

# Our Book of Wellbeing



**Simple Practical Ways to Beat Loneliness and Enjoy Life!**





# Our Mission

Abbeyfield Bristol and Keynsham has been providing housing for older people for 60 years. Established with the aim of tackling isolation and loneliness, our houses offer a warm community and a place to build new friendships later in life. Staying connected is so important for our wellbeing, that's why each of our houses brings residents together every day through mealtimes and house activities.

This book is based on the New Economics Foundations 5 ways of wellbeing.

# The Five Ways of Wellbeing

This little book has been created to share ideas that can help keep you connected and improve your wellbeing by offering tips and activities to boost your happiness.

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# Connect: The Power of People

We all need to feel close to people. As we get older, it can sometimes be easy to feel a little isolated, but staying connected to the people around us is one of the most powerful things we can do for our wellbeing. Think of it like a warm hug for your brain! Connection helps us feel valued, gives us support when we need it, and adds a lot of joy and laughter to our lives.



## Three simple ways for you to reach out and stay in touch with others:

- **Make a Phone Call:** Think of one person you haven't spoken to in a while. Don't worry about having a big topic; just say, 'I was thinking of you.'
- **Have a chat:** Events like 'chatty cafes' encourage people to get to know each other and can connect you with your local community. Age UK Bristol hosts regular Friends Ageing Better (FAB) Cafes across Bristol. You can reach out to them on 0117 929 7537 to find your local venue.
- **Find a Group:** There are plenty of groups and clubs across Bristol and Keynsham that local community groups host. For example, places like Hanham Community Centre offer fantastic group activities and Henleaze has a monthly film club – find out more at [henleazesociety.co.uk](http://henleazesociety.co.uk). Even if you just go once, you've done it.

## The Abbeyfield Connection:

Imagine having a built-in circle of friends and your very own little community to support you - That's what it's like at Abbeyfield. Our coffee mornings and mealtimes bring everyone together.

If you would like to join us for a cuppa and a chat, we'd love to have you!

Get in touch on 0117 973 6997





# Be Active: Movement Spark Joy

You don't need gym membership to get the benefit of being active! Simply moving your body, in whatever way you can manage, is incredibly important for both your physical and mental health. When you move, your body releases natural chemicals that help to boost your mood, reduce stress, and even help you sleep better.

## How could you be more active?

- **'Micro-Walk':** Put the kettle on, then walk to the end of your street and back before it boils.
- **Gentle Exercise:** Look up local Tai Chi or Chair Yoga classes. Many community centres offer them cheaply.
- **Get your hands dirty:** If you have a garden or balcony, spend 15 minutes weeding or watering. Bonus: Our houses often have beautiful, landscaped gardens like the one at our Keynsham house, and residents are welcome to help tend the raised beds!

## Get Abbeyfield Active:

We want everyone to remain active in later life so that's why our houses organise classes including seated yoga to dancing, so that residents can keep moving as little or as much as they like. You too can get Abbeyfield active from your own home by wiggling and waving along to your favorite song from the comfort of your chair!





# Take Notice: Enjoy the World Around You

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I like having the privacy of my own room but knowing that there is help if needed. The food is excellent and really good to have company.

– Happy Abbeyfield Resident

How often do you stop and really notice the small things? This is often called mindfulness, and it is about paying attention to the present moment, the sounds, the sights, the smells, and your own feelings.

It's about spotting a robin, tasting your tea properly, or appreciating the warmth of the sun. Doing this helps you to feel calmer and find richness in the everyday.

## Get out in the nature:

**At Abbeyfield Bristol & Keynsham we know how important outdoor spaces are for improving wellbeing, that's why we and our residents take pride in keeping the gardens maintained. If you're green fingered, get in touch with your local house, we'll always welcome more volunteers.**

## How can you focus on being calm?

- **People watch:** The next time you are waiting in a queue or looking out of your window, simply observe the people around you, their clothes, their expressions. Do this without judgement, just observe.
- **Practice mindful observation to help reduce stress and concentration:** Select a natural object from your environment such as a flower, leaf, or even a cloud. Spend a few minutes observing the object. Use all your senses to explore the object. You may notice your mind wandering, gently acknowledge these thoughts and bring your focus back to the object.
- **Try full-body breathing to promote calm and a sense of awareness:** Visualise your breath filling your entire body, from your toes to the top of your head. You can do this seated or lying down on your bed.



