The Outjoyment Report

The Camping and Caravanning Club
The Friendly Club

LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

Sheffield Hallam University
Knowledge Applied

A research report on the well-being and mental health benefits of camping

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Foreword

When we first revealed the results of our Real Richness Report back in 2011, little did we know how it would strike a chord in so many ways and with so many people.

The media coverage of the report was enormous and – incredibly – continued for more than a decade. The outdoor recreation and leisure industry also got firmly behind the findings, decision-makers sat up and listened, and campers themselves welcomed what they already knew – that camping makes you happier.

Given the appetite for this type of research and the ground-breaking nature of that first report, we wanted to take it to the next level.

Welcome to The Outjoyment Report!

Camping is at the heart of this study, and we know the pastime helps improves the lives of people in many ways. The Outjoyment Report reveals important new findings while also reflecting on how – or indeed if – the landscape has changed in the past 11 years.

New research techniques mean a direct comparison with the Real Richness Report of 2011 is sometimes difficult, but our findings are both illuminating and robust. We have teamed up with academics at Liverpool John Moores University, which partnered with The Camping and Caravanning Club for the first report, and Sheffield Hallam University – all experts in their fields.

The importance of spending time in the outdoors, often enjoying active hobbies and pastimes, has never been more in the spotlight, especially following the Covid-19 pandemic. And as a result, we believe our findings are crucial in assisting the nation with any recovery, especially when it comes to people's own health and well-being.

This is a subject that's been an integral part of the Club since its creation in 1901 – it's part of our DNA. Our Articles of Association, written in 1947, state: "To encourage and to help all, especially young people and those of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside, to develop their self-reliance and independence, and to promote their physical health, spiritual welfare and education by spending as much time in the open air as possible by means of camping, caravanning and similar activities."

Those words have never been truer today.

We believe the benefits of camping in all its forms, as demonstrated through The Outjoyment Report, provide compelling evidence as to why it is so good for people's health and well-being. And we think it's essential reading.

Simon McGrath
Head of Communications and External Relations
The Camping and Caravanning Club

Key findings at a glance

- Campers are more likely to be 'flourishing' than non campers, particularly those who camp frequently.
- The strongest motivator for going camping is for feelings of happiness.
- Campers are happier and less anxious than non campers, particularly those who camp frequently.
- Campers have significantly higher levels of psychological, emotional, and social well-being than non campers.
- Campers feel significantly less stressed than non campers
- Campers have significantly higher levels of nature connectedness.
- Camping provides a pathway for physical activity, with walking being the number one pastime when on camping trips.
- Camping connects people – to the outdoors, to nature and to each other.

Our credentials

The Outjoyment Report was commissioned by The Camping and Caravanning Club – the oldest organisation of its kind for all types of camping – and undertaken by Liverpool John Moores University and Sheffield Hallam University.

It comprised two central aspects. A literature review, which assessed studies carried out in the outdoor recreation sphere since 2011, and a quantitative survey of almost 11,000 campers and non campers.

The findings and data were then analysed by our team of experts.

Our report was more than a year in the making and given camping is at its heart, we think it's unique too.

What's in a word?

We have coined the term 'outjoyment' as a blend of two words that are central to this report – outdoors and enjoyment.

It's also known as a portmanteau word, the likes of which we often unknowingly use regularly. In the same way you could be pitched up on a campsite enjoying brunch (breakfast and lunch) while glamping (glamorous camping).

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the research

This report concentrates on a UK Camping Lifestyle and Well-being Survey that was conducted in February 2022 and funded by The Camping and Caravanning Club. It aims to serve as a 10-year follow-on study from a previous Club study, the Real Richness Report, which examined the psychological and social benefits of the camping experience (CCC, 2011). A decade has passed since this earlier report underpinned the Club's Camping Makes You Happier campaign and, in light of the increasing interest in the benefits of being outside and in nature for well-being (Lovell et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2020; White et al., 2019), it was deemed timely to revisit the relationship between camping and happiness.

Since the previous report, an appreciation and understanding of the benefits of time spent outdoors and in natural environments has been extended considerably, to the extent that increasing people's access to activities in green spaces is now central to Government policy, including environmental and health policies (DEFRA, 2018; Public Health England, 2020). Accompanying this, there is also now over a decade of UK population data on levels of well-being, as reported on an annual and quarterly basis by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) (ONS, 2021). Furthermore, with the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, the nation's well-being has come to the forefront of national significance. For example, there is evidence the natural environment helped some people to cope with negative feelings, such as anxiety, during the pandemic (ONS, 2021). Further, Natural England reported that 9 in 10 people surveyed during the pandemic in May 2020 agreed that natural spaces are good for their mental health and well-being (Natural England, 2020). Thus, given this changing landscape over the past 10 years, examining the topic of camping and well-being seems more relevant and, arguably, more significant than it was deemed previously.

The concept of well-being and mental health is multifaceted. The World Health Organisation defines someone's overall health as being "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 2022). Accompanying this, they claim that mental health is "a state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (*Ibid.*). Accordingly, mental health is associated with subjective well-being (Keyes, 2002), which refers to "individuals' perceptions and evaluations of their own lives in terms of their emotional state and their psychological and social functioning" (Mjøsund, 2021, p.48). Thus, psychological, social, and emotional well-being make up the "family tree of mental health" (*Ibid.*, p.49; Keyes, 2002). A person's well-being and mental health can affect how they think, interact with others, earn a living, and enjoy life (WHO, 2022). Therefore, the promotion, protection and restoration of well-being and mental health are important to individuals, communities, and societies. Consequently, measuring subjective well-being is deemed so important that it is included, alongside health, personal finance, employment, and the economy, in measures of national well-being such as the ONS National Well-being Programme (Tinkler & Hicks, 2011).

In the previous report, the psychological benefits (eg life satisfaction, purpose in life, personal growth, autonomy, positive/negative emotions) and social benefits (eg relationships with others) of camping that were deemed relevant to feelings of overall happiness were considered. In this report, a broader approach is adopted and a range of validated scales to measure well-being and mental health are utilised, recognising that each capture different aspects of well-being and mental health, and, when combined, provide a more holistic understanding of campers' psychological, emotional, and social well-being. These scales are reliable and theoretically sound measures of well-being which are used to measure the well-being of populations across the world. The scales used include the Ryff Scale of Psychological Well-being, the Perceived Stress Scale, the Mental Health Continuum Short-Form, and the Office of National Statistics Personal Well-being Scale. In addition, the inclusion of the Nature Connection Index enables an examination of improved mental well-being through being connected to nature, which camping can aid (see Section 3.3 for a more detailed overview of these scales).

1.2 Camping defined

The global phenomenon of camping tourism has emerged as a broad research field and many definitions have been offered in the literature (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020). For the purpose of this study, camping and caravanning is defined as involving spending the night away from home in a temporary shelter, at close quarters with the natural environment (Brooker & Joppe, 2013; Wellner, 2015). We also use the broad term 'camping' to describe the many forms of camping, including the use of tents, caravans, campervans, motorhomes, trailer-tents and folding-campers, glamping, and static caravans.

1.3 Research aim and objectives

The aim of the research is to ascertain if camping has a positive impact on people's mental health and well-being. The objectives include:

1. To examine the value of spending time outdoors and in natural spaces.
2. To measure levels of optimal (flourishing), moderate, and poor (languishing) mental health of campers and non campers.
3. To measure levels of emotional, psychological, and social well-being of campers and non campers.
4. To measure levels of perceived stress of campers and non campers.
5. To measure campers' and non campers' connection to nature.
6. To identify camping motivations, camping behaviour, and barriers to camping.

This study will contribute to our understanding of and inform national discussion on the relevance of camping for promoting well-being and sustaining mental health.

1.4 Summary of key findings

The headline findings from the study are:

- Campers are more likely to be flourishing than non campers, particularly those who camp frequently.
- The strongest motivator for going camping is for feelings of happiness.
- Campers are happier and less anxious than non campers, particularly those who camp frequently, scoring significantly more positively on the ONS4 well-being questions.
- Campers have significantly higher levels across six key dimensions of psychological well-being than non campers.
- Campers feel significantly less stressed than non campers.
- Campers have significantly higher levels of nature connectedness and likely to spend slightly more time in nature than non campers.
- Camping provides a pathway for physical activity, with most campers spending time walking when on their camping trips.
- A key motivation for camping is to enjoy being in nature.
- People feel positive about healthcare professionals prescribing activities outdoors (including camping) instead of medication for a mental health issue.
- People strongly support the notion that education should offer opportunities for all children to go camping and learn in nature.

Section 2: Review of Literature

The relationship between happiness, well-being, and camping can be considered from multiple perspectives that can help to inform how we understand aspects of the camping experience. For example, the health benefits of being in natural environments (eg Capaldi et al., 2015; Martin et al., 2020; Pearson & Craig, 2014; Twohig-Bennett & Jones, 2018), the social and emotional benefits from connecting with others (eg Hassell et al., 2015; Jennings & Bamkole, 2019; Lonergan, 2021), and the restorative aspects of taking time away from everyday life, providing psychological benefits (Capaldi et al., 2015). It is not within the scope of this review of literature to do an exhaustive examination of these interdisciplinary well-being dimensions (emotional, social, psychological, and physical), as this can be obtained from wider relevant research reviews (eg Trudel-Fitzgerald et al., 2019; Vada et al., 2020). Instead, the main emphasis is to draw upon literature that has specifically focused on camping itself, thus helping to ascertain what evidence currently exists and how it can inform this study.

The review will initially consider the historical background of camping and its forms, leading to an examination of the motivational drivers and barriers to camping. The benefits of camping will then be considered, followed by a brief examination of the role camping can have for educational and health purposes. To conclude, the concepts of happiness and well-being are discussed, with a consideration of measurement approaches.

To identify relevant literature to inform this review, keyword search terms 'camping' and 'caravanning' were inputted in multiple academic databases including PsycINFO, Scopus, and databases on EBSCO. Literature from 2010 onwards and written in English were selected. A total of 1,166 research articles and book chapters containing these keywords were reviewed.

2.1 The emergence of camping and caravanning

2.1.1 Early indicators of camping activities

Historically, camping tourism has occurred in multiple forms for thousands of years to evolve as we know it today. Griffin (2019) examined an early form of camping known as 'cycle camping', which occurred in Ireland towards the end of the nineteenth century. This emerged due to a rapid development in cycling as a recreational activity and subsequently urban dwellers utilised this freedom to undertake trips into the Irish countryside via bicycle and sleep under canvas (*Ibid*). The pioneers of this played a role in facilitating a wider outdoor recreational movement which enraptured many others across Britain, Europe, and North America (CCC, 2022; Sommer, 2020). In both the United States and Australia, organised camping emerged in the late 1920s as a healthy escapism for populations living in urban areas (Kambic, 2018). This summer camp movement, predominating in the USA, long realised the well-being benefits of structured camping, which involves an organised programme of activities sometimes delivered or arranged by members of staff (Henderson et al., 2005). The activities involved in camping, such as looking after one's food preparation and tent, have been recognised to help improve self-esteem, cognition, physical and social well-being (Henderson et al., 2005; Morrow et al., 2017; Tong et al., 2020). It is these associated benefits that have provided a foundation on which the role of camping for improving mental well-being have been built upon.

Alongside the evolving impact of cycling recreation, the later emergence of automobiles and highway networks promoted increased mobility, which led to a development of caravan parks. The move to modernise and increase the level of comfort to the camping experience has been seen through a multitude of shelter types and accommodation (such as cabins or fixed shelters), to grant opportunities for individuals to escape their daily lives and reinvigorate themselves in an outdoor setting providing a temporary home (Brooker & Joppe, 2014). As one of the earliest forms of accommodation, camping and caravanning tourism within natural environments has grown in popularity and importance (Birdir et al., 2015). Many European and American tourists favour it as a form of accommodation due to the inexpensive potential and flexibility of it (Albayrak, 2013). Alkan (2021) notes that camping is often recognised as something beyond the concept of a holiday, but as a way of living.

2.1.2 Emergence of different camping types

Over the years, various alternative forms of camping have emerged. For example, in Australia, Caldicott et al. (2014) explore the movement towards 'freedom camping'. Freedom camping is described as a lifestyle and involves choosing to park your recreational vehicle (RV) in a public place, in resistance to the higher-costing commercial caravan parks. The freedom camping movement brings with it much political debate across Australia at a local and national level. This is due to the supply and demand issues related to freedom camping, in addition to the complex issues around planning and management of spaces with limited resources for a variety of competing groups. In a similar vein, so called 'wild camping' has grown in many countries as an extremely popular touristic pastime, whereby tourists pitch their tents in wild, informalised and unstructured places, instead of on commercialised campsites (Rantala & Varley, 2019). Freedom camping has more recently been explored in other countries (eg New Zealand) around the time of large events, such as hosting the 2011 Rugby World Cup, where special legislation was crafted to guarantee the right to practice 'freedom camping' (Nava et al., 2022). Rantala and Varley (2019) examine wild camping as a lighter practice, within which the participants are resistant to being referred to as tourists and feel they can use it to escape to a freer form of social reality.

Another alternative and novel form of camping to recently emerge is 'glamping', a term derived from the words 'glamour' and 'camping', involving a combination of luxury and contact with nature in homelike accommodation such as cabins, yurts, tipis, and treehouses (Lee et al., 2019). This transformative injection of comfort to the camping experience has altered previous perspectives on camping as

a less substantial or adequate avenue of tourism (Hrgović et al., 2018). Adamovich et al. (2021) identify the main difference between camping and glamping, whereby glamping suggests accommodation is pre-set to the guests' arrival. With a shift in desire for millennial travellers to participate more regularly in glamping, the hospitality sector is reshaping to embody one of the multiple paradoxes of post-modern tourists who aim to encounter more authentic experiences through being intimate, yet comfortable within nature (Bigné & Decrop, 2019). Campers and glampers share an essentially similar desire to experience authenticity and stay outdoors. Campers are driven by adventure and have a desire to interact with nature, whereas glampers aim to experience nature as a spectator and view it as enchanting or fanciful (Ahn & Lee, 2015).

While there are a range of approaches to camping, it appears European campers seem to prefer use of a caravan or recreation vehicle. A study from the Auto Camper Service International (ACSI) (2019) says that campers from France (53%), Italy (57%), and Great Britain (46%) prefer recreation vehicles, while campers from the Netherlands (57%) and from Spain (45%) prefer caravans. Campers from Germany enjoy both the standard caravan (46%) and recreation vehicle (43%). Tents are not everyone's favourite kind of camping. Only a minority of campers from Great Britain (20%), Spain (23%), and Italy (21%) like to use a tent for camping (*Ibid*, 2019).

The recent growth in popularity and economic effects of camping and caravanning from an uncommon to a mainstream tourism product is evident internationally, specifically in countries such as North America (Brooker & Joppe, 2014; Young, 2017), Australia (Caldicott et al., 2014), New Zealand (Collins et al., 2018) and across much of Europe and the United Kingdom (Doğantan et al., 2017; Lashley, 2015). For example, in 2018 there were approximately 27,960 registered camping grounds in Europe (Eurostat, 2020a) and visitors spent a total of 397 million nights at these camping grounds (Eurostat, 2020b). Despite the growth in its recognition and significance as a form of outdoor recreation, multiple scholars have noted that camping tourism is relatively under researched within tourism scholarship (eg Mikulić et al., 2017; Okumus et al., 2019; Van Rooij & Margaryan, 2019), and an apparent upturn in this research area only occurred following the appearance of two prominent review papers by Brooker and Joppe (2013; 2014).

To accelerate this growth within the industry, the Covid-19 pandemic has illustrated that while there were limited opening of borders for international travel, camping and glamping are alternative forms of domestic tourism which have grown hugely in popularity. For example, Sommer (2020) provides examples of this from Great Britain and Germany. This is supported by Aydin and Dogan (2020), who also note that tourists during Covid-19 moved to a preference of camp-caravan tourism (along with residential rental boutique hotels) and nature-based and short-term trips (Wachyuni & Kusumaningrum, 2020), and will choose less popular, less crowded places in the future. Craig's (2020) cross-sectional study considers the relationship between Covid-19 and camping in the United States. This investigation found that the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on individual's choices about holidays and accommodation meant that more people engaged in camping/glamping after restrictions were lifted. The results suggested that campers and glampers preferred locations that allowed for social distancing and were willing to travel further to achieve this space.

Demographically, camping is attractive to all ages, with the exception of adolescents aged 18-24, where participation was noted to decrease slightly in the US and Australia (Outdoor Foundation, 2012). Camping is popular for couples with young children as many parents view it as an affordable tourism option, while providing families with quality time together and good access to outdoor leisure activities (Mock & Hummel, 2012). In the past, camping tourism was predominantly undertaken by individuals of White/Caucasian origin who were exposed to the sector at a young age (Brooker & Joppe, 2013; 2014).

In more recent years and through the evolution of the camping experience, pathways and access to camping tourism has changed and camping tourists today are made up of a far more diverse group, divided instead by their motivations, goals and commitment. However, challenges still exist with access to the countryside and participation in outdoor recreation for different ethnic groups (see Hines et al., 2019). In line with international tourism scholarship, the balance of academic research on camping tourism is at present dominated by studies undertaken in the global north, thus meaning there is often less of a focus on the patterns of individuals and populations in less developed nations. Despite this, Rogerson and Rogerson (2020) note the shifting emergence of literature from the global south and propose a future research agenda for studies in this growing area, including sustainable development of camping tourism.

2.2 Understanding camping behaviours

2.2.1 Motivations for camping

The travel motivations and appeal for tourists to go camping are distinguished by Brooker and Joppe (2013) as various push or pull factors. The 'push' effect involves the need to escape for various reasons such as rest, adventure, or social interaction. 'Pull' effects are the compulsions that attract tourists to want to visit those locations to see beautiful places and experience nature (Sakáčová, 2013). A study of Taiwanese campers demonstrated that the higher the motivation of camping tourists, the more positive their experience and the higher their satisfaction (Lin & Chuang, 2021). These motivational factors or stimuli that influence the decision-making process and the satisfaction individuals get from camping have been explored by other scholars.

The most prominent push factor that motivates individuals to undertake camping has emerged through multiple studies to be escapism (Brooker & Joppe, 2013; Hardy et al., 2012; Sommer, 2020; White & White, 2004). Being surrounded by the natural environment promotes different well-being dimensions, eg restoration reducing mental fatigue (Rydstedt & Johnsen, 2019), and helps to afford this escape (Garst et al., 2009). Camping can also provide a unique opportunity to escape one's normal routines, relax

within natural surroundings and socialise at an interpersonal level (Morrow, 2013). Physical and psychological distancing from urban living or the stress of daily life can be more easily achieved through camping than other avenues of tourism. Dickinson et al. (2016) state that camping facilitates this escapism through the distancing from mobile devices and technology and immersing in a more simplistic way of existing. Their study found that despite variability in the desire to disconnect, up to 50% of camping tourists in their UK based study have a desire to digitally disconnect. A more recent study explored the motivations of tourists choosing to disconnect digitally, learning that escape, personal growth, health and well-being, and relationships were significant underlying reasons for disconnection (Egger et al., 2020). This need for a temporary escape, disconnection, and diversion from normal daily living to see new sights and go camping could have a variety of explanations, including dissatisfaction with urban life, a change in family circumstances, such as retirement (Counts & Counts, 2004) or death of a partner (White & White, 2004).

