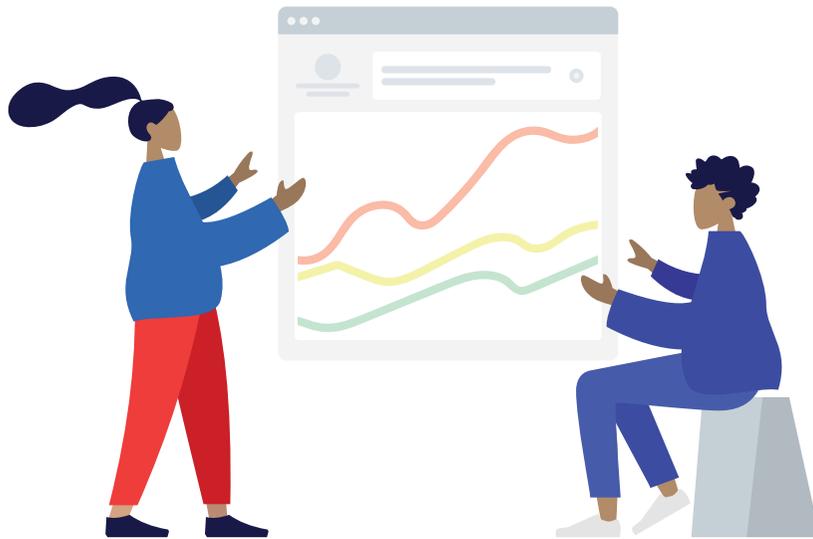


# MATURITY MODEL for wellbeing policy making

A maturity model is a tool for policy makers that supports users to self-assess and benchmark their work. Users can find where they are situated and identify opportunities for improvement.

This maturity model assesses coherence in wellbeing policy making. For each of the six hallmarks, shown below, three increasingly mature levels of policy making are described: **assuring**, **optimising** and **maximising** wellbeing.



The model was developed using learning from published English Health & Wellbeing Strategies. It was refined during discussions and testing with local authority, public health and policy professionals in the UK, Canada and worldwide.

We invite you to test this tool as you start your policy making journey, or to reflect and evaluate previous wellbeing policy making. You can use the tool individually, in group discussions or both.

Work from the Early Intervention Foundation<sup>1</sup> suggests maturity matrix tools work best when a range of people with different experiences and perspectives take part, and when they can hear and moderate each other's contributions to build a fuller picture.

## Overview: The six hallmarks of coherent wellbeing policy

1. Inclusive understanding and definition of wellbeing
2. Improving wellbeing and reducing inequity are policy goals
3. a) Powered by evidence of wellbeing need  
b) Powered by evidence of 'what works' to improve wellbeing
4. Priorities address wellbeing factors that matter
5. Comprehensive performance measures
6. Implemented to maximise wellbeing

1 <https://www.eif.org.uk/resource/eif-maturity-matrix-maternity-and-early-years>

# THE SIX HALLMARKS OF COHERENT WELLBEING POLICY

## Hallmark 1: Inclusive understanding and definition of wellbeing

### Assuring wellbeing

Wellbeing defined as distinct from health.

The difference between wellbeing and mental ill health is also set out. Wellbeing is framed as more than, and distinct from, the absence of poor mental health.

### Optimising wellbeing

The strategy describes wellbeing at an individual and community/area level.

### Maximising wellbeing

Different dimensions of wellbeing are described: evaluative, affect, pleasure, purpose & meaning, thrive & flourish.

The differences in wellbeing between groups and/or across the life course is described.

## Hallmark 2: Improving wellbeing and reducing inequity are policy goals

### Assuring

Broad commitment to improving wellbeing and reducing inequalities.

Policy goal to improve healthy life expectancy.

### Optimising

Improving wellbeing policy goals clearly articulated for individuals and communities.

Policy objectives set out that seek to reduce wellbeing inequalities, for example across the life course; and avoidable inequities that affect the wellbeing of individuals and groups.

### Maximising

Commitment to reducing wellbeing inequalities, tailored to local context.

Themes of social justice and fairness are explored.

Strong collaborative approach to goal setting.



