
North-West Mental Wellbeing Survey 2013

Wirral results

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Performance & Public Health
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Introduction

The first North West Mental Wellbeing Survey was carried out in 2009 and provided a baseline measure of the regions mental health and wellbeing. A repeat of the survey was carried out in 2012/13. This report summarises results from the Wirral sample of this latest survey.

The survey included:

- The seven-item Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS or more commonly referred to as WEMWBS)
- Demographic information
- Questions on economic position and financial situation
- Questions on lifestyle
- Questions on social capital, social cohesion and isolation

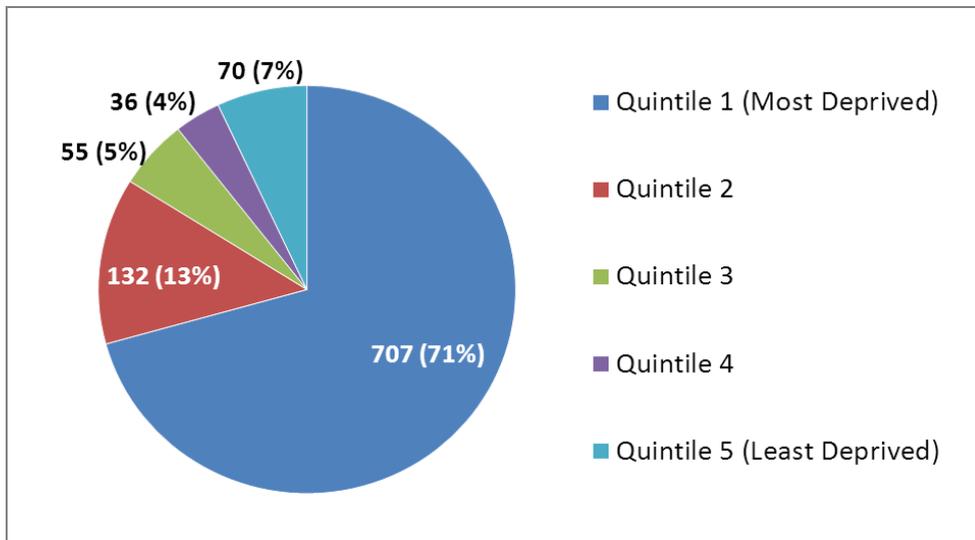
Households were selected using clustered random sampling and in the North-West overall, 11,500 people completed face-to-face interviews using computer assisted interviewing (CAPI), allowing people to answer questions anonymously.

The initial sample size for Wirral was 500. This was considered sufficient for areas with populations in the region of 200,000 (providing 95% confidence interval that results would be true and representative). As Wirral's population is 319,000 and response rates are generally lower in areas of deprivation, it was decided that Wirral would purchase an additional 'boost' sample of 500 interviews, to be conducted only in the more deprived areas of the borough.

Results

Characteristics of respondents

Figure 1: Number of respondents by deprivation quintile



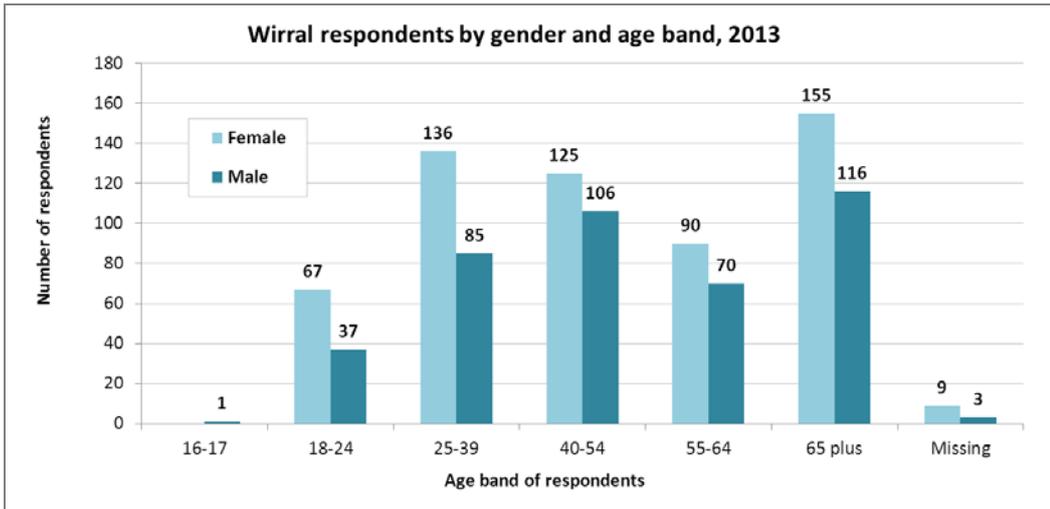
As the chart shows, the Wirral sample was very heavily biased in favour of the most deprived quintile. More than 2 out of 3 respondents (71%) were from this quintile. This is likely to mean the survey results will provide a good indication of the mental health of people in the more deprived areas of Wirral, but is unlikely to be representative of the Wirral population overall.

Table 1: Number of respondents by Wirral ward

Wirral Ward	Number of respondents
Bebington	17
Bidston and St James	116
Birkenhead and Tranmere	119
Bromborough	52
Clatterbridge	0
Cloughton	7
Eastham	53
Greasby, Frankby and Irby	0
Heswall	0
Hoylake and Meols	0
Leasowe and Moreton East	38
Liscard	223
Moreton West and Saughall Massie	15
New Brighton	32
Oxton	1
Pensby and Thingwall	0
Prenton	13
Rock Ferry	84
Seacombe	182
Upton	13
Wallasey	35
West Kirby and Thurstaston	0
Grand Total	1000

As Table 1 shows, there were no respondents from six of the 22 Wirral wards (the six most affluent wards in Wirral). In addition, two wards had numbers of respondents less than 10 (Oxton & Cloughton) and almost a quarter of respondents were from one ward (Liscard). This table appears to reinforce the message of the previous chart (respondents by deprivation quintile), which is that although this survey will be useful as an indicator of mental health & wellbeing amongst the more deprived communities in Wirral, as a more general overview of the mental health and wellbeing of the whole Wirral population, its value will be limited.

Figure 2: Age and gender of respondents to the 2013 Mental Health Survey from Wirral



As Figure 2 shows, there were more female respondents than male (582 versus 418) in all of the age bands shown except 16-18 year olds. Those aged 65+ made up the largest proportion of respondents.

