



Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation

Director of Public Health Annual Report 2022

FEBRUARY 2023

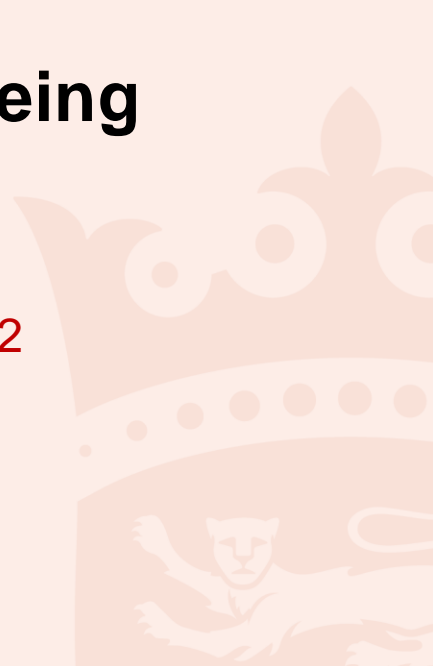


Table of Contents

- Acknowledgements4
- Organisations who supported the Conversation 5
- Foreword6
- Introduction.....7
- Executive Summary9
- What are the factors that benefit Islanders’ health and wellbeing? 10
- What are the negative impacts on Islanders’ health and wellbeing? 11
- What can the Government of Jersey do? 12
- Summary of Protective Factors for Health and Wellbeing 14
- Summary of Negative Impacts on Health and Wellbeing 15
- Summary of what Islanders want the Government of Jersey to do 17
- About Jersey’s Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation 2022 19
- The Conversation in numbers 20
- Data collection and processing..... 21
- The methodology 22
- Disclaimer about this report and the associated data 23
- Section 1: How Islanders told us they keep healthy and well 25
- Themes and Concepts found 26
- Social Connections and Companionship 26
- Engaging in “Healthy” Behaviours 26
- Self-Care 29
- Outdoors In Nature 29
- Work-Life Balance 30
- Safety and Security 31
- Healthcare and Support Services 31
- Section 2: What Islanders told us negatively impacts their health and wellbeing..... 34
- Themes and Concepts found 35
- Cost-of-living 35
- Indulging in “Unhealthy” Habits..... 37
- Personal Stressors 41
- Loneliness and Social Isolation 44
- Television, Media and Social Media 45
- Poor Quality Services 46

Environment and Pollution	48
Section 3: What Islanders told us the Government could do to improve their health and wellbeing.....	51
Ideas and suggestions from Islanders.....	52
Tackling the Cost-of-living.....	52
Improve Exercise Facilities.....	53
Improve Leisure Facilities	54
Improve Public Infrastructure	55
Personal Stressors	58
Environment and Pollution	59
Accessibility, diversity and inclusion.....	60
Reflections	63
Reflections on what we heard	63
Reflections about the process	66
How we'll build on what we learnt.....	72
Further Information	75
Feedback.....	75
Require a different format?	75
Credits	76

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all those who contributed to Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation. We appreciate you for taking the time to talk to us about the things that impact on your health, for being honest and insightful and also for the warmth shown to our colleagues. Without these interactions, this report would not be as detailed or reflective of how people in Jersey feel about their health.

Thanks also to the community leaders, third sector organisations and groups who helped us to reach underrepresented communities in Jersey, ensuring that they were able to access the event and have their voices heard. We are grateful to the Dean of Jersey for supporting the project.

We would also like to thank all the members of the Public Health Directorate and wider Government of Jersey colleagues who took part in the events to interact with Islanders and collect the information presented in this report. Without you, Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation would not have been the success it was.

Organisations who supported the Conversation

ACORN

Age
Concern
Jersey

citizens
advice Jersey



The Channel Islands
co-operative
Society Limited

 **Dementia
Jersey**

 **FOCUS**
On Mental Illness




**Grace
Trust**
JERSEY




**Highlands
College**



 **JERSEY
LIBRARY**

 **LISTENING
LOUNGE**
An open door when you need to talk

Jersey
mencap
Supporting people with
a learning disability

 **mind Jersey**



 **SancTuary Trust**
"Supporting homeless men in the community"

Foreword

Over the past two years we have seen colleagues working in Public Health rise to the challenge of guiding the Island in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This contribution has demonstrated the importance of on-island public health expertise which can respond to such situations. However, public health isn't just about the threats to our health from viruses and bacteria: it covers so many more aspects of everyday life. From considering the health implications of the food we eat, the places we live, the work we do and our lifestyle choices; everything can have a lasting impact on the health of our Islanders.

This year, public health work will move from focusing primarily on the emergency pandemic response to considering the future direction for Public Health in Jersey. A new Public Health strategy for the Island will set the direction and priorities for the next four years.

This annual Director of Public Health Report provides the results of the consultation which was carried out as part of the work to develop the new strategy. The report provides valuable insight into how our Islanders view their health. The importance of hearing from Islanders themselves, especially from those who aren't normally well represented, is reflected in what Islanders said during Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation.

I would like to thank all of those who took the time to speak to us. The information provided by respondents gives the team the evidence to improve the health for our Islanders now and in the future.



Karen M. Wilson

Introduction



Welcome to our first annual Director of Public Health Report for Jersey. It seems fitting that in the year Directors of Public Health celebrate 175 years of the role in the UK, that Jersey, with its first Director, publishes its first report.

The annual reports are an opportunity for Directors of Public Health to highlight areas of concern for the population's health and to advocate for change to support the health and wellbeing of the population they cover. These reports also spotlight some of the great work being carried out by individuals, communities and organisations to improve health and wellbeing, including the work of the Public Health Directorate, but they are also a vehicle to share good practice.

For our first report, we have chosen to share the results of Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation; a consultation event that was held in Autumn 2022 to understand, from Islanders, how they perceived their health and how they thought Government could support them to improve their health and wellbeing. This was part of the consultation work conducted to support the development of our new Public Health Strategy which is due to be debated by the States Assembly early in 2023.

The people we talked to gave their own answers to the questions asked. Sometimes there is a direct link to government policy or influence, and at other times, issues may be far less directly under the control or influence of the Government of Jersey, such as global events or news. The point of the Big Conversation was to let people speak,

and to listen to what they felt was important, so we could incorporate this understanding and those views into the areas for which we do have direct or indirect influence. Much of what we learnt will be taken directly into our Public Health Strategy, and part of that Strategy is about influencing wider services and policies, beyond our own department, which affect the health of the people of Jersey.

The importance of hearing from those we serve is engrained within the role of a Director of Public Health; it allows us to understand from the people themselves which issues they feel most affect their lives. Having the evidence of what people need to support their health and wellbeing allows us to engage effectively with partners and communities to address these issues. This is why the results of this event are so important and why we have decided to focus on them within this, our first, annual report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Bradley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Professor Peter Bradley

Director Public Health

Executive Summary

To understand people's current state of health and wellbeing we conducted a piece of research exploring Islanders' experiences of health and wellbeing from their own perspective. We wanted to hear from Islanders in all walks of life, from all ages, genders and communities. We asked Islanders to share their views via interviews, postcards, and a survey with our Public Health team. We asked about negative impacts, what helps people, and what advice they would give to the Government of Jersey to improve Islanders' health and wellbeing. We were delighted that over 1,000 Islanders shared their views with us. We did not collect data on the demographics of respondents, instead focusing on listening to the conversations and answers we received. We worked with community leaders and third sector groups to increase links with under-represented communities in Jersey.

From the 10th to the 17th of October 2022, we conducted around 40 in-person sessions, talking and listening to community organisations, students at Highland College, children and young people, parents, carers, seasonal workers, people with impairments or long-term health conditions and the general public on the streets. We visited organisations like Age Concern, Grace Trust, the Salvation Army and Jersey Mencap, as well as businesses like Romanian Delight, Fox Euro Store, Fifi Shop, Grand Marche St Peter and St Helier, Acorn Enterprises and Polo Market. Our colleagues also spent time on the streets of St Helier, from the Waterfront to Mont à L'Abbé School.

What are the negative impacts on Islanders' health and wellbeing?

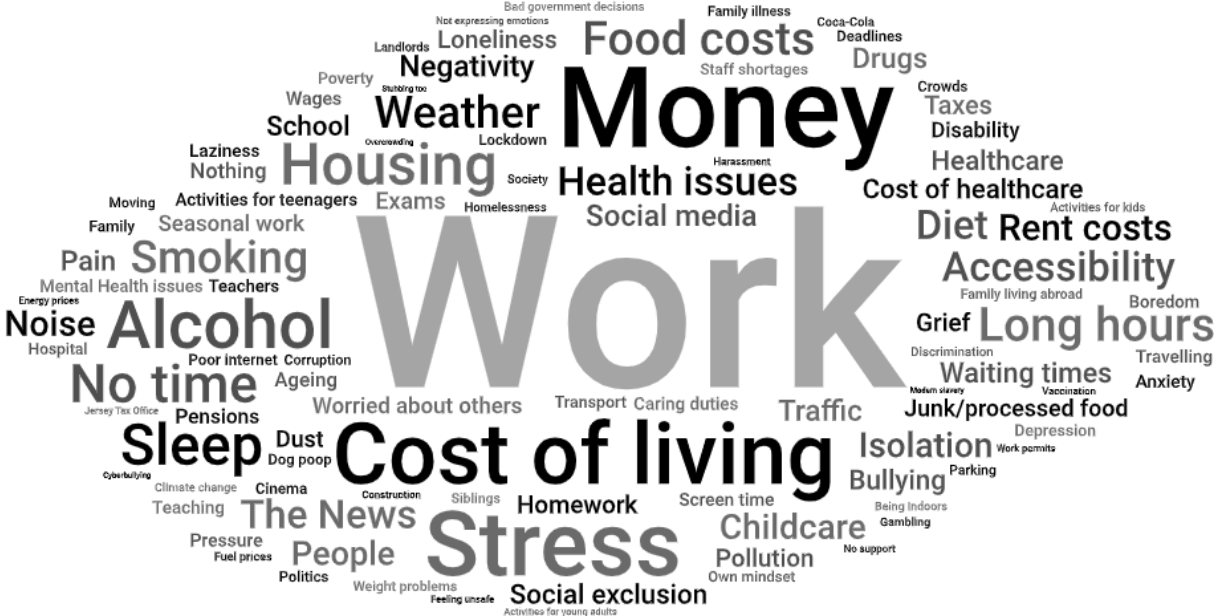


Figure 2. Word Cloud representing negative factors generated from the in-person conversations. The bigger the word, the more it was mentioned.

The cost-of-living crisis was having the biggest negative impact on Islanders' health and wellbeing, according to those we engaged with. Islanders experienced heightened stress due to adverse outcomes associated with the pressure caused by increased costs. Additionally, pollution and environmental concerns negatively affect health and wellbeing, with many people expressing worries about the environment, including sustainability and the impact of climate change.

It was clear from the conversations that Islanders were aware that unhealthy behaviours negatively impact their health and wellbeing. For instance, when asked about what negatively affects health, many disclosed that they smoke. In our conversations, occasional smokers were more reluctant to quit, despite being aware of health risks, than their daily-smoking peers. Long-term and regular smokers often expressed a desire to quit, some having attempted to quit in the past or intending to quit in the future. Islanders raised concerns about the drinking culture in Jersey, although there was no consensus on how severe this is. Respondents also discussed how a lack of exercise can have negative effects. Many stated they cannot afford healthy food. Instead, they turn to more accessible and cheaper alternatives, which are often unhealthy, processed, and fast-food options, despite knowing the negative health implications.

Many people we spoke to talked about their own personal stressors, such as work-related stress, ill health and difficulties accessing healthcare. Islanders also highlighted the negative effects of social media and the news. Many discussed their perceptions of poor public services, including healthcare, dental care, and mental health services. Several were unsatisfied with public facilities on the Island, for example, the bus service which limited their ability to socialise in the evenings when services were limited. Furthermore, concerns were raised about the limited options of leisure activities, resulting in increased loneliness and a lack of support among Islanders. Various Islanders felt as if they have no support and no one to turn to because they have a limited social circle.

What can the Government of Jersey do?

The Islanders we spoke to have called for the Government of Jersey to intervene in the cost-of-living crisis by reducing income tax and removing GST on food¹ and essential products, for example. Islanders wanted support to access healthcare, notably by reducing the cost of GPs and health professionals. Many would like more support from Government, whether they receive income support or not.

