



# The Integral Connection Between Wellbeing and Economic Prosperity

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*This economic system we have is not a success*

*It is not intelligent*

*It is not beautiful*

*It is not just*

*It is not virtuous*

*It does not deliver*

*People instinctively know and are disliking and despising it.*

*But then wonder that do we replace it with*

*John Maynard Keynes – 1933*



**Now – 90 years later – we have a vision, purpose and plan of what to replace it with.**

Some believe it is populism – Gina Miller and the True & Fair Party believe it is people-centric, caring and circular.

A Wellbeing economic model with less crisis and less clean up costs.

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# 1. Executive Summary

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This report delves into the critical interplay between health and wellbeing and their impact on economic and social vitality. It is structured into two parts: the first part examines the broad impacts of health and happiness on economic growth and workplace productivity, while the second part focuses on the role of local wellbeing centres in community revitalisation.

## Key Findings

- 1. Health and Happiness as Economic Catalysts:** There is a strong correlation between employee wellbeing and workplace productivity. Healthy employees exhibit higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness, contributing significantly to organisational success.
- 2. Driving Innovation through Wellbeing:** Mental wellbeing is essential for fostering creativity and innovation. Positive emotional states enhance cognitive flexibility, crucial for creative problem-solving.
- 3. Building Resilience in Times of Crisis:** Communities with robust health and social infrastructures demonstrate greater resilience in crises. Effective public health systems and community cohesion are key to maintaining economic and social stability during emergencies.
- 4. Reducing Public Healthcare Burdens:** Wellbeing initiatives lead to reduced dependency on healthcare services. Preventive health initiatives and mental health programs play a crucial role in mitigating healthcare demands and costs.
- 5. Community Health Hubs:** Local wellbeing hubs are pivotal in community health enhancement. They serve as holistic health hubs, offering a range of services that cater to physical, mental, and social wellbeing.
- 6. Economic and Social Revitalisation:** Wellbeing hubs contribute significantly to local economies, especially in revitalising high streets and repurposing vacant retail spaces. They boost local business, create jobs, and foster community spirit.

## Strategies for Success

The report outlines key strategies for the success of wellbeing hubs, including understanding community needs, offering comprehensive services, ensuring accessibility, engaging with the community, and utilising technology.

**Investing in health and wellbeing is essential for economic prosperity and community vitality. The report emphasises the need for a holistic approach to health, one that integrates physical, mental, and social aspects, and highlights the role of wellbeing hubs as catalysts for positive community transformation.**

## 2. Introduction

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### **Health and Wellbeing**

Health and wellbeing are multidimensional concepts that encompass the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of individuals. Health typically refers to the overall condition of a person's body or mind, especially in terms of the presence or absence of illnesses or impairments. Wellbeing extends this idea to include a person's emotional and psychological state, their quality of life, and overall sense of fulfilment. Together, health and wellbeing form the foundation of a person's ability to live a rich, rewarding, and productive life.

### **Importance of Individual and Community Wellbeing**

The importance of health and wellbeing cannot be overstated, both at an individual and a community level. Individually, good health and a state of wellbeing empower people to perform their best in various life roles, be it as employees, citizens or family members. On a broader scale, the collective wellbeing of a community or group contributes to its resilience, adaptability, supportive nature and overall functionality. This communal aspect of health and wellbeing is crucial in fostering supportive environments, shared growth, and mutual care.

### **Report Structure**

This report is presented in two main parts to comprehensively cover the themes of health, wellbeing, and their economic implications. The first part delves into the broader impact of health and happiness on economic growth, workplace productivity, and societal resilience. The second part focuses on local wellbeing hubs, examining their potential as revitalising forces within communities, specifically in the context of rejuvenating underutilised urban areas.

### **Economic Significance of Health and Wellbeing**

The correlation between health and economic vitality is significant and multifaceted. Healthy and happy individuals are more productive, show greater innovation, and contribute positively to workplace efficiency.

Moreover, a healthy workforce is a fundamental component of a robust economy, as it implies lower healthcare costs and higher productivity. Understanding this relationship is key to developing strategies that benefit both individuals and the broader economy.