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS)

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) was developed to assess positive mental wellbeing via a 14-item scale. It has been validated for use in face-to-face interviews, shows good content validity and broadly involves perspectives on pleasure and happiness. These include:

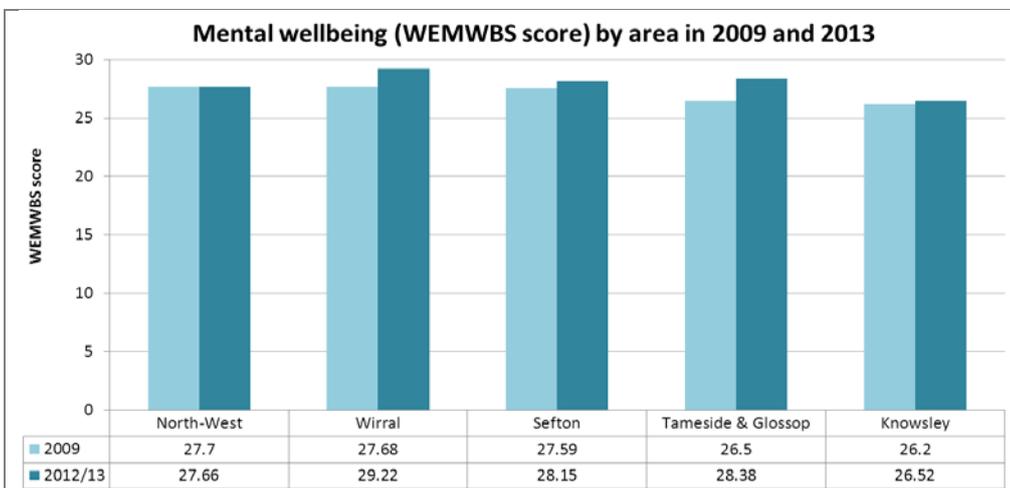
- positive affect (feelings of optimism, cheerfulness, and relaxation)
- satisfying interpersonal relationships
- positive functioning (energy, clear thinking, self-acceptance, personal development, mastery and autonomy)

A shorter, 7-item version has recently been developed as a practical alternative to the full WEMWBS. While the shorter version offers a more limited assessment, it has other advantages and has proved to be a valid and robust tool. This is the version used in the North West Mental Wellbeing Survey questionnaire.

The highest score on WEMWBS is 35 (highest wellbeing), the lowest is 7 (lowest wellbeing). For the North-West overall, the mean WEMWBS score in 2013 was lower than in 2009 (not significantly so). Fewer people fell into the extremes of high or low wellbeing, more people gave responses which put them in the moderate wellbeing category. Wirral scores increased between 2009 and 2013 however, see Figure 3.

Mental wellbeing and geography

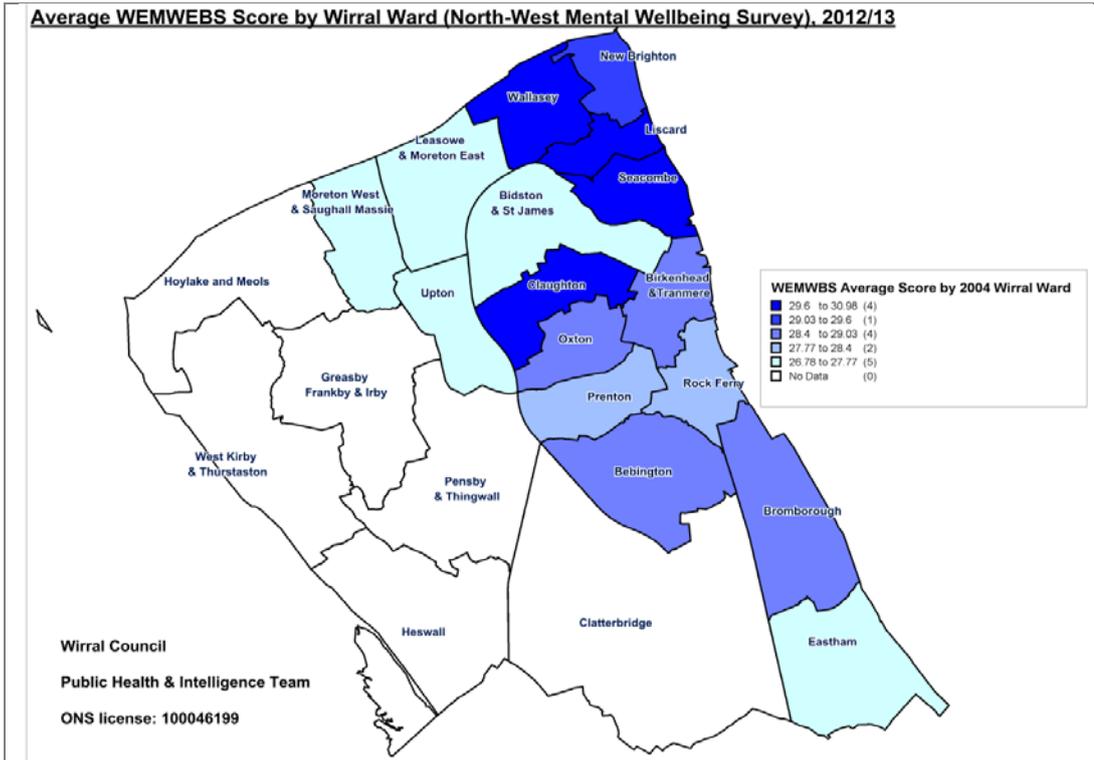
Figure 3: Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS score) in NW, Wirral and other NW Industrial Hinterland* comparators, 2009 & 2013



As the chart shows, wellbeing in Wirral (as measured by WEMWBS) increased significantly between 2009 and 2013. Reasons for this are unclear, but Wirral's other comparator areas also appear to have experienced large changes in reported wellbeing (increases).

*Wirral is classed as an 'Industrial Hinterlands' area by ONS. Industrial Hinterlands is one of seven groups devised by the Office of National Statistics to classify areas using indicators from the Census such as employment and housing. The groupings enable more relevant comparisons to be made between demographically similar areas.

