

A Spotlight Report

How people feel about living in Medway

A spotlight report focusing on the peninsula
villages of **Chattenden, Hoo, Wainscott** and
Upnor.



February 2024

Background

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

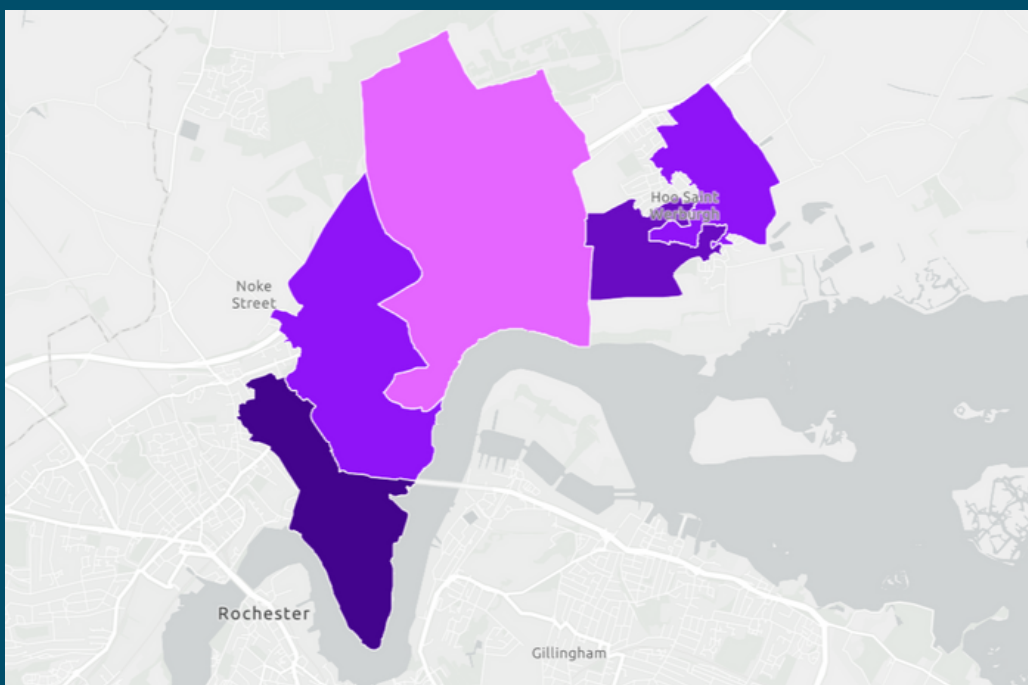
There is increasing interest in these wider determinants of health and Healthwatch Medway wanted to understand what positively and negatively impacts the health and wellbeing of people in Medway.

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

In January 2024, we engaged with **23** residents living in rural areas on the peninsula, in **Upnor** (8), **Hoo** (7), **Wainscott** (7) and **Chattenden** (1).

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

This report summarises what we have heard.



This diagram shows participant's postcode areas. The lighter shades represent higher volumes of feedback. Some respondents did not share their postcodes.

Headlines

100%

of respondents said that they **like the area** in which they live.

82%

of people involved in community groups believe that **being involved** has an impact on their health and wellbeing.

82%

of people not involved in community groups believe that **not being involved** has an impact on their health and wellbeing.

78%

of people said that **environmental factors** where they live have a positive impact upon their health and wellbeing.

74%

of overall respondents said that their **health and wellbeing is impacted** by the positives and negatives of where they live.

55%

of those involved in community groups were **between the ages of 35–64**.

52%

of people we spoke to were **under 65**.

48%

of people are **involved in a community group**.

30%

of people mentioned the negative impact of the **lack of public transport** where they live.

Methodology

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

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

Participant Profile

We spoke to **23** people, of these:

96% of people identified as **White British**

52% of people were **under 65**

61% of people identified as **female**

39% of people identified as **male**

17% of people identified as **disabled**

9% of people were **under 25**

4% of people identified as a **carer**

How do people feel about where they live?

100% (23) of respondents said that they like the area in which they live.

Factors that contribute to feeling positive about where you live

23 people told us why they like where they live:

39%

mentioned that they like the level of **access to local green spaces, rivers** and **the countryside**, with **22%** (5) specifically saying that they liked having a **range of places to walk for leisure**.

