

# The Future Rutland Conversation

**Narrative summary report:**  
Health and Wellbeing

**June 2021**

A summary report outlining the key findings and themes identified as part of  
the Future Rutland Conversation on 'Health and wellbeing'

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*We asked and this is what you told us.  
Is there anything we've missed?*

# 1. Introduction

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The Future Rutland Conversation is just that: a conversation with everyone who lives and works in Rutland, to find out what's most important to local people – both now and in the future.

Using a series of specially designed surveys, open forums and live discussion events held over a period of two months in the spring of 2021, people of all ages and backgrounds from across Rutland were invited to share their views on wide range of important issues. They were:

- Your Life in Rutland
- Climate change and the environment
- Getting around
- Leisure and recreation
- Health and well-being
- Living in the county
- Learning, skills and employment
- Local services and public spending

There were dedicated surveys and discussions for young people, businesses and visitors to the county. Local stakeholders, schools and new digital channels, like Instagram, helped to reach the widest possible audience. People without internet access were also supported to take part in Future Rutland Conversation by phone, making sure that everyone had an opportunity to share their views.

In total, 2022 people took part in the Future Rutland Conversation. This comprised 1,557 adults who registered online, plus 465 children and young people who were not required to register their details. Together, these participants provided more than 4,500 responses across multiple themed surveys. Alongside these surveys, more than 1,000 contributions were made across nine online forums and some 250 people took part in live discussion events.

The aim of all this is to develop a new shared vision of Rutland – a set of common goals and aspirations based on the things that matter to local people, and which can help to shape a bright and prosperous future for our county.

The following report summarises the comments and feedback received as part of Future Rutland's 'Health and Wellbeing' conversation.



## 2. Method statement

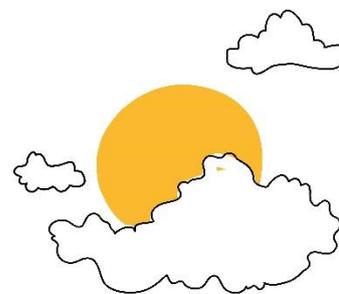
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The Future Rutland Conversation ran for a period of eight weeks, from April to June 2021. During this time, 15 online surveys were launched, asking participants more than 100 questions. This was supported by eight two-hour engagement events led by independent facilitator Michael Maynard, plus a further seven two-hour face-to-face video calls with the Leader and Chief Executive of Rutland County Council. Feedback was also gathered in the form of submissions from Rutland County Councillors and Parish Councils, who provided responses from local meetings and other forms of engagement. A significant awareness-raising campaign took place online and through traditional local media outlets, such as newspapers and radio stations. This helped to support engagement with children and young people, visitors to the county and local businesses, as well as those who live, work and were educated here in Rutland.

The many thousands of pieces of raw data and information resulting from the eight-week conversation were sent for analysis by Rutland Community Ventures (RCV), a community-based company in Oakham and operating independently of Rutland County Council. RCV's analysis involved watching and transcribing verbatim comments from hours of video-recorded Zoom conversations; listening to audio files; analysing and summarising survey data; reading and annotating event notes and reports; and reviewing the highly detailed statistics derived from the online surveys. This intensive independent analysis was undertaken over a three-week period without influence from Rutland County Council. The results of the analysis were then submitted by RCV to the Council, who have published this material in a series of theme-based reports. These reports summarise while fully representing participants' original uninterpreted views, opinions and experiences.

**If you would like to view all of the original data and information behind these summary reports, this can be read in full online at:**  
**[future.rutland.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing](https://future.rutland.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing)**

### 3. Who took part?



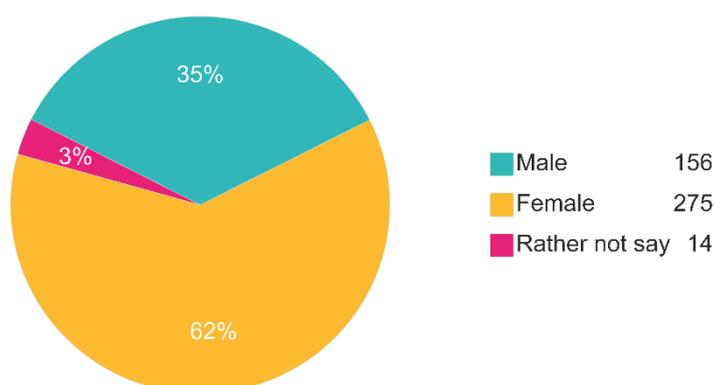
**445** responses

There were a total of 445 responses to the survey that ran as part of the Future Rutland’s ‘Health and Wellbeing’ conversation. This was in addition to three live discussion events chaired by independent facilitator Michael Maynard. Supporting information was also received in the Rutland Health & Social Care Policy Consortium (RH&SCPC) in the form of a discussion document titled: Health & Social Care Plan for Rutland - March 2021.

