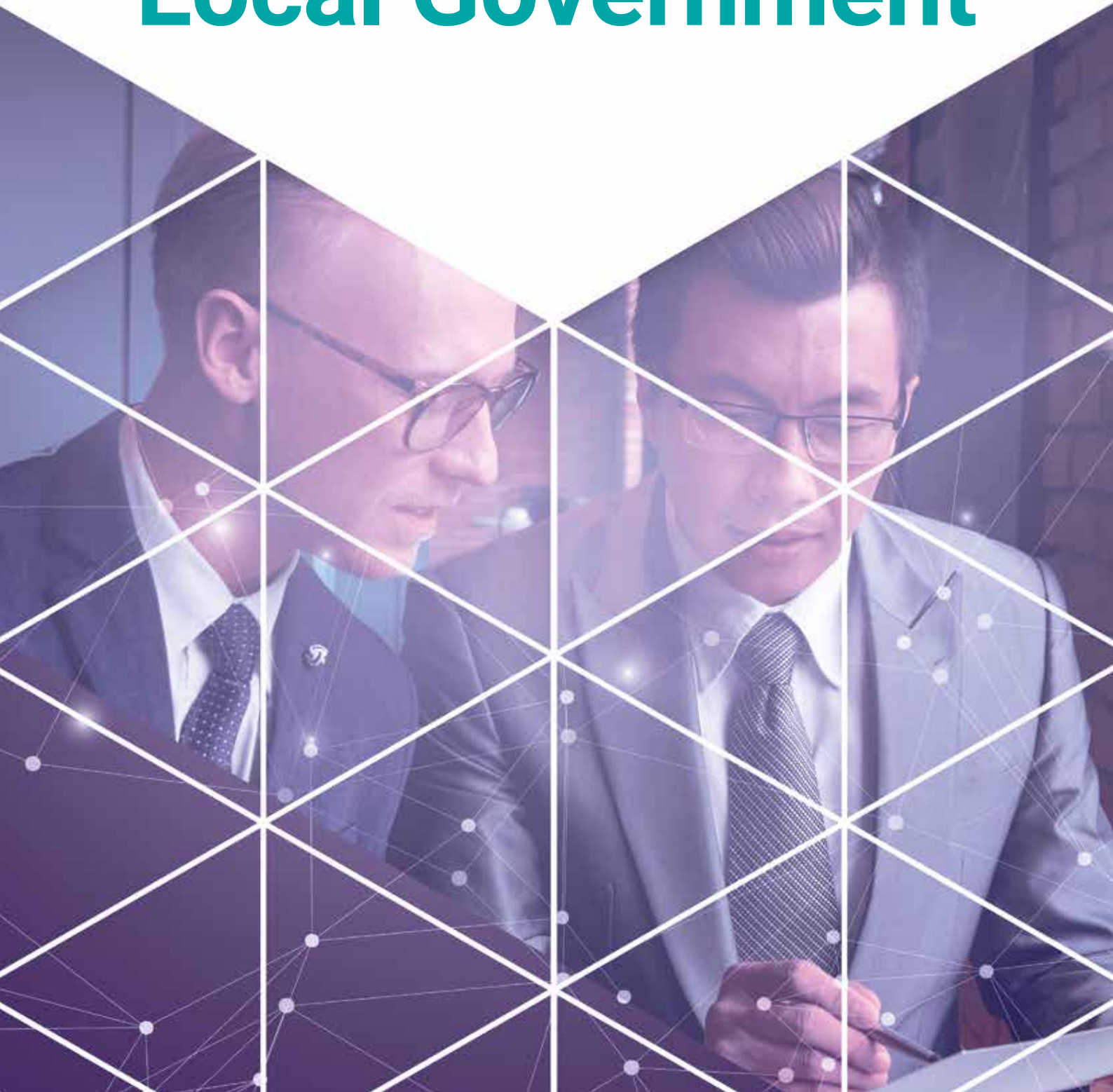


**TeamWorks**  
Improving Psychological Safety

# Local Government



## Wellbeing Works.

We are specialists in creating work environments that enable your people to Thrive. Using data-driven analysis and evidence-based solutions to help organisations achieve optimal performance by improving employees' wellbeing.

