

An introduction to...



A year to inspire people
to improve their wellbeing



Celebrate with us...



Do a Daily Mile...



Boost workplace wellbeing...



Start a conversation...

Year of Wellbeing Vision

People in Coventry and Warwickshire will be part of a strong community, inspired and empowered to take action to improve health and wellbeing for themselves and others, in 2019 and beyond.



Signed by the
Chairs of the
Health and
Wellbeing Boards



Cllr Les Caborn –
Portfolio Holder for
Adult Social Care and
Health, Warwickshire
County Council



Cllr Kamran Caan –
Cabinet Member for
Public Health and Sport,
Coventry City Council.
West Midlands Combined
Authority Physical
Political Champion

This is our Year!

The importance of wellbeing – our health and happiness, sense of purpose, and satisfaction with life – is something we often take for granted. Our vision for 2019 shows how we want to change that by inspiring everyone to recognise, celebrate and improve wellbeing.

A unique partnership between Coventry and Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Boards – the first of its kind in the country – is behind the Year of Wellbeing. We have agreed a Health and Wellbeing Concordat to ensure all organisations do all they can to address challenges which affect us all: the rise in ill-health, physical inactivity, and less tangible problems like loneliness and social isolation.

Throughout 2019 our shared resources will support stronger, healthier communities, emphasising the importance of positive action to safeguard health and wellbeing. We will work alongside our vibrant and active community sector, which already offers social, learning and enrichment opportunities that benefit wellbeing.

We aim to inspire, encourage and reignite people's passion for wellbeing. We hope people engage with information and opportunities, and are motivated to protect their own health.

With so much to celebrate there's never been a better time to get involved for you, your family and friends, your work and your community.

#LetsDoThisTogetherCW

Aiming high for wellbeing

There are great things happening in Coventry and Warwickshire already. Every day there is lots to learn and lots to celebrate. But we can do more.

Around 900,000 people live in multicultural Coventry and Warwickshire. We live longer, but many of us have health conditions we could have prevented. Making time to invest in good health and wellbeing pays dividends.

We have lots of activities planned throughout the Year. Every step towards improving wellbeing counts, and we aim to celebrate them all.

The Year will create space for people and organisations to think and act differently. We will do more to promote activities, events and learning opportunities so information is easier to find. We will talk to people to find ways of doing things better.

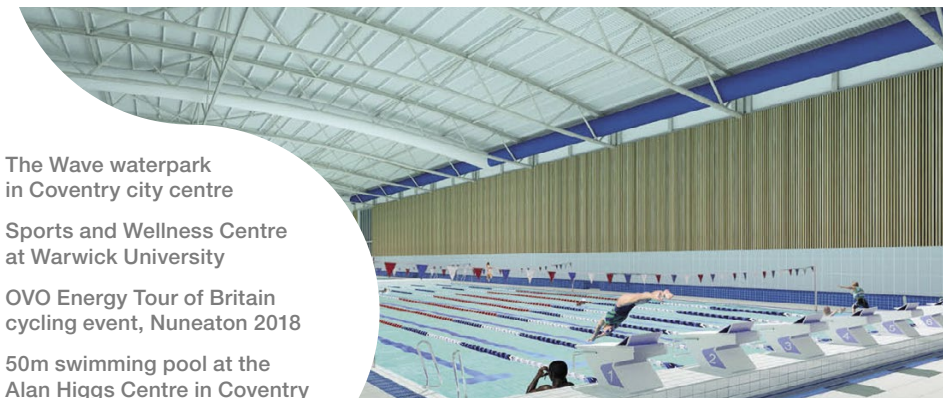
We will change attitudes as well as opportunities, and measure these changes so we can understand what works best.

In Warwickshire, there will be a £1 million investment in improved community facilities at Whitnash community hub, including a café, sports hall and pitches, and library. We will also be looking to build on the legacy of the superb **OVO Energy Tour of Britain** cycling event, which visited Nuneaton in 2018.

We will join up with Coventry's European City of Sport, too. The opening of **The Wave waterpark** in Coventry city centre, a new 50 metre pool at the **Alan Higgs Centre** in the city and a **Sports and Wellness Centre at Warwick University** will bring new experiences to enhance wellbeing.

Our journey will carry on past 2019 and beyond our historic UK City of Culture celebration in 2021.