#### Gender profile

Just over half of respondents to the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ survey were female (62%), while 35% were male. A small proportion of respondents (3%) chose not to share this information.

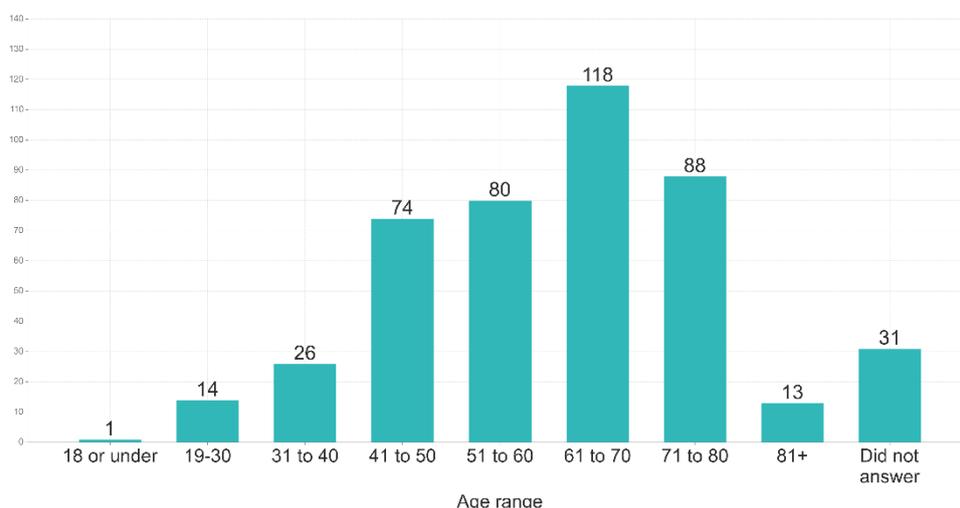
**Figure 1 – Gender profile of ‘Health and Wellbeing’ respondents**



#### Age range

The largest number of responses to the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ survey came from the 61-70 age group. More than two thirds (67%) were aged 51 and over. There was a single respondent in the 18 or under age category. However, Future Rutland’s dedicated survey for children and young people received a total of 465 responses. The results from this survey are detailed in a further report.

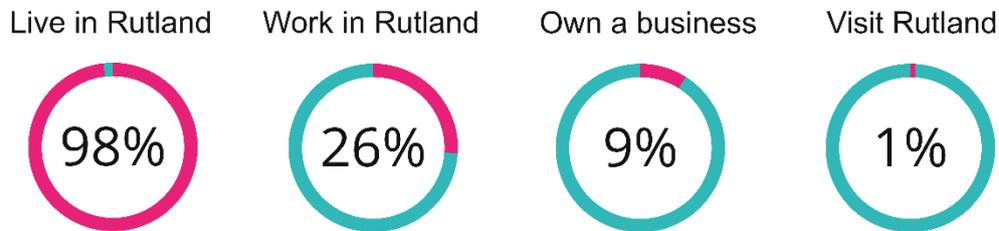
**Figure 2 – Age range**



### Connection to Rutland

Respondents were also asked to give an indication of their connection to Rutland. Almost all respondents to the 'Health and Wellbeing' survey (98%) lived in Rutland, while 26% worked in the county. Business owners accounted for 9% of respondents.

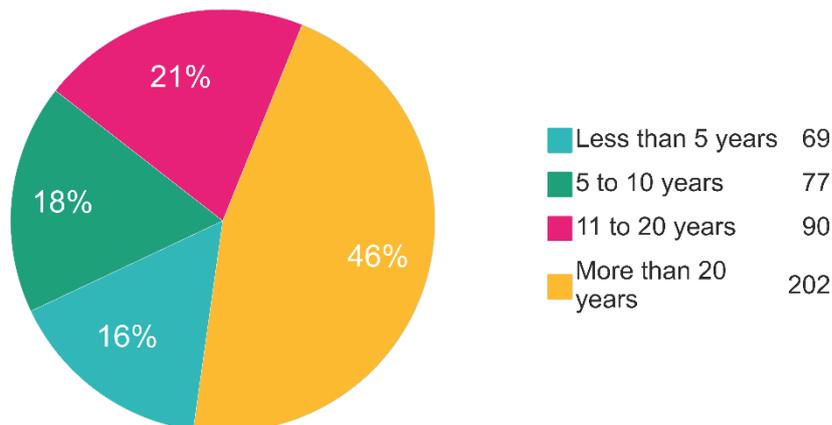
**Figure 3 – Connection to Rutland**



### Length of residency

98% of respondents who took part in the 'Health and Wellbeing' survey identified themselves as local residents. Almost half (46%) have lived in the county for more than 20 years. Just 16% of respondents have lived in the county for less than five years.