30%

mentioned that they like how **quiet** their area is.

13%

mentioned that having **ease of access** to **local amenities** (shops, pubs, GP surgery) was a positive factor.

9%

of people mentioned that having **family ties** in their local area was a factor in their level of happiness in the areas they lived.

9%

mentioned that them and their families **feeling safe** in their environment was a contributing factor.

9%

mentioned the **local history** as being one of the reasons that they like where they live.

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people mentioned other factors that had a positive impact on how they feel about where they live, including the **friendly community** (1), the **quality of housing** (1), the **price to live in the area** (1), and **ease of access to public transport** (1).



“You can’t hear the roads which means I get better sleep.”

“I go out for walks twice a week in the countryside and along the river, so I get good exercise.”

“Being around nature [is] calming and helps you stop.”



Factors that contribute to feeling negative about where you live

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

30%

mentioned that the infrequency and lack of **public transport** had a negative impact.

30%

mentioned the negatives around a lack of **local amenities**.

26%

mentioned the negative impact of **roadworks and traffic** in the local area.

13%

mentioned that they were unhappy about the lack of **reasonable places to park**.

9%

mentioned the negatives of the lack of **cleanliness** where they live.

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people mentioned other factors that had a negative impact on how they felt about where they live, including not being able to get a **GP appointment (2)**, **air pollution (1)**, **isolation (1)**, and **too much development (1)**.

"It's easier for me to get a pint of beer than it is a pint of milk!"

"I don't even bother going into town now because of the buses. They're atrocious on the Peninsula."

"You have to be careful at what times you travel, because the Hoo Peninsula only has one road and there's always a constant stream of traffic."

"There is a lack of community facilities and it's hard to bring the community together."

Involvement in community groups and activities

Out of the **23** respondents:

48%

of people said that they were **involved in local community groups**. Below is a list of all the community groups and activities that were mentioned.

Groups that were mentioned:

Chattenden

- Volunteer work (in Hoo)

Hoo

- The Church
 - Parish Council

Wainscott

- Beavers
- Squirrels
- Neighbourhood Watch

Upnor

- Yacht Club
- Archive Centre (in Strood)
- Upnor Ladies
- U3A
- Golf Club (not local)
- Local Litter Picks

Of the **11** respondents who told us they do get involved:

100%

said that they **like where they live**.

55%

were aged between **35 and 64**.

55%

of those who are involved in community groups **identified as female**.

45%

of people who said they were involved in a community group were **over the age of 65**.

Benefits of being involved in community groups

Out of the 11 people who said they are involved in community groups:

82%

believe that being involved has an **impact on their health and wellbeing.**

64%

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

27%

mentioned that getting involved has a **positive impact on the community.**

9%

of people mentioned the **positive** impact of being involved in local groups on their **mental health.**

9%

of people believe being part of a community group **benefits** their **physical health.**

“[It] gets me out and grows my circle.”

“These groups have helped me socially since I moved here alone a few years ago. I did not know anybody and it has helped me massively.”

“I get involved with the litter picks. It’s a nice thing to do for the community.”

“It has a positive impact and we’re giving back to the community. It’s physical and social.”

“It helps with mental health.”

Barriers to joining community groups

We asked people whether they faced any barriers to joining community groups or getting involved with anything locally:

48%

mentioned that there was nothing they wished to be involved in.

17%

mentioned not having **free time** to get involved in community groups and activities, with **13%** specifying using their free time for their family.

“Childcare limits me, it makes it difficult.”

17%

mentioned a **lack of amenities and groups** locally, with **4%** mentioning a lack of amenities for children.

“It’s difficulty when we have the kids on Saturdays because there’s nothing around. There’s a lack of access to facilities.”

4%

mentioned barriers due to **safety**.

“There’s not a lot of street lights or pavements and you feel a bit unsafe in the winter as a woman.”

4%

mentioned the barriers of **public transport** to access community groups and activities.

Out of the **11** people who told us there were barriers to them getting involved in their community:

82%

said that **not being able to get involved** has an effect on their health and wellbeing.

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



Online:

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By Text:

Text us on 07525 861 639. By
texting 'NEED BSL', Healthwatch's
British Sign Language interpreter
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