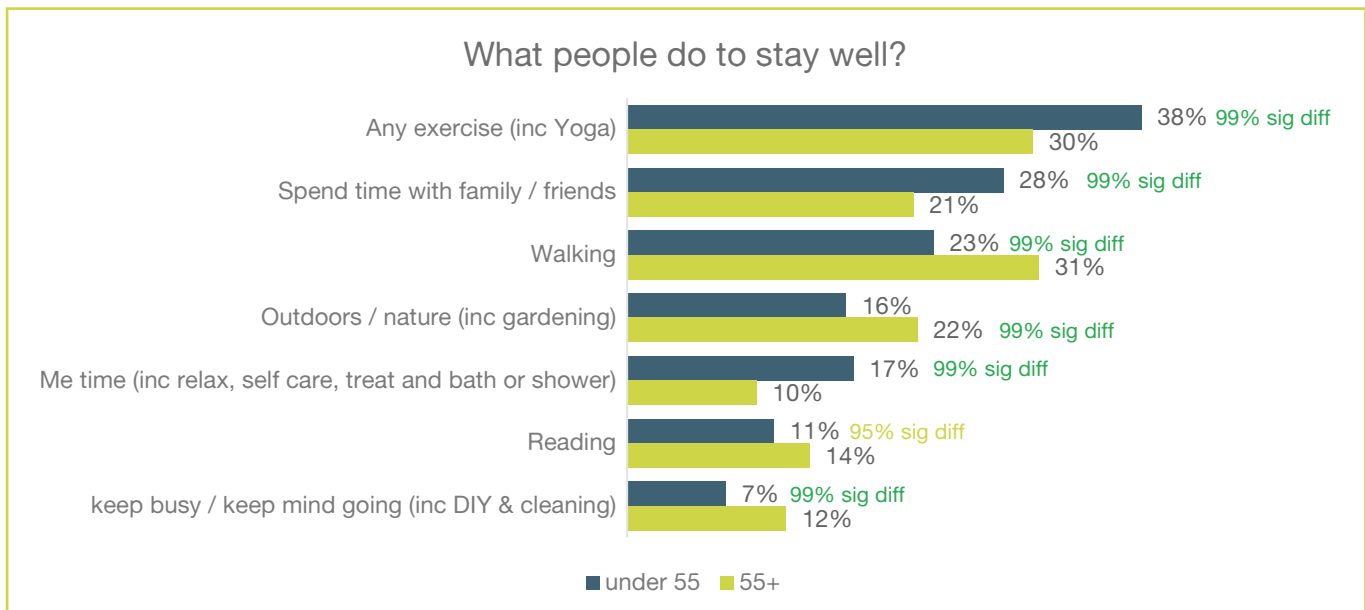
Source: Q2, 1963 Own Home, 854 Rent from Private Landlord, 653 Rent from Housing Association / Council

Heterosexuals more likely than LGBT+ to stay well by spending time with family and / or go walking whilst LGBT+ more likely to choose a non-sporting activity, (mostly creative such as art & crafts or writing), or controlled approaches such as meditation and mindfulness.



Source: Q2, 3123 Heterosexual, 592 LGBT+; 3169 Under 55, 686 55+

Over 55s more likely to stay well than Under 55s through walking, getting outdoors, reading or just keeping themselves occupied / busy. Under 55s more likely to exercise, spend time with family / friends or try to have time to themselves.



Source: Q2, 3169 Under 55s, 686 55+

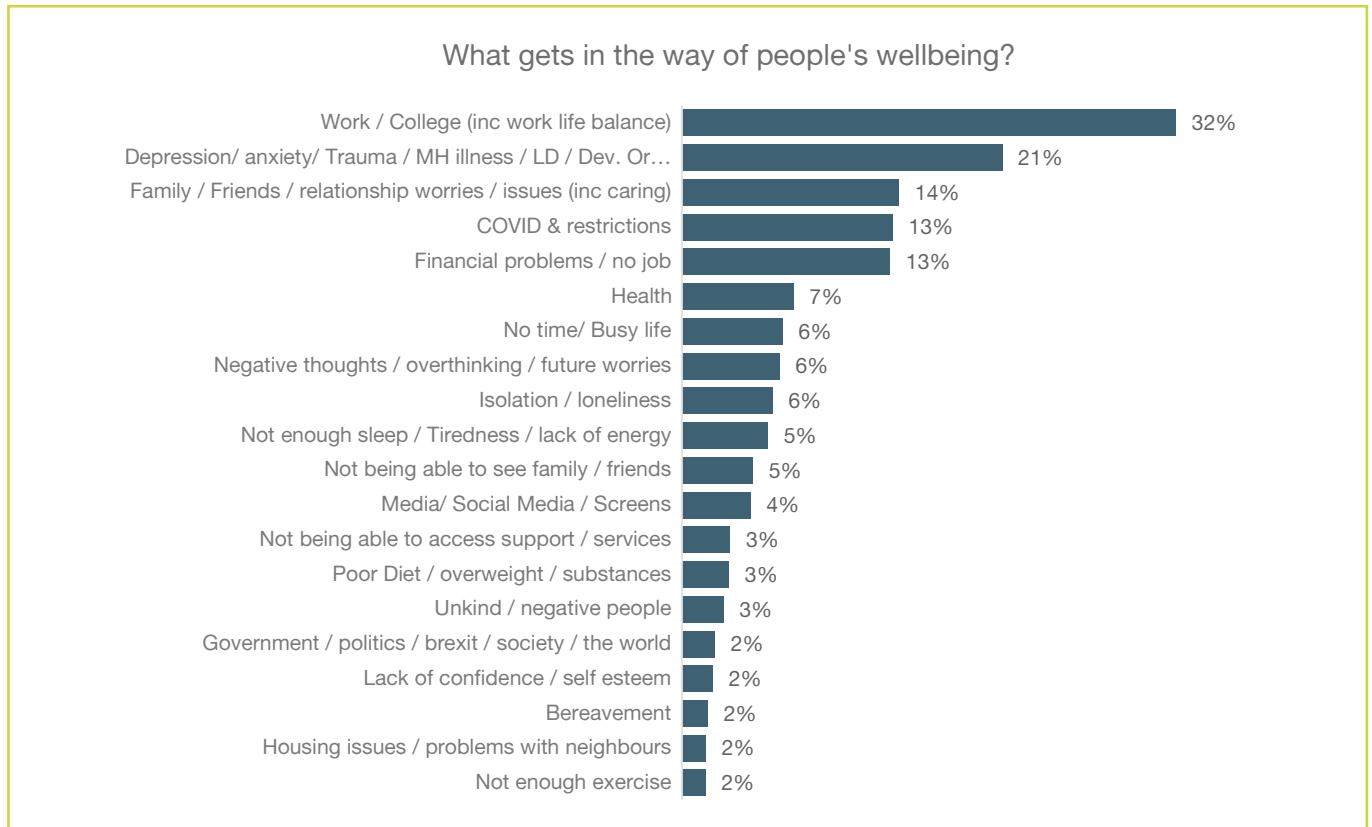
In the focus groups people are echoing the survey and stay well through ‘everyday’ activities (exercise, walking, hobbies), contact with friends and family, a good diet and getting into the outdoors:

- “Exercise and being outside in the fresh air are really important”*
- “I usually walk my dog”*
- “Things like going out into nature for walks and runs, meditating, connecting with people”*
- “Running and walking and getting out of the house”*
- “Making sure that I get enough sleep. Eating well. Exercising, fresh air is crucial. And having a sense of meaning and purpose”*
- “Going and meeting my friends”*
- “Good relationship with my parents and some friends that I can speak to about how I am feeling”*
- “Be kind to myself.....give myself that time to breathe again”*
- “Getting up and going to work every day, that feeling of routine gave me a sense of purpose essentially”*
- “I try and eat a healthy balanced diet”*
- “I’m a great family person, so it’s always been a very big part of my mental wellbeing”*
- “I tend to do things that are artistic”*
- “Exercise and fresh air, sitting in the garden”*

WHAT IS CAUSING POOR MENTAL WELLBEING

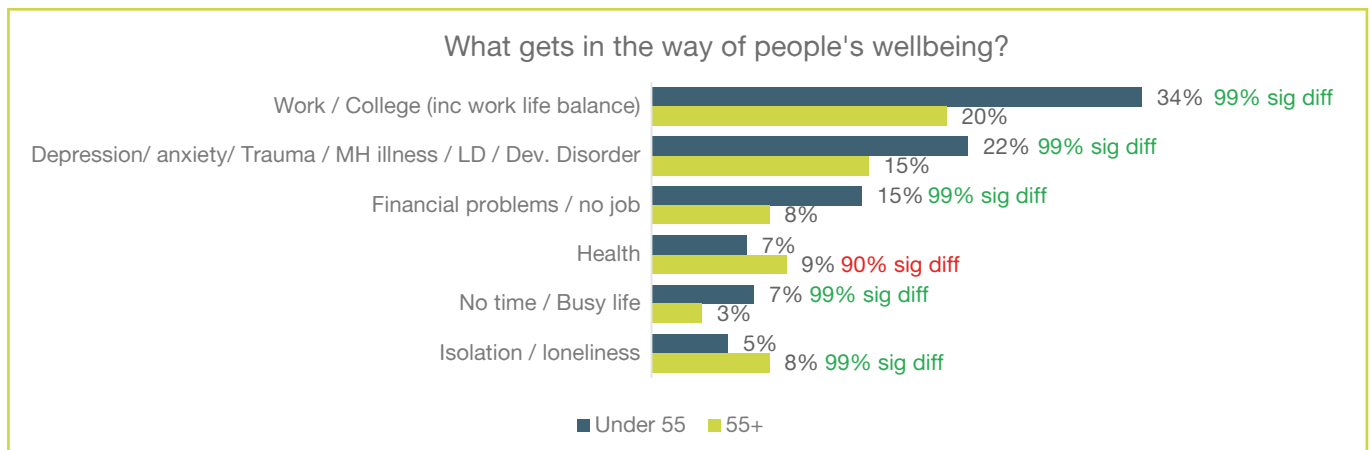
What gets in the way of people’s wellbeing?

Work (and/or college) is the single biggest factor associated with poor mental wellbeing and cited by around 1/3 of all respondents, followed by existing mental health illnesses and / or disabilities. Other key areas affecting a significant proportion of those surveyed were worries about family, friends, relationships or caring responsibilities, financial problems and the current COVID19 pandemic and associated restrictions impacting day to day life.



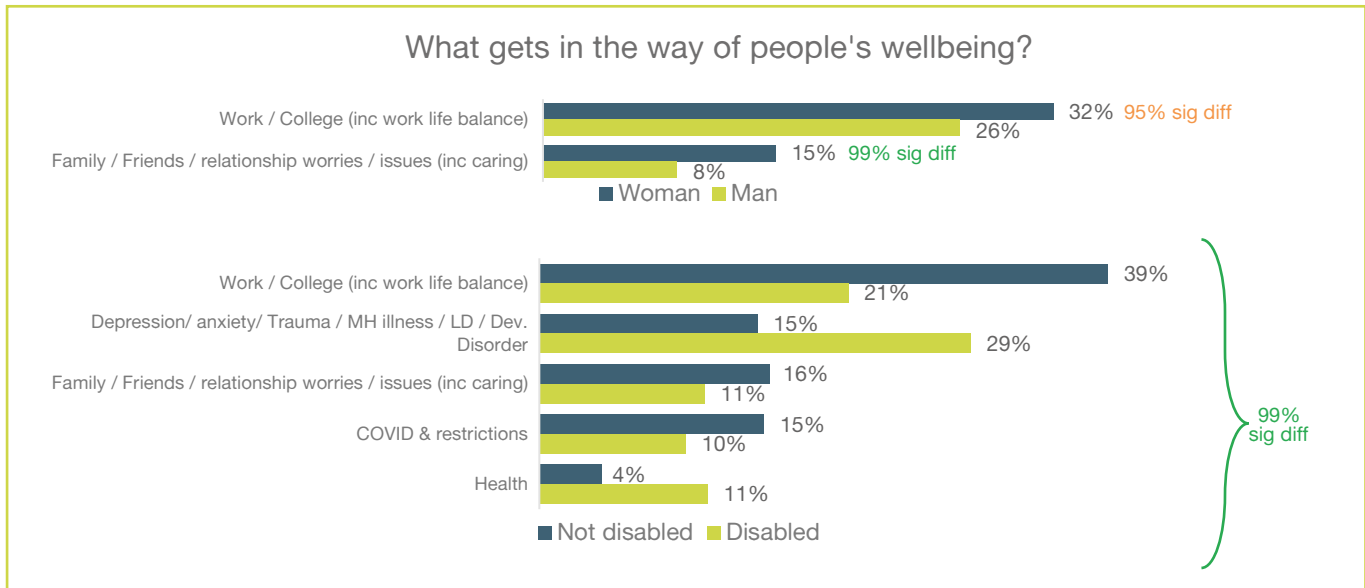
Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q3

Over 55s have similar concerns to their younger counterparts, but with the exception of health and loneliness where impact on mental wellbeing is higher, many factors (especially work / college, general anxiety or mental illness and/ or financial problems) are not having such a big impact on their mental wellbeing as that of the under 55s.



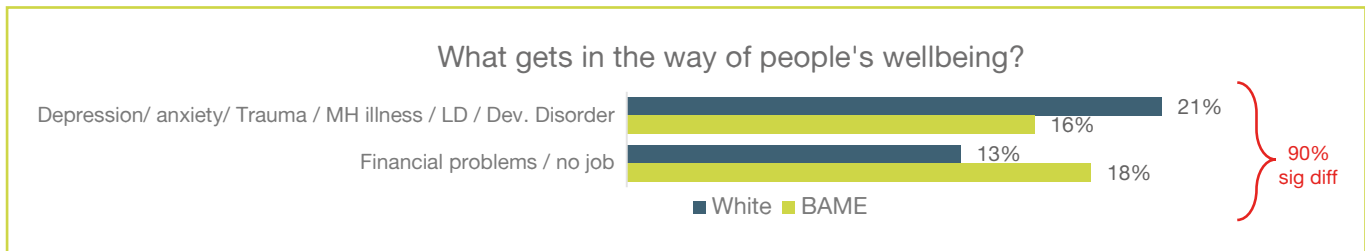
Source: Q3, 3169 Under 55 people, 686 55+ people

Women and Non-disabled more likely to think that work / college and family / friends' issues get in the way of mental wellbeing. Disabled more likely to think that general anxiety or mental illness is the biggest concern.



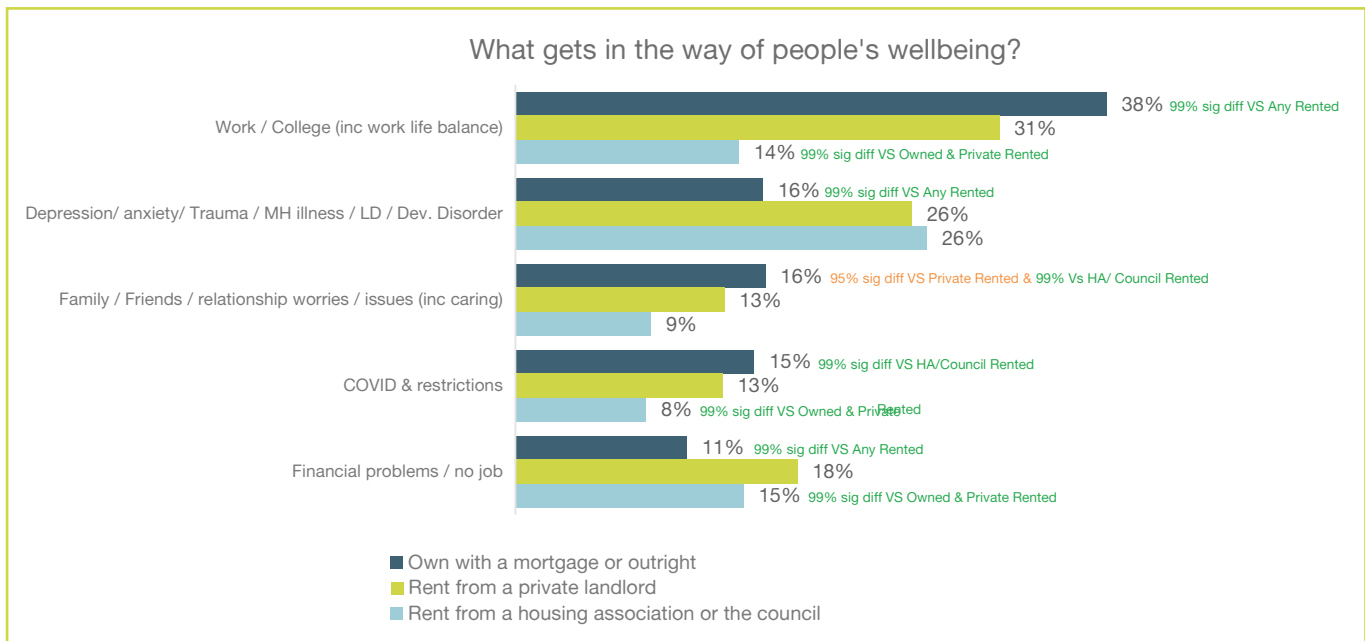
Source: Q3, Women 3347 people, Men 425 people; Non-Disabled 2291 people, Disabled 1460 people

BAME more likely to think that financial problems get in the way of mental wellbeing.