**Figure 4 – Length of residency**



In terms of geographical location, the majority of responses to the 'Health and Wellbeing' survey came from the following areas:

- Oakham (32%)
- Thistleton (11%)
- Ridlington (9%)
- Uppingham (9%)
- Barleythorpe (6%)
- Cottesmore (5%)
- Ketton (4%)
- Langham (4%)
- Whissendine (4%)

## 4. Thoughts and feelings about key issues

People who engaged with Future Rutland's 'Health and Wellbeing' conversation were invited to talk openly about all aspects of local healthcare provision, as well as their own physical and mental wellbeing, lifestyle and where they feel changes or improvements to our healthcare system are needed.

Following analysis of three live discussion events focussing on this subject and hundreds of responses to open text survey questions, respondents' thoughts and feelings about health and wellbeing have been separated into two areas:

- Access to local healthcare
- Ways to change and improve healthcare

In this section of the report, people's thoughts and feelings have been summarised as short statements, which are accompanied by direct quotes from individuals who took part.

### Access to local healthcare

#### Summary statement

You told us that your experience of healthcare in Rutland very much depends on your location and where you live. The expansion of Oakham and subsequent difficulties accessing GP services at a single surgery in the town was mentioned by lots of you. Uppingham surgery is not felt to have this issue. On the whole, you told us that you know what you need to do to improve your health and wellbeing – both for yourself and your family. Access to outdoor activities and organised sports are considered important to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation at all ages. So too is the availability of facilities and opportunities to socialise. Transport – or the lack of it – is a major consideration, particularly because many of Rutland's specialist health and wellbeing services are based outside the county. Many older respondents expressed concerns about transport to medical service providers both in and out of the county.

 *"One thing I find quite difficult is the restriction of health services. We so desperately need another doctor's surgery."*

 *"When Barleythorpe was built and there was an increase in the population, the thing about Oakham medical practice wouldn't cope (was raised. So we asked about having one at ... the East End of the town. There's a lot of GP practices that are owned by the doctors and they couldn't get anyone to go there."*

 *"Another medical practice should have been stipulated as part of the planning consent for the new housing estates."*

-  *"Getting access to GP, this is shameful. The fact you have to go on-line just after midnight to have any chance of getting an appointment is outrageous."*
-  *"The government is putting pressure on to build houses... But they haven't got the facilities that includes transport; that includes medical."*
-  *"Local doctor service at Oakham Medical Centre are incredibly difficult to access and use. Staff are very unfriendly and make it as hard as they can for anyone to get treatment."*
-  *"We are at a surviving point in Rutland at the minute. It's always been a community that looked after itself so you always get fairly good volunteers for a variety of commitments.... With the age of retirement increasing that volunteer pool is decreasing."*
-  *"Counselling services are important - dealing with grief or other life experiences. Exercise opportunities. Dietary advice and socialising opportunities are vital."*
-  *"I need more assurance of a response from emergency response services. I am a single mum in the middle of nowhere with two disabled kids."*
-  *"There is a perception of Rutland of being a wealthy enclave on the east side of Leicestershire. The facts are there are many people that don't have access to cars (and have difficulty in accessing healthcare and other services)."*
-  *"Uppingham has a great surgery that has a great service."*
-  *"Residents on (the Uppingham) side of the county can also access Corby Urgent Treatment Centre which offers a great service Rutland Water as a focal point is a great source of wellbeing, most residents utilise the walking paths there."*
-  *"I was unable to get an occupational therapist for my daughter in Oakham Memorial."*
-  *"Rutland will become a health desert. Everyone will have to go out of the county."*
-  *"If the access to healthcare and more relevant health care with good facilities is not implemented, Rutland won't attract good staff to work in the county."*
-  *"If you want to keep your older population in the village you are going to need more in the way of services available to them. Health services in particular are a big worry for people."*

## Ways to change and improve healthcare

### Summary statement

Many Rutland residents are highly engaged and knowledgeable when it comes to the subject of healthcare. A number of comments referred back to the importance of local transport services – both as a means to access health services, when needed, and a way for people to stay connected and combat feelings of isolation that can have a negative impact on our health. Some respondents spoke about the need for better education, so that people can make healthy lifestyle choices and adopt positive behaviours to help maintain good health. A number of respondents were also conscious of the need stay physically active in order to maintain their health but said they struggled to do this due to a lack of suitable facilities, time pressures and family commitments. When talking about specific services that require improvement, you feel there is a need for more NHS dentists, better access to GP services, more support for adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and specialist support for people with long-term conditions. You also recognise the importance of having a social care system that works effectively with health services, as well as the need to ensure people get the right care and support as they near the end of their life.