Camping trips can vary in length, during which time the campsite can become a transitory substitute for the home to socialise, eat and sleep in. Another factor that motivates camping tourism behaviours is the opportunity it presents for socialisation and interaction with friends and family. Camping experiences are often shared experiences and provide the space away from normal distractions to allow members of a group camping together to focus more energy on higher-quality interactions together, in perhaps physically closer quarters than normal (Hardy et al., 2012).

One of the most influential 'push' factors that motivates an individual to go camping is it offering a pathway for reconnection to the natural environment (Garst et al., 2009; Kearns et al., 2017; Kristensen et al., 2021). This connection with nature can be achieved through immersing oneself within a dynamic natural ecosystem and, therefore, connecting with the environment on a direct level (Hrgović et al., 2018). In a study by Hassell et al. (2015), campers expressed how the connection with nature also helped them to reconnect with themselves and subsequently affirm self-identity. Camping enables these connections to form as individuals become fully immersed in nature and thereafter gain an increased respect and awareness for the extent of the risks faced by the natural environment due to modern global trends. This connection subsequently stimulated the campers to change their behaviours and reassess their identity in terms of environmental awareness. A further 'push' factor is evident with camping being viewed as a sustainable tourism approach. Eco-camping falls within the bracket of sustainable tourism, involving camping which aims to have little to no environmental impact (Alberts, 2014). A willingness to pay for 'greener initiatives' that support sustainability and protection of the environment has become increasingly popular for camping tourists, who maintain a desire to contribute to the preservation of natural areas when undertaking tourism activities (Ellis, 2010).

2.2.2 Barriers to camping

While previously discussing the motives behind why people want to go camping, it is also important to consider the potential restrictions or barriers to accessing this form of tourism. A review of the current literature highlights a slight lack of work specifically considering the barriers to participation in camping. This is surprising given the range of research about barriers to participation in a variety of other outdoor recreation activities (Hines et al., 2019; Menzies et al., 2021; Schwartz & Corkery, 2011). Despite this, some pieces of research have highlighted different potential barriers to camping participation. Snyder and Evans (2017) examined how fears over safety and crime are prevalent within camping tourism in the USA. The results of their investigation suggest that fear of crime while camping was only apparent in some locations and proposed that further research into this area could highlight how crime in specific areas could potentially be tackled going forwards so that visitor numbers are not affected. In another study considering barriers to participation in camping undertaken in Israel, Ram and Hall (2020) concluded that overcrowding was the main barrier to participation on camping holidays. The respondents in their study had a preference for solitude as a key part of the camping experience, and the concern for busy or overcrowded campsites was enough of a barrier to dissuade participation in camping.

A survey conducted with younger children in Serbia by Miletić et al. (2018) found that of the 252 children in the sample, 15% stated that they would not like to go camping. The most common fears associated with camping were directed towards wild animals, small creatures such as spiders or bugs, the darkness, and strangers. All the aforementioned fears fall into the category of 'the unknown' and the authors argue that these fears can be eradicated by building a stronger relationship with the children and familiarising them with the camp setting.

Barriers related to gender have been reported when accessing a range of outdoor recreation activities (eg Boniface, 2006; Doran, 2016; Little, 2002; Low et al., 2020) including climbing and mountaineering (Doran et al., 2018; 2020), hiking (Stanley, 2020), and surfing (Fendt & Wilson, 2012). However, the review of literature revealed only one study that has examined gender in relation to camping (see Van Heerden, 2020). Further, this study, conducted in South Africa, focused on the gender differences in motivations to camp and camping behaviour, rather than barriers. Nevertheless, the reinforcement of traditionally assigned gender roles did emerge as a key finding. Males reported preferring the physical activity of camping and therefore assumed responsibility for organising all the intensive labour activities, such as pitching tents, enabling them to display their self-identity through camping. Whereas females reported see camping as an opportunity for relaxation. This is of note, as it has been found in the aforementioned outdoor recreation studies that females are motivated by the physical nature of outdoor activities, as it makes them feel stronger, self-reliant, and independent, it aids their identity as an outdoorsy person (eg a hiker, a climber), and it enables them to be themselves and not conform to traditionally assigned gender roles. Further research is needed to examine gender in relation to camping, informed by the body of literature that exists on barriers to participation in other outdoor recreation and tourism activities, and in a range of geographic locations to identify cultural similarities and disparities.

Similarly, ethnicity and disability in the context of camping need examination, as individuals from minoritised ethnic groups and with disabilities are currently under-represented in camping tourism and recreation research. Again, this should be informed by current literature on participation in other outdoor recreation and tourism activities by these individuals, although this body of literature is also small. Thus, research in this area could be pioneering and could contribute to addressing the inequalities in access. For example, it has been found that children from minoritised ethnic groups are half as likely to visit the countryside than white children (Natural England, 2019a), people from minority ethnic groups have on average 11 times less access to green spaces (Natural England, 2019b) and over 20% of England's population cannot use public rights of way due to mobility issues (Natural England, 2018).

2.3 Benefits of camping

It is the perceived benefits of camping that drive the aforementioned motivations. The benefits of camping are complex, and various factors influence how an individual derives meaning and gains benefit from going camping. However, the literature identifies benefits that broadly fall within two key areas: connection with nature and socialisation. Each influence individual social, emotional, psychological, and physical well-being (Hassell et al., 2015).

2.3.1 Connecting with nature

Individuals seeking a camping experience live predominantly in urbanised areas and lead a sedentary lifestyle that involves stressful work environments, dependence on technology, and an existence in a human-manufactured, commercialised world (Kearns et al., 2017; Sommer, 2020). Camping in natural settings has been noted as a means of escaping facets of urban life, providing restoration through improved air quality (compared to normal urban environments), reduced stress and anxiety, and a wide range of physical benefits, enabling campers to feel healthier (Berto, 2014; Jimenez et al., 2021). Further, camping tourism offers an alternative for those who seek sustainable and healthy tourism activities. This is particularly the case post-pandemic, as camping provides effective social distancing and a more isolated form of leisure (Bilim & Özer, 2021).

The opportunity to connect with nature through camping and its associated nature-based activities such as building campfires, hiking, swimming, fishing, biking, and exploring can be the most important part of the experience for many (Hassell et al., 2015). In children, these physical nature-based activities and unstructured free play have been associated with decreased risk or prevalence of obesity and improved cognition (McCurdy et al., 2010). These experiences and interactions allow the connection between the camper and natural environment to be established and repeatedly re-established with ongoing camping trips, promoting extensive benefits to their physical and mental well-being (Rantala & Puhakka, 2020). Therefore, the desire to reconnect with nature grows strong and experiences within nature, such as camping, are highly sought after. For example, Garst et al. (2009) examined the experiences of forest campers and found that interaction with nature was key to their experience.

2.3.2 Socialisation

Blichfeldt and Mikkelsen (2013; 2016) describe campsites as a bounded area for sociability where campers can relate to others and socialise in a manner where they feel liberated from the everyday constructs and structural norms, thus helping foster an egalitarian environment. The disconnection experienced through immersing in the natural environment while camping also provides time and space for socialisation and reconnection (Hassell et al., 2015). Morrow et al. (2014) further explored the effects of camping on relationships. Their findings showed that by taking time away from the usual home environment and participating in camping experiences, couples and friends were able to spend uninterrupted time together and therefore maintenance, strengthening or repair of relationships could occur. Research has identified family togetherness as a social implication of camping (Garst et al., 2009; Jirásek et al., 2017). In multiple cases, families reported improved functioning and strengthening of family bonds in campsites specifically, as special, or nostalgic places with strong associated memories and traditions over time (Triantafillidou & Siomkos, 2013). By spending time connecting to the natural world, others and oneself, camping can be an extremely liminal experience (Brooker & Joppe, 2013). The transitional nature of liminality shifts importance from the self to external others, creating a sense of equality among the group and a disregard for social status. The strengthening of social relationships and connection with others helps to fulfil the basic psychological need of relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and improves overall well-being.

2.4 Camping as an intervention for improved education and health

2.4.1 Camping for education and well-being

For many years there has been a growing body of evidence and debate surrounding the inclusion of outdoor activities (including camping) for educational means within both the national curriculum (Passy et al., 2019; Quay, 2016) and informal education (Buldur et al., 2020). Learning approaches that integrate the surrounding natural resources/environment and all human senses, especially alongside others, have been found to enhance well-being. For example, it can help children and young people overcome perceptions of risk (Erol & Gülen, 2019) and assist in character development in the outdoors, now more widely understood as positive education interventions (Pirchio et al., 2021). Children and young people also experience opportunities for developing self-reliance, building character strengths, enhancing relationships with others (relatedness), improving physical health and psychological well-being, and providing a remedy for dysfunctional behaviour as recognised in more psychotherapeutic practices (Andre et al., 2017; Cottrell & Cottrell, 2020; Mann et al., 2021; Passarelli et al., 2010; Veen et al., 2021).

These benefits of outdoor learning activities have been directly associated with camping residentials (eg Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2011; Wilson & Sibthorp, 2018). Camping continues to be a core activity offered as part of a wide range of UK outdoor learning provision and progressive camping residentials (eg The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, The Scouts, and The Learning Away Initiative), and there are several eminent youth camps set up around the world, many of which are in North America such as YMCA camps, and Circle of Courage Programmes. Tong et al. (2020) conducted research to better understand the experiences and outcomes of Chinese children participating in organised holiday camping trips away from their families. Their qualitative study elicited many positive findings associated with the camping experience, including improved self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and general knowledge. The enhancement of these skills translates into educational settings, which is of high importance, particularly in Chinese contexts, where positive education during tourism is highly valued (Wen et al., 2019). Some negative outcomes were also noted, such as feelings of boredom and anxiety (Tong et al., 2020).

Harper (2017) conducted a scoping review of existing literature surrounding outdoor adventure programmes within the child and youth care field. One of the central categories for analysis was therapeutic camping, which highlighted a body of research around residential camp interventions, such as summer camps, as a suitable treatment for troubled youth (eg Arieli et al., 2001; Beker, 2001; Norton et al., 2014). Svoboda and Jirásek's (2021) work demonstrated that a snowshoeing and camping programme was enriching for the physical education of Slovenian students, helping them to gain a better understanding of the holistic essence of human life. Further, a recent study by Samuels et al. (2022) also found that camping encouraged positive youth development and self-determination in young people. These findings support the use of camping as an engaging educational intervention, noting that the camping experience can provide a setting that develops children by helping them to re-engage educationally and develop psychologically.

2.4.2 Camping for health and well-being

In addition to the positive educational benefits camping offers, there is a growing body of literature to support its use as an alternative or complementary nature-based therapeutic intervention in a non-clinical environment, coupled with its use in psychotherapeutic outdoor approaches.

The aim of health orientated interventions is to address the psychological, social, and physical health concerns associated with individuals who are medically unwell or in recovery (Hansen-Ketchum & Halpenny, 2011; Woods et al., 2013). Various studies confirm that nature-based activities (including camping) can enable and promote restorative and therapeutic benefits with broader health outcomes (Annerstedt & Währborg, 2011; Bowler et al., 2009; Clatworthy et al., 2013; Maller et al., 2006). Accordingly, UK professional bodies of psychology, counselling, and psychotherapy are now recognising the value of long-established therapeutic outdoor approaches and, consequently, using guidance on what individuals seeking help should look for in an outdoor therapist (Richards et al., 2020). Further, outdoor activities to tackle mental ill-health and reduce health inequalities are also being recognised in the UK's national public health policy and NHS practices as part of the national mandate for 'social prescribing'.

Referred to as 'green prescribing', individuals are prescribed nature-based activities, such as prescribed walking and cycling for health schemes, community gardening, food-growing, conservation projects, and outdoor meditation (Fullam et al., 2021; NHS, 2022). Camping offers a deep connection to nature and has potential to be a significant prescribed activity. Therefore, understanding the psychological, social, and physical health benefits derived from camping experiences has wider relevance and can inform important debates on outdoor therapy as an effective intervention for mental health conditions.

Research on camping as an applied health practice is still in its infancy, however, three key studies emerged in the review of literature. First, camping as a medical intervention for children (7-18 years) with a complex heart defect in the USA created meaningful experiences that fostered the development of relationships, feeling acceptance from others, and a space for freedom, fun and learning (Desai et al., 2014). The atmosphere of the camp helped to foster these positive outcomes and achieve desired therapeutic effects on the participants' subjective well-being. Second, a camping programme in Hungary for children and adolescents living with the long-term conditions of cancer, diabetes and juvenile immune arthritis resulted in the younger children reducing their autonomy to a normal level for their age (Békési et al., 2011). Prior to the camping programme it was noted they had a mature level of autonomy to cope with their illnesses. Satisfying autonomy is one of the basic psychological needs for fulfilment and is key to improving the general well-being of an individual (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, a reduction in their

autonomy was considered as a positive outcome for their well-being from the camping experience. Positive changes were also evident in the self-esteem and self-efficacy of the adolescents taking part, indicating the way in which the camping programme helped to address psychosocial demands caused by these long-term conditions. Finally, in a study on camping trips being used to support children with paediatric acquired brain injury (ABI) and their families, Analytis et al. (2021) identified how camping trips provided by a head injury charity offered opportunities for restoring a sense of security, increasing understanding of ABI, and enabling the enjoyment of typical childhood experiences for children with ABI. This, again, highlights the psychosocial benefits of camping as part of targeted interventions aimed at supporting children with the management of specific health conditions.

Camping as part of a clearly defined psychological intervention can also be seen in outdoor adventure programmes working with individuals with mental health conditions, as camping is a core activity of these programmes. These types of programmes are commonly referred to as Wilderness Therapy (Russell, 2002), Adventure Therapy (Gass et al., 2012), and Outdoor Therapy (Fernee et al., 2017).

It is not the scope of this review to examine the wide range of benefits associated with the diverse types of outdoor based therapy interventions (see Bowen & Neill., 2013; Cooley et al., 2020; Harper et al., 2021, for some examples of these benefits). However, as camping features as one of the ingredients of these programmes, for example, as part of backpacking trips in the wilderness, it is important to acknowledge the role camping plays in the wider provision of reputable psychological interventions. For example, Norton et al. (2017) found that in an adventure therapy programme involving hiking and camping, child trauma symptoms of depression and anxiety were successfully reduced. Other benefits of wilderness therapy for young people include social and emotional changes, such as reduced anger and increased emotional connection between youth and adults (Bettman & Tucker, 2011; Paquette & Vitaro, 2014).

Overall, the aforementioned studies support improvements in self-confidence, self-esteem, social interactions with others and reduced anxiety. These are all psychosocial and well-being benefits that can be nurtured to flourish within chronically ill or recovering individuals that participate in therapeutic camping (Desai et al., 2014; Harper, 2017; Ray & Jakubec, 2014). With camping providing a setting for identity construction, and given the range of associated beneficial outcomes, including improving autonomy and social well-being (Houge Mackenzie & Hodge, 2020; Olivos & Clayton, 2017), camping can aid self-development of individuals in different ways. However, further research is needed to better understand how the short-term benefits from camping approaches can be sustainable over a longer period of time for specific mental health conditions (Cotton & Butselaar, 2013), the role camping can play in addressing psychosocial aspects of a wider range of health conditions, and the cost-effectiveness of camping interventions for targeted education and health priorities.

2.5 Happiness, well-being and their measurement

"Happiness is the meaning and purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence" – Aristotle

The pursuit of happiness has occupied human beings for centuries. However, in recent decades interest in well-being has extended beyond philosophy and psychology as governments increasingly recognise the value and importance of the well-being of their populations as key indicators of economic growth and social progress (Forgeard et al., 2011; Musikanski & Pollry, 2016). Internationally, the annual World Happiness Report links happiness to key developmental and political indicators and is used by many countries, alongside their own national data, to guide the development of public services and economic policy (Helliwell et al., 2022; Kahneman & Krueger, 2006).

Research into happiness and its broader concept of well-being has stemmed from two philosophical viewpoints: hedonia, which encompasses enjoyment of life and all its pleasures, and eudaimonia, which stems from the Greek word 'daimon' (true self) and encompasses self-realisation and the expression and fulfilment of one's inner potential (Disabato et al., 2016; Joshanloo et al., 2017; Waterman, 1993). Each of these philosophical perspectives has given rise to various conceptualisations and measures of well-being, each capturing different aspects of the human experience. However, the common thread throughout both perspectives is that well-being is not a single concept and is best embodied by a multifaceted approach (Schwanen & Atkinson, 2015).

Subjective well-being, rooted in the work of Ed Diener and colleagues, stems from the hedonic perspective and has been defined as "an umbrella term for the different valuations people make regarding their lives, the events happening to them, their bodies and minds, and the circumstances in which they live" (Diener, 2006, p.400). It is generally thought to consist of three psychological constructs that together capture how people think and feel about their lives and circumstances: life satisfaction (how people think about their lives in general) and positive and negative affect (how people feel about their lives right now). Eudaimonic well-being has, over the years, given rise to several well-validated measures capturing different aspects of this multi-faceted concept. One popular and well-validated conceptualisation is rooted in the work of Carol Ryff and colleagues, who identified six dimensions of what they termed 'psychological well-being': autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, relations with others, and self-acceptance (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

The last two decades have witnessed the emergence of positive psychology as a scientific discipline (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive psychology moves away from a focus on pathology and psychological deficits to a science of understanding how individuals can experience a life worth living (Compton, 2005). Key to positive psychology is the concept of 'flourishing', which is rooted in the work of Martin Seligman and in eudaimonia. Seligman (2011; 2018) proposed a new theory of happiness and well-being which proposes five pillars of well-being: positive emotion, engagement, meaning, positive relationships, and accomplishment. There

are similarities between this conceptualisation of well-being and Ryff's six dimensions of psychological well-being: both embody a multi-faceted approach to well-being, incorporating emotional, social, and psychological aspects. Positive psychology as a discipline has made and continues to make significant contributions towards a better understanding of well-being and its causes and consequences (eg Martela & Ryan, 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Seligman, 2018).

The science of well-being has emerged largely separately – and often as an antidote to – discourse around mental health and mental illness. The World Health Organisation defines mental health as "a state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (WHO, 2022). The Mental Health Continuum (Keyes, 2006) reflects a theoretical framework for optimal positive mental health that includes three core components. Emotional well-being represents the hedonic tradition and incorporates life satisfaction and positive and negative affect (i.e. subjective well-being). Psychological well-being represents the eudaimonic tradition and incorporates the six dimensions proposed by Ryff and Keyes (1995). The third component, social well-being, also stems from the eudaimonic tradition and captures optimal social functioning. Keyes (2002; 2006) proposed using the Mental Health Continuum to categorise individuals into three associated mental health categories, which encapsulates the positive psychology approach (Keyes, 2006; Seligman, 2011). Flourishing represents optimal mental health, languishing represents poor mental health, with individuals in-between categorised as moderately mentally healthy. This measure and associated mental health categories have been used in a range of populations across the world. For example, Keyes (2002) found that 17.2% of individuals aged 25-74 in the United States were categorised as flourishing (with 12.1% languishing), and Santini et al. (2020) found that 82.8% of Canadians, 64.5% of Danes, and 38.6% of Dutch people were flourishing (with 0.9%, 3.9% and 1.6% languishing, respectively).

