

What does West Sussex worry about?

A qualitative analysis of the West Sussex Your Health Matters – Community Survey 2024

West Sussex Public Health and Social Research Unit
December 2025



About the research team



Analyses were completed by members of the West Sussex Public Health and Social Research Unit: Catherine Wells, Kirsty Bennett, Lizzie Vass, Matthew Dorey, Ruth Burns, Tim Martin and Verity Pinkney.

In qualitative research, it is important to reflect on how our backgrounds and experience may shape the research and how our assumptions and values may influence the analyses and interpretation. To provide this context, a brief summary of the authors' backgrounds and experience is provided below.

The research team consisted of eight public health researchers/analysts, five female and three male, across a range of ages. We are all permanently employed in salaried local government roles and come from a range of health-related backgrounds including public health, social care, health psychology and statistical modelling. Some members of the research team identify as mixed-methods researchers, with others identifying predominantly as quantitative researchers. We have experience across a range of public health topics including mental health, housing, tobacco control, ageing, child health, social care and sexual health. Our identities and experiences shape how we approached this research and to address potential biases, we engaged in rigorous and reflexive practices which are detailed [elsewhere](#).

Background



- There is some evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted many aspects of health and wellbeing and widened health inequalities.
- In West Sussex, we wanted to understand health and health behaviours at a local level, following the disruption of the pandemic.
- We were particularly interested in understanding more about the health of people in the most disadvantaged areas.
- To do this, we conducted the West Sussex Your Health Matters (YHM) survey, using deprivation as the key criterion for our sampling strategy.
- Survey topics included general health, health behaviours and the wider determinants of health.
- We also included a small number of free-text questions, which included asking respondents to list their three main concerns and worries: *'At the moment, what would you say are your three main concerns or worries? These concerns don't have to be about your health, we are interested in what's important to you and causing concern'*. Respondents were asked to give up to three concerns or worries. There was also an option to select 'Nothing' or 'Prefer not to say'.
- Free-text responses to the 'three main concerns and worries' question were analysed thematically.
- This report summarises responses to each theme/sub-theme.

Methodology



Our methodological approach is described in full [elsewhere](#). In brief:

- A market research company, QaResearch, was contracted to undertake the survey data collection.
- The aim was to have equal samples across the deprivation quintiles (i.e., a minimum of 1,000 responses from the most deprived areas, alongside similar samples from less deprived areas). Households were randomly chosen to participate in each of the deprivation quintiles across the county.
- In total, 6,440 individuals completed the survey, with 4,993 leaving a free-text response describing at least one worry or concern (n=13,193 in total).
- Free-text responses to the 'three main concerns and worries' question were analysed thematically, with the research team taking the following approach:
 - Developing the framework and codebook using a small sample of the full dataset (386 responses from 150 respondents)
 - Testing the draft framework and codebook against a larger sample of the full dataset and refining as necessary
 - Applying the revised framework and codebook to the full dataset
 - Carrying out inter-rater reliability to check the consistency of coding between researchers

Overall responses



- Of the 6,440 individuals who completed the survey, 15.3% (n=987) responded 'Nothing' and 5.1% (n=331) responded 'Prefer not to say'. A further 2% of respondents did not leave a response (n=129).
- In total, 4,993 respondents left at least one free-text response (77.5%), totalling 13,193 responses. A small number of these responses were excluded because they were illegible or incomplete (n=97), leaving 4,986 respondents who provided at least one worry or concern (77.4%), and 13,096 free text-responses included in the analyses.
- A large proportion of respondents who provided at least one worry, provided multiple worries: 4,473 (69.5%) of all survey respondents provided two worries and 3,637 (56.5%) provided three worries.
- In total, 13,096 responses were included in the analyses. A summary of the quantitative analysis undertaken as part of this work is provided elsewhere.

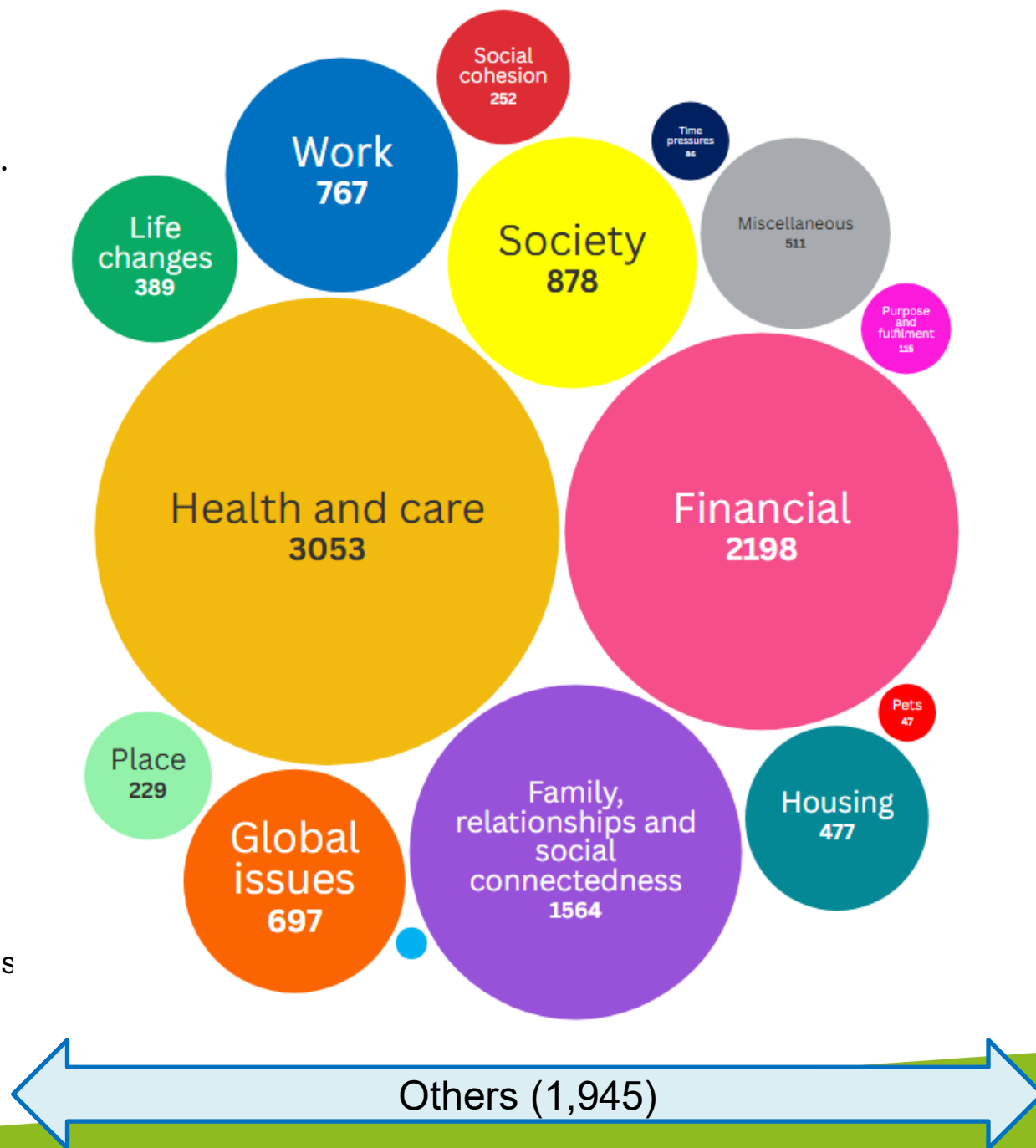
Number of respondents (and proportion of overall number of respondents)

All responses				Responses included in the analyses*		
Responded 'Nothing'	Responded 'Prefer not to say'	Left question blank	Provided at least one response	Provided one worry	Provided two worries	Provided three worries
987 (15.3%)	331 (5.1%)	129 (2.0%)	4,993 (77.5%)	4,986 (77.4%)	4,473 (69.5%)	3,637 (56.5%)

*Responses which were illegible or incomplete were excluded from the analyses.

Themes

- 13,096 worries reported by 4,986 people were grouped into 15 themes.
- The size of bubbles reflect number of worries falling into each theme.
- Most contain subthemes – for example:
 - (1) **Health and care:** (2) Conditions
 - (1) **Global issues:** (2) Climate change
 - (1) **Financial concerns:** (2) Cost of living: (3) Food prices
- Across all respondents, the most common themes were:
 - Health and care related worries (n=4260, 33%)
 - Financial worries (n=2492, 19%)
 - Worries about family, relationships and social connections (n=1806, 14%)
 - Societal concerns (n=1120, 9%)
 - Global concerns (n=828, 6%)
- Around a fifth (n=2449, 18.7%) of worries related to other people (e.g. *“the health of my partner”*)
- The infrequent themes are: Miscellaneous (n=524, 4%), Time pressures (n=91, 1%), Pets (n=49, <1%), Coping (n=14, <1%)



Potential uses of this dataset



This slide deck provides a high-level summary of each theme and sub-theme. The Your Health Matters survey also collected demographic information from respondents including age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation ethnicity, religion and marital status. Data are also available for deprivation quintile and lower tier local authority. This dataset can be used to carry out focused analyses by:

- Topic
- Quintile
- Area
- Demography

Your Health Matters collected quantitative data on a range of topics and any relevant qualitative data could be presented alongside this to provide a more comprehensive overview of a topic.

Please note that depending on how data are segmented, numbers in some groups may end up being small. We recommend exercising caution when drawing conclusions from small samples. If you have any questions about using this dataset or require guidance, please contact a member of the Public Health and Social Research Unit.

Health and Care



Worries and concerns relating to health or care, including worries relating to respondents themselves, or their worries about others.

This high-level theme was used to code all worries that related to health and care, including those also flagged within other Health and Care subthemes and included 'own' health, and health of 'others' (e.g. family and friends, named individuals).

Those worries flagged within this high-level theme includes worries where no further detail is provided, or where a worry is too specific to fall into a different subtheme but still relates to health. In these instances, these worries would only be coded into this high-level theme.

Overall, there were 3,053 respondents who mentioned worries relating to health and care at least once, which is 61.2% of respondents, and was the tier one theme with the highest number of responses.

In total there were 4,259 separate worries about health and care, out of a total 13,096 total worries. This is one third of all worries captured within the survey.

Worries that were coded in this high-level theme includes single mentions of conditions/groups of conditions (e.g. *Cancer*), and references to own or other's conditions (e.g. *My cancer*), although these are will also be coded within other subthemes such as Conditions, Living with Long Term Conditions, Pain, Prevention, Future Health and treatment and are discussed within those subtheme slides.

Of note are the single mentions of health and care with no further context that would allow them to be coded further to subthemes.