-  *“Dental. The NHS waiting list for clinically necessary orthodontic treatment is currently three years, meaning some children will not be treated at the most appropriate time in their growth. I have already raised this with our MP.”*
-  *“Insufficient NHS dentistry practitioners.”*
-  *“Larger surgery with more parking [is needed] as Oakham is expanding rapidly.”*
-  *“They’re bringing out something called anticipatory care, particularly for older people and people with long-term conditions. So hopefully someone (in the Council) with a long-term interest in health is looking at joining up councils with communities and GP practices, and how they deliver their care. It’s being piloted at present in West Devon. Which seems to be going quite well down there.”*
-  *“[We need to encourage] Wider understanding of the importance of diet/what you eat affecting your well-being and long-term health, and ways to help people achieve better diets.”*
-  *“It’s not for the Council to sort out (individual people’s personal fitness). The Council can create the conditions for personal responsibility, but it is up to the individual to have the motivation to do it for themselves.”*
-  *“They were going to see about moving the ambulance station to the bypass because it gets stuck in traffic.”*
-  *“Isolation is due to poor transport infrastructure.”*

-  *"A good and frequent bus service means people are happier as they can connect with others."*
-  *"(There is) loss of AIR QUALITY due to vehicular pollution."*
-  *"Linked to transport – better footpaths/cycle ways to enable physical activity."*
-  *"[There is a] Lack of sports facilities for general public use."*
-  *"Accessibility - if I am to exercise, I need to be finished by 7.15 am or after 8.30 pm."*
-  *"Availability of childcare in the evenings and at weekends to allow working parents to exercise."*
-  *"[We need to ensure] Easily accessible health and wellbeing services for young people."*
-  *"Support for autistic adults who cannot manage their own wellbeing but who have to ask for help because they are over 18 but who won't ask for help because they are autistic."*
-  *"Learning difficulties support/groups/activities Autism for adults especially 25+"*
-  *"End of life planning and care could do with more funding."*
-  *"The new ICS (Integrated Care Systems) structure is still defined by county borders, and I have real concern that our community's healthcare needs will suffer a fragmented approach produced by four separate local authorities/NHS structures."*
-  *"Local specialist groups to help those with a long-term health issue (would be helpful)."*
-  *"After being in lockdown I've not thought for one minute that this is terrible because I'm actually living in a place that no one can complain about living in."*
-  *"The social care for older and vulnerable people needs addressing nationwide. NHS services and social care should be fully integrated to avoid staff wasting time filling out forms with similar information."*

## 5. What issues need addressing urgently?

As well as giving people the opportunity to talk openly about their health and local health services, Future Rutland’s ‘Climate Change and the Environment’ conversation asked some specific questions. In particular, we asked:

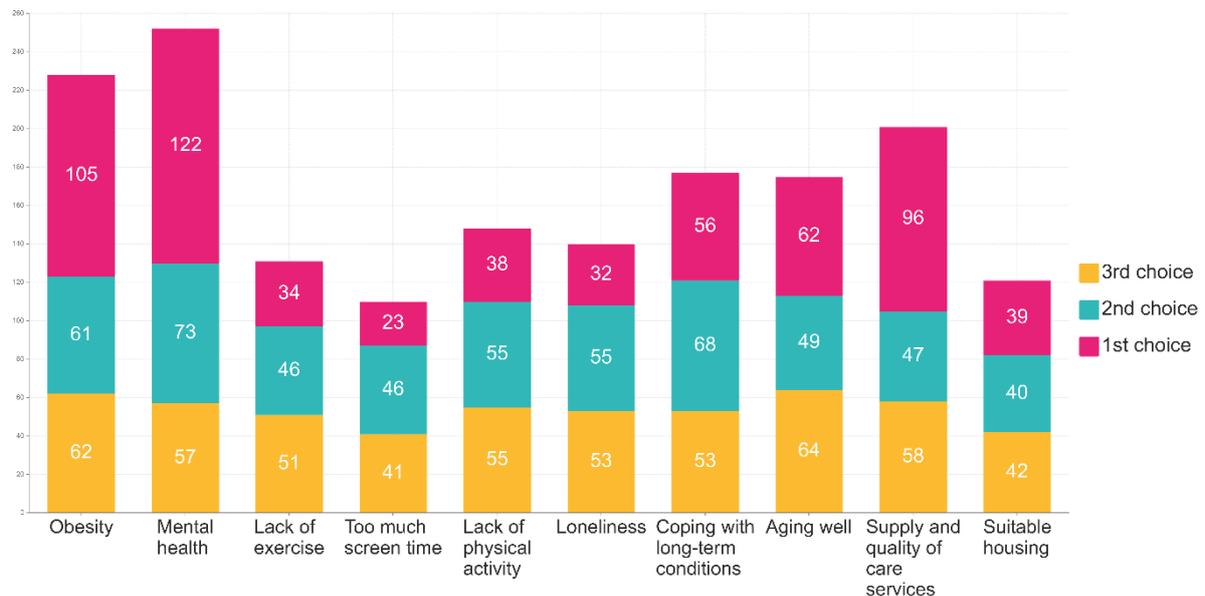
*Which three aspects of health and wellbeing do you feel addressing most urgently?*

A total of 437 people responded to this question. The top five answers (in rank order) were:

1. Mental health
2. Obesity
3. Supply and quality of care services
4. Ageing well
5. Lack of physical activity

Loneliness, suitable housing, too much screen time and lack of exercise also scored highly.