Islanders also wanted Government to improve access to sporting activities by reducing the cost of gyms, making them more accessible and improving their quality. They recommended that Government of Jersey expand exercise routes and facilities in the East. Respondents asked Government of Jersey to improve leisure facilities and access to recreational activities through encouraging and supporting the development of good quality leisure facilities.

Islanders also discussed the importance of improving the quality of public services more generally. It was felt that the Government of Jersey should take more inclusive practices and approaches when dealing with the public.

Islanders highlighted their concern around personal stressors, including work-life balance, housing issues, childcare issues, and the lack of social opportunities. Those we spoke to suggested that Government should introduce more flexible working

¹ To note, Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation occurred prior to the recent States Assembly Debate on the removal of GST off food

measures to support Islanders' health and wellbeing. Islanders also suggested that the Government improve the provisions of accommodation for all, including the non-qualified.

Islanders raised concerns over the lack of childcare and socialising opportunities for teenagers. They wanted Government to introduce more support for Islanders facing these issues.

Finally, the Government could introduce more initiatives to support the environment by protecting green spaces and investing more money into sustainability and climate change.

Summary of Protective Factors for Health and Wellbeing

Engaging in 'Healthy' Behaviours: The 3 main healthy behaviours are eating good, balanced, and nutritious food, engaging in regular physical activity and minimising unhealthy behaviours.



Outdoors in Nature: Islanders reported feeling refreshed and grounded when spending time outdoors. They see Jersey's natural environment as crucial to their health and wellbeing, often encouraging them to be more active.

Social Connections and Companionship: Islanders stressed the importance of social connections, family, friends, neighbours, and pets. Many Islanders shared the desire to meet and connect with people to increase their feeling of community and being included.



Self-care: Many Islanders expressed the importance of rest and self-care. They actively engage in hobbies and other forms of self-care, including meditation, mindfulness, and going on holidays.

Work-life Balance: Some Islanders suggested a good work-life balance keeps them healthy. It provides Islanders with purpose and it helps improve their productivity and performance at work. Islanders really stressed the need to have time for oneself.





Safety and Security: Islanders emphasised the importance of feeling safe and secure, especially when there is a war in Europe. Financial and climate security were highly considered by Islanders.

Healthcare and Support Services: Islanders emphasised the importance of reliable, supportive, accessible, and affordable healthcare. On-island support services are highly regarded among Islanders. Without these essential services many Islanders would be without necessities.



Summary of Negative Impacts on Health and Wellbeing



Cost-of-living: Many are experiencing financial stress and struggle with the cost of daily necessities, including food, petrol, bills, and healthcare. The cost-of-living crisis was the biggest problem for Islanders.

Indulging in 'unhealthy' habits: Indulging in unhealthy habits has a negative impact on Islanders' health and wellbeing. The common behaviours raised were taking drugs, drinking and smoking. Further "unhealthy" habits include a lack of exercise and consuming processed and unhealthy food.



Personal Stressors: Personal stressors differ from person to person. In our interviews, Islanders predominantly highlighted issues with accessing healthcare, ill health and work.



Loneliness and Social Isolation: Some Islanders revealed feeling a lack of support from society and Government. This lack of social support leads to an increased sense of loneliness and social isolation.

Television, the Media and social media: Many Islanders stressed the negative effects of social media and the news. Social media has been described as a constant source of stress and negativity, especially for young people. The news made a lot of Islanders stressed, unhappy, and overwhelmed.



Poor Quality Services: Multiple Islanders revealed that poor quality services contribute negatively towards their health and wellbeing, including public services such as social security, the tax office, healthcare provisions and public transport.

Environment and Pollution: Environmental issues and pollution were frequently mentioned. Many people expressed worry about the environment, including sustainability of the Island and climate change.



Summary of what Islanders want the Government of Jersey to do

Cost-of-living: For Government of Jersey to improve support around the cost-of-living crisis. Islanders suggested Government of Jersey reduce tax and/or remove GST from all food and essential products. Islanders also asked Government of Jersey to reduce the cost of healthcare, including specialist services, and support healthy lifestyles by reducing the price of gym memberships.

Improve Exercise Facilities: For Government to improve the current offer of exercise facilities on the Island, particularly in the East. Islanders proposed Government of Jersey invest into sport centres and make gyms more affordable and accessible.

Improve Leisure Facilities: For Government to improve the offer of recreational opportunities around Jersey. Islanders expressed frustration at the lack of resources for Islanders, particularly for young people. They called for Government of Jersey to facilitate cheaper activities and events for the community to come together and have fun.

Improve Resources: For Government to improve the quality of public services, including the healthcare, dental and mental health systems.

Personal Stressors: For Government to introduce more flexible working measures for Islanders, empowering people to improve their work-life balance. For Government to improve housing conditions and offer. For Government of Jersey to introduce more support for childcare and social care.

Environment and Pollution: For Government to introduce more green spaces and invest into environmental protection and sustainability. Islanders emphasised their need for green spaces, the environment, and the climate.

Diversity and Inclusion: For Government to be more inclusive and accessible when engaging with the public. Islanders suggested all Government of Jersey employees need to better understand the needs of diverse Islanders, including neurodiverse, disabled, and LGBT+ people. They said this journey should start with understanding their needs better.

About Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation 2022

On World Mental Health Day, 10 October 2022, the Public Health Directorate embarked on a one-day event to meet as many Islanders as possible and find out about their views on health and wellbeing. The aim of the conversation was to gather data that could be used to support the development of the Public Health Strategy. The Strategy is a plan of action that sets out the long-term objectives for the Public Health Directorate.



Alongside the conversations with the general public on 10 October, the team conducted around 40 sessions in the following week with groups representing a diversity of Islanders. The directorate wanted to ensure the Strategy was informed by as many perspectives as possible. We reached out to more than 20 organisations and community leaders to better engage with underrepresented individuals. Many of the group sessions were led by the staff and carers, making the sessions more accessible.

The Conversation in numbers

3 questions

24 locations

18 in-person group sessions with local organisations, schools and charities

22 in-person sessions with people around the island

25 charities, businesses, churches and community groups

30 volunteers

1,000+ interactions²

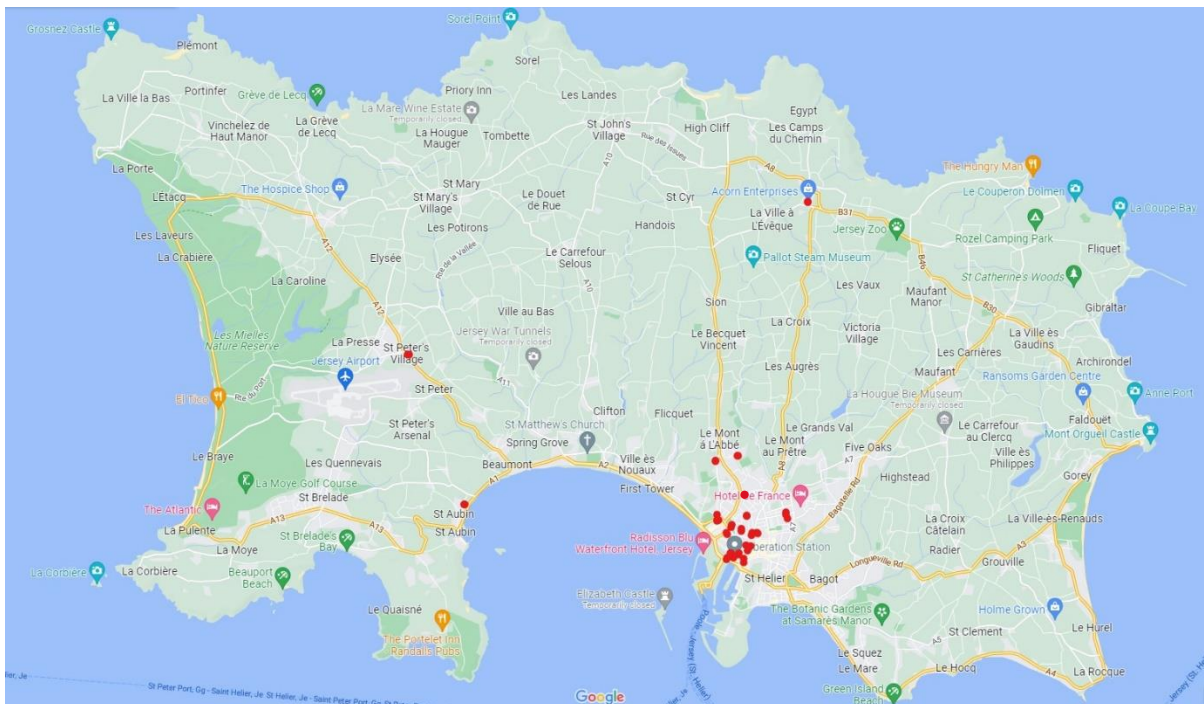


Figure 3. Map of in-person locations where Islanders might have interacted with a Public Health colleague during the Conversation.

² Estimate of the people reached between 10 October and 26 October.

Data collection and processing

We opened 3 channels of data collecting in up to four different languages. These were:

- In-person conversations and group sessions for an inclusive and face to face experience. Colleagues fed back to the team on the conversations they had had with the public which were recorded and transcribed.
- Possibility to collect and fill in postcards available in English, Polish, Portuguese, and Romanian. These could then be posted back to us for free, enabling those who prefer pen and paper to participate in their own time.
- Online survey in English, Polish, Portuguese, and Romanian for those who prefer typing on the go.

We then collated all the data and categorised it into positives, negatives and suggestions. These make up the first 3 sections of this report: How Islanders told us they keep healthy and well (section 1); What Islanders told us negatively affects their health and wellbeing (section 2); and What Islanders told us the Government could do to improve their health and wellbeing (section 3). These correspond to the questions we asked all Islanders:

- (1) What things help you to stay healthy and well?
- (2) What things have a negative effect on your health and wellbeing?
- (3) How can the Government of Jersey help you to improve your health and wellbeing?





The methodology

This Annual Report is a qualitative report, with a phenomenological underpinning. This means that researchers investigate a phenomenon (i.e. health and wellbeing) by describing and interpreting the lived experiences of Islanders. In this case, these experiences were collected via free text answers from the online surveys (translated by native speakers where relevant), typed handwritten answers from the physical postcards and transcripts from the in-person interviews.

For the data analysis, qualitative analysts in the Public Health Directorate used a thematic analysis approach to identify and interpret patterns within participants' responses. First, the data was transcribed, and analysts reviewed it. Then, they analysed the data by looking for patterns and repeated ideas. Based on these initial ideas, the researchers established 'codes' (i.e. physical activity, eating healthy, balanced food), these were used to categorise the data. All similar 'codes' were linked together to create cohesive overarching themes (i.e. engaging in healthy behaviours). It was decided to analyse each question separately, therefore leading to three separate conceptual models.

Disclaimer about this report and the associated data

The following sections of this report discuss the results for each question, the associated conceptual model and highlights pertinent quotes from members of the public which support each theme. Having spoken to over 1,000 people during the course of Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation, it is not possible to represent every single person's response in the analysis. We have attempted to represent the broad spectrum of views we heard from those Islanders who engaged with the team during the event and hope that what follows is a broad and balanced summary of those conversations. In this report, we will refer to Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation as the Conversation.





Section 1

How Islanders told us they keep healthy and well



Section 1: How Islanders told us they keep healthy and well

Figure 4 below presents a conceptual model of the data, reflecting Islanders' perceptions of protective factors that keep them healthy and well. This combines all the responses to the Conversation, including conversations with colleagues, survey responses and responses received on postcards.



Figure 4: Conceptual Model reflecting Islanders' perceptions of protective factors

Themes and Concepts found

Social Connections and Companionship

Many stressed the importance of connecting with others, including friends, family and loved ones. Grandparents said they enjoyed spending time and “**looking after grandchildren**” who made them more “**mentally and physically active**”. Some children also mentioned parents and siblings as being sources of support and wellbeing. Pets were also considered very important; Islanders spoke about the positive impact on wellbeing pets have as they encourage people to get out and about in nature, exercise, socialise, and meet people. Islanders with family abroad have emphasised the importance of their on-Island connections but also their connections back home, with some saying they lean on charities and communities to increase this on-Island support and meet up with friends.

