Hampshire Farmers Wellbeing Survey: Findings Summary

Spring 2022

Hampshire County Council

FCN | THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

Introduction to the Project – Public Health

Farming Industry and Suicide Risk:

In an industry where 34 farm workers lost their lives in fatal farm incidents in 2020/2021, there were a total of **44 suicides registered in England and Wales** in those working in the farming and agricultural industry in 2020 according to the Office of National Statistics.

Worries re financial issues, red tape, the weather, long working hours, feelings of isolation and under-appreciation can all play their part in affecting the mental health of farm workers. This, together with **access to the means** of suicide (eg firearms), **increases the risk** for this occupation group.

Sadly we have seen cases of suicide in agricultural/farm workers in Hampshire over the years. Our mission is to help increase mental health and wellbeing and **prevent** future deaths in this and every occupation group.

Men's Health

In the UK approx. 1 in 5 male deaths were before the age of 65(1)

Males also account for 77% of suicides, often associated with unemployment, debt, redundancy, and social isolation (2)

Health services engage men, especially working age men, less effectively.

Men aged 15 to 59 request fewer GP consultations compared to women (3)

Men have considerably higher rates of undiagnosed health issues (4)

Introduction to the Project – Trading Standards

Hampshire Trading Standards are committed to **helping and supporting farmers achieve compliance** with a wide range of Animal Health and Welfare and agricultural requirements. We understand and acknowledge that a large number of **external factors can have significant impact** on the abilities of farmers to fulfil their obligations during periods of **financial difficulty** and in particular in times of **ill-health**. The Service has recognised this is becoming **more prevalent** and is a cause for concern for our officers interacting with the farming community in their day to day work.

The pressures on farmers today are extensive, and by forming a **partnership** with Public Health and the Farming Community Network, we were able to bring together this substantial piece of research to **better understand** those difficulties faced by farmers within Hampshire.

Our sincere **thanks** go to all the contributors to the survey for their full and **honest replies**. This has allowed us to produce results that are both meaningful and valuable to the Hampshire farming community. We hope the results will **help us, organisations and industry themselves shape support** on a local level to address some of those concerns.

Introduction to the Project – Farming Community Network

"We are very fortunate to live in the wonderful Hampshire countryside and the role of people who work in the farming industry has never been more important. Our industry makes a significant contribution to food security, biodiversity, renewable energy, leisure and tourism, and more. But we also know that ***farming can be tough*** *and this important* ***report highlights many of the factors that contribute*** *to this. We are very grateful to Hampshire County Council and to everyone who contributed to the survey. The* ***findings will help FCN target our charity's resources within the county*** *and ensure that everyone in the local farming community can access support should they need it." – Mark, Farming Community Network*

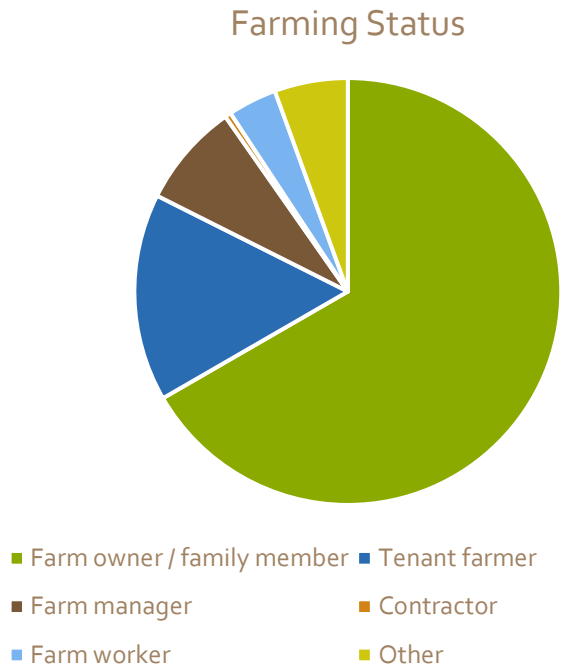
Survey background

- Results collected **Feb – March 2022**
- Delivered online, plus paper copies sent to largest 1000 farms on Trading Standards database
- Hampshire is a two-tier Local Authority. The survey was targeted at all 11 districts and boroughs of Hampshire
- 31 surveys completed on smartphone, 18 on a tablet, and 78 on a computer (total of 127 digitally). 105 were returned by post
- Promoted by Hampshire County Council, HCC Trading Standards, local branch of the FCN, and HCC public health
- *Data caution*: Not a random sample, self-reported data
- Data under 8 is suppressed, true zero is shown as -. Suppressed data is indicated by *

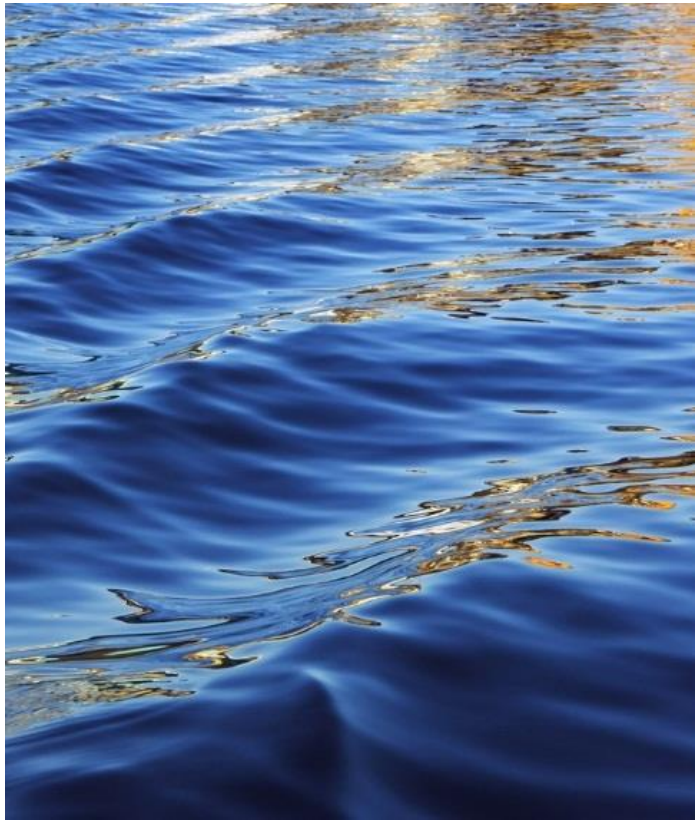
Thanks to Trading Standards and Public Health for funding the survey, and the FCN for their endorsement

Survey respondents

- Total of 232 responses received
- No responses from Gosport, Havant or Rushmoor districts
  - For Gosport and Rushmoor this is expected as they are highly urban districts
  - Havant has very little agricultural green space, so farm numbers are very small
- 14 responses from 'Other' district or boroughs (ie. not in Hampshire), these were routed out so did not complete full survey
- Therefore, base of **218 responses** for full survey. Note: no question was compulsory so the base for each question does vary
- Majority (67%) of respondents were Farmer owner / family member, followed by tenant farmers 16%, 8% farm manager, and 4% farm worker. *In 2020, 64% of those employed in the agricultural sector in the UK were either as farmers, business partners, directors or the spouse (Agriculture in the UK Evidence Pack 2020).*
- Farm size ranged from 1 – 6000 acres, with an average of 250 acres. *In the South East the average farm size in 2019 was 86 hectares [213 acres]. The overall English average is 87 hectares (Agricultural facts: England regional profiles, Gov.uk)*



Demographics



Farming status by District

		Total	What is your farming status?					
			Farm owner / family member	Tenant farmer	Farm manager	Contractor	Farm worker	Other
Base		216	144	34	17	*	8	12
District or borough farm located in	Basingstoke and Deane	39	23	*	8	-	*	*
		18%	16%	*	47%	-	*	*
	East Hants	30	18	*	*	-	*	*
		14%	13%	*	*	-	*	*
	Eastleigh	*	*	*	-	-	-	-
		*	*	*	-	-	-	-
	Fareham	*	-	*	-	-	-	*
		*	-	*	-	-	-	*
	Hart	14	11	*	-	*	-	*
		7%	8%	*	-	*	-	*
	New Forest	39	22	13	*	-	*	*
		18%	15%	38%	*	-	*	*
	Test Valley	30	21	*	*	-	*	*
		14%	15%	*	*	-	*	*
	Winchester	57	45	8	*	-	-	*
		26%	31%	24%	*	-	-	*

- A quarter (26%) of responses were from Winchester, with similar numbers responding from both Basingstoke & Deane and New Forest (18%), and again Test Valley and East Hants (14%)
- Winchester has the highest proportion (31%) of responses from farm owners/family members
- New Forest has the highest proportion (38%) of tenant farmer responses

* = data supressed

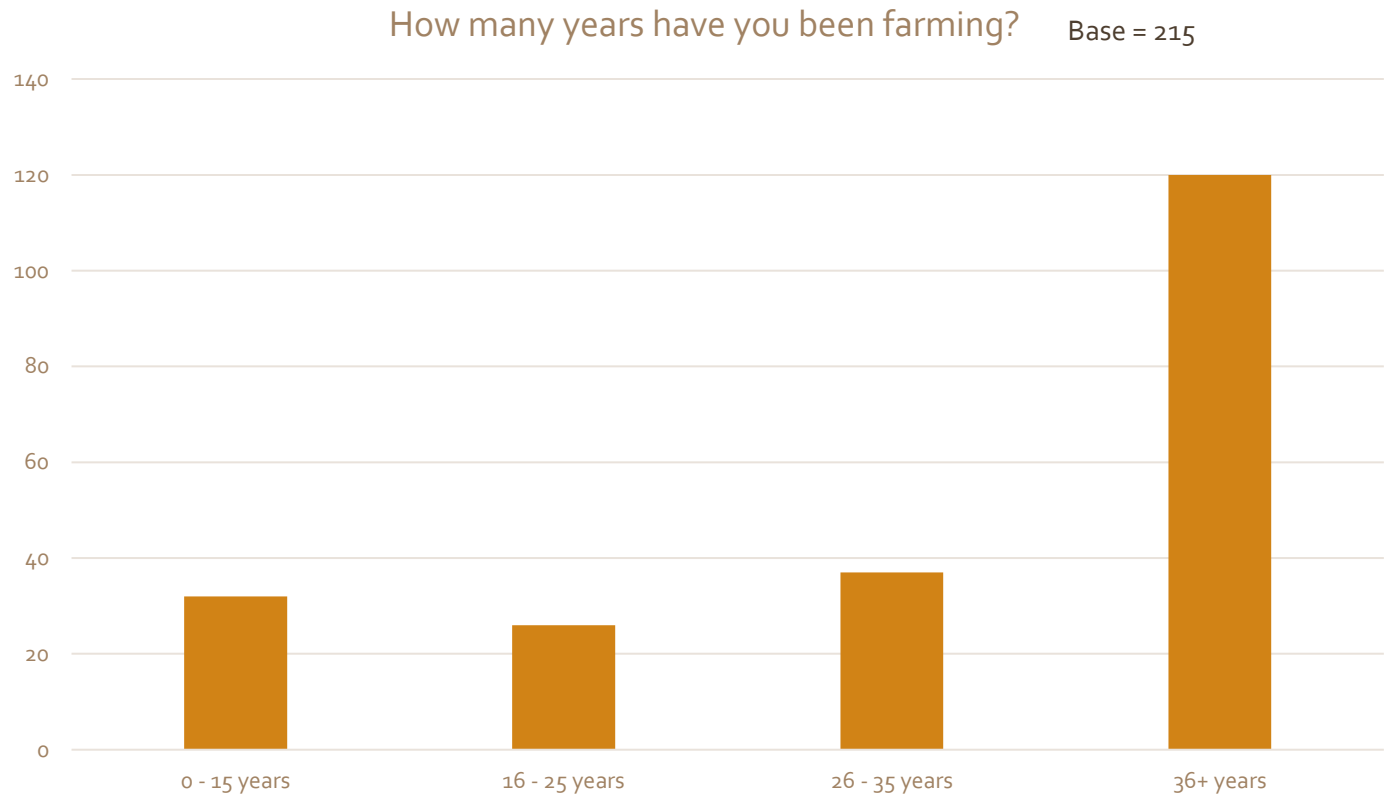
Demographics

		Total	What is your age group?					
			Under 35	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75+
Base		202	9	24	25	71	47	26
			5%	12%	12%	35%	23%	13%
Do you identify as	Male	155	8	20	18	53	36	20
			5%	13%	12%	34%	23%	13%
	Female	44	*	*	*	17	9	*
			*	*	*	39%	21%	*
	Non-binary	*	-	-	-	*	-	-
			-	-	-	*	-	-
	Transgender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Prefer not to say	*	-	-	-	-	*	-
			-	-	-	-	*	-
	Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Agriculture typically has an ageing workforce. In 2016, over a third of all farm holders in England were over the age of 65 years. 3% of holders were aged less than 35 years… 85% of farm holders in the UK in 2016 were male (Agriculture in the UK Evidence Pack 2020).

- Over three quarters (77%) of responses were from males
- 71% of responses were from people aged 55 and over
- Just 5% were from those under 35
- 85% were married, in a civil partnership or had a long term partner, 7% were single, 4% widowed
- The average number of adults in the household was 2
- 51 respondents (23%) told us they had children living in their household

Over half (56%) of respondents have been farming for 36+ years, 15% have been farming for 15 years or less



The future of the young farming entrant is so bleak that I feel they are digging their own grave, not farming!