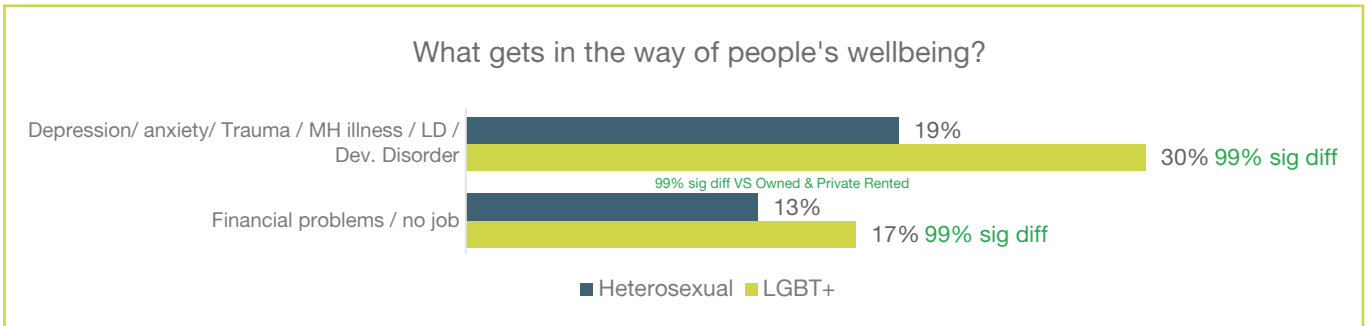
Source: Q3, White 3547 people, BAME 225 people

For those who own their own home, work is the single biggest factor, whilst for those who rent general anxiety or mental illness is the biggest concern and financial problems get in the way more.



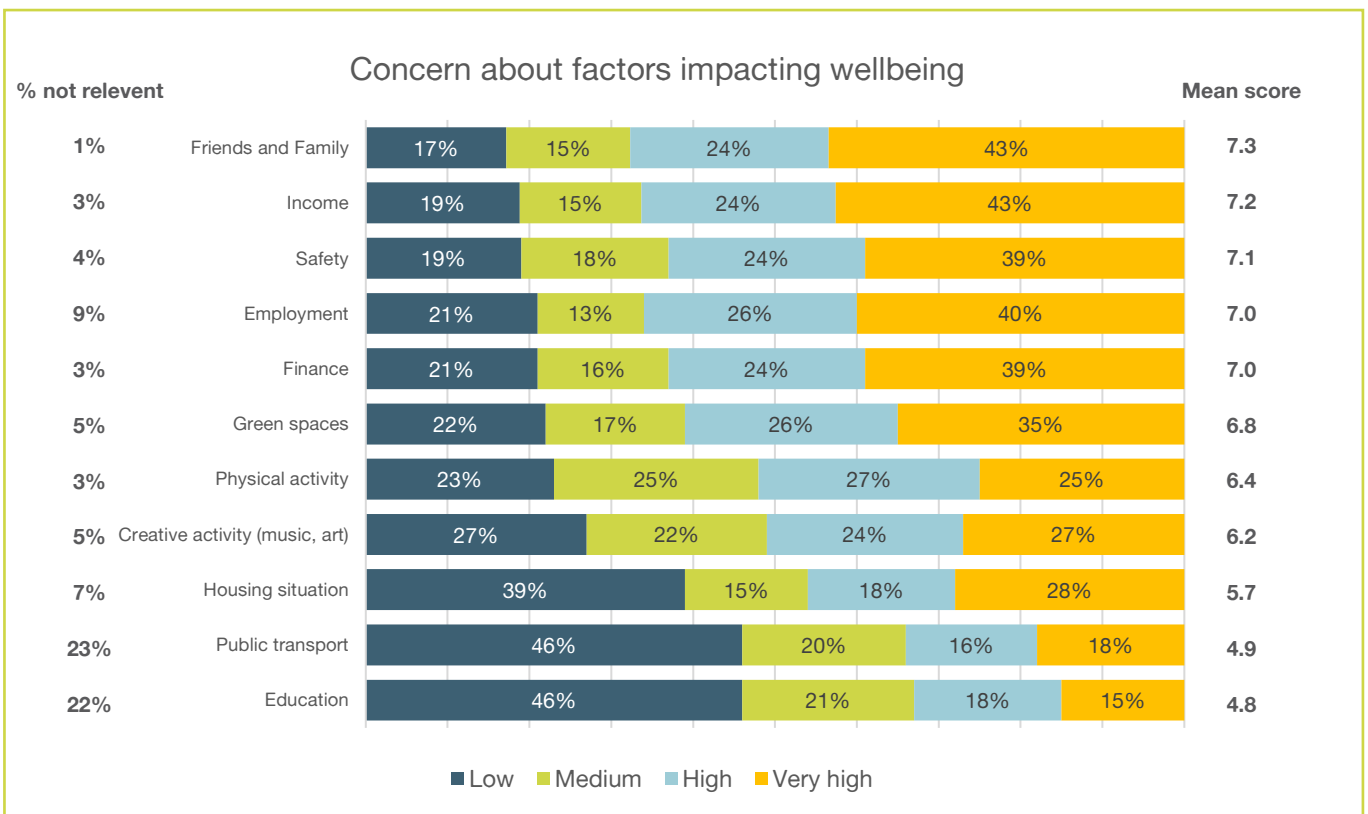
Source: Q3, 1963 Own Home, 854 Rent from Private Landlord, 653 Rent from Housing Association / Council

Work is the top factor getting in the way of wellbeing for both Heterosexual and LGBT+ groups. However, for LGBT+ depression/ anxiety / mental ill health is a very close second and along with financial problems much more of a concern than they are for the heterosexual group.



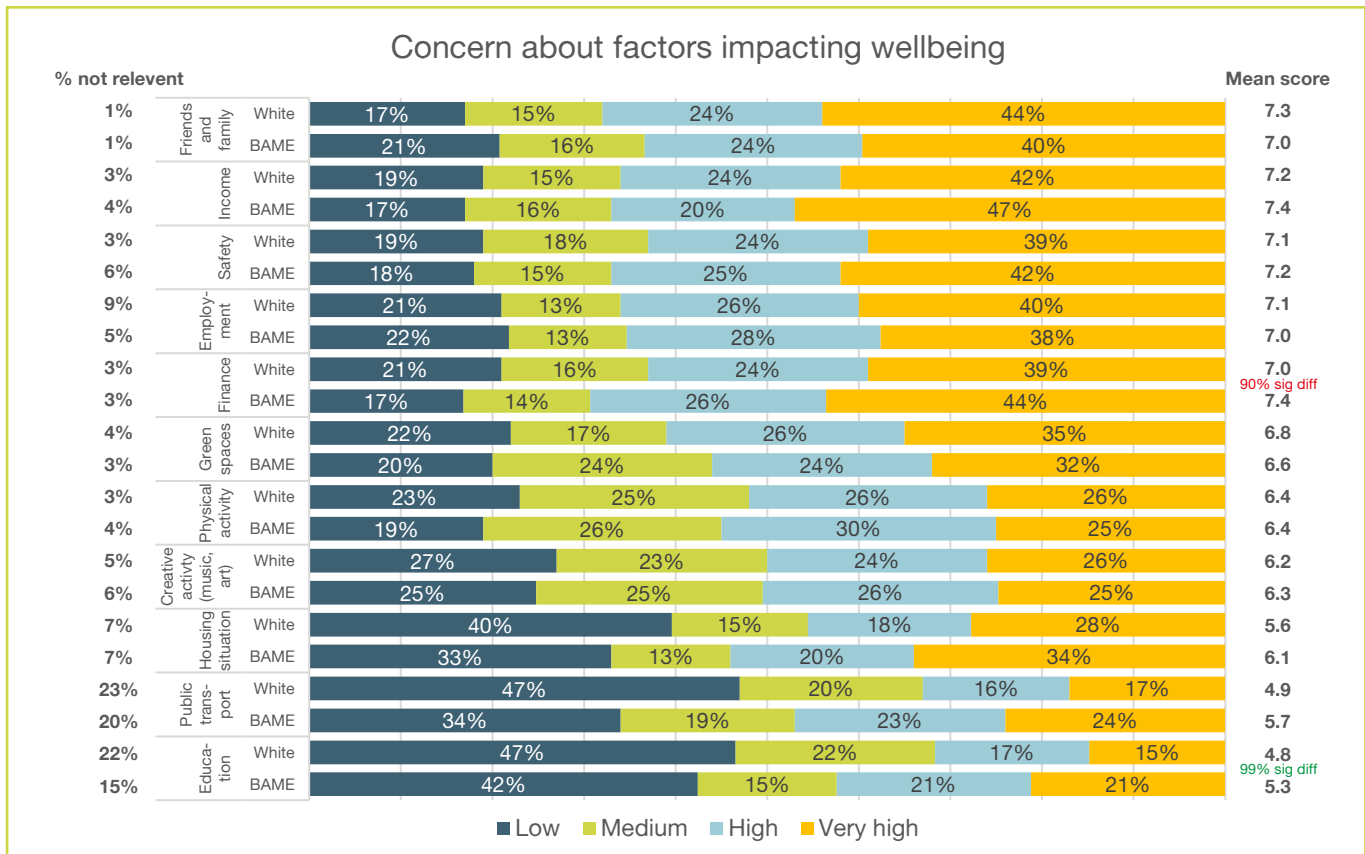
Source: Q3, 3123 Heterosexual, 592 LGBT+

The question exploring concern over key factors impacting wellbeing supported the open-ended findings and found friends & family, income, safety, employment and finance to be top areas of concern. Even amongst those for whom they are relevant public transport and education are not a cause for concern in relation to wellbeing.



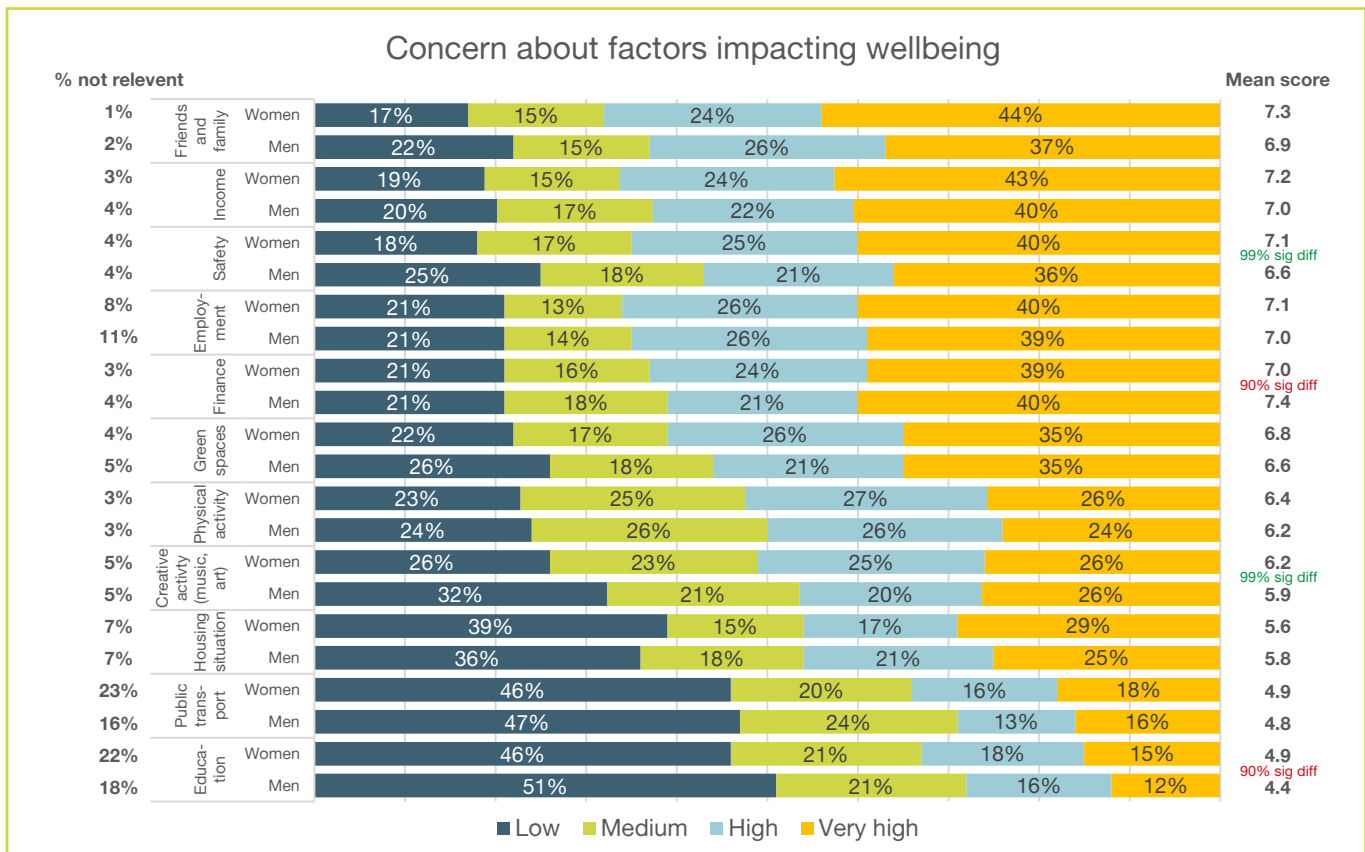
Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q8 on a scale of 1-10. Low = 1-4; Medium - 5-6; High = 7-8; Very High = 9-10

BAME are more concerned than white about finance, the housing situation and education.



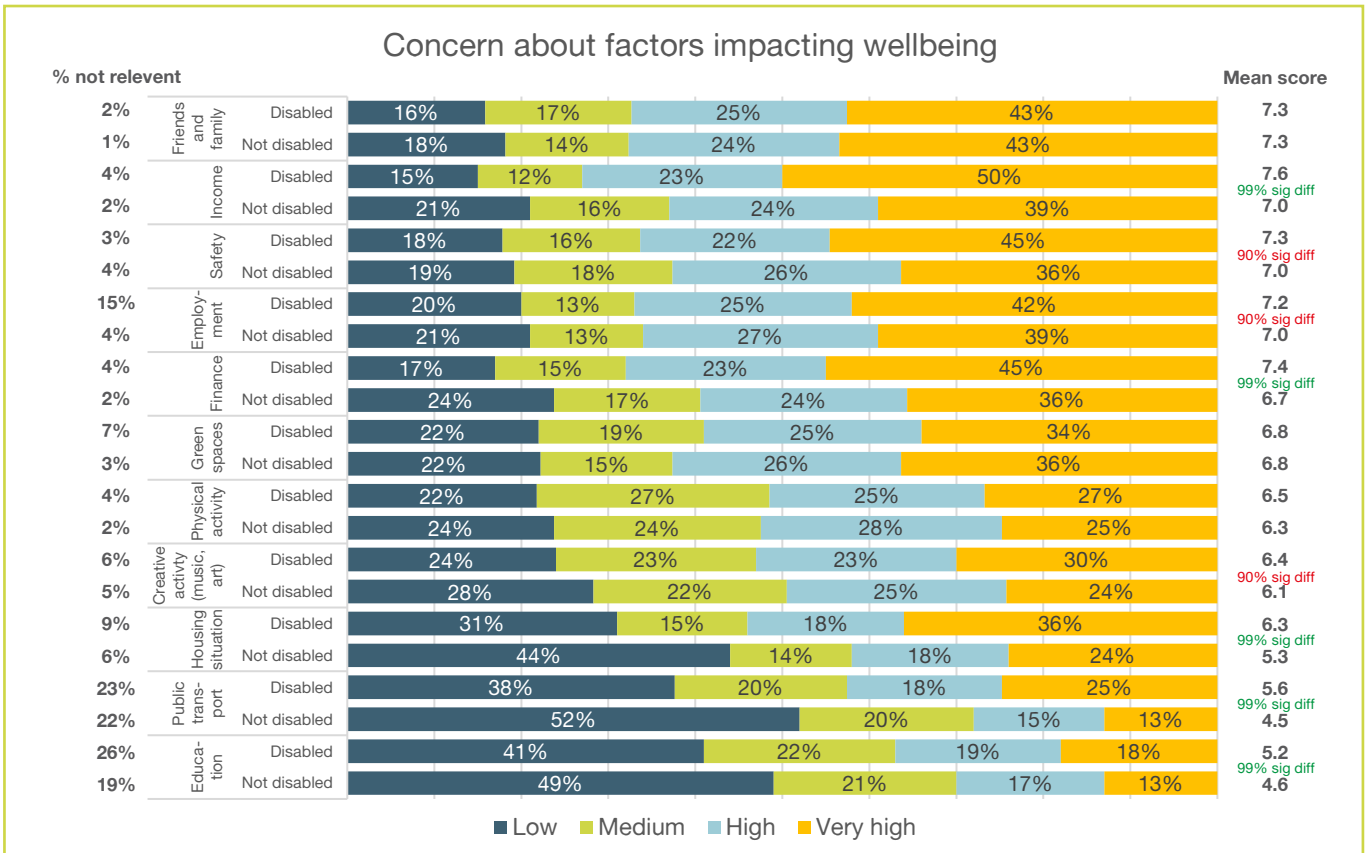
Source: Q8 on a scale of 1-10, White 3547 people, BAME 225 people

Women are more concerned than men about family & friends, safety, green spaces, creativity and education, whilst men are more concerned about finance.