“When it comes to mental health, it certainly helps to keep in touch with family in Poland and with friends here in Jersey”

Most respondents shared their desire to meet and connect with new people to increase their sense of community and feelings of being included within society. Feeling connected and belonging to a community is a protective factor for physical and mental wellbeing. An Islander described the “**Jersey Stone**” as the weight that was put on as a result of the opportunities for eating out, socialising with people, and building networks. They highlighted: “**if you had social capital, you probably have a very good lifestyle in Jersey**”, again demonstrating the importance of social connections and sense of community within Jersey.

“Happy and healthy is really linked to feeling included and being part of an inclusive society”

Engaging in “Healthy” Behaviours

Many respondents expressed their desire to engage in “healthy” behaviours regularly to enhance their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Balanced and Nutritious Food

To stay healthy and well many understand the importance of eating a healthy and balanced diet. The value of living in Jersey, by having easy access to “**organic, home grown, fresh fruit and vegetables**” was discussed. Though for some these types of healthy foods are considered unaffordable, which can result in individuals opting for more affordable ‘unhealthy’ and junk food options; despite their desire to consume a healthy diet.

“Feeding the body and treating it well is really important”

Healthy good food is subjective, and Islanders differ in their definition of what defines healthy. Cultural differences were clear; multiple English-speaking respondents emphasised the importance of consuming fruit and vegetables whilst minimising meat and carbohydrate consumption. Polish-speaking Islanders emphasised the importance of home cooked meals containing seafood, whereas Portuguese-speaking Islanders emphasised the importance of a “**balanced diet covering all sectors of the food wheel**”. However, nearly all Islanders explained the importance of consuming fruit and vegetables whilst maintaining a balanced diet.

Younger responders have voiced more of an interest towards stereotypically unhealthy foods such as “**Oreos**” and “**McDonald’s**”. Though, as highlighted by a number of people we heard from, everything is healthy in moderation, with some conveying the importance of having “**naughty treats now and then**” to maintain the balance.

Regular Physical Activity

Engaging in regular physical activity and the importance of affordable exercise provisions was voiced by many Islanders we spoke to. Many reported opting for affordable and free activities such as running, cycling, and walking in nature as opposed to more expensive options like going to the gym. Though, there does remain a number of Islanders attending the gym on a regular basis, to partake in weightlifting, cardio, and classes. An emerging activity that is becoming increasingly popular among Islanders is sea swimming, particularly in the older age community.

Some talked about an inability to partake in regular exercise due to time constraints, limited capacity, or limited ability. However, it became apparent that often these individuals engage in other forms of activity (non-exercise activity thermogenesis) which keeps them fit and healthy, such as walking the dog, playing with children, cleaning, and gardening.

“Taking advantage of armchair exercise (as I am disabled so cannot do most popular forms of exercise)”

Overall, it is clear Islanders engage in regular physical activity to help clear their mind and reduce their stress, whilst also keeping fit and healthy. One Islander who lived in the West of the Island expressed “**feeling lucky**”, due to “**cycle routes being much better out West**”.

Minimising “Unhealthy” Behaviours

Many of those who responded expressed the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle by minimising “unhealthy” behaviours such as avoiding smoking, drugs, and alcohol.

Many Islanders actively avoid smoking to help their health and wellbeing. Though, a small number of Islanders admitted to currently smoking. Some of which expressed the understanding that this behaviour is “**bad for you**” and often followed up with “**I’ve tried to quit before**” or “**needing more support to quit**”. One Islander demonstrated a sense of embarrassment when admitting they smoked:

“She is a smoker but looked quite embarrassed. She has tried to quit in the past but needs encouragement”

Most suggested they minimise their alcohol consumption to be healthy and well. However, some told us how drinking in moderation helps them, with this often related to cultural differences. Most English-speaking respondents suggested they needed to reduce their alcohol consumption; whereas Portuguese speakers suggested “**alcohol is a good thing**” and “**drinking alcohol has a positive effect on health and wellbeing**”.

For some, engaging with social media, the news, and screen time enhanced a sense of stress and worry and they explained how they actively minimised their use to support their health and wellbeing. Conversely, others explained how watching the television was beneficial for them.

Self-Care

Many Islanders have expressed the importance of rest and self-care when it comes to protective factors, with many proactively engaging in hobbies and other forms of self-care.

“Taking time to look after yourself and do self-care were important for being healthy and well”

The definition of self-care differs from person-to-person and is very subjective. Some take care of themselves by doing nothing, taking time for themselves, and watching television. Whereas, others engaged in more physical activities, hobbies and developing their knowledge, through learning, reading, and watching documentaries. One Islander said that **“being able to keep the house clean helps them to stay healthy”**, demonstrating this variance in self-care. Many highlighted the importance of a good night’s sleep; suggesting this is key to maintaining their physical and mental wellbeing and believing a good night’s sleep sets them up for the day and makes them happier overall.

“Gardening, baking, knitting and crochet, reading and watching films”

Outdoors In Nature

Taking time outdoors in the nature to unwind was felt by many we spoke to increase their mindfulness by making them feel **“grounded and refreshed”**, recognising the importance of outdoor space and needing to schedule and make time for it. Being outdoors in the natural environment, among green spaces and nature is considered vital and leads to more physical activity and socialisation.

Many reflected on how beautiful Jersey is, and how lucky they are to live here. Being in Jersey gives them the perfect opportunity to get fresh air in the countryside, on beaches or on coastal paths. As highlighted by one Islander who suggests "**Jersey is a beautiful place**" and points out the importance of "**going out for walks, cycling, being able to get out there with your family and having family time**".

"Accessing green spaces to protect and support mental and physical

Work-Life Balance

Work plays a significant part in all our lives, but it is a complicated concept. Multiple Islanders suggested their work keeps them healthy by providing them with a purpose and it can improve productivity and performance. However, being overworked, stressed and unhappy at work leads to damage to physical and mental health. Therefore, other Islanders suggest being away from work is beneficial to their health and wellbeing.

Islanders mentioned multiple factors contributing to their work-life balance. Firstly, working in a supportive work environment is considered critical by many to maintain their physical and mental health, with supportive managers and supportive colleagues often highlighted. Secondly, Islanders appreciated how flexible working, working-from-home and four-day working week were key factors in bringing them a sense of enjoyment at work. Thirdly, those who enjoyed going to work did so because they valued their role and felt a sense of purpose and meaning, often describing a sense of fulfilment.

"Promote flexible work, work from home whenever possible"

One Islander talked about his gratitude towards the Government and the Back to Work scheme, as he is unable to work a full-time job due to his age and health status, but he was given the opportunity to partake in a six-week work experience which he described as "**phenomenal**" because he felt like he was contributing to his own income support payments, demonstrating the importance of having a sense of purpose and fulfilment. Finally, having secure employment leads to a sense of

financial security, with many relating to the cost-of-living: **“You need to have a good income because the cost-of-living is so high, it gives you security”**.

Those Islanders who do not enjoy work as much often refer to being overworked and stressed in the workplace. Consequently, some explained how **“spending the least amount of time at work as possible”** benefited their health and wellbeing. Being able to leave work at the door and enjoying time off away from work is considered vital to some. By escaping the work environment and having time for themselves to engage in leisure activities maintained their quality of life; demonstrating how importance having a good work-life balance is to many Islanders.

Safety and Security

This theme was unexpected initially, but through conversations with Islanders it became apparent that the current climate we live in is contributing to stress dramatically. Having a sense of security and safety in the Island and within their own homes enhances their health and wellbeing. Islanders in the Romanian and Polish community explained how the feeling of **“public safety”** impacts their health and wellbeing, specifically when **“there is a war somewhere else”**. Additionally, many Islanders have expressed an affection for Jersey, due to its **“safety and low crime rates”**.

Another factor contributing towards good health and wellbeing, during the cost-of-living crisis, is financial security. Being able to feel a sense of financial stability and safety enhances health and wellbeing. Finally, safe, secure, and affordable housing is a considered a critical factor for many Islanders.

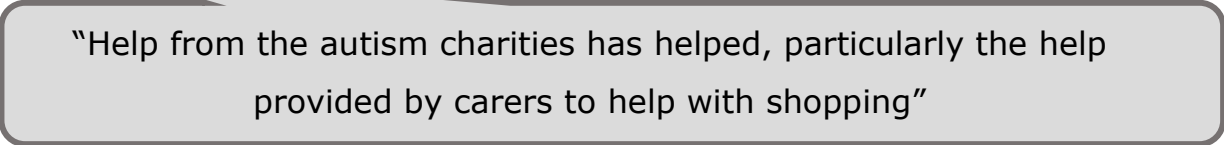
Healthcare and Support Services

“Access to health care when needed, including a good mental health service”

The Islanders we spoke to discussed the importance of a reliable, supportive, accessible, and affordable healthcare service. Many believe their health is reliant on following public health guidance, accessing, and receiving appropriate health care

and following through with treatment and medication. An Islander specified: **“You have to have good health to create wealth”**.

On-Island support services were highly regarded by Islanders, such as the Salvation Army, Macmillan, Mind Jersey, and the Grace Trust to name a few. Without these essential support services many would be without food and other necessities. An Islander at the Salvation Army highlighted: **“Without food banks people would really be struggling to get access to food for them and their families”**.



“Help from the autism charities has helped, particularly the help provided by carers to help with shopping”



Section 2

What Islanders told us negatively impacts their health and wellbeing



Section 2: What Islanders told us negatively impacts their health and wellbeing

Figure 5 below presents a conceptual model of the data, reflecting Islanders’ perceptions of the negative impacts on their health and wellbeing. This combines all the responses to the Conversation, including conversations with colleagues, survey responses and responses received on postcards.

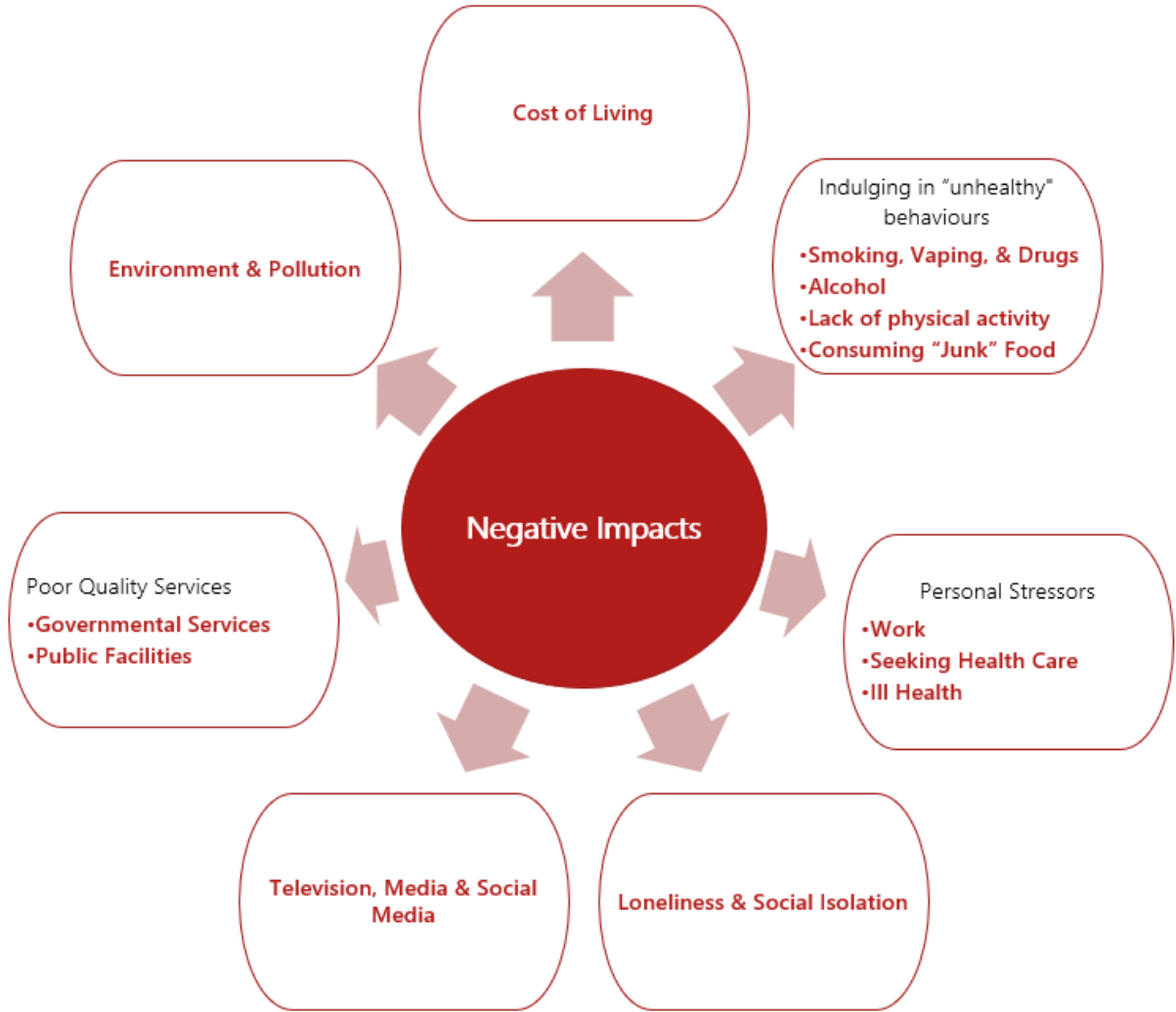


Figure 5: Conceptual model, reflecting Islanders perceptions of negative impacts on their health and wellbeing

Themes and Concepts found

Cost-of-living

The most prevalent factor having an impact on health and wellbeing is the current cost-of-living crisis. Nearly everyone we engaged with mentioned experiencing financial stress relating to the cost-of-living. For many, the worry regarding the cost-of-living is constant, with no let-up, as highlighted by one Islander: **“financially worrying all the time. It's becoming more and more expensive to live”**. This worry is consistent across age, gender and cultural background of those who responded to the conversation. Due to increased living costs, many are working excessively to afford to live a **“healthy life”**.

