

A Happier Healthier Derbyshire

Derbyshire Director of Public Health Annual Report 2015



Positive mental wellbeing is an important cornerstone of good health. There are simple ways that we can all use to make a difference to the way we feel, think and react to life's ups and downs.

Derbyshire has lots of assets and opportunities that can contribute to our feeling of wellbeing: beautiful countryside, friendly people and supportive communities. However there are considerable challenges too – welfare reforms, housing problems, work pressures and family life are just a few examples of day to day problems faced by many.

This report gives some simple, affordable ways that we can all use to make a difference to how we feel.

The **5 Ways to Wellbeing** are tried and tested actions to improve both mental and physical wellbeing. It takes a bit of practice to build them into your life, but they are fun and these small changes can make a real difference.

There are lots of connections between the five areas and I have provided some examples of the great things that Derbyshire people are doing and some examples of what you, your family and friends can do as well. The links will take you to helpful opportunities to make your choices easier.

The **5 Ways to Wellbeing** are to **Connect**, **Be Active**, **Take Notice**, **Keep Learning** and **Give**. Do give them a try!

Elaine Michel, Director of Public Health

Click onto each
5 Way to Wellbeing
to find out more information.



Be Active

Exercising makes you feel good. Discover a physical activity that you enjoy and fits your interests, lifestyle and ability.

The Amber Valley Ladies Rugby sessions attract 15-20 ladies with a mix of abilities and personalities, with ages ranging from those in their 20s to those in their 50s!

For many, this has been the first form of sport that they have been involved with since leaving school. As well as learning new skills and improving their overall fitness, the group has a social side enabling local women to meet each other and make new friends.

More activities can be found here:

www.derbyshiresport.co.uk/get-active



“My friend asked me to come for a bit of fitness. I had no idea at the age of 41 that I would embrace it or make the friends that I have. I never ever expected to even play in a match.”

(Sarah Jane Reeves, Participant)

Each year one
in four people
will experience
a mental
health issue

On average one
or two people in
100 will
experience a
severe mental
illness



Give

Small acts of kindness to other people can be rewarding as well as larger acts such as volunteering.

Chesterfield Time Bank is an informal network of people that builds on their strengths and skills. The Time Bank recognises that everyone in our community has something to offer by helping others and themselves with a variety of tasks and activities. People are able to deposit time by volunteering in a variety of ways and are able to withdraw the time by receiving volunteer support. Examples include:

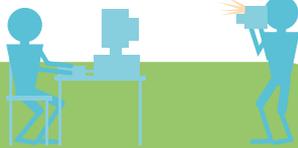
- a group who do garden tidy ups and in return receive support for community events
- a hairdresser who offers two free trims per month in exchange for an aromatherapy session and
- a single mother who takes a blind person shopping once per week to help develop her CV to work as a Carer.

Other opportunities to give can be found here –

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/community/volunteering/default.asp



Keep Learning



Learning can make you be more confident as well as being fun.

Learning is not necessarily about gaining qualifications.

Cook a new recipe; do a DIY project; take up a new hobby; visit a museum; take on a new responsibility.

Enrol in night school to learn a new language or a practical skill such as plumbing or horticulture.

Derbyshire Adult Community Education Services offer a range of courses across the county. These include courses that help you:

- return to learning
- gain a qualification
- learn with your family or for leisure
- live a greener life

Emma Yates used learning on a dry stone walling course to get her out of the office and working in the countryside.

In December 2013, after reading an article about a female dry stone waller, Emma booked herself onto a course at the Wirksworth Eco Centre. For the last 12 years she had been in a sedentary job, spending 9 hours a day at a computer. She was taking medication for back and stomach problems and migraines. She wanted to see whether she enjoyed walling and could make a living out of it. After the first day she was hooked.

Emma said "Being outdoors, walling lifted my heart, it was where I wanted to be. It was time to take my own wall down and rebuild it!"

In May 2014 she handed in her notice and launched a career as a dry stone waller. She no longer needs the medication, has lost weight and toned up, and now knows many more people in her local community.

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/adult_education/default.asp



Take Notice



Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling

What we do and the way we think can have the biggest impact on wellbeing.

Mindfulness is a direct knowing of what is going on inside and outside ourselves, moment by moment.

Savour the moment but also reflect on experiences to help you to realise what is important to you.

Yoga, tai-chi and meditation are what we usually associate with mindfulness but simple daily actions can contribute

- Break from the normal routine
- Take a different route to work
- Have lunch somewhere different
- Remark on the unusual
- Notice the changing seasons
- Be curious
- Catch sight of the beautiful



1 in 5 adults in Derbyshire report suffering from anxiety or depression

It has been estimated 993 women in Derbyshire in 2012 needed support with their mental health during pregnancy or the postnatal period.

Connect



Connect with people around you at home, work, school or the local community. Think of these connections as the cornerstone of your life and invest time in developing them.

Connecting with people through a shared interest despite busy lives can be rewarding.

A choir was started at Chesterfield Royal Hospital. Boasting around 50 members of staff, the aim was to support staff well-being and bring people together to create 'something special'. The Choir rehearsed over a ten week period, complete with a trained conductor and piano player, and performed at the hospital's annual staff recognition ceremony.

Ian Fretwell a nurse consultant who was instrumental in the Choir's inception, explained "We had terrific support from both the Charity Trustees and the Chief Executive. The Choir created a real sense of camaraderie between the group – and an enormous sense of wellbeing. This hasn't just been a singing group; we've learned a lot about ourselves and had a wonderful time."

If it isn't singing you are interested in then there are plenty of groups with common interests looking for new members.

https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/community/derbyshire_directory/categories/default.asp



If you want to know more about mental health and wellbeing click on [here](#) to go to The State of Mental Health in Derbyshire.

You can find out more about what happened as a result of my last Public Health Annual Report; A Fairer, Healthier Derbyshire 2014 [here](#)