This includes 460 responses with the single word “Health” as the worry, and the following examples of slightly longer, non-specific health worries:

‘A health condition/problem’

‘A family members health’

There are also examples of where health is not the main aspect of the worry, but is mentioned in a broad sense:

‘Ensuring baby is healthy and doing all we can to meet his needs’

‘Having to stop work due to wear & tear on my body & thereby losing money & social purpose’

Where the worry contained more detail beyond mentions of health generally, are coded into the sub themes of Health and Care detailed in the following pages.

Health and Care

Conditions



Broad theme to identify worries related to named physical or mental health conditions, or to problems with a body system e.g. back problems.

There were 484 respondents who mentioned a condition that fitted within the definition. Related subthemes are: **Future health and treatment** and **Living with/managing physical health conditions**. Within these, there were 565 individual worries that mentioned named health conditions or concerns about areas of the body. Of these the most mentioned conditions were:

- Neurodevelopmental – Autism, ADHD , ASD.
- Neurodegenerative – Dementia, Alzheimer's, Parkinsons
- Mental health conditions - Depression / Anxiety
- Respiratory – Asthma, COPD, Breathing problems
- Musculoskeletal - Back pain/issues , Spinal problems, Arthritis, Joint replacements / pain
- Cardiovascular - Blood Pressure / Hypertension, Cardiac / Heart, Stroke – Vascular/circulatory issues
- Cancer – including bowel, breast, skin, prostate, throat
- Gastrointestinal problems - Bowel (not cancer) IBS, Crohn's, Coeliac Disease
- Metabolic – Diabetes, overweight, obesity, weight
- Sensory nervous system – Eyesight, Hearing, balance
- Genitourinary including gynaecological and obstetrics
- Sleep and fatigue disorders
- Allergies and skin conditions
- Haematological

As with other responses in the survey, there are many that mention conditions not just for the respondent themselves, but also for others:

'Wife suffering from Alzheimer's'

'My youngest daughter health has multiple organ failure'

Concerns around fear and worry about a condition developing or worsening:

'Getting ill-stroke/heart attack/cancer'

'Fear of further sight loss'

How health condition impacts on everyday life:

'Bad hips can't walk much now'

'I worry that my Fibromyalgia will get so bad that I can't do much for myself'

'Osteo-arthritis in foot, knees, hips, hands. Due for a foot bone fusion in autumn 2023!. Can't plan ahead.'

Health and Care

Living with and managing physical health conditions



Concerns or worries about living with or managing physical health conditions.

This theme relates to the previous subtheme of conditions but is distinct in that it is not single mentions of a condition, rather when the condition is mentioned related to the respondent's own health or the health of others. It excludes the mental health and neurodivergence, which are coded in the subtheme of **Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health**. Related subthemes include **Concerns about a change in health, future health status, or upcoming treatment**

Overall, 188 respondents had at least one worry relating to living with and managing a long-term condition. As with the previous theme of conditions, a range of long-term conditions are mentioned within contextual responses.

Some of these are as simple as stating the person who is living with the long-term condition:

'I have dementia'

'My husband has Parkinsons plus other health issues'

Worsening or progression of a condition:

'Progress of chronic spinal condition --> pain, reduced mobility, compromised circulation'

There are also mentioned of the severity or terminal nature of the condition:

'My husband has a terminal diagnosis and as such our world has been turned upside down as we try to accommodate all the changes thrust upon us i.e. selling our business loss of income let alone coming to terms with his illness and prognosis and trying to plan for his needs etc'

'I am disabled due to severe stroke last year, finding hard to say I am disabled'

Another aspect of living with long term conditions has been the concept of coping and adjustment, which also relates to the theme "Life changes and transitions: Independence: :

'My husband's dementia/Alzheimer's- we are coping for now'

Impacts of medication and worries about the effectiveness and taking medication as prescribed are also mentioned:

'Too many prescribed medications'

'Taking my medication properly'

Health and Care

Emotional wellbeing and mental health



Concerns or worries about how an individual feels psychologically. For example, depression, anxiety, self-harm, suicide, mood, stress, burnout, motivation and tiredness. Also includes neurodivergence.

Of the 395 respondents who mentioned this theme, just over 30% of responses were about mental health in general. Many of these responses were simply '*mental health*' or '*my mental health*'. Respondents made comments about maintaining their mental health, managing mental health issues and declining mental health:

'Bad physical + mental health - failing fast - no hope'

They also commented on aspects affecting their mental health such as housing, work, relationships and their physical health:

'Our current living situation is affecting my children's mental health as well as ours'

Some respondents mentioned a specific mental health condition, most frequently anxiety and depression. A small number of respondents mentioned agoraphobia, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder. Respondents also made comments about stress and burnout, low mood, happiness, overwhelm and not being able to '*switch off*'. Like mental health in general, many of these were single word responses. A small number of respondents reported concern about self-harm and suicidal thoughts.

A couple of respondents commented on their need for psychological support or made comments about specific mental health treatments.

Some responses concerned respondents' self-esteem or opinion of themselves. This included concerns about appearance, confidence, failure, not fitting in and feeling '*...not good enough*'. A small number of respondents commented on traumatic events from the past.

Just over 30% of responses were regarding concern for others mental health or neurodivergence. Respondents were predominantly concerned about family (e.g. children, grandchildren, partners and spouses and siblings) with a smaller number concerned about friends. Most comments were about mental health in general, but some referred to specific mental health conditions. Some respondents were concerned about the mental health of family members who were neurodivergent:

'An autistic grandson finding things difficult'

Respondents commented about the support that was available for neurodivergent family members and those with mental health issues:

'Child with ADHD still waiting for CAHMS input for over a year'

Health and Care

Healthy lifestyles and preventing ill health



Concerns or worries relating to behaviours or factors that influence risk of illness or premature mortality

Overall, 429 respondents mentioned a concern or worry surrounding behaviours or lifestyle factors that influence the risk of illness or premature mortality.

Some of these concerns or worries were general, relating to keeping healthy and maintaining good health for the future more broadly.

Alongside these broader concerns, there were several areas frequently and consistently mentioned by respondents. This meant this sub-theme was one of two within this analysis which were subdivided further into a series of smaller, distinct categories.

There were five distinct categories within this sub-theme which centred around concerns or worries surrounding sleep and tiredness, smoking and vaping, alcohol and substance use, physical activity and fitness and healthy eating and weight. These categories are described in the following pages.

The number of concerns or worries varied across the categories, ranging from 151 responses relating to healthy eating and weight and 16 for smoking and vaping.

Although the number of concerns varied, many responses were brief or non-specific (e.g., using single words) and this was evident across all categories.

'diet'

'fitness'

'smoking'

Respondents also mentioned concerns relating to others behaviours and lifestyle factors. Where responses related to others, children were typically mentioned with concerns surrounding ensuring they had a balanced diet and the impact of them being around people who smoked.

Health and Care

Healthy lifestyles and preventing ill health Sleep



Concerns or worries about sleep and tiredness.

Concerns or worries about sleep were mentioned by 143 respondents. Nearly 40% of responses were non-descriptive (e.g. 'sleep', 'sleeping', 'sleep issues', 'tiredness'). Several responses related to respondents' concerns about a lack of sleep, or not getting enough sleep. Most of these were generic comments, with a small number of respondents providing an explanation for their lack of sleep (e.g. because of young children, health issues or previous traumatic experiences). Respondents commented on the quality of their sleep, for example that they were not sleeping well or that their sleep was disturbed or interrupted:

'Not sleeping properly or for long enough'

Some respondents mentioned concerns about insomnia, while others made general comments about their inability to sleep:

'Not being able to sleep even when I am tired'

Respondents commented about feeling tired and fatigued and the frequency of these feelings:

'Constant feeling of exhaustion'

Only two responses were regarding concerns about others' sleep (both young children's sleep).

Health and Care

Healthy lifestyles and preventing ill health

Alcohol and substance use

Concerns or worries about alcohol and substance use.

There were 31 respondents who had worries about alcohol and substance use/misuse. Of these, there were 8 which had either the single word responses of 'Alcohol', or 'Drinking', or the phrase 'Alcohol consumption' or 'Alcohol use'.

Nearly half of the responses that were coded in this subtheme expressed concern regarding a friend or family member's alcohol consumption or substance use consumption:

'Husband's recent ASD diagnosis and amount of drinking'

'My son's problems with drink and drugs'

'Concerned regarding a friend who is homeless and has substance abuse'

Other concerns in this subtheme relate to respondents' own alcohol use, described as "my drinking" or "my drinking habits." Respondents also voiced worries about alcohol's health effects with some expressing a desire to cut down:

'Drinking alcohol regularly and how it may impact my health'



Smoking and vaping

Concerns or worries about smoking and vaping.

There were 16 respondents who had worries that related to smoking or vaping. Of these, 7 were simply the words 'smoking' or 'smoke'.

There were also expressions of wanting help to cut down or stop smoking, such as:

'Health -stopping smoking and drinking'

There are concerns about others smoking habits expressed:

'My husbands health-he smokes and drinks and doesn't eat very well'.

And the impacts on children:

'Child mental health smoking and drugs.'

Lastly, there was a worry expressed related to vaping and impacts of potential legislation:

'The government banning flavoured vapes and having to go back to cigarettes.'

Health and Care

Healthy lifestyles and preventing ill health

Physical activity and fitness

Concerns or worries about physical activity and fitness.

Concerns or worries surrounding physical activity and fitness were mentioned by 82 respondents. Around a quarter of responses related to general concerns such as single-words of *'fitness'*, *'physical fitness'* and *'exercise'*.

Several respondents mentioned concerns surrounding current fitness and activity levels, with examples such as *'Don't move enough'* and *'Do not seem to be able to get fit even when trying'*

A similar number also mentioned concerns about maintaining their current fitness and activity levels overtime:

'That I can keep reasonably fit and continue to live independently'

Additional responses highlighted concerns surrounding different physical, psychological or environmental barriers that impacted their ability to be physically active:

'want to get back in to exercising more but I'm worried'

'My injuries preventing me from exercising'

'Managing to exercise enough whilst having a small child'



Healthy eating and weight

Concerns or worries about overweight and obesity, weight loss and maintaining a healthy weight.

Concerns or worries surrounding healthy eating and weight were mentioned by 148 respondents. Approximately half of responses related to general concerns such as single-words of *'weight'*, *'overweight'* and *'diet'*.

Several respondents expressed concerns surrounding weight loss and the challenges of losing weight with examples such as *'I need to loose weight'* and *'Not being able to lose weight'*.

There was also concerns surrounding weight gain which included weight gain following life events, particularly during the menopause, alongside worries surrounding regaining weight and the fear of future weight gain.