**Figure 5 - Which three aspects of health and wellbeing do you feel need addressing most urgently? (Number your choices 1 to 3 in order of importance)**



Respondents were also asked if there were any aspects of health and wellbeing not listed as options for this question but which they felt also needed addressing urgently.

Access to GP care services – particularly in Oakham – was by far the most common response to this question. People felt very strongly about waiting times to get an appointment and the general lack of access.

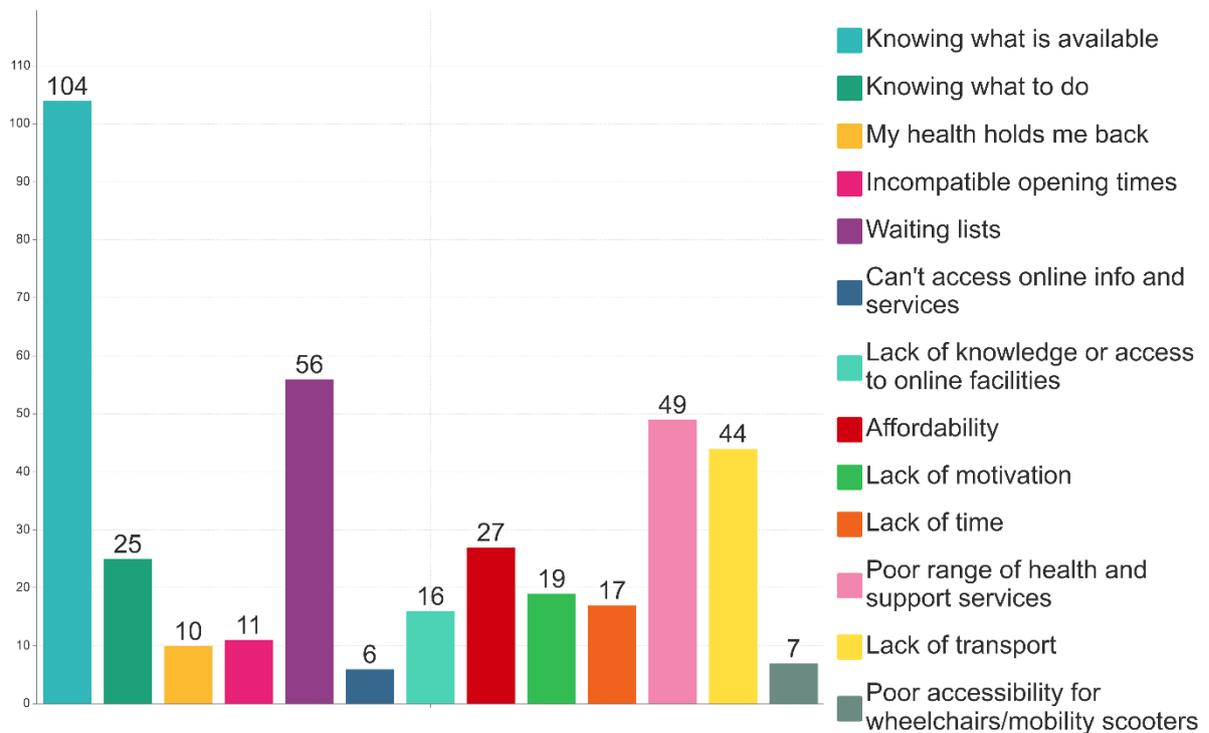
Dementia support, eye care/sight loss and access to health advice were also mentioned more the once.

Respondents to Future Rutland’s ‘Health and Wellbeing’ survey were also asked what they felt was the greatest barrier to accessing health and wellbeing services in Rutland. The top answers to this question (in rank order) were:

1. Knowing what is available to me
2. Waiting lists
3. The poor range of health support services
4. Lack of transport
5. Affordability
6. Knowing what to do

‘Knowing what to do’ was by far the top answer, chosen by almost 25% of respondents.

**Figure 6 - What do you feel is the greatest barrier to accessing health and wellbeing services in Rutland? (Select one option)**



