

Life in the UK 2024

England



Creating the Life in the UK Index

Carnegie UK's Life in the UK wellbeing index measures collective wellbeing across the UK. It is based on what people in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland tell us about their lives.

The purpose of this index is to assist governments across the UK to focus their attention on the things that really matter to people, and to help us understand whether we are collectively living better or worse over time. The index will also help identify where progress is being made and the areas of our lives that require policy intervention.

The evidence for the 2024 index was collected via a 26-question survey of 6,774 respondents using [Ipsos' KnowledgePanel](#), a random probability survey panel with selection based on a random sample of UK households. The fieldwork was carried out between 9th and 15th May 2024, ahead of the announcement of the 2024 General Election.

This report provides an overview of findings based on the 4,418 respondents living in England. The overall collective wellbeing index score and the wellbeing domain scores have a value of between 0 and 100.

- The collective wellbeing scores, domain scores, and individual questions were all analysed to compare aspects of life for different groups of people in different parts of the UK.
- Regression analysis was used to help understand which demographic characteristics are most associated with both collective wellbeing overall, and with social, economic, environmental and democratic wellbeing specifically. We have used this analysis to structure the discussion of the demographic characteristics impacting on wellbeing throughout this report.

Carnegie UK and Ipsos designed, developed and analysed the Life in the UK index in partnership. More information on the methodology used to create the index and the full technical report are available [here](#).

Carnegie UK is committed to following the principles of the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) in the production of our Life in the UK index. We outline how we adhere to these principles in our [Voluntary Statement of Compliance](#).

Carnegie UK works to put wellbeing at the heart of decision making. This report provides an independent and authoritative overview of collective wellbeing in England in 2024. We hope it makes the case for better measures of social progress and highlights where policy intervention is urgently required.

Contents

Introduction: Life in the UK - England 2024	4
Collective Wellbeing in England 2024	5
Understanding what influences collective wellbeing	6
Collective wellbeing in England 2024	7
Social Wellbeing in England 2024	8
Economic Wellbeing in England 2024	12
Environmental Wellbeing in England 2024	16
Democratic Wellbeing in England 2024	20
Summary of Policy Recommendations	24
Collective Wellbeing: standout statistics overview	26
References	27
Appendix 1: Summary table of domain scores by key demographic characteristics	28
Acknowledgements	30



Introduction: Life in the UK - England 2024

The Life in the UK index - England now provides two years of robust evidence about what life is like for people across the country. Out of a possible score of 100, England's collective wellbeing in 2024 was just 61. This number is the same as the overall UK wellbeing score and within England remains unchanged since our inaugural publication of this index in 2023. 2024's index findings tell us that the collective wellbeing of people in England is stagnant. **This stasis in living standards is driven by persistent and entrenched inequality across the four core domains of social, economic, environmental and democratic wellbeing.** It is of particular concern, that despite 2024 being a landmark year for democracy, including a UK general election, it is our democratic wellbeing that once again attracted the lowest scores.

In nearly all areas that we measured, income inequality is the single biggest driver of poor wellbeing via its influence on factors such as household income, where people live and the types of housing they occupy. Our data also highlights the importance of key variables such as disability, area deprivation, housing tenure and age, all of which have a notable impact on people's wellbeing scores.

Despite these worrying insights, there is cause for hope. **A new UK government with a significant majority in Parliament and an ambitious policy agenda that includes plans to deliver a 'devolution revolution' represents an opportunity to improve the multiple and complex challenges that exist for people living in England's diverse communities.** The UK Government's devolution white paper¹, which proposes to turn this ambition into reality by further empowering England's twelve metro mayors, reorganising local government, and extending devolution to the whole of England, is significant. Ambitions must be balanced with sufficient opportunities for people within local communities to have their say on matters that are important to them and promote dialogue between people and decision makers.

The collective wellbeing scores in this report provide a baseline for UK Government ministers, metro mayors, and local government leaders to build on if they want to realise the ambition of bringing about a decade of national renewal. This must start with an improved approach to measuring what really matters to people. It must also include a commitment to focus on renewing our democracy, given the persistent crisis in democratic wellbeing. A different approach to governing is also urgently needed, with a shift towards de-centralisation of decision making and the empowerment of communities.

We would like to see local, regional and national governments in England build on this evidence as they seek to deliver meaningful reform and improvement in outcomes for people in communities across the country. At Carnegie UK we have worked for more than 100 years to help improve the wellbeing of people across the UK and Ireland. We believe in the power of evidence based public policy to improve people's lives. We hope that this report can provide inspiration and ideas for UK policy makers as we continue our efforts to ensure we can all live well together now and into the future.

Sarah Davidson
CEO, Carnegie UK



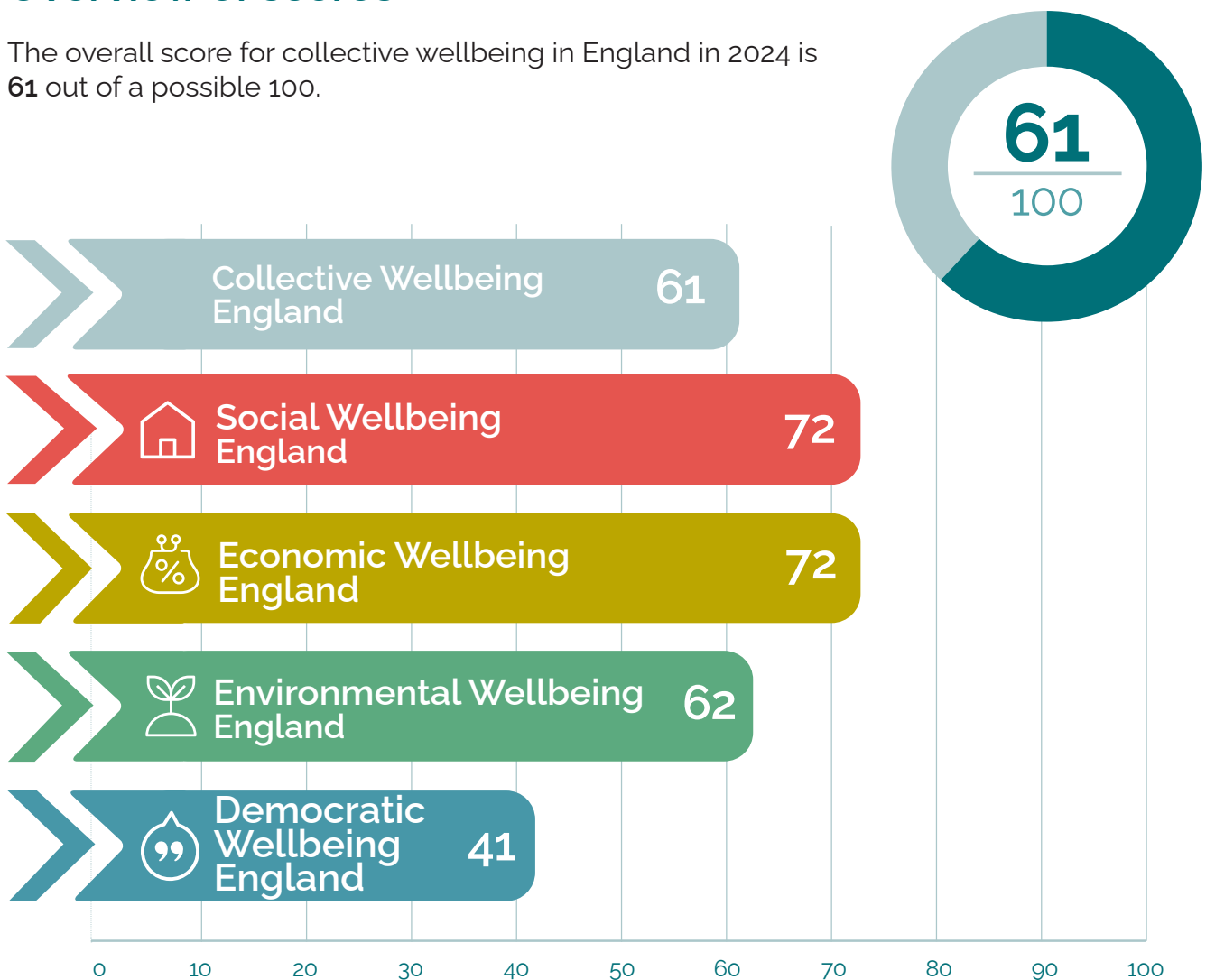
Collective wellbeing in England 2024

The story of Life in England in 2024 was much like the overall UK picture² - one of persistent inequality and wellbeing stagnation. The collective wellbeing scores for 2024 - largely unchanged from those reported in 2023³ - suggest a society struggling against a tide of inequality, poverty and democratic alienation.