While well-being measurement has, on the whole, suffered from the lack of consensus around the definition of well-being, the ONS has, since 2011, used four items (ONS4) to capture the well-being of the UK population (Tinkler & Hicks, 2011). These were chosen to capture the main philosophical constructs associated with well-being: life satisfaction and happiness (subjective well-being), feeling one's life is worthwhile (eudaimonic well-being), and feeling anxious (negative affect). The questions ask people to consider how they feel about their lives across different time periods that reflect the stability of the underlying construct. Life satisfaction and worthwhile are asked in general, as these reflect relatively stable measures of well-being, happiness and anxiety are asked about in terms of the previous day, reflecting the fact that mood (affect) changes quickly depending on current circumstances. The ONS4 is used by policymakers to track the impact of large-scale changes – such as the Covid-19 pandemic – on the well-being of the nation. As such, it is an extremely reliable and theoretically sound measure of well-being.

To build a comprehensive picture of an individual's well-being requires a multifaceted approach to measurement, while evaluating the impact of specific interventions – such as spending time outdoors – on happiness and well-being calls for a focus on the specific aspect of well-being that is most likely to be impacted by that intervention. It is also important to consider timescale and mechanisms – a walk in the woods is likely to improve a person's mood in the short term through the release of endorphins, while regularly spending time camping and caravanning is likely to improve eudaimonic well-being and a person's sense of self and purpose in the longer term.

2.6 Conclusion

With happiness and well-being being important and prominent concepts in psychology, unsurprisingly the outdoor recreation and tourism industry and scholars within these fields have become increasingly interested in exploring well-being within these settings. Yet camping has largely been overlooked (see Morrow, 2013; Morrow et al., 2014; 2017). While Morrow and colleagues' work aids our understanding of camping as a recreation and tourism activity with a means of promoting well-being, these studies draw from a small sample (four participants) and their research design does not lend itself to capturing the multi-faceted nature of well-being. The growing body of literature on camping tourism (see Brooker & Joppe, 2013, 2014; Hassel et al., 2015; Lin et al., 2021; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020; Triantafillidou & Siomkos, 2013) also provides useful insights on the well-being benefits of camping, although, as this is not the specific focus of these studies, they instead provide broader information regarding the experiences and behaviours of campers. Conversely, the well-being benefits of other outdoor activities, outdoor education programmes, and being in nature has received significant academic interest (eg Berto, 2014; Capaldi et al., 2015; Martin et al., 2020).

What is missing, is a comprehensive examination of well-being in the context of camping recreation and tourism, drawing on a range of recognised indicators of happiness and well-being. Further, given that camping has been found to be a successful health intervention prescribed by healthcare professionals (see Cotton & Butselaar, 2013; Desai et al., 2014) and a positive education intervention for the development of children (Pirchio et al., 2021), a study of this nature could not only inform the development of camping experiences that promotes well-being in recreation and tourism settings, but also for medical and education intervention purposes. Thus, it could inform industry practice, national health and education policies, and make a valuable contribution to the growing academic research in this area.

Section 3: Methodology

3.1 Overview of methods

Survey data was collected through The Camping and Caravanning Club's members and their partners, social media groups on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, and through the research team's professional and personal networks, via an online Qualtrics survey.

The questionnaire ascertained information from both campers and non campers about the value of spending time outdoors and in nature (including their personal well-being, their emotional, social, and psychological well-being, and their perceived stress). Campers were also asked about their camping motivations and behaviour, and non campers were asked what prevented them from camping. Camping was defined as the use of tents, caravans, campervans and motorhomes, trailer-tents and folding-campers, glamping, and static caravans.

In preparation for the survey, the questionnaire was subjected to a protocol analysis with both campers and non campers who were encouraged to think aloud as they completed each question. The aim was to test the wording and sequencing of the questions, the respondents' understanding of the questions, the layout of the questionnaire and the time it took to complete the questionnaire (Veal, 2018). The questionnaire was then pilot tested using a small sample from the target population (N = 5) to re-examine the validity of each question and assess the questionnaire as a whole in terms of the question flow and time to complete the survey in real-time. The study had full Ethical Research Approval from both Liverpool John Moores and Sheffield Hallam University.

3.2 Participants

A self-selected sample of 15,127 people over the age of 18 completed the questionnaire in February 2022. After deleting 4,135 incomplete questionnaires, the survey produced 10,992 useable responses, which comprised 10,598 camper responses and 394 non camper responses. The sample characteristics are presented in Table 1. Whilst the non camper sample is much smaller than the camper sample, a margin of statistical error was established using a 95% confidence interval. In other words, 'if 100 samples of the same size were drawn, in 95 cases we would expect the value of the statistic to be within two standard errors of the population value, and in 5 cases we would expect it to be outside this range' (Veal, 2018, p.422).

3.3 Measures

Motivations for camping and the constraints that prevented people from camping were measured on five-point agreement/disagreement scales comprising items found to be important in previous studies about people going both camping and into green spaces (see section 2.2).

The survey also included questions about the type of camping the respondents engaged in, with whom, the frequency, duration and location of their camping, the green and natural spaces they accessed and the activities they participate in while camping, together with respondent demographics. The participants' well-being was measured on scales comprising of items validated in previous research, as outlined on page 17.

Table 1: Characteristics of survey respondents

	Campers		Non campers	
Variable	n	%	n	%
Gender:				
Woman	4530	41.2%	154	39.1%
Man	6299	57.3%	229	58.1%
Non-Binary	13	0.1%	4	1%
In another way (please describe)	44	0.4%	1	0.3%
Prefer not to say	99	0.9%	6	1.5%
Age:				
18-24	15	0.1%	1	0.3%
25-34	144	1.3%	21	5.3%
35-44	568	5.2%	51	12.9%
45-54	1279	11.6%	37	9.4%
55-64	3488	31.7%	99	25.1%
65 and over	5367	48.8%	183	46.4%
Highest education level:				
Secondary school	2106	19.2%	79	20.1%
Further education	4157	37.8%	120	30.5%
Bachelor's degree	3006	27.3%	117	29.7%
Master's degree	1235	11.2%	50	12.7%
Doctorate	243	2.2%	17	4.3%
Prefer not to say	224	2%	10	2.5%
Employment status:				
Employed	3148	28.6%	141	35.8%
Unemployed	118	1.1%	10	2.5%
Self-employed	700	6.4%	20	5.1%
Student	12	0.1%	2	0.5%
Carer	81	0.7%	1	0.5%
Retired	6800	61.9%	212	53.8%
Prefer not to say	116	1.1%	6	1.5%
Country of residence:				
Wales	442	4%	14	3.6%
Scotland	955	8.7%	34	8.6%
Northern Ireland	94	0.9%	4	1.0%
England	9388	85.4%	340	86.3%
Other, please state	69	0.6%	1	0.3%

(Continued on page 16)

Table 1: Characteristics of survey respondents (*continued*)

	Campers		Non campers	
Variable	n	%	n	%
Household income				
<£10,000	245	2.2%	11	2.8%
£11,000 - £20,000	1347	12.3%	50	12.7%
£21,000 - £30,000	1942	17.7%	56	14.2%
£31,000 - £40,000	1502	13.7%	54	13.7%
£41,000 - £50,000	1127	10.3%	42	10.7%
£51,000 - £80,000	1353	12.3%	45	11.4%
£81,000 - £100,000	480	4.4%	26	6.6%
£101,000 - £150,000	122	1.1%	2	0.5%
£151,000+	2543	23.1%	82	21%
Prefer not to say	284	2.6%	22	5.6%
Ethnic group or background:				
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	10,491	95.4%	348	88.3%
Irish	73	0.7%	3	0.8%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	3	0%	1	0.3%
Any other White background	59	0.5%	2	0.5%
White and Black African	57	0.5%	2	0.5%
White and Black Caribbean	10	0.1%	1	0.3%
White and Asian	81	0.7%	17	4.3%
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	68	0.6%	3	0.8%
Indian	7	0.1%	0	0%
Pakistani	1	0%	0	0%
Bangladeshi	1	0%	0	0%
Chinese	6	0.1%	1	0.3%
Any other Asian background	7	0.1%	1	0.3%
African	2	0%	0	0%
Caribbean	3	0%	1	0.3%
Arab	3	0%	2	0.5%
Any other ethnic group	16	0.1%	4	1.0%
Prefer not to say	87	0.8%	8	2.0%
Overall health				
Excellent	1516	13.8%	64	16.2%
Very good	1461	13.3%	64	16.2%
Good	3245	29.5%	114	28.9%
Fair	4353	39.6%	118	29.9%
Poor	376	3.4%	33	8.4%

3.3.1 Office for National Statistics measurement of personal well-being

The general concept of happiness and well-being has been examined at national population level in the UK since 2011 as part of the Annual Population Survey (APS) when the Office for National Statistics (ONS) introduced questions on personal well-being to this survey. This includes four simple questions, referred to as the ONS4, related to feelings of satisfaction with life, feeling as if life activities are worthwhile, happiness, and anxiety, which are measured on a 0-10 Likert scale. The ONS data provide national estimates of personal well-being in the UK that are published quarterly, therefore, this measurement of well-being for campers can be compared with that of a wider UK population data set (ONS, 2021).

3.3.2 Perceived Stress Scale

Stress is important in considering health and well-being, as it is a symptom of a range of health issues (including mental health) (Vallejo et al., 2018). The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is a self-reporting questionnaire that measures an individual's appraisal of psychological stress over the last month with questions assessing 'the extent to which one's life is perceived as unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloading' (Cohen et al., 1983, p.387). This scale uses a 0 = never to 4 = often measurement. It is one of the most widely used approaches for assessing this aspect of stress and has been used in a variety of countries and translated into different languages (Vallejo et al., 2018). Being able to examine the inter-relationship between perceptions of stress for campers and non campers will help us to further consider the health and well-being benefits of camping. Especially as, a significant body of literature (eg Jimenez, et al., 2021) provides evidence that exposure to nature, which camping activities facilitate, aids stress reduction (Berto, 2014).

3.3.3 Mental Health Continuum Short Form

As previously identified, the prevalence of mental health can be categorised into one of three associated categories: 1) flourishing, 2) moderately mentally healthy, or 3) languishing (Keyes, 2002; 2007). This indicator of mental health is determined by the combination of both hedonic (emotional) well-being – feeling good – and eudaimonic (psychological and social) well-being – functioning well. The Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF) is a tool that both categorises and assesses individual symptoms of positive mental health across these combined dimensions. It has 14 questions, with three items for emotional well-being, five items for social well-being and six items for psychological well-being. Those who answered 'every day' or 'almost every day' at least once in the emotional well-being scale and at least six times across the 11 items measuring social and psychological well-being were classified as flourishing. Participants reporting 'never' or 'once or twice' at least once in the emotional well-being scale and at least six times on the social and/or psychological well-being scales were classified as languishing. The respondents that did not fit the criteria for flourishing or languishing are categorised as moderately mentally healthy.

This tool will help to ascertain levels of mental health for campers and non campers, including specific aspects of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. Like the PSS, the MHC-SF will further assist with the examination of the relationship between camping and, by its association, being in nature to improve mental health.

3.3.4 Ryff Scale of Psychological Well-Being

While the previous scales offer a starting point to understand key aspects of well-being and enable comparisons to be made with the wider UK population (ONS scale) it is recognised that the notion of happiness and well-being is far more complex. The Ryff Scale of Psychological Well-Being (Ryff, 1989; Ryff et al., 2007) reflects a multidimensional model of well-being that addresses the issue that 'there is more to being well than feeling happy and satisfied with life' (Ryff & Keyes, 1995, p.725). The scale is more thorough than previous scales, with a 42-item questionnaire that measures six psychological dimensions of well-being and happiness in more depth. These are 1) Self-Acceptance, 2) Positive Relations with Others, 3) Autonomy, 4) Environmental Mastery, 5) Purpose in Life, and 6) Personal Growth (see Table 2 for a detailed overview of each of these dimensions and indicators associated with either a High or Low score). Respondents rate statements on a scale of one to six, with one indicating strong disagreement and six indicating strong agreement. The inclusion of this scale enables a more detailed analysis of how camping contributes to happiness and psychological well-being.

Table 2: An overview of the six dimensions of the Ryff Scale of Psychological Well-being

Dimension	High scorer	Low scorer
Self-Acceptance Positive evaluations of oneself and one's past life	Possesses a positive attitude toward the self; acknowledges and accepts multiple aspects of self, including good and bad qualities; feels positive about past life.	Feels dissatisfied with self, is disappointed with what has occurred in past life, is troubled about certain personal qualities, wishes to be different than what he or she is.
Positive Relations with Others Possession of quality relations with others	Has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others; is concerned about the welfare of others; capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy; understands give and take of human relationships.	Has few close, trusting relationships with others; finds it difficult to be warm, open, and concerned about others; is isolated and frustrated in interpersonal relationships; not willing to make compromises to sustain important ties with others.
Autonomy A sense of self-determination	Is self-determining and independent, able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways, regulates behaviour from within, evaluates self by personal standards.	Is concerned about the expectations and evaluations of others, relies on judgments of others to make important decisions, conforms to social pressures to think and act in certain ways.
Environmental Mastery The capacity to manage effectively one's life and surrounding world	Has a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment, controls complex array of external activities, makes effective use of surrounding opportunities, able to choose or create contexts suitable to personal needs and values.	Has difficulty managing everyday affairs, feels unable to change or improve surrounding context, is unaware of surrounding opportunities, lacks sense of control over external world.
Purpose in Life The belief that one's life is purposeful and meaningful	Has goals in life and a sense of directedness, feels there is meaning to present and past life, holds beliefs that give life purpose, has aims and objectives for living.	Lacks a sense of meaning in life; has few goals or aims, lacks sense of direction; does not see purpose in past life; has no outlooks or beliefs that give life meaning.
Personal Growth Development as a person	Has a feeling of continued development, sees self as growing and expanding, is open to new experiences, has sense of realising his or her potential, sees improvement in self and behaviour over time, is changing in ways that reflect more self-knowledge and effectiveness.	Has a sense of personal stagnation, lacks sense of improvement or expansion over time, feels bored and uninterested with life, feels unable to develop new attitudes or behaviours.

Source: Ryff and Keyes (1995, p. 1072)

3.3.5 Nature Connection Index

The relationship between improved mental well-being and being in the natural environment has a growing evidence base (eg Cox et al., 2017; Natural England, 2016; Saraev, 2020). Consequently, the notion of nature connectedness has been conceptualised and defined as 'a measurable psychological construct that describes a person's relationship with the natural world' (Natural England, 2020, p.7). In addition to improved well-being, nature connectedness has also been linked to pro-environmental behaviours. The Nature Connection Index is a scale that uses six statements to assess a person's emotional and cognitive relationship to nature, and their sense of place (Natural England, 2020; Richardson et al., 2019). Respondents rate their level of agreement with statements on a seven-point Likert scale. This scale will be key in ascertaining campers' and non campers' connection to nature and how this connection interrelates with dimensions of their mental well-being. This scale is used as part of The Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey (Natural England, 2020). Thus, it offers the ability to make comparisons between our survey respondents and population data in England on nature connectedness.

3.4 Procedures

Using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26, a random sample of 394 respondents was extracted from the larger camper group to compare directly with the 394 respondents in the non camper group. The camper sub-group was only used when analysing the camper and non camper responses together. When analysis focused solely on campers, the larger camper group (N = 10,598) was used. For analysis that examined the frequency of camping, the larger camping group was divided into two groups according to camping frequency of six-plus times a year (55%) versus less than six times a year (45%). Where small amounts of data were missing at random, the mean for all participants was inputted (mean substitution).

Analysis began by calculating descriptive statistics for each variable (survey question). These descriptive statistics include the frequency (number and percentage), mean (average), and standard deviation (how dispersed the data is in relation to the mean). The analysis then focused on ascertaining if there were statistically significant differences between the camper and non-camper groups, and the frequent and less frequent campers, using independent samples t-tests and one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) with post-hoc tests. Independent samples t-tests were used to compare the mean scores on all the well-being scales for campers vs non campers and frequent vs less frequent campers.

A series of one-way ANOVAs were used to identify differences in the levels of campers' well-being on the basis of campers' behavioural and demographic variables such as age. Chi-square tests for independence were used to explore differences between the campers and non campers with the variables related to the time spent outdoors and the value of being outdoors; and between campers and non campers, and frequent and less frequent campers, on the percentage categorised as flourishing, languishing, and moderately mentally healthy.

All statistical tests were appropriate for the levels of data i.e. parametric tests (t-tests, ANOVAs and regression) were used for the analysis of interval level data and nonparametric tests (chi-square tests) were used for the analysis of nominal level data. A p-value of 0.05 was used, meaning that it is unlikely (less than 5%) that the results occurred by chance. A p-value higher than 0.05 is not accepted as being statistically significant as it indicates a greater likelihood that the results occurred by chance. Further details of the statistical techniques used to analyse the survey data can be found in Appendices 8.1–8.7.

Section 4: Results

The findings are reported under the three key themes of the survey: 1) spending time outdoors, 2) well-being benefits, and 3) camping behaviours. This means the results are not always presented in the survey's question sequence. The relevance of these results is considered in the later Discussion of Key Findings (see Section 5).

4.1 Spending time outdoors

4.1.1 Frequency and value of spending time outside in green and natural spaces

The findings show that both campers and non campers value spending time outside in green and natural spaces and have similar frequency patterns. For example, 31% of non-campers and 32% of campers stated they have spent time in these spaces every day in the last 12 months, and 28% of non-campers and 43% of campers stated they have done this more than twice a week, but not every day in the last 12 months.

During Covid-19 restrictions, the time spent outside in green and natural spaces was similar for both campers and non campers, although campers scored slightly higher. For most it stayed about the same (45% vs 38%), for some it increased a little (26% vs 20%) and for a small proportion it increased a lot with non campers (15%) marginally experiencing this more than campers (12%). More non campers (27%) than campers (17%) reduced the amount of time they spent outside in these spaces during Covid-19 restrictions.

Correspondingly, 53% of the survey respondents stated that they felt very positive and 30% somewhat positive of healthcare professionals prescribing spending time in nature instead of medication for a mental health issue or condition. There were also high levels of agreement with the statements regarding every child having an opportunity for learning in nature as part of their formal education, with 77% feeling positive and 17% feeling somewhat positive about this. Likewise, 74% of respondents were very positive and 19% somewhat positive about children having an opportunity to go camping as part of their formal education.