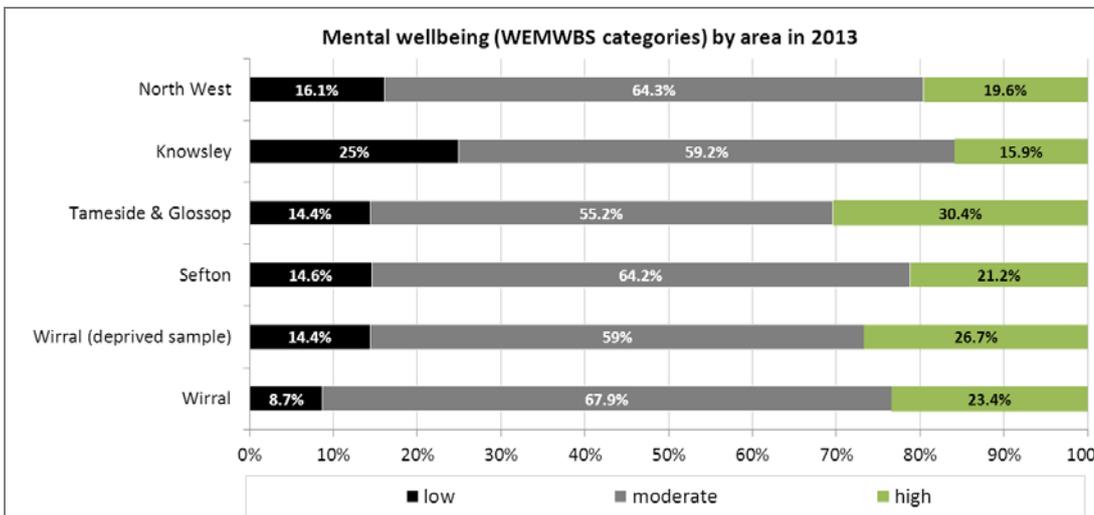
Map 1: Mental wellbeing (average WEMWBS score) by Wirral ward, 2013



As the map shows, there appears to be no clear pattern for average WEMWBS scores by ward in Wirral. As the map (and Table 1) show however, there is a large proportion of Wirral for which there is no data and this is a significant limitation. Wards in which there were the highest number of respondents (Liscard and Seacombe) appear to have the highest wellbeing scores.

WEMWBS scores were also categorised into three groups (low, medium, high), giving slightly more information than overall score.

Figure 4: Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS categories) in North West, Wirral and other Industrial Hinterland* comparator authorities (in the North-West) in 2013



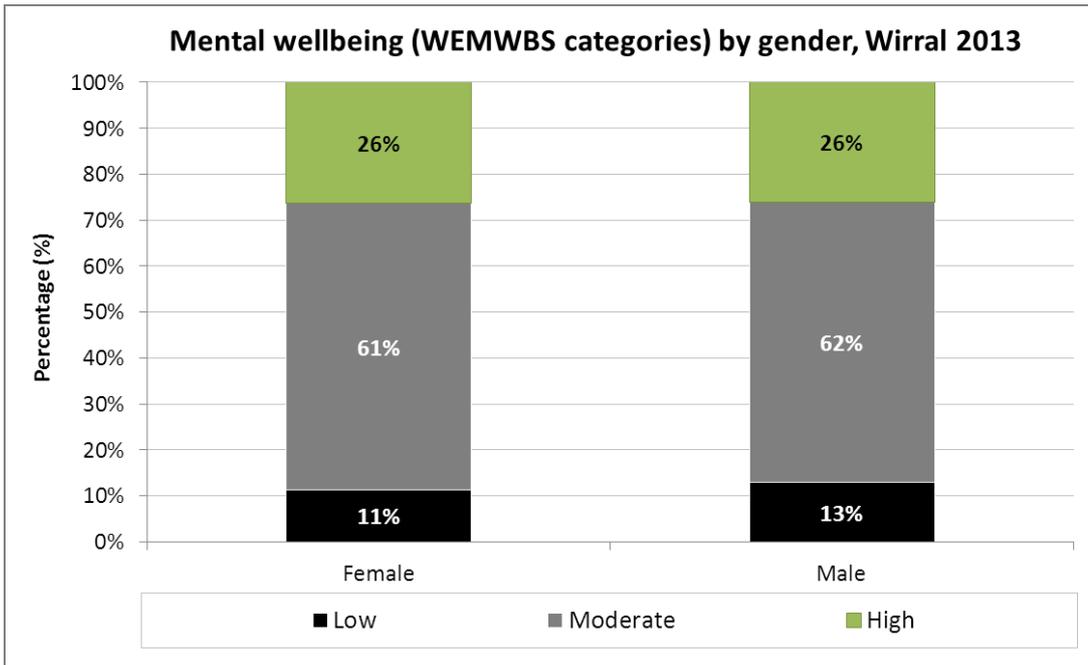
The chart shows that compared to other similar areas and the North-West overall, Wirral had lower proportions of the population at either end of the spectrum (with either high or with low mental wellbeing).

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A higher proportion of people in Wirral were classified as having moderate wellbeing compared to other areas. Interestingly, a higher proportion of people from the more deprived Wirral sample were classified as having high wellbeing compared to the standard Wirral sample (26.7% versus 23.4%). Respondents from the more deprived sample were also likely to have higher levels of low mental wellbeing compared to Wirral overall however (14.4% compared to 8.7%).

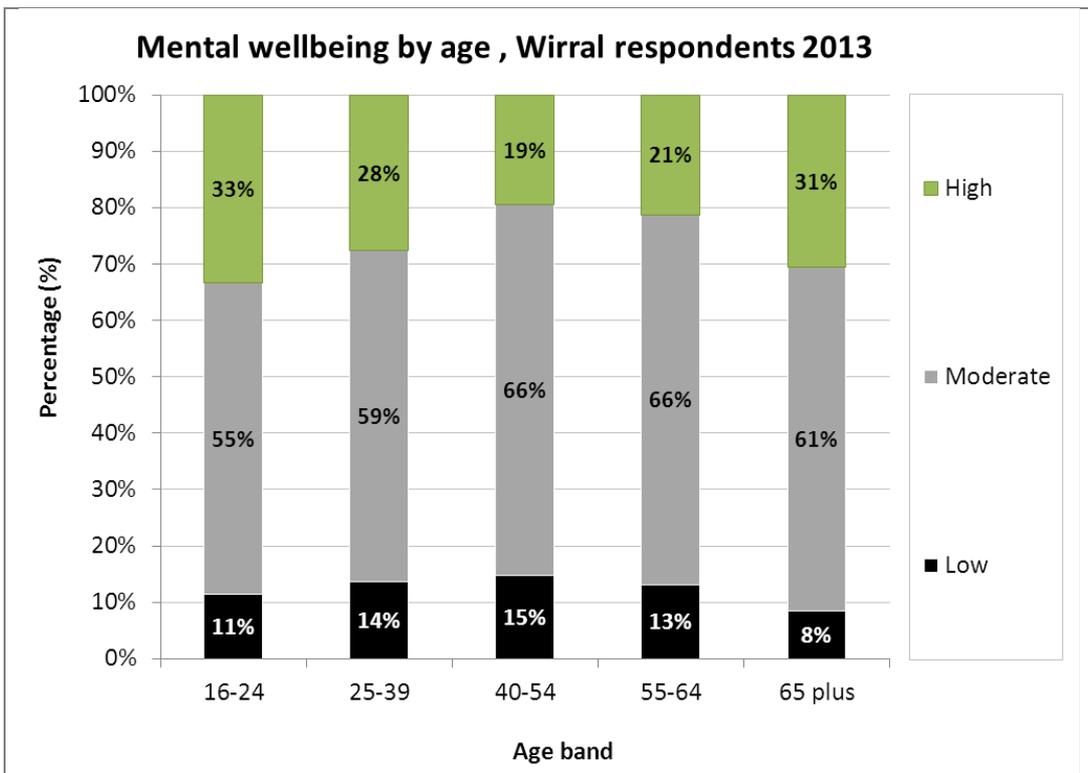
Mental wellbeing and demography

Figure 5: Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS categories) by gender, Wirral 2013