This evidence underlines the scale of the challenge facing local, regional and national government in the months and years ahead. Following the General Election result in July 2024, where turnout was down 7.5% compared to the last election in 2019⁴, there is an urgent need for positive social change. **The change in UK government in 2024 presents an opportunity for new policies and ways of governing that deliver change for those who most need it and to tackle the multiple and systemic threats to collective wellbeing evidenced in the 2024 collective wellbeing scores.**

Overview of scores

The overall score for collective wellbeing in England in 2024 is **61** out of a possible 100.



Understanding what influences collective wellbeing in England

In 2024, there were marginal differences in the overall collective wellbeing scores across the different regions in England. For example, collective wellbeing is higher than average in the South West and South East of England, and these are the only regions where the collective wellbeing score is significantly higher than the overall England figure.

Further analysis of the index data tells us that people's experience of life in England varies substantially according to a range of important factors. This highlights the reality of inequality between people and within communities living in the different regions.

The following five factors stand out as particularly significant in predicting a lower or higher collective wellbeing score >

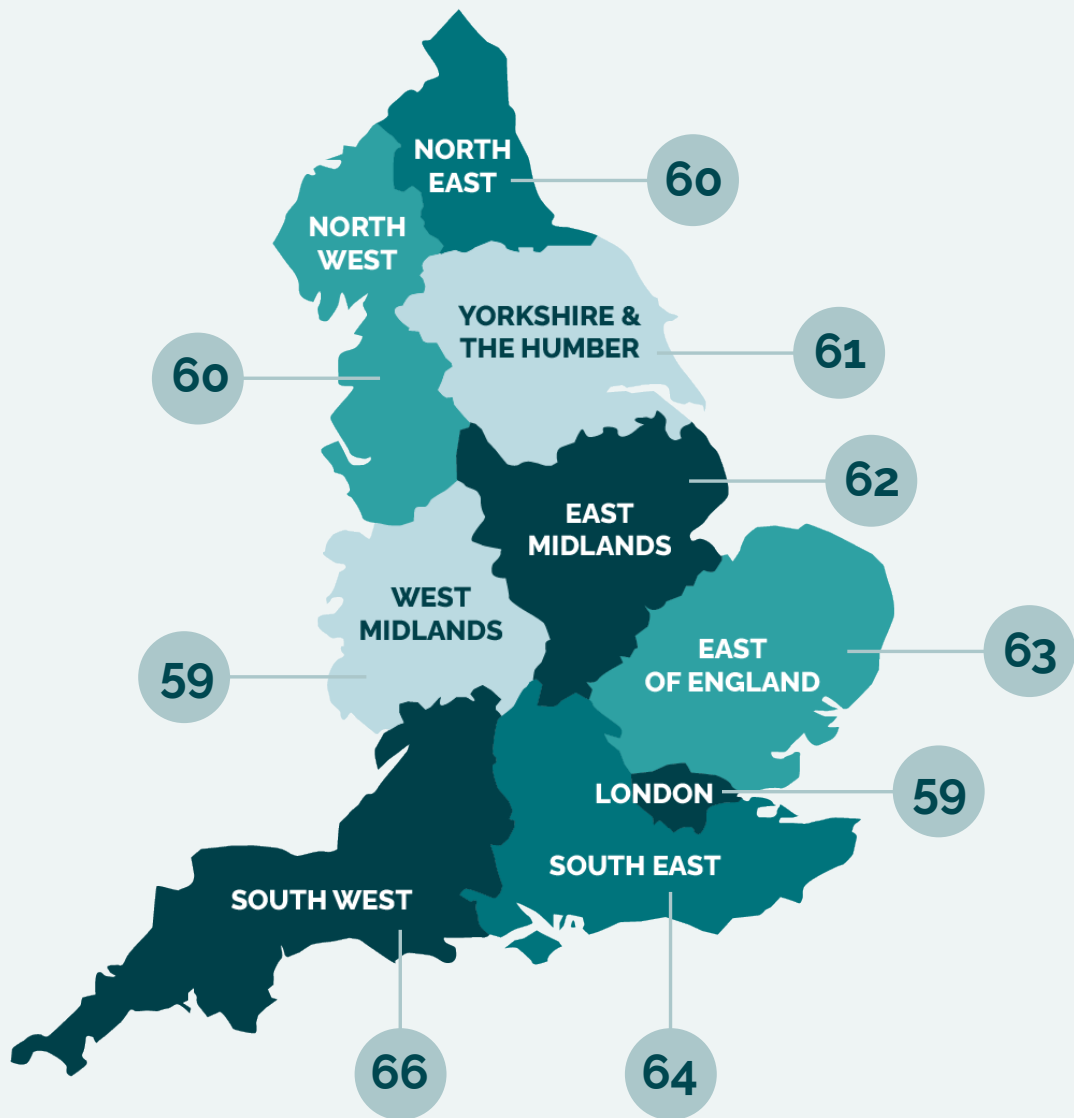
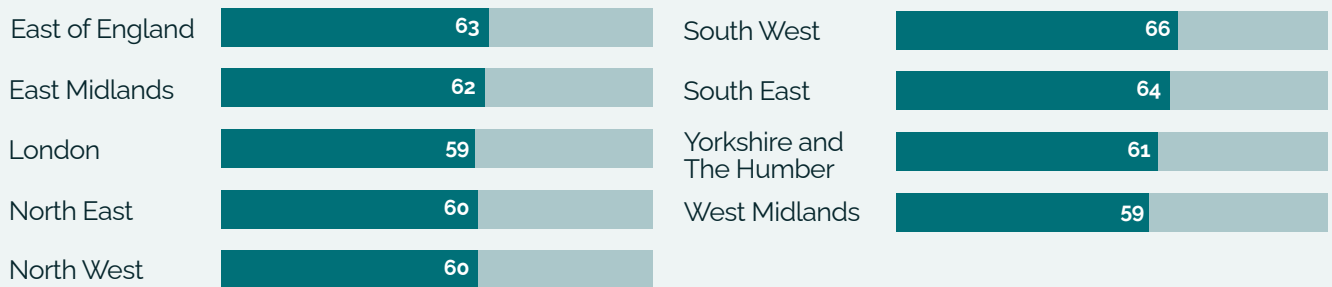
- **Income** – Household income is a particularly strong predictor of collective wellbeing in England. People with an annual household income of under £26,000 have an average collective wellbeing score of 56. This is lower than all other income groups and, notably, 12 points lower than people earning more than £100,000 (68) and nine points lower than people earning between £52,000 and £99,999 (65).
- **Disability** – People with a disability have an average collective wellbeing score of 55, which is nine points lower than for people without a disability (64).
- **Location** – Where people live, and the associated area deprivation, have a significant impact on collective wellbeing. People living in England's most deprived areas (IMD1*) have an average collective wellbeing score of 54, which is 13 points lower than people living in the most affluent areas (IMD5) (67). Collective wellbeing increases as area deprivation decreases.
- **Housing tenure** – Type and status of housing is another strong influence on collective wellbeing. People living in social housing have an average collective wellbeing score of 51, which is 13 points lower than for homeowners (64).
- **Age** – People aged 16 to 54 have an average collective wellbeing score of 59, which is six points lower than for people aged 55 and over (65).