It needs to encourage more younger people into the industry

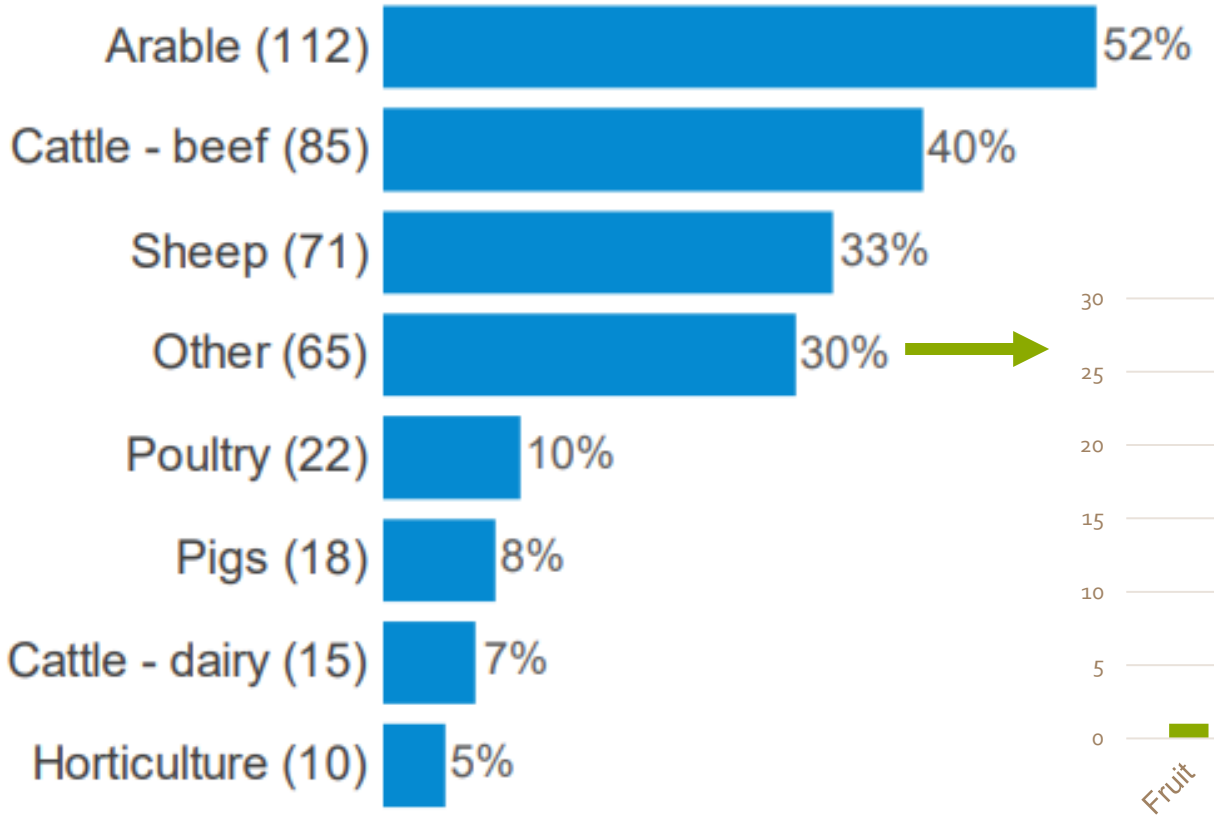
Younger farmers need opportunity… Youth want to farm but can't afford even a fraction of the land to begin. The community needs to involve the younger farmers

…Plans need to be made to allow younger generation to come in and keep farming…

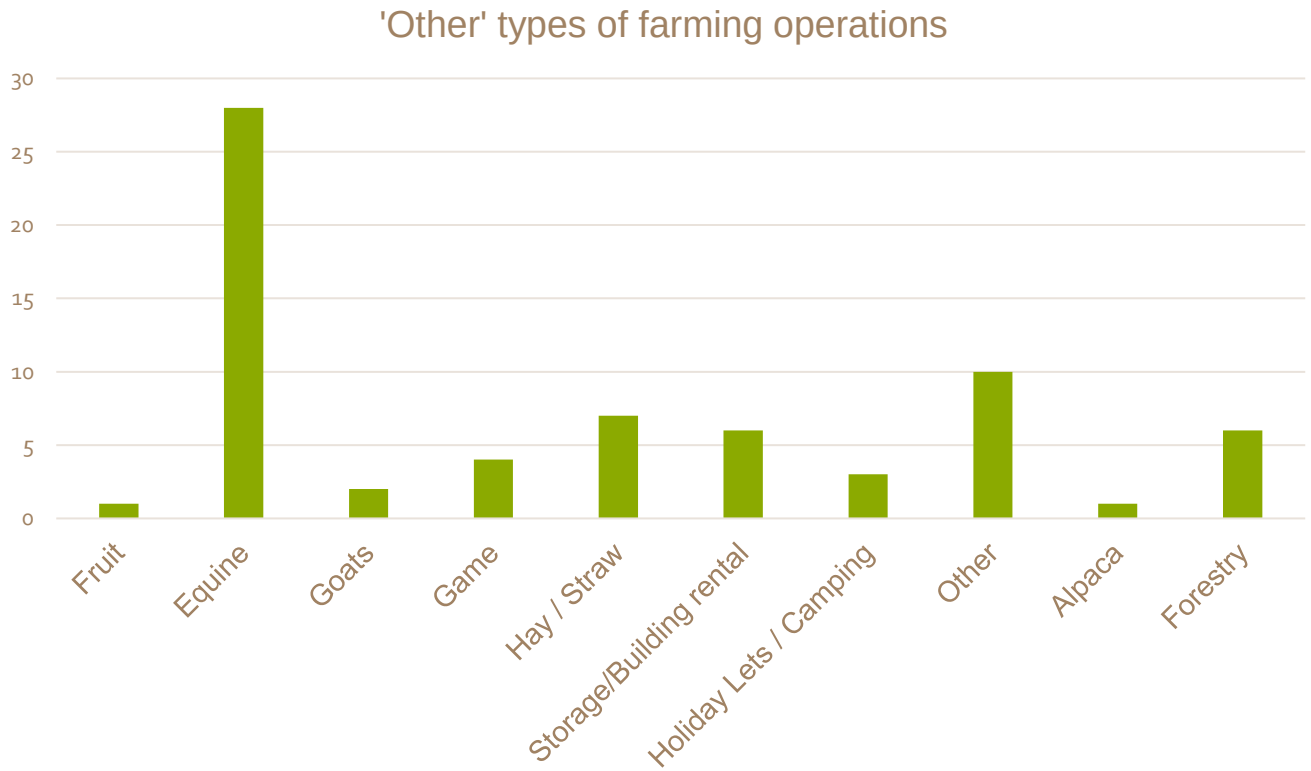
Participants shared sentiment that the industry was hard for younger people to start out in successfully

Type of farming operations

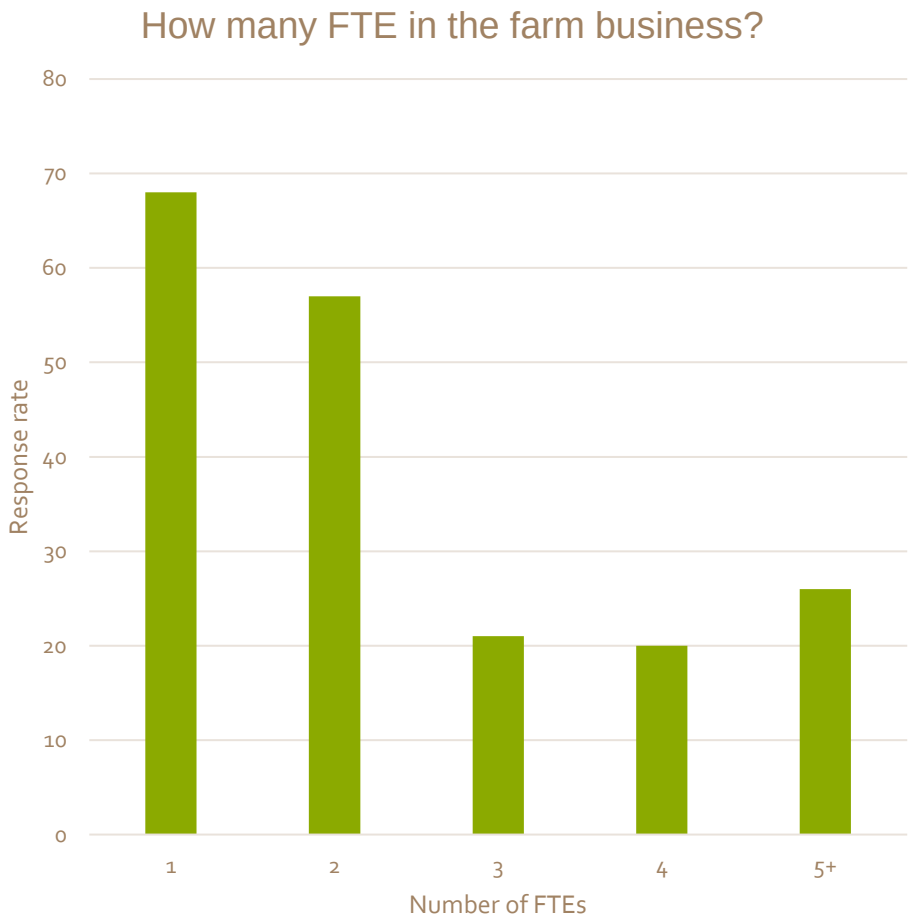
Base 215



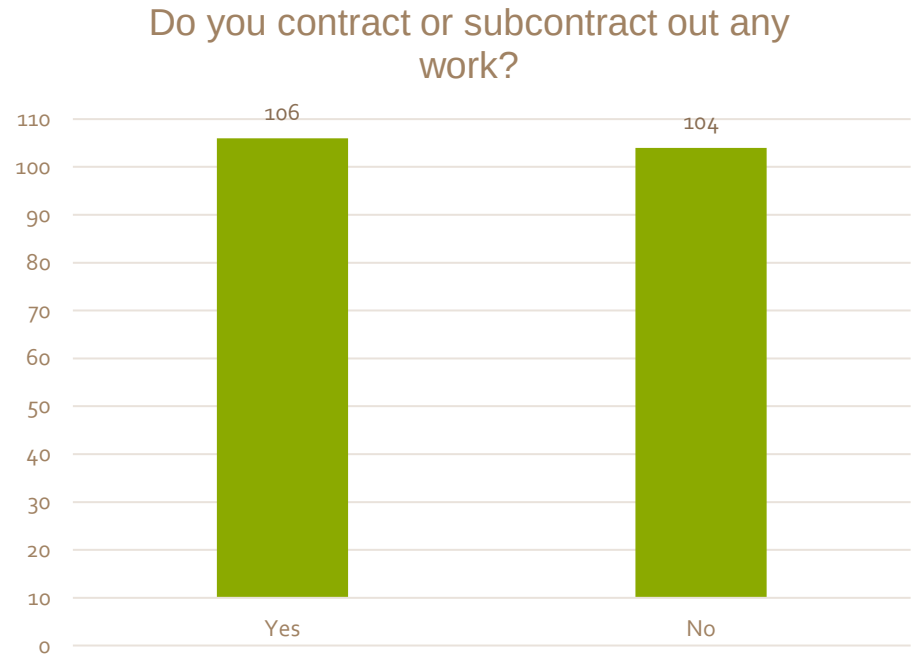
- Arable accounted for over half (52%) of all farm types responding to the survey.
  Predominant farm types in the South East in 2019 were Cereals farms accounting for 46% of farmed area and Grazing Livestock farms covering an additional 21% of farmed area (Agricultural facts: England regional profiles, Gov.uk)



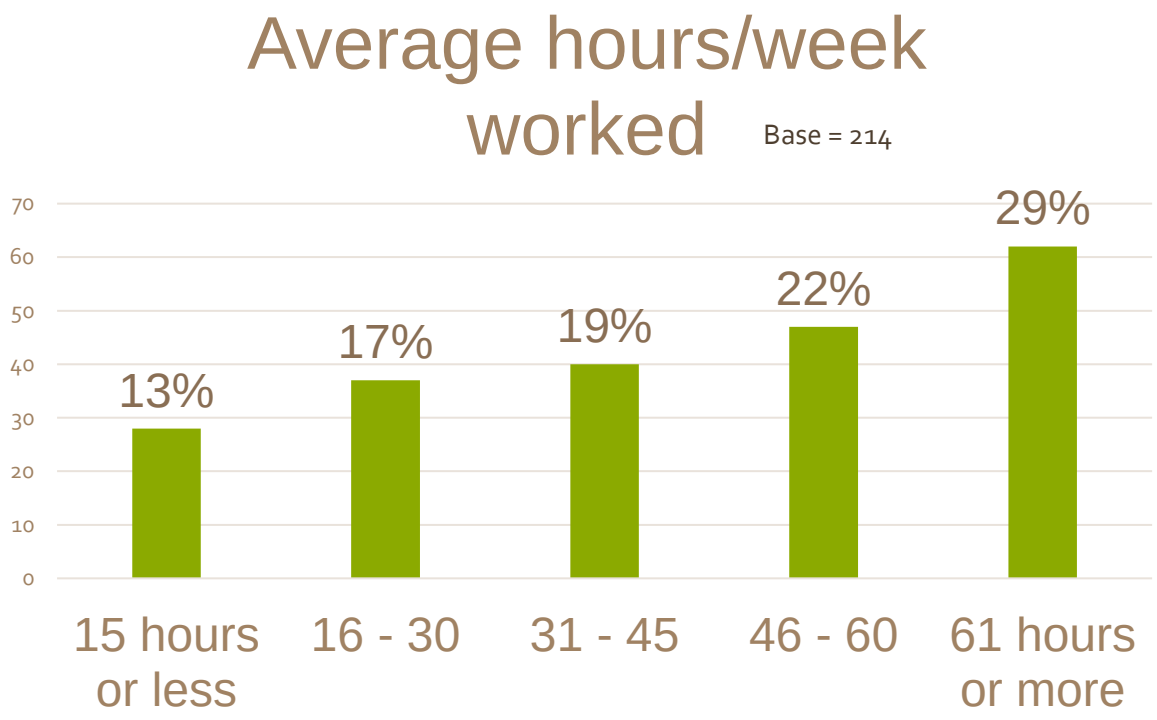
About the farm business



- Even split in terms of farms (sub)contracting out work or not
- 35% of responses were from farms who employed 3 or more full time equivalent (FTE) staff. *In the South East, the average total labour per farm is 3.7 people (Agricultural facts: England regional profiles, Gov.uk)*



Over half (51%) of respondents reported averagely working over 45 hours/week



- Three quarters (76%) reported having seasonal peaks and troughs in their work hours.