As the chart shows, mental wellbeing (using the three broad WEMWBS categories) differs only slightly by gender in Wirral. A slightly higher proportion of men appear more likely to report low mental wellbeing. NB. Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

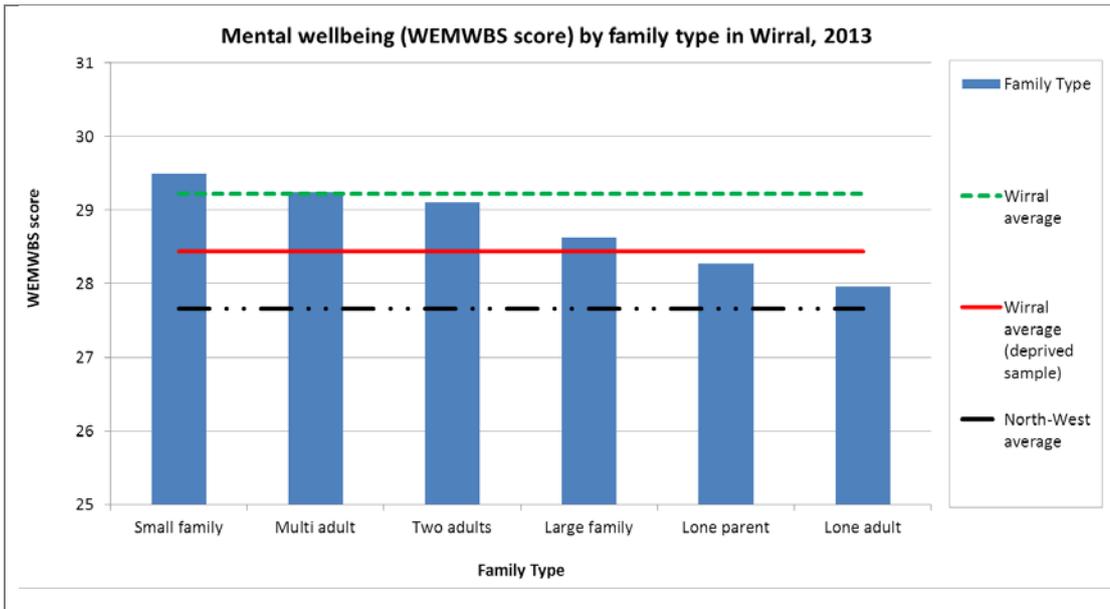
Figure 6: Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS categories), by age band, Wirral respondents 2013



It would appear from the Wirral results, that the youngest and oldest respondents have the best mental health (highest proportions of those with high mental wellbeing lowest proportion of those with low mental wellbeing). Those in the middle aged groups, particularly those aged 40-54 appear to have the poorest mental wellbeing.

Conclusions about possibly differences in WEMWBS scores by ethnicity were not possible, even for the whole of the North-West sample, due to small numbers. Hence, it was also not possible to include this information by smaller area (including Wirral).

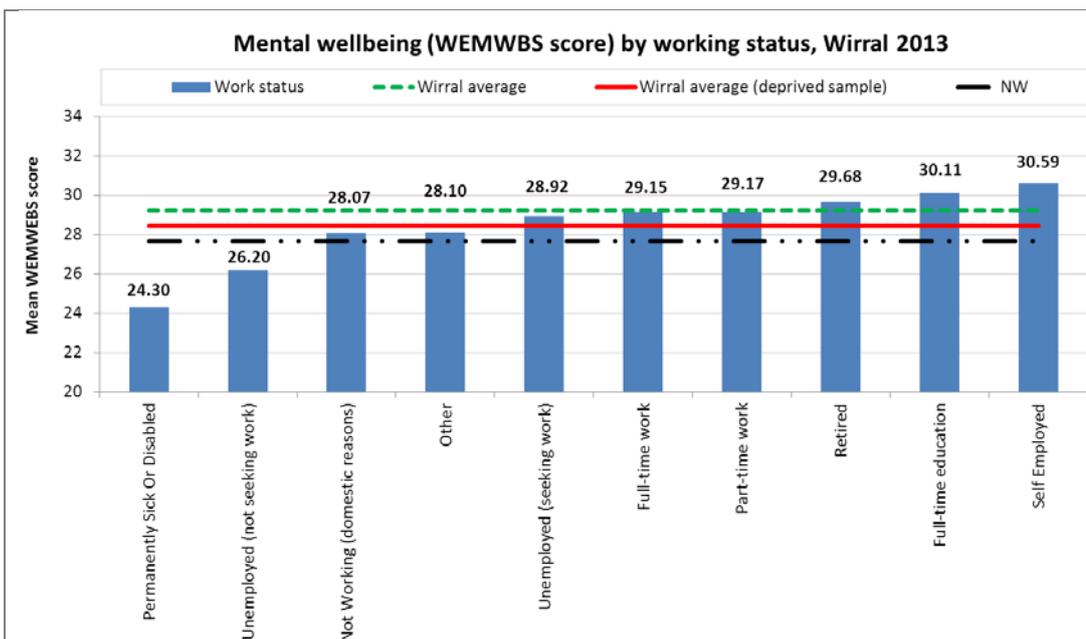
Figure 7: Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS scores) by family type in Wirral, 2013



Mental wellbeing appears to be associated with family type. The lowest wellbeing was experienced by lone adults, followed by lone parents. Despite this, even the wellbeing of these two family types is above that of the average for the North-West overall.