“There is real poverty on the island and people don't realise”

Emphasising this point, one Islander said:

“The cost-of-living has an impact upon me. My family are all still back in Kenya, so I send all my money home. The value of the pound has a major impact upon me because I seem to be working twice as hard now”.

“Cheaper food is not the same quality but have to buy it anyway. you just buy processed food because it is the cheaper alternative”

Many we spoke to are struggling to afford the necessities. It is **“hard to live in Jersey, particularly for rent costs and food costs”**. There is a perceived lack of places to buy basic and cheap food and with the price of food in supermarkets increasing, a number of people we spoke to talked about how Islanders are struggling. The cost-of-living is not just causing worry but is also impacting Islanders' health. Many people are turning to **“poorer quality”** cheaper alternatives, often resulting in them consuming more processed junk food which will negatively affect their physical health.

In addition, many have said they are unable to afford the price of doctors and are therefore avoiding going for as long as possible, potentially worsening their health. One Islander told us a story of someone they knew who **“couldn’t afford the doctors”** because **“the cost of the doctors is too high”**. They added that the person **“had seen the doctor before but couldn’t afford to see another”** and sadly **“ended up passing away 10 days ago”**.

Islanders are not just concerned for themselves but also for others, for example, they are concerned for the young people of the Island, as they believe the issues are going to get worse.

In particular, young people are **“never going to afford to get on the property ladder”**. Housing worries were an issue highlighted by many respondents, stating rent was too expensive and they couldn’t afford suitable accommodation, often resulting in them staying in poor quality unhealthy housing, which is unsafe and expensive. Concerns were raised about the **“lack of protection to tenants”** and **“inadequate accommodation”** as highlighted by one Islander who suggests many Islanders experience **“unhealthy accommodation”** including: **“mould, damp, drafts, not enough hot water, insecure doors, abusive landlords, and discrimination”**.

“Unhealthy accommodation, unsafe, bad insulation, expensive”

To demonstrate the reality of the cost-of-living crisis we have included some direct quotes from Islanders:

- "We are all vulnerable - one pay-check away from destruction"
- “Often times I have to go without my medicine so I can afford to feed the children, pay rent and bills”
- “Working two jobs means that I sometimes miss out on meals and that I have little sleep”
- “An older Islander does not have enough money to afford heating. She was quoted as saying: You've got to go cold all the time”.

Indulging in “Unhealthy” Habits

A key theme within responses to the Conversation centred around common behaviours seen as unhealthy habits, including drugs, drinking and smoking. Further “unhealthy” habits identified were a lack of exercise and consuming unhealthy food.

Smoking, Drugs and Vaping

“Teenagers said drugs, drinking and nicotine are keeping them unhealthy”

A number of people we spoke to, or who completed postcards or the survey, revealed they smoked, whether this is occasionally or regularly. They were clearly aware of the health risks associated, and understood it is “**keeping them unhealthy**”. Interestingly, occasional smokers were more reluctant to quit, despite awareness of the health risks, whereas regular smokers often explained that they have either previously attempted to quit, or they want to quit in the future. It is important to note, that some Islanders who revealed they smoked believed it impacted their health negatively.

“I understand the health risks to go with smoking. But I am 75, I'm just going to carry on because I'm not interested because I feel fine”

Age differences were apparent. Older Islanders who smoked often expressed their desire to continue the behaviour despite these health concerns, with one older Islander suggesting “**the tax and the increased price for tobacco**” is negatively impacting his health, whereas younger smokers often expressed a desire to quit smoking due to the implications to their health. This is not the case for all young Islanders, as one young person explained:

“**Look, I'm super fit. I smoke the odd rollie. It's my decision. I understand what I'm doing is not great, but it's just one of those things**”.

Vaping was also discussed, as there has been a rise in the use of e-cigarettes in recent years, especially among young people. Some Islanders have raised their concerns around the lack of information on the long-term impacts of vaping and limited support for helping to quit vapes.

“Emphasis on not smoking. He walked past Lib and he said the 13/14-year-olds vaping is crazy”

A further unhealthy behaviour impacting health and wellbeing identified in the Conversation related to the consumption of drugs. While a few people were worried about drug misuse around the island and the poor support available for those addicted, some young people also admitted **“having a problem”** with drugs themselves. They asked for more resources for young people and activities to do so they could occupy themselves differently. This was compounded by some who highlighted drug use among middle-class professionals; with some mentioning **“drugs being an issue in workplaces and banks”**.

Finally, respondents have described concern about how many betting shops there are and the amount of gambling going on. Particularly, within the middle-class professional sector.

Alcohol

“Alcohol consumption is so high and features at many social events”

Through interviews with Islanders, it became clear that alcohol is a problem in Jersey and is seen as a leading negative factor, with one interview demonstrating this:

“Alcohol use is prolific in Jersey. Everybody seems to gravitate towards pubs and bars because that was the only thing to do. It is sort of a hidden problem amongst people about the amount of alcohol consumption, and drug misuse”.

Not only were Islanders concerned about the health implications associated with alcohol, but also the effects alcohol had on them and their behaviour, with one respondent suggesting **“going out drinking and then having severe anxiety in the**

morning after about what they might have done, what they might have said” is what negatively effects their health and wellbeing.

Cultural differences in relation to alcohol were seen; English-speaking respondents often suggested they needed to reduce their alcohol consumption; whereas Portuguese speakers were more likely to suggest **“alcohol is a good thing”**. Additionally, different ages see alcohol consumption differently. For example, young people are turning to alcohol due to **“boredom”** and having **“nothing else to do”**. They spoke about the prevalence of pubs around Jersey which normalises drinking as socially acceptable. Older Islanders were worried about how teenagers are constantly being pressured by social media, resulting in them taking drugs and drinking.

Lack of Physical Activity

Multiple Islanders considered how a “lack of exercise” negatively impacts their health and wellbeing. Reasons given for this lack of exercise include having no time, an inability or lack of facilities. For instance, interviews with the Life Skills group up at Highlands College revealed how a lack of facilities to support exercise in individuals with physical disabilities was impacting them. For example, one member of the group noted there is only one swimming pool with disabled access in the island that **“they could access”**. Additionally, they found physical activity is limited in terms of **“those structured physical activity opportunities”**.

“Expensive gym memberships mean I can’t afford to join a gym”

Gym memberships were regarded as too expensive for some, as highlighted by an older Islander who shared his frustrations about gym prices: **“I would love to join a gym, but they are not affordable at the moment”**. Additionally, **“exercise classes are becoming more expensive and unaffordable”**. This is a growing concern among a number of respondents, suggesting they are having to give up activities that they do for enjoyment and physical activity due to the cost.

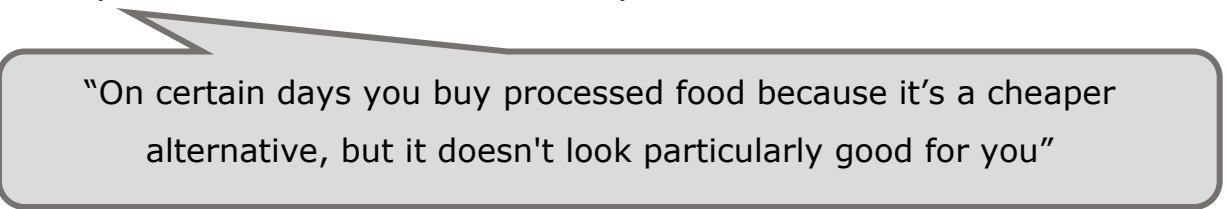
Time was another identified factor that limited exercise opportunities; **“a lack of time to exercise”**; one person we spoke to explained how they **“cannot cycle or walk to work due to a lack of facilities in their workplace”**, whilst another suggested a

“lack of sport-like activities designed for parents” is a barrier for a lot of Islanders, particular woman to stay fit and healthy.

Consuming Junk Food

Having an unbalanced diet with too much junk food and not enough healthy food was identified in the Conversation. Many stated they could not afford healthy food, so instead turn to more accessible and cheaper alternatives, often unhealthy, processed, junk and fast-food options, despite knowing the health implications. This is a common factor for many Islanders, but it is emphasised among those struggling financially. Clearly Islanders are aware of the importance of consuming healthy foods such as fruit and vegetables but need to prioritise their time and money for other important necessities such as working, paying the bills, and housing, often resulting in them consuming more “unhealthy” food.

Working patterns also impacted on diets, whether this is shift work, seasonal work, or longer working days. Some turn to easy and accessible foods which are often unhealthy options. As highlighted through an interview with an Islander at Friends of Africa who emphasised his **“diet had changed so massively (since moving to Jersey) and believes this has a real negative impact”**. Many also believed that healthy cultural foods are hard to find locally.



“On certain days you buy processed food because it’s a cheaper alternative, but it doesn't look particularly good for you”

Although many respondents reflected on their own personal relationship with food, views about the diets of others were also discussed. For example, suggesting consumption of junk food is related to a **“lack of knowledge regarding nutrition”** and calling for an increase in education about nutrition. Others believe the increased consumption of unhealthy food is because individuals are **“lazy”** and **“it is far too easy”**. However, irrespective of the cause of consuming unhealthy food, many have expressed a shared concern for Islanders who consume junk food, due to the increased prevalence of obesity locally, including **“worry for the increased number of obese children”**.

Personal Stressors

A key theme within responses to the question concerning negative impacts on health and wellbeing was stress. Stress is very individual and while the cost-of-living crisis is a common stressor, there are more individual stressors, or personal stressors, that are specific to certain individuals. This following section covers the common personal stressors of accessing healthcare, ill health, and work.

Accessing Healthcare

Accessing healthcare was raised often as a source of stress and dissatisfaction. This was both due to physical barriers like location of the hospital, lack of accessible parking, etc, and socio-economic barriers like affordability, language, etc. Many people are losing faith in the local healthcare system, resulting in many Islanders experiencing concern and stress when accessing healthcare services.

There were reports of services missing or being understaffed. Those who spoke about this explained it caused stress and worry. They explained having to access healthcare services outside of Jersey, making them harder to access and more expensive. A number of people we spoke to stated they were “**seeking healthcare in Southampton**”, others spoke about home countries in Europe and Africa.

Multiple Islanders discussed a lack of appropriate healthcare such as inaccessible dental services due to having only private providers on-island. An interview with one Islander by a member of the team revealed: “**limited access to good quality healthcare system**”. They revealed they complete necessary health checks and appointments “**when they are at home in Poland, as they have more complex tests and proper examinations available**”. Another example is the lack of support services for certain conditions that affect a large proportion of the population, like menopause. Many Islanders spoke about menopausal symptoms causing a lot of stress and discomfort and they said there were no services available to support them.

“Access to services, and long waiting lists. Couldn't access services and the type of support in a timely manner. People also fall between the gaps and that they made it worse”

Frustrations over the long waiting times when trying to access healthcare and mental health services were very common. In addition to the high fees, Islanders said they were unable to get same-day appointments and faced months-long waiting lists. Many respondents, in particular young people stated they have been on the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) waiting list for treatment for a while, and as a result, are really struggling with their health and wellbeing.

