

Our Impact

April 2023 - March 2024



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Chairman's foreword



The What Works Centre for Wellbeing has accomplished a huge amount during the financial year 2023-24. This is particularly noteworthy given the challenging and uncertain operational climate it has faced.

In my role as Chairman of the Centre's Board of Directors, I have witnessed first hand the organisation's resilience, flexibility and impact as it has continued to deliver its mission.

“ I am greatly impressed by the work of everyone at the Centre and their continued commitment to find, share and grow wellbeing evidence and convene, guide and mobilise people to use it. ”

That is why, as we approach our planned closure, I am proud to present our Impact Report 2023-24; to celebrate what we have achieved as a leading authority on wellbeing in our final year of operations.

Between April 2023 and March 2024, we have built on our previous work to refine concepts, identify gaps in the evidence base, and develop tools to improve the measurement and evaluation of interventions and the implementation of insights in practice across our four focus areas:

1. National measures and methods
2. Working age
3. Place and community
4. Loneliness and connection

We have undertaken major research and implementation work within these areas throughout 2023-24. These activities and their impacts are outlined in this report, detailing the Centre's reach and influence, and the recognition of the importance of wellbeing in policy, public life, and across businesses.

As we approach the Centre's planned and solvent closure, there continues to be a vital need for good-quality evidence to drive decision making at national policy levels, across civil society, and to ensure wellbeing is at the heart of how we shape working practices and cultures in organisations everywhere.

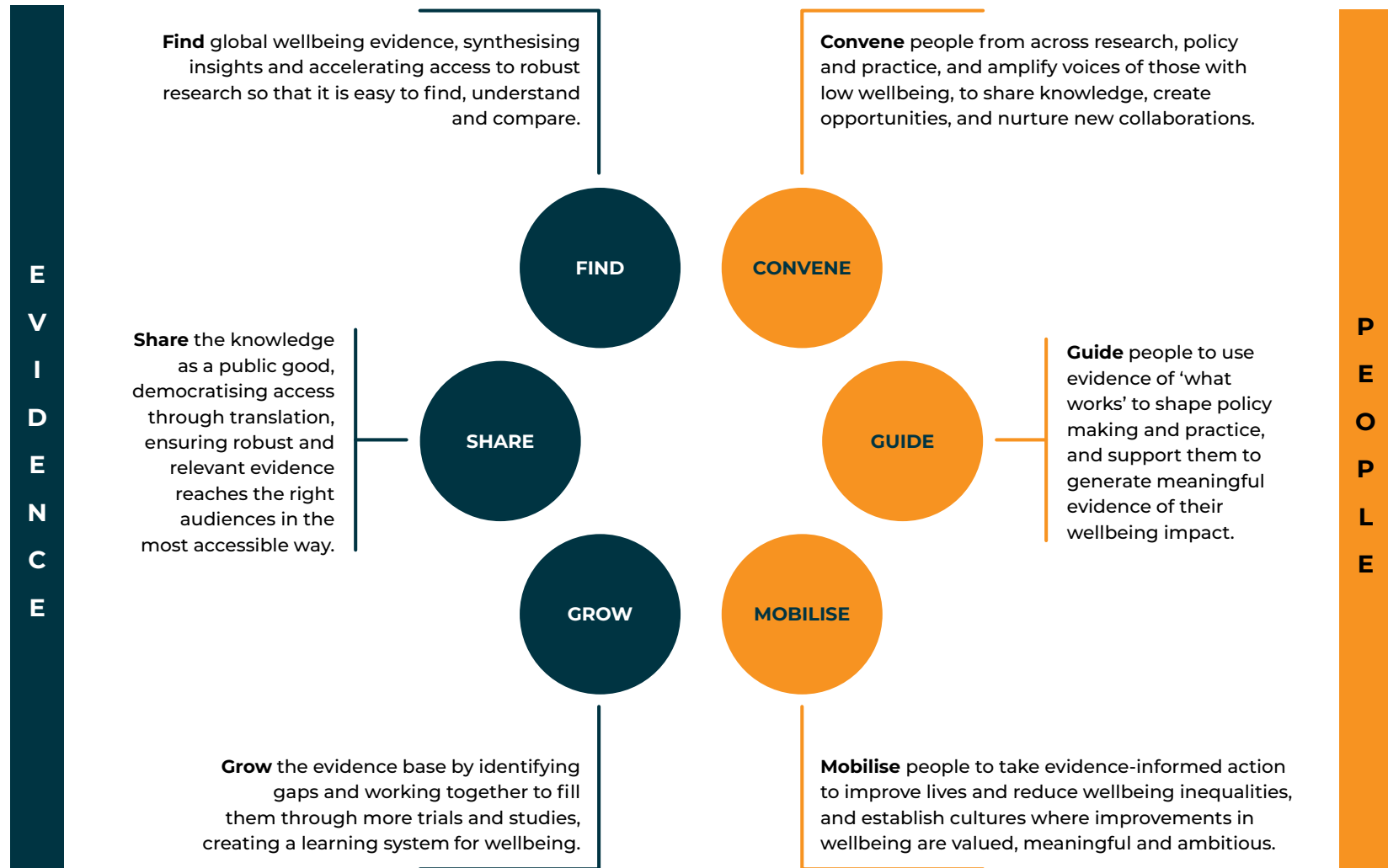
“ We hope our partners, collaborators and supporters will take up the mantle and continue to champion wellbeing. ”

Peter Cheese CEO, CIPD & Chairman,

Who are we?

Established in 2014, the What Works Centre for Wellbeing is an independent collaborating centre with an aim to improve wellbeing and reduce misery in the UK. We believe that this is the ultimate goal of effective policy and community action.

Our role is to:



To us, success means:

- Wellbeing is recognised as a meaningful and measurable goal for decision makers.
- Knowledge of what works and how to implement it reaches people who can and want to use it.
- More evidence-informed action is taken.
- More trials and studies are done which are shared with us to continue to build the evidence base.

