

ACTIVE LIVES ADULT SURVEY

MENTAL WELLBEING,
INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS
(MAY 16-17)

Published December 2017



WELCOME

This supplementary release of Active Lives data looks at the link between levels of activity and volunteering in sport and physical activity, and three of the outcomes in the Government's *Sporting Future* strategy.

The data reveals that, at a population level, there is a clear, positive link between engaging in sport and physical activity – including volunteering – and the outcomes.

We know from the Office for National Statistics' *Measuring National Wellbeing Programme* that there are clear inequalities in levels of wellbeing. We also know from the Active Lives Adult Survey that similar inequalities exist in activity levels. Delivered in the right way, people getting active can help to address both of these inequalities.

Alongside our *Sport Outcomes Evidence Review* and our *Evaluation Framework*, the analysis we are presenting in this report forms part of the overall picture we are building. We will continue to analyse all the relevant data as we deliver our *Towards an Active Nation* strategy.

Doing this will help us gain the understanding needed to target future policies and investment to be of most benefit to those people and communities with the greatest need.

Lisa O'Keefe
Insight Director

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KEY INFORMATION

This report presents data from the Active Lives Adult Survey for the period mid-May 2016 to mid-May 2017. Data is presented for adults aged 16+ in England.

RELEASE DATES

This release: 14 December 2017
Next release: 22 March 2018

FIND OUT MORE

For further information on the data presented in this report, please visit the [Active Lives area](#) of our website.

FOREWORD

The Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University was delighted to be given the opportunity to work collaboratively with Sport England to analyse the Active Lives Adult Survey data.

We have enjoyed investigating for the first time, the relationship between engagement in sport and physical activity and the strategy outcomes of mental wellbeing, individual development and social and community development.

We know from previous research that sport and physical activity can have a positive impact on people's lives beyond the physical health benefits derived from increased participation.

However, we also know it is challenging to measure and quantify the wider impact of sport and physical activity on society and as a consequence, much of the current evidence relating to the outcomes is qualitative or case study based.

Our analysis found that taking part and volunteering in sport and physical activity are positively linked with the outcome measures for mental wellbeing, individual development and social and community development.

We found that the progressively more active have higher outcome scores than the inactive and that volunteers have higher outcome scores than non-volunteers. However, we also found that, whilst significant, the differences between these groups are relatively small.

While modest in its findings, the contribution of this research should not be understated. This research adds credible cross-sectional data analysis to the literature and provides a baseline against which to measure progress in relation to the strategy outcomes.

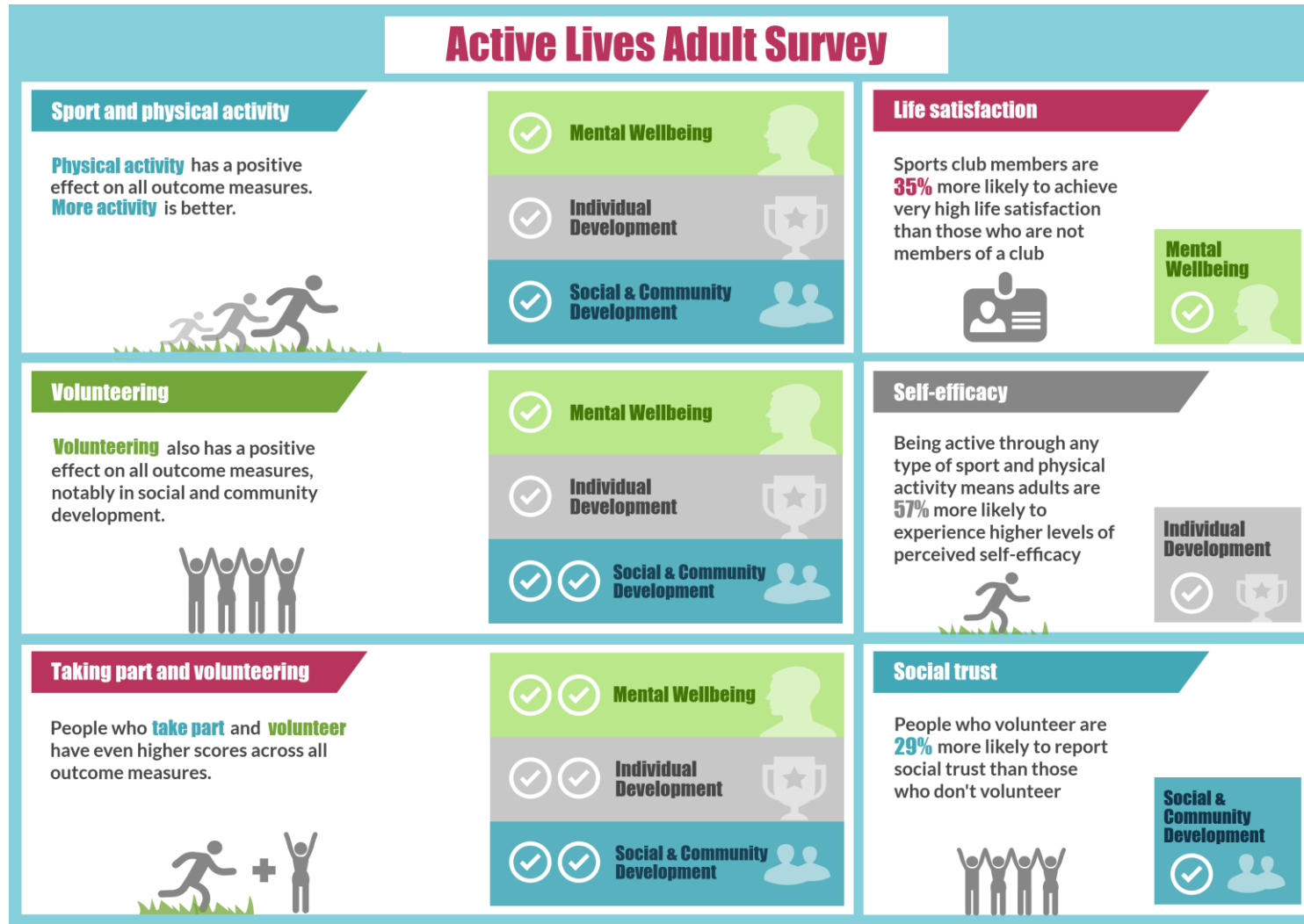
Nevertheless, it is limited to investigating the associations between engagement and the outcomes, and there is still further research to do in terms of exploring if taking part and volunteering cause higher mental wellbeing, self-efficacy and social trust.