Not only were the waiting lists a cause for concern, but many of those we spoke to suggested that people often fall in between the gaps of support services. For example, we heard from one Islander who has issues with substance use and mental health **“but is being bounced between services and is falling through the gaps”**. They were passed onto Mental Health Services who said they needed to **“address his alcohol use”** but the Alcohol and Drugs Service said they needed to address their mental health issues first. Another example is from an Islander who shared they had **“almost been given the wrong treatment or wrong appointment at the hospital”**. They explained this was due to them **“being mixed up with someone else”**. These experiences highlight the difficulty for Islanders to receive proper health care when services are not joined up properly.

Some we spoke to were critical of the current healthcare system but remained hopeful they would see improvements when the new hospital is up and running. There were also members of the public who held more sceptical views, showing the diversity of opinion in our population.

III Health

The relationship between ill health and accessing healthcare was apparent in conversations. We spoke to a number of Islanders who revealed they access additional services to support their health for a variety of reasons, but disability was the most cited. Because services are difficult to access and are not joined up properly, these Islanders see their health deteriorate. This can be because of their condition, but they often stated that the stress was one of the biggest factors. Islanders showed awareness that physical health problems increase the risk of developing mental health problems and vice versa.

Others reported specific illnesses which negatively affect health and wellbeing, such as “**psychological distress**”, “**chronic pain**” and “**long covid**”. Cancer patients and survivors explained they struggled with finding work following treatment and feel isolated. People with disabilities³ spoke about feeling unsafe or uncomfortable in some social events and places around the Island. Because of this, they socialised less often and were more likely to feel socially isolated and lonely.

Work

As stated in the first section, maintaining a good “**work-life balance**” was considered a protective factor for physical and mental health by many. Some people enjoy going to work and can maintain a healthy work-life balance. Others, however, cannot maintain a good balance and struggle to cope and adapt to the pressures caused by work and the work environment.

“A balance between work and home life also assists with this however that balance is difficult to achieve.”

Many of those we spoke to worked extremely long hours, with one Islander saying they worked “**70 hours a week as a cleaner**”. Dissatisfaction with their work was often a contributing factor. Unsocial working hours, long shifts, night shifts, split shifts and seasonal work were listed as the main reason for work-related stress. One person we interviewed had just completed a “**long night shift**” and explained they experienced a lot of stress because of work, “**whether this was due to working too long hours or the work itself being stressful**”.

Many also expressed frustration due to low pay, unsupportive management, lack of resources and inflexible working conditions, the lack of support during ill health, and feeling pressurised to return to work when they are on sick leave.

Poor quality working conditions were raised, as highlighted by a construction worker who mentioned “**the dust in my workplace**” is one of the main negative impacts in their life. In addition to the negative effects of the physical work environment, the

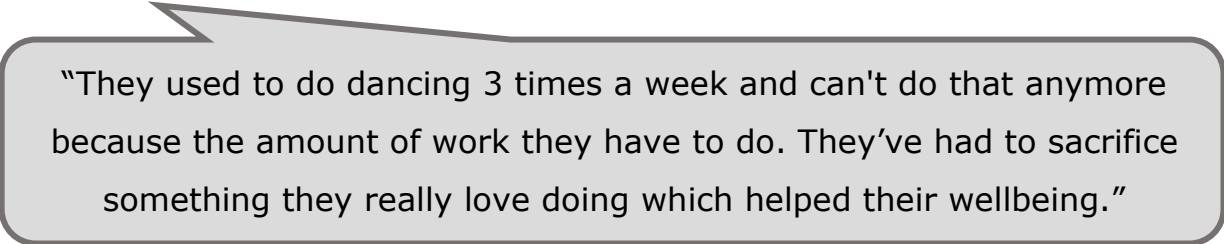
³ Throughout their responses, Islanders from all walks of life used both identity-first (disabled person) and person-first (person with disabilities) language. We have endeavoured to reflect that wherever possible.

social environment at work can also have a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing. While some people really enjoy the social aspect of working in an office or face to face, others mentioned they have experienced bullying and micro-aggressions while at work. Some also talked about feeling left out of the workplace entirely.

Another cause for concern was the lack of job security, with many people being laid off during the pandemic and because of the current financial situation. Others expressed feeling **“worried about being laid off”**, and the implications of being out of work, struggling to afford to live and poor mental health. Seasonal workers and businesses voiced deep frustration with the time it takes to receive **“work permits”**, which causes a lot of stress and can even lead to missed opportunities. This is further supported by an interview with an Islander who revealed that despite being unwell, **“they are still needing to work”** because **“they have no other option as they are still awaiting their residential documents”**.

Schoolwork also caused feelings of stress among students. The vast majority of children and young people we heard from explained they were overwhelmed with deadlines and homework. Many struggled with meeting deadlines, and this was affecting their health. One young Islander shared with us how they had to give up on their passion for dancing because of the increased workload at college.

It is clear from conversation with Islanders that many are struggling to maintain a work-life balance and have revealed that they lack the time to **“do whatever they enjoy because work is taking over too much of their time”**.



“They used to do dancing 3 times a week and can't do that anymore because the amount of work they have to do. They've had to sacrifice something they really love doing which helped their wellbeing.”

Loneliness and Social Isolation

Maintaining social connections and companionship was another key theme explored in Section 1. Like work-life balance, the lack of social connections can have negative effects on Islanders' health and wellbeing. As highlighted by one Islander: **“Not being able to spend time with family, friends and animals as often as I would like”** leads to feelings of disconnection and isolation. This was emphasised by Islanders

with family members living abroad, who suggested that living away from family and **“being separated by borders”** was significantly impacting their health and wellbeing. For example, one person wrote their **“family is back in Africa”** as one of their answers to what things had a negative impact on their health and wellbeing.

Feeling isolated and socially excluded was often mentioned alongside the lockdowns of the pandemic and the lack of support from the community and Government. Various Islanders felt as if they have no support and, if they have a limited social circle, no one to turn to. One Islander said: **“I don’t know where to turn to for support”**, reflecting the views of many others. Many expressed their need to speak with other people, to socialise and to express their emotions. Islanders were very aware of the negative impacts of bottling up feelings and emotions, but some said they struggled or had witnessed others struggling to talk about their mental health. This was especially prevalent in men⁴.

Television, Media and Social Media

“Social media has a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing”

Many stressed the negative effects of social media, the news, and other media. Social media was described as a constant source of stress in people’s lives, particularly for young people. Those who found social media stressful, said this was because it made them unhappy, overwhelmed and they spend too much time online. One Islander suggested they **“experienced a lot of social pressure for them to be part of the social world”** and found that difficult. Many interviews highlighted pressures on children and young people in relation to the internet and social media, as well as concerns that there is a lot of cyberbullying and dangerous things online.

Additionally, Islanders expressed the importance of avoiding the media and negative news, sometimes describing the news as scary and stressful. The news and the media are a source of worry and concern for many Islanders. Indeed, watching the news was considered harmful **“because it is always negative”**, with one Islander

⁴ Although we did not record any demographic data (age, sex, ethnicity, faith, etc), the conversations and entries for Jersey’s Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation showed Islanders were worried about men’s mental health.

suggesting “**media and cycles of bad news make it really difficult to take a step back**”. Agreeing with this, one Islander suggested “**the state of the planet and the news combined is becoming all too much**”.

Poor Quality Services

Some of our respondents were unsatisfied with the quality of services on the Island and explained this could have negative impacts on Islanders’ health and wellbeing. This discontent covered two areas, services provided by Government and on-Island facilities such as leisure facilities.

“The global news of impending doom can really impact on how you're feeling. Whether it's the cost-of-living, thinking about the future recession or an unstable future”

Public Services

We heard from Islanders that many public services such as Social Security and the Tax office are “**inaccessible and inconsistent**”, voicing concerns about services not being joined up and that people were falling through gaps in the system including low to middle-income earners, young people, families, seasonal workers, those in receipt of benefits and pensioners. For instance, one Islander said: “**The government [is] not seeing this as an issue, no help for middle earners that just scrape by**”. This was supported by another Islander who stated: “**young and old are suffering across Jersey because ‘thresholds’ for services are so high due to lack of funds**”. Older people told us they were unable to afford to live, having to go cold because they cannot afford to heat their homes. They mostly spoke about their pension “**not being enough**”, and benefits no longer covering their rent and other living costs. Another Islander highlighted the downfalls in the long-term incapacity allowance (LTIA), suggesting that now they “**can no longer afford to heat [their] home due to limited allowance [they] receive**”.

Overall, the need for the Government to improve the services it provides was a clear request from many respondents. As well as for services which serve most of the population, such as social security and mental health support, support for specific

groups, such as homeless people, was also considered in need of improvement according to those we spoke to.

Public Facilities

We heard about Islanders’ concerns regarding Jersey’s bus service, saying it is inadequate and needs enhancing and how **“irregular transport”** impacts health and wellbeing. Some areas on the Island are less accessible than others, and Islanders said the bus times and routes are poor. For Islanders who live in areas with limited bus routes, they can experience restrictions, especially if they have no other means of transport or cannot drive due to a condition. This is particularly an issue for younger Islanders as one respondent explained: **“the last bus home is at 7pm, my teenager can’t drive and therefore can’t go out because she can’t get the bus home”**.

“Bus times are poor. Access isn’t great to places in our Island”

Additionally, a lack of accessibility for certain services was highlighted. For Islanders with impairments or long-term health conditions, there are **“limited options for those safe social spaces where they can hang out and feel included”**. For example, **“there is only one swimming pool with disabled access in the island that I can... get to”** said one respondent. Another suggested **“there are so many resources around, but they just aren’t accessible enough”**. One Islander explained that they **“didn’t think there was an awful lot out there for people with learning difficulties to access where he felt like they fitted in”**.

“Look at the ratio of pubs compared to activities for young people, you can easily access them anywhere in the island. But what about places that young people can go with their mates?”

More generally, concerns were raised about the limited options for leisure and social activities. This issue is amplified for young people, who described a **“huge gap in the teenage market”**. It is believed there are not enough things to do for young people, in particular teenagers. Young people said:

“There are quite a few services aimed at children and then lots going on for over eighteens, but very few low-cost opportunities out there for the age group [13 to 18] that don't involve getting messed up with alcohol”.

Many felt that there was not enough being done on the Island to provide facilities and services for children, in particular activities that would allow them to be physically active, play and socialise. In addition, Islanders also believed there is nothing for young people to do, **“that aren't just about booze and food”**.

Additionally, when the weather is poor Islanders can feel **“quite isolated and trapped in their properties”** because there are no other options for them **“to go unless they can afford it”**. Overall, Islanders felt there were not enough recreational activities and leisure facilities. Some of our respondents also worried about the threat of **“losing our one and only cinema”** and the waterfront.

Environment and Pollution

When asked what things have a negative effect on your health and wellbeing, respondents also mentioned worries about the environment, including sustainability of the Island and climate change. As highlighted by one Islander: **“climate change all around the world was just not helping and making everything really, really difficult”**.

“Palm oil, plastic pollution and global warming [negatively contributes towards health and wellbeing]”

Islanders were concerned about the **“damage to environment”**, **“pollution”** and **“the fuel used due to the fumes”** and often mentioned stress and ill-health as side effects. One Islander disliked **“knowing that she's damaging the environment, that she's not getting any fresh air and exercise, and being stuck in traffic”**. In addition to the environmental impact of cars and traffic, another talked about **“noise pollution”** and **“noise from traffic”** affecting them negatively. There were also mentions of air pollution, one person suggesting **“St Helier is too polluted; this is impacting the air quality”**, whilst another discussed their belief about an increase in **“Chemtrails”**.

Concerns around the quality of the fresh produce, water, and air around the Island were also expressed, with “**chemical free water**” and “**chemical free air**” being difficult to find. Some respondents discussed the idea that the “**Government does not care about clean air and clean water**”. They shared their worry about “**poor farming practices**”, with “**farmers watering their produce with agricultural chemicals and nitrogen**”, “**famers leaving plastic in fields which toxifies the produce**”, “**farmers adding pesticides to our food**” and “**farmers applying chemical manures, which [pollute] the Islands drinking supply**”.