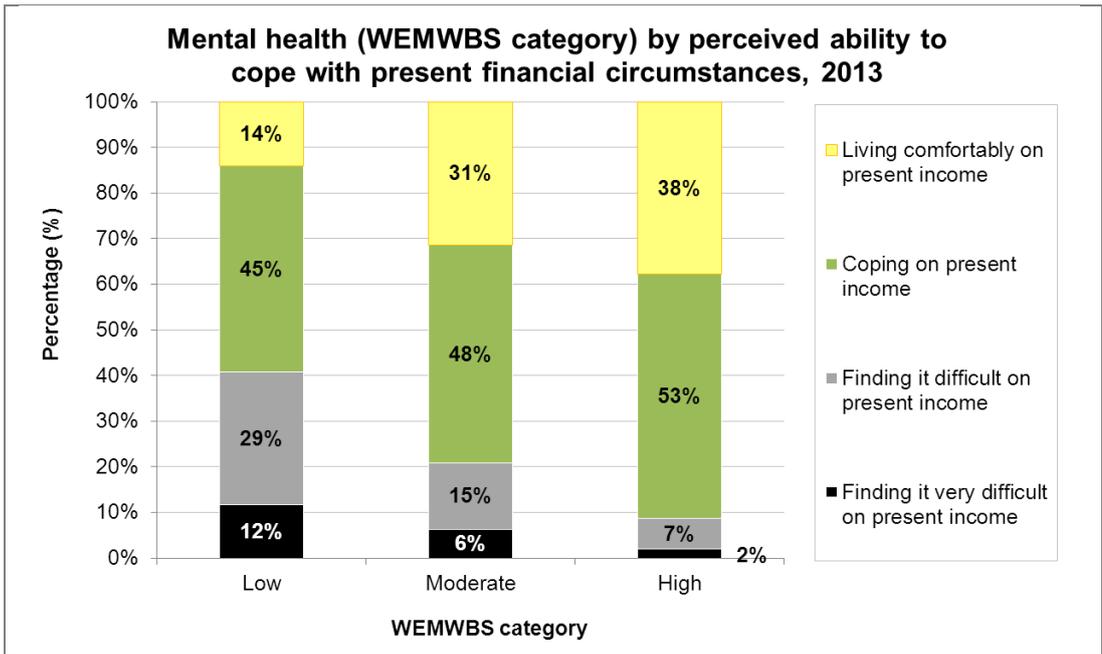
Mental wellbeing and financial situation/employment

Figure 8: Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS score) by working status, Wirral 2013



As the chart shows, those who were permanently sick or disabled and unemployed people not seeking work had the lowest levels of reported wellbeing. Those who were self-employed or were in full-time education had the highest levels of wellbeing in Wirral.

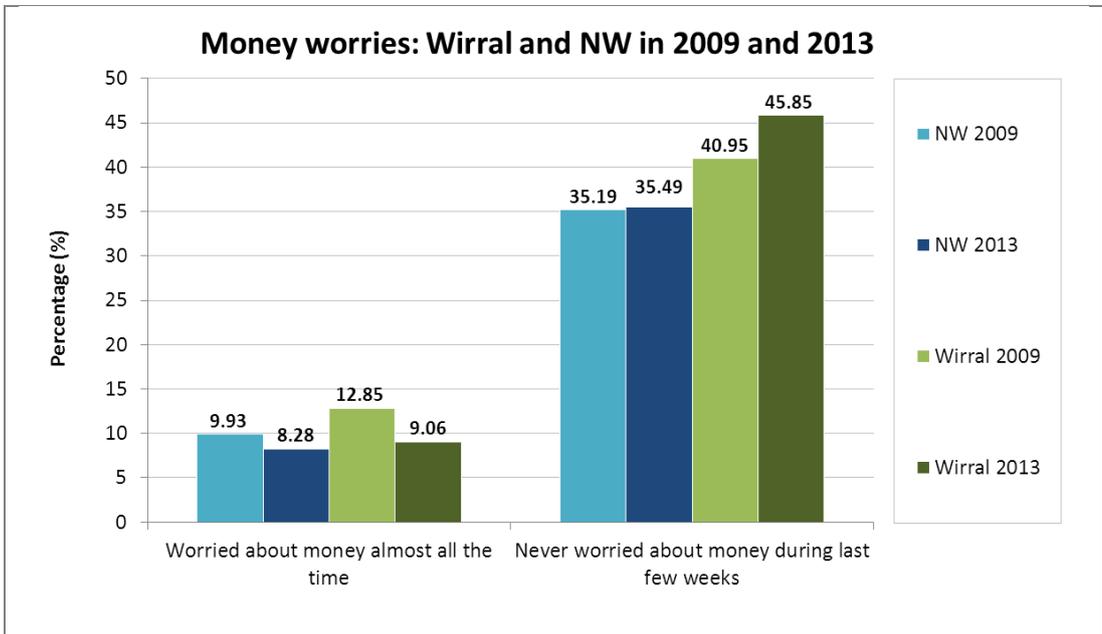
Figure 9: Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS score) by perceived ability to cope with finances, Wirral 2013



Wirral data appears to show a clear relationship between mental health and people's perceived ability to cope with their current financial circumstances. Those who had poor mental wellbeing were most likely to report that they were finding it difficult or very difficult to cope

with their present financial circumstances. Conversely, those with the highest mental health were most likely to report being comfortable or coping with their present income (and least likely to say they were finding it difficult or very difficult).

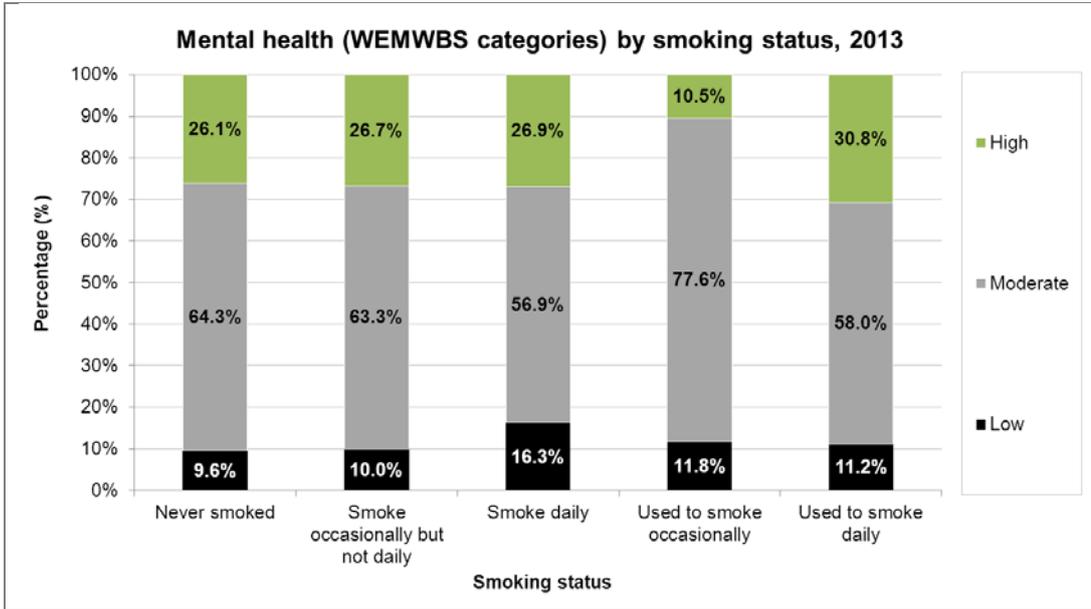
Figure 10: Money worries: Wirral and the NW in 2009 and 2013



Data appears to show that concerns about money have reduced in Wirral since 2009. It is still the case however, that almost one in ten of respondents report worrying about money almost all of the time. Almost half said they never worried (also an increase on 2009).