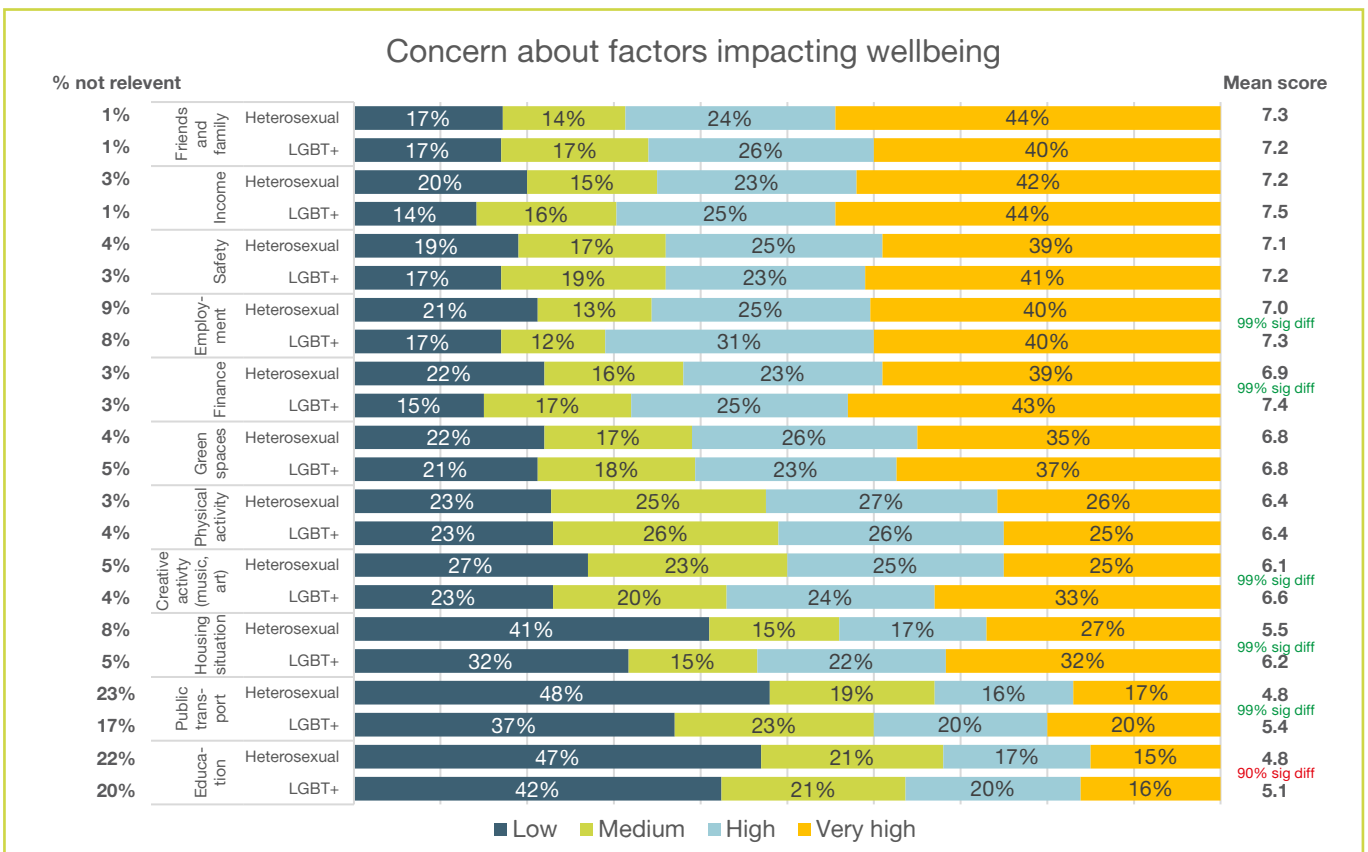
Source: Q8 on a scale of 1-10, Women 3347 people, Men 425 people

Disabled are more concerned than non-disabled about income, safety, employment, finance, creativity, the housing situation, public transport and education.



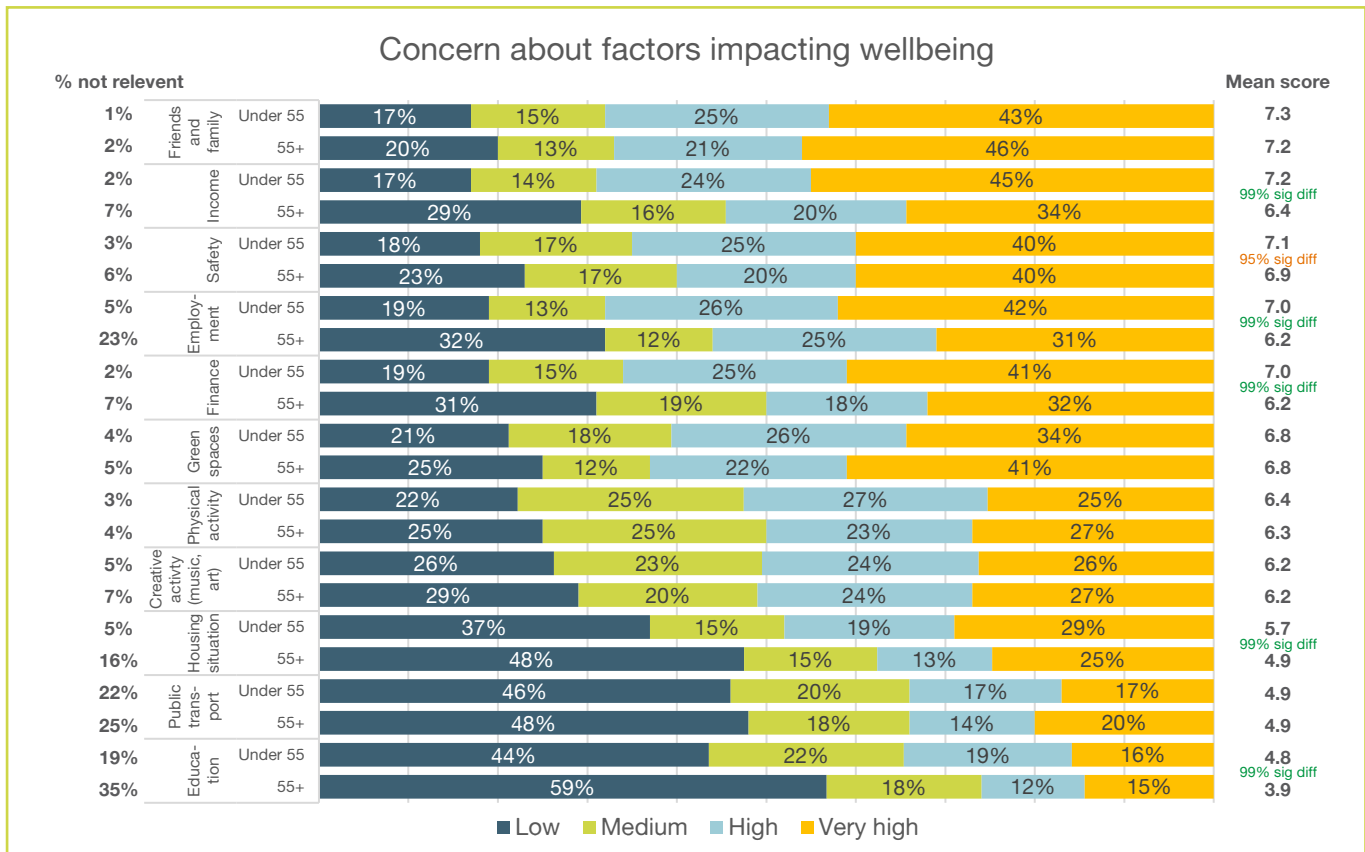
Source: Q8 on a scale of 1-10, Non-Disabled 2291 people, Disabled 1460 people

LGBT+ are more concerned than heterosexuals about employment, finance, creativity, the housing situation and public transport, but less concerned about education than heterosexuals.



Source: Q8 on a scale of 1-10, 3123 Heterosexual, 592 LGBT+

Under 55s are more concerned about income, safety, employment, finance, the housing situation and education.



Source: Q8 on a scale of 1-10, Under 55 people, 686 55+ people

Once more the people in the focus groups are concurring with the survey with regards to factors that get in the way of wellbeing - work, existing health conditions, COVID, financial problems and family issues:

- “Less pressure on certain things in terms of work load employers should be more mindful of workload”*
- “Work, in terms of working from home due to COVID. Difficult to feel connected”*
- “I struggle with Bipolar”*
- “if your job is at risk or if you’re unemployed and your housing, if you’re not secure in all of those areas of your life, I think that can be really difficult to deal with”*
- “Obviously COVID has had an impact on people who work with my son, because they’ve not been able to come into the house because of the lockdown situation”*
- “I really hate having to work in jobs that I loathe because that makes my mental health even worse”*
- “If you don’t have a lot of money coming in, that you know, if you’re mentally well, then you’re better able to budget, you’re better able to tolerate having less money”*
- “I lost my mum a couple of years ago, and that’s been the biggest change for me, mental health wise”*

"Mine's an invisible disability. I've got a quite serious learning disability"

"Physical health issues"

"COVID has had a big impact in terms of not seeing people"

"We are always going to worry about our kids"

"A lot of the people I support have had massive frustration around lack of access to NHS services. So, they would usually have in home visits for things like podiatry or scans booked, cancer treatments, things like that. That has had a massive impact"

In addition, caring for others adds additional strain on people's mental wellbeing, as clearly voiced in the focus groups:

"Being a carer for my dad... I feel that you probably have to get to crisis stage before you get any response. And that impacts on the people he lives with and the extended family"

"Well, my son is autistic... my daughter is in the process of possibly being diagnosed as Bipolar... My husband's also diabetic... I am just trying to support them all, and I tend to be the one that keeps everybody together. So that can be difficult at times"

"My partner over the last two years suffers from periods of depression, is in and out of work, which impacts our finances, puts a strain on our relationship. I was covering bills and paying things. And that became just difficult as a relationship"

"Looking after my mum, she doesn't get the access to services that she needs, which puts a lot of pressure on me to look after her"

"You are always thinking as a Carer of the person you are looking after first. You hardly ever give much thought to your own health, physical or mental health"

"I was in a care job and I find personally that I was taking on everybody else's problems and everybody else's care"

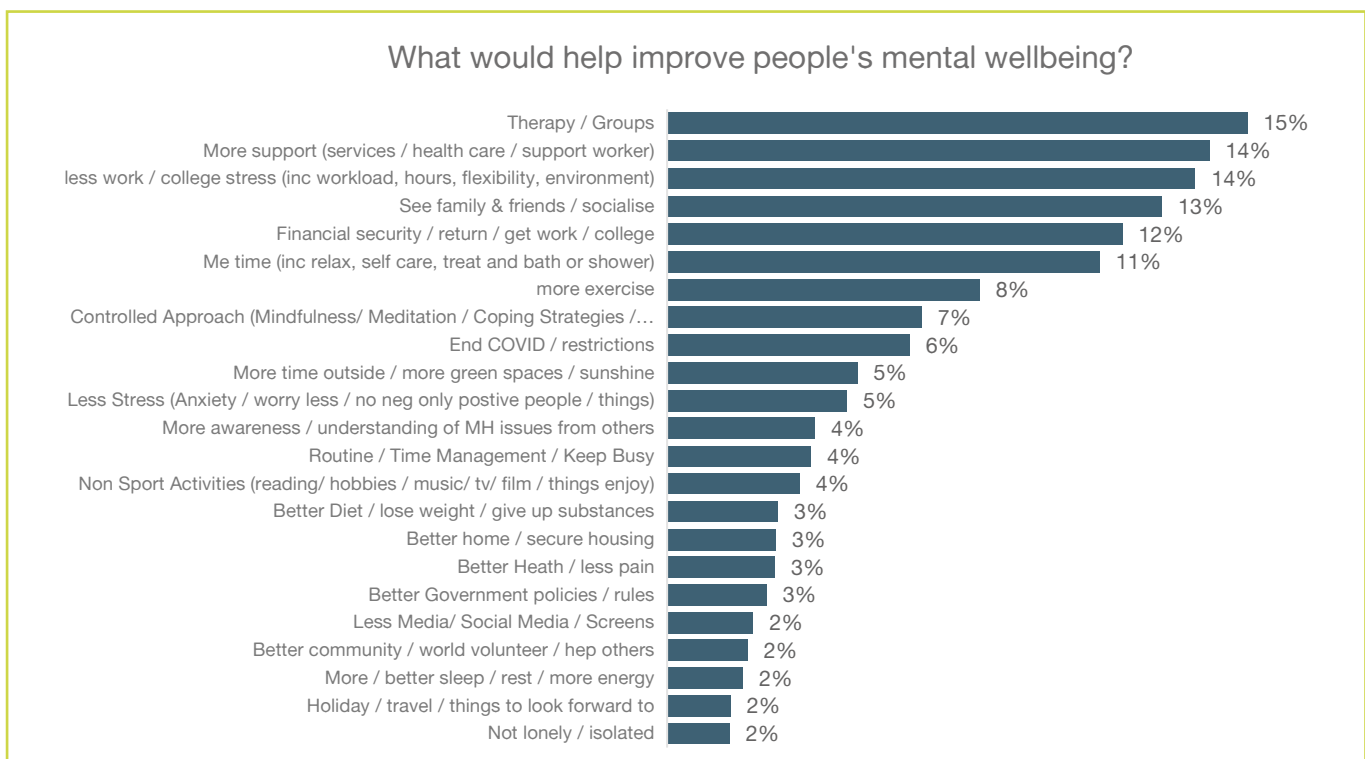
"We do things like Young Carers, but they're only once a week or once a fortnight, you know. When you're living with it constantly, I really do feel strongly that as a society, we need to be doing more to support families. Because you can't just walk away from it"

PART 4: DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY

WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT?

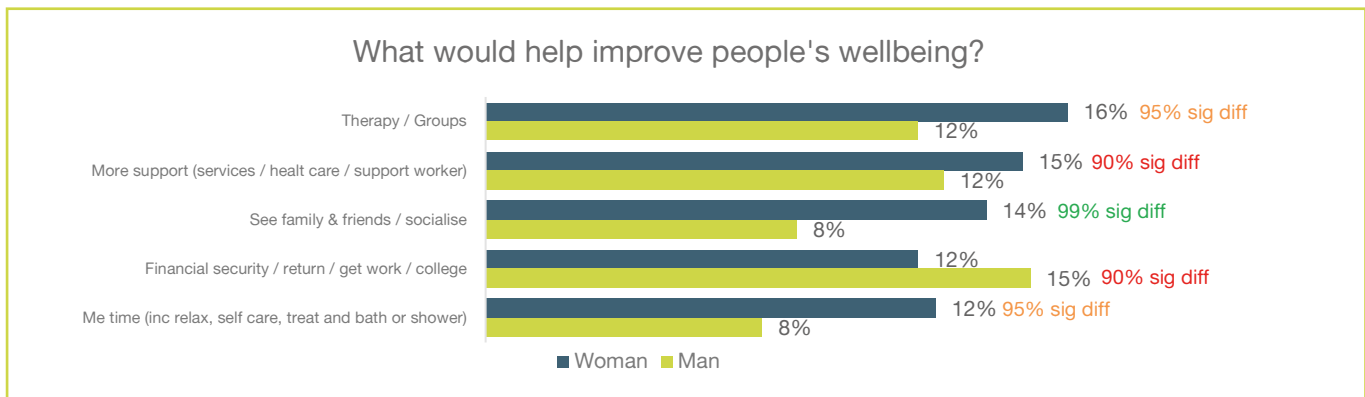
What would help improve people's mental wellbeing?