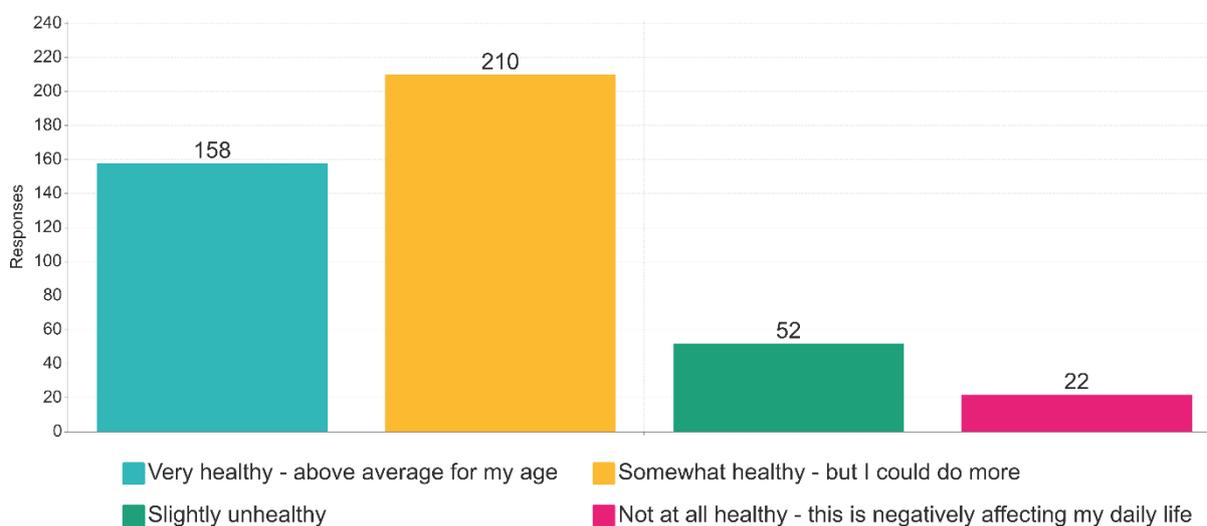
## 6. Your health and wellbeing

People who took part in Future Rutland's 'Health and Wellbeing' survey were also asked about their personal health and the health of their family.

*In your day-to-day choices, how healthy do you think you are?  
Please be honest.*

The majority of respondents to this question (47%) said they were 'somewhat healthy' but acknowledged they could do more. A high proportion (36%) said they were 'very healthy'. A small number (5%) said they were not at all healthy and that this is having a negative impact on their life.

**Figure 7 - In your day-to-day choices, how healthy do you think you are?**



Respondents gave almost identical answers when asked how healthy they thought their family was.

Future Rutland's 'Health and Wellbeing' survey also asked respondent to share details of what they do to maintain their health and wellbeing? The top answers (in rank order) were:

1. Eating healthy meals
2. Not smoking
3. Making regular visits to the dentist and/or optician
4. Exercising regularly
5. Visiting the doctor when needed

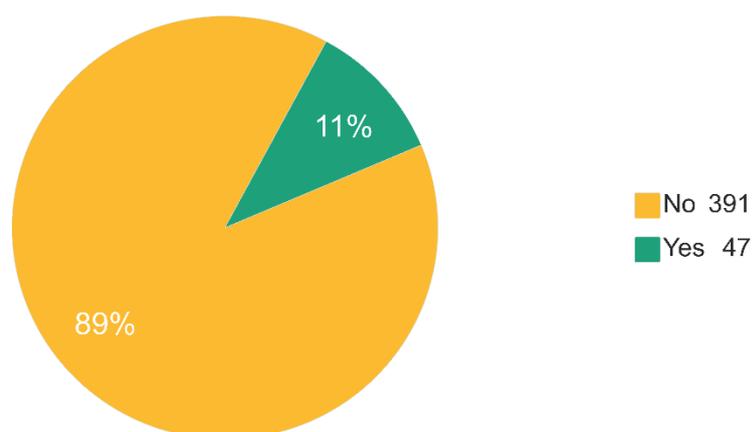
Other high scoring answers included: avoiding excess salt, fat and sugar; keeping in social contact with friends (virtually and in person); challenging themselves mentally; drinking alcohol responsibly; and get enough good-quality sleep.

Once again, respondents gave largely identical answers when asked what their family does to maintain their health and wellbeing.

## 7. SEND support

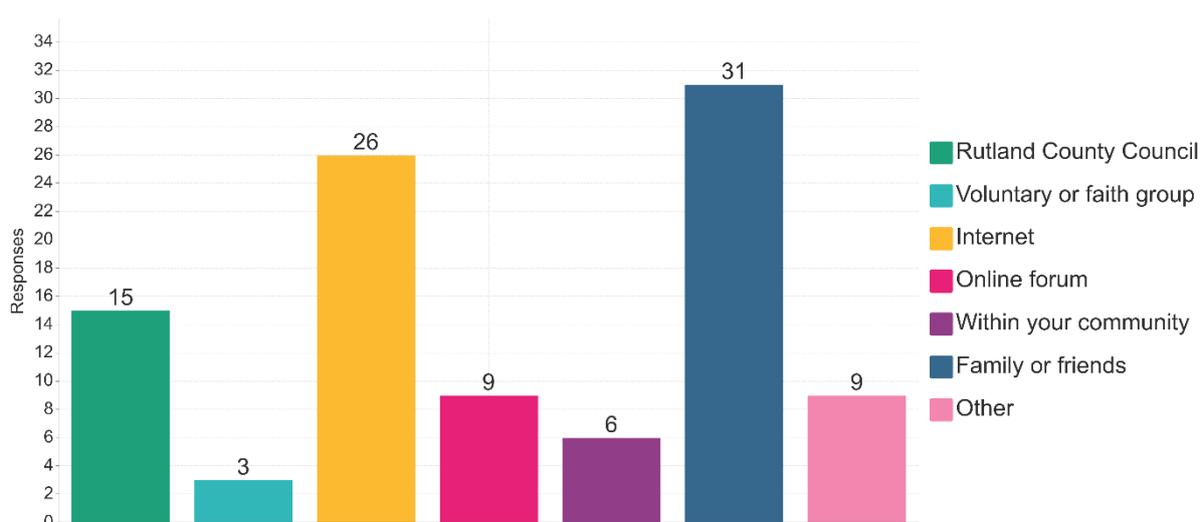
Just over 10% of those who responded to Future Rutland's 'Health and Wellbeing' survey said they had children aged under 21, or under 25 with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