### **Community Wellbeing and Local Economies**

Local communities are the lifeblood of larger economic systems, and their health and wellbeing have direct and tangible impacts on economic health. By fostering healthy communities, we can create a ripple effect that benefits the wider economy. Local wellbeing hubs offer a unique opportunity to re-energise communities, especially in the context of revitalising high streets and repurposing vacant retail spaces. This grassroots approach to economic and community development is crucial in our increasingly interconnected world.

# Part I: Health and Happiness as an Economic Catalyst

## 3. Enhancing Productivity

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In today's fast-paced business environment, the wellbeing of employees has emerged as a pivotal factor influencing workplace productivity. Research consistently illustrates that employees who are healthy, both mentally and physically, tend to exhibit higher levels of creativity, efficiency and effectiveness in their professional roles.

Physical health plays a critical role in an employee's ability to perform at their best. Regular exercise, adequate rest, and a balanced diet contribute significantly to increased energy levels, better concentration, and reduced absenteeism. Studies such as a 2019 Gallup study have shown that 239 organisations across 49 industries have witnessed a marked improvement in the overall productivity of their teams by promoting physical health through initiatives like ergonomic workspaces and health-focused programs. .

Mental wellbeing is equally crucial in determining an employee's productivity. Stress, anxiety, and burnout not only diminish an individual's capacity for work, but also impact team dynamics and overall workplace morale. Interventions such as flexible work arrangements, mental health days, and access to counselling services have been proven effective in enhancing employee mental health, thereby leading to improved productivity and job satisfaction.

A positive and supportive workplace culture is fundamental in promoting employee wellbeing. A culture that values open communication, work-life balance, and employee recognition fosters a sense of belonging and motivation among staff. Such an environment not only attracts top talent but also retains it, by creating a workspace where employees feel valued and, as a result, are more productive.

The link between employee wellbeing and workplace efficiency is undeniable. Investing in the physical and mental health of employees is not just a moral imperative but a strategic business decision. Companies that prioritise holistic employee wellbeing are likely to experience enhanced productivity, reduced turnover, and a more engaged and committed workforce, ultimately contributing to their long-term economic prosperity.

**Emerging research underscores the positive influence of individual wellbeing on altruism, voluntarism, and motivation in job-seeking activities.**

A study by the University of Oxford found a significant correlation between personal wellbeing and increased likelihood of participating in volunteer work. This connection highlights how enhanced wellbeing can lead to greater community engagement and a desire to contribute altruistically. Furthermore, wellbeing has been linked to increased motivation in individuals seeking employment.

The Journal of Applied Psychology published findings indicating that individuals with higher levels of mental wellbeing are more resilient and proactive in their job search, showing greater persistence and creativity in overcoming employment barriers. These studies suggest that fostering wellbeing can not only uplift individuals but also energise communities by encouraging volunteerism and assisting those striving for employment.

## 4. Driving Innovation

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Innovation and creativity are crucial for progress and growth in any sector, and mental wellbeing plays a fundamental role in fostering these qualities. Psychological studies have repeatedly shown that when individuals are mentally healthy, they are more likely to engage in creative thinking and innovative problem-solving.

Research indicates that positive emotional states are linked to increased cognitive flexibility, a key component of creativity. A study published in the “Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology” found that employees who reported higher wellbeing were more likely to generate creative ideas and solutions at work.

In creative sectors, such as design and advertising, mental wellbeing is closely tied to productivity and the generation of new ideas. A survey by the “Design Council” found that design firms placing a higher emphasis on employee wellbeing were more innovative and profitable.

**Healthcare and Pharmaceutical:** In these sectors, a positive workplace environment has been linked to enhanced research and development. Pharmaceutical companies that invest in employee mental health see higher rates of innovation, as evidenced by a higher number of patents filed.

**The evidence is clear:** mental wellbeing is not just a health issue, but a key driver of innovation across various sectors. By investing in mental health initiatives, organisations can create an environment where creativity and innovation flourish, leading to sustained growth and development.

## 5. Building Resilience in Times of Crisis

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A society's overall health and wellbeing play a critical role in its capacity to withstand and recover from economic challenges and public emergencies.

Analysis of community responses during the COVID-19 pandemic indicated that communities with pre-existing robust health systems and community cohesion were better equipped to handle the crisis. A report in the "Lancet Public Health" journal highlighted how communities with strong social and health infrastructures managed to maintain economic stability better than those without.