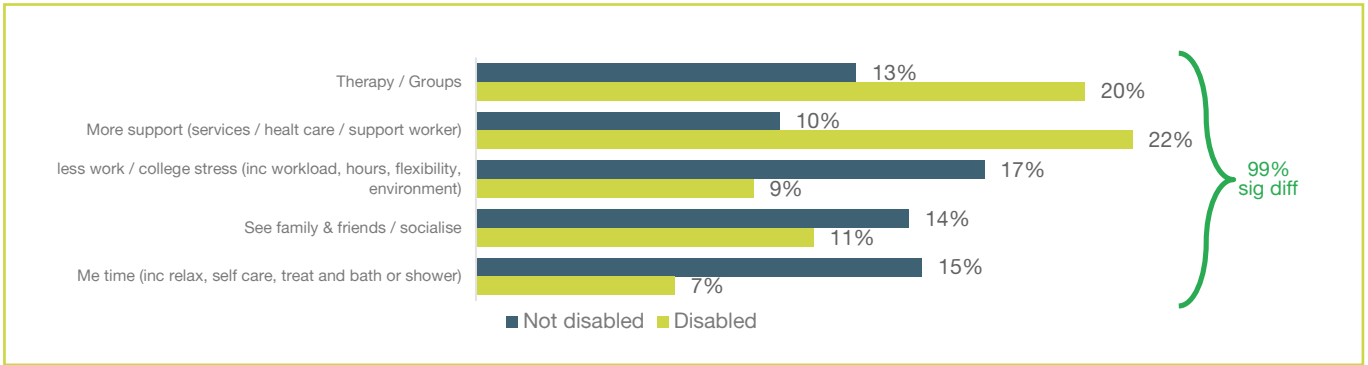
Whilst it is clear that better health services could improve people's mental wellbeing, there are also issues in people's work and personal lives, which if resolved, would aid wellness. 27% think that some form of therapy, group support or increased healthcare services or support would help improve their wellbeing. However, there are also a high level of non-medical interventions that are suggested below these that already feature strongly in the lists of strategies for staying well and things that get the way of mental wellbeing.



Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q4

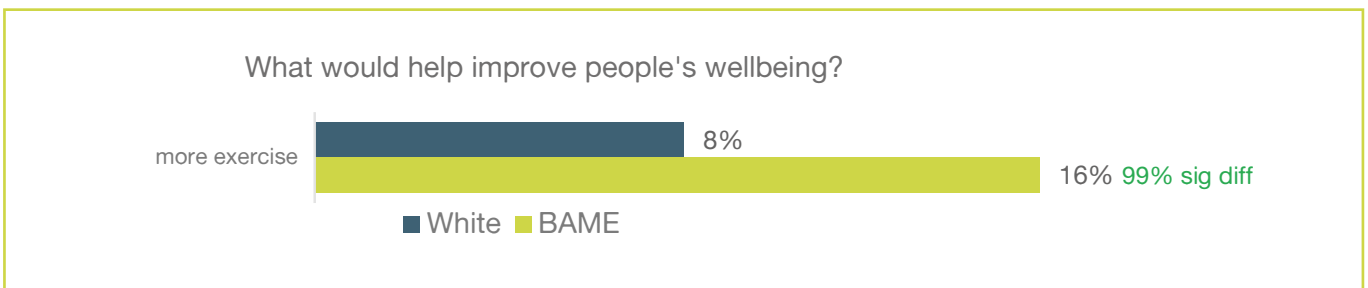
To help improve wellbeing women & disabled more likely to cite use of professional help, BAME more likely to mention increasing exercise, women and non-disabled more likely to try to seek support from family & friends and get more me time, whilst men more likely cite greater financial security.





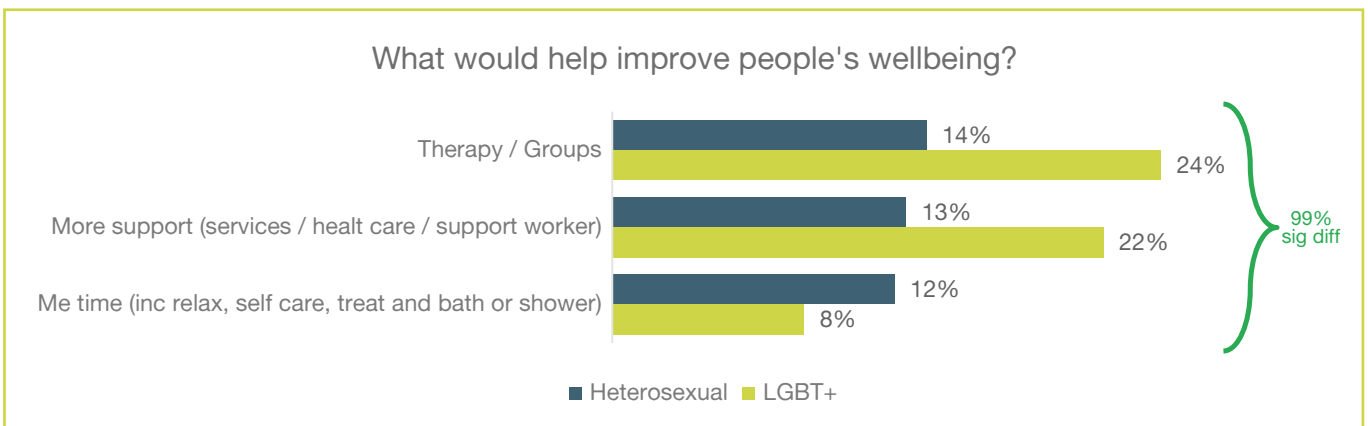
Source: Q4, Women 3347 people, Men 425 people; Non-Disabled 2291 people, Disabled 1460 people

Top answers for both BAME and white are the same as the overall sample, (therapy, group support or increased healthcare services or support), BAME more likely say increased exercise would help more.



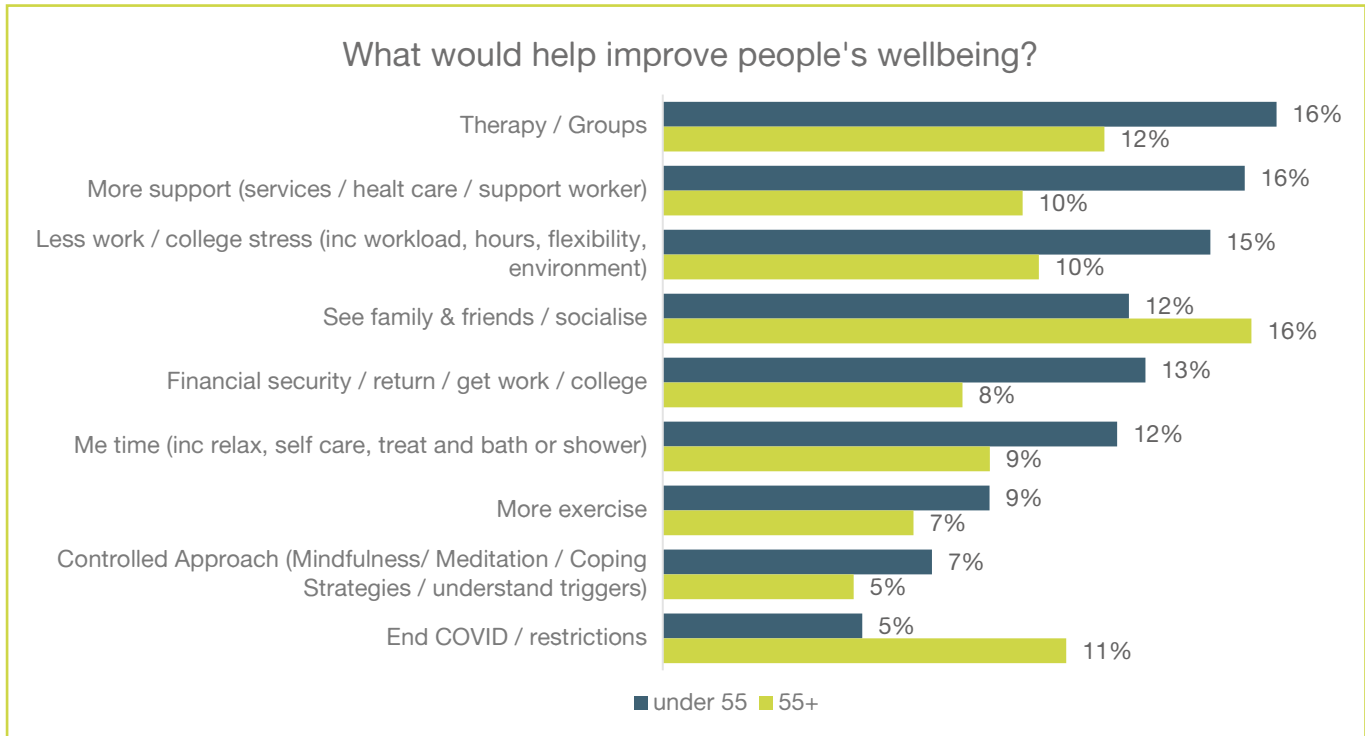
Source: Q4, White 3547 people, BAME 225 people

To help improve wellbeing LGBT+ more likely to cite use of professional help than their counterpart whilst heterosexuals more likely to seek more me time.



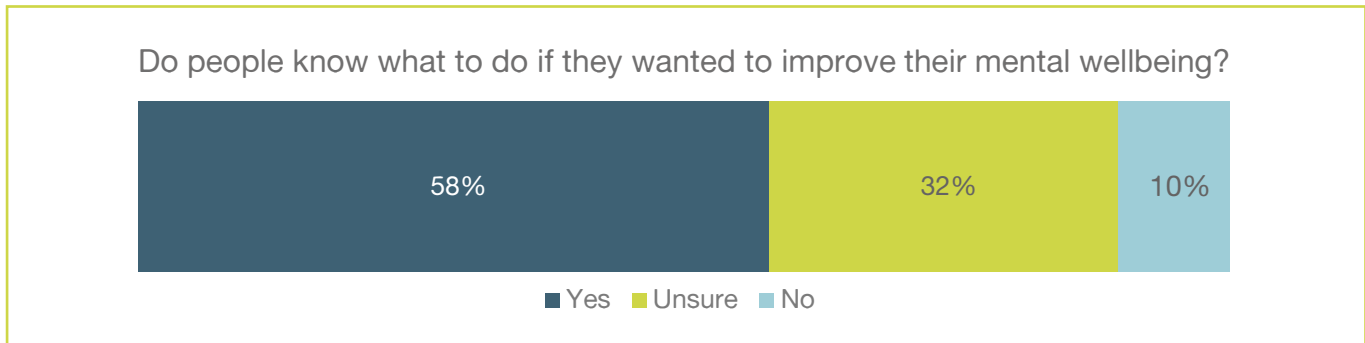
Source: Q4, 3123 Heterosexual, 592 LGBT+

In pursuit of improved wellbeing under 55s more likely to cite use of professional help increased financial security, more down time, more exercise and increased use of controlled approaches, (mindfulness, meditation & coping strategies), than their counterparts, whilst over 55s say they'd see more of family and friends and feel things would improve with the end of COVID and restrictions.



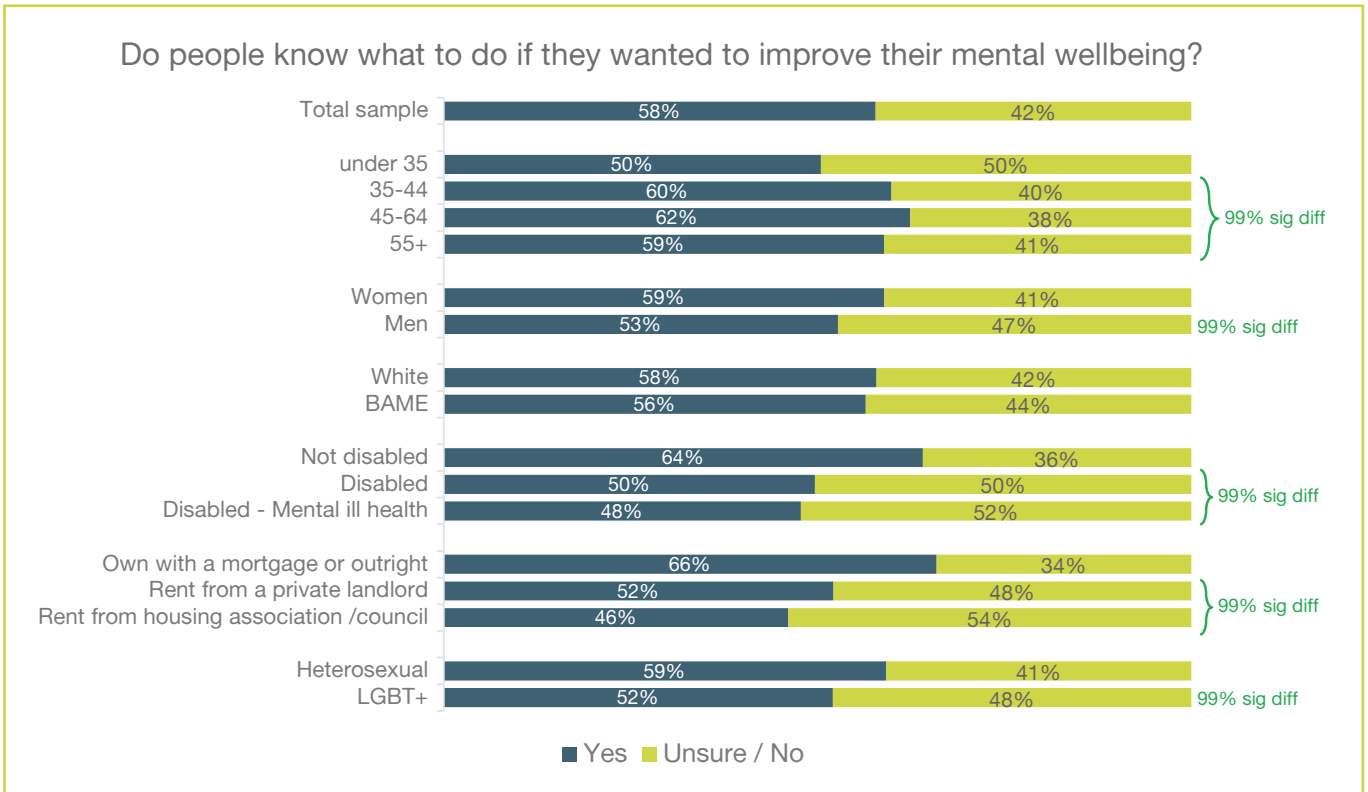
Source: Q4, Under 55, 686 55+

Whilst significantly more people know what to do if they wanted to improve their mental wellbeing, (58%), there are 32% who are unsure and a further 10% who have no idea.



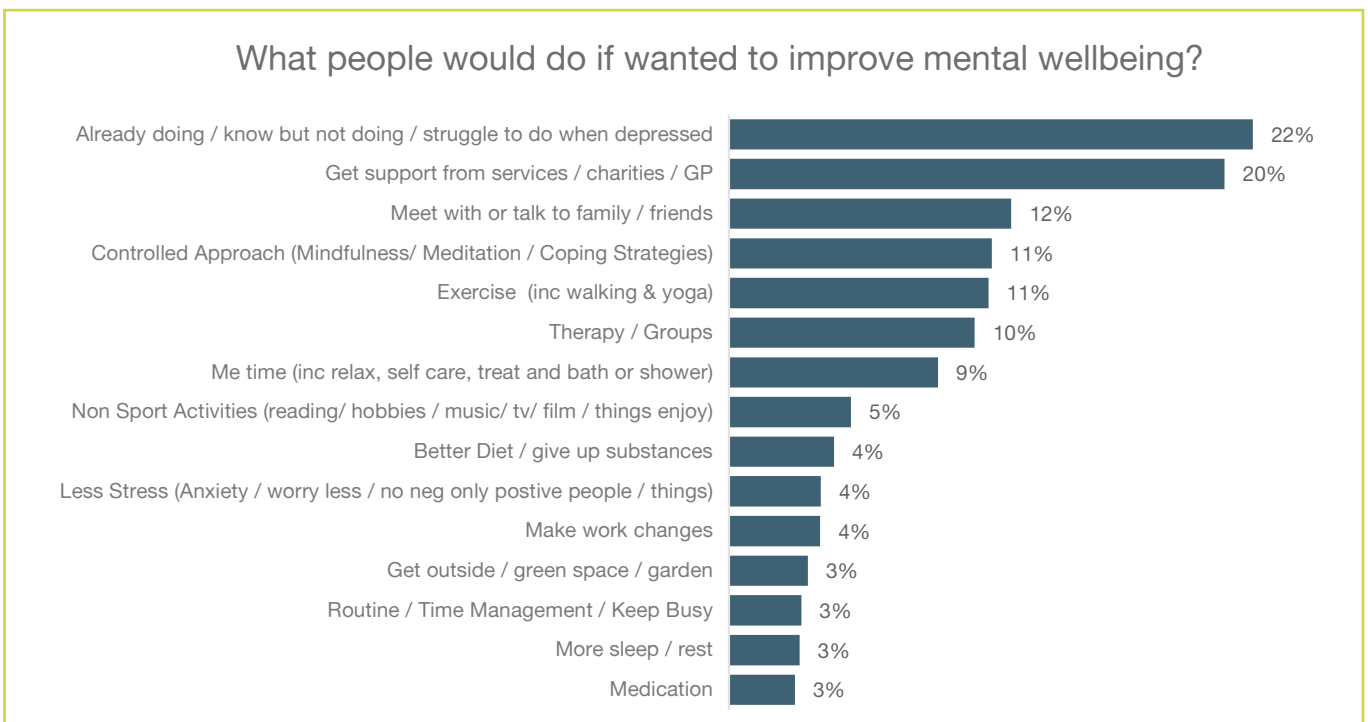
Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q5

Women, the over 35s, heterosexuals, those who are not disabled and those own their own home are more likely to know what to do if they wanted to improve their mental wellbeing. Under 35s, Men, LGBT+, those who do not own their home and those who are disabled feel less sure.