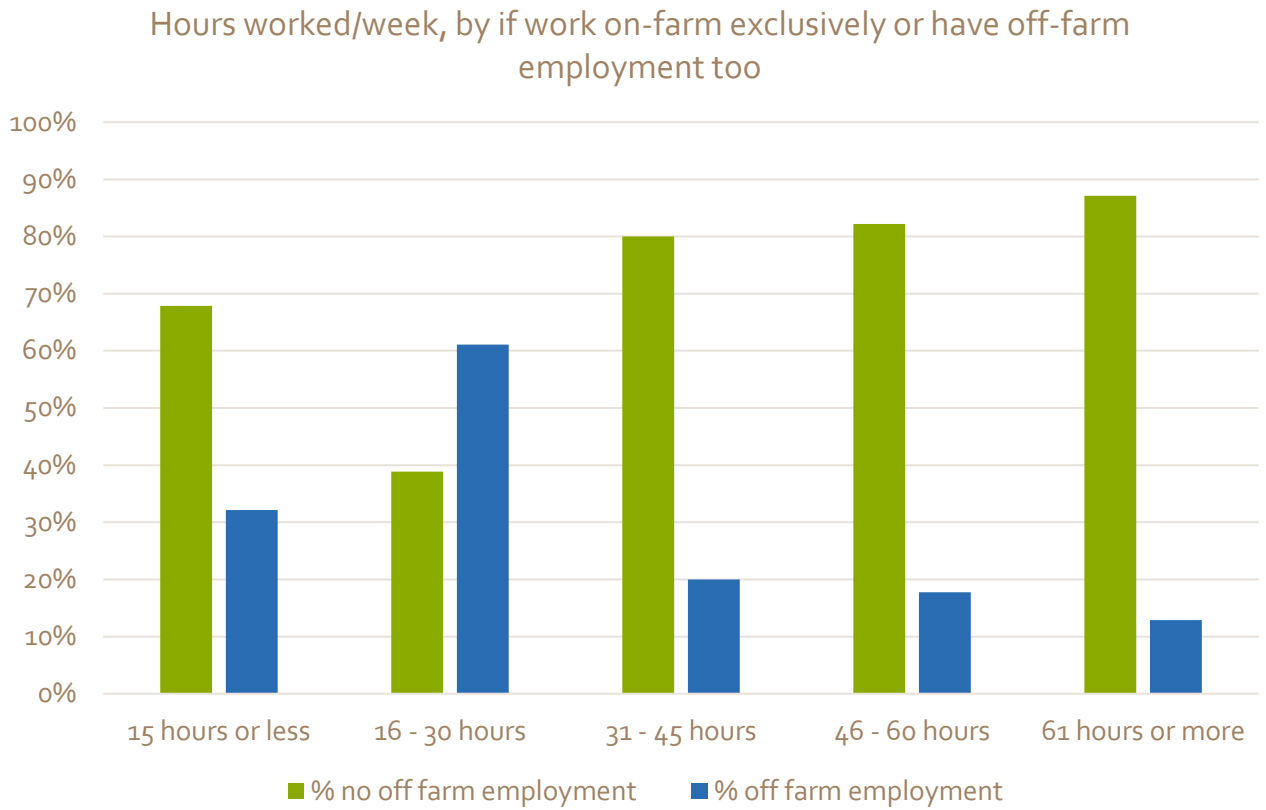
Farming is becoming more intense, farmers need groups to help get away from the 'day job'

When asked '*What type of social groups would you be interested in attending?*' a small number replied with sentiment such as 'no time always working'.

This was reflected in responses to '*How do you think your chosen support needs could be best delivered/provided?*'
'Trouble is trying to make time in your workload for someone to be able host and deliver these events'

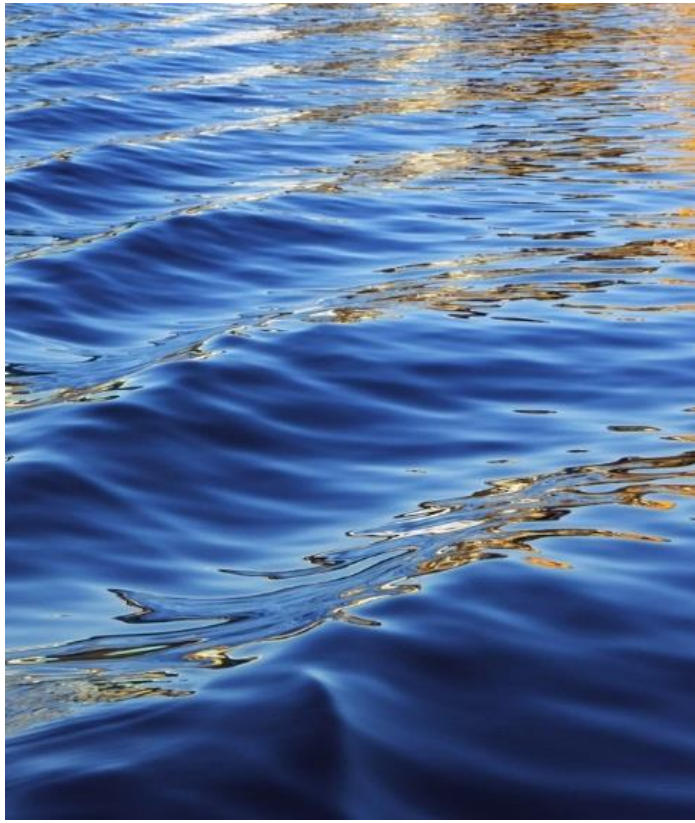
Off farm employment

- Just over a quarter of respondents reported having off-farm employment
- This off-farm employment ranged from 3 - 48 hours / week, with an average of 23 hours / week
- Those that have off-farm employment are more likely to work 30hours or less
- Those that work full time on the farm are less likely to also have off farm employment
- There is a group who work 15 hours or less and also do not have off-farm employment, 67% of whom are 65+



Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale

(SWEMWBS)



Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) © NHS Health Scotland, University of Warwick and University of Edinburgh, 2008, all rights reserved.

SWEMWBS overview

- Internationally recognised Mental Wellbeing Scale and has been benchmarked against well-validated measures of depression
- In order to get a rating, respondents must have responded to all 7 questions of the SWEMWBS. Our base for the SWEMWBS is therefore **206**
- Sample size of 30 in each group is recommended
- SWEMWBS is a 7-item scale with wellbeing scores range from 7 to 35
- Statistical and benchmarking analysis options:
  - Statistical - scores can be divided into high, average and low mental wellbeing. This approach classes 15% of the national population as having 'high mental health' and 15% with 'low mental health'. The top 15% of scores range from 27.5-35.0 and the bottom 15% from 7.0-19.5, and has a mean of 23.6
  - Benchmarked - against well-validated measures of depression. Cut points for possible/probable depression

Total mental health score of respondents (base 206)

Low mental health (amongst lowest 15% nationally)	Average mental health	High mental health (amongst highest 15% nationally)
17.0%	72.3%	10.7%

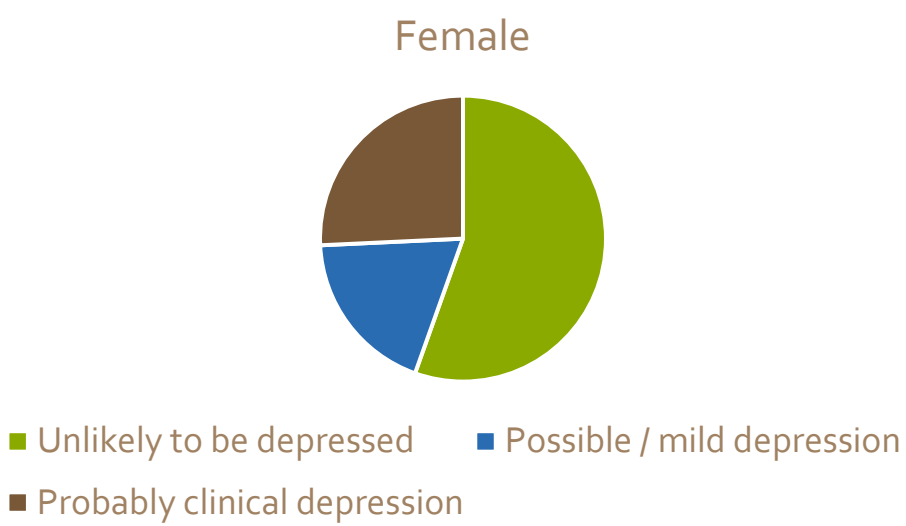
Respondents have a slightly higher than UK population average low mental health score

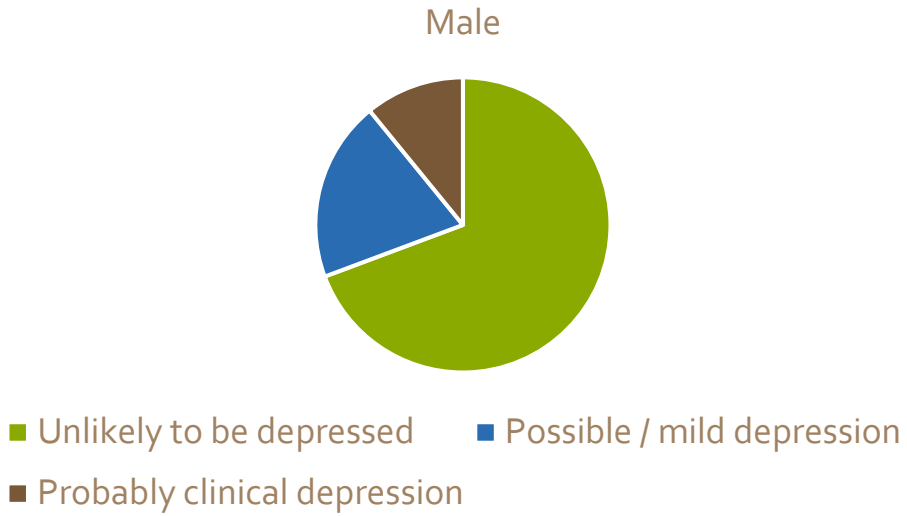
[Collect, score, analyse and interpret WEMWBS (warwick.ac.uk)]

SWEMWBS Findings

- **New Forest** has the most respondents scoring '**low mental health'**, with 28% falling in to the 'low mental health' category. 50% have a possible/probable depression score
- **Test Valley** has the most consistent '**average mental health**' score, with 17% having a possible/probable depression score
- Basingstoke and Deane, East Hants and Winchester have a mixed spread with similar numbers falling into low levels of mental health and high levels of mental health categories
- **Farming status does not** appear to have a big impact on mental wellbeing score apart from those selecting 'other' having a greater high mental health score (but small sample size of 11)
- Those who have been in farming for **15 years or less** score greater in the 'low mental health' category
- Those with off-farm employment have similar score for both low and high mental health
- Those who were **single or widowed** scored more in the 'low mental health' category
- **Livestock farmers** had 10% more respondents (20.8%) in the 'low mental health' category than those in arable/horticulture (9.7%). **Pig** farmers had the highest numbers (37.5%) with a 'low mental health' score, whilst arable farmers had the most consistent 'average mental health' score
- Those aged 75+ had the least scoring in 'low mental health'

Likelihood of depression





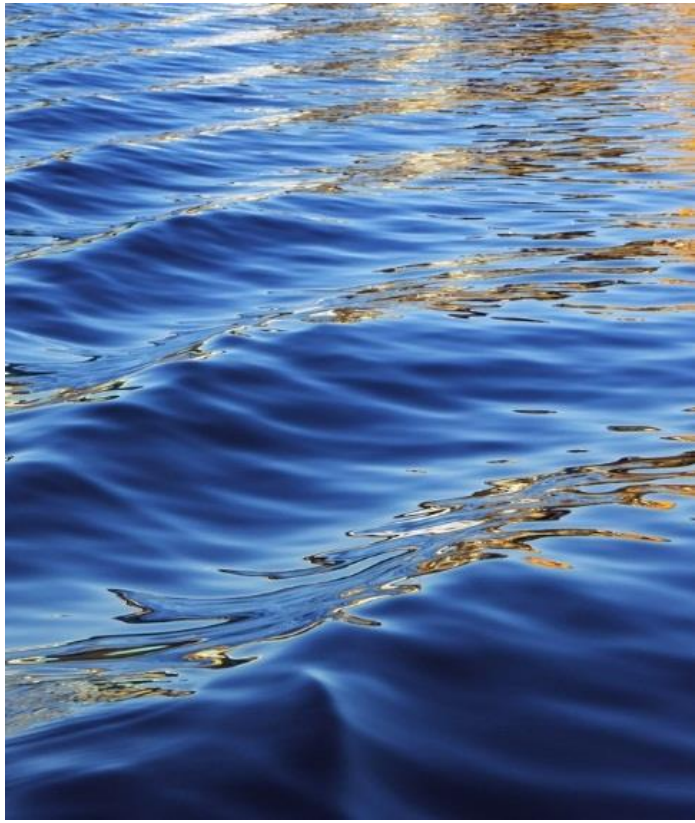
- **Females** score higher in being possibly / probably depressed than their male counterparts
- Those who are **livestock** farmers score higher (41%) than arable farmers (23%) in being possibly / probably depressed
- Those **aged 45 – 54** score highest in being possibly / probably depressed (46%)
- Those who **work 61+ hours/week** score highest in being possibly / probably depressed (45%) compared to e.g. 30% of those who work 31 – 45 hours/week scoring possibly / probably depressed

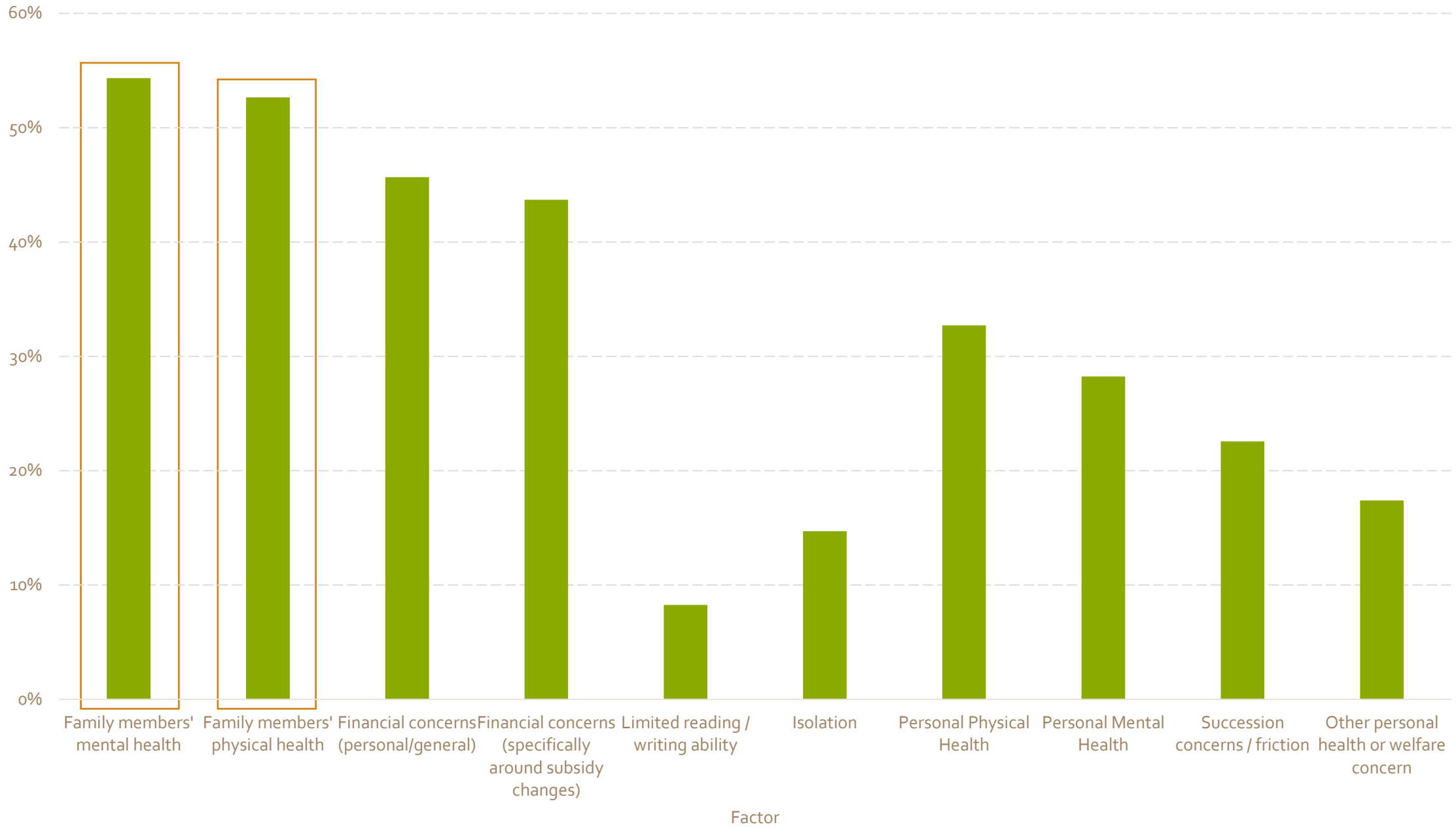
SWEMWBS findings possible interpretation