**The concept of "carrying capacity" in individuals relates to their ability to handle stress and additional responsibilities, especially during crises. Evidence suggests that individuals near burnout have significantly reduced capacity to 'step up' in challenging times.**

A study published in the "Journal of Applied Psychology" found that employees experiencing burnout were less likely to engage in additional tasks or adapt to new challenges. This study underscores the importance of ensuring employee wellbeing to maintain operational capacity, particularly during periods of heightened stress or emergency situations.



## 6. Reducing Public Healthcare Burdens

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The growing demand on healthcare systems worldwide has necessitated a critical examination of how wellbeing initiatives can alleviate this pressure. Wellbeing, encompassing both physical and mental health, plays a pivotal role in individual healthcare needs. Research increasingly suggests a strong correlation between high levels of wellbeing and reduced dependency on healthcare services. A study by the Health Enhancement Research Organization (HERO) observed that employees with higher wellbeing metrics exhibited lower health risks and subsequently lower medical costs.

**Preventive health initiatives stand at the forefront of reducing healthcare demands.**

These initiatives, focusing on proactive health management, have shown significant success in mitigating chronic diseases, which are a major contributor to healthcare costs. A prime example is the Diabetes Prevention Program in the UK and the United States, which has demonstrably reduced the incidence of type 2 diabetes—a condition that alone accounts for a substantial portion of healthcare spending. Regular preventive measures, such as exercise, healthy eating, and regular health screenings, contribute to long-term health and can significantly reduce the need for extensive medical intervention.

In parallel, mental health initiatives play a critical role in reducing healthcare service demand. Addressing mental health not only improves individual wellbeing but also substantially decreases the number of emergency department visits and long-term healthcare costs. Workplace mental health programs, for example, have shown to reduce absenteeism and healthcare costs, highlighting the economic and health benefits of mental wellbeing programs. The incorporation of these initiatives into healthcare policies can lead to more holistic and cost-effective healthcare systems.

**In addition to workplace mental health programs, community-based mental health initiatives are crucial, especially for vulnerable populations such as the unemployed or those earning low wages.**

A study by the Mental Health Foundation found that unemployment is often associated with mental health problems, and those in lower-income brackets are more likely to suffer from mental health disorders. This exacerbates the demand for healthcare services, as these groups typically have less access to preventive mental healthcare and are more likely to use emergency services for crisis situations.

From an economic standpoint, the investment in wellbeing programs is justified by the significant returns in terms of improved health outcomes and productivity.

**The World Health Organisation reports that for every \$1 invested in scaling up treatment for common mental disorders, there is a \$4 return in improved health and productivity.**

This cost-benefit analysis underscores the economic viability of wellbeing programs. Consequently, policy recommendations are shifting towards increased funding for preventive health and mental health programs. Such policies not only support healthier populations but also ensure more sustainable healthcare budgets, as evidenced by various global approaches in integrating wellbeing into healthcare systems.

# Part II: Reinvigorating Communities Through Local Wellbeing Hubs

## 7. Community Health Hubs

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Wellbeing hubs act as essential community assets, offering a broad spectrum of health and wellness services. These centres typically facilitate access to physical, mental, and often social health services in one location. For instance, the Mind Body Wellbeing Centre in Harrogate, UK, delivers a comprehensive approach to health, including services like counselling, nutritional advice, and holistic therapies. The integration of varied health services in wellbeing centres demonstrates a holistic approach to health, recognising the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

With a focus on physical health, centres like The Health and Wellbeing Innovation Centre in Truro go beyond traditional gym facilities to include rehabilitation services, nutritional advice, and health screenings. On the mental health front, centres like The Wellbeing Centre in Newbury provide counselling, psychotherapy, and a range of holistic therapies. These centres understand the intricate connection between physical and mental health, offering programs and services that bridge both areas effectively.

The True & Fair Party believes that building on these initiatives in a strategic, holistic manner is pivotal in offering support in diverse areas of personal welfare. For instance, the Bromley by Bow Centre in East London not only offers health services but also includes support for education, skills development, and employment assistance. These centres often collaborate with local organisations to provide a broad spectrum of services, from debt advice and legal support to community gardening and art classes, truly embodying a community-centred approach to overall wellbeing.

