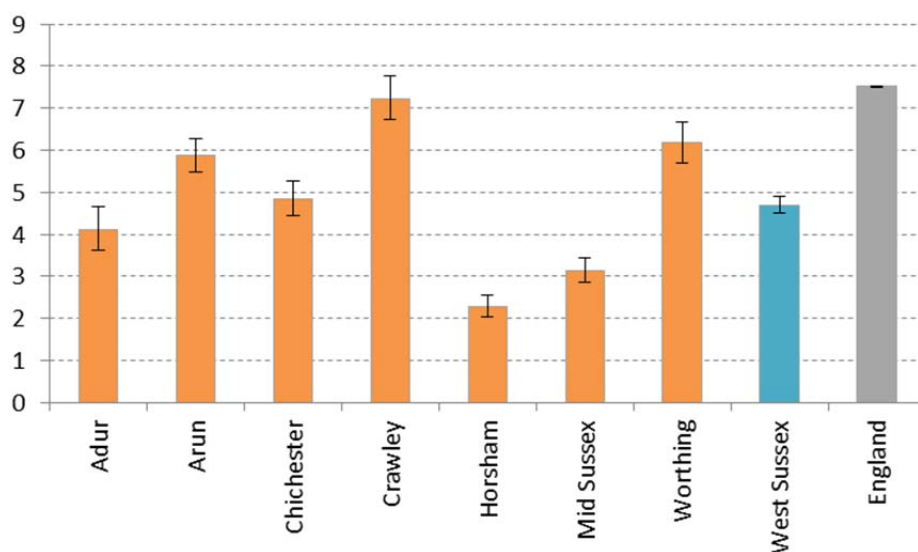


Figure 2.9 Noise complaints per thousand of the population – West Sussex Districts and Borough (2011/12)



Source: Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH).

Social Interaction, Networks and Loneliness

Social Capital

In examining factors that impact health and wellbeing many risks are identified in the JSNA, but there are also protective factors, or assets, which act to promote and sustain health and wellbeing. The quality of the relationships people form with others is such an asset, including relationships within families, between neighbours and within communities. Networks, described as “social capital” are broadly grouped into:-

- a. *bonding* social capital – for example within families or people of the same ethnic or religious group.
- b. *bridging* social capital – relates to more “distant” relationships within communities or between different groups in an area.
- c. *linking* social capital – relates to how people in different power structures relate to one another, for example how people are involved in formal decision making processes.

Measurement of Social Capital in West Sussex

To inform the JSNA, measures of social capital within West Sussex were included in a community survey undertaken in 2014. This was a door-to-door household survey of approximately 4,000 people. Measures used related the frequency of contact with friends, family and neighbours, participation in groups and clubs (bonding capital), measuring trust within a community and how well people get on together (bridging capital) to participation in decision making processes and how well feel able to influence local decisions (linking capital).

a) Bonding Capital – Contact with Friends and Family

Most people meet up with friends and/or family at least once a week and one in five in daily contact (Figure 2.10).

Figure 2.10a

How often do you meet up in person with family or friends?

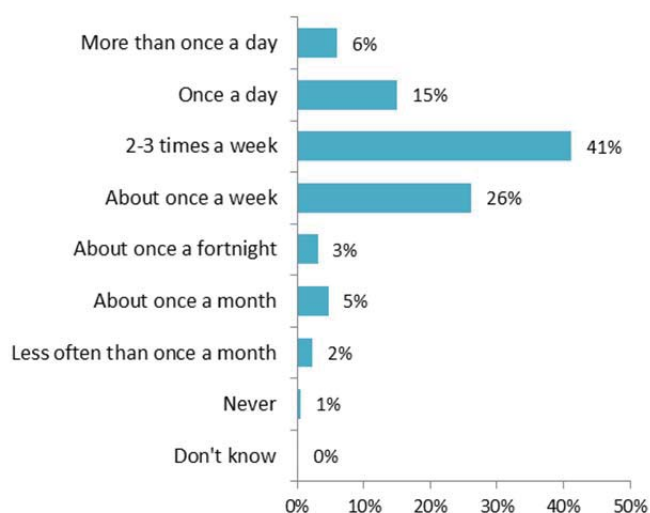
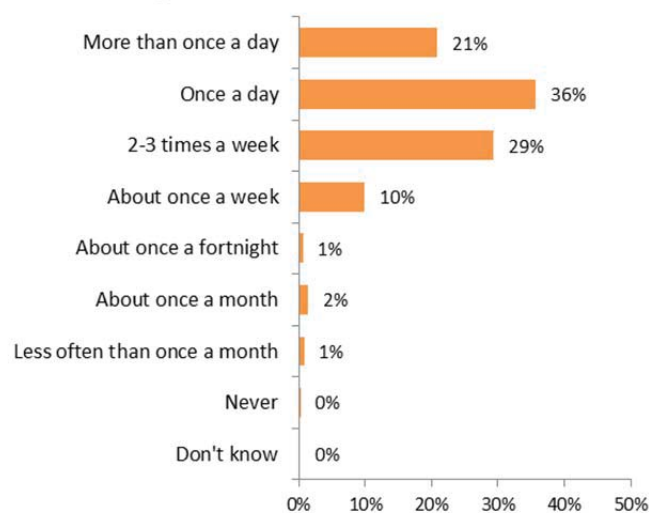