Section 3:

What Islanders told us the Government could do to improve their health and wellbeing



Section 3: What Islanders told us the Government could do to improve their health and wellbeing

Figure 6 below presents a conceptual model of the data, reflecting Islanders' views about what action the Government of Jersey can take to improve the health and wellbeing of Islanders. This combines all responses from Islanders, from all forms of data collection. Such as the conversations with colleagues, survey responses and responses received on postcards.

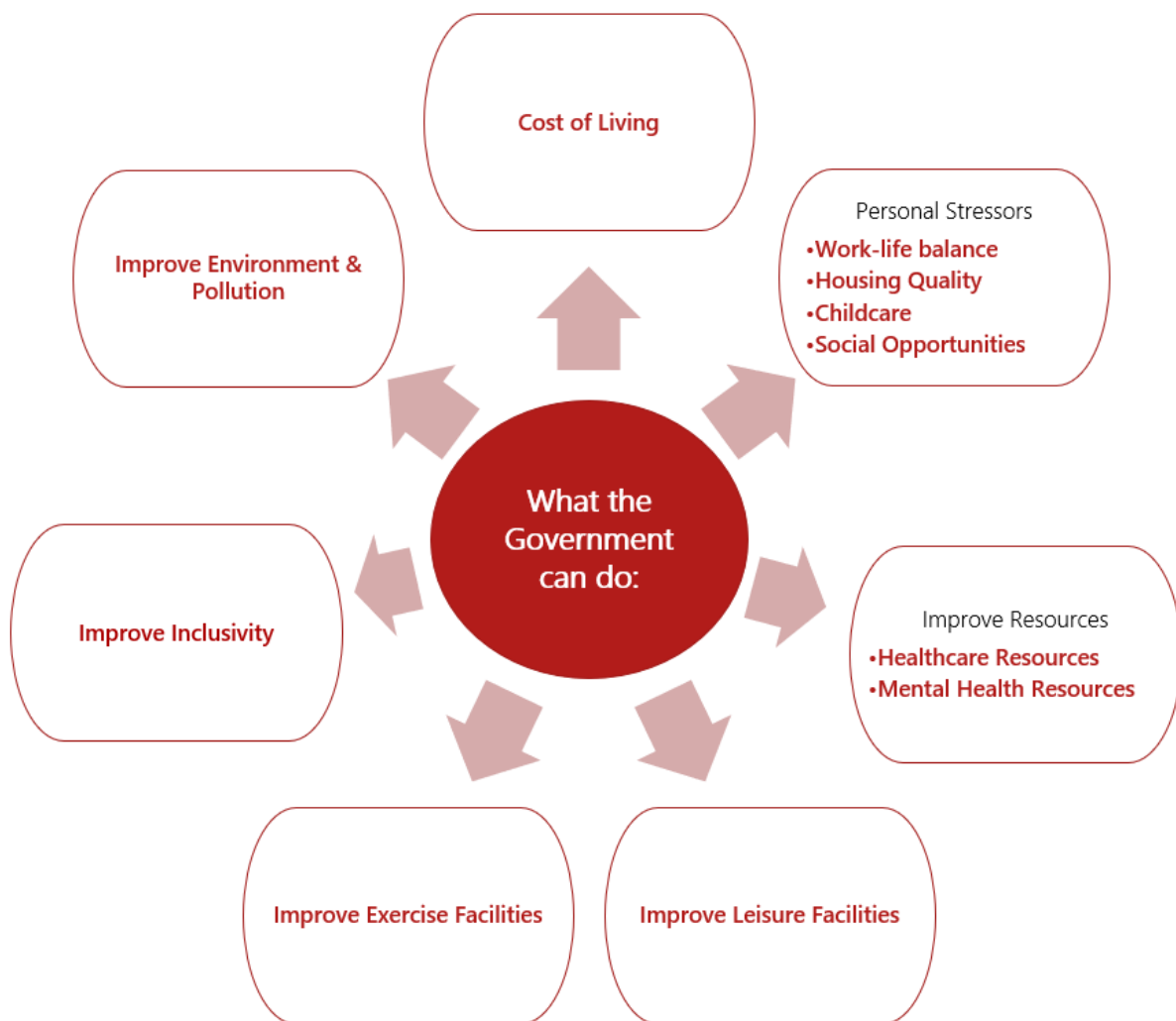


Figure 6: Conceptual model, reflecting Islanders view about what action the Government of Jersey can take to improve the health and wellbeing of Islanders.

Ideas and suggestions from Islanders

Tackling the Cost-of-living

Most of our respondents wanted Government to lessen the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. Overall, Islanders called for the Government of Jersey to **“take action against poverty”** and the **“cost-of-living crisis we are experiencing”**.

In addition, some highlighted their concern for those without their **“5 years residency and/or low-income families”**, as they are more likely to be **“experiencing inadequate housing, poor-quality food, housing costs and general financial pressure”**. One Islander was worried about how **“this must be extremely stressful and damaging to health and family life”**. Respondents discussed how all Islanders are struggling, not just those who meet the income support threshold but also the **“squeezed middle”**.

“Remove GST off food so we can afford to feed our families decent food”

One proposed solution is to reduce Income tax for most Islanders so **“Islanders have more disposable income”** and increase the income tax and social security payments for those who are higher earners. As highlighted by one Islander: **“lift the cap on social security so high earners pay their fair share instead of being subsidised by us”**. Other respondents proposed that the Government of Jersey support taxpayers around the current food crisis. To do this, those we talked to suggested removing GST from food and essential products to make food more affordable, as highlighted by one Islander **“we should not have to pay tax on simply surviving, and that is what GST on food is”**. This was further supported by suggestions that Government need to reduce the price of healthier food by reducing GST.

Other recommendations included reducing or even **“abolishing”** the cost of doctors as many Islanders are unable to afford their prices and therefore miss out on essential tests, check-ups and examinations. The Government of Jersey should **“offer some financial advice and support for low-income families”** whilst also

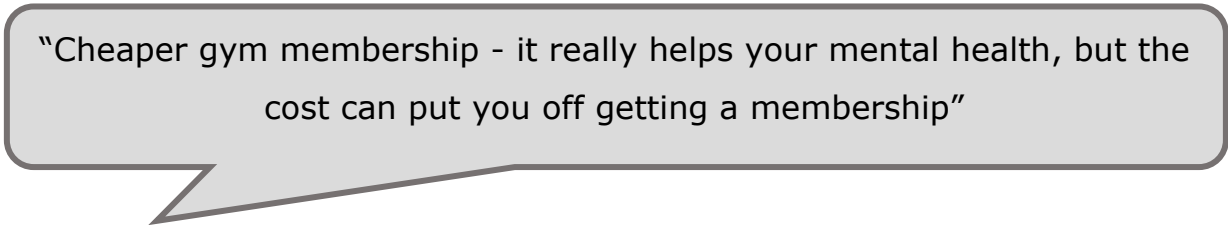
increasing their **“financial support for Islanders”**, such as the elderly by **“increasing pension payments”**.

Islanders wanted the Government of Jersey to consider **“cheaper rents and housing”** because it would **“relieve some of the stress [a] lot of people feel, which would contribute to better mental health and well-being”**. The Government could for instance **“lower the price of rent considerably”** and implement **“tighter restrictions on landlords”** to maintain standards and quality.

Many people talked about how they are struggling to afford to live, as discussed by one Islander who suggested the Government of Jersey need to **“address the housing issue especially for young people who would like to start a family but can’t”**. They also suggested this is an issue for people **“who have worked and saved but still can’t get [on] the ladder due to prices”**. They told us: **“Most of the people I’ve grown up with have left or are leaving Jersey due to the housing crisis”**. In addition, it was felt by respondents that the Government of Jersey needs to act, as a matter of urgency, to fix the housing crisis, tackling access to affordable housing and combatting unreasonable rents that make living in Jersey unaffordable.

Improve Exercise Facilities

Islanders have also conveyed the importance of improving the current provision of exercise facilities on the Island, particularly in the East of the Island, **“being in Gorey area, it is not easy to get out and about cycling”** and Government could improve activities, **“for example fitness or activities out on the eastern side of the island needs to be improved”**.



“Cheaper gym membership - it really helps your mental health, but the cost can put you off getting a membership”

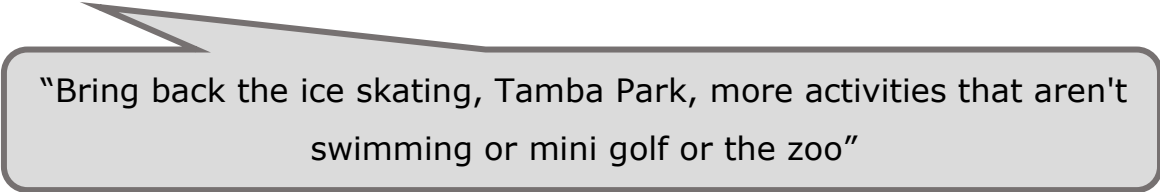
It was proposed that Government invest in sport centres and make gyms more accessible. To do this, respondents have suggested three things: more accessible resources, regulating the cost of gyms and introducing childcare facilities. For instance, the Government could subsidise **“accessible exercise classes to suit**

individuals with medical problems". Someone suggested it should **"open a public gym as private gyms are too expensive"**. Islanders have emphasised the importance of reducing the cost of sports and exercise facilities, with some suggesting a subsidy should be introduced by the Government of Jersey.

Parents and families asked for the Government to introduce childcare provisions for those parents that want to go to the gym. Some suggested it could **"provide more initiatives for activities that would increase knowledge on nutrition"**. One Islander wanted the Government of Jersey to **"take the opportunity to encourage young people to get out and about"** and do **"sports together collectively, at beaches, farms and forests"**. To do this, it was felt Government should be **"giving more families incentives to get out with their kids"**.

Improve Leisure Facilities

In the previous section, the lack of adequate leisure facilities and opportunities to socialise and build social connections was discussed as a negative impact on health and wellbeing, especially for young people. As such, there is a call for the Government to **"introduce more outdoor cheaper activities"** and **"more events in the Island for the community to come together and have fun"** and **"meet new people"**.



"Bring back the ice skating, Tamba Park, more activities that aren't swimming or mini golf or the zoo"

Many referred to what used to be available on the Island and were saddened by the fact that nothing replaced them. For instance, someone said: **"I used to love playing at Fort Regent and now there is nothing to replace this"**. Some suggested reducing the costs of activities to attract more people to the Island.

Overall, Islanders believe the Government of Jersey should **"encourage and support the development of good quality leisure and entertainment facilities"**, with many expressing their concern about having limited leisure facilities, such as only having **"one cinema, which is outdated and expensive"** and an **"old and dated bowling alley"**.

One respondent stated, **“there is pretty much no scope for being entertained”**, another extended this view by telling us:

“Jersey is starting to feel like an impoverished and second-class place to live. Property development companies are favoured over leisure facilities. If this is not addressed, the mental and physical health of the young people in Jersey will suffer and they will leave the island in droves”.

Many believe this a larger concern for younger people, suggesting there are limited leisure facilities for children and young people. Consequently, Islanders have proposed that the Government of Jersey invest in more suitable areas for children to play from the age of 10 onwards and providing more things for teenagers to do.

Improve Public Infrastructure

Reliable and efficient public infrastructure is essential to a happy society and can greatly improve people’s wellbeing. Public infrastructure refers to the facilities, systems, and structures that are developed, owned, and operated by the Government. This includes public services like water and waste management, energy, roads, transport and many more. Our respondents called for the Government of Jersey to improve the quality of public infrastructure, including public transport, healthcare, and mental health services.

Additionally, citing a **“lack of signposting”** the Government of Jersey needs to review signposting for services and support available to Islanders. Respondents highlighted information and resources that are lacking in the Island, mainly advice on **“how to stay healthy”** and how to support one’s own mental health and that of others. Some specifically asked for better access to **“online learning around children and trauma and mental health and how we can support them”**. With the mental health issues on the rise, many suggested Government could improve the school curriculum by adding modules on **“mental health”**, **“sex education”** and **“dietary skills”**. They said this could help **“ensure future generations understand the importance”** of these topics and empower them to make healthy informed choices.

Alongside requests for Government to be more explicit with its service offer, signposting and the information it provides, it was also requested that the Government listen and engage with Islanders more effectively.

Public transport

“Improve the public transport system to reduce our reliance on cars”

Islanders were frustrated with the current public transport system and called for the Government of Jersey to introduce a new more accessible public transport system. Islanders asked Government to **“improve the cycling infrastructure, as the current cycling routes in town feel unsafe”**. A number of respondents emphasised the importance of **“reducing traffic and creating safe routes to cycle across the Island so everyone can cycle safely”**. In addition to better cycling routes, Islanders requested Government **“incentivise greater bike use to reduce traffic”**, and **“subsidise electrical bikes”**.