Dr. Larissa Davies

Sport Industry Research Centre

THE HEADLINES

THIS REPORT PRESENTS SIX KEY FINDINGS, AS THE GRAPHIC BELOW ILLUSTRATES



OUR APPROACH

Using data from the *Active Lives Adult Survey* covering May 2016 to May 2017, this report gives an insight into how sport and physical activity contributes to three outcomes set out in the Government's *Sporting Future* strategy. The data analysis was conducted by Sheffield Hallam University's Sport Industry Research Centre.

This research included the following elements:

1. Secondary analysis of the Active Lives Adult Survey data using:
 - Simple (bivariate) statistical tests to give an overview of the associations between taking part and volunteering in sport and physical activity and outcome measures (related to findings 1-3)
 - More complex (multivariate regression) statistical tests that control for basic demographic differences (gender, age, occupation, ethnicity and disability) to give more sophisticated insight into the factors that influence the outcome measures (related to findings 4-6).

(The measures of engagement and outcomes used for the analysis are explained further on pages 6, 7 and 8 of this report).

2. A review of literature and evidence to provide a wider context for, and build on, the secondary analysis (referenced as applicable to the findings).

OTHER REPORTS

Alongside this summary report, which details the six key findings from our research, two other reports have been produced:

- The detailed report gives full details of all the work undertaken and the findings
- The data tables will help you to undertake your own examination of the data.

[LINK TO DETAILED REPORT](#)



[LINK TO DATA TABLES](#)



ENGAGEMENT MEASURES

The analysis presented in this report uses two different measures of engagement in sport and physical activity:

- Levels of activity (*Sporting Future* KPIs 1a and 2a)
- Volunteering (*Sporting Future* KPI 9a).

DEFINITION

LEVELS OF ACTIVITY

The graphics below show the activities we include, when they count, and how we classify different levels of activity:





- Inactive: Less than 30 minutes a week
- Fairly active: 30-149 minutes a week
- Active: At least 150 minutes a week



VOLUNTEERING

We count a person as having volunteered if:

-  They have taken part in a volunteering role to support sport and physical activity
(A full list of roles can be found on page 18).
-  A person has volunteered at least twice in the last 12 months

MENTAL WELLBEING

The analysis presented in this report uses four measures of mental wellbeing.

DEFINITION



MEASURING MENTAL WELLBEING

The Active Lives Adult Survey includes four questions on mental wellbeing:

Life satisfaction

“Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?”

Worthwhile

“Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in life are worthwhile?”

Happiness

“Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?”

Anxiety

“Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?”

MEASURE	THRESHOLDS				
	VERY LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	VERY HIGH
LIFE SATISFACTION	NA	0-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
WORTHWHILE	NA	0-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
HAPPINESS	NA	0-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
ANXIETY	0-1	2-3	4-5	6-10	NA

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The analysis presented in this report uses a measure of self-efficacy (individual development) and social trust (social and community development).

DEFINITION



MEASURING INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The **individual development** analysis presented in this report is based on the following self-efficacy question:

“I can achieve most of the goals I set myself?”

For year two of the Active Lives Adult survey, we also asked:

“If I find something difficult, I keep trying until I can do it?”

Analysis of this question will form part of future findings.

For **social and community development**, the following social trust question is asked:

“Most people in our local area can be trusted?”

MEASURE	SCALE				
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
SELF-EFFICACY	1	2	3	4	5
SOCIAL TRUST	1	2	3	4	5