'Putting on weight due to menopause'

Concerns about diet, eating habits and behaviours were also expressed. When concerns related specifically to others, the majority were focused on children's diet and eating habits.

'Ensuring a balanced diet for my children'

Health and Care

Ageing



Concerns or worries about the process of growing older (and the impact on others).

Concerns or worries about the process of growing older were mentioned by 334 respondents. Related sub-themes are **Independence, Coping, Giving and receiving care and Cognitive decline**. Around a third of responses simply referred to '*age*', '*ageing*', '*getting old*' and '*old age*'. Several respondents also mentioned concern about ageing or elderly relatives, predominantly parents. Together, these general concerns about ageing accounted for half of all responses to this sub-theme.

Specific concerns about ageing and getting older included declining levels of health, thoughts about mortality and how long they had '*left*' and remaining alive for as long as possible:

'Declining health as I get older'

'My age and realising not much time left'

Respondents also commented that ageing had resulted in them being less physically able to do what they used to do, and the things they used to enjoy doing, and a reduction in strength, mobility and energy.

'Not as strong as I use to be'

'Problems walking-age related'

Respondents were concerned about coping as they aged (in general but also being able to maintain their home/garden), maintaining independence and having to depend on others as they got older:

'General deterioration in health relating to ageing to a point where I can no longer be independent'

'Being able to cope as I grow older'

Some respondents raised concerns about being alone as they got older, or not having family or friends nearby, particularly if they needed help, support or care:

'Getting older alone and no one to help me'

While some respondents were '*dreading*' getting older and felt '*ill-prepared*' for it, others commented about '*ageing well*' and '*staying healthy and fit*' as they aged.

Respondents also commented on the provision of care for ageing relatives:

'Elderly parents: need ever increasing care. Physical and mental difficulties, live an hour away.'

Health and Care

Cognitive decline



Concerns relating to memory, memory loss, dementia and cognitive decline.

Concerns and worries about cognitive decline were mentioned by 94 respondents. Respondents were concerned about their memory, memory loss, declining cognition and mental capacity and forgetfulness:

'My memory and overall intelligence are not what they were and have got worse'

'Forgetting more things'

Some respondents simply stated they were concerned about dementia or Alzheimer's disease, while others explicitly expressed concerns about 'getting' or 'developing' dementia in the future, or when they were older, and the potential impact of this:

'I worry that I may suffer from dementia in the future'

'About getting dementia + not being able to cope'

'Age related dementia and having to go into care'

Some respondents commented that they had dementia or Alzheimer's disease, were concerned about their dementia progressing, or were waiting on test results for memory loss or dementia.

Respondents also expressed concerns about others' memory, dementia and cognitive decline (e.g. spouses, parents, siblings and friends). Some respondents commented on loved ones showing signs of dementia:

'My spouse is 82 and showing signs of dementia and Parkinson's'

Others mentioned those who already had dementia or Alzheimer's disease:

'Wife suffering from Alzheimer's'

Comments were made about caring for those with dementia:

'Having to help with looking after my 93-year-old mother who suffers from dementia symptoms'

A small number of comments were made about the implications of others' dementia, and expressions of hope that they would 'outlive' loved ones with dementia.

Health and Care



Concerns about change in health, future health status or upcoming treatment

Worries such as acquiring a condition, previous condition recurring or worsening, and upcoming or anticipating treatment.

In total, 260 respondents had worries coded to this theme. Related sub-themes are **Living with and managing physical health conditions and Conditions**.

Worries about becoming ill, or developing ill health in the future are mentioned in nearly half of the worries coded to this subtheme, with examples ranging from general health worries:

'Anyone close to me becoming badly ill or dying'

'Health of family and myself in the future'

to more specific worries around future of health conditions:

'Will my MS progress so I'm unable to walk'

There are also patterns of worries using the words *'becoming'*, *'developing'*, *'getting'*, *'possibility'* and includes health broadly and in relation to specific health conditions:

'Possibility of serious illness'

'Possible return of breast cancer'

Awaiting test results and treatment were included in this subtheme, with 68 mentioning waiting on results or treatment of some kind:

'Difficult to plan as waiting for medical results'

'Child with ADHD still waiting for CAHMS input for over a year'

Responses relating to recovery are included in this theme, however we recommend reviewing these alongside the Health and care: Living with/managing physical health conditions and Conditions themes:

'Having had right hip replacement - the left hip is deteriorating - slow recovery'

Responses that are in relation to age-related decline are excluded from this theme and are included in the Health and Care: Ageing theme .

Future health concerns and impacts on those who live alone connect to other subthemes within Health and Care and to subthemes of Family and social connectedness and Life Changes and transitions:

'I am concerned that my current health issues will escalate so that I'll either be a burden to my partner or son or go into residential care and be unable to leave my house to my family'

Health and Care

Giving and receiving care



Concerns or worries about own and/or others caring capabilities and responsibilities and the impact of this (e.g. being able to look after own self, the impact of caring for other people, becoming a burden) .

Concerns or worries relating to giving and receiving care were mentioned by 173 respondents. Many of these were associated with the 'Ageing' theme. Respondents' most mentioned concern, accounting for over a third of all responses, was being a carer to others, usually family members. Some of these highlighted the difficulties they faced coping as a carer:

'I struggle as my wife's carer'

'...I am her sole carer but hopelessly underqualified'.

Others noted the condition the person they were caring for suffered from, such as dementia or Alzheimer's Disease. Carers were also concerned about their own health and how this may impact on those they were caring for. Alongside this, carers mentioned the impact of caring on their lives including work life, home life and stress.

The next largest number of concerns that people had were related to *'coping'* with just under a third of respondents mentioning this. Associated with 'coping' were worries about people being unable to care for themselves. The majority of these were worries about the future, albeit with a small number of concerns about the present. Comments included:

'What will happen when I am no longer able to look after myself'

Getting support was the next most mentioned worry that people had. This was often as an addition to not being able to care for themselves but also referred to others such as family. Comments included:

'Having no-one to help me when I am ill or in need of support'

The needs and welfare of other family members was the next most prominent concern. This centred on elderly parents and relatives with a smaller number concerned about children. Typical comments included:

'Care and wellbeing of elderly mother'

'Securing help for disabled daughter'.

The final major worry in this theme was being reliant on other people:

'I don't want to be a nuisance/burden to my family...'

Other worries in this theme included unforeseen incidents, family members in care and people's fear of going into care themselves.

Health and Care

Death and dying



Concerns or worries about own or others mortality, including leaving others behind.

Concerns or worries about death and dying were mentioned by 95 respondents. **Conditions, Bereavement and Loss** and **Estates and end-of-life planning** are related sub-themes.

Nearly a quarter of responses were non-specific (e.g. *'death', 'dying', 'mortality'*). Respondents commented on loved one's terminal illnesses and the impact of this:

'My husband has a terminal diagnosis and as such our world has been turned upside down as we try to accommodate all the changes thrust upon us i.e. selling our business loss of income let alone coming to terms with his illness and prognosis and trying to plan for his needs etc'

Respondents were concerned about loved ones passing away:

'Death of loved ones'

There were also a significant number of responses regarding their own death. Respondents were concerned about dying alone and others not being aware that they had died for several days, dying in pain and a lack of control around right to die. There were also concerns about dying *'too soon'* and the amount of time they had *'left'* before they died. Respondents were also worried about the impact of them dying on others such as spouses or children:

'Concern over my wife if and when my turn comes'

'What will happen to my family after I die'

Health and Care

Pain

Concerns about living with or managing pain.

We recommend considering this subtheme alongside **Health and care: Living with/managing physical health conditions**, **Concerns about change in health, future health status or upcoming treatment** and **Health and Care Organisations**.

There were 102 respondents that mentioned pain. Of this, nearly one third also mentioned a condition or living with a long-term condition.

Some were nonspecific mentions of *'pain'* (n=12), others related to pain in certain areas of the body such as *'back pain'*, *'back ache'* or *'sore back'* (n = 20). Joint pain also features prominently, with knee, shoulder, leg, ankle and neck pain all mentioned.

Other responses discuss the quality of the pain, with responses such as:

'Arthritis and osteoporosis in my feet also very painful'

'I am again in acute pain'



Respondents mention impacts of pain on their lives:

'Loneliness, unable to do things I used to do, due to pain'

'Chronic pain in back, stops me from living'

Access to care and treatment is mentioned:

'Inability to get to see specialists re back + shoulder pain'

'On going pain and refusal of GP to send me for a scan'

Management of pain and impacts of pain relief are also discussed:

'Muscular-skeletal problems: I have to take pain relief to sleep'

'Medication taken for pain, caused microscopic colitis, had the pain been dealt with via the op I would not of got colitis & been suffering with that too'

'I am fed up with taking pills and aches and pains'

Health and Care

Mobility and balance



Concerns about maintaining physical mobility, or becoming immobile, which includes concerns about falls and balance.

Concerns or worries relating to mobility and balance were mentioned by 175 respondents with a total of 184 responses within this sub-theme. Of these, around a quarter of responses simply referred to 'mobility', 'my mobility' and 'mobility concerns'.

Respondents mentioned a wide range of concerns relating to mobility and balance. Most concerns in this sub-theme were centred around current levels of mobility, either generally or due to specific conditions or injuries, and the impact this had on their ability to carry out daily activities or leave the house.

'Not being able to walk well'

'I have arthritis in both hips causing restricted mobility'

Alongside current levels of mobility, some respondents expressed concerns surrounding maintaining their mobility and independence in the future:

'Keeping up my mobility and independent life'

Several respondents worried about their mobility worsening overtime:

'My increasing deterioration in my mobility'

'will end up in a wheelchair'

Respondents also mentioned concerns about falling over and injuring themselves, both in and outside the home.

'Sometimes I worry that I may have a fall, in the street for example, or when having a shower'

Alongside falling, concerns were raised around the suitability of their home environment due to mobility issues, and potentially needed to move to a more accessible living space:

'The fact I might have to move out of my flat as it has stairs'

Family, relationships and social connectedness



Worries and concerns relating to family, relationships and social connectedness

In total, 1,564 respondents stated a matter relating to family, relationships and social connectedness as one of their top three worries or concerns, accounting for nearly a third of all worries and concerns (31.4%). Family, relationships and social connectedness was the third most frequently mentioned theme.

Around half of worries and concerns relating to family, relationships and social connectedness were coded solely as the overall code for this theme (n=809). Around a third of responses simply stated *'family'* or *'my family'*, with a further fifth of respondents leaving a non-descriptive comment about their children (e.g. *'children'*, *'adult children'*, *'my kids'*, *'my son'*). Non-descriptive concerns were also raised about siblings, parents, spouses, grandchildren and friends. Comments about parents often touched on aspects relating to age (e.g. *'ageing parents'*, *'elderly parents'*). Some respondents commented *'family issues'* or *'family problems'* but did not provide any further information. Respondents also commented about family members who lived far away or overseas.

