

# Norfolk JSNA Social Isolation and Loneliness Annex 1: Community Life Survey 2023/24 data

Since writing the Norfolk JSNA on Social Isolation and Loneliness, the results of the Community Life Survey for data collected during October 2023 to March 2024 have been published (1). Several aspects for the collection of data for this latest publication have changed since the Community Life Survey 2021/22 referenced in the JSNA document. These include a significantly increased sample size to collect over 175,000 responses and the production of estimates at the local authority level. This annex provides a summary of the new data and should be read in conjunction with the Norfolk JSNA on Social Isolation and Loneliness.

## Note on the data reported

The Community Life Survey 2023/24 reports the proportion of adults aged 16+ in England who felt lonely *often* or *always*, and demographic breakdowns are provided for age, sex, gender identify, disability status, socio-economic classification, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, Index of Multiple Deprivation, and for International Territorial Levels 1 and 2 and Local Authority regions (2). The JSNA document reports the proportion of people surveyed who felt lonely *often*, *always*, or *some of the time* for different demographic groups and geographies based on the findings from the Active Lives Surveys from 2019-2023 (3).

## National findings

The Community Life Survey 2023/24 found that 7% of adults (approximately 3.1 million people in England) reported that they felt lonely often or always. This is consistent with the findings from the Active Lives Survey 2022/23, which also found that 7% of people surveyed felt lonely often or always.

Similar to the Active Lives Survey 2022/23 findings, the Community Life Survey 2023/24 found that the following groups are more likely to experience loneliness in England:

- Younger adults
- Women were more likely to report that they felt lonely often or always than men
- Adults whose gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth
- Adults from the Gypsy or Irish Traveller, mixed White and Black Caribbean, 'any other' mixed or multiple ethnic background, Black Caribbean, mixed White and Black African and Bangladeshi ethnic groups
- Adults from the never worked and long-term unemployed classification
- Adults from the routine and manual operations classification
- Adults from the two lowest deprivation (the most deprived) deciles

Converse to the Active Lives Survey 2022/23 findings, the Community Life Survey 2023/24 found that adults from the Chinese ethnic group were less likely to state they felt lonely often or always than the England average.

Community Life Survey 2023/24 data collected for population groups not reported on in the JSNA document found that:

- Disabled adults (15%) were more likely to report that they felt lonely often or always than non-disabled adults (3%).

- Adults in the ‘other’ sexual orientation classification (17%) and bisexual adults (16%) were more likely to report that they felt lonely often or always than gay or lesbian adults (12%) or heterosexual or straight adults (7%).
- There was some variation in the proportion of adults from different religious groups that experienced loneliness, for example adults from ‘any other’ religious group were more likely than adults from all other religious groups to say that they felt lonely often or always (14% compared with 6% to 9%).
- Adults living in urban areas (7%) were more likely to report that they felt lonely often or always than adults living in rural areas (5%).

### Regional findings

Data from the 2023/24 survey showed the East of England and East Anglia were in line with the England average of 7% for people aged 16 and over reporting they felt lonely often or always.

### Local findings

The Community Life Survey 2023/24 found that people aged 16 and over living in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk, Great Yarmouth and Norwich were more likely to report that they felt lonely often or always than the regional or England averages. The Active Lives Survey 2019/20 also found that Norwich and Great Yarmouth had the largest proportion of adults feeling lonely at least some of the time and had higher levels of loneliness than the England average (Norwich significantly more so), but that loneliness in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk was below the England average for those surveyed.

Table 1: Percentage of people aged 16 and over feeling lonely often or always from October 2023 to March 2024 by local authority in Norfolk (1).

Local authority	2023/24 Percentage (%)
Breckland	3
Broadland	6
Great Yarmouth	8
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	10
North Norfolk	6
Norwich	8
South Norfolk	7

### Indirect measure of loneliness

To address variation in how people understand the term “loneliness” and potential reluctance to report their feelings of loneliness, the Community Life Survey also asks three questions relating to, but not explicitly asking about, loneliness. Responses to these questions were combined to produce a composite loneliness score running from 3 (indicating less frequent loneliness) to 9 (indicating more frequent loneliness).

During October 2023 to March 2024 (2023/24):

- 10% of adults (approximately 3.9 million people in England) reported high levels of indirect loneliness (a score of 8 or 9).

- The proportion of adults who reported low levels of indirect loneliness (a score of 3 or 4) was 56%.

The demographic subgroups more likely to report high levels of indirect loneliness were largely in line with those more likely to have reported feeling lonely often or always.

Locally, the data collected in the Community Life Survey 2023/24 found that King's Lynn and West Norfolk and Norwich rated highest amongst survey responses received measuring for indirect loneliness. South Norfolk was also slightly higher than the England average for indirect loneliness.

Table 2: Percentage of people aged 16 and over who scored an Indirect Loneliness Composite Score of 8/9 (indicating more frequent loneliness) from October 2023 to March 2024 by local authority in Norfolk (1).

Local authority	2023/24 Percentage (%)
Breckland	5
Broadland	6
Great Yarmouth	10
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	13
North Norfolk	8
Norwich	13
South Norfolk	11

The full breakdown for direct and indirect loneliness for different geographies and demographic groups can be found in the Community Life Survey 2023 to 2024: Annual data tables (1).

## Bibliography

1. Community Life Survey 2023/24 annual publication. GOV.UK. [Online].; 2024 [cited 2025 January 02. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-202324-annual-publication>.
2. Community Life Survey 2023/24: Loneliness and support networks. GOV.UK. [Online].; 2024 [cited 2025 January 02. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-202324-annual-publication/community-life-survey-202324-loneliness-and-support-networks--2>.
3. Active Lives Adult Survey. Sport England. [Online].; 2019-2023 [cited 2024 October 15. Available from: [https://www.sportengland.org/research-and-data/data/active-lives/active-lives-data-tables?section=adult\\_surveys](https://www.sportengland.org/research-and-data/data/active-lives/active-lives-data-tables?section=adult_surveys).