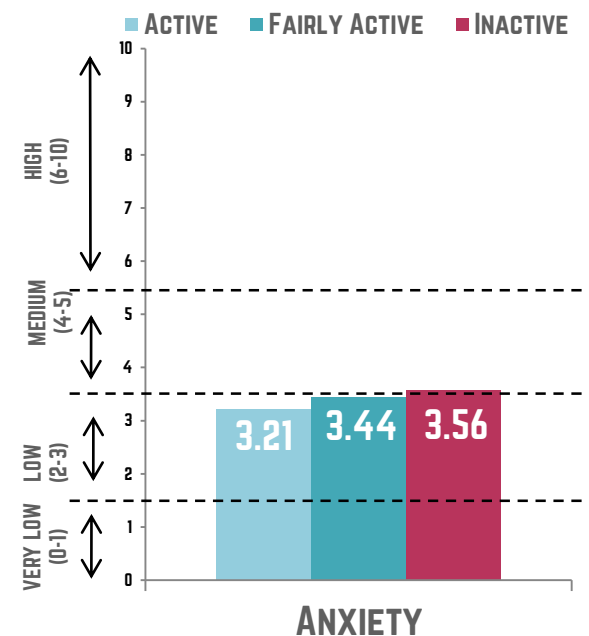
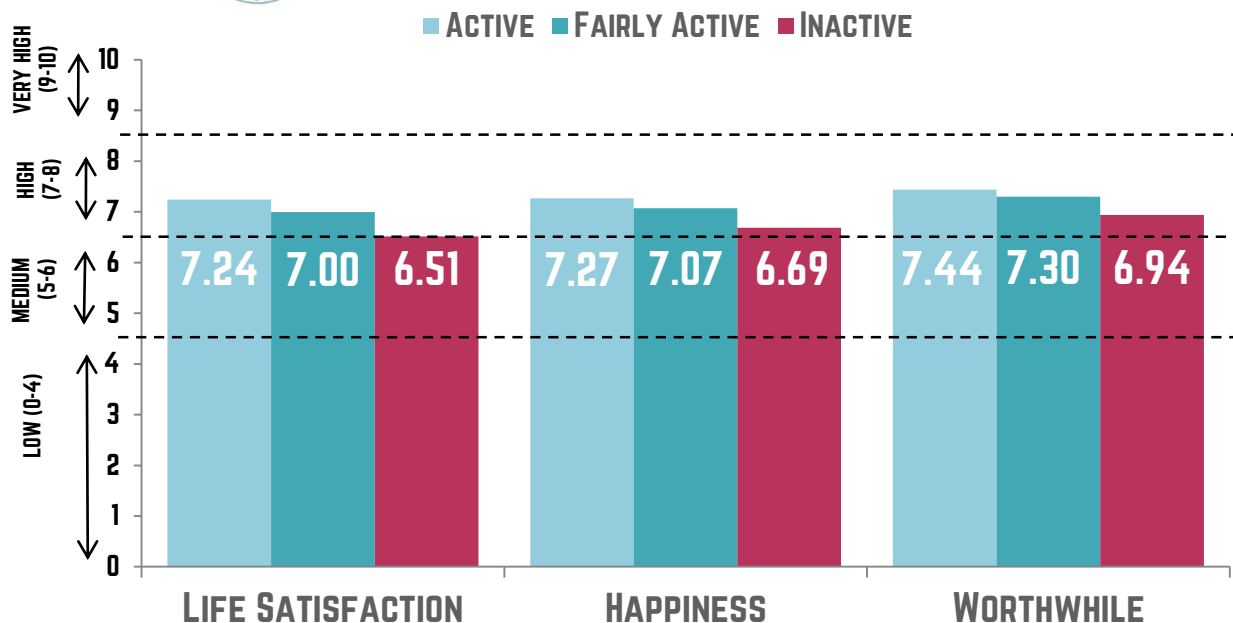
1. LEVELS OF ACTIVITY

BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE IS POSITIVELY LINKED WITH ALL FOUR MENTAL WELLBEING MEASURES

When looking at activity levels amongst adults, we can see that those who are 'active' have a better mental wellbeing score than those who are 'fairly active', who in turn have a better score relative to those who are 'inactive'. This shows a positive link between being more active and mental wellbeing.

Amongst people with a disability, the positive link between levels of activity and life satisfaction, happiness and feeling worthwhile is slightly stronger.

There is considerable research literature supporting this link, with published findings from the *Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (2014)*, *NatCen for Social Research (2017)* and *C3 Collaborating for Health Review (2012)*, amongst others.

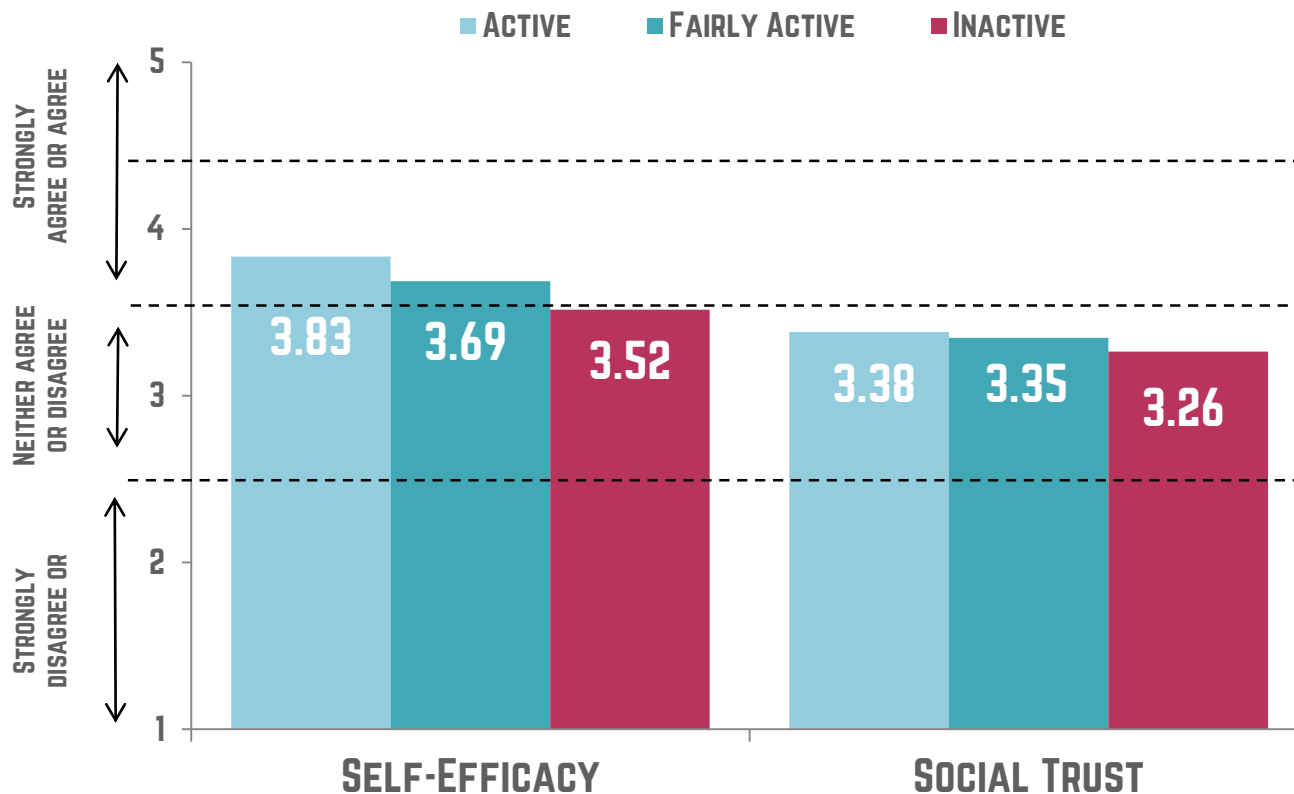


1. LEVELS OF ACTIVITY

SELF-EFFICACY AND SOCIAL TRUST IS HIGHER FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

As with measures of mental wellbeing, when looking at activity levels amongst adults, we can see that those who are 'active' report higher levels of self-efficacy and social trust than those who are 'fairly active', who in turn have better scores than those who are 'inactive'.