A large proportion of respondents commented on concerns about their children, grandchildren and family in general. Most of these comments were about their wellbeing, happiness and future. General comments about *'The future for my family'* were made, but concerns for the future also focused on economic, geopolitical, education, employment, safety and environmental aspects:

'What the future may hold for our children and grandchildren e.g. economics, climate change'.

'My children's future- education and employment'

In total, 755 respondents who mentioned a worry or concern about family, relationships and social connectedness referred to a specific aspect. The most common of these specific worries have been grouped into sub-themes, which include worries about **relationships with others, parenting and childcare, maintaining social connections, bereavement, grief and loss and loneliness and isolation**. These sub-themes are described on the following pages.

Family, relationships and social connectedness

Relationships with others



Concerns about relationships with others, including family members.

There were 265 respondents who mentioned worries and concerns which were associated with relationships with others. Related sub-themes are **Life changes and transitions** and **Relationships**. The majority of worries that people cited were broadly described as *'relationship'* or *'marriage'* (44%).

'Relationship' was taken to be distinct from *'relationships'*, the former being specific to a personal relationship, whilst the latter was taken to mean the wider concept of relationships in general.

The next most often cited worry was wider family relationships. These were worries about children, often their relationships, and parents' and the family more broadly such as:

'Relationship with my daughter'

'Wider family relationships'

Whilst wider family relationships often highlighted relationship issues in the wider family, this was also the next most mentioned worry, namely divorce and separation and the impact of this. Included in this subtheme were respondents' own intimate relationships alongside those of their wider family:

'Breakdown of marriage and divorce'

'Break up of my son's marriage'.

The next most prominent worry was that of argument and disagreement in the family. Most of these concerns was broadly expressed such as *'Family disagreements'* and *'Arguments at home'*.

Respondents were next most concerned about their children's welfare. This was almost exclusively related to their adult children and their relationships and work issues. Typical concerns included:

'Eldest daughter has marital and work issues'

Friendships were the next most mentioned worry that people had. These worries tended to be largely stated as *'friendships'* or *'friendship issues'*.

Alongside friendships, but mainly exclusive, was the issue of loneliness. Many of these respondents said they did not have, or were looking for, partners, but others noted that they had little contact with people. Comments included:

'Lack of close relationships'

'Lack of social contact'

Allied to loneliness was the lack of contact with others, mainly family, and meeting people and potential partners.

Family, relationships and social connectedness

Parenting and childcare



Concerns about parenting ability, impact that children have on own life, and childcare provision.

Concerns or worries about parenting and childcare were mentioned by 89 respondents. Most of the responses in this theme related to aspects of childcare, both taking care of one's own children (e.g. *'taking care of my child'*) and others taking care of children (e.g. *'regular long days looking after grandchildren'*). While some comments were single word responses (i.e. simply *'childcare'*), comments were also made about finding childcare and the cost of it:

'Affordability of childcare, I want to work more to match the cost of living but can't afford additional childcare'.

Comments were made about children starting nursery. Respondents also commented on children, childcare and work. This included returning to work after maternity leave, finding childcare so they could return to work, childcare around work and 'juggling' work and children:

'Navigating baby starting nursery + going back to work'

A small number of respondents commented about navigating single-parenthood, gaining access to their children or co-parenting and the psychological impact this had on them:

'Carrying the mental load as a single parent'.

Some respondents made comments about their parenting ability, questioning whether they were a good parent and striving to be a *'consistent'* and *'attentive'* parent:

'Ensuring baby is healthy and doing all we can to meet his needs'

In addition to general comments about raising and providing for children and family, challenges of raising children were also highlighted, particularly where there were financial constraints:

'I have two young children and I am doing all I can to keep them stable happy and healthy without letting everything that we are facing define them too badly either now or in the future. It's tough'

'Finances/money - Both adults working hard full time and we can only just about pay for living costs and very little left for anything extra like activities/going out for children'.

A small number of respondents were concerned about their children's behaviour, them gaining new skills (e.g. potty training), settling them into a new home and how they were sleeping:

'Getting my toddler to sleep better overnight'.

Family, relationships and social connectedness

Maintaining social connections



Concerns about maintaining social networks or connections with family/friends. This subtheme is often (but not always) related to finding time/balancing other commitments.

Concerns about maintaining social connections were mentioned by 71 respondents. Responses to this sub-theme varied. Respondents commented on keeping in touch and maintaining contact with friends and family. Respondents were concerned about not being able to see family (in general but also because of the distance and affordability), or not being able to see them enough. Some respondents commented that they missed seeing family, or were concerned about being apart from family, with several respondents noting that family and friends did not live nearby or lived far away:

'Getting old, I don't have a relationship with my 3 children and I miss them. I worry I will never see them again'.

'My son and family living abroad'

'No family nearby'

One respondent was looking to move to be closer to family.

Respondents also commented on a lack of social interaction, social life and social connections, in some cases due to being busy, having other responsibilities, or being new to an area. One respondent commented on the *'lack of sociability in the community'*. A small number of respondents noted that they were seeking more interaction with others:

'Lack of social contact due to caring for neurodiverse adult daughter'

'To keep and increase my network of friends'

Feeling detached from friends and living in a remote area resulted in respondents feeling lonely and isolated.

A small number of respondents were concerned about *'losing'* friends or loved ones:

'Reducing social circle'

'How different and bad life would be if I lost a family member or close friend'

Family, relationships and social connectedness

Bereavement, grief and loss



Worries or concerns relating to current or anticipated impact of grief, loss, and bereavement.

Concerns or worries about bereavement, grief and loss were mentioned by 105 respondents. Related sub-themes are **Death and dying**, **Ageing**, **Emotional wellbeing and mental health** and **Loneliness and isolation**.

Some concerns were single word responses (e.g. *'bereavement'*, *'grief'*). Several responses referred to the loss of a loved one, most commonly a spouse or partner, but children, grandparents, parents, siblings and friends were also mentioned. Respondents commented on coping with loss, adjusting following loss and grieving for loved ones:

'Adjusting to life following the recent death of my husband of 40yrs'

'My daughter age 37 died 11 weeks ago so dealing with grief. Coping well I think'

Some responses related to concerns about the impact of bereavement, grief and loss on other people:

'Concerns for my sister in law due to the recent death of my brother after a short illness, whilst moving home'.

Respondents also commented on the impact of anticipated loss, both on them and others:

'Loosing my husband in the future'

'Whether my wife will last and cope when I am gone'

Family, relationships and social connectedness

Loneliness and isolation



Worries or concerns relating to current or anticipated loneliness or isolation.

Worries or concerns relating to loneliness and isolation were mentioned by 225 respondents. Related subthemes are **Maintaining social connections**, **Ageing and Loneliness and Isolation**.

Over half of responses were general comments related to *'being alone'*, feelings of loneliness, and isolation:

'Having no one in the world isolation'

'Struggling with loneliness'

Several concerns about being alone, loneliness and isolation were specifically related to old age, retirement, or the actual or anticipated loss of a spouse or partner:

'Becoming isolated in old age'

'Feeling very lonely, cannot get over losing my husband'

One respondent commented on loneliness from working from home due to their office closing during the pandemic, while another commented that that they felt lonelier now than when they were younger.

While the majority of comments were about the respondent's loneliness and isolation, a small number of respondents were concerned about others' loneliness and isolation:

'My dads loneliness after my mum died of a brain tumour in 2022'

Some comments in this theme were closely linked to the *Maintaining social connections* sub-theme. Respondents commented about their lack of *'companionship'*, *'company'*, friends and connections with others:

'Feeling lonely and lack of connection with other people'.

'Not having enough contact with other people other than my husband'.

A small number of respondents commented on their desire for companionship, someone to live with and social connections:

'I am alone and would like to communicate with warm people'

'I would like to have someone else living with me'

'Making friends locally (recently moved)'

Global issues

Climate change

Concerns relating to climate change and global warming.

Concerns relating to the changing climate, sometimes expressed as an *'emergency'* or *'crisis'*, and global warming were mentioned as a top three worry or concern by 217 respondents.

'Climate change' & 'Global warming'

These responses were typically short and singular, although concerns about the warming climate and the environment were often given together, including specific concerns such as heatwaves, drought, flooding, natural disasters and biodiversity loss. Further global issues, such as war and macroeconomics, were also highlighted in some responses.

'The state of the world-climate, wars, poverty. I can't watch the news'

In some cases, climate change-related worries were expressed in terms of concern for the future of close others, including children and grandchildren. For some, this extended to a more abstract concern for future generations.

'Climate change and how it may affect my children, and all future generations'



Environmental decline

Concerns relating to the environment and perceived decline in the environment.

'The environment' was a top three worry noted by 128 respondents. **Climate change** is a related sub-theme. Where respondents gave more detailed responses, concerns were often related to the quality of the environment and the impact of people on the environment.

'Pollution of water, soil and food'

Specific environmental concerns included pollution, plastic and rubbish, and were often linked to climate change. This included concerns around extreme weather, natural disasters and biodiversity loss.

'Climate and ecological crisis'

In many cases, responses were either directly or indirectly suggestive of a perceived decline in the environment and natural world.

'The decline of the natural world, birds, bees, deforestation'

'State of the planet by the end of the century'

Global issues

Global unrest and conflicts



Concerns relating to instability and growing tensions between nations, including conflicts and wars.

Concerns relating to conflicts and instability around the world were the most frequently raised topic within the overarching Global issues theme, with 497 respondents stating this as a top concern. **Politics** is a related sub-theme.

Many concerns within this theme related to instability at an international scale and escalating conflicts.

'Increasing tensions around the world'

'The global unrest and escalation of wars'

The threat of war – often simply put as *'war' or 'wars'* – was repeatedly raised, with many responses highlighting the global nature of this concern as *'world war'* and *'world war 3'*.

'The state of the world. Are we heading towards WW3?'

Responses often noted specific regions of the world or specific conflicts, with the Middle East, Gaza, Israel and the Ukraine-Russia conflict being frequently mentioned.

'Middle East political situation'

'Conflicts in Ukraine, Israel/Gaza, middle east'

'Russia and Israel aggression and their global effect'

In some cases, these worries about the spread and escalation of conflict were expressed as concerns for family members.

'Looming ww3, I worry about my grandsons'

Place

Condition of the built environment

Concerns relating to the condition or quality of the built environment and the perceived decline of towns.