To achieve our mission, we focus on priority areas where we can make the biggest difference:



National wellbeing
methods and measures



Working age



Place and community



Loneliness and
connection

This report outlines the impact we have had in the **financial year 2023-24** across our four priority areas, as we have continued in our mission to find out what works to improve wellbeing and partner to put that evidence into action, creating conditions for us all to thrive.

What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing is how we're doing as individuals communities and as a nation; and how sustainable it is for the future.

Wellbeing is sometimes referred to as social welfare or social value. It can be thought of as quality of life, and used as a measure of societal progress beyond metrics like GDP alone in Wellbeing Frameworks.

Our impact 2023-24

What did we do?

Championed wellbeing measurement and evaluation as a way to track national progress and organisational impact, advising on updated UK national wellbeing measures and producing quarterly insight reports.

Built our community through conversation and knowledge sharing, cultivating new partnerships and strengthening existing collaborations.

Evolved our organisational strategy to clarify mission and aims, and **refreshed our brand** to embody our values and increase accessibility, integrating enhanced considerations and inclusive language.

Supported wellbeing in business and the workforce by producing new evidence-informed guidance and tools for evaluation and support.

Developed the understanding of place and community wellbeing, creating e-learning modules and exploring the evidence on agency and control.

Explored loneliness and connection across the life course, drawing together the evidence and practice landscape to uncover what works to tackle it.



Who have we worked with?

We are an **evidence intermediary** - working between evidence producers and decision makers.

Our position as **knowledge brokers and conveners** has enabled us to bring together people and organisations from across all sectors, and get valuable wellbeing evidence and resources to those who can put it into action.

Our **global network of associates and supporters** is second-to-none in the wellbeing evidence space, and includes top wellbeing evidence and policy research teams, leading practitioners and policymakers, and wellbeing experts.

From April 2023 to March 2024 we have developed and shared knowledge with:

- **Public sector** - national, devolved and local government, and the wider public sector including education, policing and healthcare.
- **Research** - individuals and research organisations across the UK and globally, such as University of the Arts London, Brunel University London, and The Health Foundation.
- **Businesses** - large, small and multinational across retail, pharmaceutical, manufacturing, media and education, and professional bodies such as CIPD and Institute for Employment Studies.
- **Civil society** - charities, social enterprises and community groups, as well as funders and commissioners, including Centre for Thriving Places, Marie Curie, Historic England, Intergenerational England, Association for Independent Museums, Pro Bono Economics, and Spirit of 2012, New Local and People's Health Trust.

Across the year, we deepened our work with the [Campaign to End Loneliness](#), which we have formally hosted since 2021. The charity was founded in 2011 as a place for people to come together, collaborate and build the evidence base for loneliness and make the case for action.

This year, we have continued to **seed organisational experience and expertise** into the wider industry. Our Working Age lead completed their secondment and returned to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to share learnings. Our Community Wellbeing lead joined The National Lottery Community Fund on secondment in 2024 to lead the communities mission of their England Portfolio Review, a role that will continue until October 2024.

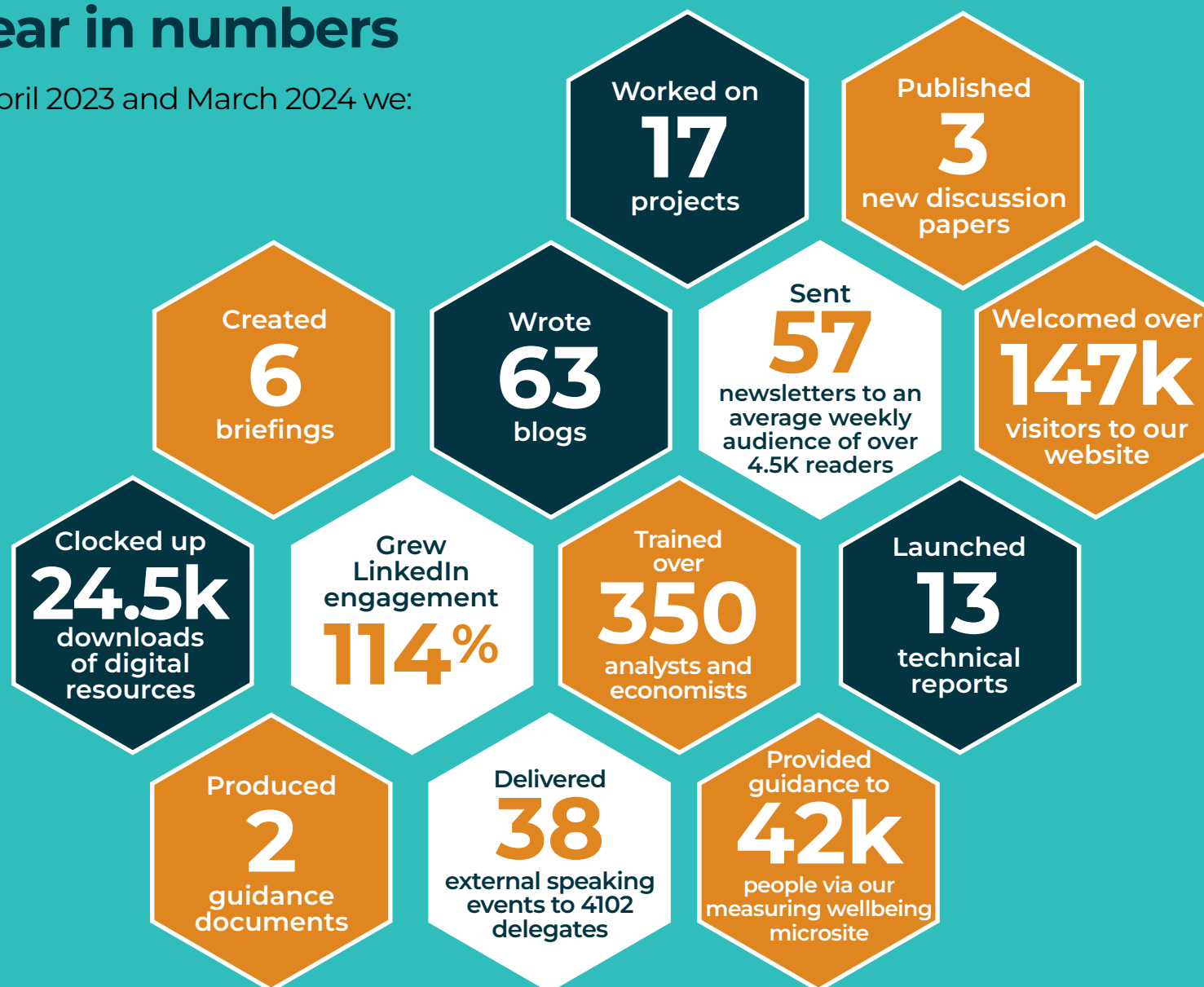
By **working in partnership**, we have contributed to the sustainability and resilience of the field of wellbeing.