Source: Q5, 1039 Under 35, 1037 35-44, 1093 45-54, 868 55+; Women 3347 people, Men 425 people; Non-Disabled 2291 people, Disabled 1460 people; 1963 Own Home, 854 Rent from Private Landlord, 653 Rent from Housing Association / Council, Heterosexual 3123, LGBT+ 592

Of most concern are the people who claim they do know, but are still struggling and not seeking support, (16% surveyed, 22% of those who responded to this question, (high level, (25%), of non-response)).



Source: Q5, 2980 responses for what do to improve mental wellbeing

It is clear that those who claim to know what to do to improve their mental wellbeing are much more likely to take positive action – get support, meet & talk with friends / family, use coping strategies, take exercise, go to therapy, have me time, etc.



Source: Q5, 2980 responses for what do to improve mental wellbeing – 1863 Yes; 1117 Unsure / No

The focus groups identify not only the need for more support, but earlier, faster and easier access to the right kind of support on an individual basis. It's also clear that being able to access the other things that contribute to positive mental wellbeing helps:

"I found that there is a huge wait to access the system. And then when you get into the system, you realise that there are only so many sessions. And it's just doing a constant circle, that you're waiting to go in and access the services and then you have so many sessions, and then you're back at the start again"

"It's not straightforward, you don't know where to start, you don't know what to do. And I kind of want a one-stop shop you know, somewhere where I just go like, my mental health I just go there and I'll find all... you know find a range of services that will be bespoke to me"

"I got a call today that was almost more than a month later from the last email. And I had reached out to them, I need help, I need support"

"Being able to easily access support, the right kind of support, or not getting a diagnosis that's going to help you are that the help that you need is available"

"There needs to be a lot more support around"

"I see a psychiatrist and I've got a counsellor"

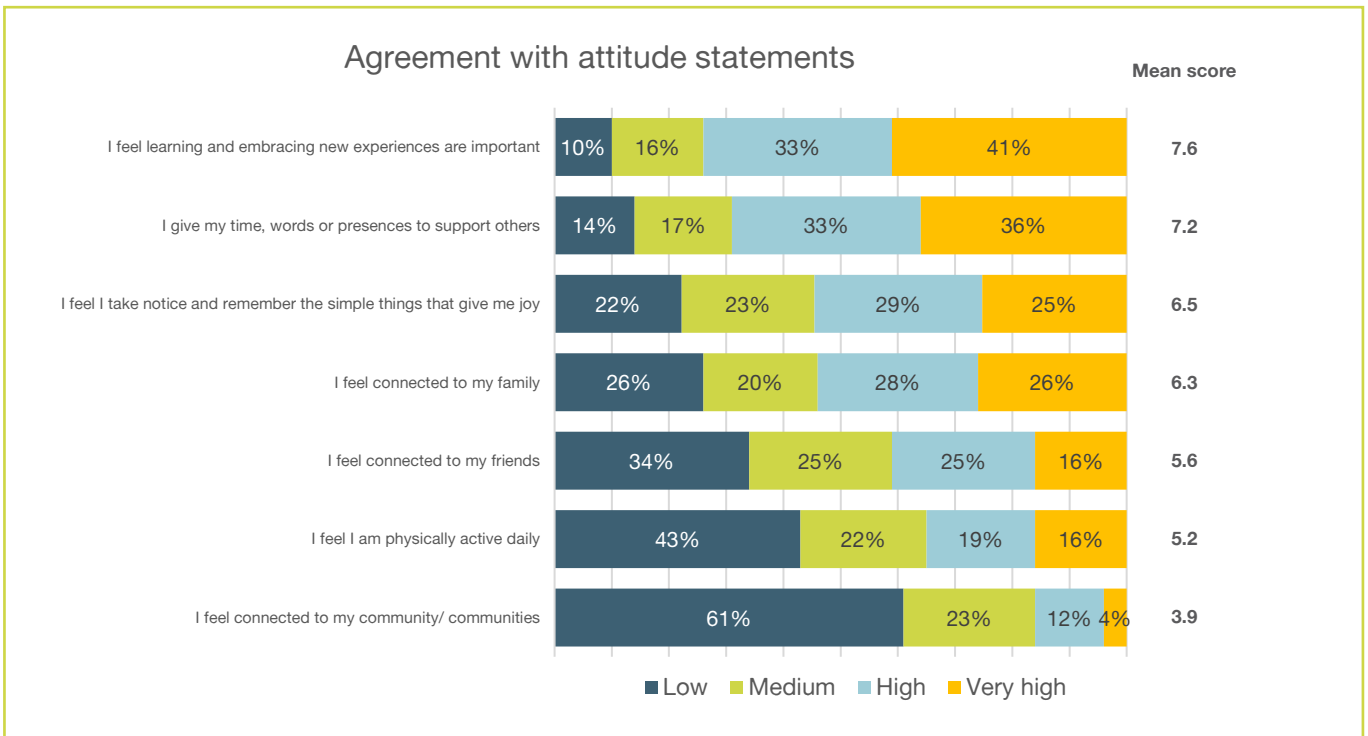
"Having friends or groups that you go to where you will be missed, helps"

"To attend something like a gym class"

"Having the money to get the tram to Heaton Park"

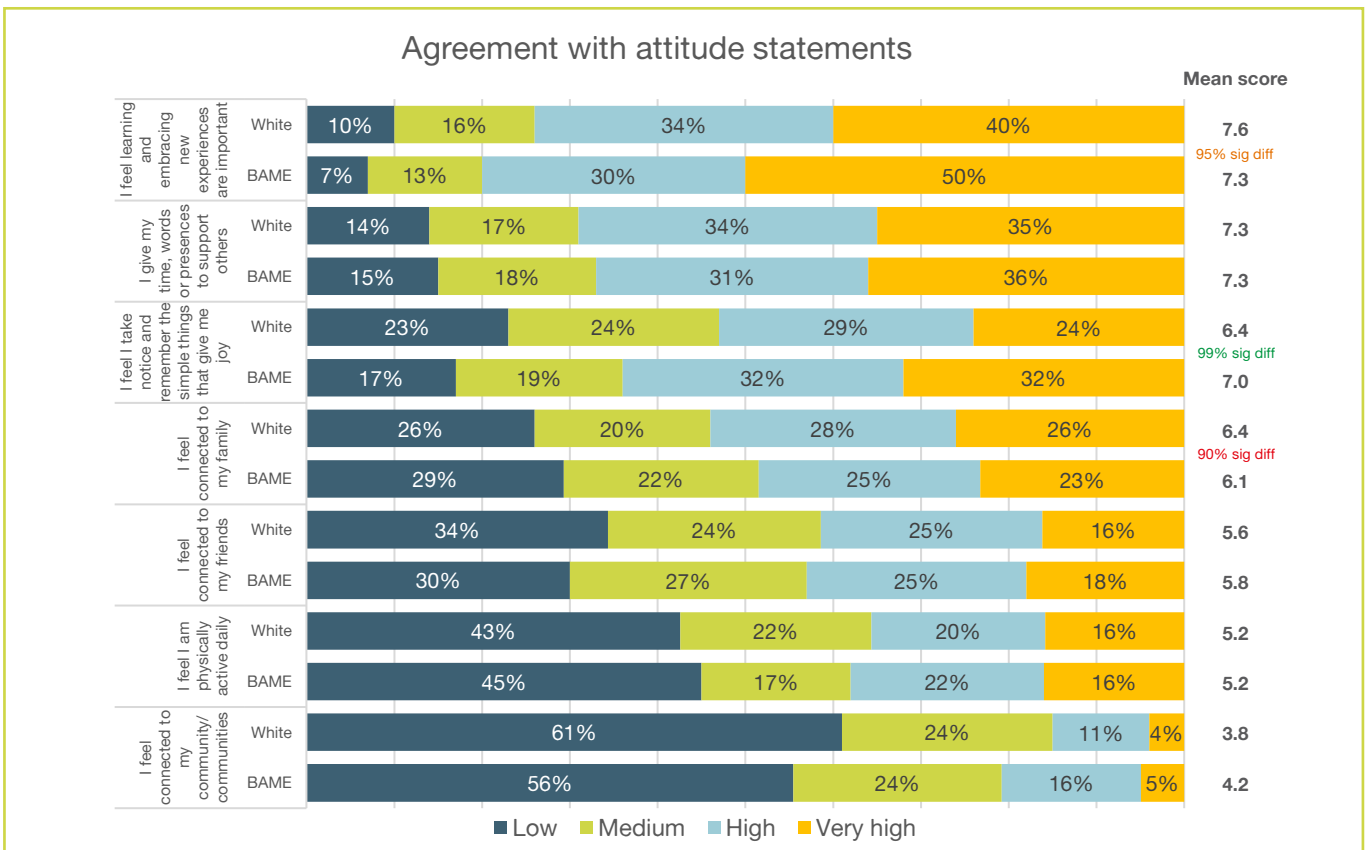
What about Community?

Whilst people feel that learning & embracing new experiences are important and willingly give support to others, they do not feel connected to their communities.



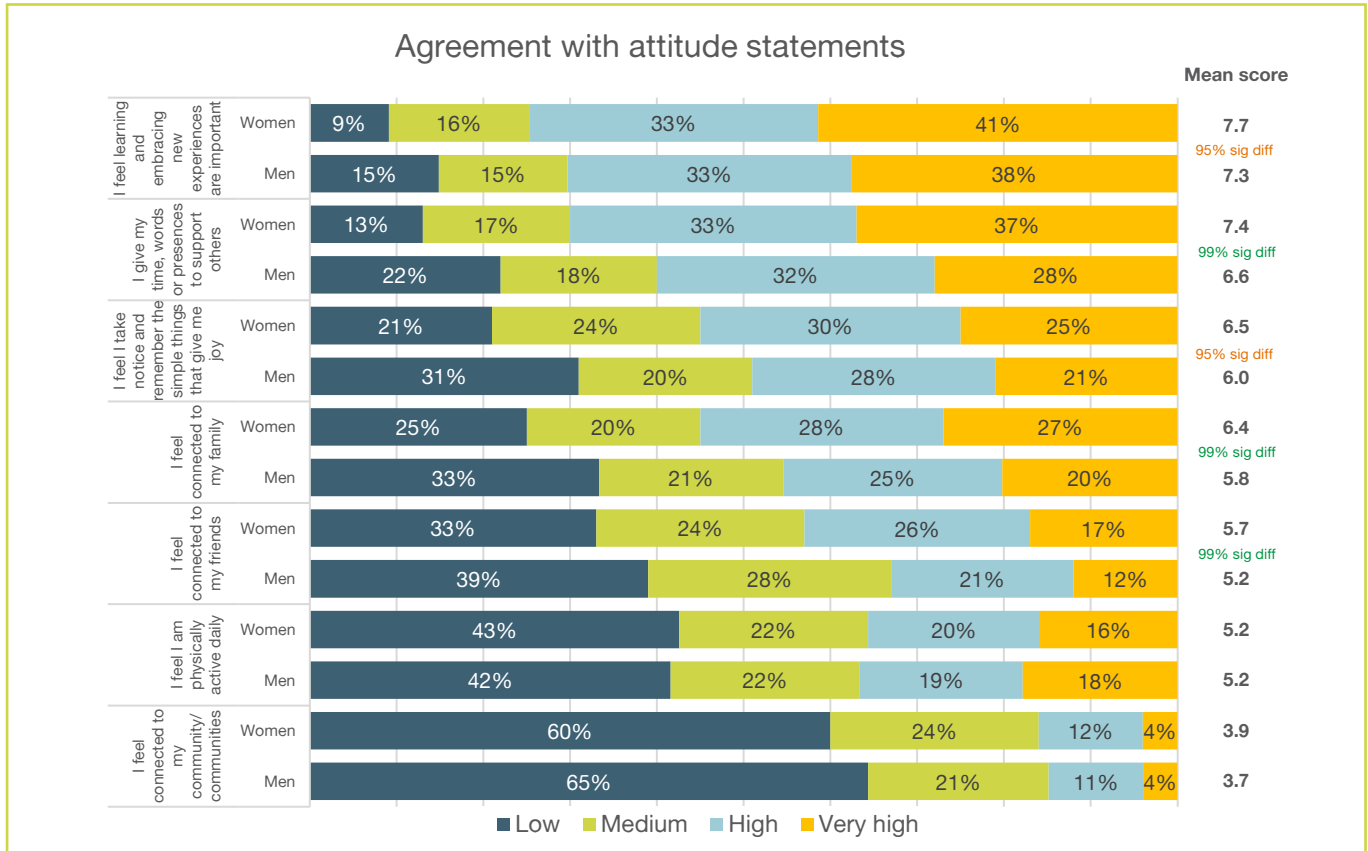
Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q9 on a scale of 1-10. Low = 1-4; Medium - 5-6; High = 7-8; Very High = 9-10

BAME feel that learning & embracing new experiences are less important and feel less connected to their families, but do feel that they take notice of the simple things that give them joy.



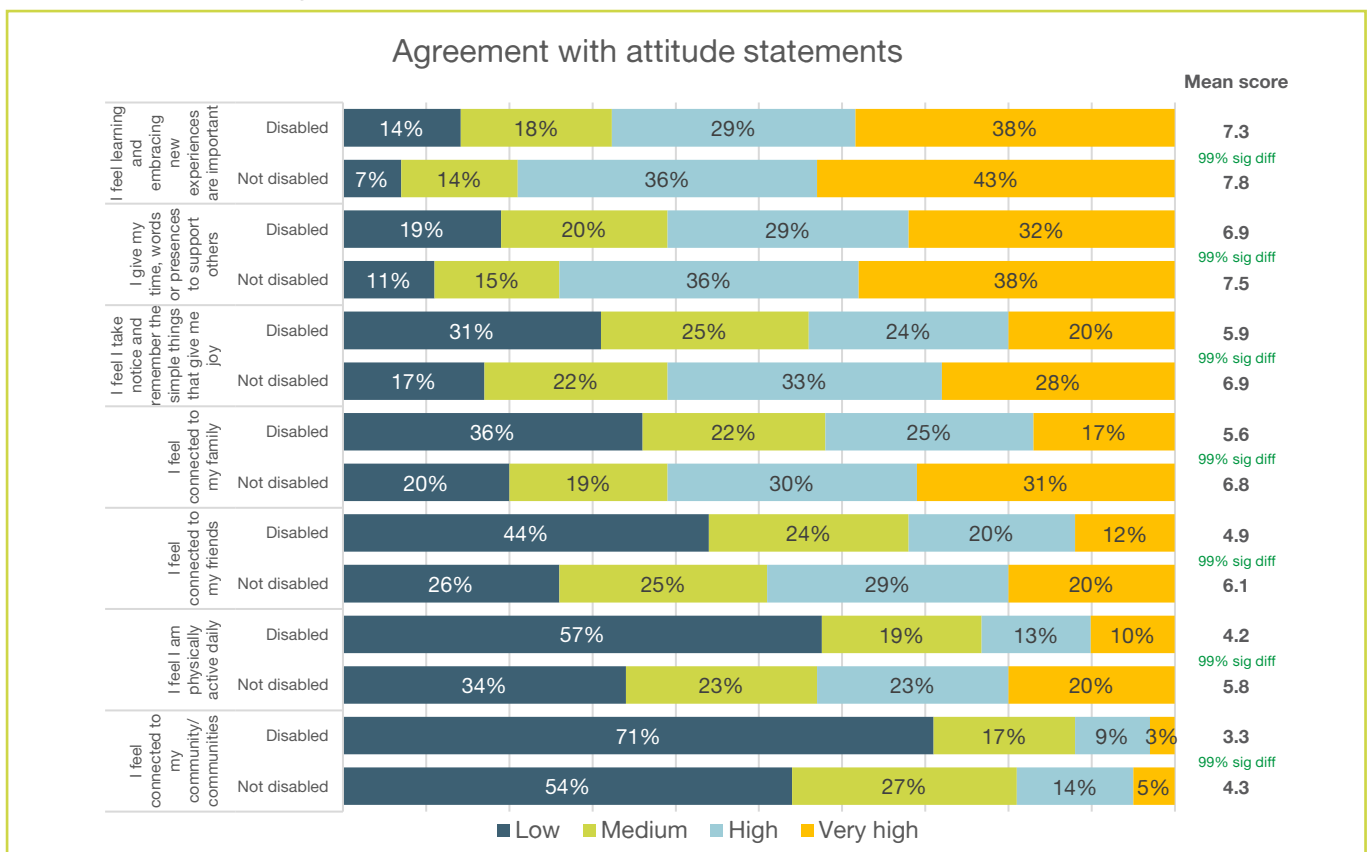
Source: Q9 on a scale of 1-10, White 3547 people, BAME 225 people

Women feel that learning & embracing new experiences are more important. They also feel more connected to their families & friends, give more time to support others, and feel that they take notice of the simple things that give them joy.