Concerns or worries about the condition of the built environment were mentioned by 93 respondents. **Impact of development** is a related sub-theme. Many responses in this sub-theme related to the condition of roads and pavements. Respondents were particularly concerned about potholes, noting driving safety concerns and damage to cars. Respondents also commented on the condition of the pavements, noting there was a risk of accidents occurring. Some respondents knew of individuals who had fallen because of the condition of pavements:

'Poor state of roads and pavements and lack of repair-wife has tripped and fallen as a result'

Respondents were concerned about the increasing amount of traffic, congestion and associated pollution and commented on the lack of green transport and cycle paths.

Concerns were raised about the perceived decline of the local area with respondents commenting on the lack of, and variety of shops, and shops shutting. Respondents also commented on litter and rubbish and the cleanliness of their local area:

'General untidiness of our streets- no cleaning or weed clearance'



Impact of development

Concerns relating to the impact of new housing developments.

Concerns or worries about the impact of development were mentioned by 47 respondents. Concerns included 'excessive' and 'uncontrolled' housebuilding and 'overdevelopment'. Respondents were concerned about the impact of development on local services and infrastructure:

"Incomers" moving into the area and increasing pressure on services instead of long term residents being in receipt of services'

'Number of new developments ruining local area and with no infrastructure'.

Respondents were also concerned about the environmental impact of development, building on green space and flood plains and increased pollution:

'House building- too much green spaces being developed'

'New housing developments and the impact on the environment with debris and infrastructure being affected'

'The amount of new building is impacting on our infrastructure/adding to population and pollution'

Place

Condition of the local natural environment

Concerns relating to the condition or quality of the local natural environment

Concerns or worries about the condition of the local natural environment were mentioned by 32 respondents. **Environmental decline** is a related sub-theme. Several respondents were concerned about the cleanliness of water (e.g. sea, rivers and harbours), in particular sewage:

'The sewage pumped into our seas and harbour which is a key resource for locals health and wellbeing'

'Contaminated water and river pollution so unable to paddleboard safely'

Respondents were also concerned about the reduction of green space, a lack of agricultural land and declining nature. Concerns were also raised about pollution, rising sea levels and flooding and fly tipping.



Safety

Concerns relating to safety within the physical environment.

Concerns and worries relating to safety within the physical environment were mentioned by 43 respondents. **Crime and antisocial behaviour** is a related sub-theme. Many comments in this sub-theme were regarding safety in general, or the safety of loved ones (e.g. family, children, grandchildren):

'General safety of my 2 daughters in society'

Some respondents commented that they felt unsafe when outside of their home, particularly at night or when alone:

'Safety - anti-social behaviour is getting worse and leaving the house is scary. The police aren't trusted, and don't turn up when called'

'Don't feel safe to go out at night'

Respondents commented on crime in their local area, concerns about being attacked and increasing violence. Concerns about e-scooters and cyclists on pavements and road safety were also mentioned:

'Road safety and widespread acceptance of breaking the highway code. I don't feel safe to drive in Britain'

Place

Accessibility



Concerns about maintaining or being able to access places.

Concerns and worries relating to accessibility were mentioned by 41 respondents. Many comments related to continuing to be able to drive and concerns about how they would *'manage'* when they were not able to:

'If unable to drive, worry about transport to appointments'

'What would happen if I have to stop driving my car'

Respondents were concerned about public transport provision (e.g. buses and trains), or the lack of it. Several of these comments related to not being able to drive:

'What will happen when I can't use my car as there is little public transport through the village'

'Having no bus service'

'Trains as I don't drive'

A small number of respondents commented on the need for a car in their local area, a lack of transport suitable for those with disabilities and concern about train strikes.

Housing



Worries or concerns relating to housing and the home living environment.

Many respondents stated a housing issue as one of their top three worries or concerns. Often, housing worries overlapped with other themes, such as immediate cost-of-living concerns relating to rent or mortgages, or the life change of moving home. As these immediate financial or life change housing worries are grouped elsewhere, this theme collects together the less immediate or more abstract worries around housing, alongside worries relating to homelessness.

Around 475 respondents stated a worry of this nature, the most common of which have been grouped into sub-themes of **Access to Housing**, **Housing security** and the **Home and living environment**.

This overarching theme also includes the more general housing and home-related responses that could not be clearly assigned to a more specific theme. Many respondents simply stated '*home*', '*house*', '*housing*' or '*accommodation*' as their worry, or referred to their children or grandchildren's homes.

'Housing issues'

'Son's housing situation'

Others referred to where they lived or a place to live.

'Where I live'

'Somewhere new to live'

Several respondents were worried about future changes in where they would live, including implied worries about the suitability of their homes. In some cases, these changes seemed linked to age, although the reason for changing suitability was less clear in others.

'Being able to keep my home as I get older'

'Being able to continue living in my house'

'Where I will live when I can no longer live here'

Housing

Access to housing (availability and affordability)



Concerns relating to the availability and affordability of housing, often relating to others (e.g., children).

For 109 respondents, the affordability and availability of housing was one of their top three concerns. The cost of home ownership was frequently mentioned, both for respondents who already owned their homes, who often referenced mortgages, and for those who wished to buy a home.

'Having to wait to retire until age 67, and still having a mortgage to pay - feel like I'm on a treadmill'

'Not being able to afford to buy a home'

Where respondents already owned their home, some worried that they were stuck where they were due to unaffordable mortgage rates or the cost of larger homes – even where their living situation may not have been suitable.

'Being unable to move due to mortgage rates'

'That we are living in a house that is far too small for my family but can't afford anywhere bigger'

In many cases, responses indicated a more abstract or future concern for the ability of children and grandchildren to '*get on the housing ladder*', including difficulties with local affordability.

'My grown up children not being able to afford their own home'

'If our children can afford to live locally'

The affordability of private sector rental homes was also raised and linked to not being able to get on the housing ladder.

'Housing-I am long term rental and unable to move as rents are too high. Can't save either'

Relatedly, some respondents worried about the availability of different types of housing, particularly in the renting sector.

'Lack of social housing for children'

'Renting private, would prefer a council flat'

Housing

Housing insecurity



Concerns and worries about having or losing a home.

Housing security was given as a top three worry by 59 respondents. Worries in this theme often related to the insecurity of living in a rental property. Commons concerns described the affordability of renting and the risk of eviction.

'Affordability of private rent-having secure place to live'

'The lack of long-term tenant security'

'Being evicted from our rental property'

Becoming homeless was also a frequent worry. Some responses described risk factors driving the risk of their homelessness, such as illness, job loss, the death of family members and relationship changes.

'Losing my home'

'Due to the passing of my partner becoming homeless'

'My illness may lose me my job and home'

Whilst most responses suggested homelessness was more of a niggling, abstract worry than an immediate concern, a small number of responses indicated homelessness was an imminent, or current, problem.

'Having nowhere to live soon and being homeless'

'I am in temporary accommodation'

Most worries related to personal homelessness, although a few respondents gave the homelessness of a family member as one of their top three concerns.

'My daughter remaining homeless'

Housing

Home and living environment



Concerns relating to the home/garden, living conditions and immediate environment, including aspects of housing quality, property maintenance, and living conditions generally.

Factors relating to their home and living environment was a top three worry for 217 respondents. Many of these responses related to keeping on top of general home and garden maintenance, or to repairs and planned renovations.

'House maintenance'

'Completing renovations on my new home'

'Keeping up with house and garden'

In some cases, home upkeep concerns were linked to ageing and how this might affect their independence and ability to maintain their home.

'Getting too old to do my garden, clean house'

'Being able to remain independent, running home, garden and life'

Other respondents expressed concern that their living environment was not suitable for their needs or would not be in the future. Most commonly, these needs related to mobility and space for families.

'Need to find a house better fitting to poor mobility'

'Need to move out of here, 2 adults 2 children in a 1 bedroom flat'

In one instance, the impact of a family sharing one bedroom in temporary accommodation was raised.

Specific concerns about the quality of housing and living conditions were also highlighted by several respondents. Damp and mould were the most frequently raised worries in this context.

'Flat is very damp so there is mould in living room and bedroom'

Difficult or inconsiderate neighbours were a top three concern for some respondents, with several responses highlighting the impact of their neighbours on the quality of their living environment.

'Dispute with a disagreeable neighbour'

Social cohesion

Social values (civility)

Concerns relating to perceived changes in social values or norms, including perceived decline in civility and respect for others.

Concerns relating to changes to social values and norms was a top three worry for 88 respondents. Responses mostly concerned lack of respect, polarisation, wokeness, the condition of society, and religious matters.

‘A deterioration in tolerance and respect towards other people’

‘polarisation of our society and international conflict’

‘Wokeness destroying common sense’

‘Society we have to bring our kids up in’

Politics and **State of world/nation** are related sub-themes.



Inequality

Concerns relating to inequalities between people. This may relate to personal feelings of being subject to inequality or concern for others.

Concerns about inequality were reported by 51 respondents. Most responses concerned inequality as a concept, usually with some detail with where the inequality is perceived to fall:

‘Greed and unfairness during a financial crisis, where the poor continue to suffer and the rich and less affected continue to line their own pockets.’

‘The increasing polarisation of society into haves and have nots, with wealth and power being increasingly concentrated into the hands of offshore financiers and industrialists who have no interest at all in the wellbeing of the majority of citizens of this country.’

Other responses detailed specific inequalities such as poverty and social class.

Social cohesion

Harmful effects of social media

Concerns relating to the harmful impacts of social media.

Concerns or worries about the harmful impact of social media were mentioned by 27 respondents. Most comments focused on the impact of 'unregulated' social media on young people, both in general, and also specifically on respondents' own children and grandchildren:

'I worry about my son growing up with social media and smart phones and the impact'

Respondents were concerned about young people's perceived 'addiction' to social media and commented on the need to limit the use of social media. Concerns were also noted about 'fake' and 'dangerous' information on social media and the influence social media has on individuals:

'How the current unchecked and biased social media has too much power over the individual and influence over news coverage'.



Misinformation

Concerns relating to the harmful impacts of misinformation

Concerns or worries about the harmful impacts of misinformation were mentioned by 5 respondents. **Harmful effects of social media** is a related sub-theme. Respondents were concerned about '*fake news*' and fringe groups gaining powerful voices.

Social cohesion

Crime and antisocial behaviour



Concerns relating to crime and antisocial behaviour.