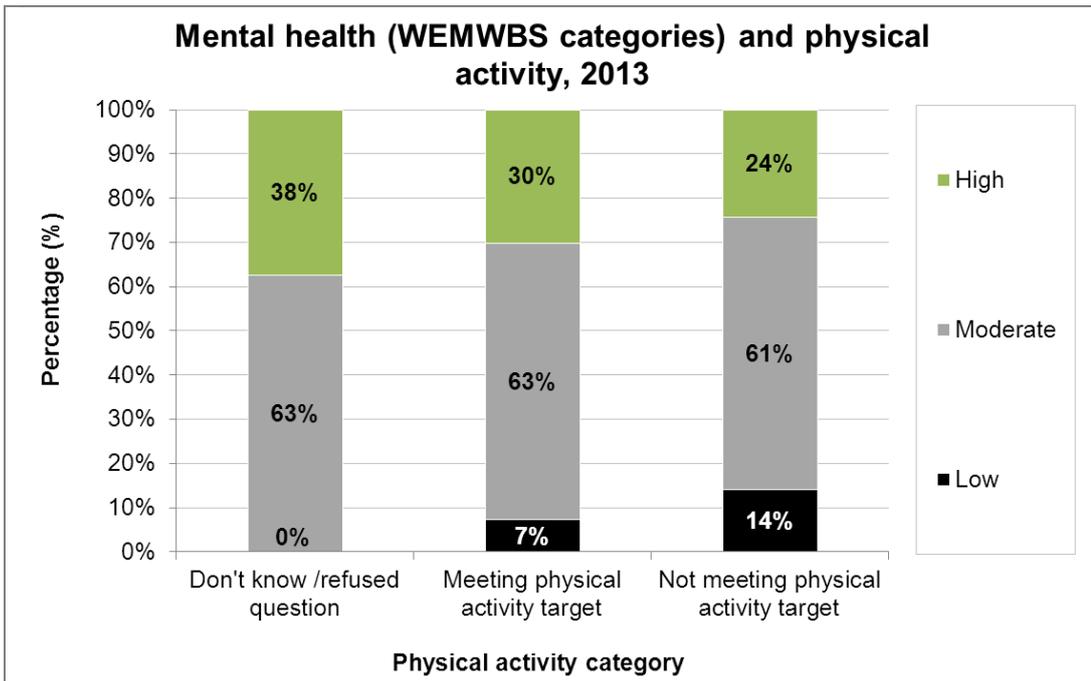
Mental wellbeing and lifestyle factors

Figure 11: Mental health (WEMWBS category) by smoking status, 2013



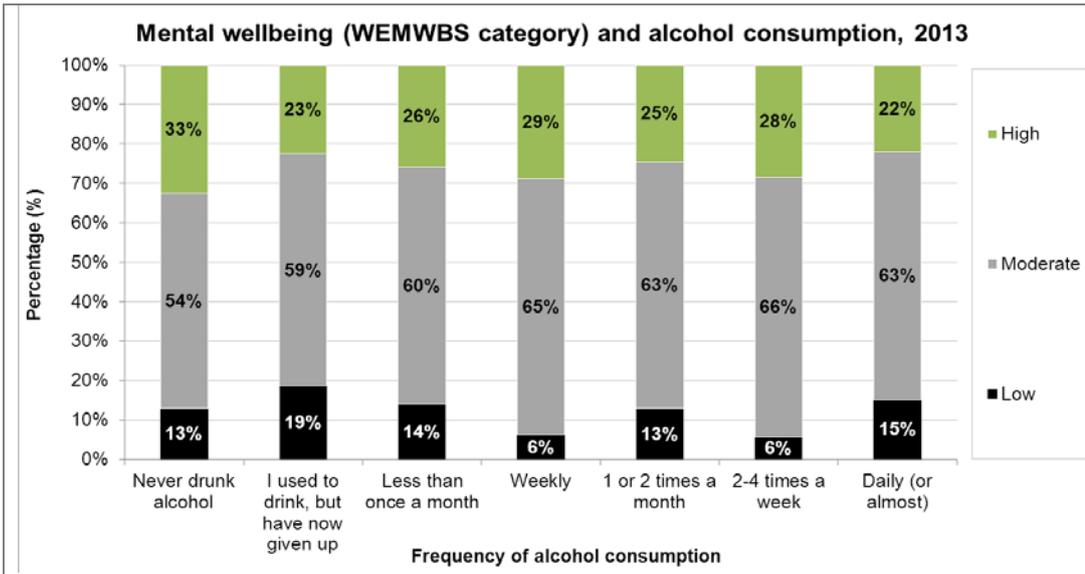
Wirral data appears to show that people who used to be regular (daily) smokers were the most likely to have the highest levels of mental wellbeing in 2013 (30.8%). Those who currently smoke appear to be most likely to have the highest levels of low mental wellbeing (16.3%).

Figure 12: Mental health (WEMWBS category) by physical activity category, 2013



The chart shows that those not meeting the physical activity target (5x 30 minutes per week), were twice as likely as those who were meeting the target, to have low mental wellbeing. They were also less likely to report high mental wellbeing than those meeting the target (24% vs 30%).

Figure 13: Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS categories) and alcohol consumption



Survey results appear to show that those most likely to report high wellbeing were people who had never drunk or who drank weekly. Those most likely to report low wellbeing were people who used to drink but currently abstain and those who drink daily.

