Key Points:

- Barnsley is ranked 227 out of 324 Local Authorities and Unitary Authorities in England for the average rating on life satisfaction where 1 is highest reported life satisfaction and 324 is lowest. This places Barnsley in quintile 3 of 5, with one being the highest and 5 the lowest. This has increased from 252 out of 324 in 2014/15 but remains in quintile 3. The average score for life satisfaction has increased since 2014/15 but remains lower than the average for Yorkshire & Humber and England, and those rating their life satisfaction as high or very high has decreased from 80% to 78%. Barnsley is ranked 10th when compared to statistical neighbours.

- Barnsley is ranked 232 out of 324 Local Authorities and Unitary Authorities in England for feeling that things they do in life are worthwhile where 1 is highest reported feelings of life being worthwhile and 324 is lowest. This places Barnsley in quintile 3 of 5, with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest. This has decreased from 162 out of 324 in 2014/15 but remains in quintile 3. The average score for feeling life is worthwhile has increased since 2014/15 but remains lower than the average for Yorkshire & Humber and England, and those rating feelings of life being worthwhile as high or very high has decreased from 84% to 81%. Barnsley is ranked 13th when compared to statistical neighbours.

- Barnsley is ranked 155 out of 324 Local Authorities and Unitary Authorities in England for happiness, where 1 is highest reported feelings of happiness and 324 is lowest and is currently in quintile 3 of 5. This has increased from 232 out of 324 and quintile 4 in 2014/15. The average score for happiness has increased since 2014/15 and is higher than the average for Yorkshire & Humber and England, and those rating their happiness as high or very high has increased from 72% to 73%. Barnsley is ranked 4th when compared to statistical neighbours.

- Barnsley is 264 out of 324 Local Authorities and Unitary Authorities in England for anxiety, where 1 is lowest reported feelings of anxiety and 324 is highest. This places Barnsley in quintile 4 of 5, with 1 being the lowest reported anxiety and 5 being the highest. This is an improvement from 277 out of 324 in 2014/15 but remains in quintile 4 of 5. The average score for anxiety has decreased since 2014/15 but remains significantly higher than the average for England. Although those rating their anxiety as very low or low has increased from 59% to 61%. Barnsley is ranked 3rd highest when compared to statistical neighbours.

Figure 1. The percentage of respondents rating life satisfaction, feelings of life being worthwhile and happiness as high or very high and the percentage of respondents rating anxiety as low or very low in 2015/16.
The average score for life satisfaction in Barnsley has steadily increased from 2012/13 although it has remained consistently lower than the Y&H and England averages.

Approx. 78% of respondents rated their life satisfaction as high or very high in 2015/16 compared to 80% in 2014/15. The proportion of respondents who reported low life satisfaction has been significantly lower than those reporting high or very high life satisfaction at each time point.

Barnsley is ranked 10th out of 16 statistical neighbours, with an average rating of 7.58 out of a possible 10 for life satisfaction. This is lower than the England average (7.64), however this is not statistically significant.

Figure 2. The average (mean) rating for Barnsley residents on life satisfaction compared to Yorkshire and Humber and England for 2011/12 to 2015/16

Figure 3. The average (mean) rating for Barnsley residents on life satisfaction compared to statistical neighbours, Yorkshire and Humber and England

Figure 4. Percentage of responses in each category for Barnsley from 2011/12 to 2015/16

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The ‘Eudemonic’ Approach: Feeling that life is worthwhile

The average score for feeling that things done in life are worthwhile in Barnsley has steadily increased from 2012/13 although it has remained consistently lower than the Y&H and England averages.

**Figure 5.** The average (mean) rating for Barnsley residents on feeling that the things they do in their life are worthwhile compared to Yorkshire and Humber and England for 2011/12 to 2015/16

Approx. 81% of respondents rated their feelings of life being worthwhile as high or very high in 2015/16 compared to 84% in 2014/15. The proportion of respondents who reported low feelings of life being worthwhile has been significantly lower than those reporting high or very high feelings of life being worthwhile at each time point.