Appendix 8.1 presents the chi-square results and shows that while there is a statistically significant difference between campers and non campers for the variables explained in this section, the difference is small. The similarity between the camper and non camper groups is likely attributed to the non campers' preference to spend time outdoors.

4.1.2 Green and natural spaces accessed while camping

The frequencies presented in Table 3 highlight the popularity of accessing green and natural spaces while camping, which corresponds with the campers' high frequency levels of spending time outdoors and in nature in general (see section 4.1.1), and the high value they place on these spaces for their health and well-being (see section 4.2.6).

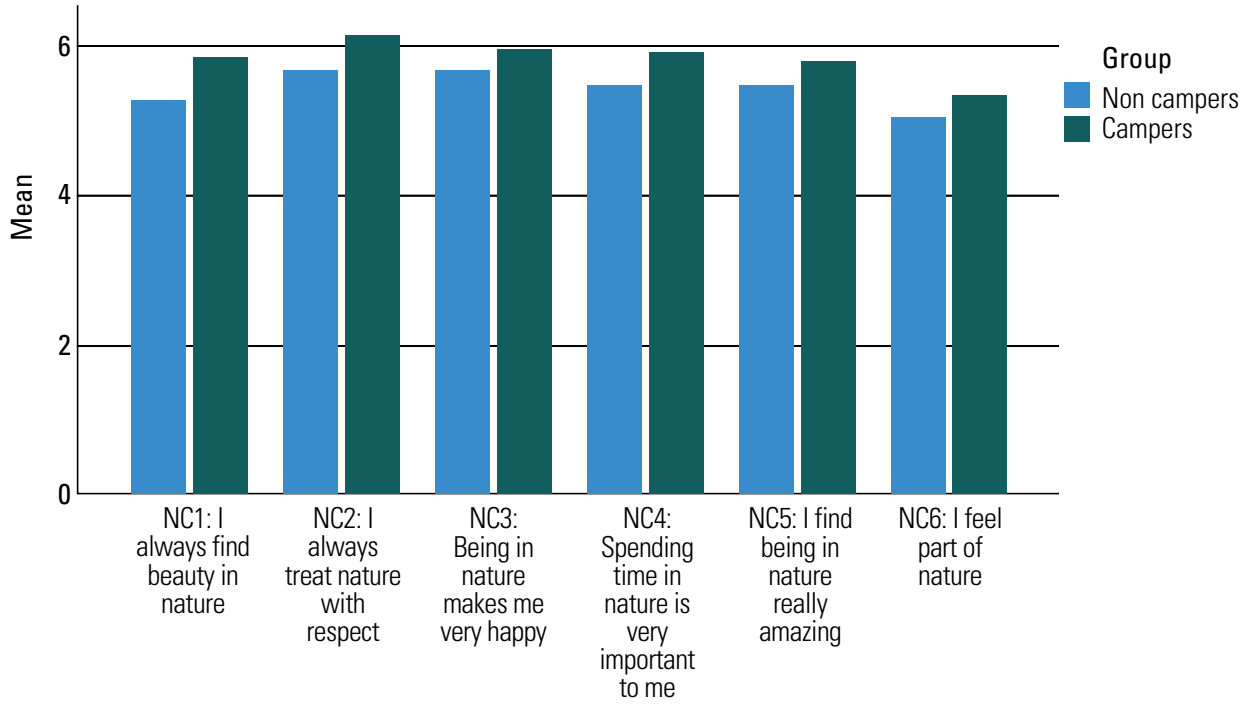
Table 3: Green and natural spaces accessed whilst camping

Green and natural spaces accessed whilst camping	Frequency
Woodland or forest	82%
Beach / other coastline / sea	82%
River / lake / canal	80%
Hill / mountain / moorland	68%
Fields / farmland / lowland countryside	60%
Nature / wildlife reserve	57%
Grounds of a historic property / country park	52%
Urban green space (such as park, field, or playground)	26%

4.1.3 Nature Connection Index

The results of the Nature Connection Index (NCI) analysis can be found in Appendices 8.2 and 8.4. When comparing campers to non campers, campers scored significantly higher on the NCI than non campers (68.09 vs 62.89) – although again, the standard deviation shows there was quite a lot of variation within the camper and non camper groups. As can be seen in Figure 1, campers also scored significantly higher than non campers on the six individual NCI items.

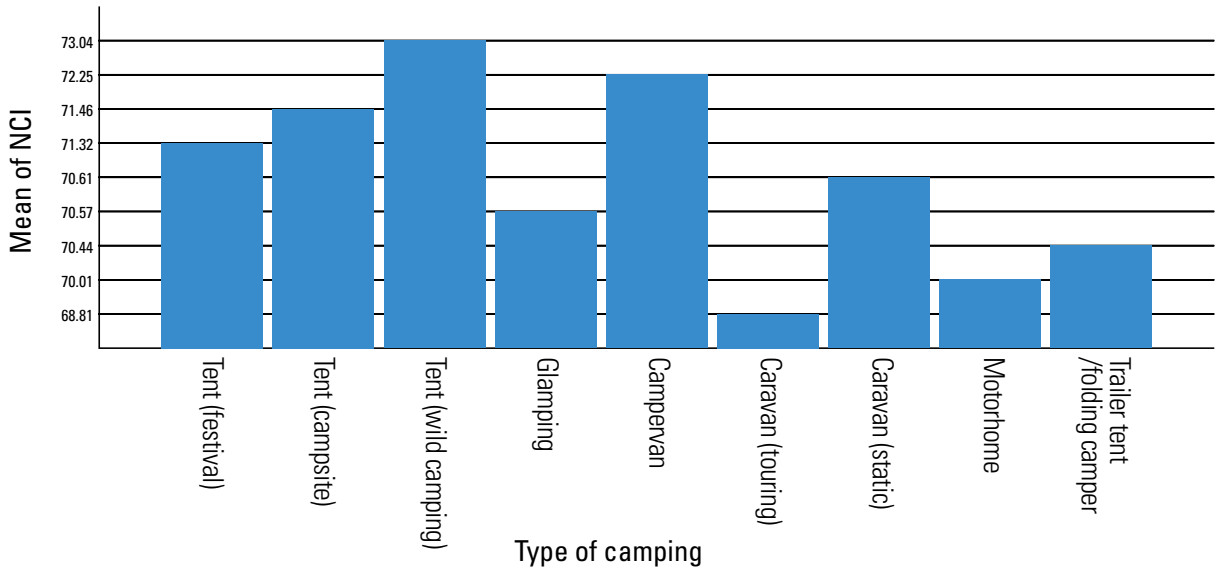
Figure 1:
Scores on the six NCI items for non campers vs campers



The average NCI score for campers overall (10,598 campers) was 70.09, which is higher than the average of 61.16 reported by Richardson et al. (2019) during the validation of the NCI. The standard deviation of 27.69 is similar to that found by Richardson and colleagues (27.88) and indicates considerable variation within the group.

There were no significant differences between frequent and less frequent campers on the NCI. There were, however, differences according to the type of camping engaged with (see section 4.3.1). As can be seen in Figure 2, wild campers reported the highest nature connectedness (73.04), followed closely by campervan users (72.25), while touring caravan (68.81) and motorhome (70.01) users reported the lowest. Although it was not possible to compare these results statistically due to campers being able to choose more than one type of camping, they nevertheless suggest that campers who engage in camping activities that bring them close to nature do also report higher nature connectedness.

Figure 2:
Nature Connection Index by camping type



Appendix 8.4 shows correlations between the NCI and all the well-being variables, including perceived stress. The NCI was weakly correlated with the positively worded ONS items, the MHC-SF subscales, and the Ryff subscales, with the strongest correlations being with personal growth (r=.150, p<.001) and relations with others (r=.132, p<.001). Interestingly, the NCI was not significantly correlated with the negative items – perceived stress and anxiety.

4.2 Well-being dimensions

4.2.1 Office for National Statistics personal well-being scales

The results for the analyses of the ONS4 items can be found in Appendices 8.3 and 8.4. As can be seen in Figure 3, campers reported better well-being overall, scoring higher on life satisfaction (7.41 vs 6.62), worthwhile (7.60 vs 6.78), and happy (7.44 vs 6.51), and lower on anxious (3.09 vs 3.93). When compared to ONS data for the UK population in April-September 2021 (the most recently available data), campers scored close to the population mean for all four items (life satisfaction: 7.55; worthwhile: 7.82; happy: 7.47, and anxiety: 3.10 (ONS, 2022)), whereas non campers scored considerably lower. Because the last ONS study was conducted in the summer and this study was conducted in winter (February 2022) when people's perception of their well-being is likely to be lower than in the summer months, comparisons cannot be fully made.

Among campers, the mean ONS scores were similar to those of the general UK population. However, Figure 4 shows that frequent campers reported better well-being and lower anxiety than less frequent campers.

Figure 3:
Mean scores on ONS4 items for non campers vs campers

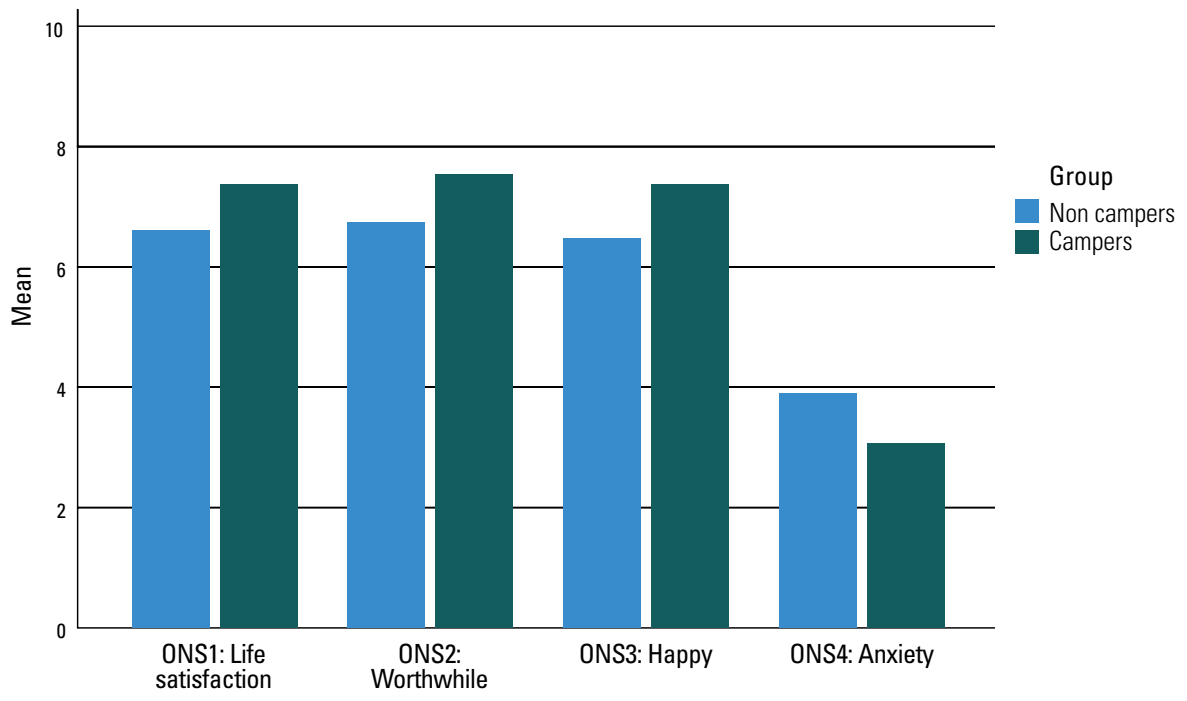
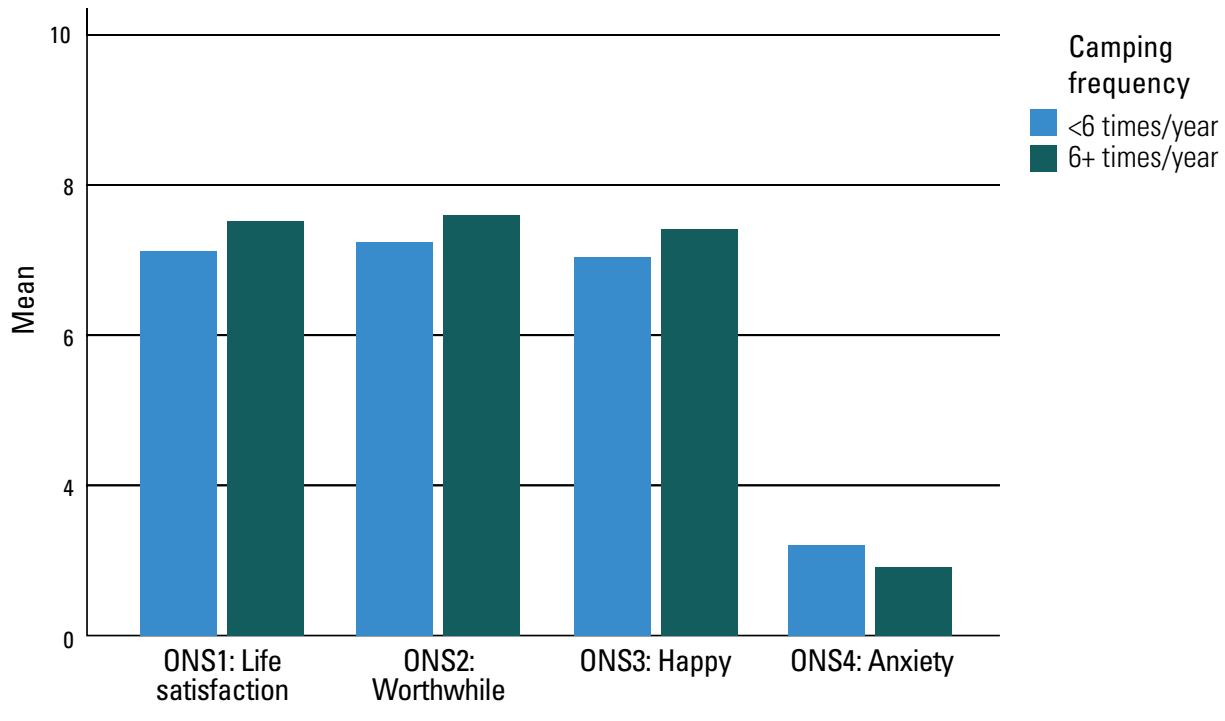
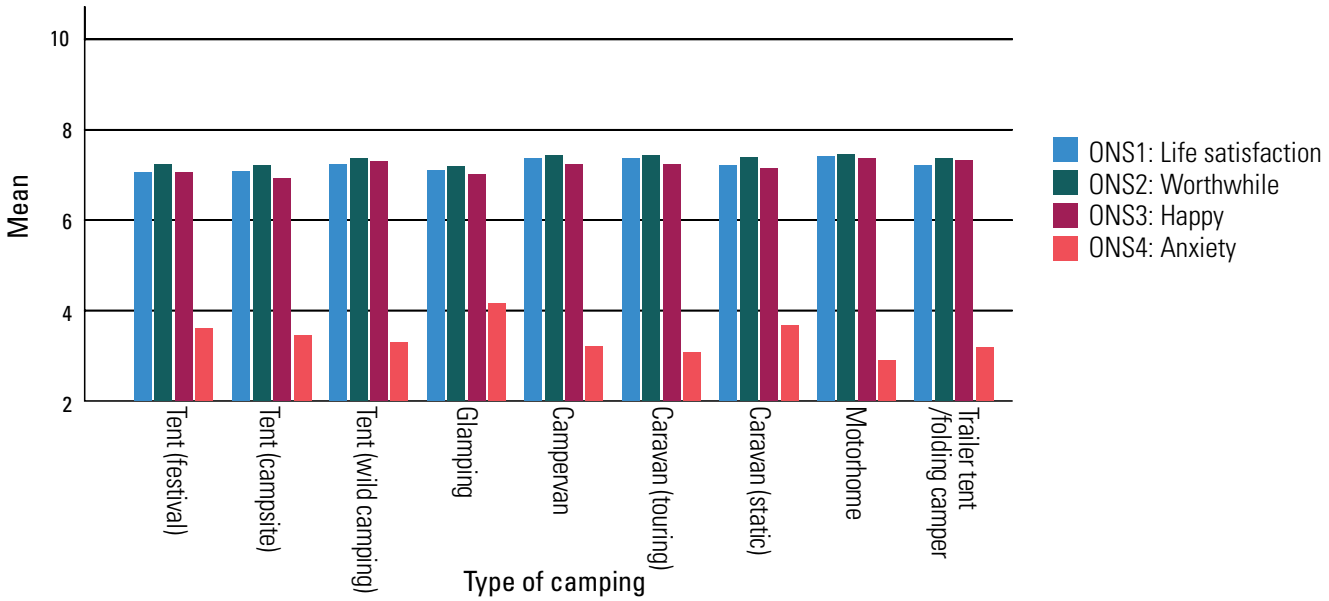


Figure 4:
Mean scores on ONS4 items for frequent vs less frequent campers



As can be seen from Figure 5, there were some slight differences in ONS4 scores by type of camping reported, with motorhome users reporting the best well-being, closely followed by touring caravan and campervan users. Those who camped under canvas reported lower well-being and higher anxiety – although wild campers' well-being was considerably higher and close to that reported by trailer-tent/folding-camper users. It is possible, however, that these differences can largely be explained by demographic differences between these groups – for example, motorhome users were more likely than tent (campsite) users to be aged 65+ (55.1% vs 29.0%), retired (71.2% vs 39.0%) and have a household income above £150,000 (24.5% vs 18.8%).