Our work is based upon the validated research carried out by Hamish Moore, the founder of Wellbeing Works and creator of our Team Works and Board Works tools. We are a team of established workplace wellbeing experts.

Our expert team, work across the public, private and third sectors. Our approach is to analyse your workplace needs, design and implement interventions to create responsible and nurturing work environments in which your employees Thrive.

We understand that *'one size does not fit all,'* your organisation is unique, and we believe your biggest asset is your people. Your organisations success is inherently linked to the capacity of your employees to Thrive. The ideal approach to wellbeing in the workplace depends on your organisation, your teams and your individual employees. We help organisations achieve optimal performance and employee wellbeing. We provide practical, effective and easy-to-adopt solutions, specific to your company's needs.

Our holistic approach to wellbeing in the workplace examines a range of key elements and looks at the bigger picture to ensure we offer solutions and advice that will work for you.

Central to our belief, workplaces need to be Psychologically safe...

## What Is Psychological Safety?

*Psychological Safety exists when there is no avoidable Psychological harm, for teams to function effectively they need to have a high level of Psychological Safety.*

Psychological harm occurs when the actions and behaviours of others or the culture of the workplace negatively impacts on an individual's Psychological Wellbeing<sup>1</sup>.

The focus is upon 'avoidable harm' rather than any harm. The nature of work may well involve team members dealing with difficult, demanding and rapidly changing situations or events. Clearly these are inherent in the nature of the work. The focus therefore must be on those aspects which can either be avoided or minimised in their impact upon your team.

Psychological Safety is about creating environments where staff can Thrive at work. That is to say, where staff are able to give of their best, exercise good judgement and decision making, enjoy their work, feel valued and appreciated, challenged and stretched appropriately, supported by line managers and colleagues and where it is safe to have and express an alternative opinion and it is also safe to ask for help from others, including managers<sup>2</sup>.

In environments where Psychological Safety does not exist or it is low, then it is unlikely that the team will perform optimally. In these situations, a team can be described as Hiving or Surviving.

The risk of low levels of Psychological Safety can often be seen in teams failing to optimise their talent, not achieve their purpose, objectives or targets.

They sometimes display dysfunctional behaviours and work poorly with other teams. These teams often have above average absence levels, low levels of engagement, high staff turnover levels where alternative jobs are available. Furthermore, creativity and good ideas are not encouraged, errors and mistakes become more frequent<sup>3</sup>.

## Actions & Behaviours

Adoption of the framework generates practical progress; managers take actions which will improve the work environment:

- ❖ Higher concentration levels
- ❖ Fully engaged workforce
- ❖ Creating openness to challenge
- ❖ Low presenteeism
- ❖ Higher levels of integrity
- ❖ Equity of work distribution
- ❖ Lower absence levels
- ❖ Greater focus

The framework allows rapid, practical progress to be made.

***"Staff Wellbeing is directly linked to organisational success, measuring Wellbeing is fundamental to improving the work environment"***

**Professor Dame Carol Black**

## Why Work With Us?

We look to work with organisations who want to:

- ❖ Improve the overall wellbeing of your workforce.
- ❖ Increase performance and productivity.
- ❖ Create a psychologically safe workplace.

This will significantly impact your organisation by:

- ❖ Reducing sickness absence.
- ❖ Reducing staff turnover.
- ❖ Reducing recruitment and training costs.
- ❖ Improving staff morale.
- ❖ Improving company reputation.