Figure 2.10b

How often do you contact family or friends by other means, e.g. speak on the phone, text message, instant message, email or write?



Source: West Sussex Community Survey 2014. Analysis by West Sussex Public Health Research Unit.

The survey identified differences between areas in the county, age groups and sex. For example survey respondents in Crawley were more likely than those in all of the other districts to contact family/friends more than once a day with over a third (36%) giving this response compared with less than a quarter (25%) in all other districts. Regular (more than once a day) contact was also more common amongst females than males (23% vs. 19%).

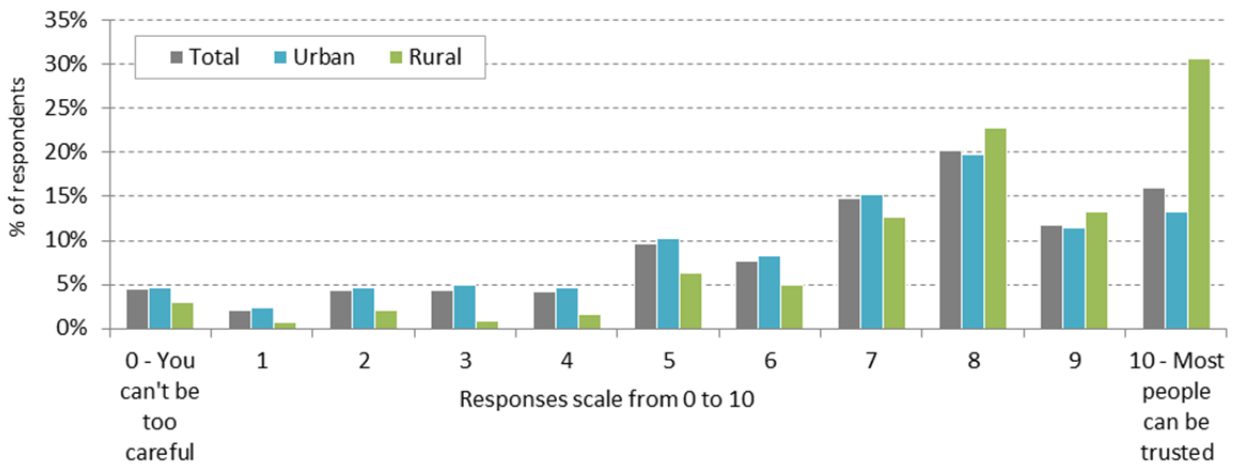
b) Bridging Capital

A number of questions were asked to measure bridging capital.

- To the statement *'this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together'* almost two thirds of people said people got on well together (agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement). This was fairly consistent across age groups and rural v urban areas. A lower percentage of people agreed with the statement in the most deprived areas (LNIA areas) in West Sussex.
- 62% of respondents agreed with the statement *'people in this neighbourhood pull together to improve the neighbourhood'*. Although there were significant differences, respondents in Worthing were significantly more likely to disagree with this statement than those in all of the other districts and respondents in rural areas were more likely than those in urban areas to agree that people pull together (71% vs. 61%).
- People were also asked to what extent they felt that other people could be trusted (Figure 2.11). Overall 63% of respondents scored this as 7-10 on the scale indicating higher levels of trust, again there were differences across the county, with significantly higher levels of trust in rural areas.