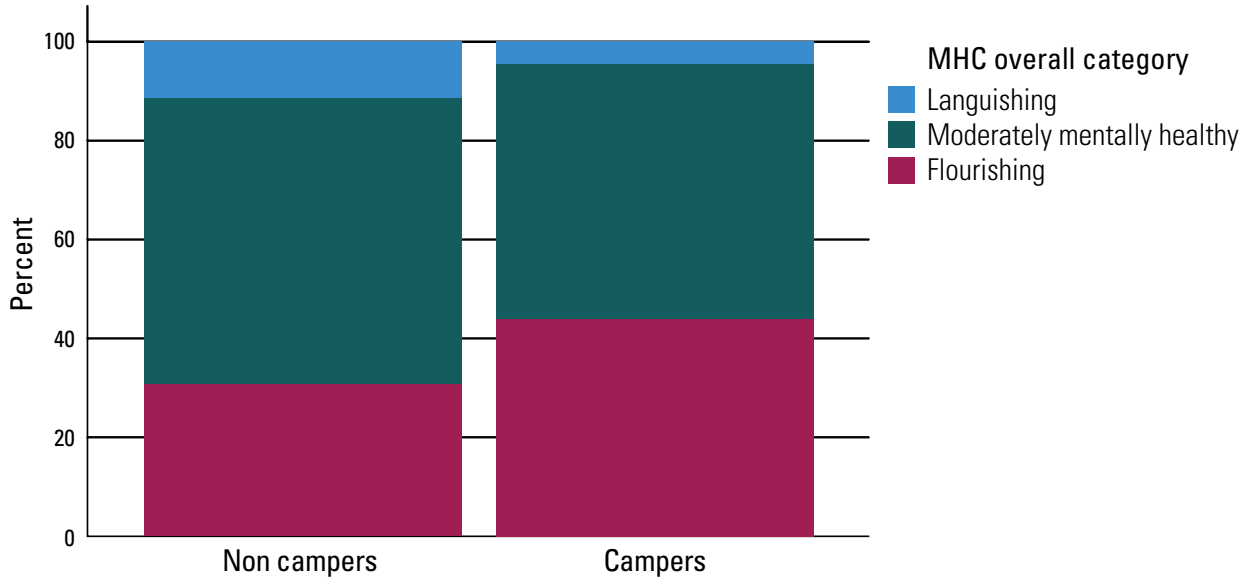
Figure 5:
Means for ONS4 items by camping type



4.2.2 Flourishing: The Mental Health Continuum Short Form Scale (MHC-SF)

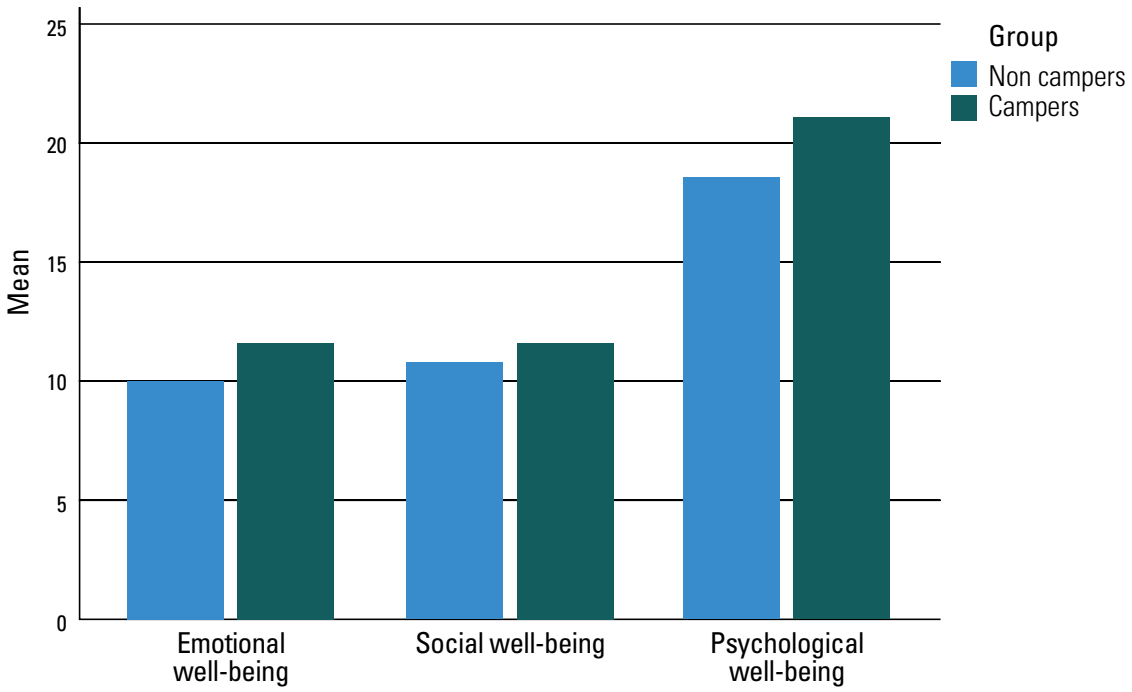
As can be seen in Figure 6, campers were significantly more likely to be flourishing than non-campers (43.9% vs 30.5%) and less likely to be languishing (4.8% vs 11.4%) or moderately mentally healthy (51.3% vs 58.1%).

Figure 6:
Mental Health Continuum category for non campers vs campers



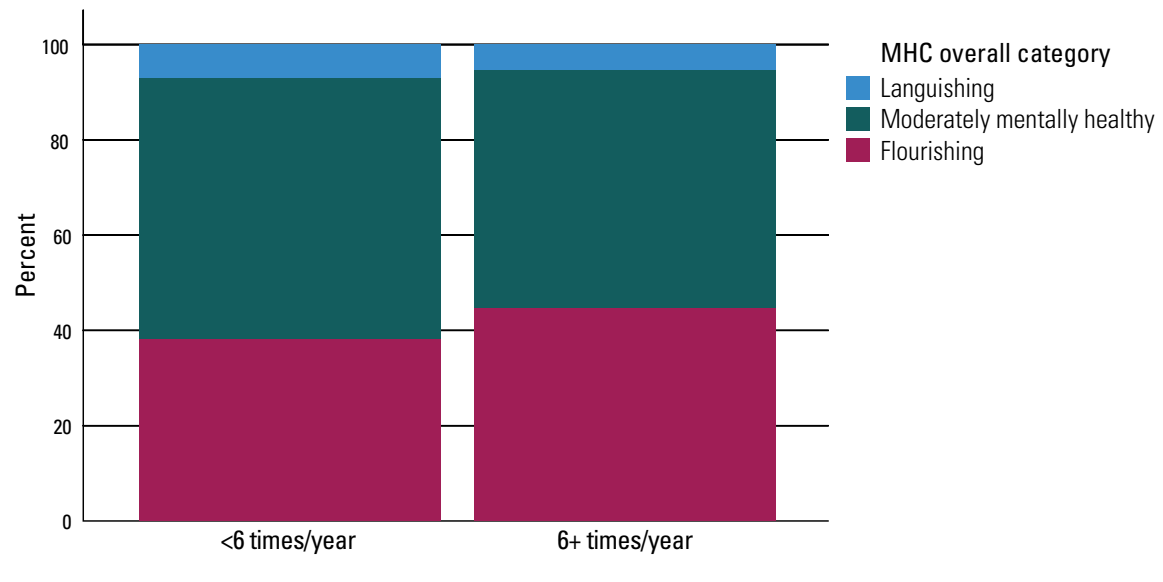
Campers also scored significantly higher than non campers on the MHC-SF subscales, reporting better emotional (11.57 vs 9.96), social (11.51 vs 10.71), and psychological (21.08 vs 18.58) well-being (see Figure 7).

Figure 7:
Mental Health Continuum-SF subscale scores for non campers vs campers



Among campers, 41.7% (4419) were flourishing, 5.9% (630) were languishing, and 52.4% (5549) were moderately mentally healthy. As can be seen in Figure 8, campers who reported going camping frequently (six or more times a year) were significantly more likely to be flourishing (44.6% vs 38.1%), and less likely to be languishing (5.1% vs 6.9%) or moderately mentally healthy (50.3% vs 55.0%) than campers who reported going camping less frequently (less than six times a year).

Figure 8:
Mental Health Continuum category by camping frequency

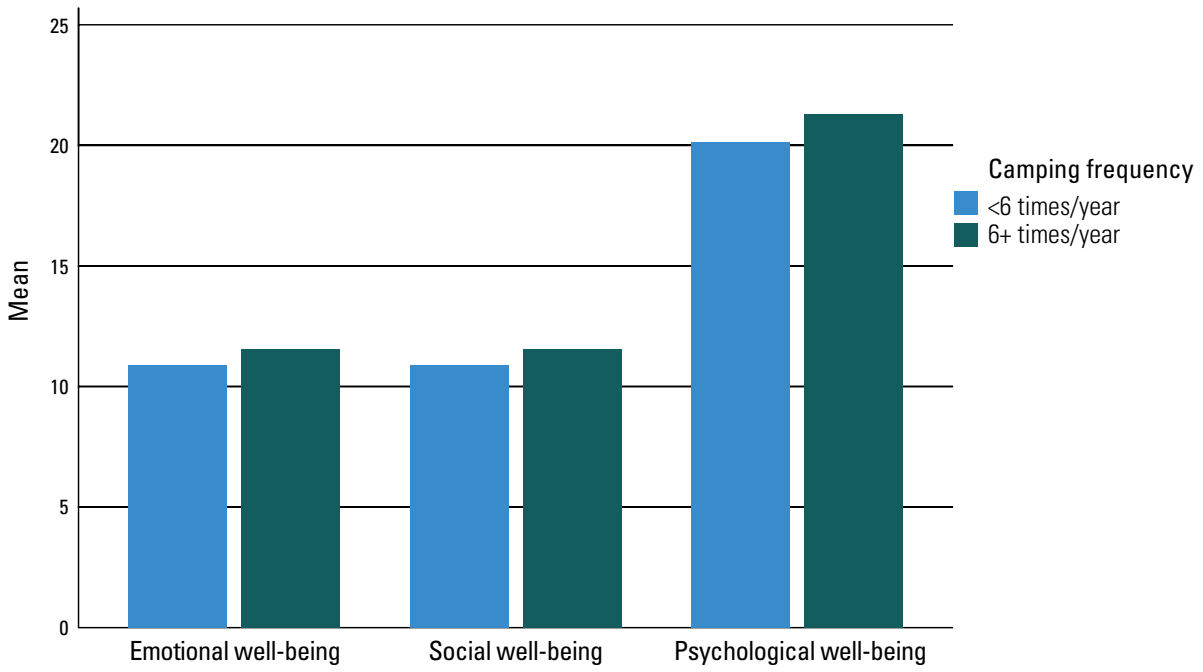


More frequent campers also scored significantly higher than less frequent campers on the MHC-SF subscales, reporting better emotional, social, and psychological well-being (see Figure 9).

The full results for this analysis, including descriptive statistics, Chi-squared and t tests, can be found in Appendices 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5.

A further percentage breakdown of the individual sub scales of the Mental Health Continuum-SF subscale are listed below for general reference.

Figure 9:
Mental Health Continuum-SF subscale scores by camping frequency



Emotional well-being

- Campers are happier: 48% of campers reported feeling happy almost every day compared to 35% of non campers.
- Campers are more interested in life: 41% of campers reported feeling interested in life almost every day compared to 33% of non campers. 37% of campers reported feeling interested in life every day compared to 27% of non campers.
- Campers are more satisfied with life: 42% of campers reported feeling satisfied with life almost every day compared to 34% of non campers. 27% of campers reported feeling satisfied with life every day compared to 16% of non campers.

Social well-being

- Both groups feel society is becoming a better place: 40% of campers and non campers reported never feeling that society is becoming a better place for all people, and a further 30% of campers and 23% of non campers felt this once or twice in the last month.
- Campers have a stronger sense of belonging to a community: 19% of campers felt this every day compared to 12% of non campers. Only 12% of campers never felt that they did not belong to a community (like a social group or your neighbourhood), whereas 22% of non campers felt this.
- Campers feel that people are good: Campers reported feeling that people are basically good more frequently during the last month than non-campers. For example, 32% of campers felt this almost every day compared to 21% of non campers and 27% of campers felt this about two or three times in the last month compared to 24% of non campers.
- Both groups feel society makes sense: Both campers and non campers reported similar results for the statement 'the way our society works makes sense to you'.

Psychological well-being

- Campers feel they can manage their responsibilities more: 32% of campers reported feeling like they are good at managing the responsibilities of their daily lives in the last month, whereas only 21% of non campers felt this way.
- Both groups feel they have warm and trusting relationships with others: The majority of both campers and non campers felt either every day or almost every day in the last month that they have a warm and trusting relationship with others.
- Campers have more confidence in expressing themselves: Slightly more (13%) campers than non campers reported feeling confident to think or express their own ideas and opinions either every day or almost every day in the last month.
- Campers reported feeling like they have less direction in their lives compared to non campers. For example, 58% reported feeling this either every day or almost every day in the last month compared to 42% of non campers.

4.2.3 Perceived Stress Scale

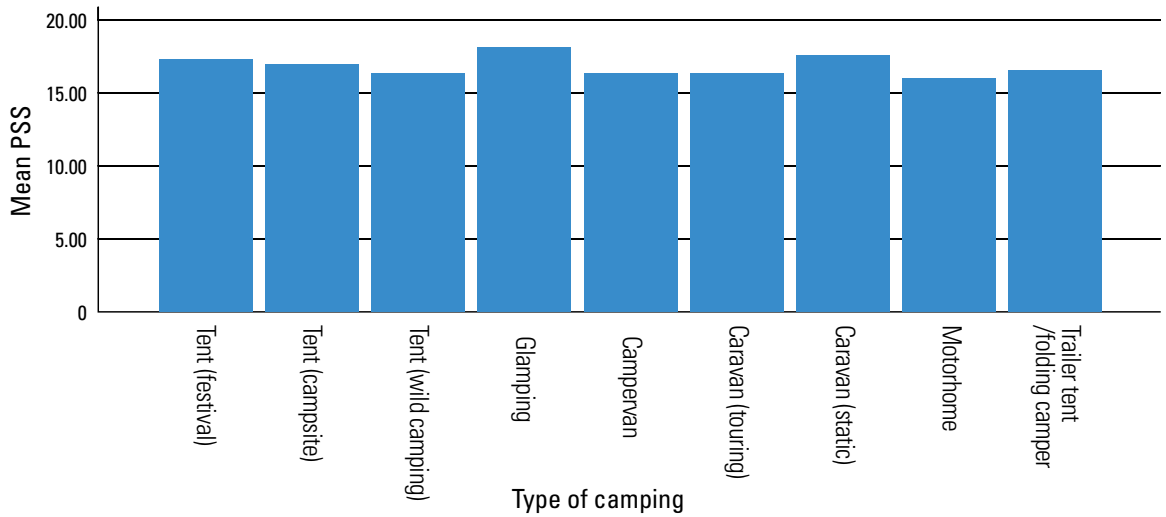
Individual scores on the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) can range from 0 to 40 with higher scores indicating higher perceived stress (Cohen et al., 1983).

- Scores ranging from 0-13 would be considered low stress.
- Scores ranging from 14-26 would be considered moderate stress.
- Scores ranging from 27-40 would be considered high perceived stress.

Results from the PSS scale can be found in Appendices 8.3 and 8.4. Campers reported significantly lower perceived stress than non campers (16.07 vs 18.25). Among campers, frequent campers reported significantly lower perceived stress than less frequent campers (15.98 vs 16.80).

Figure 10 shows the mean perceived stress scale scores for the different types of camping reported. The lowest perceived stress was reported by motorhome users, with wild campers, touring caravan and campervan users all reporting similar levels of perceived stress and glampers reporting the highest stress.

Figure 10:
Mean PSS score by type of camping

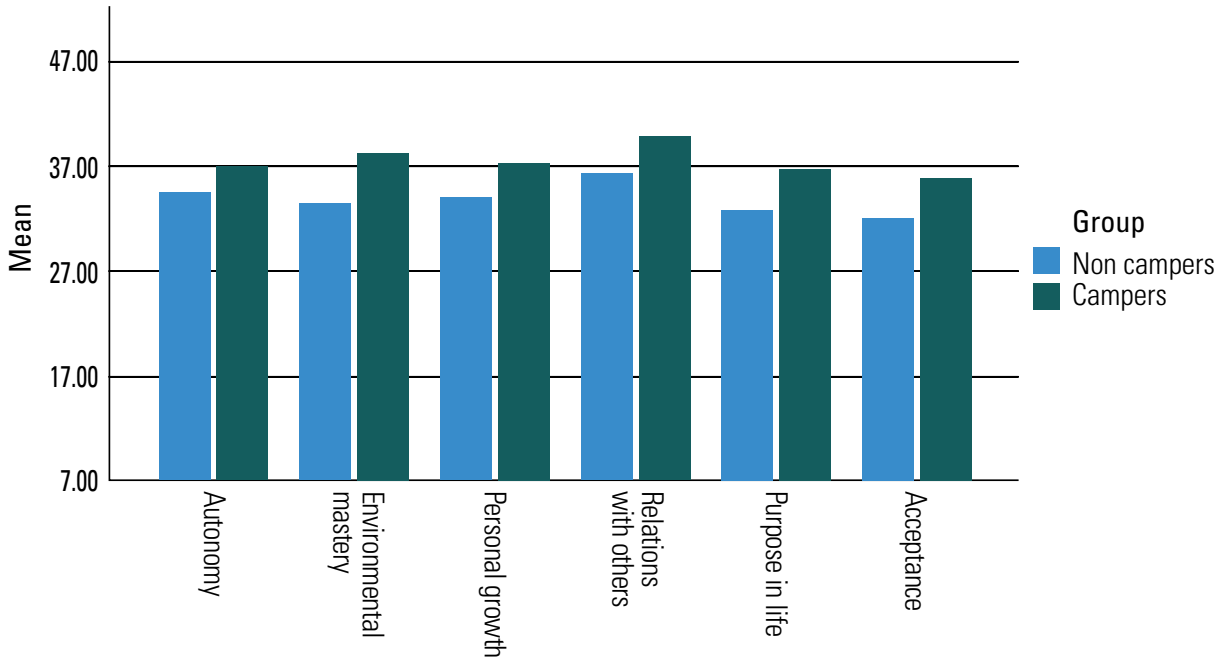


4.2.4 Six dimensions of psychological well-being: Ryff Scale

Appendices 8.3 and 8.4 show the results for the analyses of the Ryff Psychological well-being dimensions.

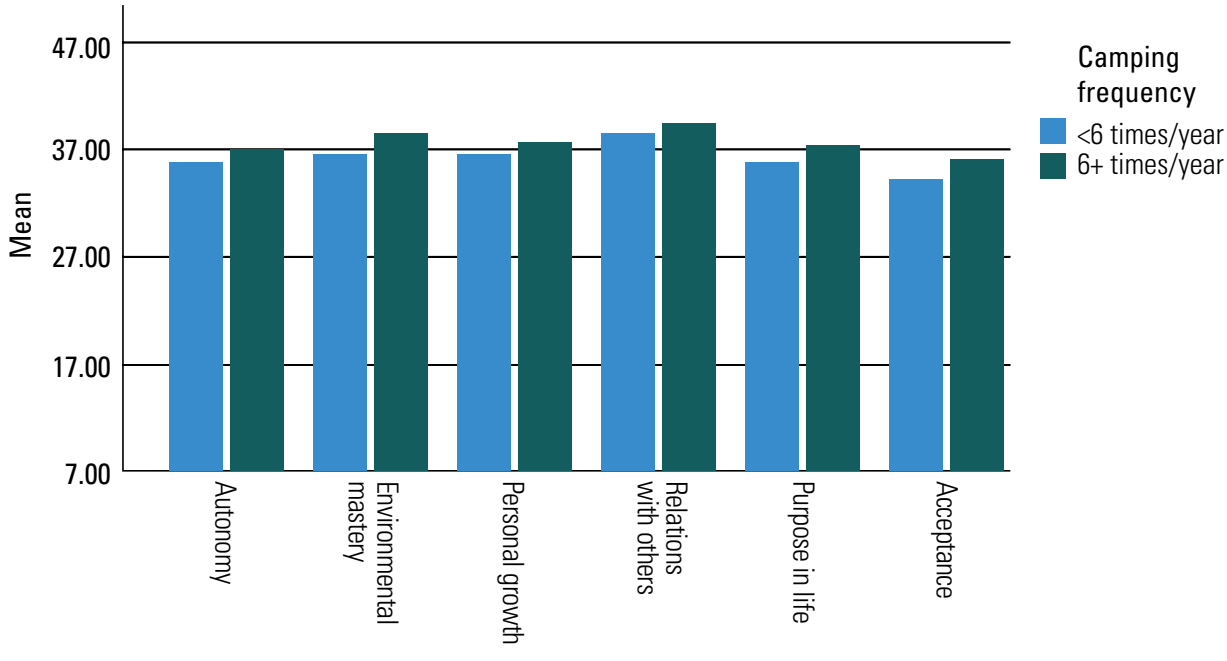
Campers reported significantly higher scores on all six dimensions of psychological well-being: autonomy (37.06 vs 34.60), environmental mastery (38.38 vs 33.53), personal growth (37.48 vs 34.15), relations with others (39.95 vs 36.44), purpose in life (36.79 vs 32.89) and self-acceptance (35.90 vs 32.10). These differences are illustrated in Figure 11.