- New Forest is farming on **common land** so this may have some influence over why it is an outlier as the experience of working this landscape is different
- Farming status 'Other' may have a greater 'high mental health' score possibly reflecting hobby-farming or more lucrative equine industries
- Those farming for 15 years or less score much lower mental wellbeing, suggesting they may be **less happy** with the tough life for little reward, or they may be from a younger generation **more open** to acknowledging their mental health
- Working very **long hours** negatively impacts mental wellbeing
- For those with off-farm employment, for some it may be a positive that boosts their mental wellbeing but for others it may be a hardship endured for **financial necessity**
- Female respondents may report greater 'low mental health' scores than males as they may be more open to recognising and acknowledging poor mental wellbeing, or there may be mental health **inequalities** experienced between genders with females suffering more
- Single or widowed respondents may experience lower mental health due to **isolation or loneliness**
- Livestock farmers, particularly pig farmers, may experience 'low mental health' due to long, **solitary work conditions** with emotional feelings of responsibility to animals for **little reward**
- Those under 35 or aged 45-54 may report lower mental health than those aged 75+ due to younger generations possibly being more open and **willing to acknowledge** mental wellbeing or this is an age when sense of **responsibility** and need to provide weighs heavy

Influencers on personal mental wellbeing

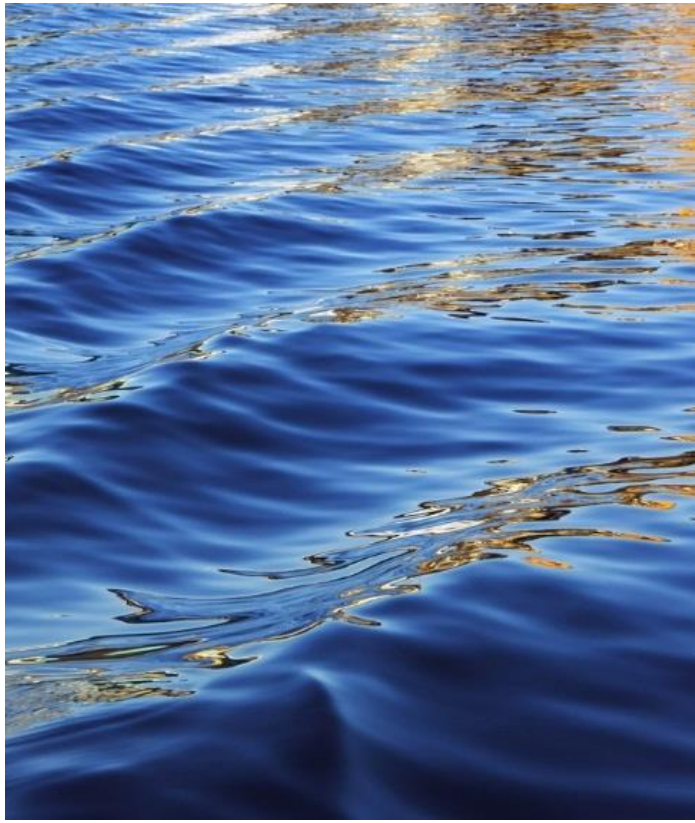
Personal factors

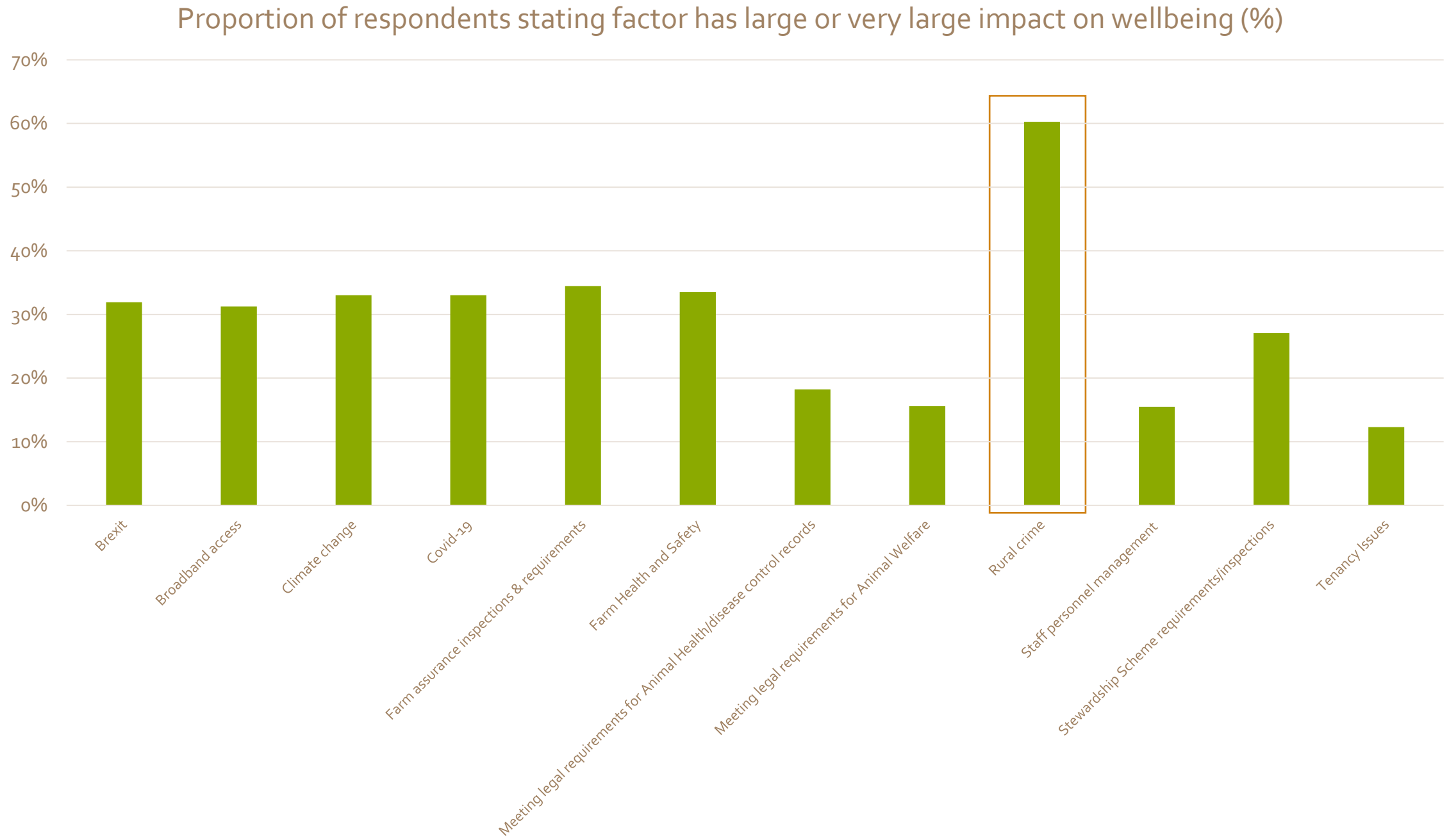



Proportion of respondents stating factor has large or very large impact on wellbeing (%)
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Family members' mental health
Family members' physical health
Financial concerns (personal/general)
Financial concerns (specifically around subsidy changes)
Limited reading / writing ability
Isolation
Personal Physical Health
Personal Mental Health
Succession concerns / friction
Other personal health or welfare concern
Factor

Influencers on personal mental wellbeing

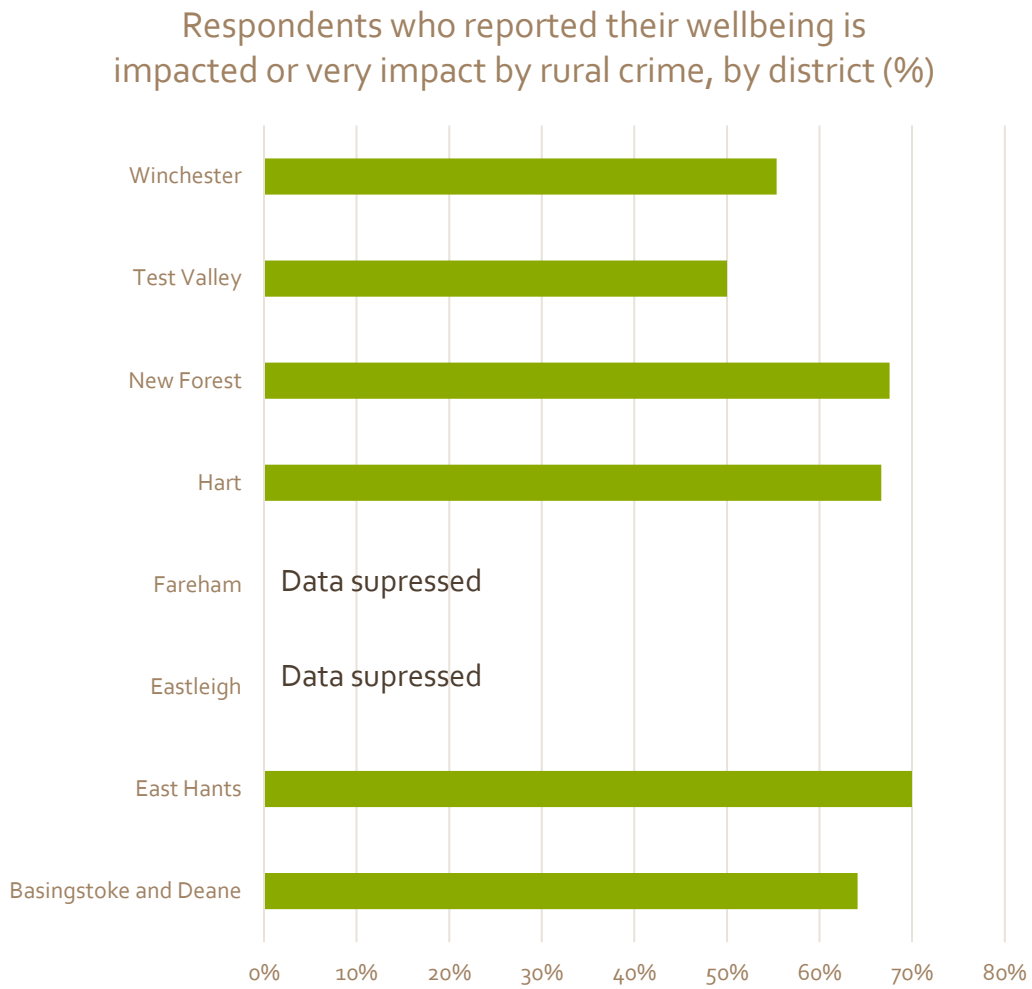
External factors



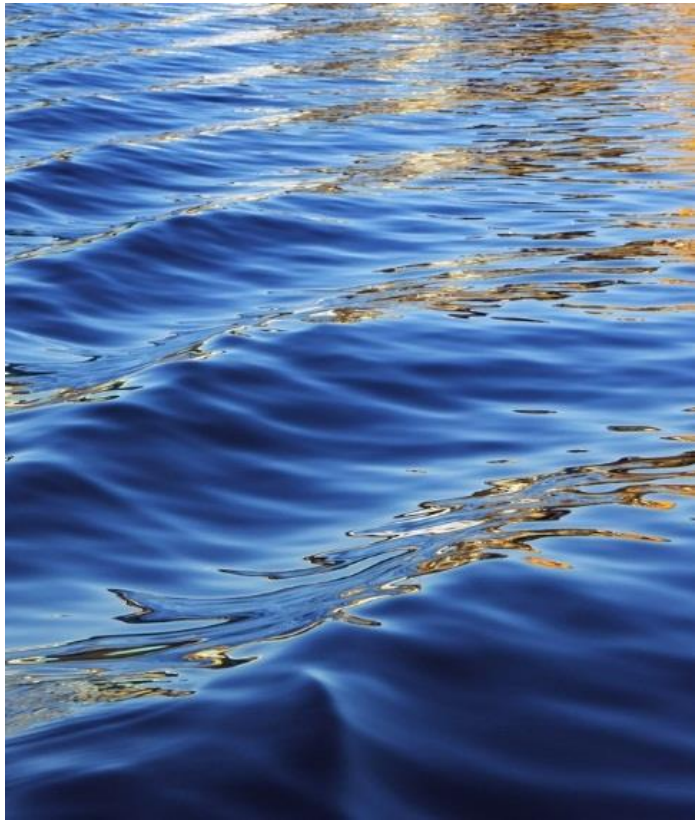

Proportion of respondents stating factor has large or very large impact on wellbeing (%)
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Brexit
Broadband access
Climate change
Covid-19
Farm assurance inspections & requirements
Farm Health and Safety
Meeting legal requirements for Animal Health/disease control records
Meeting legal requirements for Animal Welfare
Rural crime
Staff personnel management
Stewardship Scheme requirements/inspections
Tenancy Issues