These centres play a crucial role in enhancing community health by offering holistic support. They serve as inclusive spaces where individuals from all walks of life can find assistance, be it for health issues, personal development, or social welfare. The emphasis is on creating a supportive and nurturing environment that fosters both individual and community growth, as seen in centres like The Isbourne in Cheltenham, which offers a range of wellbeing courses and workshops alongside its health services.

## 8. Economic and Social Revitalisation

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Wellbeing hubs play a significant role in revitalising local economies, particularly in transforming high streets and repurposing empty retail spaces. These centres not only bring health benefits to the community but also contribute to economic development by attracting visitors, creating jobs, and supporting local businesses.

High streets across the UK have faced challenges with the rise of online shopping and the decline of traditional retail. Wellbeing hubs have become key players in revitalising these areas. By occupying previously vacant retail spaces, these centres breathe new life into high streets. For example, in towns like Stockport and Margate, the introduction of wellbeing centres has increased foot traffic, which in turn benefits nearby cafes, shops, and services. The presence of these centres makes high streets more attractive destinations, not just for shopping but for overall wellness experiences.

The repurposing of empty retail spaces into wellbeing hubs has both economic and social advantages. Economically, it addresses the issue of vacant properties, enhancing the visual appeal and utility of town centres. Socially, these centres become accessible local hubs for health and wellness. In cities like Leeds and Birmingham, large, unused retail spaces have been successfully transformed into vibrant wellbeing centres, offering everything from yoga studios to community health services. This repurposing has a multiplier effect on the local economy, encouraging investment and diversification of services, as well as alleviating pressure on public services that are underfunded and overused. The systems of social support we presently have are at crisis point and unless there is urgent new political thinking they will become overwhelmed.

Wellbeing hubs support local economies by creating jobs – from health professionals to administrative and support staff. Additionally, these centres often source products and services locally, supporting small businesses, local sustainability and resilience at a time when global instability and impacting supply chains. They also act as catalysts for community development, offering spaces where people can meet, engage in joint activities, and foster a sense of community. This, in turn, strengthens social ties and contributes to the overall health of the local economy.

**The impact of wellbeing hubs on local economies and high streets is profound. They not only offer health and wellness services but also drive economic and social revitalisation. By repurposing empty spaces and invigorating high streets, wellbeing hubs contribute to the economic sustainability and social fabric of communities.**

## 9. Improved Public Health Outcomes

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The strength and availability of local health resources – from clinics and hospitals to wellbeing hubs and public health programs – are vital in determining a community’s overall health. This section examines how enhanced local health resources correlate with significant public health improvements.

Wellbeing hubs contribute significantly to community health by providing holistic health services. These centres often offer preventive health programs, mental health support, nutritional guidance, respite care and fitness classes, addressing various aspects of health beyond traditional medical care. For example, the widespread availability of such centres in urban areas has been linked to improved mental health, reduced obesity rates, and overall better physical health in the population.

The availability of health resources is often influenced by economic and social factors. Investment in health infrastructure, healthcare workforce, and community-based programs is essential for equitable health improvements. Studies have shown that investing in local health resources not only improves health outcomes but also contributes to economic growth, as healthier populations are more productive.

## 10. Strategies for Success

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- a. Conduct a thorough assessment and audit - including meeting with all local stakeholders - to understand the specific health and wellbeing needs of the local community; tailor services and programs to meet these identified needs, ensuring they are relevant and beneficial.
- b. Offer a wide range of services that address physical, mental, and social health. Providing a diverse suite of programs, fitness classes, music, art and youth services, nutrition counselling, mental health services, wellness education and social services.
- c. Choose accessible locations with easy transportation links. Designing spaces that are welcoming and accessible to all community members, including those with disabilities.
- d. Design a people plan: to work in the range of services offered in wellness hubs, including volunteers.
- e. Actively engage with the community through outreach programs and health awareness campaigns. Collaborate with local organisations, healthcare providers, and businesses to expand services and reach.
- f. Secure diverse funding sources, including government grants, private investments, and community fundraising. Potentially offer a mix of free and paid services to ensure sustainability while maintaining accessibility.
- g. Utilise technology to conduct 'health MOTs', volunteer apps, online appointments, virtual classes, and digital health tracking. Also use local social media to help distribute health and happiness early intervention messages, methods and 'good habits'.
- h. Establish mechanisms for regular feedback from service users and staff. Routinely evaluate the impact of services on community health and adjust as necessary.
- i. Use effective marketing strategies to raise awareness of the hub's services. Ensure clear and consistent communication with the community about available services and benefits.
- j. Work with local architects, builders, gardeners to create positive harmonious town centres that make people feel proud and positive of their local community.

