

WELL BEING



Improving
lives for all

WELL
BEING

Together, Improving Lives

Our purpose is to improve lives.

We do this through challenging inequalities and increasing wellbeing – enabling people to realise their potential and providing access to activities that **make more things possible for more people.**

Our values help us focus on positive outcomes:



PASSION



OPENNESS



RESPECT



TRUST



It's about creating the best possible environment to **thrive and fulfil potential** because we care

Improved wellbeing involves providing quality homes and places, improving health and wellbeing, increasing feelings of safety, providing pathways to employment and preventing homelessness.

Wellbeing is 'how we are doing' and is affected by everything in life

Our Wellbeing Strategy will help us deliver our aspirations to those communities where we own and manage homes and employ staff.

This in turn enables people living and working together to realise their potential, function better and contribute more to their communities.

With staff we:

Care about the individual and their personal needs, creating a great place to do great things, encourage continuous learning and development.

With tenants and customers we:

Work together, listen to ideas, make a real difference, understand what and how to improve personal wellbeing for the good of the community.

With partners we:

Help to build vibrant, diverse communities and are part of something bigger – increased life chances, improved health, better education and employment.



Our aim: Making more things possible for more people

Our strategy is based on two drivers for delivery – enablers and activities.

Enablers

Enablers are conditions we continually contribute to as we know these are critical for wellbeing throughout a person's life. These help people to be responsible for their own wellbeing in a practical, ongoing way.

WELLBEING STRATEGY

Activities

Activities are interventions delivered to influence and inspire change and are particularly important for people who may have poor wellbeing or who are at risk of their wellbeing getting worse. Research tells us this can apply to people who are disadvantaged or at risk of being disadvantaged, such as people who are homeless, have an offending history or have issues with substance misuse. It can also apply to care leavers, people experiencing a life event, such as bereavement, debt or redundancy, and people with a disability or ill health.





Enablers

There are four conditions we consider to be critical for enabling positive wellbeing. Working in partnership we will prioritise conditions which deliver the following outcomes for communities:



Stable homes

A secure tenure of a well-maintained home.

This is because a stable, safe, quality home is essential for putting down roots in a community and capitalising on opportunities influencing wellbeing.



Digitally able

Equal access and use of technology.

This is because technology is embedded in day-to-day life and closing the divide between people who are digitally able and people who are not is critical for ensuring everyone can actively participate in the modern world. This includes affordable and effective access to the internet and digital devices, and attaining skills needed to make the most of this resource.



Continually learning

Support to acquire the skills and knowledge needed for life and work.

This is because being able to learn is an essential skill people need to get on in life. An aptitude for learning can give people the confidence and self-esteem to take up further opportunities. It also ensures people of all ages can adapt and succeed in a changing world.



Person centred

Empowered and respected to influence decisions.

This is because having autonomy, the freedom to make choices, is a key influence of wellbeing as it respects the person's view based on personal priorities. Self-reflection on what is important encourages people to take in and appreciate everyday experiences whilst also understanding what works best for them.

Activities

There are three types of activities we consider to be critical for improving wellbeing. Working in partnership we will prioritise activities which deliver the following outcomes for communities:



Prosperous

Reduced poverty and increased wealth.

This is because having access to financial resources is essential for accessing goods and services which impact on wellbeing, such as healthy food, utilities and being able to socialise. This will include action, advice and support to:

- Improve employability by gaining skills, experience and qualifications useful for moving into work.
- Improve career prospects, and therefore earning potential, by gaining additional skills, experience and qualifications.
- Gain employment that is fairly paid and offers job security.
- Provide employment with opportunities for progression.
- Reduce or avoid debt.
- Reduce all forms of poverty, including financial, fuel and food poverty.
- Access truly affordable homes.
- Access a bank account.



Healthy

Improved physical and mental health.

Physical health can influence if and when we develop illness and if well managed it can extend the quality of life for longer. Mental health influences how we feel and act, what choices we make and how we handle stress and relationships with others. This will include action, advice and support to:

- Access and sustain personally rewarding and meaningful employment.
- Provide employment which enables work-life balance.
- Be physically and mentally active, to reduce anxiety and depression and extend the healthy life expectancy level.
- Live independently, as long as people can and want to.
- Make people feel safe, at home, out in the community and at work.
- Access green spaces which as well as providing opportunities to be physically active are proven to make people more content.
- Reduce carbon emissions which lower air quality and can negatively impact on some health conditions.



Connected

Increased community cohesion.

This is because after the essential needs of safety, security and shelter have been met people need to connect with others to have a sense of belonging. This will also inspire people to build strong and positive relationships at home, out in the community and at work. This will include action, advice and support to:

- Appreciate and value the diversity and similarities of different backgrounds and circumstances.
- Be active citizens in matters of local importance and decision making.
- Co-design priorities for investment with communities through local offers.
- Assist communities to directly deliver activities they consider to be important.
- Give through fundraising and volunteering.



Delivery

Working with other organisations

We know that for this strategy to make the most impact we must combine and target resources in partnership with others, so in addition to delivering services directly we will commission others to deliver on our behalf. We will also signpost or refer to partner services where we do not provide them in-house.

