Your 6 Ways to Wellbeing

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This section is a short introduction to the 6 Ways to Wellbeing. If one of the Ways sparks your interest, or you know it's an area you'd like to improve, you'll find more in-depth resources and support at the end of this booklet.

Research by the New Economics Foundation identified five ways to wellbeing: Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give. With the cost-of-living crisis affecting so many people, we've added a sixth Way: Financial Wellbeing.

You can explore the Six Ways in any order - there's no right or wrong place to start. Take your time, and choose the areas that feel most relevant to you right now. Here, we've included some simple ideas and suggestions to help you build the Six Ways into your everyday life.

Read on to find out more and try them out for yourself.

Your Wellbeing Traffic Lights

For each of the 6 Ways to Wellbeing, think about how you feel right now. Then choose a colour below:

Red		**This is an area I find difficult or I'm not doing much of at the moment.**
Amber		**I'm doing some things in this area, but there's room for improvement.**
Green		**I feel confident and positive in this area.**

Focus first on Red or Amber areas. Small steps-like checking in with a friend or taking a short walk-can grow into something meaningful over time.

There's no right or wrong answer. This is just a tool to help you reflect and take positive steps for your wellbeing.

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Your Wellbeing Traffic Lights

Feeling in control of money reduces stress. This could mean making a budget, getting advice, or taking small steps to plan ahead.

Paying attention to what's around us helps us feel present. You might notice nature, savour a meal, or pause to breathe.

Building strong relationships helps us feel supported. This could mean spending time with family, friends, or joining a group.

Learning new things keeps our minds active and builds confidence. Try a new hobby, recipe, or skill.

Moving our bodies boosts mood and energy. It doesn't have to be sport - it could be walking, dancing, or stretching.

Helping others gives us purpose and joy. You could volunteer, offer your time, or do something kind for a neighbour.

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Money worries are hard. Taking small steps can help you feel more in control.

Financial wellbeing plays a crucial role in our overall mental health and quality of life.
With the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, it's completely natural for money worries to be top of mind. The good news is that you're not alone – there are many local organisations offering free, confidential advice and a wealth of resources designed to support you through challenging times.

Financial Wellbeing

- **Celebrate small wins** – whether it's making a packed lunch instead of eating out, sticking to a budget, or making a payment towards a debt, every step forward counts.
- **Explore community options** – from clothes swaps and tool libraries to free local events, your community might offer ways to save money and connect with others.
- **Talk about money with someone you trust** – you're not alone, and sharing can bring relief and advice.
- **Create a simple budget** that works for you, focusing on small, manageable changes rather than big sacrifices.
- **Check in with your finances regularly** – even 10 minutes a week to review spending can help reduce anxiety.
- **Seek support** – free help is available through organisations like Citizens Advice West Lothian, The Advice Shop,Step Change, or West Lothian Council's advice services.

Financial wellbeing worksheet

Reminder

Taking control of your finances doesn't mean doing everything at once. Start small, be kind to yourself, and remember – every positive step, no matter how small, is a move in the right direction.

Use this space to think about ways to feel more in control of your money and reduce stress.

Prompts to help you get started:

- What steps can I take to better manage my finances?
- Could I make a simple budget or track spending this week?
- Who could I reach out to for advice or support?
- Are there small goals I can set to improve my financial wellbeing?

Stopping to notice how you feel and what's around you can help you feel calmer.

Taking notice of our thoughts, emotions and surroundings is a great way to stay present and pay attention to our needs. Looking back on your experiences will enable you to understand what is important to you.

Take Notice

- **Pause and breathe deeply.** Spend a few minutes each day taking slow, deep breaths. Try this in a quiet spot like your local park or by a window at home to help calm your mind.
- **Notice small pleasures.** Listen for birdsong on a walk, enjoy the warmth of your tea, or smile at a neighbour. These little moments can brighten your day.
- **Capture what boosts your mood.** Keep a journal or take photos of things that make you happy, maybe the view from Linlithgow Loch or the seasons as they change.
- **Try mindful hobbies.** Gardening, painting, or baking are great ways to focus on the present. Check out local groups at community hubs like Polbeth or Craigsfarm.

Take notice worksheet

Reminder

Notice one small good thing today-whether it's a smile, a breath, or a moment of calm. Let it remind you that even little moments of kindness and mindfulness can brighten your day and support your wellbeing.