Figure 11:
Means for Ryff psychological well-being dimensions for non campers vs campers



Among campers, frequent campers reported significantly higher scores on all six dimensions of psychological well-being, although these differences were smaller than between campers and non campers: autonomy (37.12 vs 35.92), environmental mastery (38.81 vs 36.79), personal growth (37.79 vs 36.58), relations with others (39.59 vs 38.58), purpose in life (37.44 vs 35.81), and self-acceptance (36.28 vs 34.31). Figure 12 illustrates these differences.

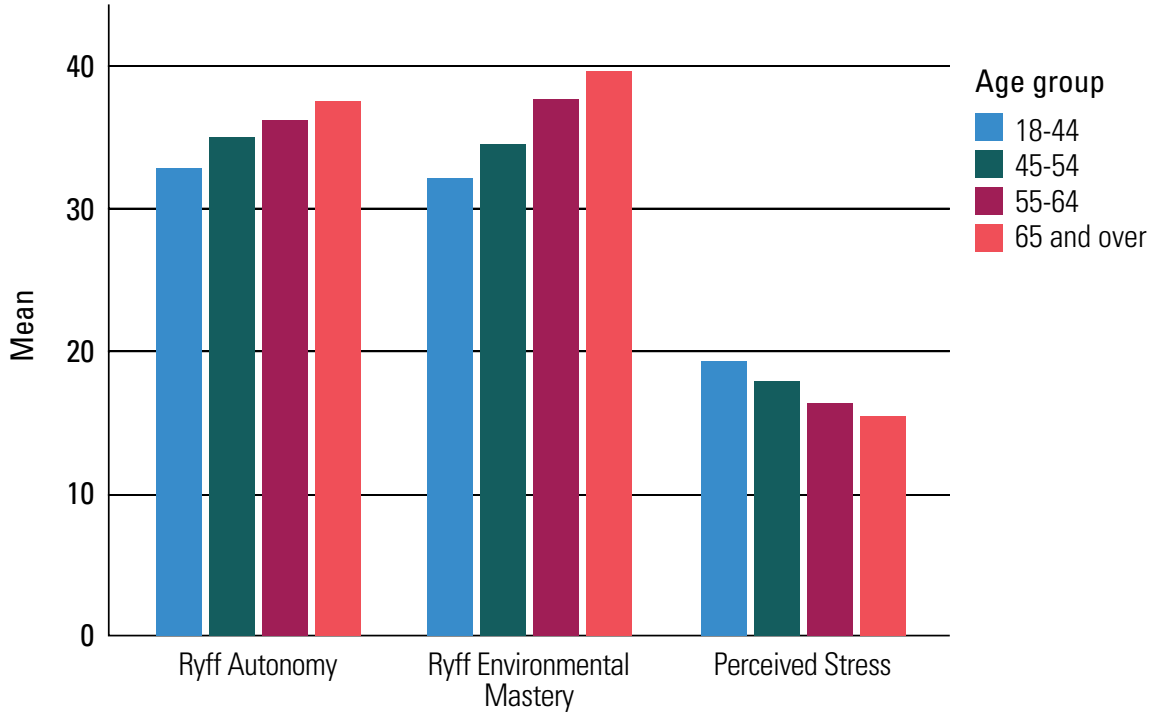
Figure 12:
Means for Ryff psychological well-being dimensions by camping frequency



4.2.5 The impact of campers' age on their personal well-being

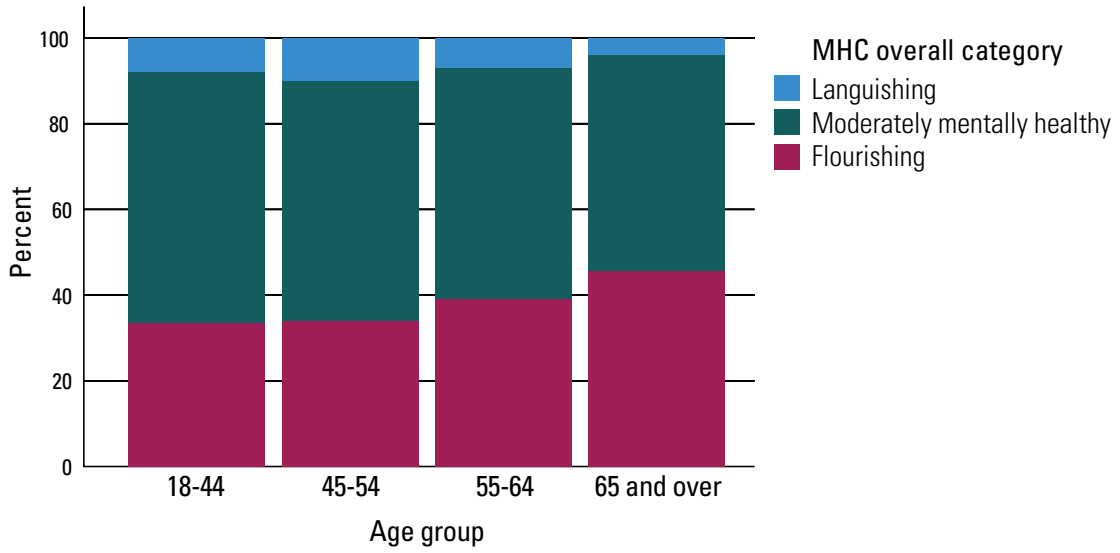
For this analysis, which is presented in Appendix 8.6, campers aged 18-44 (N=654) were combined into one group and compared with campers aged 45-54 (N=1242), 55-64 (N=3389) and 65+ (N=7184). There was a significant improvement in personal well-being across age groups. For the majority of well-being measures, there was a clear gradient: campers aged 18-44 scored lowest and scores increased across the age groups. This pattern was repeated for the perceived stress and ONS anxiety measures, with the youngest reporting the most stress and anxiety and scores decreasing with increasing age. The largest differences were seen for the environmental mastery and autonomy subscales of the Ryff measure, and the perceived stress scale – and these are illustrated in Figure 13 below.

Figure 13:
Mean scores on Ryff autonomy and environmental mastery subscales, by age group



As can be seen in Figure 14, 45.9% of the campers aged 65 and over were categorised as flourishing and 4.0% as languishing, where among the younger age groups 33.6%-39.3% were categorised as flourishing and 7.1%-9.9% as languishing. These differences were statistically significant (see Appendix 8.6).

Figure 14
Percentage of each age group categories as flourishing, languishing, and moderately mentally healthy



4.2.6 The value of camping for health and well-being

The respondents place a high value on camping for their health and well-being and this did not change during Covid-19. Overall, 93% of campers felt positive about this, although the composition of this varies slightly before Covid-19 restrictions began (73% felt very positive and 20% felt somewhat positive) and during Covid restrictions (75% felt very positive and 18% felt somewhat positive). In essence, Covid-19 did not change the value people place on camping for their health and well-being.

4.3 Camping behaviours

4.3.1 Types of camping

Mainly caravan, motorhome, campervan, and tent (campsite) users completed the survey (see Table 4).

Table 4: Type of camping

Type of camping	N (%) of Campers
Caravan (touring)	4102 (38.7%)
Motorhome	3424 (32.3%)
Campervan	2455 (23.2%)
Tent (campsite)	1972 (18.6%)
Tent (wild camping and bivvying)	634 (6.0%)
Caravan (static)	494 (4.7%)
Tent (festival camping)	458 (4.3%)
Glamping	290 (2.7%)
Trailer-tent/Folding-camper	312 (2.9%)

4.3.2 Camping motivations

Table 5 presents the results for the motivation statements, which were scored from 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree. A higher mean score, therefore, indicates greater endorsement of that statement. The table also indicates the percentage of campers who strongly agreed or agreed with the statement.

The results suggest that the majority of campers go camping because it makes them happy, they enjoy being in nature, to feel more relaxed, to enjoy an outdoor lifestyle and to visit the local area and sightsee.

Campers were less likely to endorse the motivations relating to children and young people, getting a better night's sleep, being alone, attending a festival, and to feel more connected to others. Again, this is likely due to the demographics of the sample, who were generally in the older (55+) age groups.

Table 5: Camping motivation scores

Variable	Mean	% Strongly Agree or Agree
I go camping as it makes me happy	4.72	97.4%
I go camping to enjoy being in nature	4.51	93.1%
I go camping to visit the local area and sightsee	4.49	92.0%
I go camping to make me feel more relaxed	4.48	91.1%
I go camping because I enjoy an outdoor lifestyle	4.47	91.6%
I go camping to take time out from everyday life	4.43	87.6%
I go camping to spend quality time with family	4.21	78.9%
I go camping to be physically active in the outdoors (eg walking, cycling, climbing, surfing)	4.19	79.0%
I go camping as it's an affordable form of accommodation and/or holiday	4.19	79.0%
I go camping to create lasting memories of shared experiences	4.16	80.1%
I go camping to have an adventure	4.02	75.9%
I go camping to pursue a hobby	3.64	56.8%
I go camping to spend quality time with friends	3.57	52.4%
I go camping to feel more connected with others	3.29	40.5%
I go camping because I want children and young people to enjoy an outdoor lifestyle	3.13	36.2%
I go camping because I want children and young people to connect with nature	3.01	31.0%
I go camping to get a better night's sleep	3.01	25.6%
I go camping to reconnect with others because I missed social interaction as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic	2.65	21.1%
I go camping to spend time alone	2.23	16.7%
I go camping because I am attending a festival	2.20	15.4%

4.3.3 Camping location

Regardless of the type of camping people do, most (2/3 of respondents) will choose to camp sometimes at the same campsite and other times at a different campsite. The remaining third prefer to camp at different campsites each time. Only 1-2% stay at the same campsite. For example, focusing on the four key types of camping:

- 65% of tent campers will sometimes stay at the same campsite and other times stay at a different campsite. 33% chose to stay at different campsites. Only 2% stay at the same campsite.
- 63% of campervan users will sometimes stay at the same campsite and other times stay at a different campsite. 36% chose to stay at different campsites. Only 1% stay at the same campsite.
- 69% of caravan (touring) users will sometimes stay at the same campsite and other times stay at a different campsite. 28% chose to stay at different campsites. Only 2% stay at the same campsite.
- 66% of motorhome users will sometimes stay at the same campsite and other times stay at a different campsite. 33% chose to stay at different campsites. Only 1% stay at the same campsite.

Also, 71% camp in the UK, 28% camp both in the UK and abroad and only 1% camp solely abroad.

4.3.4 Camping companions

Camping with a partner is significantly more popular than camping with others (see Table 6), although this is likely due to the demographics of the survey respondents, who are mainly over the age of 55.

Table 6: Camping companions

Camping companion	Frequency
I camp with my partner	85%
I camp with friends	30%
I camp with my children	24%
I camp with my grandchildren	19%
I camp alone	15%
I camp with my wider family	14%
I camp with a club/organised group	12%
I camp as part of my job	1%

4.3.5 Participation in outdoor activities whilst camping

98% of people who go camping participate in outdoor activities. Table 7 illustrates the outdoor activities which are most popular among campers while camping.

Table 7: Participation in outdoor activities whilst camping

Outdoor activity	Frequency
Local / low level walks	91%
Hill walking / mountaineering	39%
Cycling / mountain biking	39%
Bird watching	26%
Outdoor swimming	18%
Fishing	10%
Canoeing / kayaking	10%
Running	6%
Surfing	4%
Sailing	3%
Climbing	3%
I don't participate in any outdoor activities when I go camping	2%
Caving	1%

4.3.6 Frequency of camping

Many of the survey respondents have been camping for more than 30 years, which corresponds with the prominent age group of our respondents (55 years and over) (see Table 8).

Table 8: Years the respondents have been camping

Camping years	Frequency
<1 year	2%
1-3 years	7%
4-6 years	7%
7-10 years	7%
11-19 years	10%
20-29 years	9%
30+ years	57%

The survey respondents undertake multiple camping trips each year, which may reflect their high levels of Camping and Caravanning Club membership (see section 4.4.7) (see Table 9).

Table 9: Frequency of camping each year

Frequency of camping	Frequency
Once a year	2%
2-3 times a year	15%
4-5 times a year	27%
6-10 times a year	30%
Over 10 times a year	25%

Given the high frequency of camping trips per year, it is unsurprising that these largely consist of shorter trips lasting seven days or less (see Table 10).

Table 10: Days spent camping on each trip

Days spent camping per trip	Frequency
1-3 days	17%
4-7 days	49%
8-10 days	15%
11-14 days	9%
15-20 days	4%
21+ days	6%

For 51% of the survey respondents, Covid-19 restrictions have negatively impacted the time they spend camping. Specifically, 26% said it has decreased a lot and 25% said it has decreased a little. Given this reduction in the time spent camping for half of the survey respondents, it is positive that the respondents still place high value on camping for their health and well-being, as explained in Section 4.2.6. This indicates that, for these respondents, there is a motivation to return to camping for the benefits it can afford.

For nearly a quarter of campers (23%), the time they spent camping during Covid-19 restrictions stayed about the same. Conversely, 25% said their time spent camping has increased: 13% of campers said it increased a little and 12% said it increased a lot.

4.3.7 The influence of household income on camping behaviour

Table 1 (Characteristics of survey respondents) in Section 3 and Table 11 on p.33 show that campers' household income is largely spread across the lower income bands between £11,000 - £80,000, with £21,000 - £30,000 (17.7%) being the most common household income within this range. Thus, it can be inferred that those with household incomes of £11,000 - £80,000 are more likely to go on camping holidays, which ties in with the affordability of camping being a key motivation for 79% of campers (see 4.3.2). The exception to this and the most prevalent household income reported by our survey respondents is £151,000+ (23.1%). Fewer campers with household incomes of <£10,000 (2.2%) or between £81,000 - £150,000 (5.5%) responded to the survey than those with other household incomes, indicating that people with these household incomes are less likely to go on camping holidays – or less likely to respond to surveys.

Most of the survey respondents were aged 55-64 (31.7%) and 65 and over (48.8%) and these age groups were present across all household income bands, although spiking in the £151,000+ band (22.5% and 27% respectively). This is to be expected as they are near the end of their careers with pensions, savings, and home equity bolstering their household income. Those aged less than 55 mainly reported a household income of £51,000 - £80,000.

Table 11 also presents the campers' household income against the frequency with which they camp each year. As noted in section 4.3.6 (see Table 9), many campers reported undertaking multiple camping trips each year with 6-10 times a year (30%) and 4-5 times a year (27%) being the most popular. Household income does not appear to influence this, as these two camping frequencies are preferred across all household incomes. Except for those with a household income of <£10,000 and £101,000 - £150,000 who marginally prefer to camp four to five times a year than six to 10 times a year, and those with a household income of £51,000 to £80,000 who would equally choose to camp four to five or six to 10 times a year.

Table 11: Campers' household income vs frequency of camping each year

Frequency of camping each year						
	Once a year	2-3 times a year	4-5 times a year	6-10 times a year	Over 10 times a year	% of Total (N = 10,598)
Household income						
<£10,000	3.4%	21.0%	28.8%	24.0%	22.7%	2.2%
£11,000 - £20,000	1.5%	16.4%	26.6%	28.0%	27.4%	12.3%
£21,000 - £30,000	1.1%	14.2%	27.0%	31.4%	26.2%	17.7%
£31,000 - £40,000	1.5%	14.5%	27.7%	30.9%	25.4%	13.7%
£41,000 - £50,000	2.3%	12.0%	28.3%	32.1%	25.2%	10.3%
£51,000 - £80,000	2.1%	16.6%	28.4%	28.8%	24.1%	12.3%
£81,000 - £100,000	4.2%	20.5%	23.6%	28.0%	23.6%	4.4%
£101,000 - £150,000	0.8%	18.5%	27.7%	26.9%	26.1%	1.1%
£151,000 +	2.0%	14.5%	26.6%	31.2%	25.7%	23.1%
Prefer not to say	2.3%	18.7%	27.5%	29.4%	22.1%	2.6%
% of Total (N = 10,598)	1.9%	15.2%	27.2%	30.2%	25.5%	

Those with a total household income of <£10,000 and £81,000 to £100,000 are not only less likely to go camping compared to people with other household incomes (see above), but they are also more likely to camp less frequently (once a year and 2-3 times a year). Further, they are also marginally more likely to stay in a tent than other forms of camping accommodation (see Table 12). Combined, these findings indicate that people with these household incomes have a lower preference for camping and/or have barriers that prevent them from camping and influence the type of camping they do compared to those with other household incomes.

When comparing campers' household income with the four main types of camping, again, household income does not appear to influence this and campers from across all household incomes camp in tents (campsite) as well as caravans, motorhomes, and campervans. For example, those with a household income <£20,000 and £41,000 to £50,000 choose each type of camping equally, and those with a household income of £21,000 to £40,000 are marginally more likely to not stay in a tent. This indicates that campers with the lowest household incomes see all forms of camping as a viable form of accommodation and would not necessarily choose to stay in a tent (campsite) as the most cost-effective type of camping. Further, those with a household income of £51,000 to £150,000 are marginally (+1% - 4%) more likely to stay in a tent. In comparison, staying in a tent is the least preferred form of camping accommodation for those with the highest household income of £150,000+.

Table 12: Campers' household income vs type of camping

Frequency of camping each year				
	Caravan (touring) N = 4102 (38.7%)	Motorhome N = 3424 (32.3%)	Campervan N = 2455 (23.2%)	Tent (campsite) N = 1972 (18.6%)
Household income				
<£10,000	1.7%	2.1%	2.3%	3.3%
£11,000 - £20,000	12.6%	11.2%	12.7%	12.6%
£21,000 - £30,000	18.4%	18.8%	17.1%	15.5%
£31,000 - £40,000	14.3%	14.5%	12.4%	12.1%
£41,000 - £50,000	10.4%	9.8%	10.7%	9.7%
£51,000 - £80,000	11.9%	10.7%	13.2%	16.1%
£81,000 - £100,000	3.6%	4.7%	5.1%	6.7%
£101,000 - £150,000	0.7%	1.1%	2.0%	1.9%
£151,000 +	24.3%	24.5%	21.1%	18.8%
Prefer not to say	2.1%	2.5%	3.6%	3.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

4.3.8 Membership of The Camping and Caravanning Club

96% of the camping survey respondents are members of The Camping and Caravanning Club, 1% are members of a different camping and caravanning related club, and 3% are not members of any club.