The literature review found that the amount and quality of evidence varies by outcome measure, but *Chalkley et al (2015)* provides evidence to support the association between physical activity and self-efficacy.



2. VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERING IS POSITIVELY LINKED WITH THE FOUR MENTAL WELLBEING MEASURES

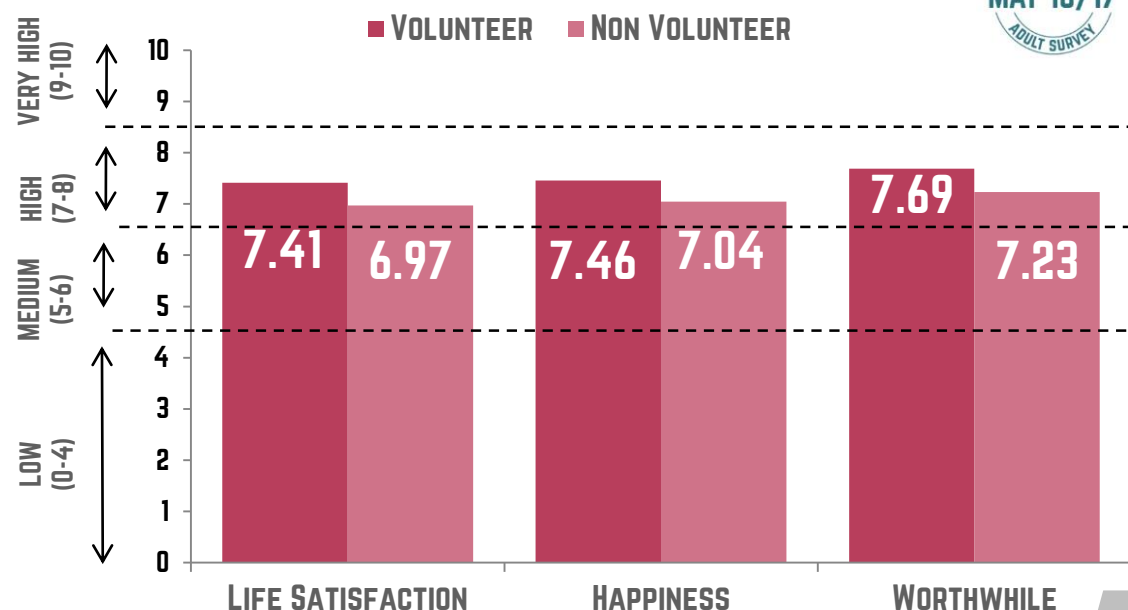
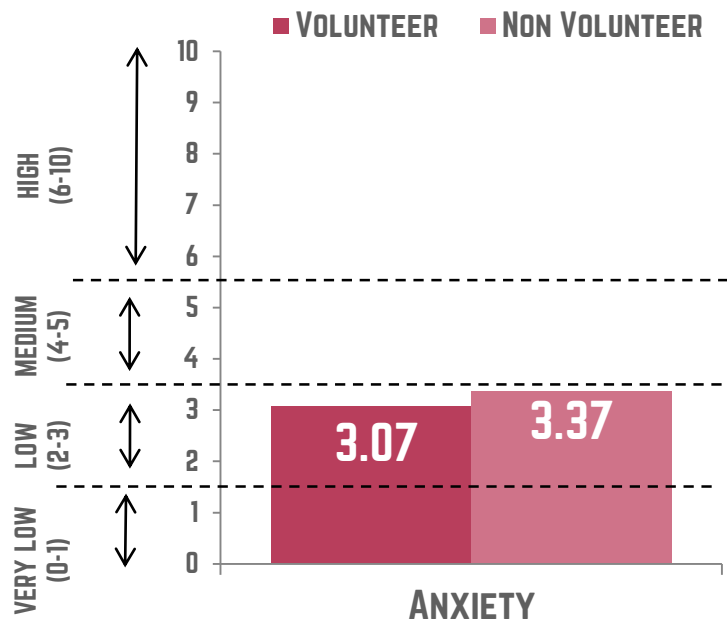
Across all four measures of mental wellbeing, those who volunteered at least twice in the last 12 months reported better outcomes than those who did not.

The positive link between volunteering and anxiety for people from lower socio-economic groups is slightly greater.

There is less literature on the link between volunteering and mental wellbeing. The main evidence on volunteering comes from a report

commissioned by Join in (*Williams and Jacques, 2015*). This showed that people who volunteer in sport report higher levels of feeling like their life has a sense of purpose, that they are doing something important, feel a sense of pride and that their life has meaning.

This supports our findings on feeling worthwhile, where people who give their time to volunteer in sport had a higher average score (7.69), compared to non-volunteers (7.23).