The Wave waterpark
in Coventry city centre

Sports and Wellness Centre
at Warwick University

OVO Energy Tour of Britain
cycling event, Nuneaton 2018

50m swimming pool at the
Alan Higgs Centre in Coventry

Celebrating and building on our strengths

Our vision for wellbeing is ambitious. Coventry and Warwickshire is brimming with people offering opportunities for exercise and friendship, practical advice and specialist training, professional counselling and volunteer support.

We will build networks between these champions of a healthier lifestyle, increasing their reach and impact. During 2019, we will promote great work to improve people's wellbeing going on right here, right now.



We will also:

- Promote physical activity, particularly in primary schools;
- Encourage conversations about wellbeing;
- Work to improve workforce wellbeing in voluntary, public and private sector organisations.



Physical activity: We will use tools such as the Daily Mile to engage primary schools in getting more children moving more often.

Already a feature of life in thousands of primary schools up and down the country, The Daily Mile is a way of building 15 minutes of exercise into each day. We aim to have 100 primary schools engaged with The Daily Mile by the end of 2019, giving children a daily burst of physical activity to let off steam and build up stamina. More than that, we will encourage people of all ages to commit to taking a quarter of an hour a day to stroll, jog or run flat out for the sake of their hearts, their health and the pleasure of moving.



Start a conversation: We will get people talking in order to reduce loneliness and social isolation, particularly among older people.

Loneliness can affect anyone, and is linked to the development of mental and physical health conditions. We want to showcase the value of building social connections, volunteering and befriending, and promote the benefits of simply starting a conversation. We will amplify the voices of people with positive stories to tell about their health and wellbeing journeys to generate discussion, awareness and acceptance. We will learn from the many organisations working with older people to see what we can add to their work in targeting isolation.

Workplace wellbeing: We will engage employers in the Thrive West Midlands workplace wellbeing programme, to generate new and greater activity on workplace wellbeing.

Starting with the NHS, voluntary and local authority organisations in our area, we will work with local employers to raise awareness of the benefits of having healthy and well staff. In particular we will highlight the importance of managing stress and mental health, and how to respond when colleagues are struggling. We will also offer advice and guidance to the region’s many small employers who value staff wellbeing but may not have the resources to develop activity themselves.



Here are just a few ideas for how you can take simple steps to improve your wellbeing, any time you like!
Which of these work best for you?

Your wellbeing

- Tweet your positive wellbeing thoughts at #LetsDoThisTogetherCW
- Join a sports club or activity
- Join a leisure club or activity
- Walk or run a Daily Mile
- Drink water more often
- Make healthy food swaps
- Do simple stretching exercises
- Have tech-free time
- Take time to relax

Get

Family and community wellbeing

- Organise a weekly outdoor activity
- Stay in touch with your social circle
- Make eating a social experience
- Join #onething and make pledges to improve wellbeing together
- Visit local parks, galleries and museums
- Enjoy tech-free time together
- Smile at others and share small acts of kindness
- Join a group, activity or club as a volunteer or helper
- Go for a swim



involved

Wellbeing for workers

- Take regular breaks
- Do regular stretching exercises
- Step out for a Daily Mile walk
- Go for scheduled health checks
- Take action to limit stress
- Learn how to have good mental health
- Help a local group or charity
- Help others when you can
- Bring a smile to work

5

ways to mental wellbeing

Extensive research has shown that there are a number of important steps we can all take to maintain and improve our wellbeing. These **five ways to wellbeing** are used all over the world to help people find activities that support their health and wellbeing.

Give

Even the smallest act of giving or kindness counts, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts of giving include volunteering and joining a community group.

Connect

Building connections and social networks is important for wellbeing and will support and enrich you every day.





Take notice

Be more aware of the present moment, including your feelings and thoughts, your body and the world around you. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

Keep learning

Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and confidence. Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Take on a different responsibility at work.

Be active

Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Being active makes you feel good. Find an activity that you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness, and make it a part of your life.



In your community

We are all a member of a number of communities as a result of who we live with and near, where we live, what we do each day and who we know and choose to mix with.

Connecting with other members of these communities offers one of the most powerful ways of improving our wellbeing, and the wellbeing of other people.



Lots of this activity happens in and around where you live

Libraries are hives of social activity with interest groups meeting in many of them. Library noticeboards are packed with ideas for things to do and computers are available, with help to get online. You can borrow a book too!

Community centres, village halls and public spaces like shops and pubs are natural connecting points for people and well worth a visit.