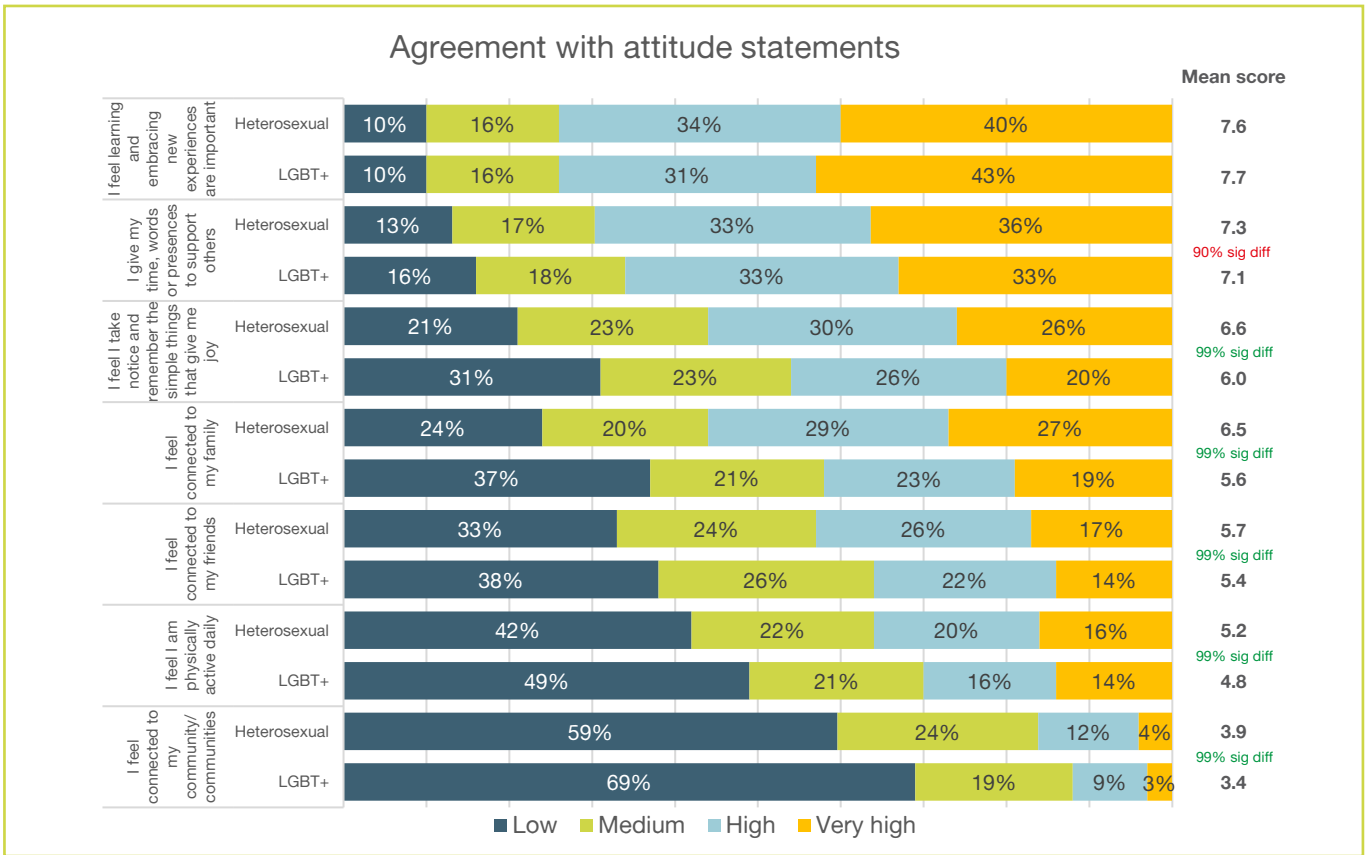
Source: Q9 on a scale of 1-10, Women 3347 people, Men 425 people

Disabled have lower agreement with all the statements.



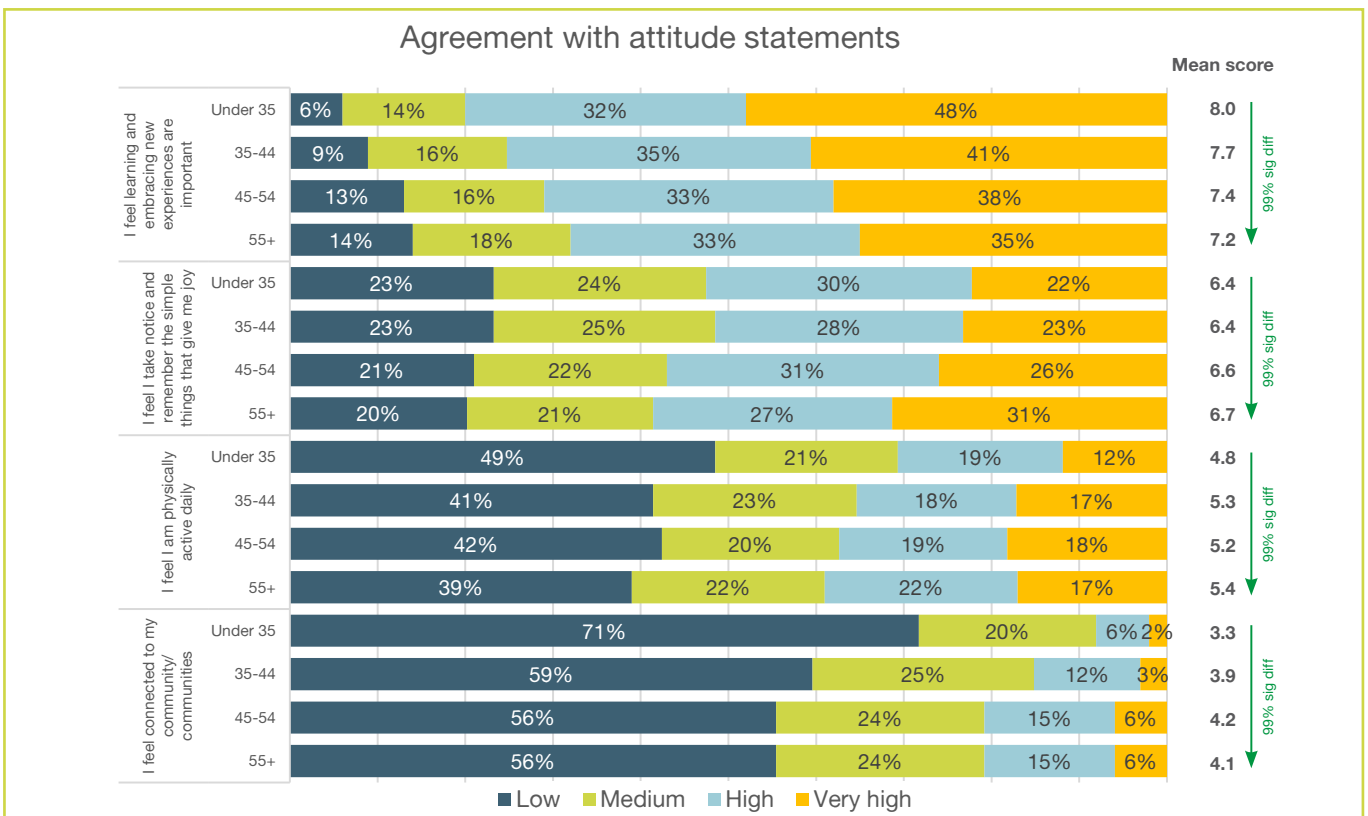
Source: Q9 on a scale of 1-10, Non-Disabled 2291 people, Disabled 1460 people

LGBT+ have lower agreement with all statements than heterosexuals except learning and embracing new experiences.



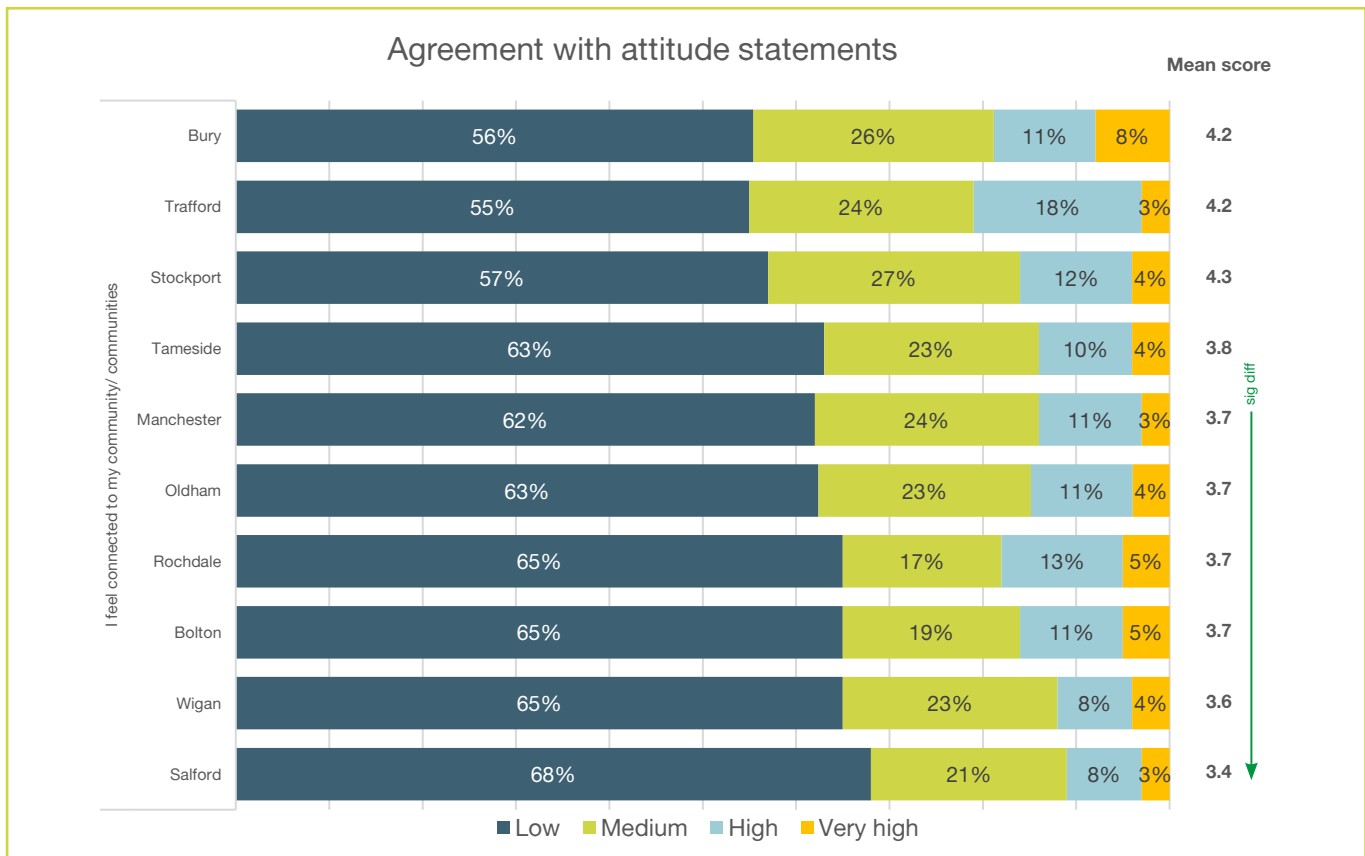
Source: Q9 on a scale of 1-10, 3123 Heterosexual, 592 LGBT+

Whilst all ages do not feel connected to their community, younger people feel even less connected. New experiences embraced more by younger people, whilst older people feel they get more joy from simple things.



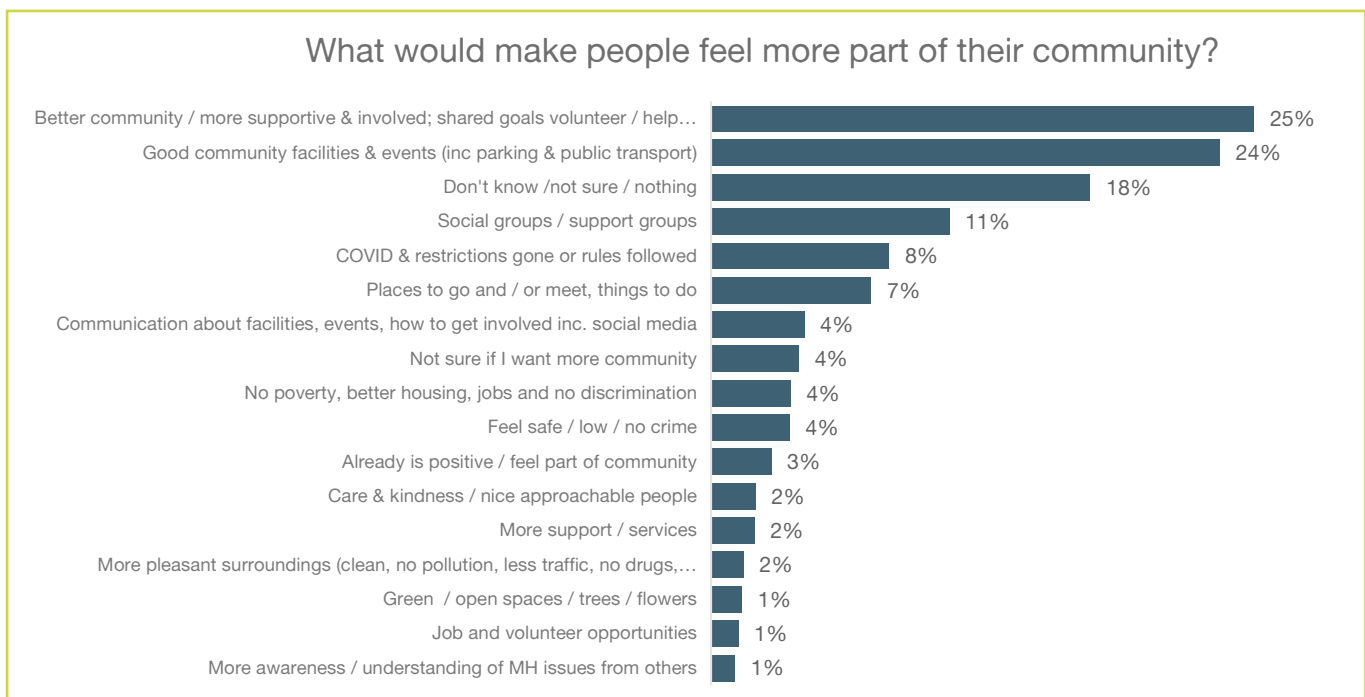
Source: Q9 on a scale of 1-10, Under 35, 1037 35-44, 1093 45-54, 868 55+

People in all boroughs feel a low connection with their community, but those in Bury, Trafford, Stockport and Tameside feel slightly more connected than the rest.



