

A Spotlight Report

How people feel about living in Medway

A spotlight report focusing on **Halling** and
Cuxton.



April 2024

Our health and wellbeing can be affected by things that we experience in everyday life.

There is increasing interest in these wider determinants of health and Healthwatch Medway wanted to understand what positively and negatively impacts the health and wellbeing of people in Medway.

Medway has a range of diverse settlements, from isolated rural villages and hamlets on the peninsula to densely populated urban towns.

This report is part of a series of reports that will be posted monthly in 2024 with each covering a different area of Medway. As of April 2024, these reports together contain 144 responses. You can read our other reports [here](#).

In April 2024, we engaged with **44** residents living in **Halling** (23) and **Cuxton** (21).

Healthwatch Medway will share this report with health and social care services to help build an understanding of how the areas where people live impact on them, and how we can work together with services to improve Medway residents' quality of life.

This report summarises what we have heard.

Headlines

- 100%** of respondents **involved** in community groups said that they **like the area** in which they live.
- 98%** of overall respondents said that they **like the area** in which they live.
- 85%** of people **not involved** in community groups believe liking where you live and being involved in groups **has an impact** on your health and wellbeing.
- 86%** of overall respondents said **where they live** has an **impact on their health and wellbeing**.
- 75%** of respondents were **not involved** in community groups.
- 66%** of respondents said that **the community** in the local area has a **positive impact** on them.
- 27%** of respondents said the amount of **traffic** in the area has a **negative impact** on them.
- 23%** of residents spoken to say that **not being involved** in community groups does **not** affect them.

Methodology

Using a semi-structured interview, we approached people face-to-face in local community areas.

Participants were selected by a randomised sample of who was out and about in their local area on the days we were out engaging.

Participant Profile

We spoke to **44** people, of these:

91% of people identified as **White British**.

5% identified as **Asian British**.

2% identified as **African**.

2% identified as **White and Black Caribbean**.

64% of respondents were **between the ages 45–74**.

48% were **35–64**.

39% were **over 65**.

14% were **under 35**.

57% of people identified as **female**.

43% of people identified as **male**.

30% of people identified as **disabled**.

18% identified as having a **physical disability**.

11% identified as having a **long term health condition**.

2% identified as having a **learning disability**. A further **2%** spoke about having a **mental health condition**.

2% of people identified as **carers**.

2% of people identified as **homosexual**.

Factors that contribute to feeling positive about where you live

44 people told us why they like where they live:

66%

mentioned that the **community** contributes to people liking where they live.

57%

of residents mentioned that the **green spaces** increase their level of satisfaction of where they live.

48%

mentioned the ability and spaces to **exercise** having a positive impact on their opinion about where they live.

34%

mentioned the convenience of **local** and **accessible amenities** is a factor in their levels of happiness about the area they live.

32%

spoke about the positive impact of the area on their **mental health**.

27%

mentioned the importance of **familiarity** and **family ties** being one of the reasons why they like where they live.

23%

of people mentioned the **quietness** of the area having a positive impact on how they feel about where they live.

17%

mentioned other things that have positive impacts on them in their area: **5%** mentioned the **cleanliness** of the area, **5%** spoke about the area being **safe**, **5%** mentioned the **reliable public transport** and **2%** mentioned the **quality of housing**.



"I feel lucky considering how much we have locally."

"It's a nice space and it's beneficial for my mental health, especially with the nicer weather, and I've seen an uptake in my dad."

"When we get out to walk the dog we get to green spaces just 100 yards from the door."



Factors that contribute to feeling negative about where you live

44 people told us what they do not like about where they live:

27%

of Halling and Cuxton residents mentioned the negative impact of the amount of **traffic** in the local area.

23%

residents said they dislike **nothing** about the area they live in.

20%

spoke about the negative impact of more **infrastructure being built**. 14% specifically mentioned the negative impact of a vineyard wanting to be built in the local area.

16%

mentioned negatives around issues with the **roadworks** and **amount of potholes**.

16%

mentioned the negatives of the lack of **parking** available where they live.