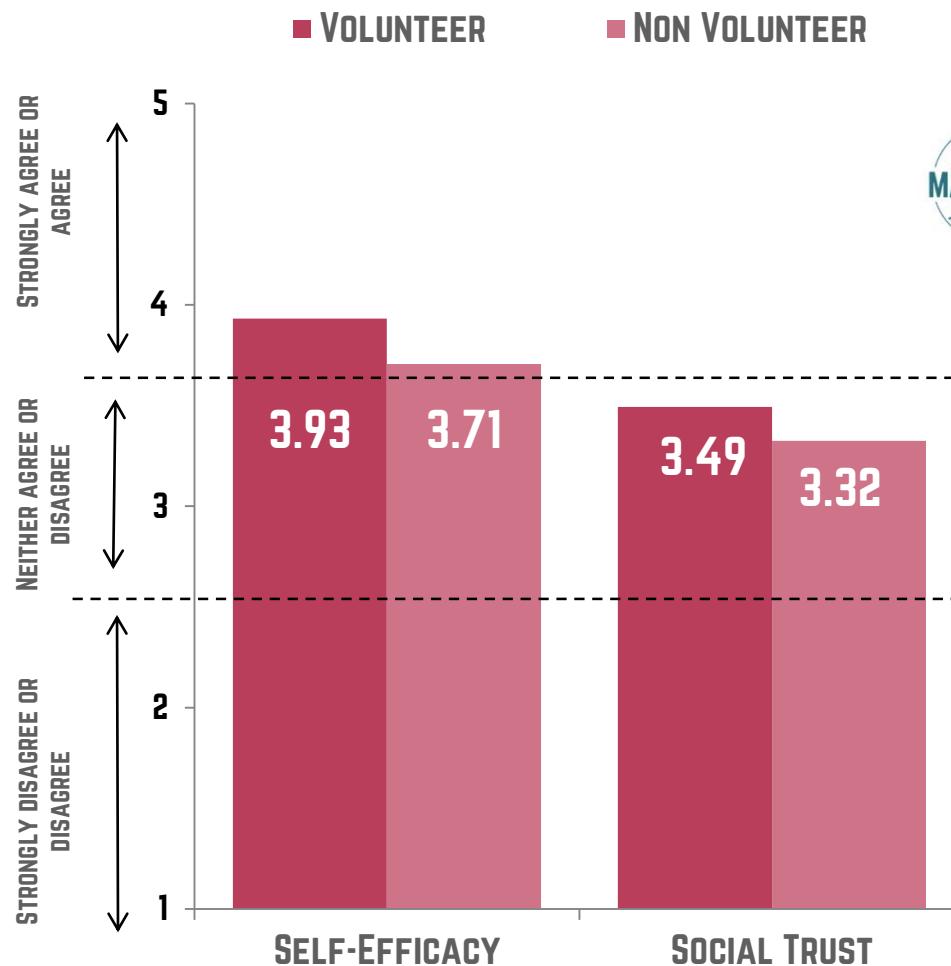


2. VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERING IS POSITIVELY LINKED WITH SELF-EFFICACY AND SOCIAL TRUST

As with measures of mental wellbeing, people who volunteered report higher levels of self-efficacy and social trust compared to those who do not.

Williams and Jacques (2015) found volunteers were more likely to feel good about their community, and that compared to those who have never volunteered in sport, were more likely to report that they trusted others in their community.

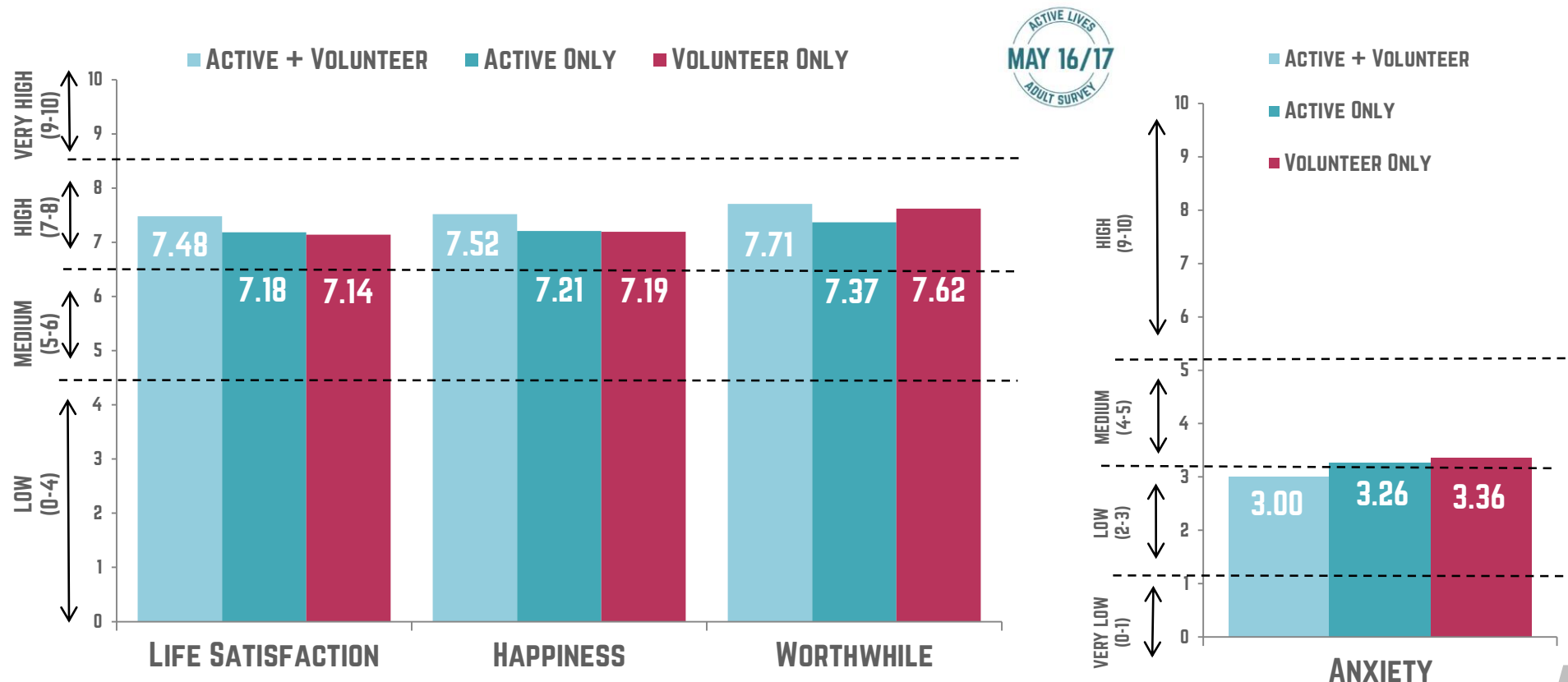


3. BEING ACTIVE AND VOLUNTEERING

GOOD MENTAL WELLBEING INCREASES EVEN MORE FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BOTH ACTIVE AND A VOLUNTEER