The following are also notable influences on people's collective wellbeing >

- **Rural versus urban living** – People living in urban areas have lower collective wellbeing compared to people in rural areas (60 compared to 66).
- **Gender** – Women have an average collective wellbeing score of 61, two points less than that of men (63).
- **Region of England** – The lowest collective wellbeing scores are found amongst those living in London (59), the West Midlands (59), the North East (60), and the North West of England (60).
- **Ethnicity** – People from Ethnic minorities have a collective wellbeing score six points lower than people from a White British background (56 compared to 62).

* The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures relative deprivation across the UK. Areas are ranked from the most deprived area (rank 1) to the least deprived area (rank 5).

Collective wellbeing scores by region in England*



* Base sizes as follows: England (4418), South West (507), South East (670), East Midlands (409), West Midlands (444), North West England (569), Yorkshire and the Humber (429), London (667), North East (209), East of England (514).



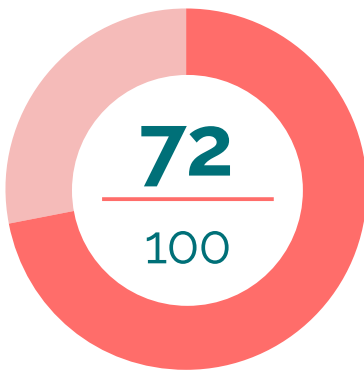
Social wellbeing in England in 2024

We all have the support and services we need to thrive.



100

1-5, 8-11, 13 & 14 via stairs
↑ Way out
↑ 1 to 5, 8 to 12 level access
↑ 13 & 14 via lift from platforms 9/9 & 10



England scores 72 out of a possible 100 for social wellbeing.

Social wellbeing is about everyone being able to achieve their potential and contribute to society because they have their basic needs met. Our basic needs include having access to health and social care, education, housing, transport, digital resources and childcare.

To determine trends in social wellbeing in England, we asked questions about access to public services, community relationships, safety and community cohesion, and self-reported health and mental health.

The groups that were most likely to experience high levels of social wellbeing in England in 2024 are >

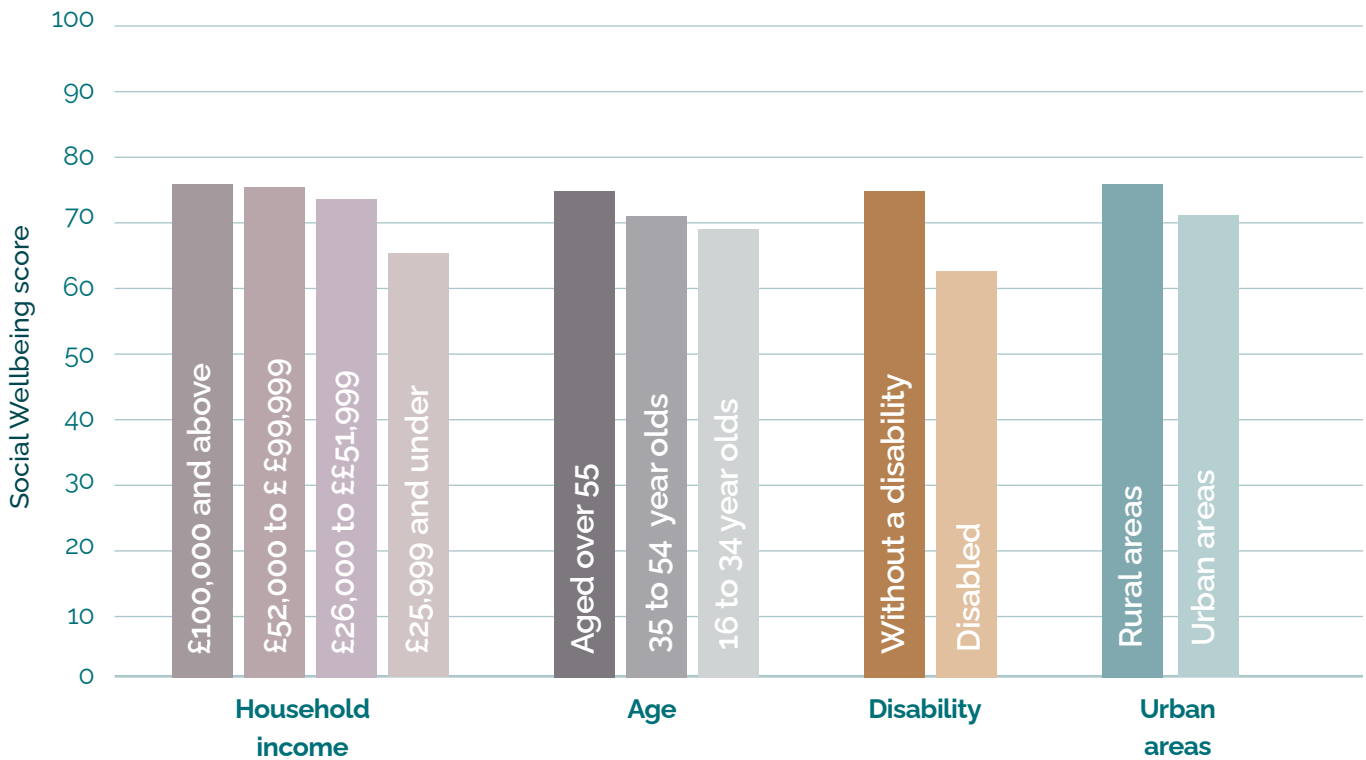
- **People with an annual household income above £100,000**, who have an average social wellbeing score of 77. This is 11 points higher than those with the lowest household income (66 for people earning up to £25,999).
- **People aged over 55**, who have a social wellbeing score of 75. This is seven points higher than the social wellbeing score of 16 to 34 year-olds (68).
- **People who live in South West and South East England**, who have a social wellbeing score of 77 and 74 respectively. This is higher than London and the West Midlands (each scoring 69) and than North East England (70).

The groups that were most likely to experience low levels of social wellbeing in England in 2024 are >

- **Disabled people**, with a social wellbeing score of 62, 13 points lower than the average score of people without a disability (75).
- **People living in social housing**, who have a social wellbeing score of 61. This is 13 points lower than the score of homeowners (74).
- **People living in the UK's most deprived areas (IMD1)**, who have a social wellbeing score of 65. This is 11 points lower than the score of people living in the most affluent areas (IMD5) (76).
- **People living in urban areas**, with a social wellbeing score of 71, six points lower than those living in rural areas (77).
- **Women**, who have a social wellbeing score of 70, four points lower than the score for men (74).
- **Ethnic minorities**, who have an average social wellbeing score of 66, seven points lower compared with those from a White British background (73).

These findings are consistent with the 2023 Life in the UK index scores for England.

People most likely to experience high and low levels of social wellbeing in England



Social wellbeing - standout statistics

- **44%** say they have experienced discrimination over the past year. This is a three-point increase on 2023 (41%).
- **31%** say they feel unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.
- **17%** say they don't have anyone to rely on in their neighbourhood.



Carnegie UK observations

Meaningful social participation requires people to have accessible opportunities and networks, particularly important for more vulnerable groups whose wellbeing is at risk due to isolation or social exclusion⁶.