> View our current and former [funders and partners](#).



Our year in numbers

Between April 2023 and March 2024 we:



Deepdive: National wellbeing measures and methods

Our aim is that wellbeing is measured consistently, comparably and appropriately, and recognised as a meaningful and measurable goal for decision makers at a national level.

We have made a significant impact on the awareness, understanding, and measurement of wellbeing. Highlights of our work are detailed below.

Finding and synthesising the evidence

We worked with academics, researchers and wellbeing economists to continue to champion wellbeing measurement and evaluation, and build a rich evidence base.

To **identify high-quality evidence on life satisfaction, and inform experimental research and policy-relevant outcomes**, we undertook two [rapid evidence reviews of life satisfaction literature](#). The findings, and the Centre's [ongoing work and thinking](#) on how to generate experimental wellbeing evidence, are being used to produce a trials strategy for using life satisfaction in experimental research. The research programme builds on our previous reviews of evidence that uses established wellbeing metrics [ONS4](#) and [WEMWBS](#). It is also part of our mission to [accelerate the generation of and access to wellbeing data](#). Our aim is for the insights to inform the development of future experimental evaluation, and shape policy objectives to help prioritise policies and projects based on their wellbeing impacts, cost effectiveness and trade-offs.

To **amplify the visibility of national wellbeing metrics and data**, we have systematically re-shared ONS fortnightly releases on our digital channels and responded to quarterly data releases, leveraging our role as experts to distil key insights and build capacity. This has helped contextualise wellbeing insights within the broader picture of national accounts, and has had a broad engagement. For example, our May [blog](#) had 934 views within a week of publication.

We have also led a project with King's College London and Understanding Society to produce a dashboard of [wellbeing data and related community metrics](#). Users can build and download charts using Understand Society survey data to show key trends across time, and between groups and regions. This **builds capacity by making it easier to find and use, and to improve quality of analysis** by reducing common mistakes.



To **understand the contexts and mechanisms that link creativity with personal wellbeing outcomes**, we conducted a rapid scoping review with University of the Arts London and Brunel University London. The project builds on our extensive work summarising the existing research on the wellbeing benefits of creative activities, such as participatory arts, and volunteering-based programmes. Findings from this review highlight the value of creativity across different contexts, and its role as a pathway to improved wellbeing outcomes. It also brings high-quality evidence together on how and why creativity supports wellbeing in a way that can be easily used by practitioners and policymakers. The work has been shortlisted for the London [Highers Awards - Best research/ knowledge exchange collaboration in London](#).



Thank you so much for stewarding this project and for your attentiveness to the many voices and viewpoints expressed throughout!

- Nigel Ball, Director of Social Purpose Lab, UAL

Putting evidence into action

We used our knowledge to offer a number of services, tools and resources for central and local governments, as well as other bodies, to help ensure good governance for wellbeing.

Across 2023-24 we continued to partner with Pro Bono Economics and State of Life to deliver **online and in-person training sessions for 350 analysts and economists**. This included lunch and learn introductions, and deeper dive sessions on using the HM Treasury's Green Book and supplementary wellbeing guidance to promote robust, consistent and comparable approach across government. Additionally, our Executive Director continued to deliver **policy profession training events**.



The presenters and the content were excellent. Many interesting insights into what has changed e.g. measuring hope etc.

- Webinar participant



It was a well run, enjoyable and constructive session that gave an excellent and robust introduction into wellbeing valuation.

- Workshop attendee

We **supported peer-learning through knowledge-sharing, capturing real-world examples** of how standardised measures are applied in practice in different contexts, like charity [Power2](#), to demonstrate impact. A notable example is a suite of resources exploring State of Life's methodology and insights from its experience of conducting the Tearfund's largest ever social value impact assessment. A particularly popular output was an explainer blog on [converting the UK derived Wellbeing-adjusted Life Year](#) (WELLBY) to the context of four African countries. It had 812 views, demonstrating the appetite for accessible technical explanations. Impact was amplified through cross promotion on digital channels by partners.

Growing the evidence base

A key Centre priority for 2023-24 continued to be accelerating access to wellbeing data and increase the quality and quantity of wellbeing research in the UK.

Building on 2022-23, we invested in our **in-house analysis capability of national datasets** to explore the wellbeing of individuals in the UK over time, and by income, geography and demographic variables. We were able to publish exploratory insights from the [English Housing Survey 2013-2020](#), [Living Costs and Food Survey 2014-2020](#), [Annual Population Survey 2012-2022](#) and the [Health Index 2015-2021](#). This offers further understanding of how UK residents are doing, helping policymakers identify areas of need. We also published Stata do files used for analysing datasets on Github as a public good, to encourage visibility and use of existing data.