Across all four mental wellbeing measures, those who reached 150 minutes or more of physical activity a week and volunteered twice in the last year reported better outcomes compared to those who did just one of these. The combination of doing both increased scores

across the mental wellbeing measure. It should be noted that volunteering is particularly associated with higher levels of feeling worthwhile.

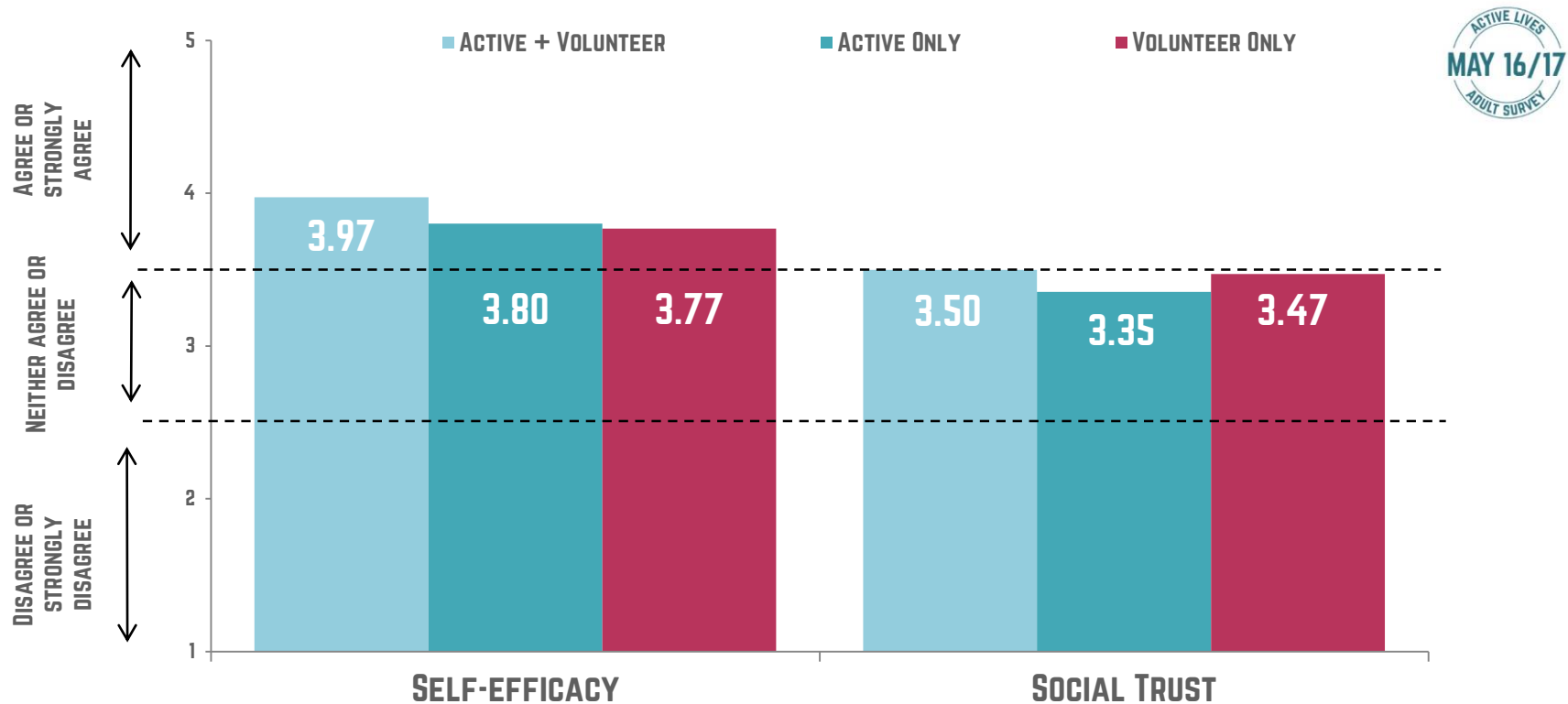


3. BEING ACTIVE AND VOLUNTEERING

SELF-EFFICACY AND SOCIAL TRUST ARE EVEN HIGHER FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BOTH ACTIVE AND A VOLUNTEER

For the individual development measure, those who reached 150 minutes or more of physical activity a week and volunteered twice in the last year, reported better outcomes compared to those who did one and not the other.

For the community development measure, as with feeling worthwhile, it is volunteering that is particularly associated with higher levels of social trust (3.47).