# 11. Conclusions

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This report explored the multifaceted role of health and wellbeing in fostering economic growth, enhancing productivity, driving innovation, building resilience, and reducing public healthcare and wider social services burdens. It has underscored the critical importance of individual and community wellbeing in creating robust, adaptive, and thriving societies.

The correlation between employee wellbeing and workplace productivity is undeniable. We've seen that healthy, both mentally and physically, employees are more efficient, innovative, and contribute positively to organisational success. This realisation should prompt businesses and policymakers alike to invest more in holistic health initiatives, recognising that such investments are not merely expenses but crucial inputs for long-term prosperity and stability.

Innovativeness, a key driver of economic and social progress, has been shown to be closely linked with mental wellbeing. Environments that support mental health are hotbeds for creativity, leading to groundbreaking ideas and solutions that propel industries forward. This is especially true in sectors where innovation is the lifeblood, such as design, advertising, and pharmaceuticals.

The report also highlighted the resilience brought about by robust public health infrastructures, as evidenced during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. Communities with strong health and social support systems were more adept at navigating the challenges posed by such emergencies, maintaining not just health standards but also economic stability.

Local wellbeing hubs emerged as vital in reinvigorating communities. By transforming high streets and repurposing vacant retail spaces, they contribute significantly to local economies, create jobs, and foster community spirit. They stand as beacons of holistic health, offering an array of services that cater to physical, mental, and social needs, thereby enhancing overall community health.

In conclusion, the link between wellbeing and economic vitality is clear and compelling. Investing in health and wellbeing is not just a moral imperative but a strategic economic decision. As societies, our focus should be on creating environments where wellbeing is prioritised, accessible, and integrated into every aspect of life. This approach is not just about treating or preventing illnesses but about nurturing thriving communities where every individual can lead a fulfilling life. This, in turn, creates a ripple effect that benefits the wider economy driving sustainable growth and resilience.

The strategies for success outlined in this report, from understanding community needs to employing technology and fostering a supportive culture, provide a roadmap for establishing and maintaining effective wellbeing centres. **These hubs are more than just health facilities; they are community anchors that uplift local economies, enhance public health outcomes, and contribute to the social fabric.**

As we move forward, it is essential that both public and private sectors collaborate to strengthen and expand the reach of wellbeing centres. This collaborative effort will ensure that the benefits of health and wellbeing are widely accessible, laying the groundwork for healthier, more resilient, and economically vibrant communities. Embracing this holistic approach to health and wellbeing, one that transcends traditional boundaries and integrates into the very fabric of our societies, is key to our collective future.

Wellbeing centres, therefore, are not just service providers; they are catalysts for positive change. Their success and proliferation will mark a significant step towards realising a vision where health and prosperity go hand in hand, where communities flourish not just economically but in their very essence of wellbeing and quality of life.

In summary, this report underscores a profound truth: the health of individuals and communities is inextricably linked to their economic and social wellbeing. By investing in and prioritising health and wellbeing through initiatives like wellbeing hubs within a wider wellbeing economy, we can pave the way for a future that is not only economically prosperous but also rich in health, happiness, and human potential.

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- This report by the WHO provides evidence that every US\$ 1 invested in scaling up treatment for depression and anxiety leads to a return of US\$ 4 in better health and ability to work, highlighting the significant economic benefits of investing in mental health services.
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XVI. Health and Wellbeing Innovation Centre in Truro: It's a state-of-the-art facility providing dynamic office space, business support services, meeting and conference facilities, and a collaborative business community. It's designed to facilitate business growth, especially for enterprises in the health and wellbeing sectors. <https://formationzone.co.uk/our-network/health-wellbeing/>

XVII. **Wellbeing Centre in Newbury:** It offers a wide range of complementary therapies, yoga and meditation classes, workshops, and events focusing on emotional and physical wellbeing.



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