It is therefore concerning to see evidence of a rise in experiences of discrimination reported in the 2024 index scores. It is notable too that Carnegie UK's fieldwork was undertaken before the riots in July and August, when approximately 29 anti-immigration demonstrations took place across multiple towns and cities in England (as well as in other parts of the UK). Many of these riots were violent, with attacks on mosques and hotels housing asylum seekers⁷.

In May 2024, just under half of people living in England (44%) said they had experienced discrimination in the last year, a three-point increase from 2023. These figures rise substantially for ethnic minority groups, with 68% reporting that they have experienced discrimination in the last year, compared to 40% of White British people. Research into the impact of the summer riots on social cohesion, segregation, and racism indicates that discrimination has been further exacerbated since these events⁸.

Community safety is also a significant issue to be addressed. Nearly one third of people feel unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, with 43% of women reporting feeling unsafe compared to 18% of men.

Wellbeing cannot flourish when there is inequality between people and communities. Evidence tells us that facilitating conversations and interactions between diverse communities, sectors and professions promotes relationships, tolerance and understanding⁹. However, the differences in wellbeing scores based on protected characteristics such as ethnicity and age highlight that there is still a long way to go to make equality a reality.



Economic wellbeing in England in 2024

We all have a decent minimum living standard.



100



England scores 72 out of a possible 100 for economic wellbeing.

Economic wellbeing means that everyone has a decent minimum living standard and can absorb financial shocks. This includes access to a decent income, affordability, financial resilience, job opportunities and skills.

To determine trends in economic wellbeing in England, we asked questions about skills and job availability, and the affordability of essential items like food and fuel.

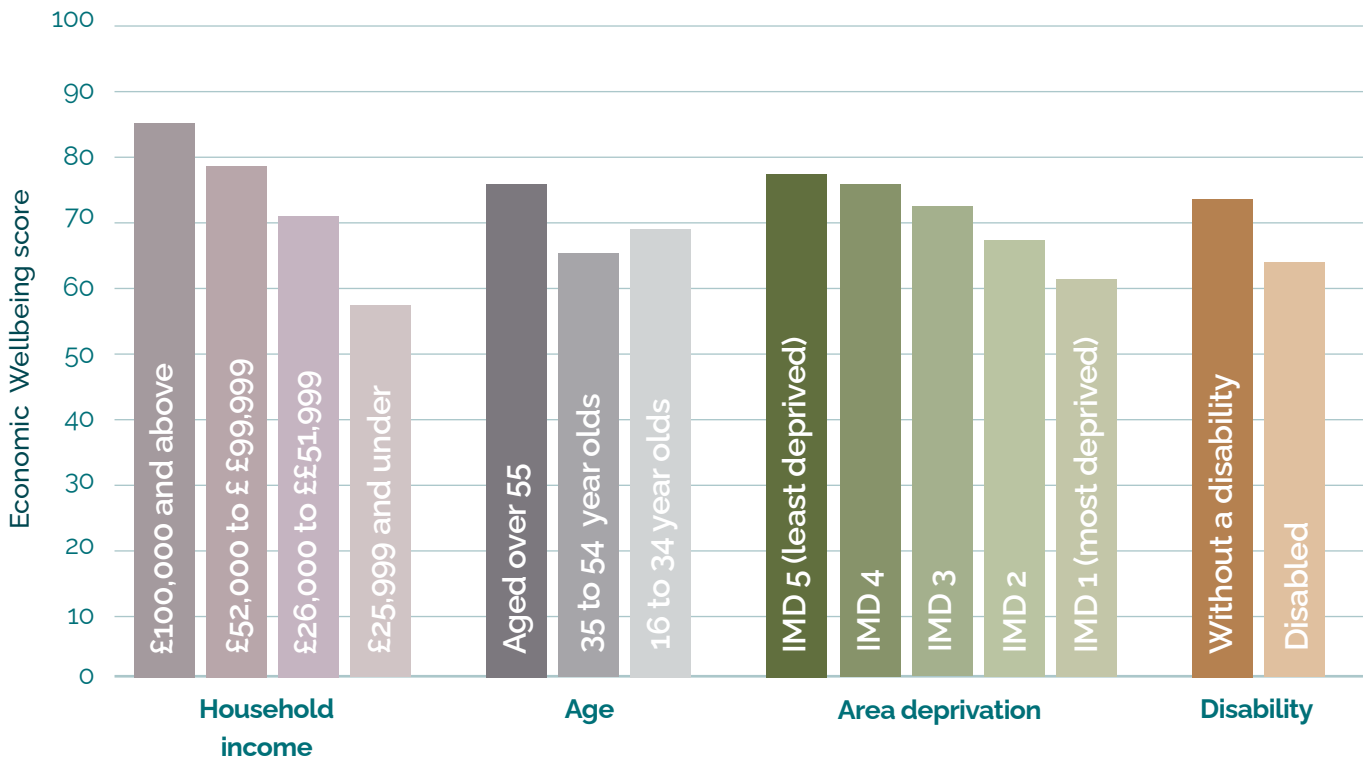
The groups that were most likely to experience high levels of economic wellbeing in England in 2024 are >

- **People with an annual household income above £100,000**, who have an average economic wellbeing score of 85. This is a 26-point difference compared to those with the lowest household income (59 for people earning up to £25,999). This indicates a more pronounced relationship between income band and overall economic wellbeing than was seen in 2023 when the gap was 22 between the two groups.
- **People aged over 55**, who have an average economic wellbeing score of 77. Those aged 16 to 34, on the other hand, have an average economic wellbeing score of 69, which is eight points lower than for people aged 55 and over.
- **Men**, with an average economic wellbeing score of 73, three points higher than women (70).

The groups that were most likely to experience low levels of economic wellbeing in England in 2024 are >

- **People living in social housing**, who have an economic wellbeing score of 53. This is 23 points lower than the score for homeowners (76).
- **Larger families**. Having children is a strong predictor of lower economic wellbeing. People with three or more children under the age of 15 in the household have an average economic wellbeing score of 59. This is 15 points lower than people with no children (74), and eight points lower than people with two children or one child (67).
- **Disabled people**, with an economic wellbeing score of 63. This is 11 points lower than the average score of people without a disability (74).
- **People living in the UK's most deprived areas**, (IMD1), who have an economic wellbeing score of 62. This is 16 points lower than the score of people living in the most affluent areas (IMD5) (78).

People most likely to experience high and low levels of economic wellbeing in England



Economic wellbeing - standout statistics

- **28%** can't afford an unexpected expense of £850.
- **26%** are dissatisfied with the job opportunities in their local area. Dissatisfaction has increased by four percentage points (from 22% dissatisfied in 2023 to 26% in 2024).
- **23%** can't afford to go on a week's annual holiday away from home.
- **13%** can't afford to keep their home adequately warm, a four-point improvement from experiences reported in 2023 (17%).
- **11%** can't afford to socialise with friends or family outside of the home once a month if desired.





Carnegie UK observations

The 2024 economic wellbeing scores demonstrate that the impact of rising living costs is not a short-term problem, but rather a long-term, structural emergency influencing multiple aspects of people's lives¹⁰.

High living costs, combined with limited access to local job opportunities and a lack of affordable housing, are keeping people in poverty¹¹. They are hindering the sense of control and agency people have over their own lives and putting pressure on relationships.

The cost of poverty goes beyond the hardship experienced by people living in low-income households. It has impacts across society, including on the economy through reduced employment¹² and on public services, as people tackle the symptoms and consequences of poverty on their personal wellbeing, like poor physical and mental health¹³.