Figure 2.11 Level of Trust in Others

Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

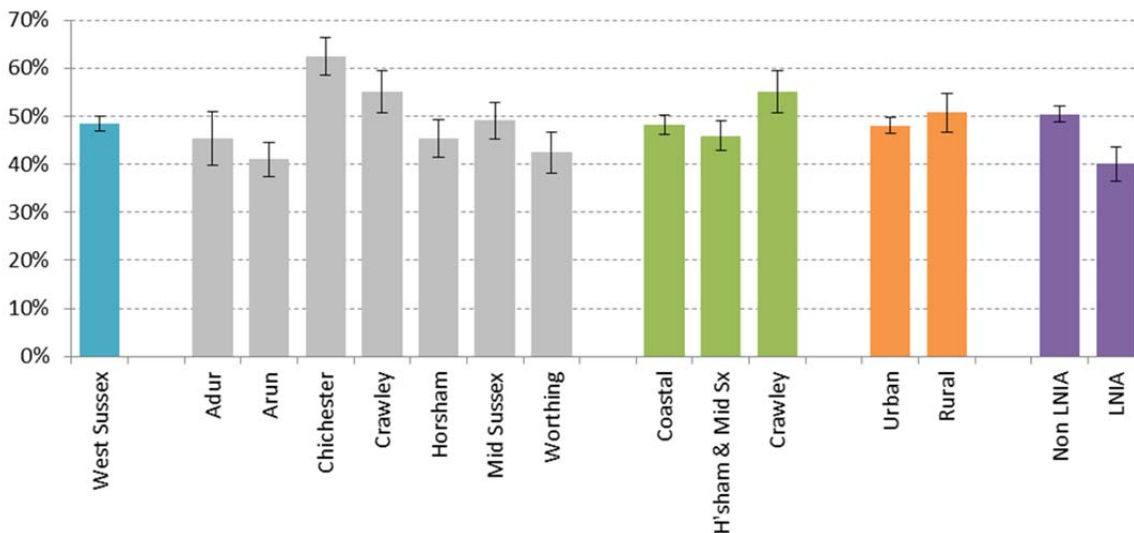


Source: West Sussex Community Survey 2014, West Sussex Public Health Research Unit.

c) Linking social capital

- A question used in the Community Survey asked respondents whether they were confident that their actions could influence decision making. 48% of respondents agreed with the statement that “When people in this area get involved in their local community, they really can change the way that their area runs”.
- In response to this question 48% of people in West Sussex said agreed or strongly agreed with the statement but this varied across the county, with a significantly lower percentage of people agreeing in Arun and in LNIA areas (Figure 2.12). Respondents in Chichester and Crawley were most likely to believe in the potential for local action to bring about change with 62% and 55% respectively agreeing with the statement, while those in Arun were least likely to agree (41%). Respondents in non-LNIAs were more likely than those in LNIAs to agree (50% vs.40%).

Figure 2.12 % of Respondents Agreeing to Statement “When people in this area get involved in their local community, they really can change the way that their area runs”



Loneliness in Older Age

West Sussex Older People Survey

In 2013 a survey was undertaken in West Sussex of people aged 65 or over. The survey aims were to establish a baseline from which to measure community connectedness experienced by local older people and to investigate levels of social isolation and loneliness and their relationship with health and wellbeing. 24% of respondents indicated that they were moderately or severely lonely. Those living in more deprived areas were 30% more likely to be lonely as those living in other parts of the county.

Loneliness was found to be highly associated with health outcomes, even after controlling for a number of factors including age, sex, exercise and medication. Lonely people were 60% more likely to be in poor health than non-lonely people and 78% more likely to have reported multiple emergency admissions to hospital. It is possible that people who have poor health find it difficult to maintain their social connections and it's also possible that loneliness itself leads to poorer health, especially poorer mental health.

Table 2.5 Loneliness by Local Authority Area

Area	% Respondents aged 65+ Moderately or Severely Lonely
Adur	29.0%
Arun	23.8%
Chichester	22.3%
Crawley	28.3%
Horsham	19.5%
Mid Sussex	20.6%
Worthing	27.1%
West Sussex	24.4%

Source: West Sussex Public Health Research Unit

Loneliness was more common in those with poor sight, poor hearing and problems with their memory. It was also common in carers with high care burdens, but not if they lived independently. Contact with neighbours and participation in groups were associated with a 20% reduction in the odds of a respondent being lonely.

Volunteering in West Sussex

(Data source: West Sussex Community Survey 2014)

In West Sussex 26% of people reported that they had volunteered in the previous year. Respondents were most likely to have supported children's education/schools (7%), local community groups (6%), sport/exercise (6%) and youth activities (6%).

Respondents in rural areas were more likely than those in urban areas to have provided support (36% vs. 25%). Those in non-LNIA's were more likely than those in LNIA's to have provided support (28% vs. 19%). Of those volunteering, 42% of people said they volunteered frequently (once a week).