14%

of residents spoke about the amount of **dog poo** left by dog owners and **rubbish** left around the area having a negative impact on them liking the area.

9%

mentioned the negative impact of **anti-social behaviour** in the local area.

7%

mentioned that they were unhappy about the local **community**.

5%

mentioned issues with **public transport**. A further 5% spoke about the negative impact of a **lack of amenities and activities** available in the local area. The **accessibility** of the area was mentioned as a negative by another 5% of residents.



“The proposed vineyard will impact on pollution, the environment and noise.”

“It’s lacking for things to do for old people like me. There’s not a lot for young people either.”

“I wish we had more than one bus an hour, the buses are a lifeline for us old people.”

“Nothing. You can’t complain living here, there are way worse places!”



Involvement in community groups and activities

We engaged with Halling and Cuxton residents out in the community. **43/44** people told us if they were involved in local community groups. One person did not answer.

10 **were** involved in community groups.

33 **were not** involved in community groups.

100% believe liking where you live and being involved in groups **has an impact** on your health and wellbeing.

85% believe liking where you live and being involved in groups **has an impact** on your health and wellbeing.

100% **like** where they live.

97% **like** where they live.

100% identified as **White British**.

88% identified as **White British**.

80% identified as **female**.

52% identified as **female**.

60% were between the ages of **65-74**.

42% were between the ages of **45-64**.

50% identified as having a **disability** or long term **health condition**.

24% identified as having a **disability** or long term **health condition**.

20% identified as **carers**.

6% identified as **carers**.

Community Groups Mentioned:

- Activist group against the construction of the vineyard
- Football Club
- School Governor
- Blackthorn Trust
- Bell Ringers
- Badminton
- Shooting Club
- Community Centre
 - Children's Group
- Church
 - Classical Group
- Zumba
- Retirement Association
- Slimming World
- Social Club
 - Bingo

Benefits of being involved in community groups

Out of the **10** people who said they are involved in community groups:

100%

believe that being involved in a community group has an **impact on their health and wellbeing**.

30%

mentioned that involvement in community groups has a **positive social impact**.

"I talk to people and I have made friends."

"I've made friends there and now I go out with them socially."

30%

mentioned that getting involved has a **positive impact on their mental health**.

"When I do Zumba I come back happier. It's had a positive impact on my relationship as my husband has a happier wife."

20%

mentioned that involvement in community groups **benefits** their **physical health**.

"I was referred by my GP to go there, and it has helped me to manage and control my chronic pain."

20%

of people believe being part of a community group has a **positive impact on the community**.

"It brings the community together."

10%

of people mentioned the **positive impact of learning new skills** through being involved in community groups.

"It helps me with my job, it gives me skills."

Barriers to joining community groups

We asked people whether they faced any barriers to joining community groups or getting involved with anything locally. Out of **44** respondents:

45%

said that there was **nothing** they wished to be involved in. Of these responses:

20%

said that there was nothing they wished to be involved in as they already have an **active social life**.

"We do meet up, me and my friends go down to the pub."

11%

said that there was nothing they wished to be involved in due to **not liking being part of big social groups**.

"I don't like mixing with other people, so I don't miss out."

9%

said that there was nothing they wished to be involved in because they have **other hobbies** that use their time.

"I do fishing and I make bonsai trees in my garden."

34%

of respondents mentioned a **lack of spare time** to get involved in local groups.

"I look after my elderly parents at the weekend and my disabled son during the week, so I don't have a lot of time to get involved."

9%

of respondents spoke about a **lack of knowledge** of what is available in the area.

"I only moved here a year ago and have only assimilated in the last few months."

2%

of locals spoken to mentioned that their **mental health** creates a barrier, which impacts on them being able to get involved.

"I am not sure my mental health team would want me to [get involved]."

2%

of people mentioned their **disability** as a barrier to getting involved.

"My Parkinson's impacts as I find it hard getting up sometimes."

23%

of residents spoken to say that not being involved in community groups does not affect them.

If you would like to chat with us about the report you can reach us through the following routes:



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Text us on 07525 861 639. By
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