We also continued our [Wellbeing Evaluation Top-up Fund](#), supported by the Evaluation Accelerator Fund, which is **enabling the expansion of 15 existing trials to include measures of subjective wellbeing** at a low-cost.

Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, we partnered with the Centre for Time Use Research to **explore what [time-use data](#) tells about wellbeing**. The full report and summary blog were published alongside an accompanying discussion paper by Dr Christian Krekel and Dr George MacKerron which proposed an alternative method to estimate the value of time. By collaborating and sharing pioneering research, we have furthered the field of wellbeing measurement. This value of this work is reflected in the well above average engagement it received through digital channels. For example, our launch tweet had 3,700 impressions, 97 engagements (ER 2.62%) and 36 link clicks, while the newsletter drove double the number of users to our website than average. We have increased the accessibility and shelf-life of our analysis offerings by utilising LinkedIn's slides function to provide bite-sized summary posts. These generated 20.08% CTR and 20.46% ER, making them highly effective dissemination tools.



The UK is leading
the way in
wellbeing valuation.

- Rose Fawcett,
State of Life

Thought leadership

At the local level, we provided expert advice for London's [Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure](#) and Greater Manchester's [measuring mental wellbeing](#) framework. We delivered training on the new wellbeing domain of [OHID's Fingertips resource](#) for all regional networks of public mental health local authority leads.

At the national level, we have engaged political leaders, policy-makers, sector bodies, funders and commissioners who determine the extent to which wellbeing is prioritised and invested in across the country as a whole. This included **responding to the Commission on the Centre of Government**, giving written evidence from a wellbeing perspective on what could be done to radically improve the UK's core governance. Our Executive Director is directly quoted in the report, alongside other key figures from government, research and private and public sectors. The report also **references wellbeing frameworks** as an alternate way to set priorities, outcomes and strategies, suggesting that the UK can learn from other countries approaches, such as New Zealand's wellbeing budget.

Our Executive Director also **chaired a session** for 200 people at the **Royal Economic Society Annual Conference** with Prof Lord Richard Layard (LSE) and Amanda Rowlatt (Chief Economist Dept Transport), and **provided expert advice to the National Centre for Creative Health** on how to use our Case Study Synthesis methodology across 12 [community health and wellbeing projects](#). Our Head of Implementation & Learning submitted a **book chapter** on Wellbeing and Policy in the UK for LSE authored Routledge textbook *Wellbeing and policy: Evidence for action*.

At an international level we **contributed to the World Happiness Report 2023**, and worked with the Head of Economic Statistics at Office for National Statistics (ONS) as part of UN National Accounts '[Beyond GDP Sprint](#)' to broaden National Accounts to include social and environmental accounting and to include Life Satisfaction.



Effective institutions are essential for managing risk

Nancy Hey, Executive Director
What Works Wellbeing
Power with purpose - Final report
from the Commission on the
Centre of Government pg 96
(March 2024)

To continue to **advance the field of wellbeing measurement**, we hosted a hybrid event in conversation with wellbeing expert, economist and author Carol Graham on the future of hope. This convened key allies, stakeholders and amplifiers both in person and online, drawing attention to the national relevance of hope and purpose to support wellbeing, and aligning with the inclusion of hope as a new measure in the UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard.

Our Executive Director was interviewed by Matt Iasiello for podcast *Researching Happy: Stories behind the studies*, a 12-episode series featuring an array of global experts, raising public visibility and increasing understanding of the Centre's role and impact.



I listened with great interest to the talk about findings on hope and further implications. Thank you again for organising this event and making it possible to listen to it from all over the world!

- Doctoral student at Institute of Business and Economics, Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg (Germany)



Deepdive: Working age

With life satisfaction peaking at ages 23 and 68, and at its lowest during working life, we believe that taking a whole-life approach to wellbeing is core to building resilience, and progressing and thriving as a nation.

Finding and synthesising the evidence

One way in which we've looked to support working age wellbeing in 2023-24 is to focus on increasing the robustness, consistency and relevance of what's known about [drivers of workplace wellbeing](#), and get that used in practice.

An example is our [literature review of what works to alleviate frontline worker burnout](#), which consolidated available causal evidence in the context of UK homelessness. This **lays the foundations** for research funding and policy change on worker wellbeing by enabling us to identify evidence gaps and provide confident recommendations. The summary briefing has had 77 views and 27 downloads, and the full report has had 112 views and 53 downloads. The Centre for Homelessness Impact will use these insights, alongside stakeholder engagement workshops, to identify and trial relevant and feasible low-cost interventions in 2024-2025.

Putting evidence into action

We have provided increased support, guidance, and learning and measurement tools, focusing on the development, implementation and evaluation of effective wellbeing strategies.

For example, we identified **an opportunity to evolve existing popular content to improve impact and efficacy**. Funded by the Department for Education, we expanded a 2020 guest blog into a [comprehensive toolkit](#) for improving staff wellbeing in schools and colleges in England. The new guide has had extremely high engagement with nearly 1,800 views and almost 800 downloads to date, largely driven by the DfE [Education staff wellbeing charter](#) page which recommends it directly. This project also instigated **a review of our core visual assets**, including our five drivers of workplace wellbeing model, which we updated to be more accessible and accurate. Promotion of the refreshed model, alongside the guidance, has led to greater reach and visibility with almost 4000 views to date.



Through our 2022 scoping review and our subsequent 2023 survey of HR decision makers, we found that very little is known about the experience of people **working with terminal illness**, or the policies and practices designed to support them. To build our understanding, we continued our collaboration with Marie Curie and CIPD, bringing together a **cohort of people professionals** from across the education, charity, and private sectors in three sessions to develop policy for their own organisation and share learning. Participants welcomed the range of topics covered, access to experts in having supportive conversations and the opportunity to hear first hand from people working with terminal illness. The policies developed by participating organisations will cover over 50,000 employees. The learning from these workshops was captured in **collaboratively produced peer guidance**, launched at an online event with key practitioners and stakeholders in November 2023. Users of the guide to workplace policies and practice were invited to send feedback to help us improve and refine insights.