Use this space to explore ways to be more mindful and aware of the present moment.

Prompts to help you get started:

- What small moments or things around me do I want to notice?
- How can I slow down or pause to appreciate them?
- Could I add a mindful practice to my day, like having a cup of tea or journaling?
- When can I make time for this?

Being around others can help you feel better.

Connecting with the people around us is a great way to remind ourselves that we're important and valued by others.
Connecting with the people around us is a great way to remind ourselves that we're important and valued by others. Whether it's your relatives, friends, coworkers, or neighbours, at home, at work, or in your community.

Social connection can help us build wellbeing and resilience every day. By putting effort into developing relationships, you will enrich your everyday life and support networks for years to come.

Ways to Connect

- **Say hello in passing.** Chat with a neighbour or strike up a conversation while waiting in a queue. Small moments of connection can make a big difference.
- **Reconnect with a friend** by sending a quick message to someone you haven't spoken to in a while. Even a simple "Just thinking of you – how have you been?" can brighten their day.
- **Try to meet up with someone regularly** – even once a month. A walk, coffee, or shared activity helps build stronger connections.
- **Notice when someone might need a check-in.** A quiet colleague or neighbour might appreciate a kind message or quick catch-up.

Connect worksheet

Reminder

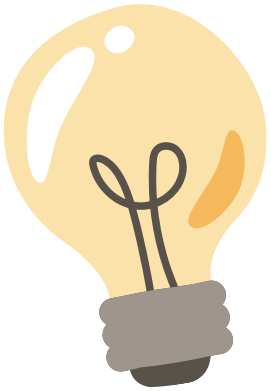
Connection doesn't have to be big or bold – it just has to be kind. Whether it's a quick text, a shared moment, waving at a neighbour or a regular catch-up, small actions can have a huge impact on someone's mental health – and your own.

Use the space below to explore ways you can connect with others. Think about what works for you and add your own ideas.

Prompts to help you get started:

- What are some ways I can connect with people?
- Who do I enjoy spending time with?
- How could I reach out to them?
- When this week could I make time for it?

Learning new things can help you feel more confident and interested in life.



Learning new things is a good way to meet people and boost our self confidence.

It doesn't have to mean getting more qualifications. There are lots of ways you can keep learning, from reading a new book, exploring the arts to getting creative or learning more about local history to learning a new skill or hobby.

Keep Learning

- **Try a new hobby.** Always wanted to try pottery, DIY, cooking, or creative writing? Now's a great time to start! You can find local classes or just dive in at home with some simple supplies and a bit of curiosity.
- **Learn through media.** Watch a documentary, read a book, or listen to a podcast about something you're curious about. It's an easy way to discover new ideas and keep your mind active.
- **Swap skills with friends or neighbours.** Why not teach each other something new? Maybe you bake a cake while they show you how to knit. It's fun, social, and helps you both learn something new.
- **Visit you local library** for books, local clubs and activities that are on.
- **Join local groups.** Look out for local clubs or classes that fit your interests-many are free or low cost. It's a great way to meet new people and share what you enjoy.

Keep learning worksheet

Reminder

Trying something new-even a small step-can boost your mood, build confidence, and connect you with others. Give it a go today!

Use this space to think about ways to try new things and keep your mind active.

Prompts to help you get started:

- What skills or hobbies would I like to learn or improve?
- Is there something new I can try this week?
- Who or what can help me learn this?
- When can I make time for learning?

Moving your body, even a little, can help your mood and energy.

Our physical and mental health benefits from regular physical activity, and even small increases in the amount we move during the day can have a big impact on our lives. Physical activity for as little as 10 minutes a day improves mental health.

Doing something you enjoy and that works for your level of fitness is the best way to keep movement a part of your day.

