



network of  
wellbeing

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2023



[www.networkofwellbeing.org](http://www.networkofwellbeing.org)



# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The Network of Wellbeing (NOW)'s vision is of people and the planet thriving together. We connect people, support projects and inspire action for the wellbeing of people and the planet. We do this through events, network-building, our retreat venue Eden Rise, and community projects, such as our Share Shed – a mobile library of things.

2023 was a year of challenges but also transition. We revised our strategic goals and began to develop a clearer sense of our mission. We worked harder to generate income so we can offer more to our beneficiaries.

We're proud of what we've achieved in the year, including:

- our six-week online *Wellbeing for Changemakers* programme;
- the Share Shed's weekly service to seven towns in south Devon;
- the ShareFest we ran in Totnes and the WoolFest we co-hosted in Buckfastleigh;
- that 1100 people attended 57 separate retreats at our retreat venue, Eden Rise.

Now, as a new year begins, we're keen to improve our offer so that we can build wellbeing even more effectively in the years to come.

Thank you for all your support,

*Roger Higman*

**ROGER HIGMAN**

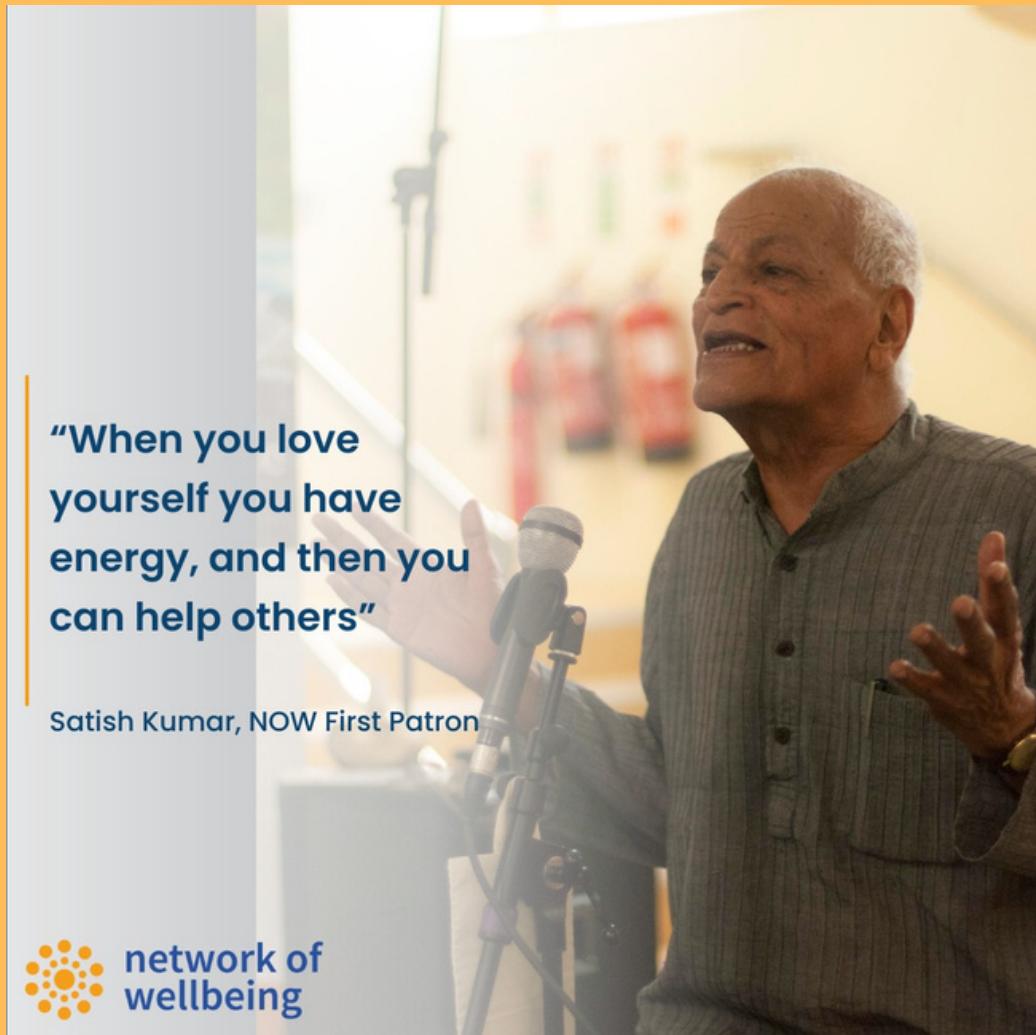
**DIRECTOR, NETWORK OF WELLBEING**



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**“When you love  
yourself you have  
energy, and then you  
can help others”**