Summary of factors affecting mental wellbeing

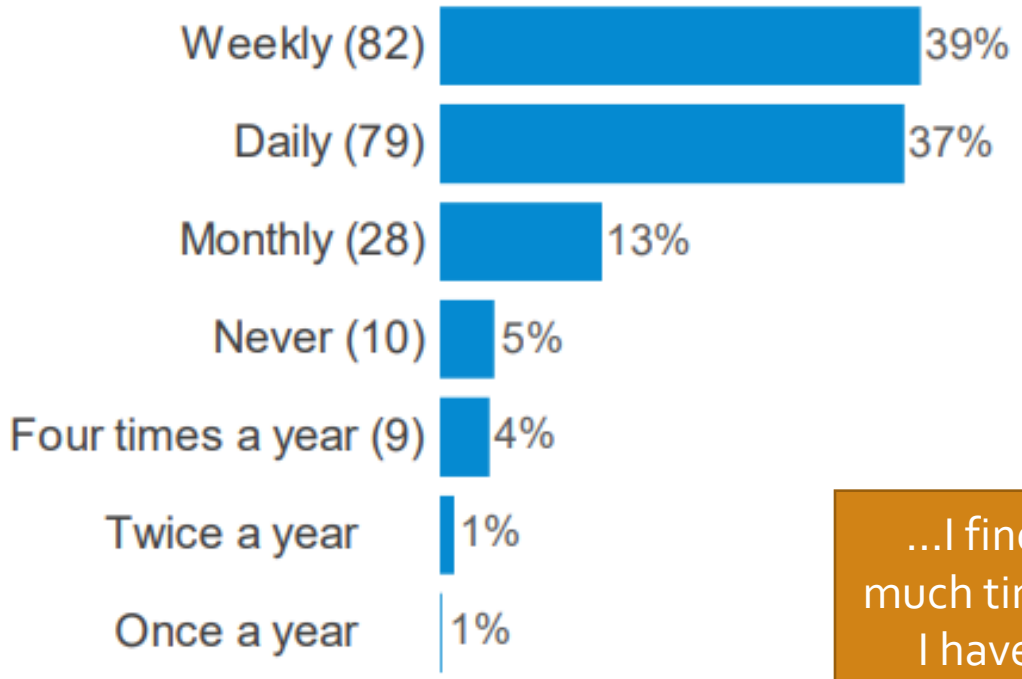
- Respondents reported that a large or very large factor in their own mental wellbeing were **concerns about their family members' mental (54%) and physical health (53%).** This was greater than the impact of concerns for their own mental or physical health (28% / 33% respectively)
- **Financial concerns** impacted the mental wellbeing of around **half of respondents**
- A **small number (15%) reported isolation** as a large or very large factor impacting mental wellbeing
- **Rural crime had the largest impact** on mental wellbeing over any other factor (60%)
- **Covid-19, climate change and Brexit were similar** in their reports of it being a large or very large factor that impacts on the mental wellbeing of respondents



Social activities



How often do you socialise with people outside of the farm?



- 11% of respondents socialise with people outside of the farm less than monthly.
- 76% of respondents said they socialise with people off the farm at least weekly

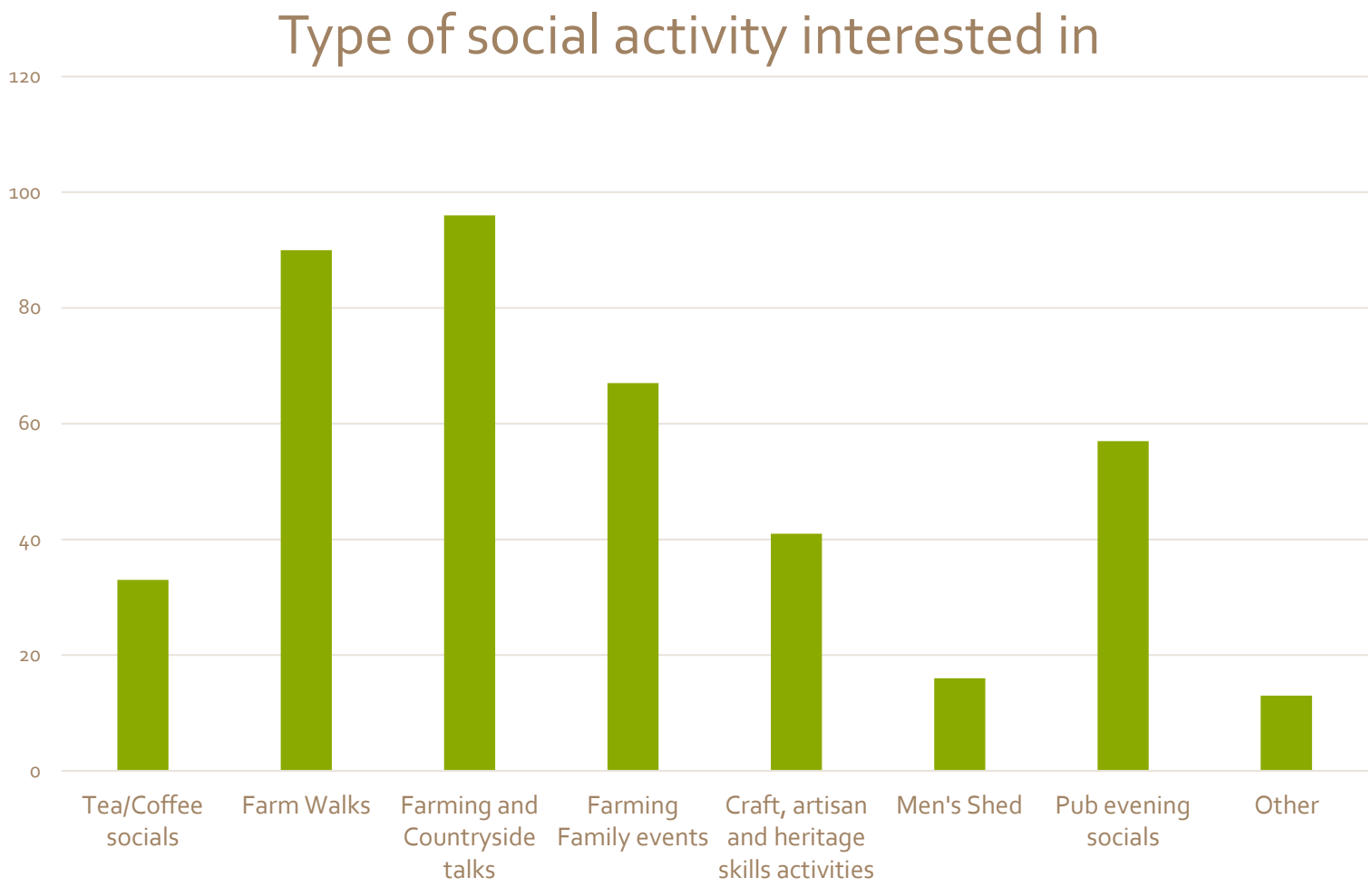
…I find if I spend too much time on socialising I have added stress because work builds up as there is very little/non existent relief labour available…

…it takes me weeks to organise a day away from the farm

Types of community/social activities respondents take part in include:

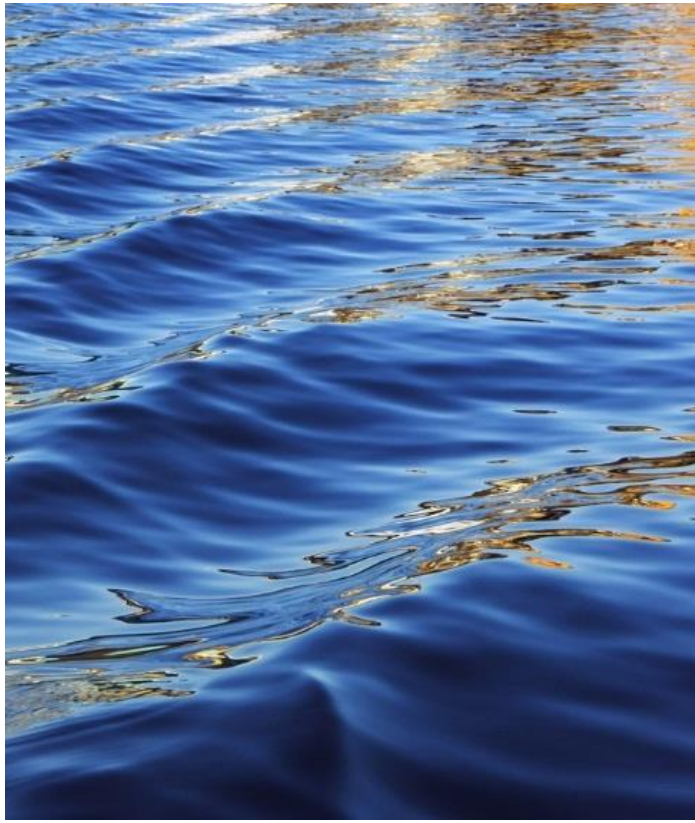
Growmore clubs
Game/shooting activities
Church
Family and friends
Sports and fitness
Pub
Work off-farm

Type of social activity interested in, if they were available

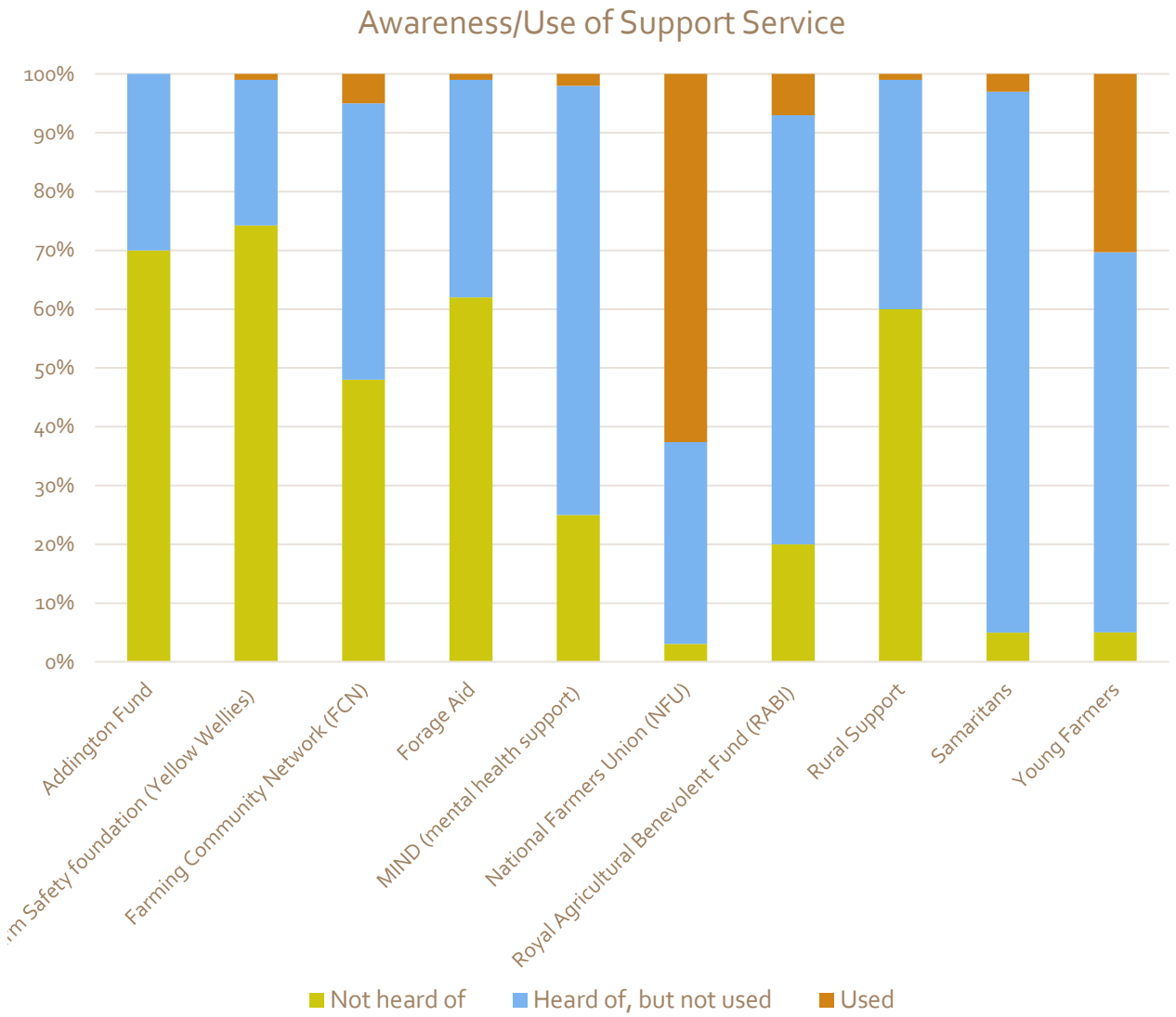


- **Farming and Countryside Talks were most popular,** closely followed by Farm Walks.
- A small number commented 'Women's Shed' in 'Other' section to counter the Men's Shed. A **small number put 'no time' in 'Other'**
- Females and those aged 65+ were most interested in Tea/Coffee socials
- Craft, artisan and heritage skill activities were more popular with females and those aged 55+
- Males were more interested in Pub evening socials than females
- Those aged 35-44 were more interested in Farming family events

Wellbeing Support Awareness and Needs



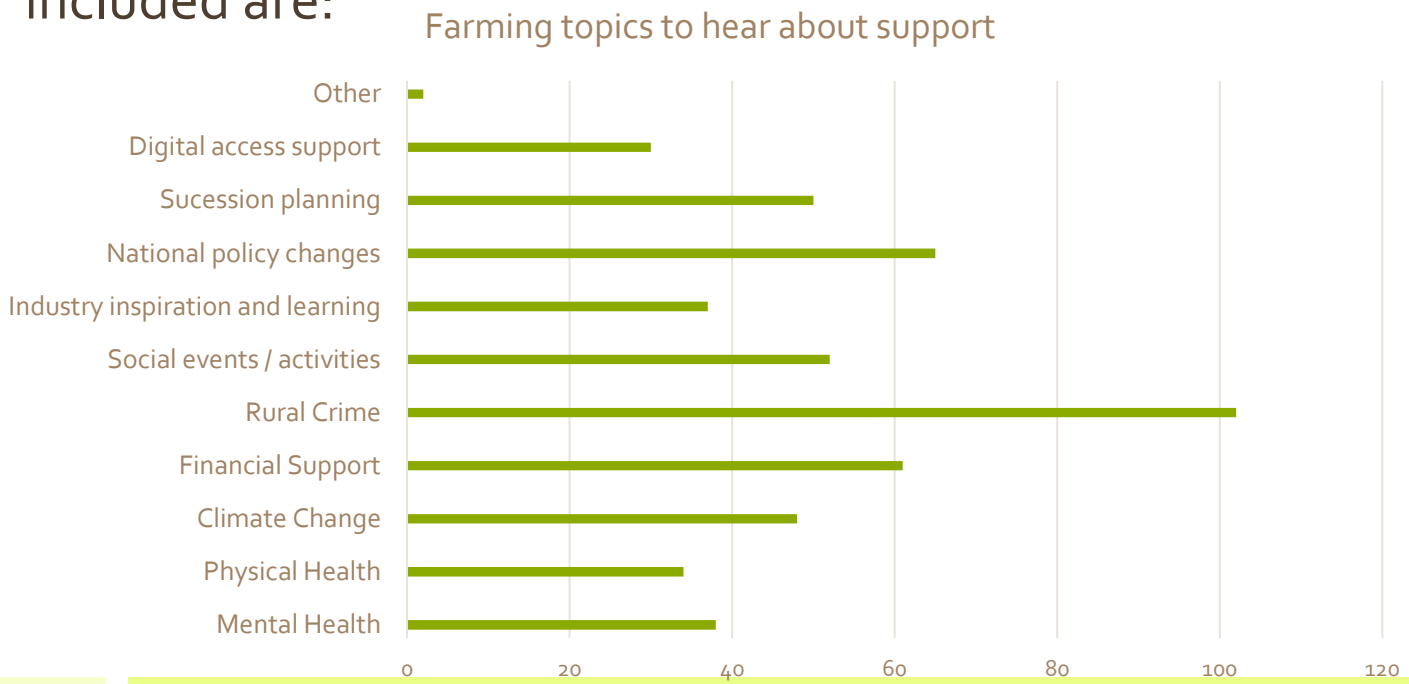
Awareness of Current Support Services Available