## THE SIX HALLMARKS OF COHERENT WELLBEING POLICY

### Hallmark 3a: Powered by evidence of wellbeing need

Assuring	Optimising	Maximising
<p>Wellbeing data from JSNA summarised.</p> <p>Local Authority level analysis of ONS 4 self-reported wellbeing measures: life satisfaction, anxiety, happiness and worthwhile.</p> <p>Qualitative insight provides additional local context.</p>	<p>National measures supplemented by local wellbeing data collection.</p> <p>Distribution of wellbeing across groups and geographies is discussed.</p> <p>Social capital and community connectedness data and insight analysed.</p> <p>An asset-based approach is taken to collaboratively identify the social, cultural and material resources that are wellbeing enhancing.</p> <p>This data and insight is publicly available, and presented in a form that enables all groups and organisations in the area to use this to inform their planning and service delivery.</p>	<p>The quality of the evidence that informs the policy is discussed.</p> <p>Trends in data are presented and benchmarking takes place. Gaps in data are highlighted, and plans are set out to fill these gaps.</p> <p>Data on wellbeing need is comprehensive: economy, education &amp; childhood, equality, health, place and social relationships.</p> <p>(For more information see <a href="#">WWCW publication</a>).</p>

### Hallmark 3b: Powered by evidence of 'what works' to improve wellbeing

Assuring	Optimising	Maximising
<p>Evidence of 'what works' to improve wellbeing is presented in response to the wellbeing needs identified.</p> <p>Principles of evidence-informed policy making established.</p> <p>Evidence is drawn from national research and local insight.</p>	<p>Evidence clearly informs the development of tailored policies reflecting local context.</p> <p>A range of different types of evidence is presented.</p> <p>Gaps in knowledge are identified, and testing/trials proposed to fill these gaps.</p>	<p>The quality of the evidence presented is assessed and considered 'good enough' for this purpose.</p> <p>A 'prove and improve' approach is adopted: understand, demonstrate, reflect and review.</p> <p>Evidence of 'what works' is compared to the local context.</p>

### Hallmark 4: Priorities address wellbeing factors that matter

**WISER:** Work, Income, Society & governance, Emotional mental-health, Relationships & Communities<sup>2</sup>

Assuring	Optimising	Maximising
<p>Wellbeing priorities established for WISER areas.</p> <p>Policies to reduce inequalities in a way that can improve overall levels of wellbeing are sought.</p>	<p>Wellbeing priorities are presented across policy themes, reflecting different groups and needs e.g. emotional wellbeing priorities set out for maternal health, parents, children &amp; young people, working age and older people.</p> <p>Policies that address differentiated wellbeing needs are described, for example urban/rural, economic sectors, lifecourse.</p>	<p>Trade-offs in policy making are transparent, for example investing in one person's wellbeing may be more important than another's based on their starting level of wellbeing.</p> <p>Wellbeing economics, and wellbeing cost-effectiveness analysis is presented alongside health economic data.</p> <p>Key policies are appraised in line with <a href="#">HM Treasury Wellbeing Guidance</a>.</p>

### Hallmark 5: Comprehensive performance measures

Assuring	Optimising	Maximising
<p>Validated measures of personal subjective wellbeing (ONS4).</p> <p>A mix of subjective and objective measures that reflect the core drivers wellbeing.</p>	<p>Measures that drill down below averages and show how life is being experienced by different groups and in communities.</p> <p>Measures of wellbeing inequality and inequity are presented e.g. dispersion and deprivation.</p>	<p>Data on 'how we are doing' is presented in an open, accessible form that gives partners, communities and citizens the wellbeing data they need.</p> <p>Measures are frequently updated and reflect a 'full set' of accounts taking into consideration investment in our future through human, economic, social and natural 'capitals'.</p>

<sup>2</sup> WWCW, 2020 [Wellbeing evidence at the heart of policy](#). pp.72-73.

## Hallmark 6: Implemented to maximise wellbeing

### Assuring

Deploy approaches that build trust in our collective institutions.

Clear where attention should be focused.

Work with the wider system in place, devolving power and control.

Engage citizens and civil society in a meaningful way.

### Optimising

Explore the complex and multi-faceted nature of policy implementation in your context.

Build and harness the system resources required to support the policy implementation process.

Identify and engage system leaders. Use a range of leaders and leadership styles to drive implementation

### Maximising

Work with Anchor Institutions and seek to lever assets to deliver policy objectives e.g. through procurement, training, employment, professional development, buildings and land use.

Deploy behavioural insight and design thinking approaches

Consider longevity - work to ensure wellbeing policy-making transcends political cycles.

Develop a learning system for wellbeing.



**Suggested citation:** Smithson, J. (2022) Maturity Model for Wellbeing Policy Making [PDF] What Works Centre for Wellbeing, available at: <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/resources/maturity-model-for-wellbeing-policy-making>