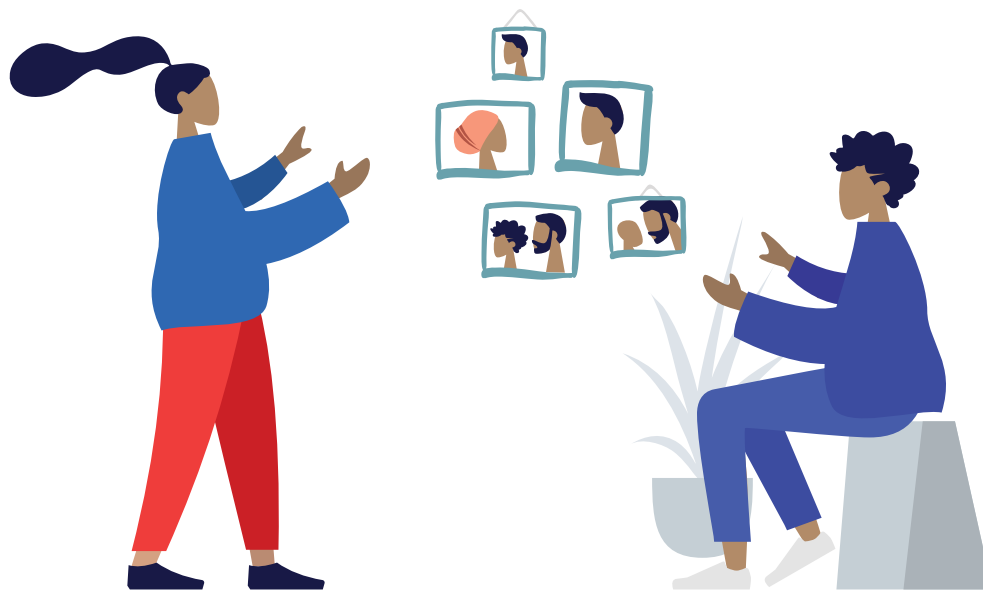
The practical tips and hearing the correct language to use from those who know best was incredibly useful. This session helped me (as best as I am able) to better consider things from the employee's point of view

- Event participant



[The guide] feels a warm and supportive document to read and inspired me to transfer this compassion and understanding into my workplace. Also, I'd never given much thought to this issue before and I intend to share the guide with our Board members so they understand why we should implement a policy on this.

- User feedback



To date, it has had almost 800 views and over 300 downloads, demonstrating its use as a go-to resource in this space. In addition, we continued dissemination activity for our research findings by delivering a keynote at Association of Local Authority Medical Officers annual conference 2023, webinars for Society of Occupational Medicine and Hospice UK, and sessions at the CIPD and Marie Curie research conferences in February 2024. In partnership with the Local Government Association we delivered a webinar to over 100 Local Authority HR Leads. This activity was supported by a social campaign re-sharing assets as part of Dying Matters awareness week. The value of the work to date has been recognised by the sector, winning the inaugural Marie Curie Clair Fisher Research Impact Award.

Our top-performing LinkedIn post with engagement rate 11.8% re-shared the Wellbeing Non-Executive Director Theory of Change, illustrating the **appetite for practical tools and advice**, and the value and relevance of our green content. LinkedIn is an effective mechanism for sharing these types of assets with their intended professional audience.

To help evaluations, develop theories of change and implement recommendations we **delivered accessible training** for organisations including General Medical Council wellbeing champions network. We also advised Thame Primary Care Network on its staff wellbeing survey.

This year, we were part of a consortium of partners pooling expertise to create a 'what works' digital resource. Shared across the partner sites, it helps universities and colleges to identify and make use of effective practice in **supporting student mental health**.

Growing the evidence base

We have concentrated on **building our in-house analysis capacity** this financial year to gain deeper insights into working age and workplace wellbeing. This includes our annual analysis of the Civil Service People Survey data, which explored the longer-term impact of the pandemic on the service and its recovery and how these insights can be used in practice. It gained coverage in Civil Service News, the key sector publication.



The panel were impressed that the project has already had significant impact through engagement with a wide variety of organisations, some of them very large in size [...and] will lead to further impact and positive change. The project addresses a widespread issue that will affect all organisations.

- Dr Sam Royston, Executive Director for Research and Policy at Marie Curie

To **expand understanding of the drivers and determinants of student wellbeing**, we analysed undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research student data in collaboration with TASO and King's College London. The [two resulting reports](#) had 289 views and, on social media, the findings gained 5000 twitter impressions and 170 engagements including 54 link clicks. This indicates student wellbeing is a high priority and important topic with our audiences. The insights will help universities to better support students to thrive during their studies, and establish the foundations for lifelong learning and their future wellbeing.

We were collaborating partners with Youth Futures Foundation on the creation and recruitment of a **UKRI Policy Fellowship** that is focused on what makes for high-quality jobs for young people. This helps **further challenge the assumption that work quality is simply 'being employed'**, or even receiving a particular level of pay. Rather, it is about the wellbeing that the job produces in the person's life, which may be different for different people.

Thought leadership

Through our **Business Leaders' Council** event series, we brought together research and practice, convening stakeholders who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to wellbeing within their workplace, and within society. This financial year, we invited perspectives on the UK labour market from Youth Futures Foundation, West Midlands Combined Authority and Centre for Ageing Better to explore how employers and policymakers can support people to find, stay in and return to work across their lives. Not only did the event attract over 80 registrants, but it also led to a keynote speaking engagement with the Civil Service Occupational Psychology Profession Annual Conference.