4.3.9 Barriers to camping for non-camper survey respondents

When asked what prevents non-campers from camping, a preference to do other leisure activities or use other forms of holiday accommodation was the most prominent reason (see Table 13).

Table 13: Barriers to camping for non-campers

Barriers to camping	Frequency
Prefer to do other leisure activities or use other forms of holiday accommodation	32%
Bad/poor weather	26%
Too busy at home / with family commitments	20%
Staying at home to stop Covid-19 spreading/government restrictions	19%
Poor physical health (or illness)	18%
My physical ability	17%
lack of general home comforts (eg showers, heating etc.)	17%
Too busy at work	13%
Don't have access to camping equipment	12%
Don't have anyone else to go with	12%
It is too expensive	9%
Poor mental health or well-being	9%
Don't like camping/just not interested	8%
Lack of facilities and access points for those with disabilities	6%
Nowhere near enough to me is suitable to go camping	5%
I don't have access to transport to go camping	5%
Fear/worry about crime and anti-social behaviour	5%
Don't have enough knowledge about camping to feel confident to go	5%
Fear/worry about getting hurt or injured	4%

Section 5: Discussion of Key Findings

5.1 The value of camping and being in green and natural spaces

The findings show that both campers and non campers value spending time outside in green and natural spaces and, for the majority, do so either every day or more than twice a week, although more so amongst campers (75% vs 59%) (see section 4.1.1). The time spent outside by non campers corresponds with what is being observed at a general population level, with Natural England (2022) recently reporting in March 2022 (the most recent available statistics at the time of writing this report) that 61% of adults in England spent time outside in green and natural spaces in the last 14 days. It also highlights how campers not only spend more time outside than the survey's non campers, but also compared to England's general population.

When asked about the value of camping for their health and well-being, 93% of campers felt positive, which is a slight increase from what was reported in the earlier report (85%) (CCC, 2011). This likely drives their camping frequency, with many choosing to camp four-plus times a year, with four to seven days being the most popular duration (see section 4.3.6). While the camper survey respondents have been enjoying the benefits of camping for many years, with more than half reporting they have been camping for 30+ years, the increasing preference to camp as an alternative form of nature-based tourism for a quieter tourism setting where social distancing can be maintained and when shorter trips are more feasible (Aydin & Dogan, 2020; Craig, 2020), may have also positively impacted these perceptions. This would also support the increase in popularity – which is accelerating post Covid-19 crisis, particularly domestically (Euromonitor, 2020; Mintel, 2020; UNWTO, 2019) – that is being observed across all forms of tourism that involve being in nature, in quiet and less crowded settings, that are more sustainable, and improve one's well-being.

Natural England (2020) reported that participants who visit nature frequently tend to report higher levels of nature connectedness. Our findings support this. Both campers and non-campers scored highly on the Nature Connection Index compared to the UK national average, as reported by Richardson et al. (2019) (see section 4.1.3). However, despite non campers frequently spending time outside and placing high value on the outdoors for their health and well-being, those who camp still have a greater connection to nature. Further, campers who camped less frequently were just as connected to nature as those who camped more frequently. Therefore, camping frequency did not appear to impact nature connectedness. Similarly, a connection to nature was evident across all camping types, although there was a slightly higher level of nature connectedness amongst those who camped under canvas or in a campervan, than those who used other forms of camping (eg caravan, motorhome). Therefore, we can support the notion that camping positively influences nature connectedness. This is important as nature connectedness brings benefits for both humans and nature: it can lead to both improved mental well-being (both hedonic and eudaimonic) (Pritchard et al., 2020) and increased pro-environmental behaviours (Richardson et al., 2020), and it is argued that nature connectedness is a basic psychological need (Baxter & Pelletier, 2019; Hurly & Walker, 2019).

5.1.1 The value of green and natural spaces post Covid-19

It is of note that, unlike England's general population whose time spent in green and natural spaces increased during Covid-19 to reach its current levels (Natural England, 2020), the survey respondents' time in these spaces stayed about the same, despite Covid-19, although more so for campers (45% vs 38%). This is likely attributed to the existing high-value placed on being outside and in nature for their health and well-being before the pandemic, with respondents reporting similar positive feelings about this before (92% felt positive: 68% felt very positive and 24% felt somewhat positive) and during Covid-19 restrictions (89% felt positive, 71% felt very positive, and 18% felt somewhat positive). This indicates that, unlike England's general population who may have increased their appreciation of the value of the outdoors during Covid-19 and thus increased their visits, the respondents were able to maintain spending time outdoors and in nature during the pandemic. Further, for a third of respondents, they increased this time. Although, notably, more non-campers than campers reduced the time they spent outdoors during the pandemic (27% vs 17%), again highlighting the strong connection campers have with the outdoors for their health and well-being compared to non campers. When compared to national data, the survey respondents (89%) place higher value on green and natural spaces for their health and well-being than the English population, as only four in ten adults say it is important to their well-being during Covid-19 restrictions in 2020 (Natural England, 2022).

5.2 Camping motivations

The natural surroundings that camping provides are central to many motivational factors. It affords a sense of escapism – both physical and psychological – from the stresses of everyday life and urban living, fostering a sense of relaxation which has been found to promote health and psychological well-being (Dickinson et al., 2016; Egger et al., 2020; Garst et al., 2009). It enables campers to pursue a range of outdoor activities (see section 4.3.5), fuelling their sense of adventure, keeping them physically active and enabling them to live an outdoor lifestyle. This, in turn, would further support aspects of their psychological and eudaimonic well-being such as personal growth, autonomy, accomplishment, and environmental mastery, but also their hedonic well-being through the enjoyment of camping, being active outdoors, and a life worth living, which leads to positive emotions (eg happiness, joy, excitement, interest, pride, love, inspiration). Camping also facilitates the opportunity to spend time with friends and family, focus on high-quality interactions with others and create lasting memories of shared camping experiences (Hardy et al., 2012), thus enhancing relatedness (psychological well-being) and social well-being. Combined, these provide campers with a deep sense of happiness,

which is reflected in their key motivation to keep camping, and is a key tenet of subjective well-being. Indeed, the breadth of motivations endorsed by campers illustrates how camping has the potential to promote well-being across multiple dimensions, thus supporting campers' flourishing, mental health, and overall well-being (see section 4.2).

The motivations reported by campers also indicate the wide range of expected psychological and social benefits of camping, as noted in The Camping and Caravanning Club's earlier report (CCC, 2011). When compared with the benefits of camping previously reported, generating happy memories (97% vs 80%) and being with family (91% vs 79%) while camping is less important to the modern camper. However, camping to appreciate nature is equally important to past and present campers, with 93% agreeing to this statement in both studies. Similarly, feeling more relaxed (91.1%) and taking time out from everyday life (87.6%), which are key motivations for the campers in this study, relate to the key benefit of camping to recharge batteries (95%) and relieve stress (89%) reported 10 years previously (CCC, 2011). It is of note that previously 73% of campers said camping was a great way to make friends (CCC, 2011). By comparison, fewer contemporary campers rated spending quality time with friends (52.4%) and feeling more connected to others while camping (40.5%) as a motivation to camp. This is perhaps attributed to the large proportion of our camper respondents (85%) preferring to camp with their partner than with friends, family members, or with a club or organised group (see 4.3.4). Whom campers choose to camp with was not collected in the earlier study, therefore, direct comparisons cannot be made.

5.3 The impact of camping on well-being

A key finding from the study is that campers, compared to non campers, are more likely to be flourishing, the most favourable end of the mental health spectrum indicating a strong coexistence of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (see Section 4.2.2). Further, campers scored higher for flourishing (43.9%) than previously reported in population studies in the United States (17.2%) (Keyes, 2002) and The Netherlands (38.6%) (Santini et al., 2020). Comparisons cannot be made with UK population data, as this information is not available. However, this finding supports the assertion that camping is good for your mental health and well-being. Flourishing is a recognised concept central to international debates about health and mental health (Keyes, 2007), and seen as "the gold standard of measuring well-being" (Seligman, 2011, p.13). Therefore, this finding helps position camping as an activity that could be central to wider strategic national agendas for promoting the restorative benefits of the outdoors for well-being and improved mental health.

To further support this claim of the benefit of camping, campers also scored significantly higher than non campers across the MHC-SF subscales of psychological, emotional, and social well-being; on all ONS4 personal well-being questions; and reported considerably less stress (PSS). Further, campers scored more highly than non campers on Ryff's six dimensions of psychological well-being, particularly on environmental mastery and purpose in life. This, supporting the underpinning assertions that camping contributes to identity construction and the development of self-confidence, self-awareness, and interpersonal and practical skills within educational, leisure and tourism settings, as found by others (Fiennes et al., 2015; Houge MacKenzie & Hodge, 2020; Olivos & Clayton, 2017; Tong et al., 2020). Notably, those who camped more frequently also reported higher scores across all well-being measures than those who camped less frequently. Thus, the more one camps, the better their well-being and mental health.

A direct comparison with the well-being findings in the previous report (CCC, 2011) cannot be made, as the two surveys used different measures to capture the happiness and well-being of campers. As mentioned previously, in order to capture multiple dimensions of well-being, this current study used a range of validated measures of well-being – some of which simply did not exist or were not widely used 10 years ago. However, despite this, the overall findings of this study correspond well to those previously reported. For example:

- Campers are more satisfied with their life compared to non-campers (see 4.2.1 and 4.2.2)
- Campers are happier than non campers (see 4.2.1 and 4.2.2).
- Campers are less stressed than non campers (see 4.2.3)
- Campers are more social and their relations with others (family, friends, community, and society) are more positive than non campers (see 4.2.2 and 4.2.4). For example, campers have a stronger sense of belonging to a community and they generally feel that people are good.

Collectively, these findings offer a strong basis from which claims can be made that camping is an outdoor recreation and tourism activity that contributes to improved well-being and mental health.

For those who do not go camping, poor physical health or illness (18%), physical ability (17%), and poor mental health or well-being (9%) were a barrier for some survey respondents. This serves as a reminder that inclusive camping approaches must recognise barriers and adapt camping practices that promote a full spectrum of health and well-being benefits.

5.4 Camping on prescription and in the classroom

The majority of respondents (83%) felt positive about healthcare professionals prescribing spending time in nature instead of medication for a mental health issue or condition. While this question was not asked in the previous report, a related question asked respondents if they felt camping should be prescribed by the NHS and just 46% of campers and 12% of non-campers agreed to this (CCC, 2011). Similarly, just 59% of campers said that camping should be on the school curriculum in the earlier report. By comparison, in this present study, there was strong agreement (94%) that all children should have an opportunity to learn outdoors and camp as part of their formal education. This provides a helpful barometer 10 years on as to the public's current views and advocacy for greater access to camping and time outdoors as both education and healthcare solutions. Indicating that now, more than ever, has there been support for the rollout of national initiatives, such as Green Prescribing, to tackle the increase in children's and young people's poor mental health. This would support DEFRA's (2019) proposals that every child should spend a night under the stars, as well as camping as part of formal curriculum.

5.5 Participation in activities while camping

It is of note that 98% of camping respondents participate in outdoor activities while camping, with walking being the most prevalent, an activity which has been found to be a significant predictor of health and a predictor, albeit small, of nature connectedness (National Trust, 2020). The identification of camping as a clear pathway to physical activity (in particular walking) is an important finding, as physical activity in outdoor environments (Marselle et al., 2013), in comparison to both urban and indoor environments (Fruhauf et al., 2016; Kelly et al., 2018; Loureiro & Veloso, 2014), is widely associated with increased well-being. Alongside this, woodland or forest environments were the most frequented type of green and natural space accessed while camping (82%), settings which have been found to further enhance well-being in other studies. For example, increased exposure to levels of tree canopy can positively impact levels of psychological distress (Astell-Burt & Feng, 2019), evident with emerging concepts such as 'measuring exposure-response' to green spaces (Saraev et al., 2020). Thus, the combination of camping with both physical activity and accessing different types of natural environments beyond the initial camping venue itself, could foster greater well-being and mental health benefits of camping.

Section 6: Conclusions and Future Research

Camping as a facilitator for improving well-being and mental health is still relatively under-researched. However, it has been found to be a valuable outdoor recreation and tourism activity providing important opportunities for improving psychological, social, and physical well-being through connecting with nature (eg Capaldi et al., 2015; Hassell et al., 2015; Jimenez, 2021); disconnecting from the stresses of everyday life (Brooker & Joppe, 2013; Capaldi et al., 2015; Dickinson et al., 2016; Egger et al., 2020; Rydstedt & Johnsen, 2019); socialising with others (e.g., Hardy et al., 2012; Hassell et al., 2015; Lonergan, 2021); and offering therapeutic benefits as part of structured educational and prescribed healthcare interventions (Cotton & Butselaar, 2013; Desai et al., 2014).

The findings of this research indicate that campers report higher levels of well-being than non campers, and that they are also more likely to be flourishing, a category given to those with optimal mental health (Keyes, 2006). Further, those who camp more frequently were significantly more likely to have higher levels of well-being and mental health. Campers also have a greater connection to nature than non campers, which is important, as not only does a connection to nature positively improve mental health and well-being (Pritchard et al., 2020), it can also increase pro-environmental behaviours (Richardson et al., 2020). Therefore, camping is a valuable mechanism for promoting well-being, mental health, and environmental sustainability.

The key motivations to camp also support the assertion that camping can improve well-being and mental health as the most commonly endorsed motivations are associated with psychological, physical, social, and emotional well-being. It is the perceived psychological (escapism, restoration, reduced stress), physical (pursuing outdoor activities, particularly walking) and social (spending time with partners, family and friends) benefits of camping, alongside being in nature that drive motivation and, presumably, camping behaviours. Combined, these can provide campers with a deep sense of happiness, which is a key motivation for camping, and which encompasses positive feelings about their lives right now and in general (subjective well-being), their broader sense of self and purpose (psychological well-being), and optimal mental health (flourishing).

Given the multitude of well-being benefits that can be enjoyed from camping, it is unsurprising that campers champion healthcare professionals prescribing time in nature instead of, or in addition to, medication, and the inclusion of camping in the curriculum. When taken into consideration with the reports of camping being a successful healthcare and education intervention (see Cotton & Butselaar, 2013; Desai et al., 2014), the findings of this study provide a strong foundation for the advocation of positioning camping within national health and education agendas, and the development of camping experiences beyond recreation and tourism that will have wider societal benefit. This is particularly pertinent now, as these experiences could counteract some of the negative impacts of Covid-19 on the nation's well-being and mental health, and contribute to building a flourishing and happy nation. Further, such experiences could potentially be more cost-effective than other traditional approaches which, post-Covid-19, would also be appealing to Government.

It is of note that the time campers spent in green and natural spaces did not change during the pandemic, as their existing appreciation of these spaces for their health and well-being

motivated them to maintain this time spent outdoors. Given that campers have higher levels of well-being compared to non campers (even those who participate in other outdoor recreation activities) and national populations, this suggests that if non campers can be converted to campers, their well-being may improve. It also poses the question of how providing children with camping experiences while in formal education can help foster camping behaviour into adulthood, thus promoting mental health and well-being benefits from positive lifestyle behaviours. This is an important health agenda issue as lifestyle behaviours are among the leading determinants of health outcomes (Katz et al., 2018; WHO, 2021).

The findings of this study point to several areas that merit further research, and these include the following:

1) **Examining the psychological mechanisms that positively impact mental health and well-being whilst camping:** Whilst the robust and widely adopted well-being scales used in this survey provide an indication of the respondents' well-being and levels of mental health, the fixed nature of these scales did not allow for contextualisation. Research that examines how people experience and develop different aspects of emotional, social, and psychological well-being while camping, and associated impacts, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between camping and well-being. Further, in examining how camping can help people move out of languishing and into a flourishing state of well-being would also assist in knowing if and how camping can facilitate improved well-being for wider lifelong benefit.

2) **Camping as a targeted mental health approach:** As camping is seen as an acceptable alternative or addition for healthcare professionals to prescribe for a mental health need, this presents an opportunity for stronger advocacy for widening access to camping for improved mental health. A key aspect of this would be to better understand and address barriers to camping for those with poor mental health and mental health conditions, alongside examining the ways of effectively offering it as a pathway for social and green prescribing. There is also a need to develop a more strategic research agenda that examines how camping and other associated activities (eg outdoor adventure and outdoor learning activities) done whilst camping impact the mental health and well-being of children and young people. A part of this is to better understand how camping provision in schools can be best delivered to maximise these associated benefits at different stages of a child's education.

3) **Camping to target inequality:** The respondents of this survey are predominately white British. The nexus between ethnicity and camping is not evident in contemporary research literature, although an earlier study found camping to be a white/Caucasian activity (Brooker & Joppe, 2013). This is perhaps not surprising, as participants of outdoor activities in general are not typically ethnically diverse and it is well documented that people from minority ethnic groups spend less time in green spaces compared to white people due to a range of barriers (CPRE, 2021; DEFRA, 2019; Natural England, 2019). Further, some respondents reported that their physical health and abilities posed a barrier to camping. Understanding perceptions of physical capabilities required for camping and how these can be addressed through camping options, information, and facilities would help to alleviate these concerns and improve accessibility. Undertaking more research across these collective areas, would not only fill a significant gap in knowledge concerning inclusion in camping, but the findings could lead to improved access to camping and the natural environment for diverse communities within the UK.

4) **Camping to improve sustainability:** Considering the global impetus to safeguard the natural environment and promote sustainable forms of tourism, the relationship between being connected to nature through camping and pro-environmental behaviour at home and on holiday is worthy of exploration. Especially as the nature connectedness of the UK population is below levels required for pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours (Richardson et al., 2019), yet campers are much higher than this national average and they may have stronger behavioural levels. The findings of this work could inform national pathways to improve human-nature relationships, increase nature connectedness, advance pro-environmental behaviours, and contribute to the nation's sustainability agenda.

The findings of The Outjoyment Report extends current understanding of why spending time outdoors can be good for us, giving specific attention to the complexity of well-being, and helps us to consider how we can collectively aspire and work towards a more flourishing society.

■ **Footnote – Camping and Caravanning Club response to point 3:** The Club recognises more can be done to reach out to a more diverse audience and ensure the organisation is making people from all backgrounds feel accepted and welcomed. Early in 2022 we joined seven of the UK's leading walking, climbing and outdoor leisure organisations on the research piece 'Your Movement Matters', to better understand participation in these activities as well as the key barriers and enablers. All partners agreed commitments to improve diversity within the sector, and will use the findings to support diversity and inclusion strategies. We are also working with a dedicated Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) consultant to carry out an in-depth review that will help establish a baseline to identify which areas of diversity need attention. We plan to engage with diverse communities, run focus groups with members and non-members, and audit our existing policies, practices and external communications to ultimately embed ED&I into our culture.

