

# Age UK Wiltshire Survey

## What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch is here to *demonstrably influence commissioning, service provision or strategic decision making*... This impact report outlines our findings across Swindon and Wiltshire after Healthwatch Swindon and Age UK Wiltshire worked in partnership to survey older people to better understand people's experiences in later life.



Healthwatch Swindon worked in collaboration with Age UK Wiltshire to produce a survey consisting of 15 questions.

The survey was aimed at people who were 65 and older and based in the Wiltshire and Swindon areas.

The objectives of the survey were to:

- To improve understanding of the factors affecting the older population and their impact on wellbeing or ability to enjoy later life
- To review Age UK Wiltshire's service provision and use evidence from engagement with target population to influence their charitable and business planning
- To help Age UK Wiltshire be an effective voice for the older population of Swindon and Wiltshire

People completing it remained anonymous, unless they requested Age UK Wiltshire to contact them.

"I'm fortunate enough to enjoy good health. I can choose to try new things, meet new people. I can travel (and have) to amazing places and I am not restricted by working duties as I was before. I have enjoyed the opportunity to volunteer with an organisation close to my heart - give a lot, gain a lot"

Female, 71-80 -  
BA13

.....

"Miss my wife and friends. Can't go to lots of what's on offer as don't take people with dementia. Like seeing my family"

Male, 81-90 - SN4

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[healthwatchswindon.org.uk](http://healthwatchswindon.org.uk)



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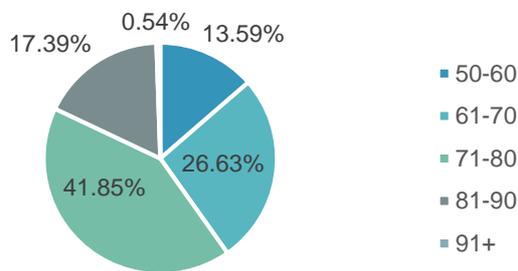
## Survey Results Overview

Out of the 184 people who responded to the survey 66% were female and 34% were male.

A higher proportion of respondents, 54% in total, listed an SN postcode, 25% a BA postcode, 20% an SP postcode, 1% an SO postcode and 2 declined to provide this information.

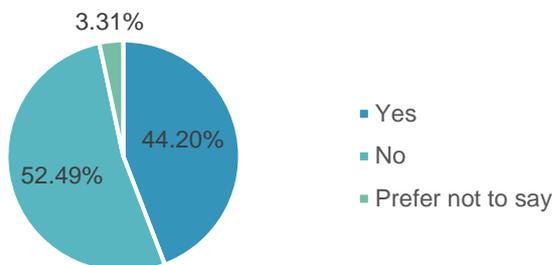
The survey invited people who were 65+ to participate. A larger proportion of respondents were in the 71 - 80 age bracket, making up 41% of the total. It should be noted that 14% of the respondents were in the 50 - 60 age bracket.

Please tell us how old you are



The survey asked respondents whether they had long term physical or mental health conditions and whether or not they had a disability. Out of the 184 respondents 52% said that they did not and 44% said that they did to the first question. In total 77% responded that they did not have a disability and 23% said that they did. A variety of different illnesses were listed, such as anxiety, diabetes, COPD, atrial fibrillation, hearing and sight loss, osteoporosis, fibromyalgia and arthritis.

Do you have a long term physical or mental health condition?



“For Melksham to become age friendly! We need more disabled parking places, close to the shops. We need the toilets re-opened in town! Toilets in the park and centre of town were closed some months ago. I have not seen a GP for a long time, due to the state of Giffords Surgery. A practice nurse diagnosed my whooping cough. We need to have easier access to a doctor. We need the Hopper bus re-instated to enable elderly, sick and disabled to get to hospital”

Female, 71-80 - SN12

“The freedom to engage in different pursuits and playing a fuller role in our local community. Financial security and good health facilitate these”

Female, 61-70 - SP3

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There were highly scored responses amongst people who said they had a long term illness, although proportionally the scores were lower compared to the people who stated they did not have a long term illness, with a significantly higher number scoring 6 or above in this category.

From the cohort of people who did have a disability a female respondent, with a SP postcode, scored a 1 against each of the core questions and commented in two sections that she would like to use a befriending service and help accessing healthcare needs. By contrast a disabled man with a BA postcode scored 10s against each of the questions and cited his family and friends as being the thing he enjoyed most about later life.

If any conclusions can be drawn from this it's that contact to family, friends and community is important to a person's sense of wellbeing, irrespective of being in peak physical and mental health or not.