Asset based approach

We realise the importance of improvements being sustainable and will work with communities to develop skills, knowledge and connections so they can, where possible, deliver on their own in the long term and be prepared for future challenges. We will do this by focusing on potential rather than perceived problems and by continuing to invest in individual and community development for wellbeing improvement and self-reliance. We will also utilise our organisational assets to leverage investment in communities.



Whole life approach

The type of environment needed to nurture and develop changes throughout an individual's life. We will therefore prioritise and invest in the following life stages where potential is most open for development or decline. The stages that lead to touchpoints are:

- Children need encouragement and support to achieve a positive course in life including having an environment which instils an enjoyment of learning. Home environment, parenting skills and handling trauma such as bullying or domestic abuse are all factors which can impact on learning and future potential.
- Adults need support to achieve work-life balance. Responsibilities can leave little time for healthy living, but this is essential, along with continued learning, for good health in old age.
- Older adults need support to continue working, if they want to, as well as socialising and learning, to prevent physical and mental decline. This group has skills and experience but may need advice and support on how to adapt to new ways of working.
- Disadvantaged groups are less likely to develop their potential, and we will give particular consideration to additional support and resources needed. This includes people at risk of being excluded, such as care leavers and people experiencing a life event, such as bereavement, debt or redundancy, and people who are already excluded, such as people who are homeless, have an offending history or issues with substance misuse.
- Informal carers are also susceptible to poor mental health due to the stresses of caring for others. This time consuming responsibility can result in personal wellbeing being neglected. As such, we will consider how we can best support this group so they can participate.

Self-service

We recognise there is already a range of free, well researched and respected tools available for people to take responsibility for their own wellbeing. We will therefore raise awareness and encourage take-up of these options. Examples include:

- 5 ways to wellbeing, which recommends actions to improve personal wellbeing. Launched in 2009, this campaign, which is advocated by Government, the NHS and Mind, will be a primary resource for delivering the strategy.
- Every Mind Matters, a new campaign launched in October 2019 by Public Health England (PHE), encourages adults to take simple actions and steps to manage feelings of stress, anxiety, low mood as well as advice for people struggling to sleep.
- Change 4Life, launched in 2009 by PHE, aims to get people and their families to eat well, move more and live longer.
- Access to work grants, which can better assist people to do their job if this is not met through reasonable adjustments.
- Fit for Work, which gives free online support to people in work with health conditions and help with sickness absence.

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP)

We will nurture staff wellbeing by providing timely assistance when it is needed including support through major life events. We will also support groups with a higher risk of poor wellbeing such as people with physical illness and/or disability.

Our policies are designed to support staff to stay in work, such as reasonable adjustments and access to health care provisions. We will also support staff to manage their own wellbeing through training, health checks and campaigns, as well as advice, coaching and counselling.

Development Programme

In addition to protecting our social housing assets through investment programmes, we will grow provision through our development programme. Additionally, all new homes from 2025 will no longer use gas boilers, reducing carbon emissions which cause pollution. This will help improve air quality and the health conditions this impacts on.



Governance

Our Wellbeing Committee has overall responsibility for approving the annual programme of activities aiming to improve wellbeing across ForHousing's activities.

This includes understanding what each activity is aiming to deliver, the investment requirements and whether this is being funded internally or externally. It also reports on outcomes of an activity when it is concluded, or at year end if delivered annually. This makes a judgement on the return in terms of value for money - outcomes achieved in the context of what they cost to deliver.

Board members have been involved in the development of this strategy.



Measuring success

We consider improvement to wellbeing to be an equal measure of success to our financial position. For this reason we will include in our Annual Report the difference made by wellbeing enablers and activities. Combined with our home-related strategies and financial statement, this will give a full picture of our activities.

Evaluations will include a range of recognised participant and partner feedback mechanisms including:

Stories

We will include at least one case study for each activity we report. Case studies tell the 'stories' of those impacted and bring the difference made to life in a way data never can. These will be shared through our digital channels and within our Annual Report.

Proxies

Where the difference made by an intervention has already been evaluated by others and the value is generally respected as an acceptable measure, we will adopt these values, known as proxies, rather than evaluate ourselves. For example, if a person stops claiming universal credit because they are working, we can claim the cost of paying and administering universal credit for one person as a proxy saving to the public purse.

Data

We will use statistical evidence to report actual and potential improvements to wellbeing. Examples include employability due to skills and/or qualifications gained and improved physical health due to being more active.

Mental health surveys

Everyone has mental health and therefore everyone is on the spectrum that measures mental health. Asking people to place themselves on this spectrum enables activities aiming to improve mental health to be discussed, agreed and measured. The Short Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale is another way of measuring wellbeing on the spectrum, particularly where people take part in more long term and/or intensive interventions where they have regular contact with the provider of the activity. The spectrum comprises of the following and where a person is on the spectrum changes throughout their life.

- 1 HEALTHY** (flourishing, thriving)
The best level of mental health
- 2 COPING** (languishing, holding it together)
- 3 STRUGGLING** (presenteeism)
- 4 IN CRISIS** (ill, off work)
The worst level of mental health

If you would like to know more about how we're delivering wellbeing help and activities, or if you have any feedback, please contact us at hello@forhousing.co.uk



