

# Measuring and Understanding Wellbeing in Blackburn with Darwen (BwD)

By Frances Riley

[Frances.Riley@Blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:Frances.Riley@Blackburn.gov.uk)



## Background:

Wellbeing is more than feeling good and functioning well. It also includes positive relationships, emotions and purpose.

Which makes it a great indicator for lives going well and vice versa, if measured. Measuring wellbeing evidences the impact of an intervention and highlights any opportunities for improvement.

## Aim:

To improve the mental wellbeing of residents of BwD. By understanding who has the lowest levels of wellbeing and therefore being better able to target resources.

## Method:

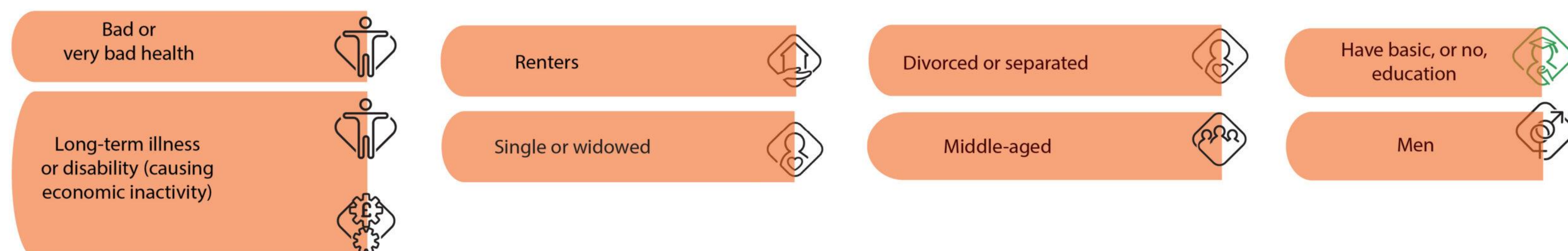
To compare national data from 'What Works - Wellbeing' with local data in the form of the Beyond Imagination Life Survey Dataset, to find out:

**If the data presented nationally was true for residents within Blackburn with Darwen?**

## Who is at risk of the lowest wellbeing?

This visualisation provides a useful illustration of the determinants that are consistently associated with people experiencing the poorest wellbeing.

**Lowest wellbeing\***  
Around 1% of people in the UK (over half a million people) were estimated to report the lowest wellbeing in 2014-16.



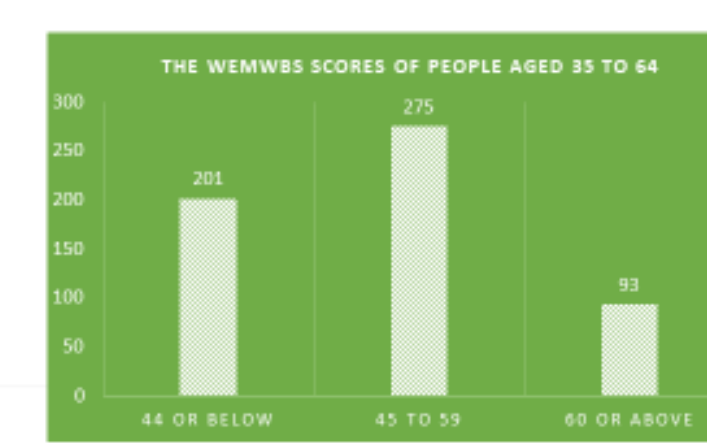
\*ONS (2018), data from the Annual Population Survey (APS), 2014-2016.



whatworkswellbeing.org @WhatWorksWB

## Being Middle Aged and Wellbeing

Comparing the Below Average WEMWBS across the different age ranges, as a proportion of the overall WEMWBS scores in that age range. (%)



- We class middle-aged as 35 to 64
- In this age range against other age ranges we see the highest numbers of people with below average WEMWBS (35.3%)
- But within this age range we see the highest numbers of people have an average WEMWBS score (45 - 59).

In line with National Findings

## Wellbeing Levels In BwD

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale (WEMWBS) was developed to enable the monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing.

The WEMWBS questions were used in the Life Survey:

Wellbeing Scores	Numbers	Percentages
Below Average <64	319	32.5%
Average 45 - 59	501	51.1%
Above Average >60	161	16.4%

- 32.5% of our survey respondents have a below average wellbeing.
- This is a snapshot of the population - but if we scaled this up to our actual population this would be approx. 50k people

## Results

### Characteristic

### In Line with National Data :

### Findings from the Life Survey in BwD:

Characteristic	In Line with National Data :	Findings from the Life Survey in BwD:
Gender	No	More females have 'Below Average' wellbeing scores than males
Age Range	Yes	A higher % of people of middle age have 'Below Average' wellbeing scores than any other age groups
Renters	Yes	A higher % of people who rent have 'Below Average' wellbeing scores than people who own their properties
Health	Yes	A higher % of people with self reported bad or very bad health have 'Below Average' wellbeing than people with better health
Education Level	No	A higher % of people with more than a basic level of education have 'Below Average' wellbeing than those with no or a basic level of education
Long Term Illness	Yes	A higher % of people who are Economically Inactive due to Health or Disability reasons have 'Below Average' Wellbeing.
Single or Widowed, Divorced or Separated	Unknown	The Life Survey didn't ask this question

## Conclusion:

- Confirmed the need to focus on mental wellbeing as an important part of the mental health continuum. 32.5 % of our respondents to the survey had below average wellbeing score.
- Provided the evidence to support the idea of changing the structure of engagement and delivery around this area of work and the need to bring partners together around improving mental wellbeing.
- Need to be asking ALL our commissioned partners to measure and track wellbeing as an output of their projects. Especially those that might not consider wellbeing as a KPI. Engagement of these services will need to be done to raise the profile of mental wellbeing as an important indicator of 'How we are doing...'

## Next Steps:

- To complete a statistical analysis of these findings to give the results some further validity
- To determine the effect of higher proportions of respondents with those determinants