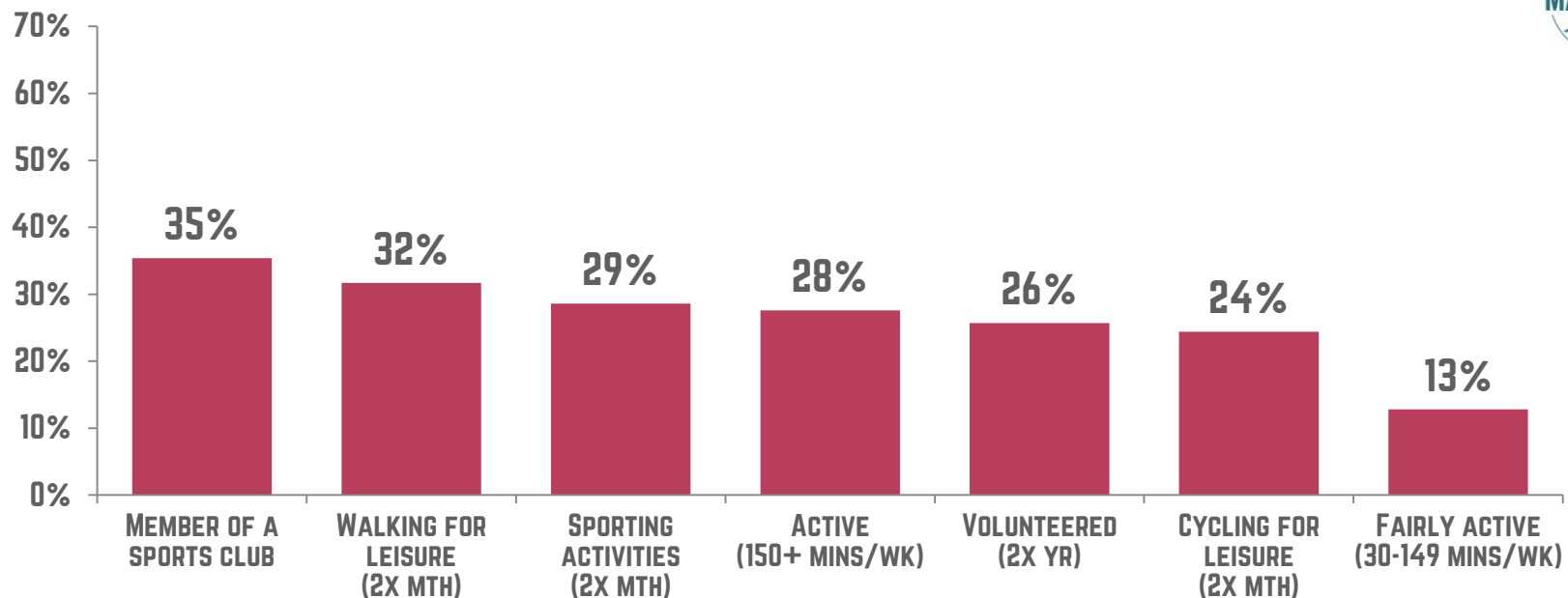
4. DRIVERS OF LIFE SATISFACTION

BEING A MEMBER OF A SPORTS CLUB MEANS YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE VERY HIGH LEVELS OF LIFE SATISFACTION

Allowing for demographic differences, if someone doing sport is also a member of a club, then the likelihood of having 'very high' life satisfaction increases by 35%.

We also found that walking for leisure increases the likelihood of having 'very high' life satisfaction by 32%.

ENGAGEMENT FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH HAVING VERY HIGH LIFE SATISFACTION



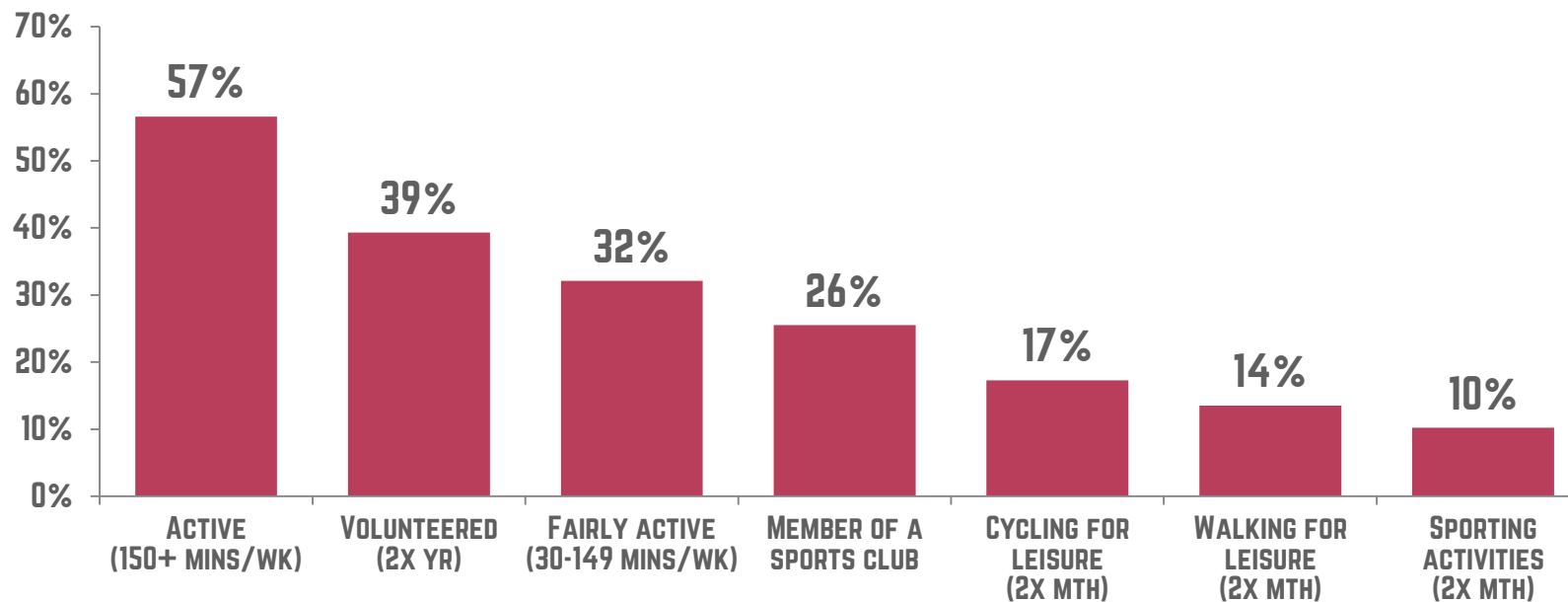
5. DRIVERS OF SELF-EFFICACY

BEING ACTIVE MEANS YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE A HIGHER LEVEL OF SELF-EFFICACY

Allowing for demographic differences, doing 150+ minutes a week of sport and physical activity improves the likelihood of achieving a higher level of self-efficacy by 57% (compared with those who do less than 30 minutes a week).