We have been able to leverage colleagues' professional profiles as **expert spokespeople** to increase the Centre's brand visibility and build its reputation at a national level. Speaking engagements include Marie Curie's fourth annual Research Conference 2024, and the CIPD Wellbeing at Work Conference. Media presence include a *Financial Times* interview about flexible working and office spaces, demonstrating how we embody our values as an employer, as well as strengthening our role as a trusted advisor to the sector.



Deepdive: Place and community

Our aim is that community wellbeing is measured consistently, comparably and appropriately, not just as the sum of individual wellbeing, and that wellbeing inequalities within and between communities are reduced.

In pursuit of this goal, we have increased our focus on growing understanding of community wellbeing and its key components of place, people and power and getting that used in practice. Highlights of our work are detailed below.

Finding and synthesising the evidence

We lead a rapid review exploring the **impact community agency and control on community wellbeing**. Using evidence from 27 included studies, we identified common features that influence collective agency and control at the community level: opportunities for community connections, ability to make decisions, availability and size of funding, and the maturity of community agency, including existing relationships. The [research](#) provided a good indication that improved community agency and control can lead to improved community wellbeing. It also **revealed a mixed picture**, with some neutral or negative impacts. For example, while funding was found to be a facilitator, it sometimes also created tensions and brought about power imbalances. Collectively, the suite of digital resources from this project has been used over 3,000 times since launch, including being shared by Phil Chamberlain, England Director for the National Lottery Community Fund.

To enhance our understanding of the **impact of place-based cultural events** and their effective evaluation, we commissioned a [discussion paper](#) from Prof. Rhiannon Corcoran, Professor of Psychology and Public Mental Health University of Liverpool. She explored the rationale, design and learnings from her team's experience evaluating the community and wellbeing impact of Eurovision 2023. The paper forms part of our ongoing series sharing views contributed by high profile researchers and thinkers on topics that **advance the field of wellbeing measurement**.



This is excellent work. It really brings the issues together nicely.

- Andy Haldane,
Chief Executive,
RSA

Putting evidence into action

We continued to provide services specifically for third sector organisations, offering bespoke consultancy, knowledge transfer and learning, and measurement and evaluation guidance. This included delivering an **introductory learning session** with a network of regional Lloyds Bank Foundation community coordinators across six areas in England covering personal and community level concepts and measures, key evidence and discussion of potential future collaboration. We also created **e-learning for Historic England**, completing the third and final module design for staff to learn more about social prescribing, heritage and their impact on wellbeing.

We also developed a wellbeing module for Nottingham Trent University and Pro Bono Economics' quarterly **VCSE Barometer Survey**. This collects data from around 2,000 voluntary sector organisations to track the effectiveness and sustainability of the sector. The module covers organisational attitudes to wellbeing as an outcome; how organisations measure wellbeing impact; and provision and commitment to wellbeing support for staff and volunteers.

Building on our knowledge of local area wellbeing and our advisory work on the Wellbeing Strategy for the City of Stockholm, we delivered further support to the Swedish city this financial year. Specifically, we collaborated with UK colleagues including former UK Mental Health Minister Paul Birstow to support the design of a programme for Stockholm Mayors and Public Servants. This adapts our previous Local Area Wellbeing Cohort programme, **translating UK learnings to an international context**.

Growing the evidence base

Wellbeing research in universities usually focuses on individual wellbeing, looking at student and staff wellbeing separately. To grow understanding, we also need to **know what 'being well together' means in higher education institutions**. This year, to establish early-stage evidence, we have provided expert guidance to Northumbria University. The team is using our community wellbeing conceptual framework to support place-based qualitative research exploring what community wellbeing means to the staff and students.

During 2023-24 we have also **supported proposals for the forthcoming ESRC Centre on Social participation and connectedness**, sharing the social capital evidence base on community, volunteering and loneliness to inform what we already know and what needs to happen next.

We worked with private sector research organisation SQW in response to a call from Homes England to robustly **identify and assess wellbeing impacts associated with the provision of supported housing for older people**. Centre staff provided expert advice shaping the study's wellbeing framework, theory of change, and the questionnaire tenants of supported accommodation completed to more completely identify and quantify wellbeing benefits. This report shows - for the first time - how wellbeing evidence can inform the strategic stages of policymaking in this area and how the wellbeing benefits associated with older people moving into supported housing can be monetised.

Thought leadership

We were invited to **review the National Lottery Community Fund's strategy and draft outcomes**, with a particular focus on mission one: bringing communities together. Our involvement ensured wellbeing measures, evidence and outcomes were included wherever possible.

We presented at the international Singing for Mental Health and Wellbeing conference focusing on children and young people.

Throughout the year we've been able to successfully **leverage national and international events** to increase cut through and engagement by being topical and relevant. An example is utilising the [Big Help Out](#) - part of coronation weekend - to reflect on the volunteering evidence base. We curated a narrative from our existing resources and involved guest input from organisers to platform different voices. It had almost 1,000 views, indicating we were able gain traction with VCSE sector audiences, while minimising reputational risk by avoiding being explicitly political.



Deepdive: Loneliness and connection

Our overall aim is to take a life course approach to loneliness, continuing to build our collective understanding of who is affected by loneliness and social isolation and how, and how to tackle it.

Major strides have been made on what we know about loneliness and how to tackle it, with a shift from focus on older age to all age. This reflects the changing evidence base.

For 2023-24 we deepened our work with the Campaign to End Loneliness, which has been hosted by the Centre since 2021.

Finding and synthesising the evidence

Five years on from the 2018 Tackling Loneliness review we **reviewed the evidence on the effectiveness of loneliness alleviation and mapped current practices in the field**. The [work](#) was done together with the Campaign to End Loneliness, and funded by DCMS Tackling Loneliness Team. We knew it was important to bring together the two strands of work for our audiences, so created an [overview](#) to accompany the two full reports. This has been viewed 221 times and downloaded 76 times. The online launch event had an 83% attendance rate, with attendees from Civil Society, Public Sector and Research. 94% reporting they were satisfied or very satisfied with the event. The high engagement and re-sharing by key sector stakeholders such as Healthy Working Wales, London Arts and Health and Mental Health Hampshire indicates **the value of bringing practice and research together**.