Pharmacies are a great place to ask questions about health and wellbeing. Some pharmacies are 'Healthy Living Pharmacies' with a consultation space for a private chat as well as leaflets and information about health promotions and ways of keeping well.

Specialist information and support groups are there to help, often surprisingly close to home. Look online or ask a friend.

Museums, galleries, theatres and cultural spaces. Cultural spaces offer a rich and varied opportunity for us to get involved.

Physical fitness and the great outdoors. Local sports clubs and groups cater for all fitness interests and abilities. Get into the pool or the gym! Or you can head outdoors for fresh air and open space.

There is a world of information online and in social media. This booklet suggests topics about which it might be useful to find out more. And people at any of the places listed above will be able to provide specialist advice about where to get the best information online.

People's stories

Here are just four inspiring stories of people in Coventry and Warwickshire who have changed their lives by understanding better what they needed to do to improve wellbeing for themselves and others. We'd love to hear your story, too!



Adrian

Adrian has found as much as he can about the condition that threatens to disable him most of every day.

By talking and listening to others with similar experiences, by getting specialist medical help and by joining local groups, he has been able to help himself and others, too.

Adrian has psychosis, often described as 'an impaired relationship with reality'. For him, this means he hears voices of people criticising him.

These are puzzling and frightening experiences related to trauma from his childhood and resulting depression and anxiety. He works hard to manage the condition.

He explained: "Managing these voices drains every bit of energy you have. I maybe feel fully in control for about four hours each day. But knowledge and understanding is what works for me."

He helps run research and development courses for the Recovery Academy, and shares his experience by helping teach an Understanding Psychosis course. He reads about his condition, and uses different ways of keeping well.

He said: "I've always been determined to overcome the nausea I feel just going outside, but if I can help just one other person who feels this way, it will have been worthwhile."

“About five years ago, I was working in a financial institution in quite a high-pressure role.

I felt I was bullied at work, and complained. About this time, my boy was sent on active duty in Afghanistan as part of a bomb detection detachment. I found it difficult to cope, went into complete meltdown.

I lost confidence, was drinking, and wasn't looking after myself. Eventually, my GP prescribed anti-depressants and referred me to Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT).



Graham

Here, I went on the Share course, a Recovery Academy course about managing anxiety and stress.

I repeated the course because I found it so helpful. It gives you strategies and helps you learn so much about how to take care of yourself.

I wanted to put something back, so I became a volunteer for Mind. Now I teach the course myself. I have gone full circle.

I find the course helps with my everyday life. All the time I meet people who find it helps them, too.

Now I know to look for the positive side, accept some things are out of my control and not to act so quickly, for example. It has helped me put so much back into my life.

You have to want to change. But you can do it. You just have to discover things for yourself.”

“It gives you strategies and helps you learn so much about how to take care of yourself.”

People's stories

Tracy Southam works as Business Development and Contracts Manager at Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action.

She sought help from her GP when she found she was experiencing acute pain in her head, down one side of her face and her back.



Tracy

"I am a lot more aware of balancing life and work..."

"I actually thought I was having a stroke," she said. "It was a very scary experience."

Four days of medical tests later, and Tracy was diagnosed with a neurological condition called idiopathic intracranial hypertension (IIH).

Her doctor referred her to Slimming World and with their help, and the help of her employer, Tracy has been able to make a huge change to her lifestyle.

"I've lost almost four stone, and by keeping a healthy diet now have more of a happy medium in my life. I am a lot more aware of balancing life and work, and people here have been so helpful allowing me to work at home when I needed it and attend appointments in work time when I am less tired than in the evenings."

"Since then I have got into lots more physical activity... I go to the gym lots and it helps me feel really good."



Rishard

"I needed help from so many people! I have Down's Syndrome and some other things, so there were all these professionals trying to figure out how to treat me, doctors, social workers, therapists... but I still had times when I wasn't doing so good.

When things were really bad my mum was really stressed that I might hurt myself, or other people... I was worried too. It just wasn't working out. Then I got the chance to hire a dance teacher, paid for by the people who had been trying to help. This was a way for me to express what was going on, to get it all out there. I love dance and music so it really helped and was just what I needed. Since then I have got into lots more physical activity... I go to the gym lots and it helps me feel really good. I am an actor too, a really good one. Making that change helped so much. Now I've got lots of things opening up, thanks to a little help from the people around me."