- Most used service is NFU, so we should look to engage with them locally to assist in disseminating messages. This was seconded by Young Farmers
- Samaritans had very high level of awareness, followed by RABI and Mind. These are all long-standing national organisations
- Listed in 'Other': CLA, Hampshire Growmore clubs, Tenant Farmers Association, Cluster Farm Groups, and pub time

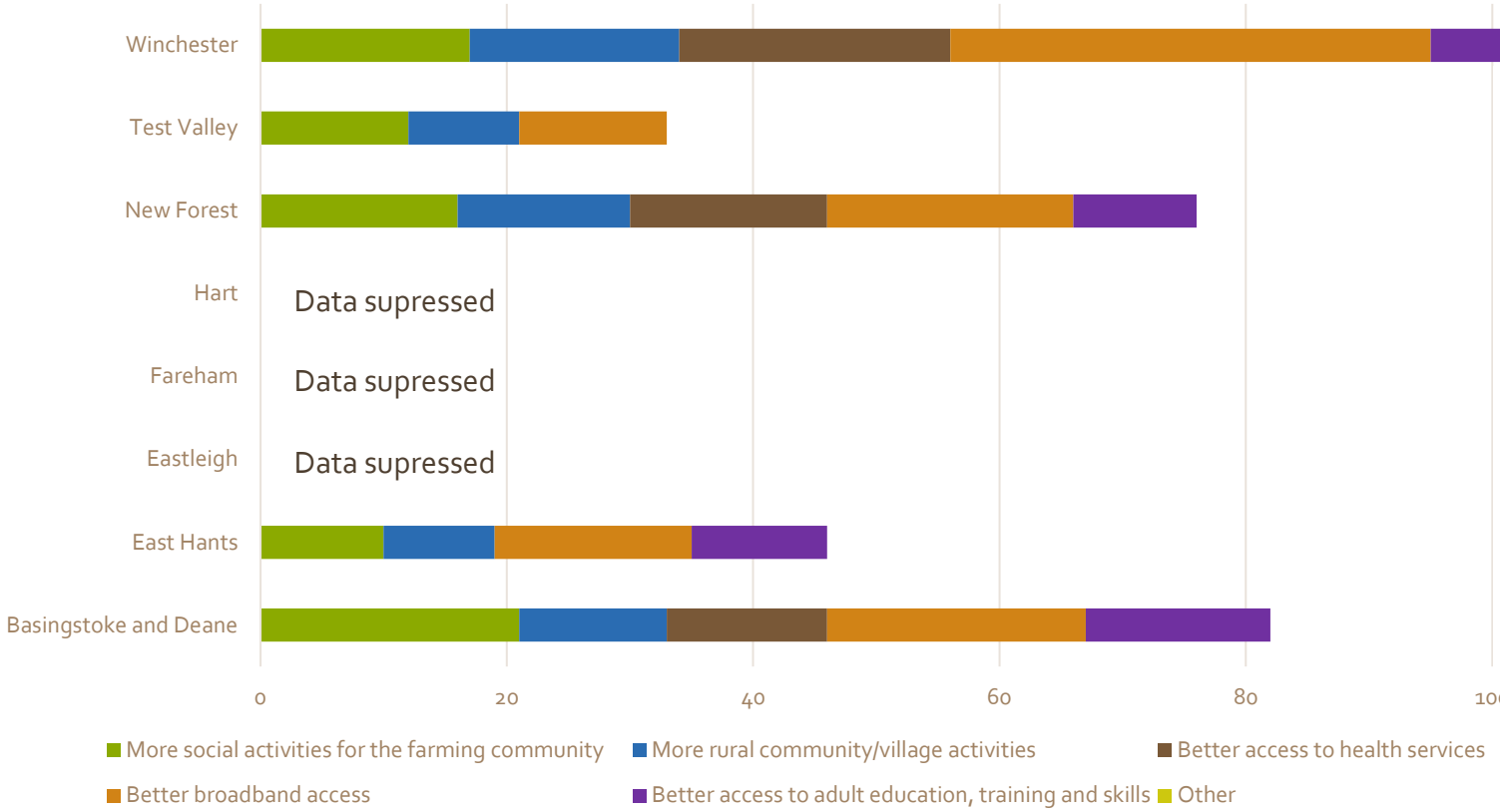
Farmers are interested in hearing more about the support available for the following topics

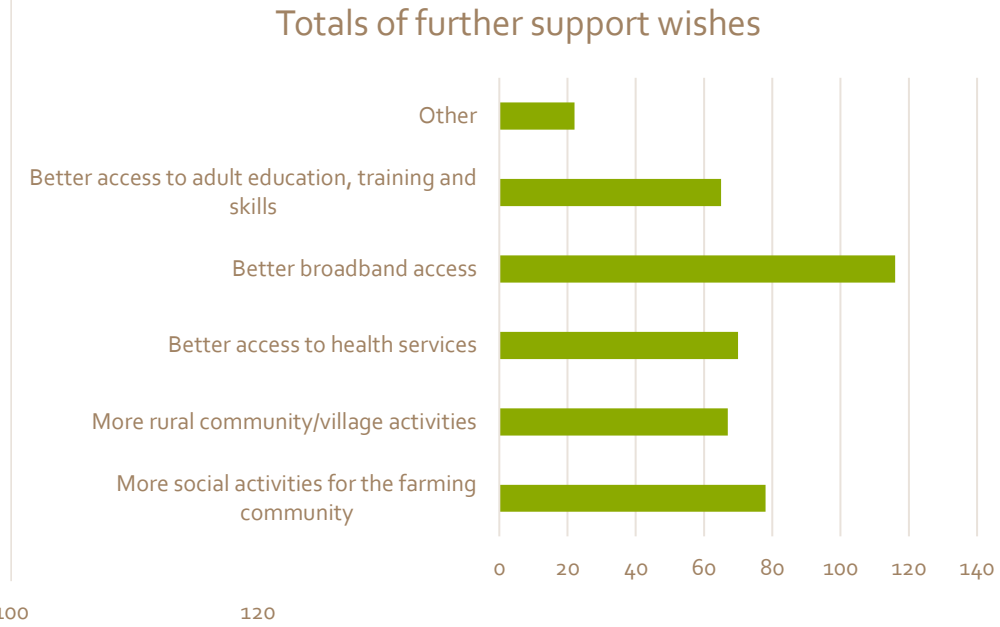
- 143 (69%) responded 'Yes' to the question '*Would you be in interested in hearing more about the support available for the farming and rural community, whether that relates to mental health, climate change, financial support, physical help, rural crime, or social opportunities?*'
- Of those who responded yes, the topics they selected they'd find most useful to be included are:



- Rural Crime ranked top by a considerable margin, with 75% of all who voted including it
- National Policy Changes (48%) and Financial Support (45%) were #2 and #3.
- Both mental and physical health ranked much lower with 28% and 25% of votes

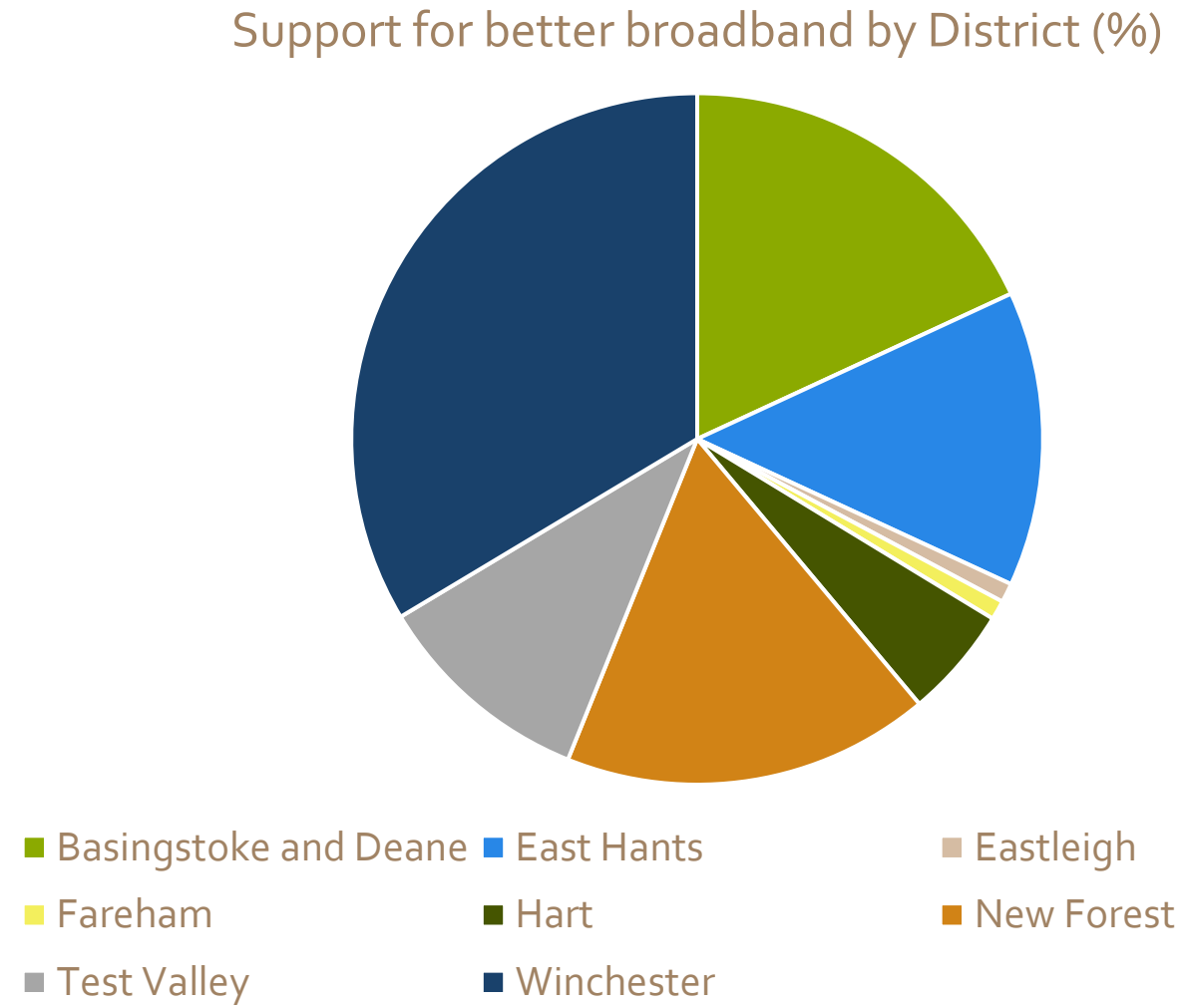
What further support do you think the farming community currently needs?





Better broadband access rates highest (116, 62%), with all other listed options falling within a 7% range of each other. 'Other' included themes such as: Understanding and support from public / Awareness raising, Funding / Subsidies / Financial help, and Policing / Rural Crime as the top mentioned issues