We know that people need to have their basic needs met before they can improve other aspects of their wellbeing. But 28% of people in England can't afford an unexpected expense of £850, and 13% can't afford to keep their home warm enough. Additionally, 23% report that they can't afford to go on a week's annual holiday, and 11% can't afford to socialise with friends or family outside the home once a month.

This data suggests that people are focusing on the essentials, with holidays and socialising outside the home no longer feasible for many. This requires urgent attention, because relationships and social connectedness are significant enablers of collective wellbeing. The reality that having children is a predictor of low economic wellbeing also indicates that familial relationships are coming at a cost to the overall wellbeing of parents and their children¹⁴.

In future Life in the UK index scores, we will see if the commitments made in the UK Government's Get Britain Working White Paper¹⁵ - published in November 2024 as part of the UK Government's Growth agenda - positively impact economic wellbeing over time. The White Paper includes plans for significant reforms to tackle the root causes behind why people are not working, including joining up support based on the specific needs of people and where they live, and empowering Mayors and local authorities to take a more integrative approach to health and skills support.

However, with Carnegie UK's evidence telling us that 26% of people are dissatisfied with the job opportunities in their local area (a four-point increase from 2023), these plans must be matched with appropriate attention to the availability and quality of jobs, and the needs of those unemployed for other reasons.

Growth and productivity are only useful wellbeing goals if they support and enable a range of wellbeing outcomes for all. The UK Government's Growth agenda¹⁶ must acknowledge that pursuing economic growth alone will not achieve collective wellbeing for all. What is more, as the UK Government finalises its Public Spending Audit¹⁷, it must back its policy ambitions with sufficient financial resource to see meaningful changes in economic wellbeing.



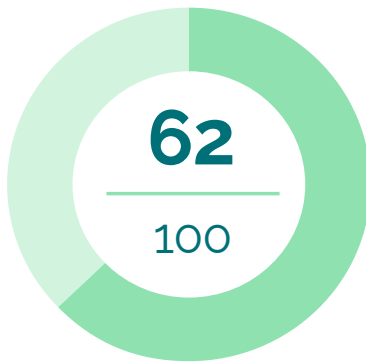
Environmental wellbeing in England in 2024

We all live within the planet's natural resources.



100

England scores 62 out of a possible 100 for environmental wellbeing.



Environmental wellbeing means that everyone has access to green and blue spaces, and that collectively we live within the planet's natural resources, protecting the environment for future generations.

To determine trends in environmental wellbeing in England, we asked questions about litter, noise and air pollution, as well as access to and the quality of local parks, rivers and other green and blue spaces. We also asked about levels of satisfaction with efforts to preserve the environment.

The people most likely to experience high levels of environmental wellbeing in England in 2024 are >

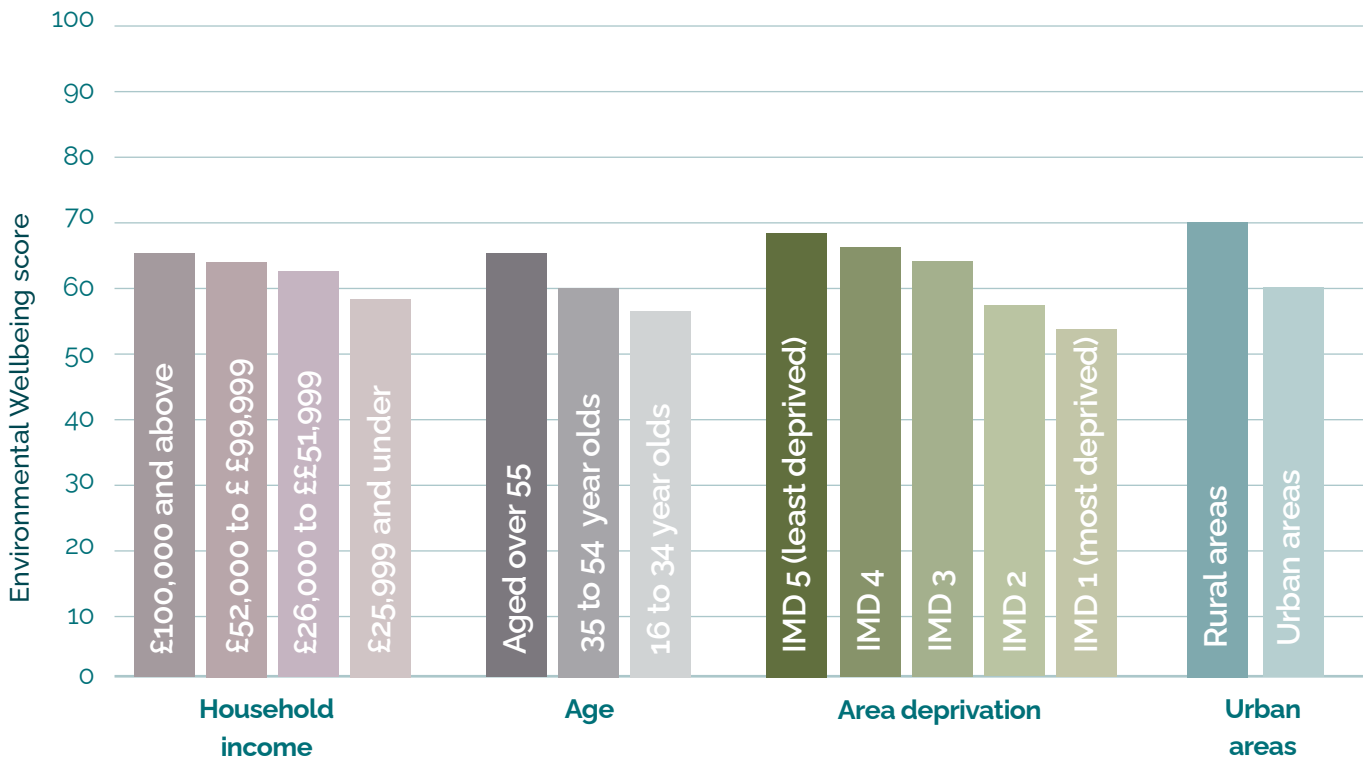
- **People living in the most affluent areas (IMD5)**, who have an environmental wellbeing score of 68. This is 15 points higher than the score of people living in the UK's most deprived areas (IMD1) (53). Broadly speaking, the less deprived the area someone lives in, the higher their environmental wellbeing score.
- **Older people.** People aged 55 or over have an environmental wellbeing score of 66, eight points higher than the score of 16 to 34 year-olds (58).
- **People with an annual household income above £100,000**, who have an average environmental wellbeing score of 64. This is six points higher than those with the lowest household incomes (58 for people with a household income below £26,000).

The people most likely to experience low levels of environmental wellbeing in England in 2024 are >

- **People living in London**, who have an environmental wellbeing score of 54 and the lowest score of all the regions.
- **People living in urban areas**, who have an environmental wellbeing score of 60. This is ten points lower than the average score of those living in rural areas (70).
- **Disabled people**, with an environmental wellbeing score of 58, five points lower than the average score of people without a disability (63).

There were no significant differences in environmental wellbeing based on gender, ethnicity, housing tenure or the number of children in the household.

People most likely to experience high and low levels of environmental wellbeing in England



 Environmental wellbeing - standout statistics

- Most people experience issues with litter (**84%**), noise (**64%**) and air quality (**55%**) in their local neighbourhood.
- **44%** are dissatisfied with current efforts to preserve the environment.
- **13%** are dissatisfied with the quality of the nearest local public, green or open space.



Carnegie UK observations

We are currently not living within the planet's natural resources and climate change is already affecting communities across England. Not adapting how we live and work poses significant threats to wellbeing that will devastate the health and biodiversity of communities¹⁸. As severe flooding, for example, becomes more common, the bacteria in flood water poses a growing risk to human health¹⁹. In addition, extreme weather accounts for around one third of all food price inflation in the UK²⁰.