# Keep Learning: Use It or Lose It

## The Abbeyfield quiz that can keep you learning:

**Our Residents love a quiz and in Abbeyfield House, Keynsham, we're very lucky to have our very own 'quiz master', Pete. Every Thursday morning, he brings laughter and 'friendly' competition with his unique quiz and one liners!**

**Gather your friends and family and try our Pete's quiz at home! Open the camera on your mobile phone and hold it over the QR code below to download the quiz from our website.**



Did you know that your brain loves a challenge? Keeping Learning isn't about going back to school; it's about keeping your mind active, flexible, and interested in the world. Learning new things, no matter how small, can give you a wonderful sense of accomplishment, boost your self-confidence, and open up new ways of connecting with people.

It could be learning a new recipe, figuring out how to use a computer, or finally planting those rare tulips.

## How can you embrace that natural curiosity and discover a new passion?

- Visit your local library and pick up a book or magazine you'd never normally read. Our local libraries are a fantastic resource. Some areas offer mobile library services.
- You could ask a neighbour or family member to teach you one new thing on your phone or tablet. You could learn how to video call, for instance!
- Test yourself! Watching Countdown or University Challenge keeps you learning at home.



# Give: Nothing Feels Better Than Helping Others

**We all have something valuable to offer, and by giving back, we help both our community and ourselves. So, why not:**

- **Volunteer:** Call your nearest charity shop or food bank to see if they need support once a week.
- **Be a good neighbour:** Drop a note through a neighbour's door offering to collect a pint of milk next time you're out or offer to take a parcel if they are out.
- **It can be the small things:** Volunteering just 30 minutes of your time to help local community groups run a coffee morning or a chatty café can make a huge difference to you and those isolated in your community.

## Abbeyfield's built-in community:

At Abbeyfield, our residents are often the heart of the community, helping each other, chatting with our house manager, and making the house feel like home.

Every resident has a vital role to play here and it's those roles and willingness to help each other that builds our communities!





# The Honest Conversation: “What Does Independence Really Mean?”

The biggest barrier to a better life is often the fear of change. But what does “independence” really mean when you’re managing a home alone? When we are forced to handle everything ourselves, what does that life often cost us?

- **The Daily Burden/The Mental Load:** It’s not just the physical work of cleaning and gardening. It’s the constant worry about rising bills, handling unpredictable maintenance bills, and managing the endless stream of post and admin. All of this “life admin” can be a real burden, distracting you from the things you actually want to do.

- **The Empty Table:** Eating meals can be a lonely, feel like a chore, or sometimes skipped entirely. Shared mealtimes are one of the most natural ways to connect and laugh, and without them, the day can feel long and isolating.
- **The Worry of ‘What If?’:** When living alone, there is the constant, unspoken worry about what might happen if you slip, fall, or become unwell. Being truly isolated means asking: Who would know? This anxiety of being isolated in a crisis can really affect your confidence and limit your enjoyment of true independence.

## The Abbeyfield Answer: Choose a Better Independence

Abbeyfield Bristol and Keynsham offer supported, independent living, we’re not a care home. We encourage our residents to be as independent as possible but offer

support when it’s needed. It’s a place where you can offload the worries of running your own house and focus on the things you enjoy.

## Why choose Abbeyfield?

- All of our houses offer private, unfurnished apartments with en-suite and kitchenette.
- You don’t have to worry about the main chores. Delicious, home-cooked meals are provided in the communal dining room, and bills and maintenance of your flat are included in the monthly fees.
- You gain community. A friendly face is always nearby. You have a house manager for support and a lively social calendar to join if you want to.

## Our locations:

**Kift Lodge, Hanham**

**Abbeyfield House, Henleaze**

**Abbeyfield House, Redland**

**Abbeyfield House, Keynsham**



# Supporting Independence in Later Life.

## Your Next Steps

The No-Pressure Invite: We are so confident in the warm, friendly atmosphere of our houses that we want you to experience it for yourself—with no strings attached.

## Call us for a 'Proper Cuppa and a Chat.'

**What to Expect:** Forget the formal tour (unless you want one!).

We'll sit you down in our comfortable communal lounge with a cup of tea and a biscuit. You can just watch the world go by, chat to our existing residents, and see what a happy, connected home feels like.



0117 973 6997



43-49 Westbury Road, Henleaze,  
Bristol, BS9 3AU



abbeyfield-bristol.co.uk  
e-mail@abbeyfield-bristol.co.uk