Islanders also requested that the Government of Jersey **“improve car parks in St Helier for residents, to make it easier to get to other parts of the Island and reduce the stress and hassle of living in Town”**.

Healthcare Facilities:

Respondents were vocal about the need to improve healthcare facilities and infrastructure. Waiting times were one of the top priorities Islanders wanted the Government to address by reducing the waiting lists for doctor and hospital appointments. In addition, many we spoke to recommended Government increase the number of doctors and nurses in the hospital. This was reflected by one Islander saying:

“Staff are on their knees with a lack of resources, poor staffing and being asked to work even more. This is going to make them more stressed and unwell, making the staffing situation even worse, which will have a massive detrimental effect on patients too”.

Islanders hoped for access to self-referral capacity to be introduced into the healthcare system. Furthermore, they wanted access to specialists reinstated to support their health and wellbeing. For instance, respondents quoted the increasingly high number of skin cancers in Jersey and explained that more regular check-ups with dermatologists would be helpful. Some also asked for free annual full-body health checks for all Islanders, including access to a gynaecologist for women. Because of the lack of accessible and affordable dental care, many wished for subsidised dental care for adults.

“Lower cost of GP and dental costs for families”

Multiple respondents expressed their need for the Government to restore their trust in the healthcare infrastructure. As highlighted by an Islander:

“I actually feel very angry about the state of the Island’s healthcare system and feel we’ve spiralled into a position where you fear getting ill or having an accident as you have no confidence in the system to provide the appropriate care”.

Mental Health Facilities:

Islanders believed the current mental health provision could be greatly improved. For instance, one Islander said of the waiting lists for mental health services **“[they] are abysmal and need to change”** and another said, **“no one struggling should have to wait months for treatment”**.

“Improve mental health services by listening to users and making cultural changes”

Many creative and practical solutions were offered by respondents. One of them suggested there should be a place where **“those considering suicide can go and relax free of charge, grab a tea or coffee and play pool or use gym equipment”**. Another asked for **“emergency counselling for teenagers”** which does not require them to go through emergency services where long waiting times cannot provide an adequate response to an urgent mental health crisis.

Personal Stressors

Concerning personal stressors, Islanders proposed the Government introduce more flexible working measures to support health and wellbeing, along with their work-life balance. Many felt like they are not experiencing a positive and healthy work-life balance and believe the Government of Jersey could empower them to achieve this goal. Therefore, they wanted Government to encourage a flexible working culture, **“introducing flexible working measures, such as trial 4 day working week like the UK has”**. In addition, the Government of Jersey should **“encourage workplaces like schools to prioritise their staff’s health and wellbeing rather than pushing workload”** to maintain health and wellbeing.

Respondents believed Government should ensure **“conditions and terms of the job roles are in accordance with law and ensure pay in accordance with job undertaken”**. Multiple respondents also requested an increase in pay for all Islanders.

Moreover, Islanders raised concerns about the quality of accommodation on the Island and wanted the Government of Jersey to improve housing conditions, both public and private. They called for governmental action, by **“regulating landlords better”** to prevent them from **“increasing rent above the cost-of-living”**. Overall, Islanders supported the need for Government to improve **“all citizens’ housing conditions”**.

Many Islanders spoke about the lack of childcare support and socialising opportunities, highlighting the need for public services to better support families. The problem was intense for some, and worsened during school holidays with one Islander telling us: **“It keeps me awake at night worrying about childcare”**. They believed Government could invest into community support and reducing the cost of childcare facilities which in turn would substantially help parents. For instance, one parent asked for childcare facilities where they attend yoga classes because without them, they cannot access classes as often as they would like to.

Islanders also expressed a desire for more social opportunities, from young children to older adults. As described in the previous sections, social connections are essential to Islanders’ health and wellbeing, with one respondent explaining friends can help support young people to **“feel better about themselves”**.

A number of respondents called for Government to ensure there is a better offer in Jersey, starting with safe and free community spaces. For example, they suggested Government organise more community events around the Island. They wanted more accessible spaces where people could meet new people as well as meet up with friends and family. Furthermore, the cost-of-living crisis has increased the need for such spaces, with some revealing they socialise less due to the cost of **“going out”, “fuel” and “food”**.

“Since fuel prices have gone up, Islanders are less able to move around, less able to go to places around the island that he would have previously gone to, and that meant that he's disconnected from some of the social connections that he would normally have”

Environment and Pollution

Jersey's natural environment and green spaces were a very important protective factor for our Islanders. They suggested the Government of Jersey introduce more green spaces in St Helier for instance and start **“planting more trees and greenery”**. The Government of Jersey could **“make sure that the environment that we are living in is also really nice and clean, so there's no litter”**.

“A lot of dust comes into my home and my windows show pollution from outside”

Respondents called for the Government to invest **“more money into environmental protection”**, starting with more **“support schemes and opportunities for Islanders to actively engage with their environment”**. One Islander proposed the Government of Jersey **“generate its own electricity with windmills”** and hoped as a result the **“electric prices will go down for everyone”**. Many stressed the importance of protecting our wildlife and wanted to see more Islanders care for the Island's biodiversity. Lastly, they supported the need to improve the air quality and suggested Government could **“introduce air**

purification around town” as well as phase out **“agricultural chemicals”** and stop supporting **“chemical manures”**.

Accessibility, diversity and inclusion

The Islanders we engaged with insisted the Government of Jersey be more inclusive and bring more people from diverse backgrounds into the conversation. Respondents highlighted the need for Government employees to be better **“versed when interacting with neurodiverse people, with people with disabilities and with LGBT people and understanding their needs”**. To understand their needs, the Government needs to listen to those with lived experience from diverse backgrounds and communities. It was important for many of those who took part in our Conversation that this change start with attitudes, language, and behaviours on the ground.

Islanders explained they would benefit from Government promoting what community-level understanding of accessibility and inclusion look like or should look like. This was felt by Islanders from different backgrounds, such as ethnic minorities, people with impairments or long-term health conditions and the organisations who supported them. They want accessibility that ensures there are no barriers that prevent interaction with and access to public services and public health provisions.

Mental health support was often quoted as needing improvement. For instance, Islanders proposed the Government of Jersey help **“children with special needs and mental health”** through **“improvements in health services, improved services for children and reform the education system”**. Parents also asked for better support to care for a disabled child and more awareness of the avenues of support for parents of children with autism and neurodivergent conditions. It was emphasised that **“people with physical disabilities often receive more assistance than people with learning difficulties and this could be improved”**. This was mirrored by those with mental health conditions and all suggested Government could do more to help. However, it is important to note that Islanders also asked for more physical changes such as more accessible toilets, lifts, escalators, ramps, better sidewalks etc.

Inequalities were not restricted to underrepresented groups. Islanders from all walks of life felt a rise in inequality for everyone. For instance, a construction worker told us:

“We feel there are inequalities, because what is being done for us, we are workers and work all day, and then we don’t have any advantages. It just seems that whoever has a family or is pregnant gets a house. What about me? I don’t fall under any category. I struggle to provide for myself, but where I am all day getting the work done”.



Reflections and further information



Reflections

The previous sections of this report have set out the findings from Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation and the views of the many Islanders who engaged with this event. The aim of the Conversation was to consult Islanders to better understand the factors that protect and challenge their health, as well as what they think the Government of Jersey could do to support their health as part of the development of the Public Health Strategy. The following section considers the results from a public health perspective, looks at our reflections on what we heard and about the process and what we learnt. It then sets out what we intend to do to address the issues that were raised.

Reflections on what we heard

Having engaged with over 1,000 Islanders as part of this event, we had many very open and honest conversations about the factors that impact people's health and what could be done to support them.

It is important to note the context at the time we ran the event, since many of the discussions we had with the public reflected topical items, such as the cost-of-living crisis, the decisions around the new hospital, the war in Ukraine and the change in seasons. We held the bulk of in-person conversations on World Mental Health Day, which was reflected in some of the conversations we had and helped us better understand not only the physical health factors but also Islanders' thoughts on mental health.

The responses we received reflect a great depth of understanding among Islanders about what drives good and bad health, that it is not just the choices that people make but also the environment around them that can influence these choices. In public health terms, these are called "the wider determinants of health" and they reflect the conditions in which we are born, live, work and play. These social determinants are influenced by the distribution of power and resources, and they determine the extent to which different individuals have the physical, social and personal resources to identify and achieve goals, meet their own needs and deal with changes in their circumstances.

The responses to our questions highlighted poor housing, work conditions and the environment as having serious negative impact on people's health and wellbeing. People told us how important social connections were to them, how having a good support network helped them and what the impact of not having these social connections could be.

Another clear theme was the importance of healthy behaviours; with healthy diets, physical activity and avoiding unhealthy behaviours such as smoking, drinking and drug use, all of which were mentioned by Islanders.

The conversations were not always about the individuals themselves, but at times, were concerned about those around them. Islanders showed great empathy for one another; for example, highlighting how the cost of living was impacting on younger Islanders accessing the housing market or affording to run a household and maintain healthy diets. There was concern for how access to services was having an impact on other people's health and wellbeing and there was concern for how those recently arrived were fairing. This empathy reflects the social connections and the community feel that some people talked to us about too. This supports the bigger picture of this project; there are minor day-to-day factors which positively and negatively affect health and wellbeing, but every Islander is a part of a bigger community and society which can also have a major impact on health and wellbeing.

There was a great deal of consensus among Islanders when we spoke to them. This is reflected in the themes that emerged for each question. Many of these themes reflect protective factors which, when not available or correctly balanced, could have a negative impact on health and wellbeing and which are factors that Islanders think Government could address. For example, access to affordable healthy foods was seen as a protective factor, but when not available was a cause of obesity, with Islanders tending towards cheaper more unhealthy processed foods as a result. This then led many to suggest that Government should step in to support access to healthy food, whether through reducing the impact of the cost of living, lowering taxes or removing GST from food. The table below shows where these themes all crossed over in the answers for each question.

Factors supporting Islander's health	Factors that challenge Islanders' health	Islanders' views on what Government can do
Accessing healthcare and support services	Poor quality services	Improve resources for health and mental health care
Engaging in healthy behaviours	Engaging in unhealthy behaviours	Improve exercise facilities
Spending time outdoors, in nature	Environment and pollution	Improve environment
Social Connections and Companionship	Loneliness and social isolation	Improve inclusivity
Work/life balance	Personal stressors	Improve personal stressors
Engaging in self care	Television, media & social media	Improve leisure facilities
Ensuring safety and security	Cost of living	Improve cost of living

Table 1. Themes from formal qualitative analysis of the 'Big health and Wellbeing Conversation' Questions

Reflections about the process

The Conversation was a different approach to public consultation and not an approach taken before by the Public Health Directorate. We wanted to take the opportunity not only to reflect on what we learnt from the responses to the conversation themselves, but also to reflect on the process.

As mentioned previously, the aim of this event was to hear from Islanders about their health needs, so this information can support the development of the Public Health Strategy. Typically, government consultations on draft strategies have involved an online survey for the public available on the Government website. We recognised that this method wouldn't allow us to hear from the many of those we serve, especially from those communities who are under-represented in traditional surveys.

There were benefits from using the Public Health Directorate to conduct the conversations; firstly, we could use our knowledge of the Island and our community connections to access the under-represented groups we wanted to hear from. Secondly, encouraging members of the team to engage with those we serve provided an opportunity for the team to really understand how their work affects Islanders. Thirdly, by using our own team, we have kept the knowledge in-house (rather than using a third party) so we can continue to build on our understanding of Islanders' health in everything we do.

The response from the members of the team who spoke to Islanders during the event has been positive. There is a great deal of enthusiasm in the team for the work they do and a real understanding of the link between their daily work and the people they can help through doing it. The interactions and the issues we have heard have also allowed members of the team to bring a sense of reality to the conversations we have with our partner organisations. Being able to talk about the people they met and the issues described can be really powerful for colleagues and can support the data, helping them to explain the issues to others.

There was a sense of surprise at the willingness of Islanders to engage with us, to have very open and honest conversations and to take the time to explain their issues and answer our questions, for which we are very grateful. In some of the responses, it was clear that Islanders also appreciated the opportunity to talk to us,

as highlighted by an Islander: **“he has been coming back and forth to Jersey for 15 years and it is the first time he felt that anyone has been interested or listened”**. Islanders felt valued through this project and want this to continue but want to see change and actions put in place.