**Figure 6.** The average (mean) rating for Barnsley residents on feeling that the things they do in life are worthwhile compared to statistical neighbours and England in 2015/16

Barnsley is ranked 13th out of 16 statistical neighbours, with an average rating of 7.78 out of a possible 10 for life satisfaction. This is lower than the England average (7.83), however this is not statistically significant.

**Figure 7.** Percentage of responses in each category for Barnsley from 2011/12 to 2015/16

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The average score for feeling happy in Barnsley has steadily increased from 2011/12 and is now higher than the average for Y&H and England.

Figure 8. The average (mean) rating for Barnsley residents when asked how happy they felt on the previous day, compared to Yorkshire and Humber and England from 2011/12 to 2015/16

Approx. 73% of respondents rated their feelings of happiness as high or very high in 2015/16 compared to 72% in 2014/15. The proportion of respondents who reported low feelings of happiness has been significantly lower than those reporting high or very happiness at each time point.

Figure 9. The average (mean) rating for Barnsley residents when asked how happy they felt on the previous day, compared to statistical neighbours and England in 2015/16

Barnsley is ranked 4th out of 16 statistical neighbours, with an average rating of 7.51 out of a possible 10 for happiness. This is higher than the England average (7.47), however this is not statistically significant.

Figure 10. Percentage of responses in each category for Barnsley from 2011/12 to 2015/16

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The average score for feeling anxious in Barnsley has fluctuated from 2011/12 and has been higher than the average for Y&H and England at each time point, with the exception of 2013/14. Barnsley has been significantly higher than England from 2014/15.

Barnsley is ranked 3rd out of 16 statistical neighbours, with an average rating of 3.12 out of a possible 10 for anxiety. This is significantly higher than the England average (2.87).

Approx. 61% of respondents rated their feelings of anxiety as being very low or low in 2015/16 compared to 59% in 2014/15. The proportion of respondents who reported high feelings of anxiety has been significantly lower than those reporting very low anxiety at each time point.
Methodology:

Sample

Special weighting is included in the dataset to ensure the data is representative of the UK population and also adjusts for the fact that respondents must answer for themselves, although further details about this weighting are not available. For the 2015/16 data population totals from the 2011 census have been used. The average sample size for the Personal Wellbeing survey was 165,000. The average total was 120,180 for England. For Yorkshire and Humber an average total of 13,088 responded, with an average 3408 of respondents in South Yorkshire and 910 from Barnsley*. Average sample sizes are provided because the response rate fluctuated between the four questions. In terms of

Method

The APS dataset includes responses from over 300,000 people per year in around 135,000 households. The personal wellbeing questions are the smallest section of the APS survey because the questions must be answered by the individual in person; no one else is allowed to provide their response however this is still considered representative of the general population, according to ONS. An important caveat made by ONS is that the personal wellbeing survey is only representative of adults living in residential accommodation and as such, cannot be generalised to young people (under 16 years of age) or those living in institutional settings like prisons and nursing homes.

The data included draws from responses to four ONS personal wellbeing questions, drawn from research by Dolan et al (2011). The questions analysed in this briefing note are: overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays? (evaluative approach), overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile? (eudemonic approach), overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? (experience approach) and overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday? (experience approach). All are answered using a 0 to 10 scale where 0 is ‘not at all’ and 10 is ‘completely’. For the purpose of analysis, the scores for each question have been grouped into low (0-4), medium (5-6), high (7-8) and very high (9-10). Each geographical area is given a percentage score to reflect how much of the sample scored low, medium, high or very high for each question. The mean average score is also provided for each geographic area.

Confidence Intervals:

Confidence intervals are a statistical method of accounting for variability in data. Variability means that data collected under the same circumstances can yield different results. The confidence interval is therefore used to represent with a confidence of 95% the range in which the true value will lie. Where confidence intervals do not overlap, we say that the difference is statistically significant. Statistically significant differences will indicate that there is a real underlying difference between the proportions.

For this report, the term ‘significant’ has been used where appropriate to denote ‘statistical significance’.

*Numbers may not total due to rounding

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