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Section 8: Appendices

8.1 Chi-square tests for independence

Table 14 presents the Chi-square results. While the p value (ie the result is unlikely to have occurred by chance) shows there is a significant difference between campers and non campers for the variables explained in section 4.1, the Chi-square test for independence (using Cramer's V value) indicates this difference is small (<.30 small effect (Pallant, 2016)). The similarity between the camper and non-camper groups is likely attributed to the non campers' preference to spend time outdoors.

Table 14: Chi-square tests for independence

	Pearson Chi-Square Value	df	p	Cramer's V
In the last 12 months, on average, how often have you spent free time outside in green and natural spaces?	45.87	9	***	.24
Since Covid-19 restrictions began, have you changed the amount of time you spend outside in green and natural spaces?	16.56	4	**	.15
Since Covid-19 restrictions began, has the amount of time you spend camping changed?	108.31	5	***	.37
Since Covid-19 restrictions began, how have you felt about the value of going outdoors and being in nature for your health and well-being?	32.43	5	***	.20
If your GP or another healthcare professional was to 'prescribe' spending time in nature (eg giving you access to an outdoor walking group, going camping, gardening, etc.) instead of medication for a mental health issue or condition, how would you feel about this?	15.60	5	**	.14

*** p = <0.001; ** p = <0.01; * p = <0.05

8.2 Nature Connection Index scores

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the Nature Connection Index (NCI) scores of campers and non campers (Table 15). Campers scored significantly higher on all individual items and the NCI overall.

Table 15: Nature Connection Index items and total index for campers vs non campers

Scale	Item	Campers (N=394)		Non campers (N=394)		t (df)	p
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D		
Nature Connection Index	I always find beauty in nature	5.84	1.83	5.27	2.24	-3.881 (756.57)	<.001
	I always treat nature with respect	6.16	1.85	5.70	2.22	-3.144 (761.01)	.001
	Being in nature makes me very happy	5.98	1.73	5.71	1.94	-2.077 (775.22)	.019
	Spending time in nature is very important to me	5.94	1.70	5.53	1.95	-3.158 (771.30)	.001
	I find being in nature really amazing	5.78	1.59	5.49	1.93	-2.377 (756.79)	.009
	I feel part of nature	5.37	1.51	5.08	1.86	-2.437	.008
						(754.49)	
Nature Connection Index		68.09	27.68	62.89	30.28	-2.492 (770)	.006

8.3: Comparison of campers vs non campers on all well-being measures, and perceived stress scale

Table 16 below indicates the means and standard deviations, and t-test results, for campers and non campers on all the well-being measures, including perceived stress. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare scores on all the well-being measures between campers and non campers. Campers scored significantly higher on all measures than non campers.

Table 16: Scores on well-being and mental health scales for campers vs non campers

Scale	Subscale item	Campers (N=394)		Non campers (N=394)		t (df)	p
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D		
ONS4	Life satisfaction	7.41	2.05	6.62	2.60	-4.729 (745.77)	<.001
	Worthwhile	7.60	1.99	6.78	2.60	-4.951 (734.79)	<.001
	Happy	5.98	1.73	5.71	1.94	-2.077 (775.22)	<.001
	Anxious	5.94	1.70	5.53	1.95	-3.158 (771.30)	<.001
Perceived stress scale		16.07	4.68	18.25	5.13	6.223 (786)	<.001
MHC-SF	Emotional	11.57	2.87	9.96	3.70	-6.818 (740.69)	<.001
	Social	11.51	5.17	10.71	5.55	-2.093 (786)	.018
	Psychological	21.08	5.87	18.58	6.98	-5.433 (763.65)	<.001
	Total	44.16	12.00	39.25	14.37	-5.199 (761.76)	<.001
Ryff Psychological Well-Being	Autonomy	37.06	6.96	34.60	7.10	-4.926 (786)	<.001
	Environmental mastery	38.38	7.86	33.53	9.25	-7.929 (766.03)	<.001
	Personal growth	37.48	6.97	34.15	7.31	-6.550 (786)	<.001
	Relations with others	39.95	6.65	36.44	7.95	-6.734 (762.42)	<.001
	Purpose in life	36.79	7.32	32.89	7.92	-7.170 (786)	<.001
	Self-acceptance	35.90	8.02	32.10	8.96	-6.275 (786)	<.001

When applying the ONS thresholds (ONS, 2018) (see below) for the ONS4, the campers fall into the high threshold for the first three statements and the low threshold for anxiety. By comparison, the non campers' mean for the first three statements is considered medium on the ONS threshold. Non-campers also have low anxiety.

ONS Thresholds:

Thresholds are used to present the distribution of the data. For the life satisfaction, feeling that things done in life are worthwhile and happiness questions, ratings are grouped in the following way:

- 0 to 4 (low)
- 5 to 6 (medium)
- 7 to 8 (high)
- 9 to 10 (very high)

For the anxiety question, ratings are grouped differently to reflect the fact that higher anxiety is associated with lower personal well-being. The ratings for anxiety are grouped as follows:

- 0 to 1 (very low)
- 2 to 3 (low)
- 4 to 5 (medium)
- 6 to 10 (high)

8.4: Scores and correlations for all campers on all well-being measures, and comparison of frequent vs non-frequent campers

Table 17 below indicates the means and standard deviations, and t-test results, for all campers and comparing frequent with less frequent campers on the NCI, and all the well-being measures, including perceived stress. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare scores on all the well-being measures between frequent and less frequent campers. More frequent campers scored significantly higher on all well-being measures, but not on the NCI.

Table 17: Scores on well-being and mental health scales for all campers, and by camping frequency

Scale	Subscale item	Campers (N=10598)		Frequent campers (N=5894)		Less-frequent campers (N=4688)		t (df)	p
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Nature Connection Index (NCI)		70.09	27.69	70.22	27.98	69.95	27.34	-.496 (10365)	.310
ONS4	Life satisfaction	7.35	2.05	7.52	1.99	7.14	2.11	-9.318 (9777.54)	<.001
	Worthwhile	7.44	2.12	7.61	2.05	7.24	2.18	-9.044 (9764.78)	<.001
	Happy	7.27	2.32	7.43	2.27	7.07	2.36	-8.077 (9877.63)	<.001
	Anxious	3.08	3.01	2.95	3.02	3.24	2.98	4.887 (10580)	<.001
Perceived stress scale		16.35	4.82	15.98	4.76	16.80	4.85	8.698 (10580)	<.001
MHC-SF	Emotional	11.34	2.97	11.60	2.86	11.03	3.07	-9.827 (9713.82)	<.001
	Social	11.23	5.52	11.45	5.52	10.95	5.51	-4.579 (10580)	.018
	Psychological	20.79	6.30	21.29	6.17	20.17	6.40	-9.081 (9880.88)	<.001
	Total	43.35	13.07	44.34	12.79	42.15	13.28	-8.549 (9879.25)	<.001
Ryff Psychological Well-being	Autonomy	36.58	7.06	37.12	6.94	35.92	7.15	-8.722 (9915.50)	<.001
	Environmental mastery	37.90	8.21	38.81	7.87	36.79	8.46	-12.569 (9703.24)	<.001
	Personal growth	37.25	6.91	37.79	6.86	36.58	6.90	-8.990 (10580)	<.001
	Relations with others	39.14	7.33	39.59	7.16	38.58	7.49	-7.004 (9842.95)	<.001
	Purpose in life	36.71	7.49	37.44	7.33	35.81	7.58	-11.127 (9895.67)	<.001
	Self-acceptance	35.40	8.44	36.28	8.21	34.31	8.58	-11.919 (9849.42)	<.001

Bivariate correlations between the NCI, perceived stress scale, and all well-being measures are shown in Table 18. While the majority of correlations were significant, this was largely down to the large sample size. The NCI in particular was only weakly correlated with all other measures, and not significantly so with the perceived stress and ONS4 anxiety measure.

Table 18: Correlations between all measures (all campers)

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1 Nature connectedness	--													
2 Perceived stress scale	-.012	--												
3 ONS1 – life satisfaction	.062**	-.489**	--											
4 ONS2 – worthwhile	.092**	-.436**	.787**	--										
5 ONS3 – happy	.078**	-.492**	.775**	.752**	--									
6 ONS4 – anxious	-.025	.491**	-.273**	-.231**	-.345**	--								
7 MHC EWB	.092**	-.628**	.630**	.597**	.627**	-.377**	--							
8 MHC SWB	.100 **	-.389**	.412**	.442**	.420**	-.204**	.570**	--						
9 MHC PWB	.103**	-.525**	.510**	.544**	.513**	-.297**	.729**	.657**	--					
10 Autonomy	.054**	-.371**	.237**	.250**	.243**	-.255**	.328**	.180**	.422**	--				
11 Environmental mastery	.062**	-.688**	.556**	.532**	.546**	-.428**	.705**	.491**	.688**	.507**	--			
12 Personal growth	.150**	-.370**	.337**	.381**	.333**	-.235**	.470**	.418**	.575**	.419**	.592**	--		
13 Relations with others	.132**	-.409**	.404**	.424**	.405**	-.254**	.536**	.469**	.619**	.344**	.648**	.565**	--	
14 Purpose in life	.119**	-.444**	.441**	.500**	.437**	-.277**	.579**	.470**	.630**	.402**	.680**	.666**	.608**	--
15 Acceptance	.072**	-.554**	.506**	.520*8	.497**	-.341**	.648**	.497**	.706**	.525**	.788**	.621**	.654**	.708**

Note: * = p<.01; ** = p<.001
ONS = Office for National Statistics; Mental Health Continuum; EWB = emotional wellbeing; SWB = social wellbeing; PWB = psychological wellbeing

Table 19 below shows the mean and standard deviations for the NCI, ONS4, and PSS by camping type. As respondents could choose multiple of these options, it was not possible to test the significance of the differences between these camping types. However, the means do indicate some differences as outlined in the main report.

Table 19: NCI and ONS scores by camping type

Camping type	N	NCI Mean (S.D.)	ONS1 Mean (S.D.)	ONS2 Mean (S.D.)	ONS3 Mean (S.D.)	ONS4 Mean (S.D.)	PSS Mean (S.D.)
Tent (festival)	458	71.32 (27.66)	7.07 (2.08)	7.25 (2.24)	7.03 (2.35)	3.60 (3.03)	17.33 (4.82)
Tent (campsite)	1972	71.46 (27.74)	7.09 (2.03)	7.22 (2.17)	6.93 (2.36)	3.45 (3.02)	17.10 (4.97)
Tent (wild camping or bivvying)	634	73.04 (27.44)	7.26 (2.02)	7.36 (2.19)	7.31 (2.28)	3.30 (3.17)	16.43 (4.90)
Glamping	290	70.57 (28.44)	7.11 (2.17)	7.20 (2.31)	7.00 (2.45)	4.16 (3.21)	18.16 (4.95)
Campervan	2455	72.25 (27.18)	7.38 (1.96)	7.44 (2.08)	7.25 (2.26)	3.20 (3.00)	16.51 (4.81)
Caravan (touring)	4102	68.81 (28.08)	7.36 (2.09)	7.48 (2.15)	7.29 (2.34)	3.09 (3.05)	16.40 (4.82)
Caravan (static)	494	70.61 (27.46)	7.21 (2.02)	7.39 (2.12)	7.16 (2.39)	3.66 (3.17)	17.58 (4.94)
Motorhome	3424	70.01 (27.04)	7.42 (2.06)	7.47 (2.13)	7.36 (2.32)	2.90 (2.97)	16.03 (4.75)
Trailer-tent/ folding-camper	312	70.44 (27.48)	7.21 (2.07)	7.38 (2.13)	7.31 (2.31)	3.18 (3.09)	16.64 (4.83)

8.5: Mental Health Continuum category by group

Table 20 shows the number and percentage who were classified as flourishing, moderately mentally healthy, and languishing within the campers vs non campers, all campers, and by camping frequency.

Table 20: Mental Health Continuum category by group

Group	Flourishing		Moderately mentally healthy		Languishing		Chi square	df	p
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Campers	173	43.9	202	51.3	19	4.8	21.841	2	<.001
Non campers	120	30.5	229	58.1	45	11.4			
All campers	4419	41.7	5549	52.4	630	5.9			
Frequent campers	2630	44.6	2962	50.3	302	5.1	52.488	2	<.001
Less frequent campers	1784	38.1	2580	55.0	324	6.9			

8.6: The impact of campers' age on their personal well-being

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of age on levels of the campers' feelings on aspects of their everyday life, as measured by the ONS personal well-being scale (Table 21). Due to small numbers among the younger age groups, campers aged 18-44 were combined into one group for this analysis.

Eta squared was used to calculate the strength of association between the well-being measures and age (0.01 is a small effect (Pallant, 2016)). The strongest effects were for environmental mastery, perceived stress, and autonomy, with ONS4 anxiety close behind. For the majority of measures, the 18-44 group scored worse (either lowest, or highest for the perceived stress and anxiety measures) and each subsequent group scored better. The exceptions to this pattern were the ONS life satisfaction and happy items, on which the 45-54 group scored lowest.

Table 21: One-way ANOVA to examine the impact of campers' age on all well-being measures

	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	df	p	Eta Squared
ONS1: Life satisfaction	18-44	654	6.94	2.007	42.75	3	<.001	.012
	45-54	1242	6.90	2.126				
	55-64	3389	7.31	2.000				
	65 and over	5184	7.53	2.052				
ONS2: Worthwhile	18-44	654	7.04	2.146	33.38	3	<.001	.009
	45-54	1242	7.09	2.173				
	55-64	3389	7.38	2.087				
	65 and over	5184	7.62	2.107				
ONS3: Happy	18-44	654	6.77	2.305	64.17	3	<.001	.018
	45-54	1242	6.69	2.352				
	55-64	3389	7.16	2.318				
	65 and over	5184	7.54	2.267				
ONS4: Anxious	18-44	654	4.30	3.004	102.95	3	<.001	.029
	45-54	1242	3.93	2.956				
	55-64	3389	3.13	2.950				
	65 and over	5184	2.68	2.960				

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Table 21: One-way ANOVA to examine the impact of campers' age on all well-being measures (*continued*)

	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	df	p	Eta Squared
Perceived Stress Scale	18-44	654	19.31	4.59	191.45	3	<.001	.052
	45-54	1242	17.99	4.81				
	55-64	3389	16.43	4.84				
	65 and over	5184	15.52	4.59				
MHC-SF Emotional well-being	18-44	654	10.35	3.29	91.75	3	<.001	.026
	45-54	1242	10.52	3.35				
	55-64	3389	11.21	3.05				
	65 and over	5184	11.74	2.70				
MHC-SF Social well-being	18-44	654	11.11	5.91	15.86	3	<.001	.005
	45-54	1242	10.60	5.76				
	55-64	3389	10.93	5.41				
	65 and over	5184	11.58	5.46				
MHC-SF Psychological well-being	18-44	654	19.51	6.47	37.50	3	<.001	.011
	45-54	1242	19.62	6.83				
	55-64	3389	20.63	6.45				
	65 and over	5184	21.34	5.98				
Ryff PWB: Autonomy	18-44	654	32.86	7.07	131.22	3	<.001	.036
	45-54	1242	34.90	7.42				
	55-64	3389	36.27	7.23				
	65 and over	5184	37.66	6.59				
Ryff PWB: Environmental mastery	18-44	654	32.10	7.97	273.33	3	<.001	.073
	45-54	1242	34.59	8.74				
	55-64	3389	37.60	8.34				
	65 and over	5184	39.62	7.39				
Ryff PWB: Personal growth	18-44	654	35.78	7.20	13.64	3	<.001	.004
	45-54	1242	37.13	6.94				
	55-64	3389	37.64	6.85				
	65 and over	5184	37.21	6.89				
Ryff PWB: Relations with others	18-44	654	36.28	7.60	47.06	3	<.001	.013
	45-54	1242	38.36	7.85				
	55-64	3389	39.22	7.42				
	65 and over	5184	39.65	7.00				
Ryff PWB: Purpose in life	18-44	654	34.48	7.63	28.15	3	<.001	.008
	45-54	1242	35.98	7.65				
	55-64	3389	36.84	7.60				
	65 and over	5184	37.09	7.31				
Ryff PWB: Acceptance	18-44	654	31.70	8.43	99.37	3	<.001	.028
	45-54	1242	33.45	9.12				
	55-64	3389	35.08	8.76				
	65 and over	5184	36.54	7.81				

Table 22 shows the percentage of each age group categorised as flourishing, moderately mentally healthy, and languishing, along with the Chi-squared test results comparing the four age groups.

Table 22: Mental health category by age group

Group	Flourishing		Moderately mentally healthy		Languishing		Chi square	df	p
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
18-44	220	33.6	383	58.6	51	7.8	142.30	6	<.001
45-54	428	34.5	691	55.6	123	9.9			
55-64	1333	39.3	1816	53.6	240	7.1			
65 and over	2382	45.9	2593	50.0	209	4.0			

8.7: The impact of camping frequency on campers' personal well-being

An ANOVA was conducted to explore the impact of camping frequency on the levels of the campers' feelings on aspects of their everyday life, as measured by the ONS personal well-being scale. Participants were divided into five camping frequency groups (Table 23). There was a statistically significant difference (p = <0.05) across all ONS scores for the five camping frequency groups. Despite reaching statistical significance, the mean scores between the groups were small. However, the mean scores show that as the frequency of camping per year increases, the scores for the ONS statements related to satisfaction with life, life is worthwhile, and happiness also increase. Likewise, with an increase in camping frequency in a year, there is a statistically significant decrease in levels of anxiety. Therefore, the more a person camps in a year, the better it is for their personal well-being.

Eta squared was used to calculate the strength of association between the four ONS statements and the frequency of camping. The resulting eta squared value shows a small association between frequency of camping and each of the ONS personal well-being statements.

Table 23: ANOVA to examine the impact of camping frequency on their personal well-being

	Frequency of camping each year	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	p	Eta Squared
Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?	Once a year	6.60	2.54	28.68	<.001	0.011
	2-3 times a year	7.03	2.10			
	4-5 times a year	7.25	2.06			
	6-10 times a year	7.52	1.90			
	Over 10 times a year	7.51	2.08			
Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?	Once a year	6.78	2.54	25.53	<.001	0.009
	2-3 times a year	7.13	2.22			
	4-5 times a year	7.33	2.12			
	6-10 times a year	7.61	1.97			
	Over 10 times a year	7.62	2.15			
Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?	Once a year	6.38	2.71	22.88	<.001	0.008
	2-3 times a year	6.97	2.39			
	4-5 times a year	7.16	2.306			
	6-10 times a year	7.43	2.19			
	Over 10 times a year	7.44	2.36			
On a scale where 0 is "not at all anxious" and 10 is "completely anxious", overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?	Once a year	3.37	2.75	7.98	<.001	0.003
	2-3 times a year	3.39	3.02			
	4-5 times a year	3.14	2.97			
	6-10 times a year	2.93	2.97			
	Over 10 times a year	2.98	3.08			

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