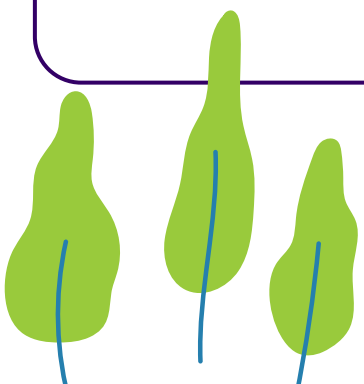
Be Active

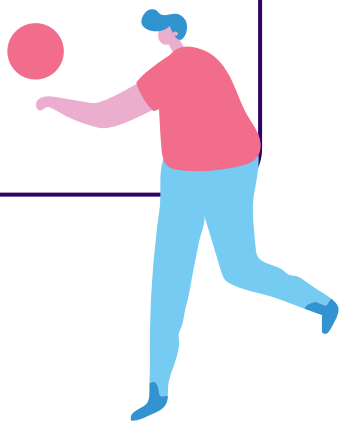
- **Take a walk in your local area.** Explore the paths around your neighbourhood or head to one of West Lothian's beautiful green spaces. Try a loop around Beecraigs Country Park, wander by the water at Linlithgow Loch, or enjoy the peaceful woodlands of Polkemmet Country Park. Even a short stroll can help clear your mind and lift your spirits.

- **Stretch while you relax.** Try some gentle stretches while watching TV, waiting for the kettle to boil, or between daily tasks. Simple neck rolls, shoulder stretches, or standing side bends can help ease tension and re-energise you throughout the day.

- **Dance it out in the kitchen.** Put on your favourite feel-good song and have a mini dance party while making a cuppa or cooking dinner. Movement doesn't have to be structured – just let go and enjoy it! A good song and a little shimmy can be an instant mood booster.

- **Enjoy the buzz of a workout, a run, or a fitness class.** West Lothian has a range of welcoming, low-cost or free ways to move with others.





Be active worksheet

Reminder

Whether it's a calm stretch or a high-energy session, all movement counts! it's about discovering the kind of movement that fits your body, your life, and your mood. That could mean a gentle stroll, a weekend hike, or smashing it in a spin class.

Use this space to think about ways you can move more and stay active.

Prompts to help you get started:

- What activities do I enjoy that get me moving?
- Could I try something new this week?
- When and where can I fit this into my routine?
- How can I make it fun or social?

Acts of giving, even small ones, can bring comfort and care.

Doing something kind for others, whether it's helping a neighbour or volunteering in your community can boost your mood and give you a real sense of purpose. Giving your time not only strengthens your connections with others, but it also makes a positive impact on their lives too. It's a simple way to feel good and feel like you're making a difference.

Give

- **Offer to help someone out.** Whether it's helping a colleague with a task, carrying a neighbour's shopping, or offering to babysit for a friend who needs a break, small gestures can mean a lot.
- **Check in on someone.** A quick message or call to ask, "How are you doing?" can really brighten someone's day, especially if they're going through a tough time.
- **Volunteer locally.** Even an hour a week at a food bank, community garden, or charity shop can make a big difference. It's also a great way to meet new people and feel more connected.
- **Share what you have.** Got a book you loved? Pass it on. Cooked too much dinner? Offer a portion to a neighbour. Have a skill like sewing, fixing bikes, or tutoring? Someone nearby could benefit.

- **Connect with your community.** Join a PTA or Scout Group, or come together with others to support local maternity wards by knitting blankets and hats
- **Spread kindness with words.** A compliment, a thank-you, or even just a smile can lift someone's spirits-and yours too. Never underestimate the power of a kind word.

Give worksheet

Reminder

If you're feeling like you don't have much to give, that's okay. Kindness starts with you.

Taking care of yourself is just as important - rest, compassion, and setting boundaries are all acts of kindness too.

Use this space to explore ways you can help or support others.

Prompts to help you get started:

- What small acts of kindness could I do for someone?
- Who could benefit from my time or support this week?
- How could I make giving part of my routine?
- What feels meaningful to me when helping others?

The 6 Ways to Wellbeing

Final Thoughts

You don't have to do everything at once. Sometimes, just choosing one small thing, like checking in with a friend, reviewing your spending, or sharing a kind word, can make a big difference. These small steps can help you feel more connected, capable, and cared for.

Think of it like planting a seed: one small action can grow into something meaningful over time.

And don't keep it to yourself! Share this guide with friends, family, or neighbours. We all face challenges, and sometimes just knowing someone else is trying too can be incredibly reassuring. When we support each other, we build stronger, more compassionate communities - and that's good for everyone's wellbeing.

For more ideas, local resources, and community support, visit:

Your thoughts...

This space is yours. Use it to jot down ideas, reflections, or anything that comes to mind as you explore the Six Ways to Wellbeing.

There's no right or wrong way to do it. It's simply a space to pause, reflect, and capture whatever feels helpful in the moment.

Your thoughts...

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