There are of course limitations to this approach, and we recognise that not every Islander was able to engage with the team during this event. With our team out on the streets of St Helier and in various locations around Jersey, some may have been unable to engage with us. For instance, those with worse health conditions may not have been able to access us and those with limited literacy or whose first language wasn't one of the languages that the surveys were translated into may not have been able to respond. Although we consciously visited several locations with harder to reach groups, such as Age Concern, schools and areas where our minority ethnic groups have connections, it is likely that there are Islanders who could not engage with us and thus whose voice is not included in our analysis.

Our emphasis on the importance of having a conversation and taking the time to really listen to what people were saying will also have limited our results to an extent. We chose not to collect demographic information from participants (other than what they wished to disclose as part of the conversation, or via the locations that the conversations took place) which will have limited the depth of analysis we were able to provide. We also chose not to record the individual conversations but instead asked our colleagues having the conversations to report back on what they heard and their reflections on this. We recognise that this use of second-hand data will have introduced an element of bias, embellishment or loss of detail but we wanted our team to focus on listening and engaging with the public and saw recording devices as a potential barrier to engagement for this event.

In the space of about 6 weeks, the Public Health Directorate organised the event, from conception of the idea to having the whole team briefed, time slots allocated, group sessions scheduled and the whole event advertised. The team in charge of communications set up a multi-channel campaign to engage Islanders and maximise participation, both at the in-person conversations and via the online conversation. The campaign included print and digital advertising and used traditional media, social media and Government internal communications. We

printed postcards with QR codes in four languages, sweatshirts to identify the team and had online surveys available (also in four languages). It was a great example of teamwork and what can be achieved by the team. We have learnt a vast amount about how to conduct such an event, the level of organisation required and the interactions with key partners to facilitate engagement with the groups we wished to hear from.

The analysis of the vast quantity of qualitative data we collected during the event should also be recognised. The transcripts of the recordings with colleagues, the postcard results, and the survey results all needed to be thematically analysed and condensed into a conceptual framework that allows us to tell the story of what we heard.

It was also important to us that we reported back quickly on what we heard and so this report has been compiled by a number of team members at pace to ensure we could report in a timely manner and allow those who contributed their voice to the Big Conversation to see how we have listened to what they had to say to us.

Before we set out to conduct the Conversation, we knew we would not be able to reach certain members of the public through our initial channels: talking to people on the street on 10 October, leaving bespoke postcards in key organisations and businesses and opening an online survey. We therefore decided to reach out to community leaders and gatekeepers to understand how we could engage with those groups that are usually underrepresented.

We identified multiple barriers to engagement: previous experiences of accessing public services and engaging with Government, physical barriers (such as mobility issues, access to transport), attitudinal barriers from public servants, language, communication and cultural barriers and finally, mistrust of anchor institutions and/or healthcare providers. To overcome these, we involved members of these groups in formulating a different approach that would enable us to gather as many diverse views as possible.

We assessed that face-to-face group sessions would be best, using available resources and existing initiatives to maximise the numbers of people we would speak with while making sure service users would be at ease and feel safe. Our

colleagues then travelled to the locations of these existing initiatives like the Salvation Army, Grace Trust and the Life Skills sessions at Highlands College. They used staff in these locations to help explain the purpose of the consultation (setting the context and ensuring service users made informed decisions about whether or not to participate) and collected feedback. Thanks to these sessions, we learnt a lot about engaging with under-served and under-represented groups which we will look to develop and use in future consultations.

For instance, Jersey Mencap invited our colleague to join an existing art class that occurs every week where members can come and engage with each other using art. In this session, they used a method they employ regularly to gather feedback from their members which is to roll out a large sheet of paper and invite everyone to draw, paint and write their thoughts on the paper. Our colleague gave them the three questions we were asking the public and Mencap organisers then reframed and explained the questions in more accessible ways for their members, some of whom are non-verbal and have learning disabilities. Our Public Health team member also interviewed the staff to make sure their views would be included in the Strategy. They then transcribed their findings into a format we could analyse anonymously along with the rest of the data we gathered.

We wanted to ensure that those who do not speak English as their first language would feel confident sharing their views. We knew that giving people the option to submit answers in other languages would be helpful to some, but we also needed to ensure we would be able to translate these responses accurately in good time. So, we identified translators for three additional languages: Portuguese, Polish and Romanian. We translated the postcards and online survey into these three languages, in addition to having colleagues with specific language skills and cultural ties travel to locations around the Island where they would be able to speak to Islanders in their native language. We observed a real willingness to speak to us as well as sentiments of mistrust towards public servants. This was recorded and we will be looking into doing more to regain the trust of all Islanders.

Multiple Islanders expressed their frustrations at the lack of government action following other consultations with the public, especially those that raised similar issues to those we were seeing in the responses. We clarified the purpose of this

consultation, which is to gather views and inform our next Public Health Strategy. This helped some Islanders feel valued and included, because despite no action plan being set out following the Conversation, their experiences and opinions would still be included in the Directorate's long-term plans.

Finally, this engagement process focused on qualitative data rather than quantitative. For instance, we did not collect any demographic data (age, sex, ethnicity etc) but aimed to focus on what people had to say. Usually, [Public Health intelligence reports](#) are data sets with statistics on how many people do what or have a condition or use a certain service. This is quantitative data, which we collect by asking questions like "How many?", "How often?" and "How much?" It can then be used for mathematical calculations and statistical analysis to make real-life decisions based on these mathematical derivations. Quantitative data has advantages, such as enabling detailed and in-depth research, reduction of personal bias and objectivity. However, analysts and decision-makers cannot make effective decisions based solely on this form of data as it is not descriptive and does not capture personal reasons, attitudes, and the wider picture of an individual's life-course.

On the other hand, qualitative data – such as that collected in this Conversation - offers the possibility of measuring the "quality" of data rather than just observing it, such as seeing how many people feel sad and how strong that feeling is, and maybe even the reasons behind that feeling. Qualitative data, sometimes referred to as categorical data, is non-numerical and deals with descriptions, feelings and thoughts. By relying on qualitative data in this consultation, we have been able to create a snapshot of how the population of Jersey is feeling at this particular moment in time, what their priorities are, what their biggest concerns are, and what do they think and want us to do about them. This has provided us with a much better understanding of our population and how the Public Health Strategy can be shaped and customised so that it has the widest positive impact possible.

On a separate note, the Conversation also had a positive impact on our Public Health colleagues. Our colleagues discovered attitudes and behaviours that surprised them, such as one colleague telling us they were surprised to see young people and children be so knowledgeable about food and nutrition. They compared

that to their own upbringing in Wales where such topics were never really discussed. Another colleague member told us they felt really grateful to be part of the in-person sessions because they got to connect better with their community and gained a greater understanding of the biggest challenges people faced. One colleague for instance told us:

“A thing that surprised me was how the members are facing daily challenges that can be as simple as getting from a point A to a point B, but they find happiness in the little things of their life.”

Public health colleagues were inspired by the work of organisations’ staff and the relationships they build with their members.

Another colleague drew personal lessons from their engagement with the different individuals and groups and said they would reflect on their own identity and biases. They were surprised for instance that **“a white male middle-aged man from government”** was welcomed in some spaces and people were receptive to the initiative and honestly engaged with it. Our public health colleague shared they **“felt disappointed in us, in the system”** and that the experience had made them want to do more initiatives like this with Government. They said the conversations underpinned the **“importance of getting out there and speaking to people and understanding what it's like from people's perspectives”**. Overall, the Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation was a really positive experience for the Public Health Directorate and a lot of lessons were learnt in the process that we hope to explore further. The feedback from our Islanders has only served to strengthen our resolve to seek out more diverse input and be more inclusive in our approaches.

How we'll build on what we learnt

The Conversation was a first step in establishing a long-term, two-way dialogue with Islanders of all ages and backgrounds on the topics that are most important to them. During this consultation, we learned that the wider determinants of health and support for healthy behaviours were of great importance to Islanders. We have integrated our reflections and lessons learnt from the Conversation into the aims and objectives of our new strategy, *Seizing the opportunity: A Population Health Strategy for Jersey 2023-27*, which will be lodged with the States Assembly in early 2023. The Conversation revealed two key themes in Islanders' thinking about health.

Firstly, it is clear that Islanders have a strong grasp of the impact of the wider determinants of health on their wellbeing. The ministerial plans for 2023 show that the Government of Jersey has already proposed a wide range of measures to address key topics such as housing and the costs of living. While the Public Health Directorate is not directly responsible for measures relating to the wider determinants of health, we will support other government departments through our Health in All Policies work. Health in All Policies (HiAP) is a collaborative approach to government policies that considers the health implications of the decisions made across all sectors and departments to improve the health of the population and reduce inequity.

Secondly, Islanders spoke frequently about the impact of healthy and unhealthy behaviours on their health, in particular diet but also with regards to alcohol, smoking and physical activity. Alcohol, smoking, poor diet and lack of physical activity contribute in a major way to the risk of developing non-communicable diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and some cancers. Analysis of ministerial plans tells us there is room to develop the Government of Jersey's response to respondents' request for additional support in promoting healthy behaviours. Some of this work would require additional funding. In order to build on Islanders' contributions, we will look at securing resources to translate our findings into tangible improvement. Our new strategy includes three sections that detail the Public Health Directorate's response to the concerns raised during the consultation.

Understand

To improve Islanders' health and wellbeing, we first need to understand it. Jersey is a unique place with unique opportunities and challenges. We need good quality, local data, to help us understand health on the Island and monitor the impact of our work. We want to understand physical, mental and social health in several different ways: health outcomes (e.g., illness), risks for poor health (e.g., smoking) and the aspects of people's lives that can protect or improve their health, like having enough money for the essentials, or being physically active. For instance, we will build on what we learned about effective engagement with diverse Islanders when we carry out qualitative research into the impact of COVID-19 in 2023, as part of the Covid Recovery and Insights work.

Improve

In our strategy *Seizing the opportunity*, we have developed a new strategic aim in response to the consultation:

“Establish an approach to secure a continual dialogue with islanders to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of new or existing services or policies, including the use of digital data capture.”

Improving prevention of ill health and the promotion of health and wellbeing is an opportunity to improve the lives of all Islanders. The “improve” section of the strategy details the Public Health Directorate's response to Islanders' concerns around unhealthy behaviours. It includes work on how we can help shape the environments in which we live, work and play. We want to shape these spaces so that making healthy choices is easier, while allowing Islanders to behave as they choose. For example, we have work planned to support individual behaviour change like reducing smoking.

Innovate

Improving the health of a whole population, in a way that doesn't place those with fewer resources at a disadvantage, needs innovation. This is why we plan to develop and build on learning from the Conversation when we innovate. Innovation is needed to address some of the long-standing global population health issues that are also seen in Jersey, such as obesity and poor mental health in young people. Three key pieces of innovation are planned in relation to: healthy

behaviours; developing preventative approaches for young people, using schools as a community hub; and making use of digital tools to support Islanders' health.

Further Information

The Jersey Health Profile 2022 is due to be published in early 2023, this will provide an up-to-date statistical compendium of all public health indicators for Jersey alongside national and international benchmarking.

We have also started work on the Jersey Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), bringing together a steering group of representatives from across the Government of Jersey and third sector to drive work which aims to understand the health needs of Islanders now and in the future.

In the meantime, a range of reports on the health of Islanders can be found on the [Public Health website](#) which is available on Gov.je in the departments section. Public Health currently sits under Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance. You can also find these by searching for 'Public Health reports' or 'Public Health department' on Gov.je.

Feedback

We would really welcome your feedback on this report, you can get in touch with us via email at publichealth@gov.je. Alternatively, you can visit us on Twitter @GovJersey and reference Jersey's Big Health and Wellbeing Conversation (BHWC) or call the Public Health Intelligence team at 01534 445792.

Write to us:

Public Health Directorate
Government of Jersey
PO Box 140
19-21 Broad Street
St Helier
Jersey
JE2 3RR

Require a different format?

This document can be made available in other formats, please contact us to request the appropriate format for you.

Credits

Photo credits:

Government of Jersey Media and Design Team

Symbol credits:

©WiStudio, codenamerahul, maartenvanderwerfcollection, Sketchify, pixabay, iconsy, badshameah, Icon54, Leremy Gan and MAxicons via Canva.com