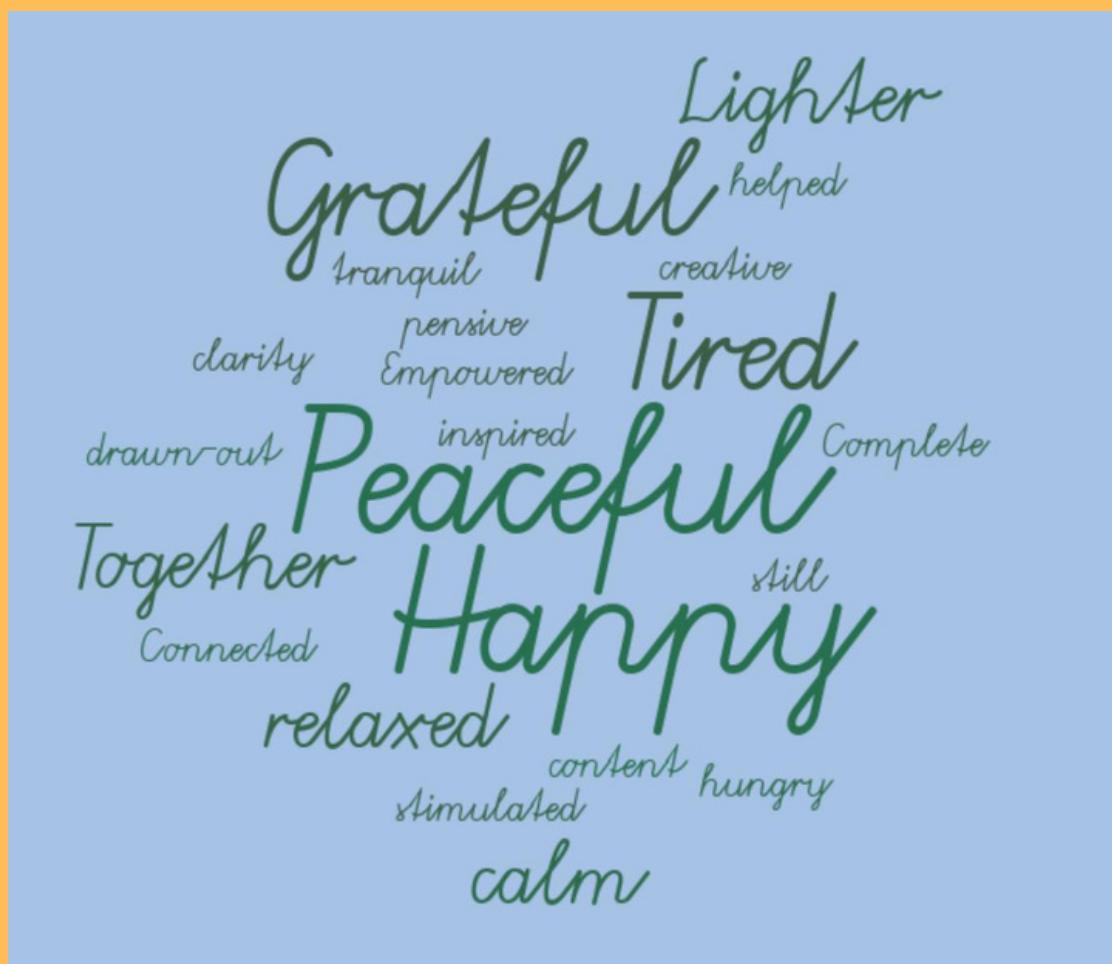
Satish Kumar, NOW First Patron

 **network of  
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# WELLBEING FOR CHANGEMAKERS

Wellbeing for Changemakers was a six-week online programme run in partnership with Melissa Noble of the [Academy of Wide-hearted Living](#), and with support from the [National Lottery Community Fund](#). It explored the benefits that simple creative practices such as mindfulness, meditation, physical activity and even doodling can have in managing stress and preventing burnout.

Over 150 people registered to attend some or all of the sessions. Feedback was positive with respondents awarding the sessions 4.5/5. Every respondent said that they'd recommend the sessions to a friend. Compilations of participants' What Three Words? responses (see below) showed the improvement in mood by the end of each session.



**We'd like to thank everyone who attended our Wellbeing for Changemakers Programme.**

# ONLINE COMMUNITY

The Network of Wellbeing connects a community from all over the UK and beyond. Its followers have a passion for wellbeing, and many work professionally in wellbeing related activities – as sole traders or in charities, schools, the NHS, local authorities and the private sector.

From surveys, we know that our community takes a broad view of wellbeing, combining an interest in their own happiness with concern for others and the planet on which we all depend.

“

BEING WITH PEOPLE WITH SIMILAR VALUES  
AND BELIEFS FEELS AWESOME AND INSPIRING

JULIA (WEBINAR PARTICIPANT)

“

I ONLY DISCOVERED THE NETWORK OF  
WELLBEING IN SEPTEMBER AND AM SO  
IMPRESSED BY THE OFFERINGS

(SURVEY RESPONDENT)

“

ONLINE EVENTS HAVE BEEN GREAT AND SOCIAL  
MEDIA POSTS ARE QUICK AND EASY TO READ

NICKY (MEMBER OF NOW'S ONLINE COMMUNITY)

In 2023, we maintained our reach and engagement through our online and social media communities, consisting of thousands of people, all over the UK and beyond:



6,500 ON FACEBOOK  
+ 712 ON OUR BUILDING WELLBEING  
TOGETHER GROUP



731 ON LINKEDIN



18,700 ON X



755 ON YOUTUBE



2,116 ON INSTAGRAM



5099 VIA NEWSLETTER



Share Shed Members

## SHARE SHED - A LIBRARY OF THINGS

This pioneering project offers over 350 items such as tools, camping and gardening equipment, household appliances, and much more, for people to borrow at low cost, on a weekly basis.