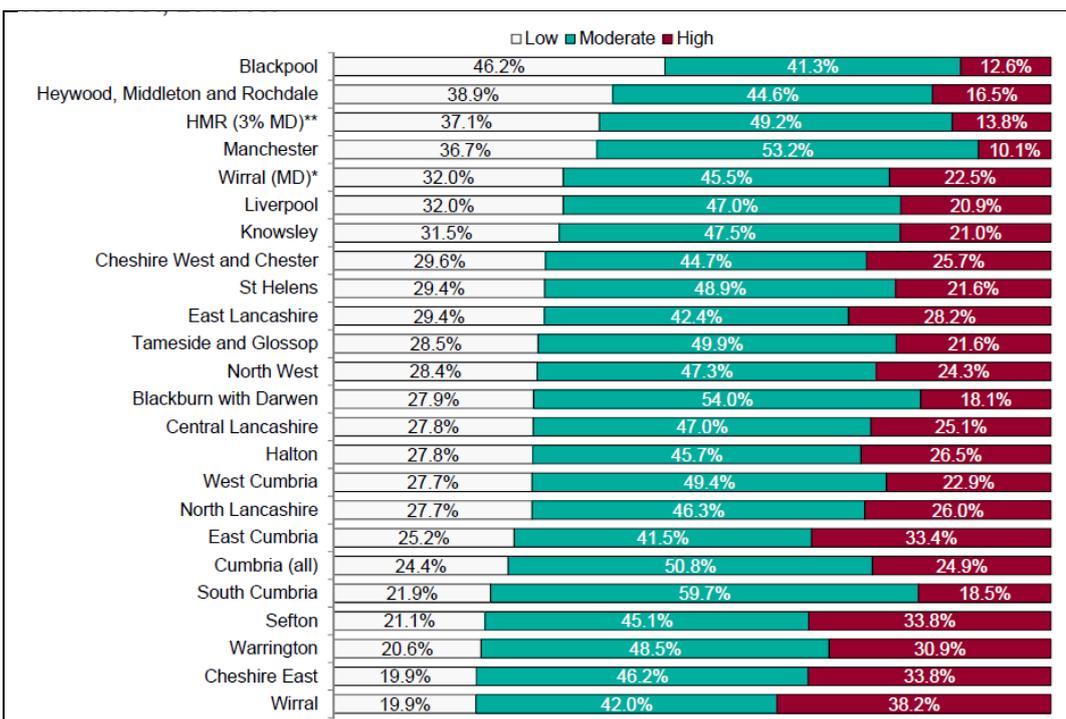
Mental wellbeing and social capital

Social capital was a proxy measure created by combining scores from five key aspects explored in the survey:

1. Social participation (variety and breadth of participation in community organisations)
2. Social networks (frequency of contact with friends, relatives or neighbours, social support)
3. Social cohesion (length of residence in local area, sense of belonging to neighbourhood and trust)
4. Civic participation and control (perception of local influence and life satisfaction)
5. Local area views (satisfaction with local area and perception of safety in local area)

Social capital was then made into a combined score. Scores were then categorised into low, medium or high. Figure 14 below shows the proportions of the population in each area in the North-West who were classified as having low, medium or high social capital (the boost sampled of the deprived areas of Wirral is shown separately).

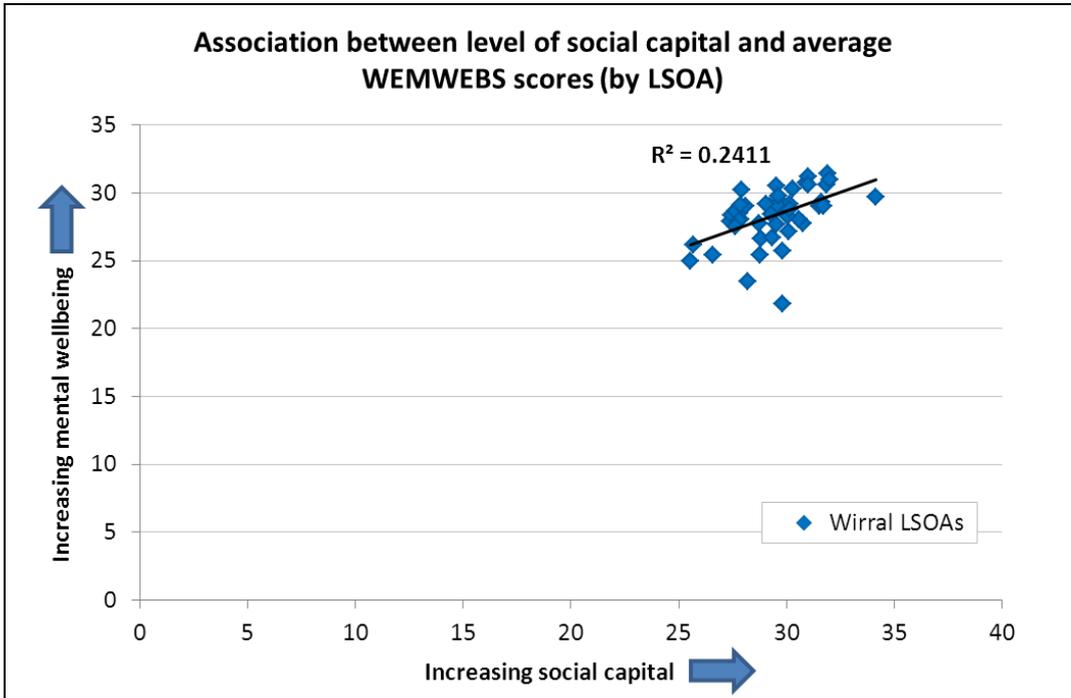
Figure 14: Proportion of respondents with low, moderate or high social capital by area, 2013



As Figure 14 shows, Wirral (standard sample) had the highest proportion of the population with high social capital of any authority in the North-West. The boost sample (deprived areas of Wirral only) displayed much higher levels of low social capital than the standard sample (32% versus 19.9%), and lower proportions of high social capital.

Analysis of the Wirral data also showed that there is a relationship between social capital and average WEMWBS scores by LSOA, see Figure 15 below.