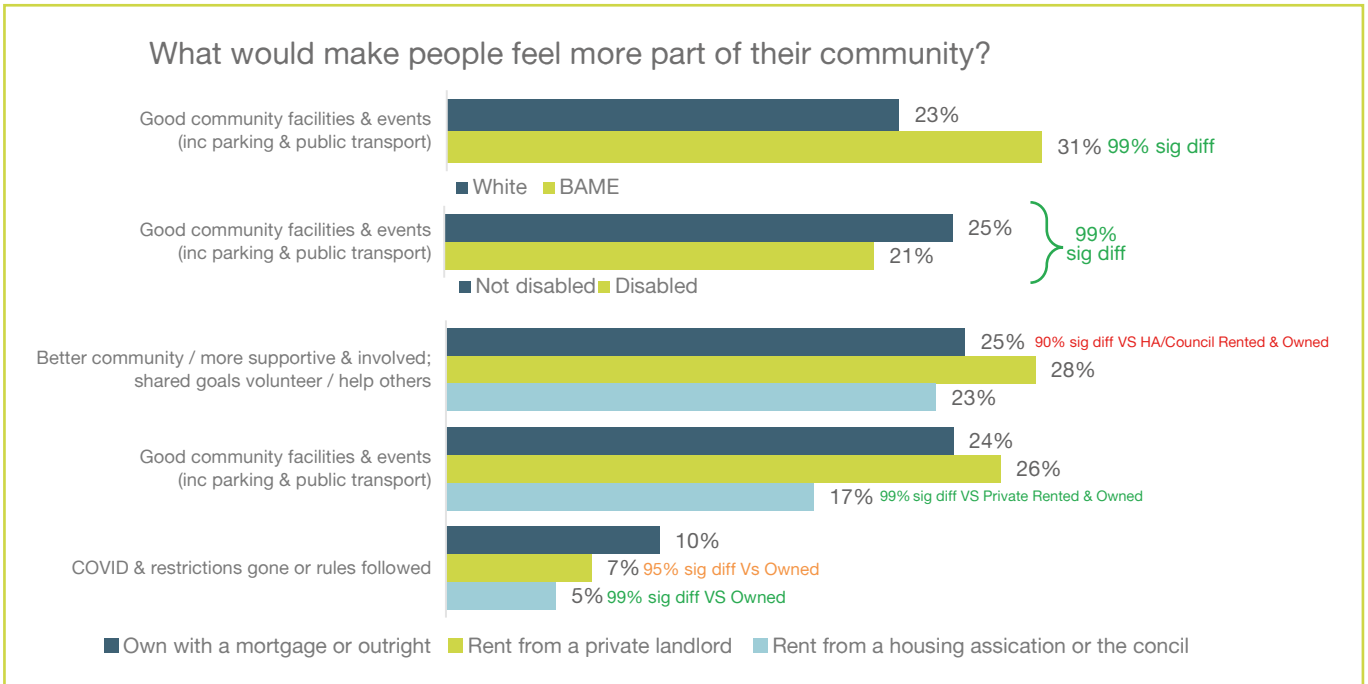
Source: Q9 on a scale of 1-10, Bolton 362, Bury 312, Manchester 859, Oldham 257, Rochdale 232, Salford 332, Stockport 467, Tameside 342, Trafford 330, Wigan 237

Better community support and involvement, good facilities & events, ((community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, local community events and places to walk), and social groups are key elements that would make people feel more part of their community. However, a high proportion show no interest (18% nothing / don't know, 4% not sure if want to be part of it).



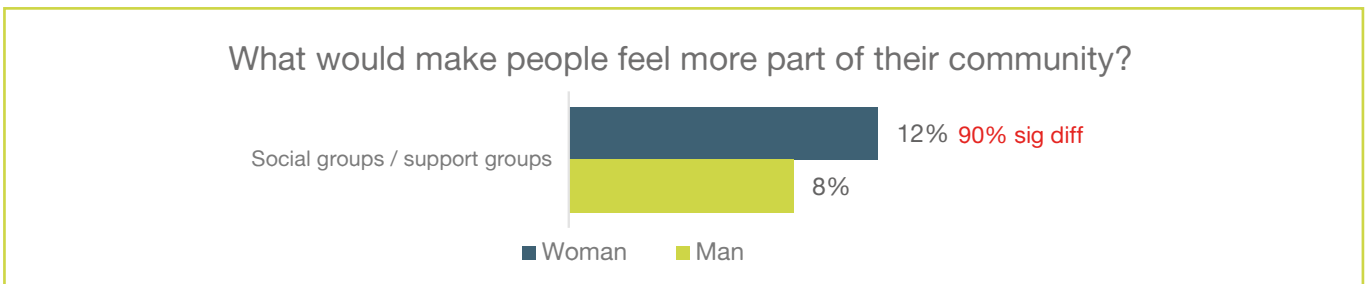
Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q10

Good community facilities & events would be more likely to make BAME, non-disabled and those who own or are in private rented feel more part of the community.



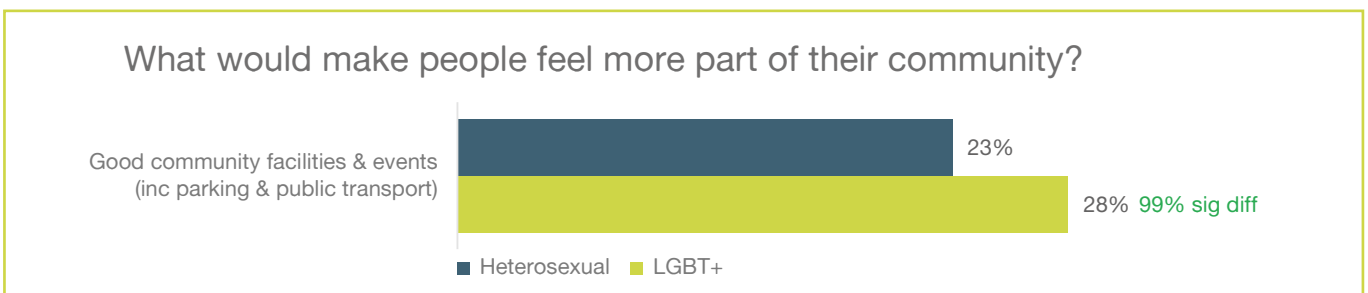
Source: Q10, White 3547 people, BAME 225 people; Non-Disabled 2291 people, Disabled 1460 people 1963 Own Home, 854 Rent from Private Landlord, 653 Rent from Housing Association / Council

Women favour more social groups than men and those in private rented would like to see more community support.

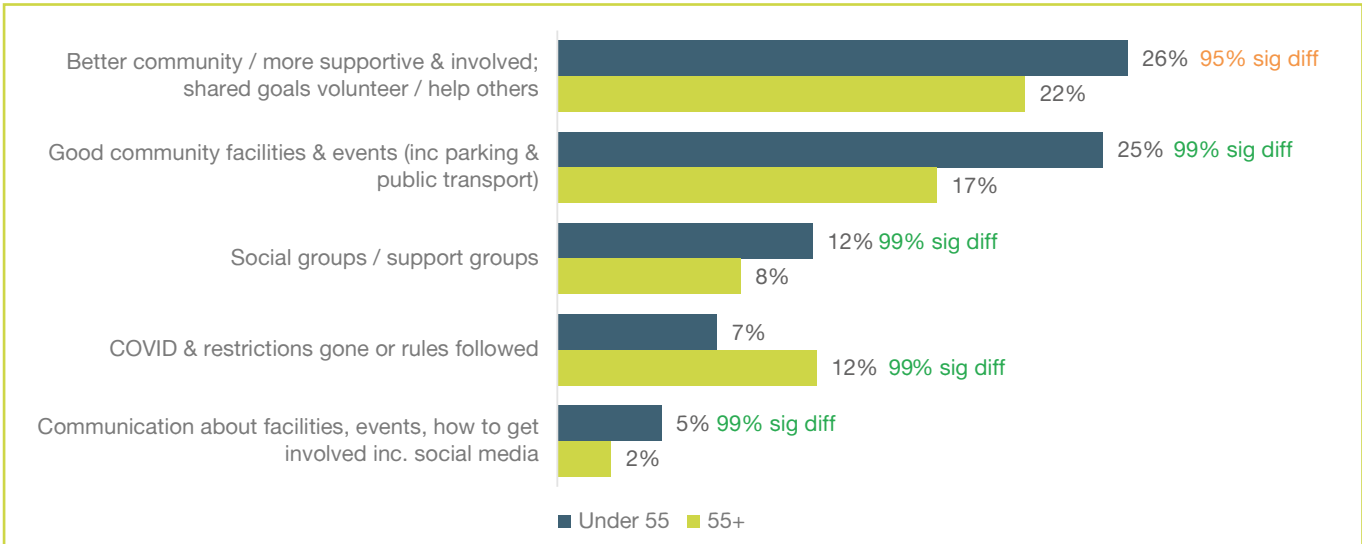


Source: Q10, Women 3347 people, Men 425 people

Good community facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, local community events and places to walk), would be more likely to make LGBT+ and under 55s feel more part of the community. Under 55 also think that more community support, more social groups and better communication about events and facilities would help, whilst over 55s say that the end of COVID and restrictions or better adherence to COVID rules would make them feel more part of the community.

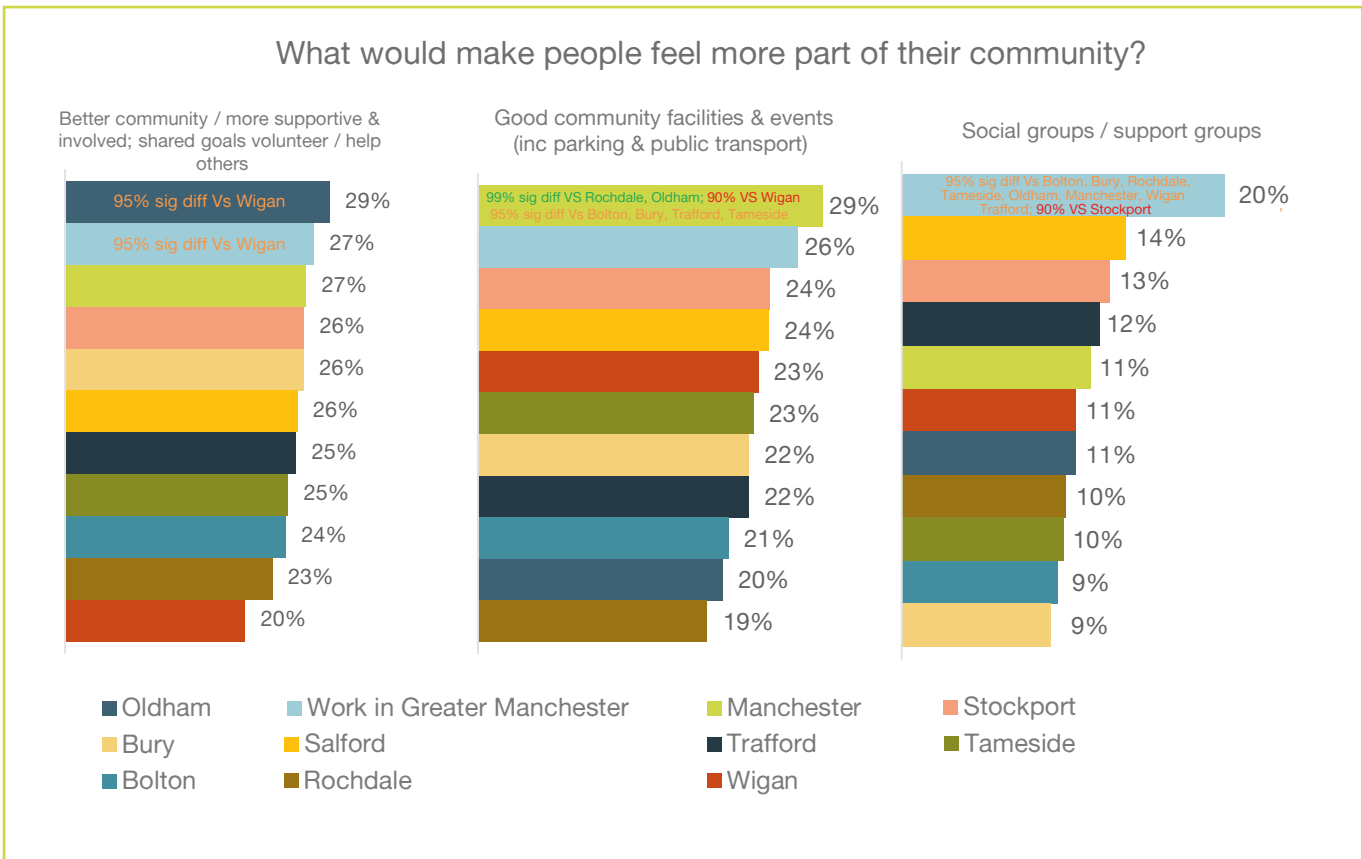


Source: Q10, 3123 Heterosexual, 592 LGBT+; 3169 Under 55, 686 55+



Source: Q10, 3123 Heterosexual, 592 LGBT+; 3169 Under 55, 686 55+

Better support and involvement are particularly sought in Oldham and Manchester whilst good facilities & events are key elements that would make people feel more part of their community especially in Manchester.



The focus groups support the survey findings and also identifies the desire for local people to have involvement in how money is spent, the need to be inclusive and communicate what's happening and available:

"Things like people checking in on you can make a big difference"

"More could be done to signpost where sort of community facilities is available because I just don't know"

"I know that these areas do have a community feel. And I knew there was a big community. But obviously, this year, like for everyone, it's just made it impossible to be part of that"

"In the future when communities are given a bit more of a free reign to actually do things that benefit them, and spend money the way it should be spent"

"I don't think that I've ever been as interested in our local community in terms of where I live for example, and things like that. I don't think it's something that I particularly don't want to be a part of, it's just we've never had a real closeness"

"Being part of a community that welcomes you, having gone through racism makes me be reluctant to feel part of the wider mixed community"

"There is a lot going on in Manchester and there were different websites where you could access, but not everybody knows how or where to access"

"More could be done to mix people where everyone could feel included"

"Maybe if there was sort of a service that sort of pointed you in the direction of what's available locally"

"In the sense that I'm very lucky, I feel that I've always lived somewhere where there has been a really strong community spirit"

"Spaces where people can come together"

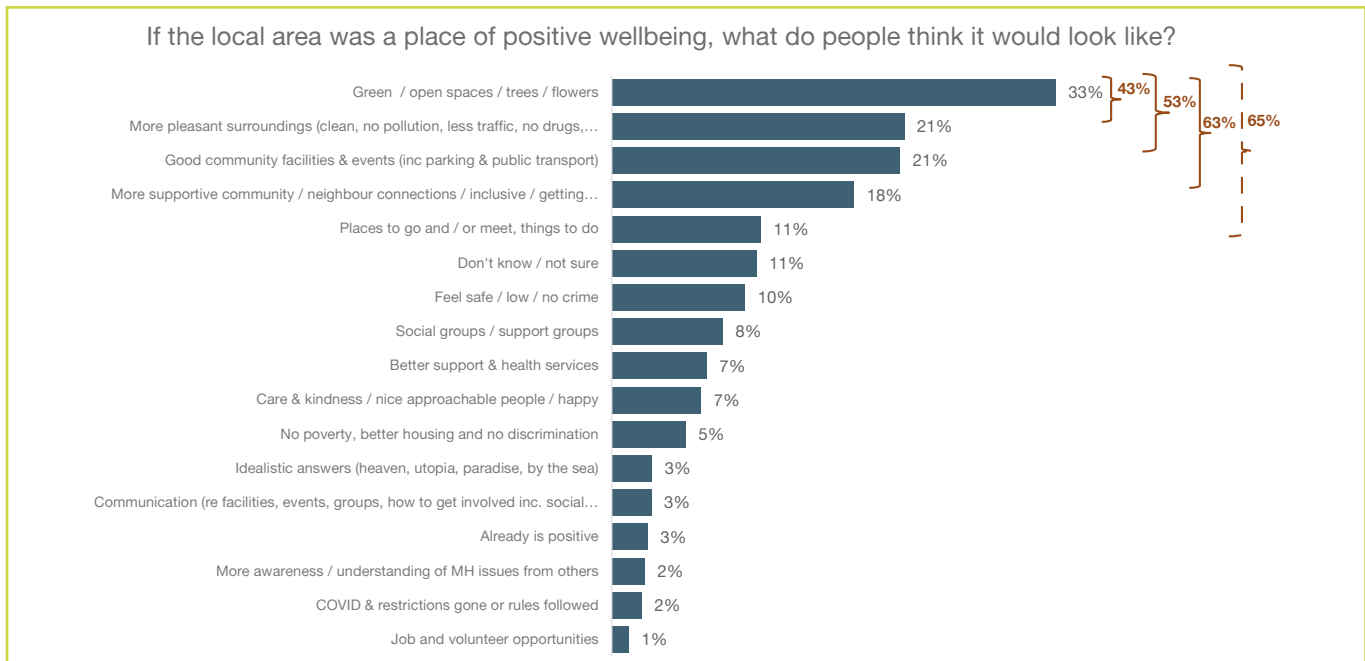
"I know that there are multiple directories out there, so that if you know you're looking for something, you can go to a directory and find it. But there's a different directory for every local authority. Simple information across the board would be a lot easier for people to access"