Travelling in its bespoke van, a real 'shed on wheels', this initiative in south Devon helps people save money, storage space and reduce waste as well as general consumption.

Along with promoting access over ownership, and promoting collaboration, the Share Shed hosts a range of repair and skillshare events in order to further support the wellbeing of people and the planet.

## In 2023, the Share Shed project celebrated:

- **Serving seven locations** in our **weekly** route: Ashburton, Dartington, Ivybridge, Totnes, South Brent, Kingsbridge and Buckfastleigh
- **635 new members** (2,571 since opening)
- **1,169 loans** (4,707 since opening)
- A **Pop-Up Sale** in Totnes that rehomed 90+ pre-loved items, and raised £500+ for our project
- A **ShareFest event in Totnes** that ran in collaboration with 40+ projects. More than 700 people attended
- A **WoolFest event in Buckfastleigh** in collaboration with the Wholly Nanas. More than 250 people attended
- Participation on a **Decarbonising Programme**, furthering our commitment to making the Share Shed a net-zero project
- Participation in **10+ outreach events**
- Extended our **team of volunteers** in South Devon to 21 kind people



SHARE SHED IS A GREAT WAY TO SAVE A FEW QUID AS WELL AS REDUCING OUR RESOURCE CONSUMPTION

ANNA (SHARE SHED MEMBER)

YOUR SERVICE IS MUCH APPRECIATED. ALSO SAVE BUYING AN EXPENSIVE ITEM YOU MAY ONLY USE ONCE A YEAR.

BOB (SHARE SHED MEMBER)



ShareFest Totnes 2023

## SHAREFEST, IN TOTNES

On 29th April 2023 we hosted our second ShareFest at the Civic Hall, in Totnes (Devon). This free day festival aimed to celebrate and promote sharing, repairing, swapping and making.

Collaborating with over 40 regional projects, this event showcased the wealth of initiatives that support our communities to be better connected, while being more skillful and sustainable.

The 700+ attendees had an opportunity to get broken items (including electrical gadgets, bicycles and clothes) repaired, sharpen tools, upcycle pieces of fabric into beeswax food wrap and reusable hand bags, swap seeds, plants, school uniforms and skills, enjoy taster massage sessions, fruitful conversations, delicious food as well as singing sessions, and learn about so many local and useful service providers.



WoolFest Buckfastleigh 2023

## WOOLFEST, IN BUCKFASTLEIGH

In partnerships with the Wooly Nanas, on 9th July 2023 we hosted our first WoolFest at Orchard Millenium Green, in Buckfastleigh (Devon). This free and family-friendly event aimed to revive the importance and value of working with wool, a sustainable, natural material.

While celebrating Buckfastleigh as an 'Ancient Woollen Town', the 250+ attendees had an opportunity to learn about and try out spinning, weaving, felting and dyeing as well as watch expert makers practice their crafts.



Eden Rise - set in the beautiful green Devon countryside

## OUR RETREAT VENUE, EDEN RISE

Our much loved residential retreat centre, located on the outskirts of Totnes in South Devon, thrived with activity in 2023. Available for hire all year round, we provide a sanctuary for wellbeing-related events, workshops and training. We continually strive to make our space as sustainable and green as possible – the building runs on solar and wind energy suppliers, our onsite borehole provides fresh filtered water, and we recycle, upcycle and compost onsite.

We look forward to welcoming more local, national and international guests to our haven for wellbeing.

## During 2023 we have:

- Welcomed **57 wellbeing retreats**
- Hosted approximately **1100 guests**
- Developed a **partnership programme**
- Offered a **tranquil space** for a wide range of activities, such as: yoga and singing, psychotherapy training, mindful living, movement and dance, addiction recovery, breathwork, self development, Zen and Buddhist meditations, pregnancy and family workshops, and respite services for refugees and young careers
- Created a **new calendar system for 2025 onwards**
- Bid farewell to Milton, our dedicated volunteer of six years



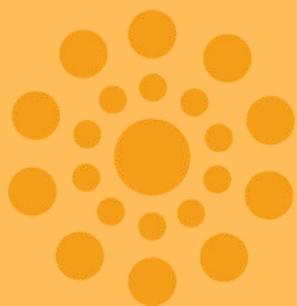
Feedback from an Eden Rise guest - 2023



Network of Wellbeing's staff and trustees at Eden Rise - Feb.2023

## THANK YOU

We would like to say a huge thank you to all those who have supported and engaged with our work over 2023, including those who have volunteered with us, supported us financially, attended our events, borrowed items from the Share Shed, used our Eden Rise venue, followed our work online, or generally engaged with wellbeing for people and the planet. We look forward to continuing to connect with you throughout 2024. Thank you again for being a part of this journey with us.



# network of wellbeing

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