The 2024 index data suggests that the threat of the climate emergency is being observed and experienced, and environmental wellbeing continues to suffer – with 44% of people again reporting that they are dissatisfied with current efforts to preserve the environment.

The evidence indicates a clear relationship between factors such as where you live and how much you earn, and overall levels of environmental wellbeing. As observed in the other domains, it is those living in the most deprived areas on the lowest incomes, and the younger age groups who report lower levels of wellbeing in this respect.

It is also notable that people living in London have a significantly lower environmental wellbeing score than the other areas in England. The disproportionate exposure to pollutants and noise and inadequate access to green and blue spaces like parks, woodlands and rivers – environmental injustice – is a threat to collective wellbeing. It further entrenches inequality between people and communities in England.

Living in an urban area, living in a more deprived area, or having a disability are associated with lower environmental wellbeing scores. The ongoing environmental crisis doesn't affect everyone equally. **The intersection between environmental justice and social justice demands that we advocate much more clearly for targeted action for people and communities that are and will be most affected by the impacts of climate change.**



Democratic wellbeing in England in 2024

We all have a voice in decisions that affect us.



100



England scores 41 out of a possible 100 for democratic wellbeing.

Democratic wellbeing is about everyone having a voice in decisions made that affect them. This means having local and national leaders who support participation, foster trust and encourage diversity.

To understand democratic wellbeing in England in 2024, we asked questions about levels of trust in local, regional and national government(s), perceptions of personal ability to influence decisions, and experiences of discrimination.

While markedly low across the board, the groups most likely to experience high levels of democratic wellbeing in England in 2024 are >

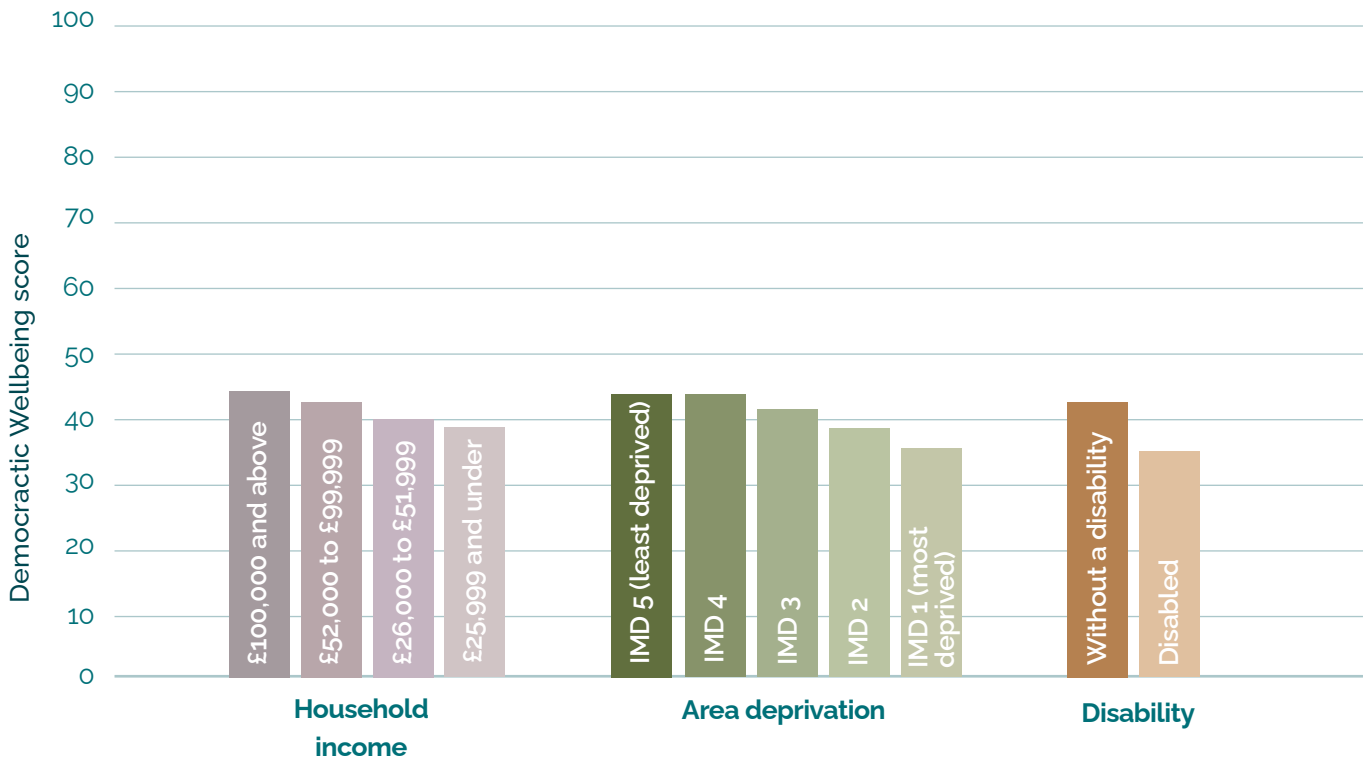
- **People living in more affluent areas** (IMD4 and IMD5), with a democratic wellbeing score of 43. This is six points higher than the score of people living in the UK's most deprived areas (IMD1) (37).
- **People with an annual household income above £100,000**, who have an average democratic wellbeing score of 45. This is six points higher than those with the lowest household income (39 for people earning up to £25,999).


The people most likely to experience low levels of democratic wellbeing in England in 2024 are >

- **Disabled people**, with a democratic wellbeing score of 36, six points lower than the score of people without a disability (42).
- **People living in North West England** (38) and **the West Midlands** (37), who have lower democratic wellbeing scores than the average for people living in England (41).

There were no significant differences in democratic wellbeing in England according to gender, age, ethnicity, housing tenure, urbanity or the presence of children in the household.

People most likely to experience high and low levels of democratic wellbeing in England



 Democratic wellbeing - standout statistics

- **72%** feel that they cannot influence decisions affecting the UK as a whole.
- **55%** feel that they are unable to influence decisions at a local level.
- **52%** have low levels of trust in the UK Government.
- **50%** have low levels of trust in Members of Parliament.
- **34%** have low levels of trust in news media, a four-point improvement from low trust levels reported in 2023 (38%).
- **27%** have low levels of trust in local councils, a two-point increase in distrust compared to 2023 (25%).
- **17%** have low levels of trust in the police, a two-point improvement from experiences reported in 2023 (19%).





Carnegie UK observations

Wellbeing cannot be 'done to' people: it must be done by and with them. Giving people voice and choice, enhancing transparency and promoting dialogue are all influential enablers of wellbeing. **It is not right that democracy is working better for people with a higher annual income and those living in more affluent areas.**

For more people to feel positive about participating in democracy, trust in government and public bodies is essential. It is widely accepted that trust is the foundation of a functioning democratic system. Improved citizen engagement, working transparently, actively communicating about decision making, and investing in responsible, reliable, and fair public services are all evidence-based actions that governments can take to improve public trust and confidence²¹.

Trust has been widely reported as being in decline for some time²². Ahead of the General Election in July 2024, confidence in the UK's system of government was at a record low²³. The fact that 72% of people in England feel they cannot influence decisions affecting the UK and 52% of people have low levels of trust in the UK Government sets a very low bar for the new administration.

As a matter of urgency, action is required if faith is to be restored in our local and national leaders and the institutions of our democracy. Participatory and deliberative democratic initiatives, if designed and delivered properly, have an important role to play in this. They can be powerful tools for countering polarisation in our society and can help reconnect democracy to the decisions and issues that most impact people's daily lives.