Since 2020 we have sought to **further the collective understanding of young people's loneliness and its relationship to wellbeing and mental health**. Over the past three years we have worked with the University of Glasgow to look specifically at mental health and loneliness in Scottish schools, tracked trajectories of loneliness during Covid-19 and sought to identify risk and protective factors at individual, social, and community and geographic levels. This year, we published the final outputs from the project, including an [evidence summary](#) of the four academic papers which collates and communicates key findings and recommended actions. This has been viewed 600 times and downloaded almost 200 times.



This was further supported by a short launch blog, which has had 1500 views to date, making it the second most popular blog of the year overall. The insights can be used by those working with young people, as well as researchers and policymakers working in youth services and education, and have already been reshared by mental health professionals and NESTA.

Putting evidence into action

Our learning partnership with the Association of Independent Museums enabled us to **support the allocation of £900k the Know Your Neighbourhood Fund to evidence-informed applications**. As part of a grant-making panel, we assessed and recommended projects that would be most likely to reduce loneliness through heritage and volunteering, based on the evidence base. We also ran learning workshops for over 30 independent museums interested in applying to the Fund on how to design effective interventions. Mobilising this knowledge ensured that the most effective projects could be supported.

Funded by the Department for Culture Media and Sport, the Campaign continued to deliver the **Tackling Loneliness Hub**, a digital platform that acts as a learning and exchange space for loneliness professionals across the public, private, academic and charity sectors to connect, support and collaborate. Membership of the Hub doubled in the 2023-24 financial year, with over 400 new members joining, bringing the total number of members to over 850 people from over 600 organisations. Feedback from members continues to paint a positive picture of real-world impact, with 94% of members saying the Hub helped to widen their professional network; 80% saying the Hub informed the action their organisation is taking to tackle loneliness; and 99% saying the content shared on the Hub was useful to them. Over the course of the year, we published 24 newsletters, produced 24 public-facing blogs with an average of 1000 views per blog, and delivered 10 workshops which had an average satisfaction rate of 98%.



I have found the Hub immensely useful in a very short space of time. Nice to have a go-to place for networking and research, with peer support too.

- Hub member

Across the financial year, the Campaign continued to deliver **loneliness training** for a range of organisations including Action Hampshire, Kent Arts and Wellbeing, Sky, NHS Property Services, and Libraries Connected, empowering them with the knowledge and tools to make a meaningful difference in their organisations and work. Interviews conducted with NHS Property Services receptionists who received in-person loneliness training six months' prior, revealed positive action taken by staff as a direct result of the training.

The Campaign also launched two **e-learning modules**, an introduction to loneliness and addressing workplace loneliness. Corporate partner TransPennine Express embedded the introduction to loneliness e-learning module into the onboarding process for new starters. Both modules have received positive feedback, with 100% of survey respondents saying they would recommend the course to others.

The Campaign has continued to **support the Global Initiative on Loneliness and Connection**, including leading a restructure and update of the organisation's website, improving its social media presence, and developing a quarterly newsletter, leading to an increase of 352 subscribers on LinkedIn.

Growing the evidence base

We continued strengthening the evidence base, partnering and advising to build insight into specific populations.

To provide more **accurate, up-to-date data on levels of loneliness in Great Britain** from 2020-22, the Campaign commissioned [new analysis of ONS Opinions and Lifestyle survey data](#). Having access to the raw data enables more precise information on loneliness inequalities. Key findings indicate that severe loneliness, which rose during the pandemic, has still not returned to pre-pandemic levels. The prevalence of severe loneliness has been consistently higher in younger people compared to older age groups. The analysis was launched during Loneliness Awareness Week in a flagship event, sponsored by Sky and Togetherly, that brought leading voices together in a hybrid format to consider what's next for loneliness. The report - State of Loneliness 2023: ONS data on loneliness in Britain - was featured by [The Guardian](#) and has had 2872 views and 926 downloads to date.



**Thank you for this course.
It has helped me to think in new
ways about loneliness and how it
may be addressed and alleviated.
The additional resources are also
much appreciated and will be
very useful...**

- e-learning participant

To **address a gap in our understanding of loneliness for young people**, the Campaign has embarked on partnerships with Queen Mary University London, King's College, London and University of Manchester to develop developmentally sensitive measure of loneliness for children and young people, and characterise social and cognitive pathways to loneliness (and protective factors) for young people from marginalised groups. For 2023-24, the Campaign has supported the design and participant recruitment stages of these pieces of work, as well as identified new dissemination partners following planned closure in April 2024.

We partnered with University College London to analyse existing data from British longitudinal generations studies, exploring social isolation and connectedness. This was a necessary first step in identifying concrete policy, community and societal actions we can take to reduce isolation and loneliness. Across 2023-24, the project's first two reports were published. The first investigated social isolation across our lives, within different contexts and between generations, addressing pre-existing evidence gaps. The second looked specifically at experiences in later life before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. The third report will explore associations between social isolation and health outcomes in midlife, and the role of social support. Initial insights will be shared in April 2024. Not only has this work **provided a more nuanced and holistic picture of differing experiences**, and ways to reduce isolation, it also **generated comparable measures of social isolations and loneliness** in this UK longitudinal data, laying the groundwork for researchers to use these variables for future comparisons across time and between generations.