**Figure 4 - Do you have children aged under 21, or under 25 with special educational needs or disabilities?**



These respondents were also asked where they would go if they needed help or support for their child, such as supporting their development, parenting support and advice or help at home. Most said that they would go to family and friends for support and advice. Accessing advice via the internet was next highest choice, followed by Rutland County Council.

**Figure 5 - If you and your family needed help and support with your child, such as supporting their development, parenting support and advice or help at home, where would you go? (Select all that apply)**



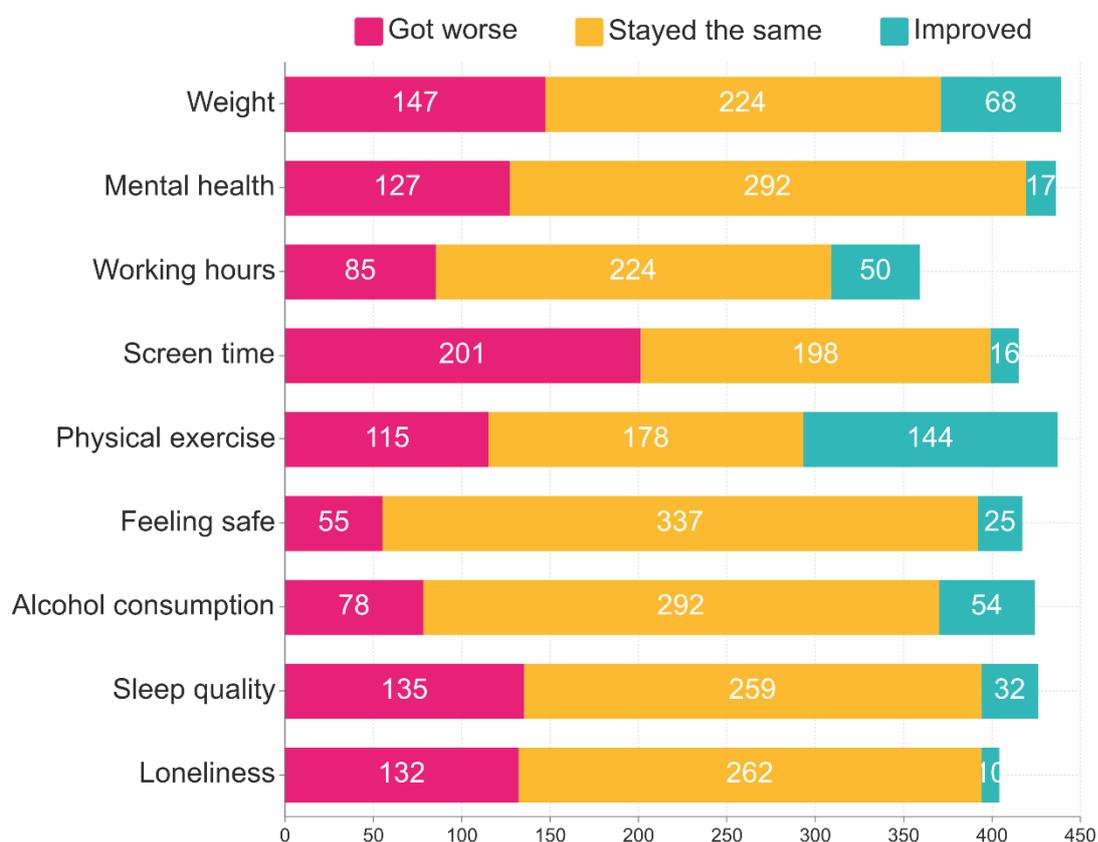
## 8. The impact of COVID-19

Future Rutland’s ‘Health and Wellbeing’ survey also sought to understand the impact that COVID-19 has had on respondents.

Across a wide range of issues, from weight and mental health to exercise and sleep, respondents were asked whether things had improved, got worse or stayed the same as a result of the pandemic.

The only aspect of health and wellbeing which seems to have improved for some people is increased physical exercise. Screen time is the area of health and wellbeing that has worsened the most. A significant number of respondents also indicated that their weight, mental health, sleep quality and feelings of loneliness had worsened. For many people, their health and wellbeing has remained the same.