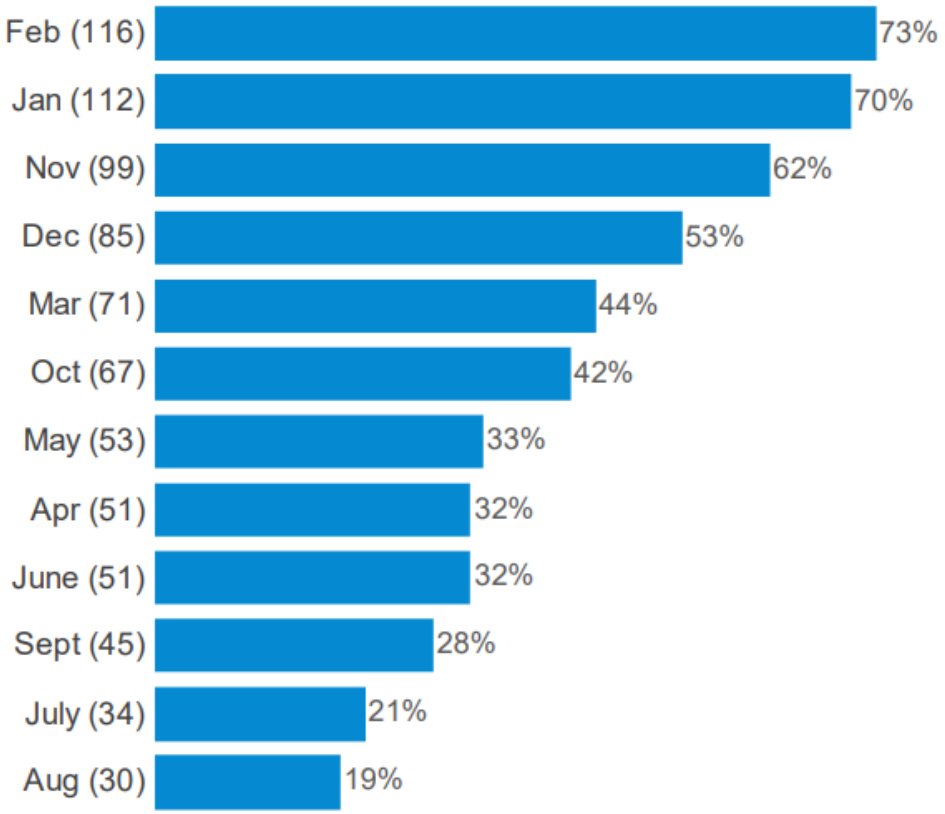
Better broadband support



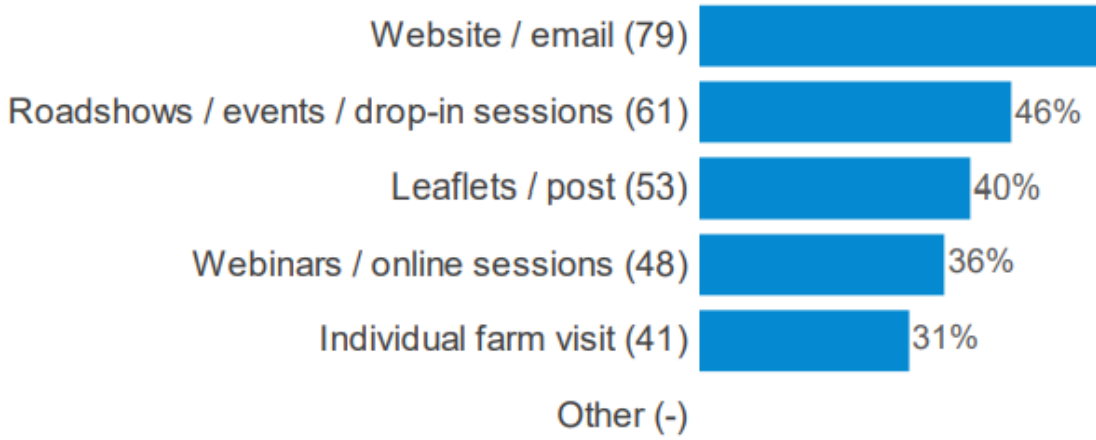
Access to Information Preferences

What is the best time of day **for you to attend events? (tick all that apply)**

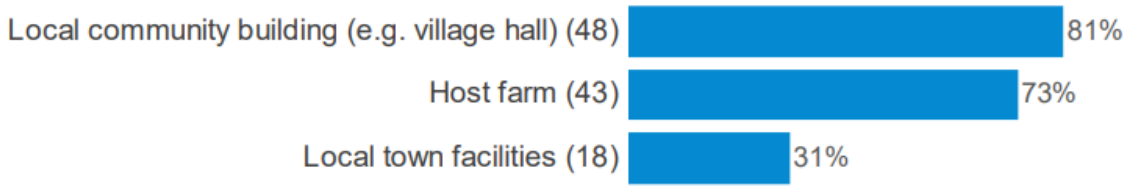
What time of year **is best for you to attend events? (tick all that apply)**



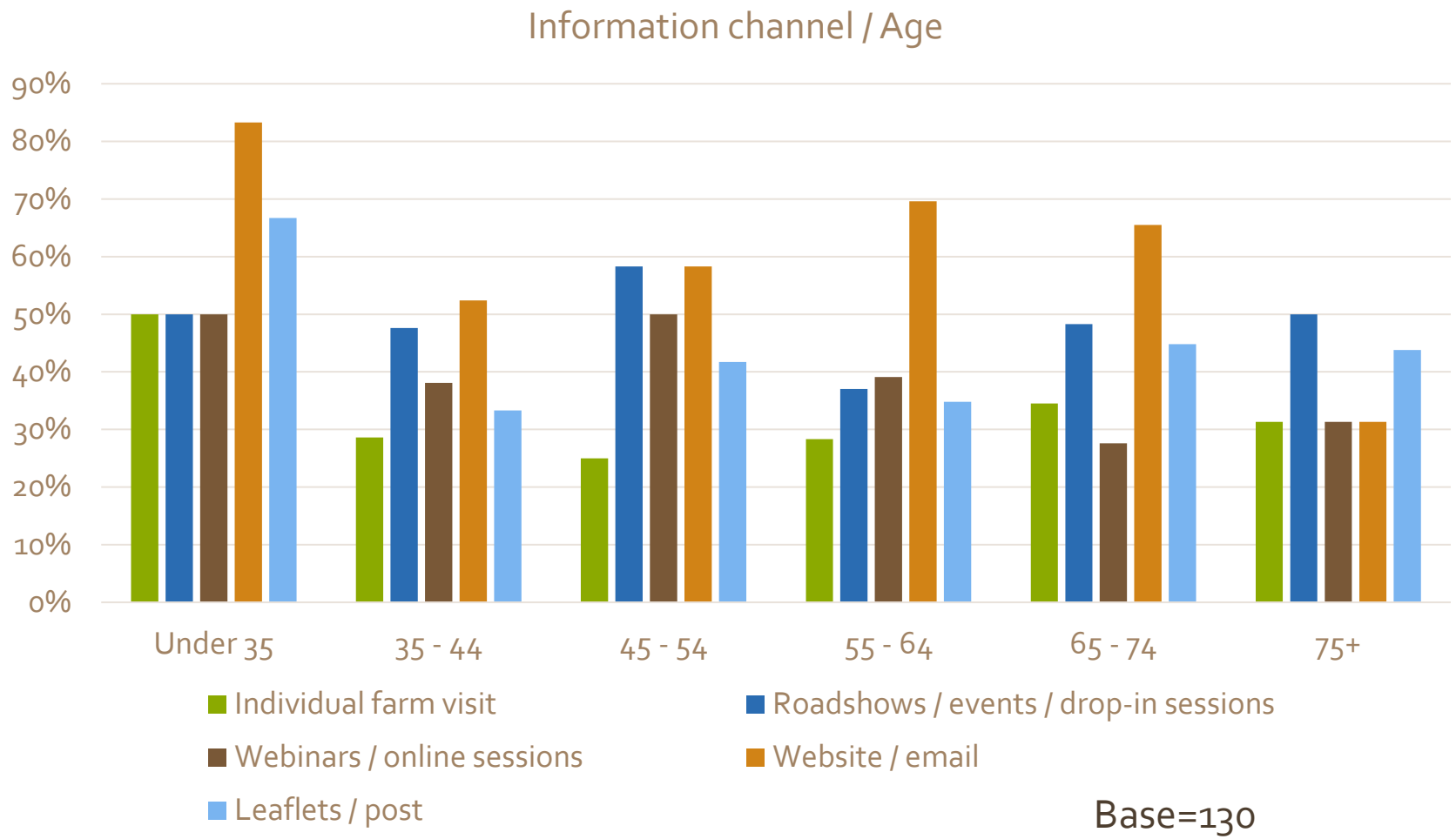
How would you like this information to be delivered? (tick all that apply)



Where would you be willing to attend these? (tick all that apply)

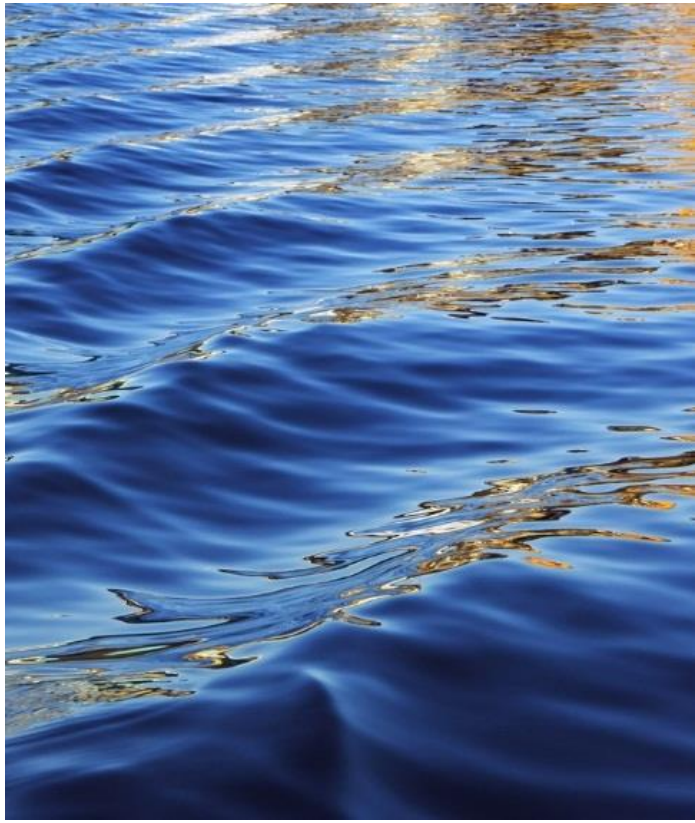


Information delivery preference by age



- Those aged under 35 favoured website/email channels
- Older respondents showed a slight preference for roadshows/events and leaflets/post

How can the farming community better support each other?



'Other' included themes to make an effort to socialise/speak with others, understanding succession planning, and that it was felt there is already enough support in place for the farming community.

- Those aged 45 – 64 and females were more keen to be more involved in championing the industry
- Respondents under 45 were most interested in Hosts for local farming coffee morning/evening
- Hosts for farm walk events was relatively similar across all age groups
- Those most interested in sharing innovations and learning were aged 45 – 74
- Those aged 65+ were most keen to help support those leaving the industry by maintaining links back
- Females were more keen for more online local farming forums / groups than males

How do you think your chosen support needs could be best delivered / provided? How can we make it happen?

Quarterly "old" farmers club with speakers and socials

Talk about physical and mental health issues associated with farming 'you are not alone'

Get DEFRA act together and support farming and to stop lower standard imports. Trade deals that support British farming and not to trash it

Communication	15
Community Development	13
Support/Peer Support	11
Government/Policy	7
Don't know/Negative	7
Funding	4
Happy as is	4
Industry support	4
Promotion of farming to the wider public	3
Publications	3
No time	2
Other	2
Better broadband/Mobile Coverage	1

When everyone is so busy it's difficult to see who has time to organise events

online and webinars allow access even in busy times

More of a community needs to be created within Hampshire Agriculture

By promoting the pressures farmers face to their local community who are often hostile to diversification of farm businesses

How do you think the farming community needs to adapt for the future? And how could it be achieved?

Common themes of comments to this question include (in descending order of number of mentions):

- Issues with government policy
- Connection with others
- Seeking understanding and education of the public about farming
- Financial support for the sector
- Succession planning, challenges for young and older farmers
- Need to improve broadband internet
- Climate change and environmental issues
- Mental health issues
- Prevention of rural crime

Consumer needs to adapt, not the farmer and appreciate all the hard work and stress involved.

Better understanding of diversification requirements on farm and planning regulations have to adapt to help them be able to expand/diversify to survive

Youth want to farm but can't afford even a fraction of the land to begin. The community needs to involve the younger farmers.

Pressures are such nearly all farmers and workers suffer at least some mental anxiety

Clarity from government re environmental issues, be supported by local and central government and kept updated

‘Other’ comments shared

- 50 respondents provided further comments. These were coded into the following themes:

Policy	26
Survey direct comments	7
Media	5
What farmers can do	3
Public opinion	3
How actions can be delivered	3
Rural Crime	2
Heath	1

I would like to know where and who owns local farms so that we could keep in touch and help each other if needed

I feel many members of the general public are unhappy and unsupporting of farming in this country and that they have a varying lack of understanding about the industry…

…even though we have been farming within the government farming policies. We are left on [site] to clear up and cope with agricultural blunders like it's all our fault rather than a collective mistake…

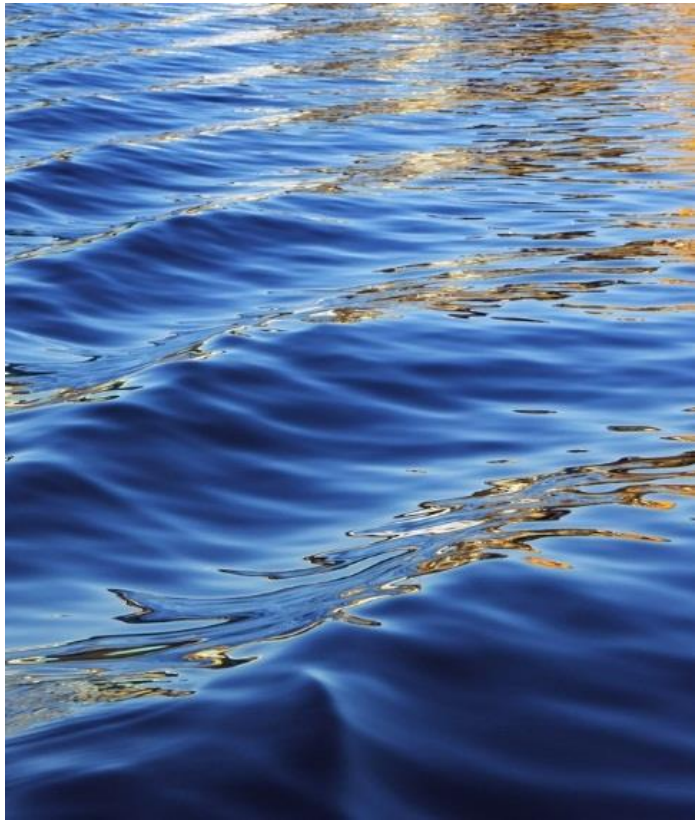
…do not forget the importance of food security, animal and environment welfare…

Challenging times and remorseless criticism in all media are not conducive to good mental health.

We face real hardships and sometimes help needs to come from all levels of the governance ladder.

There should be more wellbeing clinics run in rural areas dealing with mental health issues. where people can go along to chat about their worries

Summary and Next Steps



Summary of Hampshire Survey

- Roughly 50/50 paper/digital response rate
- A majority of respondents have been farming for **36+ years, work long hours, are older, and male**
- **Rural crime** is a top concern, rated highly as impacting on mental health and something respondents want more support with
- Rural **broadband connectivity** rates high as support the farming community currently needs, although when asked how they'd like to receive information the top rated preference was website/email
- **Weekdays after 6pm between Nov – Feb** is the best time to reach farmers, and using a local community building or host farm if a face-to-face engagement activity
- Farming **policy changes** are causing much concern amongst respondents
- Many respondents use the services of the **NFU** and are aware **of national wellbeing providers**
- **New Forest** is the area with poorest mental wellbeing. Livestock farmers have poorer mental wellbeing than arable farmers. **Females** experience worse mental wellbeing than their male counterparts

Comparison between Hampshire survey and RABI 2021 survey findings

- Both surveys found that the **farming community has a lower average mental wellbeing** than the UK population, with both surveys finding around one third of respondents being 'possibly depressed' or 'probably depressed' (RABI 36%, Hampshire 33%)
- Both surveys found that **more females respondents score probably/possibly depressed** than their male counterparts (RABI 43%, Hampshire 44%)
- Both surveys identified **pig farmers** in particular as more likely to be possibly or probably depressed, with **livestock farmer wellbeing being significantly poorer than their arable counterparts**
- Both surveys found that **working-age farming people experience lower levels of mental wellbeing**, particularly those aged 54 and under
- Similar themes on sources of stress / impact on wellbeing were found, with **subsidies, rural crime, future of farming, financial pressures, policy issues and not feeling valued** by the public appearing in both surveys. Covid-19 rated as a lower concern in the Hampshire survey possibly reflecting the later timeframe during the pandemic when the survey was completed
- RABI found 29% of respondents hardly ever or never leave the farm, Hampshire found 24% of respondents socialise with people outside of the farm with a frequency of monthly or less

RABI-Big-Farming-Survey-FINAL-single-pages-No-embargo-APP-min.pdf

Hampshire Farming Wellbeing Support Directory

Rural Wellbeing and Farming Support Contacts Directory

A list of useful contacts for rural wellbeing voluntary advice and support agencies, and regulatory bodies.