Volunteering to support sport is associated with a 39% increase in the likelihood of having greater self-efficacy. This finding is supported by *Williams and Jacques (2015)*, who found that sport volunteers have 10% higher self-esteem, emotional wellbeing and resilience and are 15% less likely to worry.

ENGAGEMENT FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH HAVING RELATIVELY HIGH SELF-EFFICACY



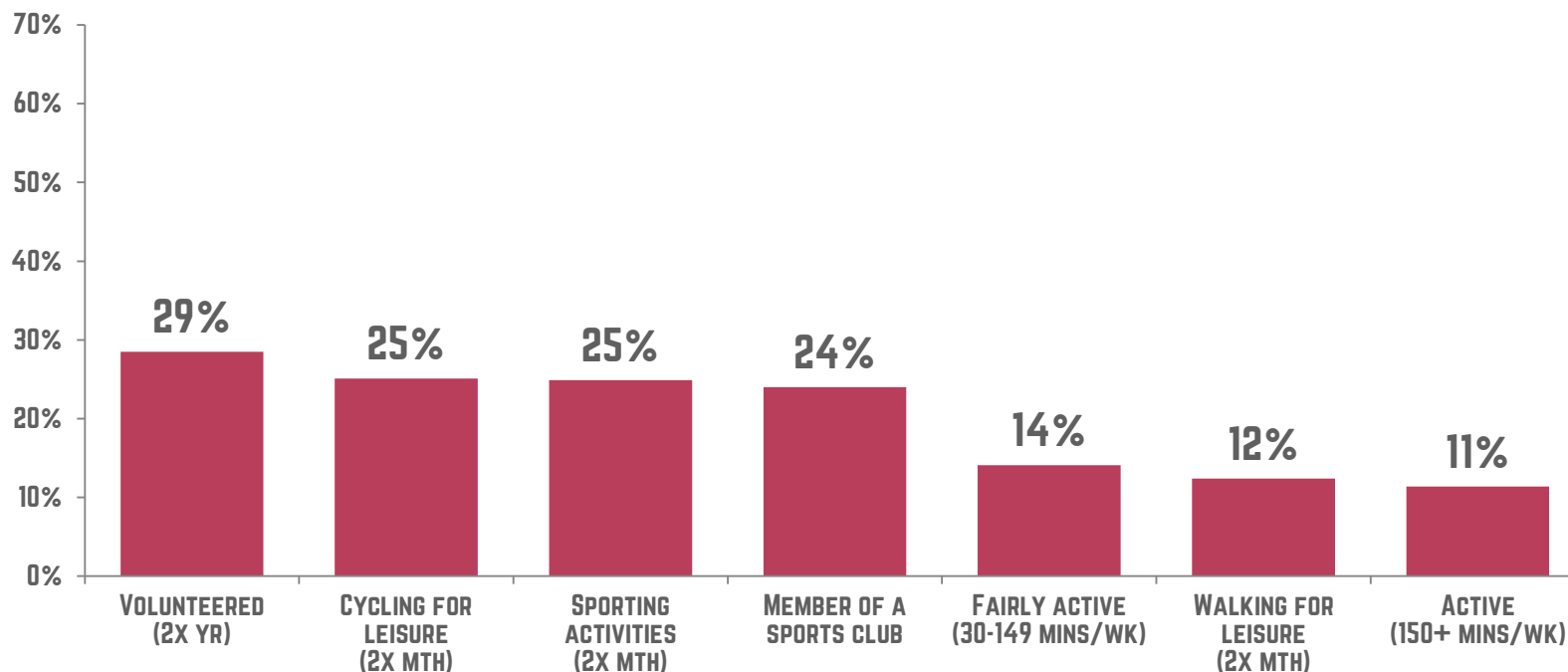
6. DRIVERS OF SOCIAL TRUST

VOLUNTEERING CONTRIBUTES POSITIVELY TO SOCIAL TRUST

Volunteering at least twice a year to support sport and physical activity is linked with a 29% increase in the likelihood of having a higher level of trust in most people from the local area, allowing for demographic differences.

This finding is supported by *Williams and Jacques (2015)*, who found volunteers were more likely to feel good about their community and more likely to report that they trusted others in the area they lived in.

ENGAGEMENT FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH HAVING RELATIVELY HIGH SOCIAL TRUST



SAMPLE AND WEIGHTING

This analysis is based on responses from 54,558 people.

THE ACTIVE LIVES ADULT SURVEY IS A PUSH-TO-WEB SURVEY carried out by Ipsos MORI. It involves postal mailouts inviting participants to complete the survey online. The survey can be completed on mobile or desktop devices. A paper questionnaire is also sent out to maximise response rates. More information on the survey can be found [here](#).

DATA HAVE BEEN WEIGHTED to Office for National Statistics (ONS) population measures for geography and key demographics.

CONFIDENCE INTERVALS can be found in the linked tables. These indicate that if repeated samples were taken and confidence intervals computed for each sample, 95% of the intervals would contain the true value.

VOLUNTEERING ROLES are defined as:

- Provided transport: to help people other than family members take part in sport
- Coached or instructed: for an individual or team(s) in a sport or recreational physical activity (other than solely for family members)
- Refereed, umpired, or officiated: at a sports match, competition or event
- Administrative or committee role: for a sports organisation, activity or event (e.g. chairman, treasurer, social secretary, first aider, welfare officer)
- Stewarded or marshalled: at a sports activity or event
- Provided any other help: for a sport or recreational physical activity (e.g. helping with refreshments, sports kit or equipment).

Link to more information on
measures and demographics