**Figure 6 – What impact has the COVID-19 pandemic had on your health and wellbeing?**



Respondents were also asked to name three things they might commit to doing over the next year to improve their health and wellbeing, after COVID restrictions have been removed. The top choices (in rank order) were:

1. Spending more time in the fresh air
2. Arranging to meet friends and family on a regular basis either virtually or in person
3. Eating healthy meals more often
4. Growing my own food

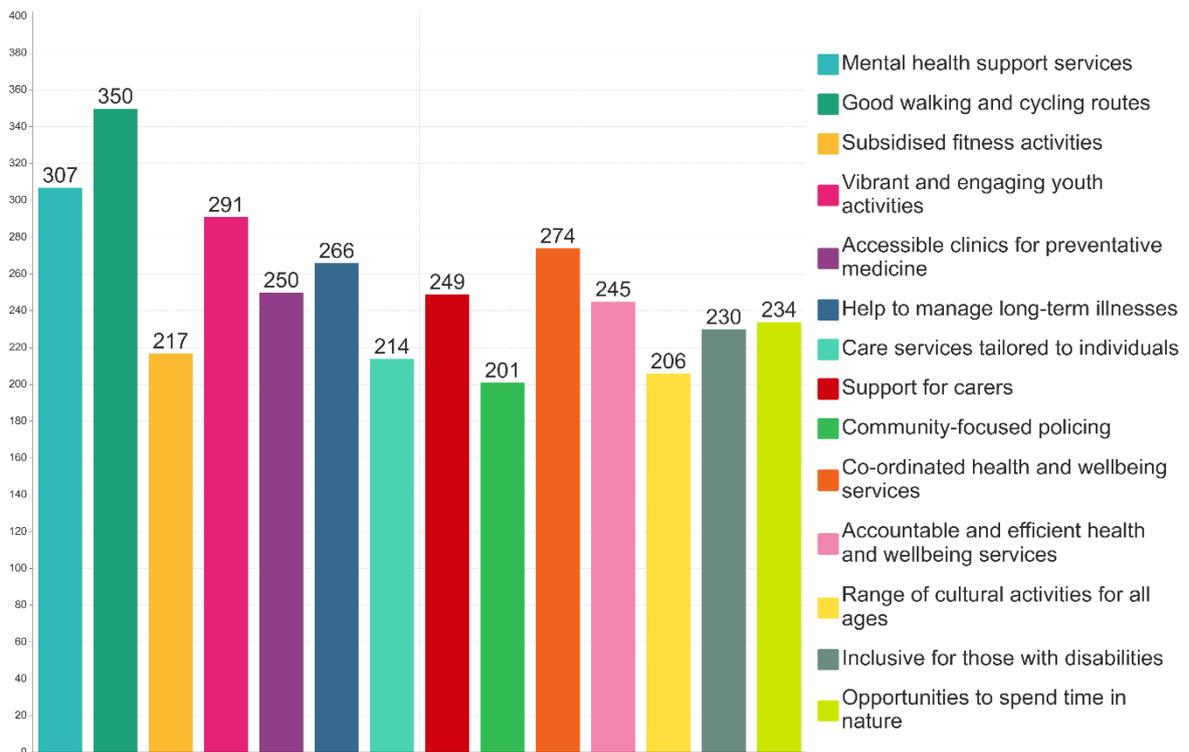
# 9. A healthy future

Looking ahead, respondents to the ‘Health and Wellbeing’ survey were asked what they think a healthy Rutland should include in the future. The top answers (in rank order) were:

1. Good walking and cycling routes
2. Mental health support services
3. Vibrant and engaging youth services
4. Co-ordinated health and wellbeing services
5. Help to manage long term illnesses

Other options selected by a large number of respondents included: opportunities to spend time in nature; inclusivity for people with disabilities; accountable and efficient health and wellbeing services; and support for carers.

**Figure 7 – What do you think a healthy Rutland should include in the future? Select all that apply. (Answers that were selected more than 200 times)**



## 10. Sharing further feedback

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This report summarises the comments, feedback and survey responses collected throughout Future Rutland's 'Health and Wellbeing' conversation. The purpose of gathering this feedback is to develop a new shared vision for Rutland – one that's based on things that really matter to local people and helps organisations like Rutland County Council plan for the future.

Please remember that you can read all of the original data and information behind this summary report by visiting: [future.rutland.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing](https://future.rutland.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing).

Getting your views and feedback was just the first step of the Future Rutland Conversation. Now, we need to know if we heard you correctly. To tell us what you think about this report and whether you feel it's an accurate representation of what matters to people in Rutland, please go to: [future.rutland.gov.uk](https://future.rutland.gov.uk) or email: [rutlandconversation@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:rutlandconversation@rutland.gov.uk). If you don't have access to the internet, you can call us on 01572 722 577.

Once we're sure that there's nothing we've missed, we'll use all this information to develop a draft vision for the county, which we hope to publish before the end of summer 2021 to invite even more discussion and feedback.

[Click here to comment on this summary report](#)