"It's about sharing for them what support is out there. And I think it's down... although the government can only do so much and there's lots of people falling through the gaps at the moment, they have a duty of care to be advertising what is available, even if it isn't run by them"

"COVID was such an overwhelming thing for our community. People lost their jobs, lost their businesses. They don't know what is going to happen. And we were always picking up information for them. Giving them that hope. When that grant thing came up, we were giving so much information about that, universal credit, where to get help from"

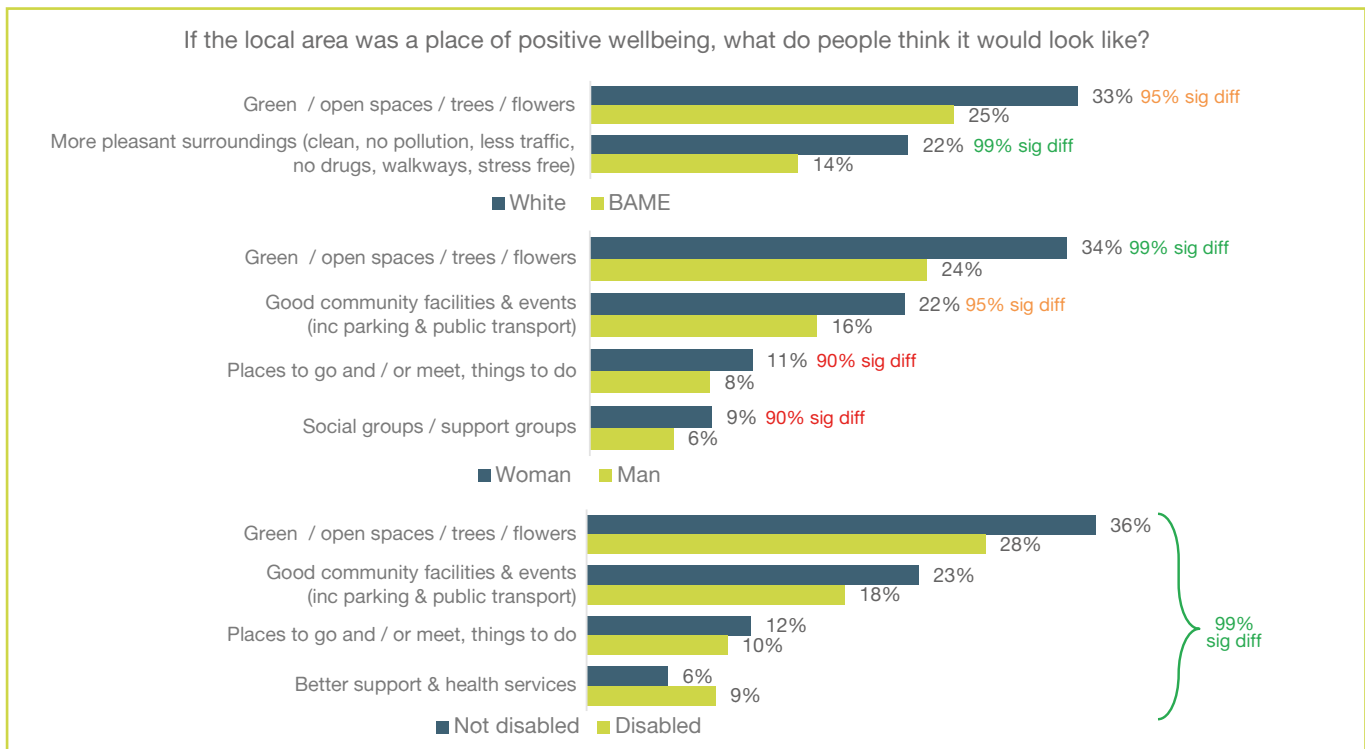
CREATING A PLACE OF POSITIVE WELLBEING

If their local area was a place of positive wellbeing there are 4 things that would meet the majority, (63%), of people’s needs: Green open space, the ambiance of the surroundings, (such as stress free, clean areas with less traffic, no pollution and drugs), good facilities & events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, accessible parking, local community events and places to walk), and people behaving in a more supportive ‘community’ way. Suggestions after these are fragmented and none adds significantly to the overall total.



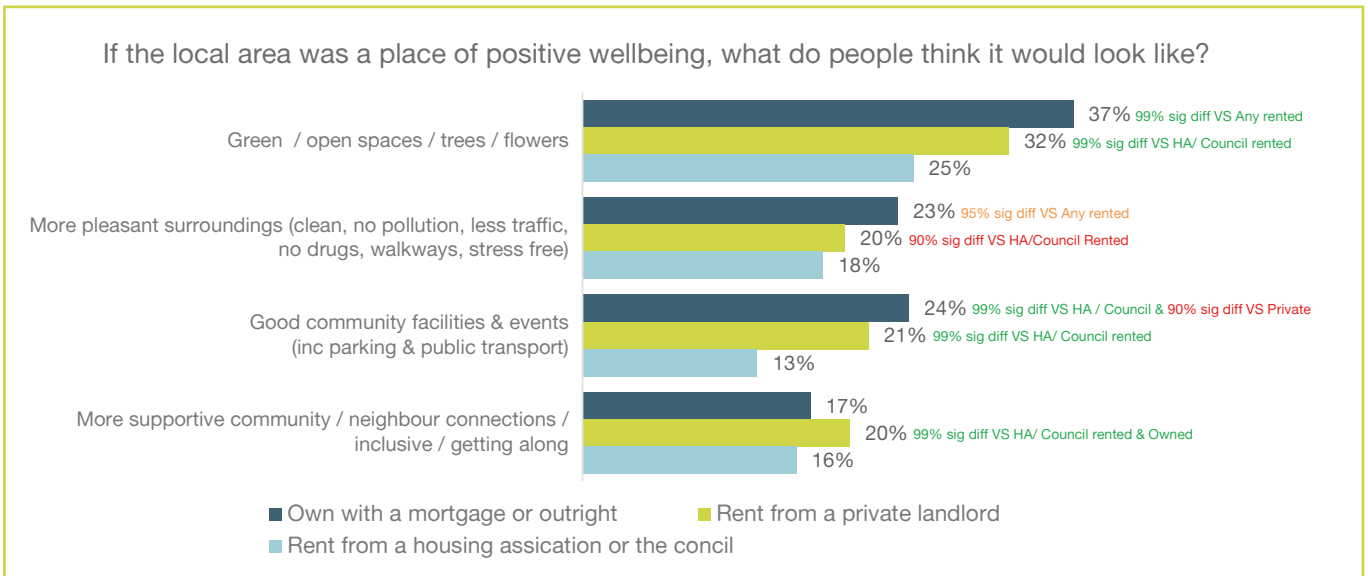
Source: GM Mental Wellbeing Conversation Survey Aug-Nov 2020 3986 people who live and or work in Greater Manchester Q6

White, women and non-disabled endorsing top positive wellbeing attributes more than their counterparts.



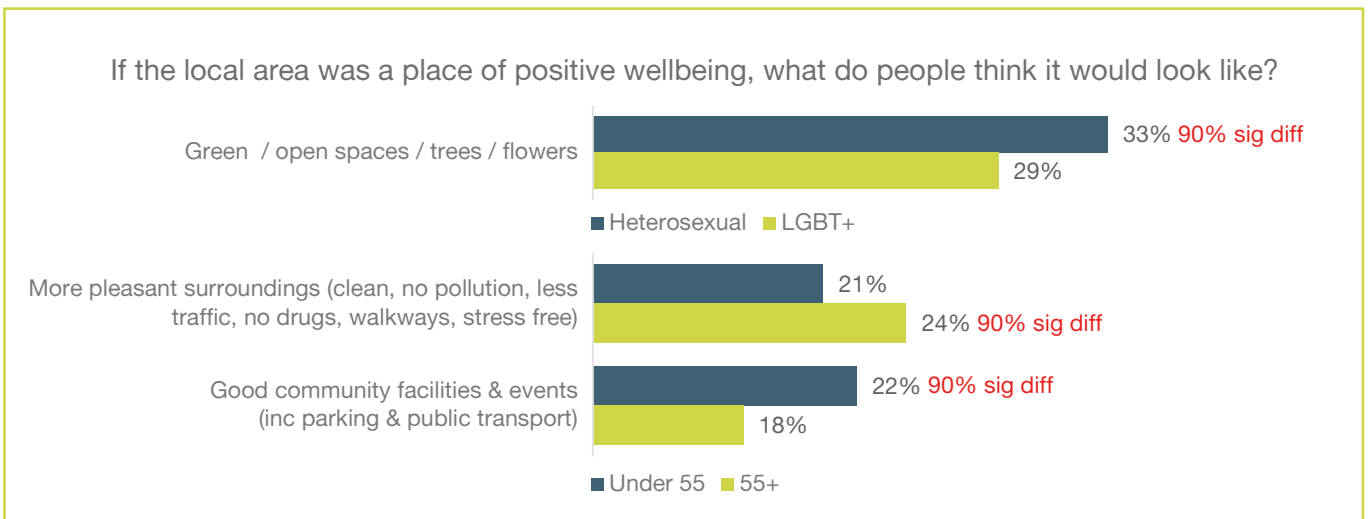
Source: Q6, White 3547 people, BAME 225 people; Women 3347 people, Men 425 people; Non-Disabled 2291 people, Disabled 1460 people;

Those who own their own home endorsing top 3 positive wellbeing factors more highly.



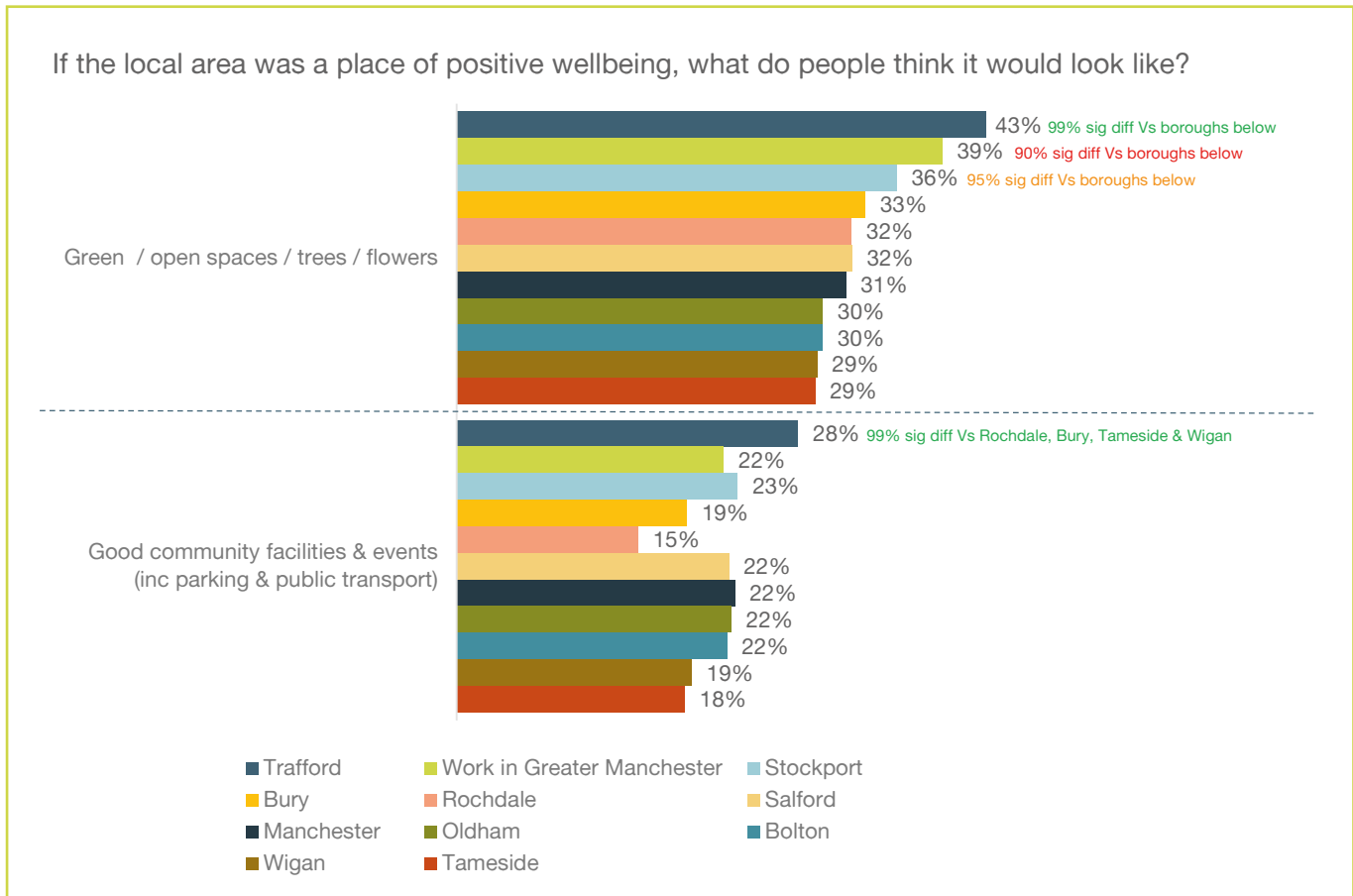
Source: Q6, 1963 Own Home, 854 Rent from Private Landlord, 653 Rent from Housing Association / Council

Heterosexuals endorsing top positive wellbeing factor – green open space - more highly than LGBT+. Whilst for all age groups green open space tops the list of positive wellbeing factors, 55+ more likely to want more pleasant surroundings than their younger counterparts who want good community facilities and events, (community spaces, parks, libraries, access to sports / exercise facilities, exercise equipment in parks, play areas for children, good public transport, accessible parking, local community events and places to walk).



Source: Q6, 3123 Heterosexual, 592 LGBT+; 3169 Under 55, 686 55+

Those living in more urban areas mention the need for green space and community facilities / events more, (Trafford, Greater Manchester).



Source: Q6, Bolton 362, Bury 312, Manchester 859, Oldham 257, Rochdale 232, Salford 332, Stockport 467, Tameside 342, Trafford 330, Wigan 237

Focus group participants responded similarly to the survey, saying that positive wellbeing would be enhanced through green open space, good facilities & events and people behaving in a more supportive 'community' way:

"I live in Manchester, so I think that Manchester is quite concrete..... I feel like I would want to get out more, but not necessarily walking on the streets. I want to walk through nature"

"Connection with people in a positive way"

"A sense of community, like there used to be, back in the 1970s where everybody knew everybody. And if someone was in trouble, someone would step up and help"

"Lots of green spaces, a place for people to connect"

"I think that community is crucial"

"There would be green space, a café, there would be places you could go if you wanted, if you're feeling lonely"

"Make sure that there are communal areas where people come and meet"

"Having clean walking paths, natural reserve parks and play area for the children"

"Everybody would feel supported"

"I would want an area where there is a low crime rate"

"I'd like to see less traffic"

"I'd say people out and about and enjoying nature and the parks"

"It means that if things get a bit shabby, like the other week when someone was like putting on the Facebook group that they're noticing there's a lot of like rubbish recently, like let's do like a litter pick. And so, a handful of us did do that one Saturday morning, we just went round the courtyard at the front and the back and just like filled up some bags"

"I think it's about feeling safe in your community as well as the community being there in the first place"

"It was knowing that you could knock on a door and somebody would help you. And that we would be safe"

"Ensuring that there were opportunities for a diverse range of people were able to pursue their interests"

PART 5: NEXT STEPS FROM WORDS TO ACTIONS

The people of Greater Manchester have clearly emphasised a need for more to be done to protect and improve their mental wellbeing. They have put forward many ideas for how we could do things differently. Now we need to start a process to respond to these findings.

The next steps will involve;

1. Continuing the conversation

continuing the conversation with targeted groups i.e. middle-aged men who are one of the most high-risk groups for suicide

2. Working with key stakeholders

working with key stakeholders such as health and social care, voluntary, community, social enterprise, third sector and business partners to draft a plan. The plan will include a set of clear actions for improving and protecting the mental wellbeing of the people of Greater Manchester

3. Securing resources within the system

securing capacity, skills, data and knowledge to implement the plan

4. Agreeing governance

agreeing the governance process so we are clear how actions will be monitored and how to measure impact

Our aim is for these actions to be agreed and published in Spring 2021, providing a significant step towards our vision to improve the mental wellbeing of the Greater Manchester population.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership would like to thank the Independent Mental Health Network for conducting the research in partnership with the GM Mental Wellbeing Executive Group. With thanks to those networks and organisations who helped facilitate the focus groups and all who contributed to the survey, enabling us to develop a report with this invaluable insight.

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