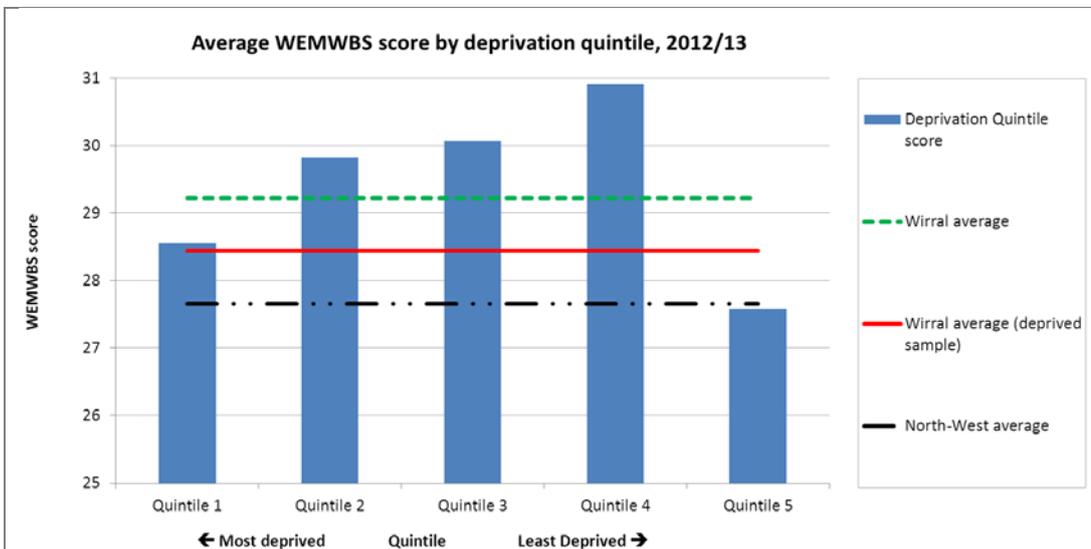
Figure 15: Association between level of social capital and WEMWBS scores (by LSOA)



As the scattergram shows, there does appear to be an association between levels of social capital and average WEMWBS scores in this Wirral sample. Increased social capital was associated with increased wellbeing on the WEMWBS scale. Or conversely, lower social capital was associated with lower levels of mental wellbeing.

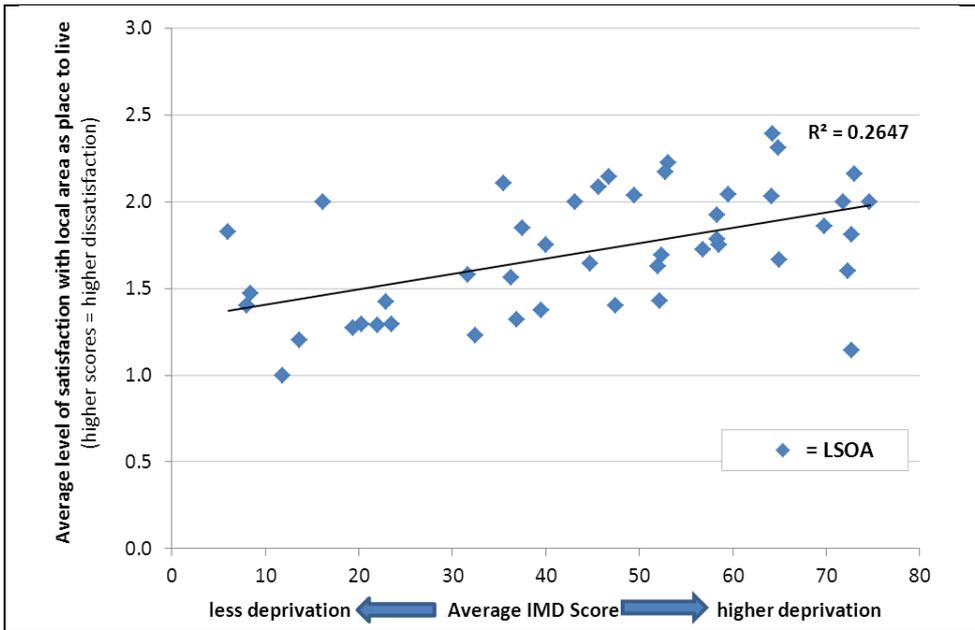
Mental wellbeing and deprivation

Figure 16: Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS scores) by deprivation quintile, Wirral 2013



Average WEMWBS scores by deprivation quintile in Wirral show a mixed picture. Mental wellbeing appeared to be lowest in the *least* deprived quintile and highest in the 2nd least deprived quintile. Reasons for this are unclear.

Figure 17: Association between satisfaction with the local area and deprivation (LSOA) in Wirral, 2013



As Figure 17 shows, in 2013, the satisfaction of Wirral residents with their local area was associated with the level of deprivation of that area (deprivation score of the LSOA in which they lived as measured by the IMD 2010). Unsurprisingly, higher levels of deprivation appear to result in higher levels of dissatisfaction with the local area as a place to live.

Key Messages

- The overall sample of 1,000 respondents was not representative of Wirral. This survey is therefore likely to be a good indicator of mental wellbeing in deprived areas of Wirral, but not in Wirral overall. Females and those aged 65+ made up the largest proportions of respondents
- Mental wellbeing increased in Wirral between 2009 and 2013 (compared to a slight decrease in the North-West overall). Mean WEMWBS scores increased from 27.7 to 29.2
- A higher proportion of those from the deprived 'boost' sample were classified as having high mental wellbeing, compared to the standard sample (26.7% versus 23.4%). Those from the boost sample also appear to have more extreme scores, with greater proportions of people with 'low' mental wellbeing than the overall Wirral sample, and a lower proportion of people with 'moderate' wellbeing
- There was little difference in WEMWBS scores by gender, but there were some differences by age band. The young and old appeared were most likely to report high wellbeing and least likely to report low wellbeing. Middle-aged people (40-64) were most likely to report low wellbeing.
- Those living alone (lone adults and lone parents) had the lowest WEMWBS scores of all the family types
- Those who were permanently sick and disabled and those who were unemployed had the lowest mental wellbeing. Those who were self-employed or in full-time education had the highest wellbeing.
- Those who reported finding it 'difficult' or 'very difficult' to cope financially had the lowest mental wellbeing. Those who reported being comfortable, were most likely to report high levels of wellbeing.
- Concerns about money overall appear to have fallen since 2009, with more people reporting that they 'never' worry about money in 2013 and less people reporting they worried about money 'all the time'
- Current smokers were most likely to report low mental wellbeing, whilst those who used to smoke daily were most likely to report high mental wellbeing
- Physically active people were most likely to report high wellbeing and least likely to report low wellbeing
- Those who used to drink (but have now given up) were most likely to report low wellbeing, whilst those who drank weekly, were most likely to be classified as having high wellbeing
- High social capital was associated with higher mental wellbeing. Wirral (standard sample) had the highest proportion of those reporting high social capital in the North West. The deprived 'boost' sample however, had one of the highest proportions of those reporting low social capital in the North-West.
- Greater deprivation was associated with more dissatisfaction with local area. The relationship between deprivation and mental wellbeing was slightly less clear cut however. Although the least deprived Quintile (5) had the lowest WEMWBS scores, whilst the second least deprived Quintile (4) had the highest WEMWBS scores.