Worries and concerns about crime and antisocial behaviour were mentioned by 107 respondents. **Safety** is a related sub-theme. Around a fifth of responses simply mentioned 'crime' or 'anti-social behaviour'. Respondents were worried about the *'high crime rate'* and the increasing level of crime and violence, particularly among young people:

'Increase in crime within local community, particularly the young'

'The increase in violence particularly in young people'

Several respondents were concerned about knife crime in particular, again, especially among young people:

'Knife crime by young people'

Other concerns included worries about drugs and drug-related crime, cybercrime, internet scams and fraud, theft, vandalism and random violent crime (e.g. assaults, attacks and stabbings), with respondents noting specific concerns about the safety of women, and children and young people (their own and in general).

Some respondents commented on the police, noting a lack of, or reduction in, policing and dissatisfaction with the police:

'Reduced presence of police'

'I had a job to find police and I don't think they were genuine and they took no interest'

'Safety - anti-social behaviour is getting worse and leaving the house is scary. The police aren't trusted, and don't turn up when called'

Society

Immigration and population

Concerns relating to immigration, and expanding or changing populations.

Worries about immigration and population were mentioned by 85 respondents. Around a third of responses were the single word *'Immigration'*, with other responses focussing on it being *'too high'* or *'out of control'*. While these responses are not framed with much nuance, some respondents attempted to contextualise with impacts on resources and the impact on their own sense of belonging:

'To (sic) much immigration using our resources making it difficult for our own homeless and those struggling'

'Being a stranger in my own country'

It is notable that most responses mention 'the country' or 'the UK' rather than West Sussex in particular.



Change in public services

Concerns that imply a perceived decline in public services, such as healthcare, transport, policing, and education.

There were 206 respondents who mentioned public services. **Health and care organisations** is a related sub-theme. Many of these worries refer to the 'state' of the NHS (85 responses). The worries express concerns about the current state of services, their decline compared to a previous ideal, their sustainability into the future, and the perceived lack of such services:

'Amount of time it will take a new labour govt to invest in and improve health and social care'

'The decline of public services like dentistry and the NHS as I will need them in the future'

Society

Politics

Concerns relating to politics and politicians, including local, domestic/UK and international politics.

Worries from 291 respondents were coded within this subtheme. **Global unrest and conflicts** is a related sub-theme. Most such responses expressed distrust in government, both national and local, with other issues such as global affairs, climate change, and Brexit (6 responses) featuring prominently. Key responses in this regard include:

‘Inept politicians’

‘lying politicians’

‘lack of accountability’

Other responses overlap with the Public Services subtheme. While responses exclusively coded with the Public Services subtheme established worries about the decline of particular services, these politically-coded responses (sometimes from the same respondent or concerning the same services) home in on the people or organisations felt to be responsible.

Further responses in this subtheme explore the interactions between politics and interpersonal relationships, particular culture war echoing statements about both: *‘wokeism’* and *‘Right wing and populist politics’*.



Economy

Concerns relating to the economy or economic stability.

117 respondents gave responses that were coded to the Economy subtheme. While most responses coded to this subtheme are generic responses about the economy, some responses mention the economy in concert with other factors such as geopolitics:

‘State of the world – climate change, wars, the economy’

references to past economic hardships:

‘That there is another 14 years of austerity’

and more local concerns:

‘that the council is bankrupt and you are spending taxes on this’

Society

Education and schools

Concerns relating to provision of education, quality of schooling, and stressors relating to education. This can often include worries about the quality of education of dependents.

There may be some overlap between this subtheme and the **Life changes and transitions** theme and the **Change in public services** subtheme.

102 respondents gave responses that were coded with this subtheme. Over a third mentioned children, while two thirds of responses mentioning children indicated that the respondents was concerned about their own child. The intersection with the **Others** subtheme is quite prevalent, with references to grandchildren and other instances of the younger generation.

Sometimes responses involved specific services and locations:

'Lack of support for children with autism, particularly girls with high functioning autism, socially + educationally in the local area'

'My son's school (age 11). Alot of bad behaviour from other children makes it difficult to learn'



Digital inclusion

Concerns surrounding using digital devices (e.g., computers/smart phones), lack of access (e.g., wi-fi), and lack of skills/confidence to use computers/internet/online services etc and the barriers this can cause.

35 respondents provided responses that were coded with the Digital Inclusion subtheme (41 responses in total).

Approximately two thirds of these responses were about coping with an increase in the use of computers and technology in daily life:

'being able to cope with modern technology on my own'

'I cannot engage well with all the new technology and there is no one to help with all this'

Most of the remaining responses coded to this subtheme are concerned with changes to the quality of life owing to the increased used of digital devices in daily life:

'Having to go online rather than speaking to people. Doctors etc'

Society

State of the world/nation

Concerns relating to the state of the world or the country.



242 respondents gave responses that were coded within the state of world/nation subtheme. Related themes are **Change in public services**, **Global issues** and **Social cohesion**. Most of these responses involve a simple categorical '*state of the nation*' or '*state of the world*' response. Variations include '*state of the country*', '*state of this country*' and '*state of the UK*' for the former; while for the latter '*state of the planet*' and '*the world situation*' were often used.

While many responses offered very little in the way of specific detail, most additional information offered with global responses concerned involved wars, climate change or the future more generally. For nation-focussed responses, additional detail centred on politics, Brexit, public finances, or the NHS.

Financial

All worries or concerns relating to money and financial matters.

Nearly 2,200 respondents stated money or financial matters as one of their top three concerns or worries. This large number of respondents – around 44% of all respondents who stated at least one worry – is likely reflective of the difficult economic situation in the UK at the time that the survey was completed, in Spring 2024. The effect of this period on household finances is most noticeable, and described further, in the **Cost of living** sub-theme.

‘Money’

Around half of respondents giving a financial concern simply stated ‘*money*’, ‘*finances*’ or some variation on these terms as one of their top worries (e.g., money or financial ‘*concerns*’, ‘*worries*’, ‘*problems*’, ‘*situation*’, ‘*wellbeing*’) or referred to having, or not having, enough money.

Nearly 900 respondents who mentioned a money worry referred to a specific aspect of this financial concern. The most common of these specific worries have been grouped into sub-themes, which include worries about **Debt**, **Income**, **Future financial security**, and the **Cost of living**. These sub-themes are described on the following pages.

A much smaller number of respondents referred to ‘*wealth*’ or tax concerns, or the cost of paying for certain expenses, such as weddings, holidays and university fees.

Financial

Debt



Concerns about existing debts or falling into debt.

Concerns or worries about having, or falling into, debt were mentioned by 38 participants. Most responses were simply expressed as ‘*Debt*’ or ‘*Debts*’, whilst several others referred to paying off their debts.

‘Paying off credit cards’

‘Reducing my overdraft’

In some responses, participants alluded to the factors that led to their debt, including injuries and the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

‘Not being able to work due to my injury and getting into debt’

‘Still trying to get out of debt since pandemic as self employed’

One respondent expressed a feeling of lack of control over their debt, whilst others, when referring interest rates, seemed to allude to the same feeling.

‘I feel I cannot get my debt under control’

‘My student loan interest rate has been increased by a significant amount’

Financial

Income



Concerns relating to income, including income from jobs and benefits/welfare.

Income was given as a top three worry by 130 respondents. Many respondents simply stated '*income*' as their worry, although several further referred to the regularity or stability of their income, or to having a reduced, low or non-existent income for reasons such as maternity leave, moving areas, fluctuations in their businesses, being in unpaid training and being unable to work.

'Keeping a stable income'

'Cost of living, exacerbated by cost of baby and reduced income because of maternity leave'

Variations on '*earning enough*' or '*earning more*' were also common responses, with several respondents referring to having enough work or earnings to be able to pay for the daily costs of living.

'Earning enough money to pay bills'

'Financial problem, no savings. Basic outgoings are more than earnings'

'Not working and earning enough to pay bills'

Pensions and retirement income were frequently mentioned by respondents, with several worrying about the amount of their pension, not having private pension or lack of a pension entirely. Many of these responses were similar to worries grouped into the 'Future financial security' theme, although these latter responses tended to be more explicit about the anticipatory nature of this worry, rather than it being a current income issue.

'Stretching my pension'

'Reduced finances since retired'

A few respondents expressed worries around receiving, or not receiving, benefit payments, or these being reduced.

'DWP and my benefits'

'Finances are bad, not receiving any benefits'

Financial

Future financial security



Concerns relating to future financial security, including having enough savings, and enough of a pension for the future.

Future financial security was given as a top three concern by 197 respondents. Many respondents referred to their '*financial security*', '*financial stability*' or '*future finances*'. In most cases, this response was left open-ended, but some respondents referred specifically to having enough money for specific periods, including later life and retirement.

'Future financial security'

'Finances in later life'

Respondents frequently referred to pensions, retirement and savings, and were worried about how they would afford, fund, cope or manage financially in old age.

'My age, no savings, no pension and don't own a house'

'Retirement – can I afford it'

'Will I have enough money to get to the end of life'

A small number of respondents worried about unexpected or trigger events that could affect their ability to work or earn money, and thus affect their future financial security.

'Being bankrupted or made homeless by inflation'

'Unexpected accident/health issue making me unable to work'

Most respondents' worries appeared to be in relation to their own future financial situation (or, by extension, their dependents). A few respondents worried for their children's or grandchildren's future finances, including being able to financially support their children.

'Saving enough funds for future emergency and children's future'

'My children getting good jobs and being able to afford life'

Financial

Cost of living

Concerns largely relating to the day-to-day costs of living and bills, both current and anticipated.

At the time of the survey, the UK was continuing to experience the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and of several other recent economic shocks, which had led to high inflation for many goods and services. This was clearly reflected in the top three worries given by West Sussex residents: over 700 respondents referred to the day-to-day costs of living, both current and anticipated, as one of their top three worries, with hundreds of these specifically highlighting increasing costs.

‘Cost of living crisis. Struggling to pay for essentials’

‘Cost of living going up not in line with income’

The expression ‘*cost of living*’ was used by hundreds of respondents, as were different variations of ‘*bills*’, ‘*paying bills*’ and so on. Many respondents used language such as ‘*Being able to afford/pay...*’, ‘*Having enough money to...*’, ‘*Not enough money to...*’, or ‘*Cost of...*’.

Several specific and frequently mentioned dimensions of day-to-day living costs have been grouped as sub-themes of this ‘Cost of living’ theme. These sub-themes – the costs of **Food, Energy, Transport, Housing, and Health and social care** – are described in the following pages.



Food

Concerns or worries about the cost of food.

Cost of living concerns specifically relating to the cost of food and increasing prices were highlighted by 39 respondents.

‘Food prices’

‘Cost of food in the supermarkets’

‘Cost of food rising’

In general, although food prices were a top three worry for each of these respondents, most responses were not detailed enough to understand the size or severity of the impact of increasing food prices on them. However, several respondents referred to having or not having enough food or enough money to cover food costs, including one respondent who was having to resort to food banks.