Industry Helplines

The Farming Community Network The Farming Help helpline is open 7am to 11pm every day of the year. Whether the issue is personal or business-related, FCN is here for you. Volunteers provide free, confidential, pastoral and practical support. Call: **03000 111 999** email: help@fcn.org web: fcn.org.uk/

Addington Fund Provides housing, and disaster relief in the form of animal feed or services to farmers in need. Call: **01926 620135** email: enquiries@addingtonfund.org.uk web: www.addingtonfund.org.uk

National Farmers Union (NFU) The NFU is a member organisation/industry association for farmers in England and Wales. It is the largest farmers' organisation in the country. Call: **024 7685 8500** web: www.nfuonline.co.uk

Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI) – RABI provides support to the farming community across England and Wales. Support is provided to those who are currently working in agriculture and those who are no longer working due to illness, injury, disability or age. Call: **0800 188 4444** email: help@rabi.org.uk web: www.rabi.org.uk

YANA rural mental health support and runs a helpline for confidential support. Call: **0300 323 0400** email: helpline@yanahelp.org web: Yanahelp.org

National support organisations

Samaritans offer confidential emotional support. Call for free 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Call: **116 123** email: jo@samaritans.org.uk web: www.samaritans.org

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) offer webchat or 5pm-midnight, 365 days a year helpline. Call: **0800 58 58 58** web: thecalmzone.net

Bereavement support When you lose someone close to you, it's normal to feel angry, sad, depressed or worried. Everyone reacts in their own way. There is a range of support available to help you through this process: connecttosupport hampshire.org.uk/directories&Type=Local (from the categories tab select: specific needs then bereavement).

Cruse bereavement support. Call: **01264 336006** (North Hampshire) or **0844 879 3448** (South Hampshire). They offer a webchat at cruse.org.uk

Online industry support resources

FarmWell, an initiative by FCN, a range of information to support your personal resilience including mental and physical health farmwell.org.uk/personal-resilience/. Watch the wellbeing webinar series: farmwell.org.uk/ahdb-mental-wellbeing-webinars/

Fit for Farming men's guide - issuu.com/menshealthforum/docs/fit_for_farming_2015_hr and women's guide, www.menshealthforum.org.uk/fit-farming-women both have sections about mental wellbeing as well as physical health

V1 December 2021

https://documents.hants.gov.uk/public-health/rural-wellbeing-contacts-directory.pdf

Find it in 'Workplace Wellbeing' on

Mental Wellbeing Hampshire

hants.gov.uk/mentalwellbeinghampshire

EFRA Committee Rural Wellbeing

The findings of this survey have been submitted to the EFRA committee for inclusion as evidence into the Rural Wellbeing inquiry:

https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/52/environment-food-and-rural-affairs-committee/news/159155/mps-study-rural-mental-health-a-sometimes-hidden-topic/

Suggested Recommendations and next steps

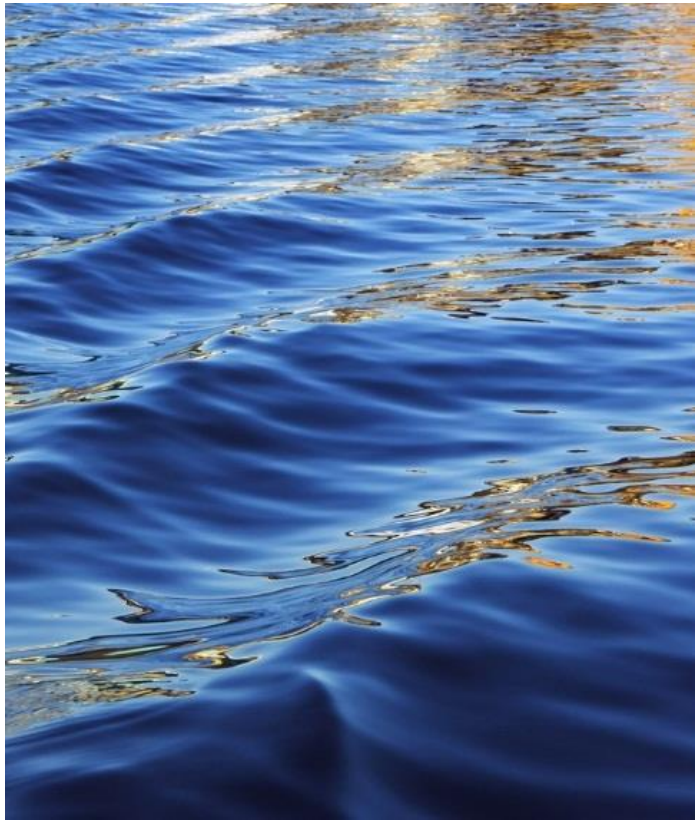
- **Rural Crime** – work with Hampshire rural police teams to deliver an offer and carry info/signposting to wellbeing support
- Rural **broadband connectivity** – how can digital inequalities be reduced?
- Work with farming support charities, local NFU and other stakeholders (e.g. Growmore clubs) to **disseminate local wellbeing messages**, amplify national wellbeing campaigns from large recognised organisations via local channels, build and improve local communication channels
- Explore opportunities to improve **communications and relationships between farmers and local people**. Media opportunities, community engagement activities. Explore linking with National Parks to broker relationships between farmers and those using countryside for leisure
- **Climate change** conversations – share learning and best practice? Communicate Net Zero information/support
- Encourage all farms to have **succession and contingency plans** in place and that a social support network is in place for those retired from the industry

Suggested Recommendations and next steps

- Be mindful of when / where / how to deliver messaging or interventions
- Identify willing farmers to work with to host farm walks / talks and use partners to reduce hosting burden
- Identify ways to **support farming women** with their mental wellbeing
- Targeted **additional support for livestock farmers** and those located in the New Forest
- Additional local **support and opportunity to discuss changes in national policy and financial support** options, and what it means for those actually working on the ground
- Work with stakeholders to foster a strong **sense of community** amongst Hampshire Farmers for peer support, learning and social connection, offering a range of **social activity opportunities**, post pandemic re-connection events to help combat isolation and loneliness
- Work with local **agricultural colleges to raise awareness of mental health issues**, resilience and self care techniques, and mentoring support for students beginning their careers
- Explore possibility of **rural health** clinics or support for farm personnel

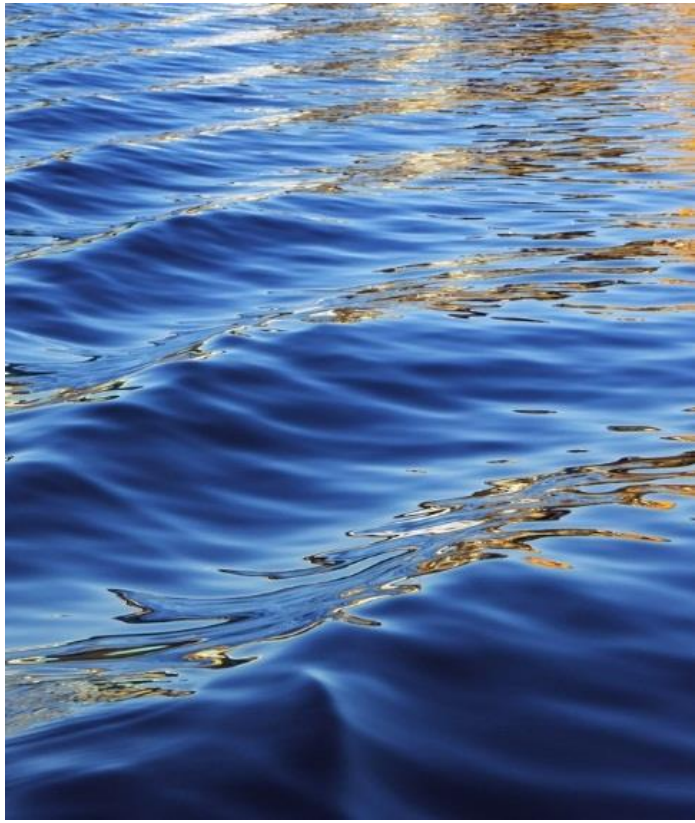
How can your organisation help to address needs identified here?

We don't have all the answers, or the resources, but together we can have meaningful change



https://jamboard.google.com/d/1bVUu2MkP2rzR10Lyd1u8aVPdBRqAkWrgdHdwUi40AUQ/edit?usp=sharing

Appendix



Some SWEMWBS Data

		Category of SWEMWBS score		
Age	Number	Low mental health (amongst lowest 15% nationally)	Average mental health	High mental health (amongst highest 15% nationally)
Under 35	9	22%	78%	-
35 - 44	24	17%	67%	17%
45 - 54	24	25%	67%	8%
55 - 64	70	17%	71%	11%
65 - 74	48	19%	73%	8%
75+	25	8%	76%	16%

		Category of SWEMWBS score		
Gender	Number	Low mental health (amongst lowest 15% nationally)	Average mental health	High mental health (amongst highest 15% nationally)
Male	154	14%	75%	11%
Female	43	28%	63%	9%
Prefer not to say	*	*	*	*

		Category of SWEMWBS score		
Average hours worked/week	Number	Low mental health (amongst lowest 15% nationally)	Average mental health	High mental health (amongst highest 15% nationally)
15 hours or less	28	14%	79%	7%
16 - 30 hours	34	21%	59%	21%
31 - 45 hours	40	10%	75%	15%
46 - 60 hours	46	11%	76%	13%
61 hours or more	58	26%	72%	2%

		Category of SWEMWBS score		
Farming Type	Number	Low mental health (amongst lowest 15% nationally)	Average mental health	High mental health (amongst highest 15% nationally)
Arable	108	8%	85%	7%
Cattle - dairy	13	23%	69%	8%
Cattle - beef	83	24%	66%	10%
Sheep	66	26%	67%	8%
Pigs	16	38%	63%	-
Poultry	21	14%	57%	29%
Horticulture	10	20%	70%	10%
Other	63	18%	70%	13%

Step by Step (SBS)

Project objective:

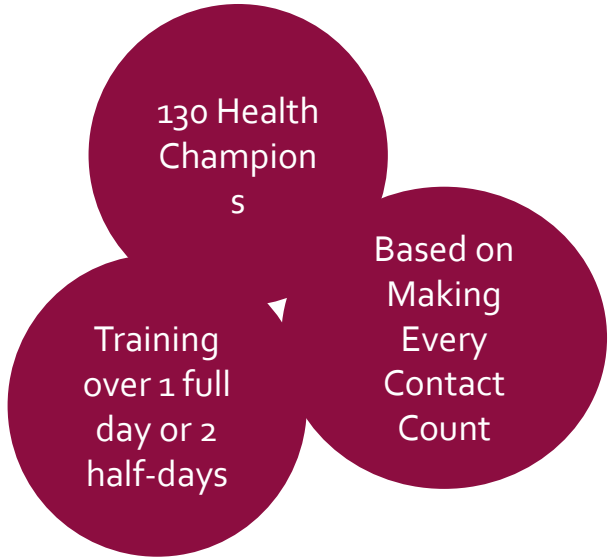
To develop, test and evaluate a new model of community-based health improvement for men.

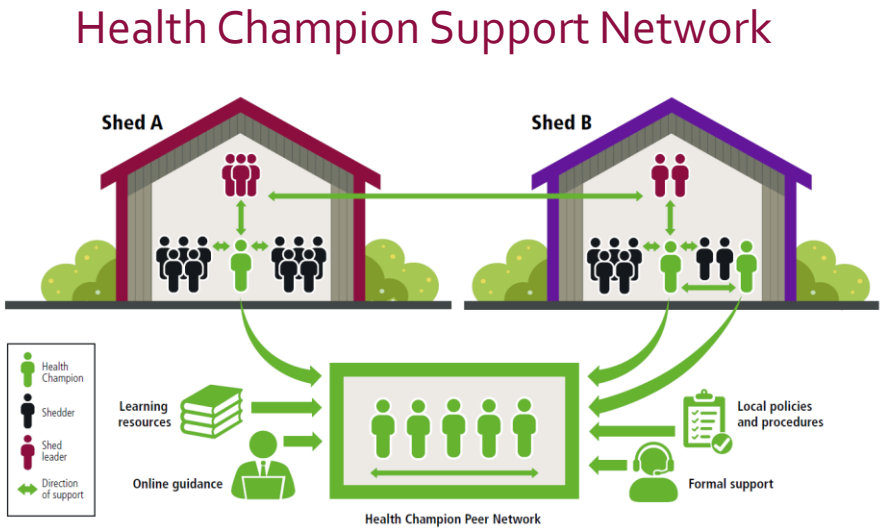
Model aims:

- Improved mental wellbeing
- Improved physical health
- Improved employability

Key elements of SBS Model – Health & Wellbeing

- Support to embed health in all aspects of Men's Groups – mental health, healthy lifestyles
- Health Champion training programme covering men's health and healthy conversations
- Mobile health kiosks using digital technology to engage more men in their physical health and wellbeing
- Health awareness talks





See visit https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-every-contact-count-mecc-practical-resources

Benefits – Health

- 68.2% reported improvements in mental wellbeing
- 45.2% reported improvements in physical health

Mental Health and Wellbeing
I'm sure it's helped me with my depression. Probably once upon a time, if I was going to go somewhere and I was feeling particularly depressed, I probably would have thought 'I don't feel well enough to face other people'. But [at the Shed] I've gone, so it's made me realise I've got a commitment to them. (AA2404)

Physical Activity
I've got the step app on my phone now, it's great, it pushes me and it's a target and that's something that appeals to blokes, they want something to aim at. I've got an exercise bike now, I'm getting better forms of exercise. Both of those have been developments that have coincided with the SBS stuff. (TD0101)

Health Conversations
We were just chatting about prostate cancer screening. And one of the lads said 'yeah, I did that last year, I got the amber letter'. Five of us signed up for prostate cancer screening that night. One of them got the red letter, he's had the op, and he's absolutely fine now. Had we not had that conversation, would he have gone and done it? (AW2407)