## Core questions

The survey was based on 4 core questions, asking respondents to rate their level of satisfaction from 1 - 10, with 1 being extremely dissatisfied and 10 being extremely satisfied. There were also further sets of questions allowing the respondents to give more detailed responses about such things as what they enjoyed most of out of life and the sort of support or contact they had received from Age UK Wiltshire. A snapshot of some of the findings can be read below.

### Do you feel supported by friends, family and local community?

When asked this question 33% of the respondents rated this as a 10 - they were extremely satisfied with the support they received from loved ones and the community.

"Not being ruled by a clock so free to do what I want"

Female, 61-70 - SN10

"Better connection with other gay and lesbian older people in Wiltshire"

Female, 61-70 - SN12

"Keeping busy with running charities and ensuring that they help as many people as possible. Those who do not keep busy in this way are missing a large chunk of later life"

Male, 81-90 - BA12

"Being fit and can still drive, and doing what I want when I want"

Female, 71-80 - SP3

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Encouragingly 82% rated this as a 6 or above. One male respondent in the BA postcode area stated he was very dissatisfied (2) with the support he received but he responded with high levels of satisfaction (9) to all of the other questions. He commented that he was satisfied with life and happy not to be at anyone's 'beck and call'.

## How confident do you feel that you are able to stay safe and well at home?

Out of the 184 respondents 91% scored this questions a 6 or above with 45% scoring this a 10.

72% (33) of the 46 respondents with a BA postcode were female with 16 giving a rating of 10 to this question. In the main most of these respondents scored the other core questions with a 10.

## How confident are you that you can shape the way that you live your life?

In response to this question 87% scored 6 or above and 13% 5 or below. Of those who scored 5 or below there were 22 scores of 6 or above and the remaining 48 were 5 or below - all of which were a mix of postcodes. Of the comments made from this cohort of people things such as companionship, more pension, more to do with their time and better transport links to get out and about came up.

## All things considered how satisfied are you feeling about life as a whole today?

For the final core question once again 87% scored 6 or above but for the first time 10 was not the highest score. In this instance 9 was the top rating, and still encouraging nonetheless.

## Would you tell us what you enjoy most about later life?

The word freedom came up time and time again, or was alluded to, when answering this question.

Retirement gave people the freedom to do as they please, and when they wanted to do it with no need to watch the clock.

Good health and financial stability was mentioned, as was contact with friends and family, especially grandchildren, and having a good marriage.

Keeping active with hobbies, such as singing in a choir or gardening or reading, and volunteering were consistently mentioned as things to enjoy and give purpose to one's life.

"Nothing at the moment but future health care is of concern. The hassle needed to see a doctor face to face is worrying and what appears to be a lessening of home care is a worry"

Female, 81-90 - BA15

"Be able to use my mobility scooter to get me to places to meet people, but being able to park it safely off of the street"

Female, 61-70 - SN5

"I'd like to take part in sport and exercise where I live in Melksham. Unfortunately it's impossible for the foreseeable future thanks to Wiltshire Council closing the sports centre"

Male, 50-60 - SN12

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## What would you like to see/do/experience that would make a difference to you?

For a couple of respondents this meant going on a zip line, hot air balloon or skydiving! And for quite a few the desire to travel was at the top of the list, as well as not having to worry about money.



For others transport was a concern. For those unable to drive anymore, having good transport links essential, or if on a mobility scooter lower kerbs and safe parking. Fear of future health issues and not being able to access doctors' appointments easily also featured as regular worries.

### Age UK Wiltshire

Of the 35% who had contact with Age UK people said they had either had help with form filling, accessing the befriending service or fitness classes/groups or that they were volunteering with them.

### Conclusion

As 54% of respondents had an SN postcode and therefore significantly higher than the other postcodes it is difficult to draw notable conclusions from geographical data. Overall there was a much higher count of high scores across all postcodes than low ones with, overall, lots of positive comments made.

Health issues were mentioned, which did on occasion have a detrimental impact on the wellbeing of individuals. However, these were not necessarily impediments to living a full and enjoyable life.

Being active, having hobbies and having sufficient social contact were mentioned over and over again, as was being free and no longer beholden to the routine of work.

"Winning the lottery, a politician that you can believe and a government that helps you instead of hinders. I'd like to be able to see a dr when I'm actually ill, rather than waiting a fortnight to see a random dr"

Male, 81-90 - SN3

"Better social care systems to help others and perhaps me one day"

Male, 71-80 - SN5

"Having time to do the things I enjoy such as crafts, visiting places, meeting friends for coffee etc"

Female, 61-70 - SP1

"Being retired! Spending time with my grandchildren. Holidays!"

Female, 50-60 - SN4

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