‘Having enough money to pay for food’

‘Not having money for food and pay the monthly bills’

‘Not having money, living on food banks’

Financial

Cost of living

Energy

Concerns or worries about the cost of energy.

Cost of living concerns specifically relating to the cost of energy were highlighted by 50 respondents.

'Heating bills'

'Cost of living increases, especially energy costs'

As with rising food prices, most responses did not describe the impact on their lives of rising energy costs, although a few alluded to struggling to meet these costs or balancing them alongside other costs.

'If I can pay utility bills'

'Our heating is all electric and it's a struggle to keep enough money on the meter to stay warm'

'Keeping warm'



Transport

Concerns or worries about the cost of transport, including acquiring and maintaining a vehicle.

Cost of living concerns specifically relating to transport were highlighted by 24 respondents. Almost all of these related to running and maintaining a car, including several responses that referred to the costs of car insurance and fuel. Many others referred to either a current need for car repairs or a worry for the possible future need for repairs.

'Broken down car'

'If the car remains in working order'

The importance of having access to a vehicle was clearly apparent in these responses, particularly where respondents were at risk of losing their car and worried that they couldn't afford another.

'What to do if car packs up'

'My car is old and I need a new one but just cannot afford it. My car is my life line'

'Raised cost of fuel and food being on local pensions only being unable to continue running a car and get out to socialise'

Financial

Cost of living



Housing-related costs

Concerns of worries about the day-to-day cost of affording to buy, maintain, or afford a home. Includes cost of paying rent.

Cost of living concerns specifically relating to the day-to-day costs of home ownership or of renting a home were highlighted by 129 respondents. Many of these responses referred to the cost of a mortgage, including worries about increasing interest rates or remortgaging, or the cost of rent.

'Being able to afford the mortgage when our fixed rate changes'

'Keeping up with rent'

A few respondents specifically worried about whether their living situation would be affordable after changes in their lives, such as relationship breakdowns, retiring or having to stop work, or reducing working hours.

'Affording my house and bills after a separation'

'Old age, being homeless. Being able to pay my rent when I can't work anymore'

'Money and whether it will be possible to retire at some stage due to mortgage debt'

Several others worried about the cost of home maintenance issues, repairs or renovations.

'Financing necessary home repairs'

'Unexpected bills e.g. repairing roof'

The costs of moving house were noted as one of a few respondents' top three worries.

'Cost of moving house'

A few others noted the cost of council tax, and one person the cost of bedroom tax, as one of their top three concerns.

Financial

Cost of living



Health and social care-related costs

Concerns or worries about the cost of care, including future/anticipated care costs, and the cost of health care services, such as dental treatment.

Cost of living concerns specifically relating to the cost of managing health and care needs were highlighted by 35 respondents. Around half of these worries were for the anticipated costs of care in the future and in old age, should this be needed.

'Paying for care when needed'

'If I get dementia and can't afford care'

'As I approach 80 will my relatively small pension and savings meet any future medical needs, housing maintenance etc'

A few others were worried about the financial impact of care that their family members were currently receiving, including respondents who were themselves providing this care.

'Financial, the cost of care for my wife is ridiculous'

'I am a carer for my youngest son and am concerned about my ability to continue supporting him financially'

Several others worried about healthcare or medical costs, with many of these concerned specifically about the costs of dentistry.

'Being able to afford medical care due to the withdrawal of NHS services previously provided'

'Everything costs so much, especially the dentist'

'Not having enough money to pay for dental treatment, glasses and vet bills'

Work

All worries or concerns relating to work-related matters.

In total, 767 respondents stated a work-related matter as one of their top three worries or concerns, accounting for around 15% of all worries and concerns. Around half of work-related worries and concerns were solely coded as the overall code for work. Most of these were non-specific responses such as '*work*', '*my job*', '*my business*', '*career*', and '*employment*'. Responses were overwhelmingly about the respondent's work, with only 15 respondents making general comments about others' work.

Just under 400 respondents who mentioned a work-related worry or concern referred to a specific aspect of work. The most common of these specific worries have been grouped into sub-themes, which include worries about **finding and maintaining work**, **work demands**, **work-related bullying**, **progression and fulfilment** and **returning to work after an absence**. These sub-themes are described on the following pages.

Work

Finding and maintaining work



Concerns or worries about finding or staying in work. This includes job security.

Concerns and worries about finding and maintaining work were mentioned by 174 respondents. **Life changes** is a related theme. By far the most mentioned worry was people's job security and maintaining the employment they had. This was mentioned 79 times, many simply stating *'job security'*. Other typical comments included:

'That I will lose my job'

'Will my employer go bust and I lose my job'

'Possible redundancy'.

Allied to job security, was finding a job, which was mentioned 50 times. Comments included:

'Finding employment'

'Finding a new job'

'If I am ever going to get a job or not'.

Some of these wanted to find more suitable employment and others volunteering opportunities.

Alongside personal opportunities to gain employment, people were also worried about family members getting and maintaining work. This was mentioned 34 times. Typical examples included:

'Family member getting a job'

'My daughter's fear of becoming redundant'

'My partner being without a job'.

The next most prominent worry was that of people's health and how this impacted their ability to work. This include both finding and maintaining work. Comments included:

'Working while struggling with pain'

'Physically disabled affects what I can do working wise'

'Keeping job because of health'.

Work

Demands



Concerns about the amount of work required, being too busy or overwhelmed with workload. This subtheme include stress related to work.

Concerns or worries about work demands were mentioned by 120 respondents. **Time pressures** is a related theme. Just over half of comments related to aspects of *'job stress'*, *'stress at work'* and *'work stress'* and *'pressure at work'*, *'workload'*, and *'work pressures'*:

'Work piling up and not being able to deal with it'

While most comments were regarding respondents own work demands, there were also comments about others work demands and work stress:

'Our 50 year old daughter is a primary school teacher and currently suffering burn out'

'My daughters work stress levels'

Respondents were concerned about high levels of tiredness and fatigue following work, that work was impacting their mental health and feeling *'at risk of burning out'*. Respondents also commented about *'performing effectively at work'* and *'succeeding'* in roles:

'Will I be able to make my dream job that I trained hard for work for the rest of my life (primary teacher) with the current stress and anxiety it can bring to my life. What will I do if not'

Several respondents were concerned about their work/life balance, with some commenting on the challenges of balancing work and family life, and being able to find time for themselves with the demands of work:

'Not being able to manage my workload and balance this with home life'

'Pressure at work-not having enough time for myself'

A small number of respondents commented on having to return to working in the office:

'Increased office attendance'

Concerns or worries about bullying were mentioned by 4 respondents. All instances were about the respondent being bullied in the workplace or by an employer.

Work

Progression/fulfilment



Concerns relating to progressing within a job or feeling fulfilled in a job.

Concerns and worries about purpose and fulfilment in their work were mentioned by 45 respondents. Most of these concerns were related to the broad concept of 'career', which was closely associated with achievement, success and progression in work. There were 23 mentions about career in total. Typical comments included:

'Lack of career.'

'Career prospects.'

Where the concept of 'career' linked to 'progression at work', comments included:

'Work development.'

'Moving up the career ladder at work.'

Other concerns around achievement, success at work, alongside progression, included:

'Work – being successful.'

'Job and promotions.'

The next most mentioned worry was changing jobs. This included 'job change' and 'getting a better paid job'.

Following this was people who were not enjoying work or finding it fulfilling:

'Wasting my life doing a job I don't like.'

'My job is not as fulfilling as I would like.'

Job satisfaction was also mentioned as a worry:

'Being happy in choice of career-want to do something I like'

'Job satisfaction'.

Work

Returning to work after absence

Concerns about returning to work after a period of absence.

Concerns and worries related to returning to work after a period of absence were mentioned by 22 respondents. Around half (12) of the mentioned concerns in this theme were associated with returning to work after maternity leave. Typical comments included:

‘Balancing work and children when I return post maternity leave.’

‘Currently on maternity leave. I’m concerned about going back to work.’

‘To get a job after giving birth.’

While some people worried about returning to work after maternity leave, others were worried about returning to work and adjusting following other absences (6), including ill health. Some examples included:

‘Getting back to a normal life after a year of not being able to work.’

‘I am on leave and worry about the amount of work I will return to.’

A few other worries were mentioned which were related to returning to work after education, balancing caring responsibilities and financial concerns after returning to work.

Time pressures



Concerns around feeling purpose and fulfilment in life, including enjoyment in activities and motivation.

Concerns or worries relating to time pressures were mentioned by 86 respondents. **Demands** is a related sub-theme.

Approximately half of concerns in this sub-theme were centred around not having enough time. This included concerns surrounding not enough time to complete everyday tasks, for personal time (e.g., self-care or hobbies) or time with friends and family.

‘Having enough time in each day’

‘Need more relaxation/leisure time’

‘Not enough time to do house maintenance’

Alongside concerns surrounding not enough time, several respondents commented on their work life balance and the impact of juggling demands on their time. Work life balance was also referred to within the ‘Work: Demands subtheme’.

‘Balancing work family and caring’

‘Managing my time-balancing work, carer duties and doing my stuff’

Respondents also mentioned concerns about their time management, highlighting areas such as organisation and prioritisation.

‘Prioritising life tasks’

‘making good use of time’

‘procrastination’

Purpose and fulfilment



Concerns around feeling purpose and fulfilment in life, including enjoyment in activities and motivation.

Concerns around feeling purpose and fulfilment in life were mentioned by 115 respondents. **Emotional well-being and mental health** and **Loneliness and isolation** are related sub-themes. Responses to this sub-theme varied. Respondents reported feeling bored, either in general or with their lifestyle. Others described feeling *'worthless', 'useless', 'invisible', 'not good enough'* and *'not fitting in'*.

Some commented that they felt of lessening worth, or lacked purpose, since retiring, while others questioned how they would occupy their time and remain useful once retired:

'Just retired and wonder if I have enough to do'

A small number of respondents commented on *'finding worth'* and work where they felt valued. Some respondents felt they needed structure in their life and *'...a reason to get up in the morning'*, work or a project to keep them occupied and enough enjoyable things to do:

'Having enough things that I enjoy to do to keep me busy'

'I need to find things to do that make me happy rather than just mundane day to day living'

Respondents reported feeling lethargic and lacking motivation, optimism, purpose and direction:

'Not having a purpose at times'

Some specifically described lacking motivation, pleasure or enjoyment in doing day-to-day tasks or activities, being *'stuck in a rut'* and having *'nothing to look forward to'*.