The UK Government's legislative agenda and priorities on democratic reform outlined in the King's Speech in July 2024 may go some way to improving democratic wellbeing scores in future years. The English Devolution Bill, for example, aims to bring policymaking closer to people 'with skin in the game' and is focused on shifting decision making power away from Westminster.

The English Devolution White Paper – published in December 2024 – outlines the UK Government's proposals to strengthen local government; create new strategic authorities and devolution deals that offer regions in England more powers in relation to housing, transport, and economic development; and empower communities, encouraging a "bottom up" approach to decision making and shaping local policies.

While encouraging, these measures alone will likely not be enough to meaningfully turn around the current crisis in democratic wellbeing, particularly if they do not include sufficient public engagement mechanisms to promote dialogue between government and citizens. Greater attention is required to enable people to have their say. **Repairing democracy is the UK Government's missing mission²⁴. The UK Government's vision for devolution must also look beyond the need to drive economic growth to include a range of wellbeing outcomes.**

Life in the UK: England 2024 - Policy Recommendations

The collective wellbeing scores in this report provide a baseline for local, regional and national government to build on if the UK Government wants to realise its stated ambition of bringing about a decade of national renewal²⁵.

The scores also provide stark evidence of the demographics of people who are being left behind in England today. It is on these groups that the twelve existing mayoral and forthcoming new strategic authorities should be focusing their attention if they are to make progress on closing the wellbeing gaps highlighted in the 2024 index.

Informed by the evidence from the 2024 Life in the UK - England index, we believe there are three areas of opportunity to meaningfully improve outcomes for people in England. Leaders working in local and national government in England should:

- Take steps to measure what matters;
- Put repairing democracy at the centre of plans for English devolution; and
- Learning from others, adopt and implement a fresh approach to governance.



Measure what matters

If the UK Government is serious about delivering the “plan for change” outlined in its 2024 manifesto, alongside the proposals in the Get Britain Working and Devolution in England white papers, we strongly recommend that it adopts and implements useful and timely measures to track progress across a range of wellbeing outcomes.

In our experience working with governments across the UK to implement an outcomes-based or “mission led” approach, we have found that the lack of an identifiable, shared story about how we are doing as a country undermines public confidence that politicians and other senior leaders have citizens' best interests at heart.

Economic output data, such as Gross Domestic Product, has long been the dominant narrative. **However, there is a growing movement of individuals, policymakers and institutions now highlighting why GDP, while perhaps a good measure of the economy, is a poor measure of social progress²⁶. Similarly, the UK Government's vision for the country must look beyond economic growth to a range of interdependent wellbeing outcomes.**

The ability to monitor and communicate progress toward the achievement of outcomes or missions is critical in bringing about positive change for people living in England, and the UK more broadly. **The UK Government's devolution agenda represents an opportunity for the new devolved institutions to do things differently and embed outcomes-based approaches.** Local, regional and national governments and their partners could also learn from examples of the work already being undertaken in this area at local authority level (such as in the development of the North of Tyne Wellbeing Framework²⁷ and the London Wellbeing and Sustainability measure²⁸). It is essential to have a compelling narrative and timely understanding of where we are, where we want to go, and what progress is being made.



Put repairing democracy at the centre of plans for English devolution

Repairing democracy is a mission absent from the UK Government's policy plans and proposals. The 2024 Life in the UK - England index evidence highlights why this must be addressed as a matter of urgency, and why the "devolution revolution" plans in England – while a promising step forward – will not be sufficient on their own to address the scale of the challenge.

It is essential that all those in power work to build trust with the people of the UK: a failure to address the root causes of discontent, and to embed methods of dialogue between government and citizens will further threaten the foundations of democracy. We need a bold agenda to re-engage people in our democracy and rebuild trust in those we elect to represent us.



Adopting a fresh approach to governing

The UK Government has outlined its intention to deliver a mission-driven government; this means focusing on ambitious, measurable, long-term objectives that can deliver improved outcomes for people living in England and the rest of the UK.

Governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have made similar commitments to outcomes-led approaches which have so far had variable levels of success in driving system-wide change. This experience tells us that any gap between rhetoric and reality will be a drag on implementation, and political and executive leadership, while critical, is not sufficient on its own.

To successfully deliver these changes, there must be alignment of culture; incentives; rewards; training and development; recruitment; internal processes and procedures²⁹. **A decentralising and empowering mindset is needed which respects the different roles of the devolved governments as well as local government, agencies, and the third and private sectors.**



Collective wellbeing: standout statistics overview



- **44%** say they have experienced discrimination over the past year. This is a three-point increase on 2023 (41%).
- **31%** say they feel unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.
- **17%** say they don't have anyone to rely on in their neighbourhood.



Economic wellbeing - standout statistics

- **28%** can't afford an unexpected expense of £850.
- **26%** are dissatisfied with the job opportunities in their local area. Dissatisfaction has increased by 4% (from 22% dissatisfied in 2023 to 26% in 2024).
- **23%** can't afford to go on holiday away from home.
- **13%** can't afford to keep their home warm, a four-point improvement from experiences reported in 2023 (17%).
- **11%** can't afford to socialise with friends or family outside of the home once a month if desired.



Environmental wellbeing - standout statistics

- Most people experience issues with litter (**84%**), noise (**64%**) and air quality (**55%**) in their local neighbourhood.
- **44%** are dissatisfied with current efforts to preserve the environment.
- **13%** are dissatisfied with the quality of the nearest local public, green or open space.



Democratic wellbeing - standout statistics

- **72%** feel that they cannot influence decisions affecting the UK as a whole.
- **55%** feel that they are unable to influence decisions at a local level.
- **52%** have low levels of trust in the UK Government.
- **50%** have low levels of trust in Members of Parliament.
- **34%** have low levels of trust in news media, a four-point improvement from low trust levels reported in 2023 (38%).
- **27%** have low levels of trust in local councils, a two-point increase in distrust compared to 2023 (25%).
- **17%** have low levels of trust in the police, a two-point improvement from experiences reported in 2023 (19%).

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Appendix 1: Summary table of domain scores by key demographic characteristics

		Collective wellbeing	Social wellbeing	Economic wellbeing	Environmental wellbeing	Democratic wellbeing
Total		61	72	72	62	41
Disability	Not disabled	64	75	74	63	42
	Disabled	55	62	63	58	36
Age	16-34 years	59	68	69	58	41
	35-54 years	59	71	67	60	39
	55 years & over	65	75	77	66	42
Household Income	£25,999 and under	56	66	59	58	39
	£26,000 to £51,999	61	73	71	62	40
	£52,000 to £99,999	65	76	79	63	42
	£100,000 & above	68	77	85	64	45
Area deprivation	1st quintile (highest deprivation)	54	65	62	53	37
	2nd quintile	59	70	68	57	39
	3rd quintile	62	72	72	63	41
	4th quintile	65	76	77	66	43
	5th quintile (lowest deprivation)	67	76	78	68	43
Housing tenure	Social rented	51	61	53	53	36
	Private rented	57	68	63	58	41
	Homeowners	64	74	76	63	41
Gender	Women	61	70	70	61	40
	Men	63	74	73	62	41
Ethnicity	Asian	56	65	65	54	41
	Black	55	66	56	58	39
	Mixed/multiple	56	67	62	57	35
	Other ethnicity	57	67	66	55	42
	Other White	59	69	72	56	40
	White British	63	73	73	63	41
	Ethnic minorities (excluding White minorities)	56	66	63	56	40
	White (including White minorities)	62	73	73	62	41

cont.

		Collective wellbeing	Social wellbeing	Economic wellbeing	Environmental wellbeing	Democratic wellbeing
Children	One child in household	59	71	67	60	39
	Two children in household	60	72	67	60	41
	Three or more children in household	56	68	59	59	39
	No children in household	62	72	74	62	41
Urban areas	Urban living	60	71	71	60	40
	Rural living	66	77	76	70	43



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Find out more about the work of the Network here: <https://povertytruthnetwork.org/>.