Thought leadership

In February 2024, the Campaign to End Loneliness hosted its [annual online international conference](#), funded by Sky. The conference focused on celebrating collective achievements in addressing loneliness to date, and emphasised the need to continue building the momentum in the years to come. Across the day, we heard how people, organisations and politicians are responding to loneliness, from developing accessible and gender-inclusive places and spaces, to embedding social connection within local, national, and global policy making. The conference attracted 400 attendees, with delegates from business, academia, politics and media, and the dedicated microsite had 644 unique visitors and 1565 sessions on the day of the conference alone.

The Campaign helped write a **call to action on loneliness** with 14 leading charities including the British Red Cross, Nesta and Jo Cox Foundation. It has 80 signatories and was shared at party conferences and showcased to parliamentarians through an All Party Parliamentary Group on Tackling Loneliness and Connected Communities event in Westminster.

Speaking engagements for 2023-24 included the Haringey Connection Matters Conference, Bromley Loneliness Awareness Conference, London Walking and Cycling Conference, Age UK Gloucestershire, and Whizz Kids.

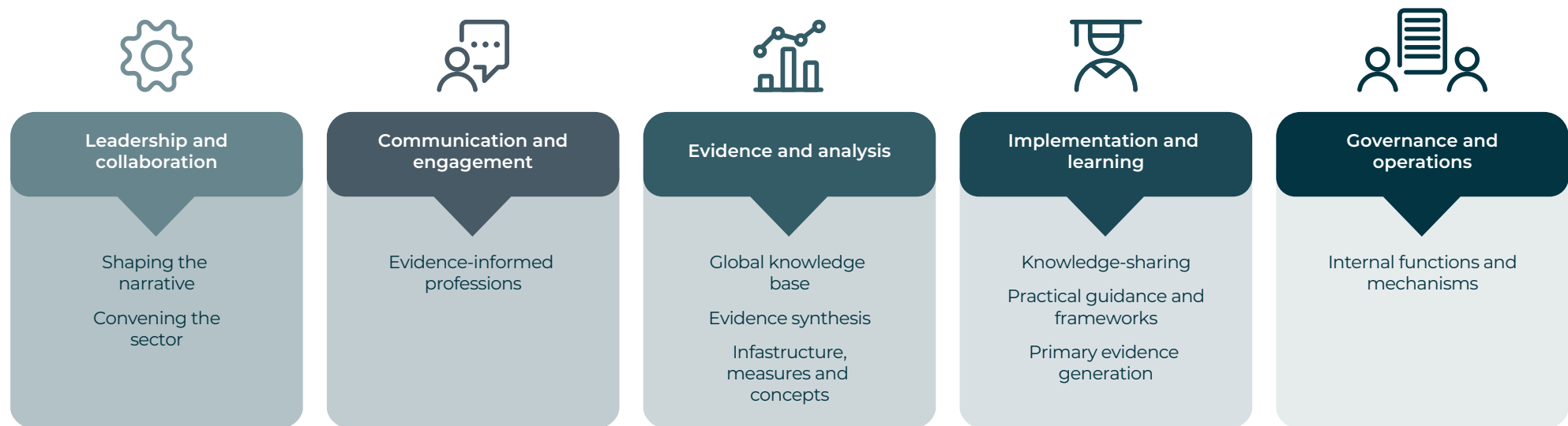
The Campaign also continued its [Conversations to Connect](#) **podcast**, with the number of listens significantly increasing following targeted promotion. And across the financial year the Campaign's **media profile continued to build** with key articles from the [Economist](#), [Daily Mail](#) and [Metro](#).

For Loneliness Awareness Week in June, the Centre and Campaign coordinated a digital campaign to raise visibility and share evidence-informed insights, using the event to reshare timely and relevant research. This resulted in a total of 7,472 engagements on Facebook and X.

Our people

Our diverse, international team is crucial to the organisation's success. The experience and effectiveness of colleagues has enabled us to consistently deliver a high level of impact, working creatively within the constraints of limited resources. This is supported with a remote-first, flexible policy.

To support our priorities we operated a multidisciplinary, cross-sector core team that brings together expertise across five distinct functions:



This financial year, the Centre welcomed back our Senior Civil Society lead after an 18-month secondment to the National Academy for Social Prescribing, and recruited further evidence expertise to support the delivery of our goals.

We have brought in additional freelance and contracted expertise where necessary - in the form of analysts and designers - to augment and compliment our in-house capacity and provide specific skills.

Our governance

The Centre is led by a board of voluntary Directors. The Board is the ultimate decision maker, as outlined in the Articles of Association.

The Board is responsible for working closely with the Executive Director and the senior management team to develop and agree strategic direction for the organisation, and ensure that any activities and executive decisions:

- are made in the best interest of the organisation, its stakeholders and the wider public;
- contribute to achieving the organisational purpose and aims;
- are delivered effectively and sustainably.

The Centre also has an advisory panel that, along with a wider consultation group for each project, ensures quality assurance and suitability of the products and research outputs that are being produced. The advisory panel is composed of voluntary members who represent the key sectors and audiences the Centre engages with. The main purpose of this panel is to ensure high quality, transparency, relevance and accessibility of all the Centre's products and research strategies.



What's next?

In April, our final month of operations, we will be:

- Publishing the findings from our review of life satisfaction evidence, and delivering our trials strategy for using life satisfaction in experimental research.
- Sharing initial findings on associations between social isolation and health outcomes in midlife, using data from the 1970 British Cohort Study and the 1958 National Child Development Study.
- Reporting on the legacy learnings from ten years of grant making by Spirit of 2012.
- Continuing to develop a toolkit for MedTec developers that shows how technologies can be designed and configured to maximise kidney patient quality of life and renal health professionals' job satisfaction.



Though the Centre will close on 30 April 2024, knowledge can still be grown and used to help build a future where the wellbeing of people and communities in the UK improves year-on-year and wellbeing inequalities are reduced.



Nancy Hey - Executive Director, What Works Wellbeing



You can continue to engage with our rich bank of digital resources at whatworkswellbeing.org

> Explore our [ARIs](#)

> Access our full annual report at companies house.