Respondents questioned whether they were living life 'to the full', *'Where my future is going'* and described wanting to make *'the most of life'*:

'Not doing enough with my own life'

Lack of feeling I'm living the most useful and fulfilled life I could

Some respondents commented on their *'lack of achievement in life'* and lack of progress in achieving goals:

'Myself not achieving all I want'

Others commented on their desire for children, to make *'more time for me'* and to go on holiday or travel:

'Getting away on holiday as we don't drive it is our only real pleasure - can't go with tests outstanding due to insurance issues'

'Running out of time to start a family - still a lot I want to do'

Life changes and transitions



Concerns or worries about specific life events or life transitions, and the impact these can have.

Concerns or worries about significant changes and transitions in life were given by 389 respondents as a top three concern. The most common of these worries have been grouped in sub-themes, which describe worries around **Independence, Retirement, Estates and end-of-life planning, Moving home, Pregnancy, and Perimenopause and menopause**. These are explored in the following pages.

Going through a marital breakdown, separation or divorce - either personally or of close family - was also a frequent worry and recognised as a major life change. Due to conceptual overlap, such worries are also captured in the **Relationships with others** sub-theme of the **Family, relationships and social connectedness** theme, and explored in more detail there.

Several responses referred to significant changes in where or how respondents lived, including transitioning to living on their own or being able to continue living in their current home. Many of these *may* relate to changes in independence, although there was enough ambiguity about the root cause of the worry that we did not assign these responses to the **Independence** sub-theme (unlike many other similar sounding responses).

‘Being able to continue living in my house’

‘For the first time in my life I am living on my own which is hard to get used to’

A smaller sub-set of respondents gave worries about their children growing up and becoming independent. These responses ranged from the transition of young children starting school through to older children starting college or university, moving out, travelling or emigrating.

‘Children leaving home’

‘Seeing children through university and early life’

A few respondents referred to other potentially life changing events or transitions, including losing or giving up driving licenses, or becoming disabled. Some of these worries seemed to be speculative – i.e., possible future issues – but others were clearly current worries.

‘Not being able to drive, e.g. bad health/lose driving licence etc.’

‘I am disabled due to severe stroke last year, finding hard to say I am disabled’

Other respondents worried about upcoming milestones, including weddings – both their own and their children’s – and big birthdays (e.g., 18 and 50).

‘That my daughter’s wedding arrangements come together’

Life changes and transitions

Independence



Concerns about maintaining independence (including into old age), living independently (e.g. in own home) and developing/gaining independence (at any life stage).

Concerns or worries about independence were mentioned by 90 respondents. **Giving and receiving care** and **Ageing** are related sub-themes.

Respondents commented on the need, and their ability, to maintain independence:

'Keeping as independent as possible'

Concerns about losing independence and *'Not being able to do what I do now'* in general were raised, with other respondents referring specifically to concerns about losing independence as they got older.

Respondents commented about being able to live independently and stay in their own home. Some respondents were specifically concerned about having to leave their home to live in a care home, and having to depend on others:

'Will I always be able to stay in my home'

'I don't want to lose my independence in my own home or have to move to a care home'

Several respondents were concerned about their ability to *'manage'* and *'cope'* in their home and carry out day-to-day tasks such as *'household chores, cooking, gardening'*, but also make decisions and manage finances, both currently and in the future.

Other respondents commented on their ability, and having to adapt to, living alone after the loss of a spouse or partner and the need for additional help with *'jobs'* their loved one used to do:

'Adapting to living alone after 62 years of married life'

'All the jobs around the house were done by late husband, I will now have to get someone to do it'

Respondents raised concerns about how they would *'cope'* if a spouse or partner passed away, or when family members moved out of their home. A smaller number of respondents were concerned about how their spouse would cope if they were to pass away and about the independence of their parents.

Life changes and transitions

Retirement



Concerns about becoming or being retired, and the impact that may have on the respondent's life.

Concerns about becoming or being retired were given by 79 respondents, with just over a third of these simply stating '*Retirement*' as one of their top three worries. For some respondents, worries related to planning for retirement, including determining when and how to retire, where to live in retirement and '*being retirement ready*'.

'Deciding when to retire'

'Where am I going to live when I retire'

'Housing and care in retirement for my wife'

Relatedly, many worries were financial in nature, such as having enough money either to retire or whilst being retired, including references to the retirement age and pensions.

'Having enough money to retire'

'Having enough money to get by once I finish work & have to depend on my pension'

'Reduced finances since retired'

Others worried about having a lack of purpose in retirement and of feeling lower self-worth, including worries of 'coping' with retirement.

'Lack of purpose since retiring'

'Feeling of lessening worth now I'm retired, although I have many interests'

'How my husband will cope with retirement'

For some respondents, their concern was for the quality of their own or their partner's life during retirement, including concerns around supporting themselves.

'Ability to have a good quality of life when I retire'

'My wife is happy and enjoys her retirement with me'

'Planning for retirement and being able to support myself'

Death and dying, Bereavement, grief and loss and Future financial security are related sub-themes.

Life changes and transitions

Estates and end-of-life planning



Concerns or worries relating to end-of-life planning for affairs and estates, including concern for dependents, or relating to dealing with the affairs and estates of others.

Concerns or worries relating to end-of-life planning for affairs and estates or dealing with the estates and affairs of others were given by 29 respondents. Around half of these worries related to the individual themselves, including concerns about making wills, dividing up estates and leaving their affairs in 'good order'.

'How I'll divide my estate in my will'

'Leaving everything in good order'

'Having all and everything prepared for my death'

For some individuals, these concerns seemed to be more speculative than immediate, highlighting how some respondents were beginning to reflect on their age and mortality.

'Getting older and wondering about future funeral arrangements'

'Dying without sorting my affairs'

'Putting my legal affairs in order'

In several cases, these concerns were for the welfare of the individuals' dependents, following their death.

'End of life concerns/what will happen to family'

'What will happen to my family after I die'

'Will dependents be Ok on my demise'

Just under half of these concerns within this theme related to dealing with the affairs and estates of others, typically family members. Worries included acting as an executor, managing probate and resolving estates, including selling houses.

'Probate for my late husband'

'Selling my mums house as she has died'

'Having to act as executor and deal with estate, in due course'

Life changes and transitions

Moving home



Concerns about moving home (excluding purely financial concerns).

Concerns around moving home were given by 103 respondents. Many of these responses were short, simply noting a house move, the process of buying and/or selling a house, or '*downsizing*'.

'Moving home'

'Selling home, buying new one'

'Having to downsize and move house'

Where responses were more detailed, several of these noted concerns for moving home during old age or due to health or mobility concerns.

'House move in old age'

'Moving to somewhere more practical for my age'

'Where to move to once my mobility starts to reduce'

In a small number of responses, concerns around moving away from social networks and community were apparent.

'Having moved to a new area, I'm worried about being lonely'

'Having to leave my lovely home and community'

In some instances, respondents phrased their concern as 'having' to move, suggesting a possible reluctance in making this life change or that moving home was by necessity rather than choice.

'Having to move due to health'

'Whether I have to move property or not'

'Possibly having to sell the house later'

Life changes and transitions

Pregnancy

Concerns or worries surrounding getting pregnant, pregnancy and birth.

Concerns or worries around pregnancy were given by 13 respondents. These responses touched on many aspects of pregnancy. Several worries were around planning to have a child or getting pregnant, including pregnancy after miscarriage.

'Planning to have a baby'

'Having a baby after miscarriage'

Others gave worries about the experience of pregnancy and birth, and recovery following birth.

'Being pregnant'

'Recovery from pregnancy and birth physically'

In some instances, these concerns were given by family members about the health and safety of the expectant mother and unborn baby.

'Wife is pregnant. Hope everything goes well with pregnancy'

'Safety of my unborn baby'



Perimenopause and menopause

Concerns or worries relating to perimenopause and menopause.

Concerns or worries relating to perimenopause or menopause were given by 25 respondents. Around half of these simply stated '*Menopause*' or '*Perimenopause*' as one of their top three concerns.

Where responses were more detailed, these noted worries around the health impacts or '*symptoms*' of going through the menopause, including weight gain, sleep difficulties, anxiety.

'I've gained weight, it is probably the beginning of menopause'

'Peri menopause symptoms and incorrect dose of HRT'

'Menopausal, can cause anxiety'

Pets

Concerns relating to pets, including health of pets and impact on respondent's wellbeing and social connectedness.

Concerns or worries about pets were mentioned by 47 respondents. Several responses were non-specific (e.g. *'my animals'*, *'my dog'*, *'pets'*). Some respondents were concerned about their pet's health. Others were concerned about the age of their pets in general (*'Elderly dog'*), while others commented specifically on the health of elderly pets:

'Health of our elderly cat'

Some respondents were concerned about pets passing away and the impact that would have on them:

'Wondering how I will cope when my cat dies'

Others were concerned about what would happen to their pets if they were to pass away:

'I worry about my cat. What happens if I died. She bites but I got used to it. I worry other people would hurt her'.

Concerns were also mentioned about pets' behaviour, pets being taken away and rehomed, pet care while working and pets not being permitted in living accommodation.

Coping

Non-specific worries about ability to cope.



Concerns or worries about coping were mentioned by 14 respondents. These included being unable to cope, coping with the future and coping in the future:

'Not being able to cope'

'Coping with the future'

'Will I be able to cope in 10/20 years time'

During coding, we considered whether responses relating to coping should be coded under the *Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health* subtheme but felt that we could not determine whether the worry was emotional or practical in nature and therefore decided to code such responses separately.

Miscellaneous

Concerns or worries that do not align with any other themes or subthemes

The codebook instructed coders to use the **Miscellaneous** subtheme when all other potential coding seemed inappropriate. This subtheme is distinct from illegible or incomplete responses, which were coded as uncoded.

Miscellaneous worries and concerns were mentioned by 511 respondents. Around 30% of miscellaneous responses related to an aspect of the future. Many of these were simply *'future'* or *'the future'*. Other respondents commented on the *'Future of the world'* or *'What the future holds'*. Some responses were specifically about the respondents', or their loved ones', future:

'What will happen to me in the future'

'The future of a close friend'

The remaining responses coded as miscellaneous were much more heterogenous in nature, however small numbers of respondents made general comments about their life, time, holidays and food :

'Life in general'

'Time passing faster and faster'

'Having a holiday'

General concerns were also raised about artificial intelligence, security and scams:

'So many scams'

Animals, animal welfare and animal cruelty were also mentioned:

'Animal cruelty that is happening in the world'

Other respondents raised concerns about car-related issues or problems:

'Car trouble'

Although the Your Health Matters survey was carried out shortly after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, only a very small number of respondents commented on future pandemics or the impact of COVID-19:

'COVID and the effect on excess deaths, long term sickness'