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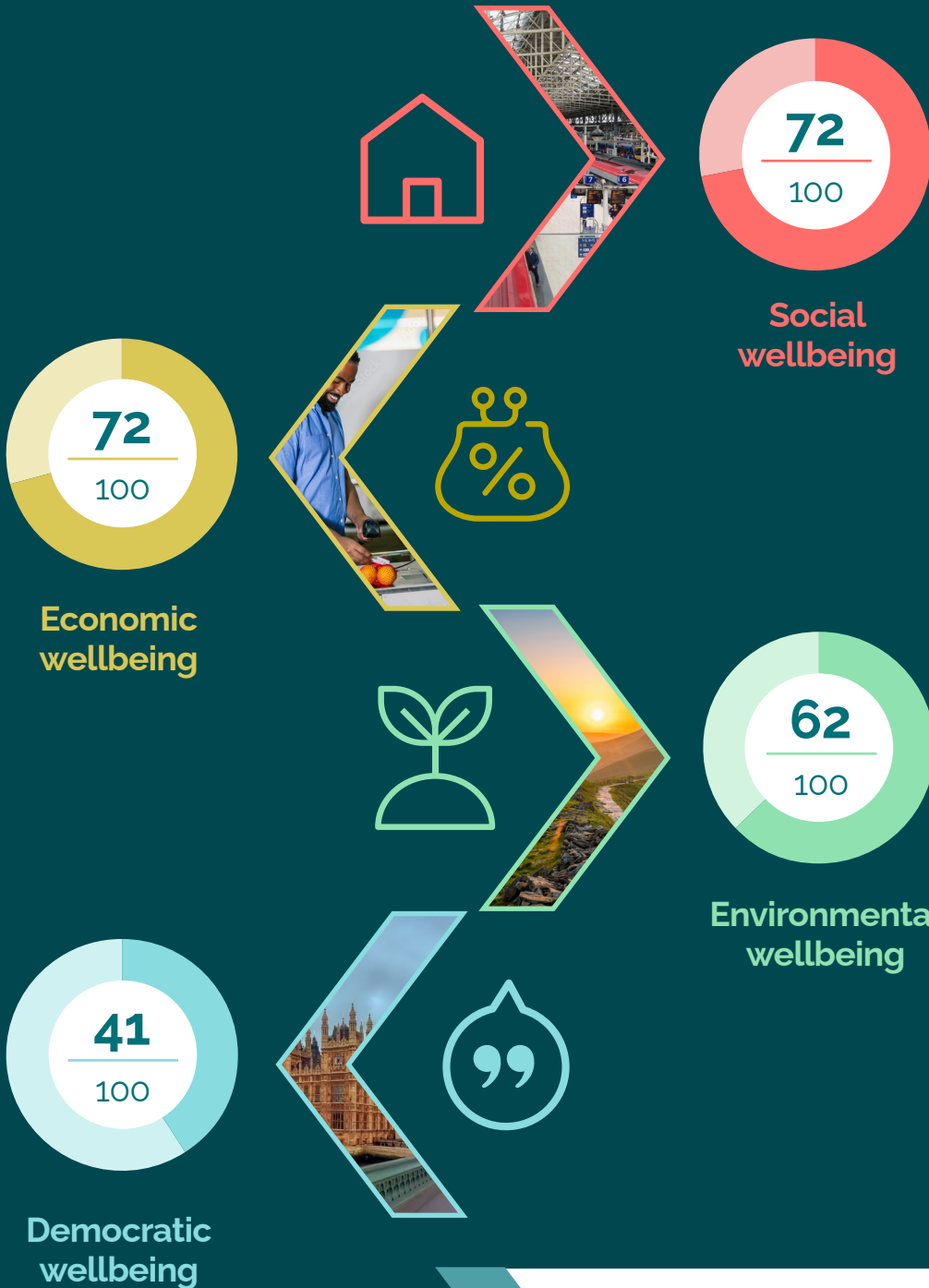
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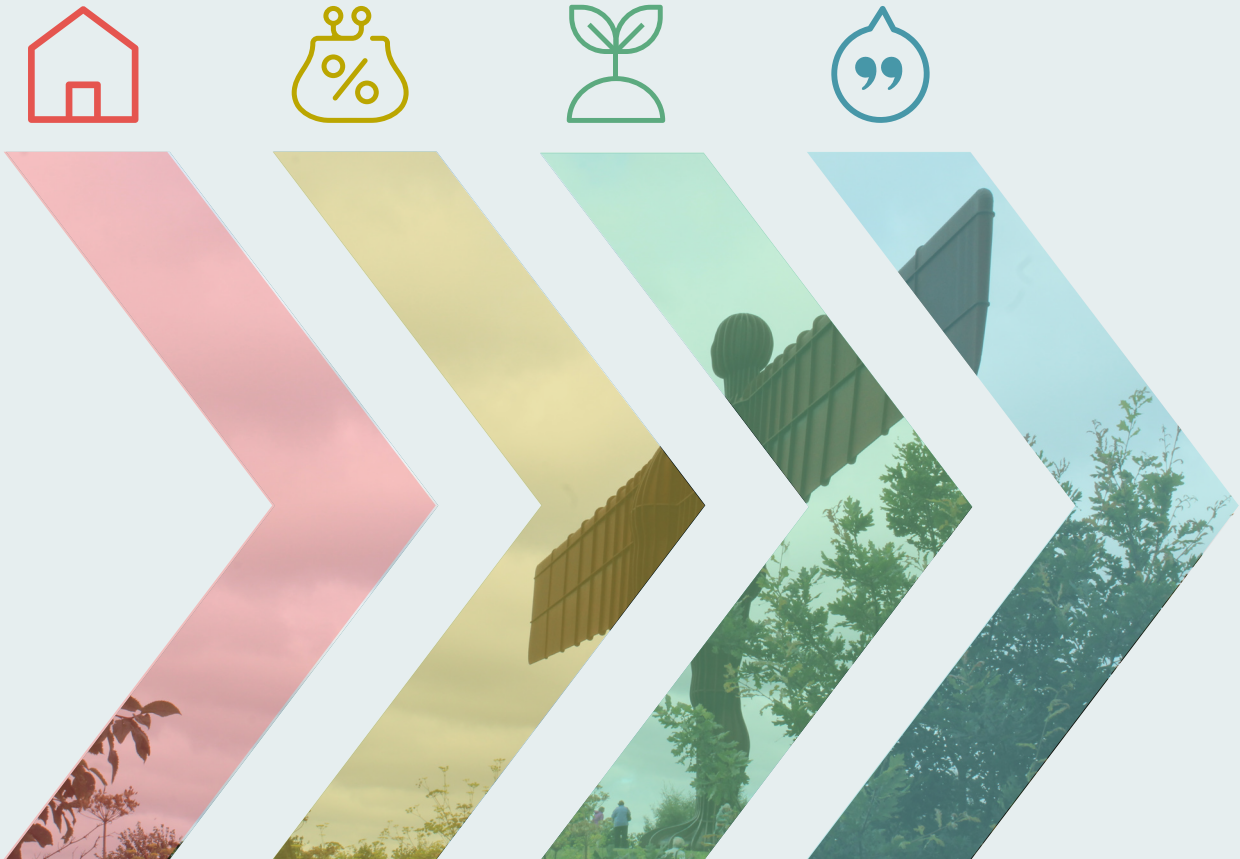


61
100

The Collective Wellbeing score for England in 2024 is 61 out of a possible 100.

Life in the UK 2024

England



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