### REFERENCES:

<sup>1</sup> Amy Edmundson, Harvard Business School 1999, 2003 and 2018

<sup>2</sup> Google, Project Aristotle (Re-Work), 2014

<sup>3</sup> Dame Carol Black and David Frost, CBI Report on Wellbeing at Work, 2013 and Thriving at Work Report, Stevenson and Farmer 2017

# TeamWorks

Improving Psychological Safety

Team Works is an innovative diagnostic reporting tool that can measure your Team's Wellbeing and Psychological Safety. An easy to answer, anonymous, online survey is completed by all Team members, in return, you will receive a comprehensive report which includes recommended interventions to improve your Team's performance.

## Features & Benefits

### Features

- ❖ Key focus is on the work environment and culture.
- ❖ Independently Researched and independently Validated in peer review journals.
- ❖ All survey answers are anonymous.
- ❖ Widely used across a range of sectors.
- ❖ Complete the Team Works survey in less than 3 minutes.
- ❖ Reports accessed at the touch of a button and can be viewed during the survey period.
- ❖ Identifies practical recommendations for improvements.
- ❖ Identify where training and development is needed in the organisation.

### Benefits

- ❖ Identifies levels of Psychological Safety and Wellbeing Risks.
- ❖ Guaranteed return on investment with improved productivity levels (when recommended Interventions are implemented).
- ❖ Prioritises and recommends actions for improvement.
- ❖ Generates effective teamwork.
- ❖ Delivers improvements in service and quality.
- ❖ Delivers increased staff attendance and retention levels.
- ❖ Demonstrates good governance and employer of choice credibility.
- ❖ Easy to re-run the survey in 3, 6 or 12 months to compare, monitor and measure improvements.
- ❖ Recommendations are practical and easy to follow.

### Validation

#### Well-Being Insight

A 5-year research project with Newcastle University developed the questions identifying the components of Thriving, Hiving and Surviving® at work.

The statistical validation of our original research was by Professor John Matthews, an eminent Medical Statistician.

Further validation of this research was provided by peer review (Vendrig and Schaafsma) in the Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation 2018.

Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health 2020

## The Well-Being Insight In Detail

### Thriving Teams

Thriving teams enjoy coming to work, have a positive outlook, adopt proactive thinking, are collaborative and productive and produce high quality work because work demands are sustainable, autonomy levels are appropriate for team members, challenges tasks and skills are broadly in balance, work relationships are constructive, supportive and value driven. Managers pre-empt Psychological Harm.

### Hiving Teams

Teams that display Hiving characteristics are likely to be working very hard but not achieving the full benefits of that effort. Work systems may not be effective. Duplication of effort is common and individuals are often not valued for their contribution. Work relationships are not always team focused and team members often go home tired and exhausted. Productivity is often impaired and mistakes can occur.

### Surviving Teams

Surviving teams struggle to function optimally. Individuals may be present at work but not able to give their best. Decision making may be impaired because team members find it hard to focus or concentrate. Levels of support from colleagues or managers may at best be modest. Many team members may be thinking of finding another job. Frequently there are poor levels of recognition for contribution either by colleagues or by managers. High absence levels are common. Productivity is impaired.

**Team Works provides an overall Thriving, Hiving and Surviving® score in relation to a team's overall level of Psychological Safety.**



### Compassionate Mind Model

Further analysis is provided utilising the Compassionate Mind Model created by Professor Paul Gilbert.

We can identify which aspects of the work environment warrant your attention. We provide an insight into the relative impacts: Content of the work; the volume, variety and pace of work; the levels of perceived stress staff report.

We then consider if the conduct and behaviour of leaders, managers and colleagues or the capability and capacity of individuals to cope with their work environment is having the greater impact.

This approach based on sound psychological theory and practice, allows you to have confidence in the analysis and value of the practical recommendations provided.

## Local Government...

Local governments face an unprecedented list of demands; they are expected to work in partnership with other agencies, stakeholder expectations continue to rise, resources are stretched with unprecedented cuts to funding whilst the demands on services increase.

Many authorities who have managed this challenge well; are now finding that the pace, scale and depth of change is so significant that staff are finding it increasingly difficult to function effectively. Employee relationships, recruitment and retention are causing increasing concern for government officials.

Given that many authorities have large staffing costs, proactively managing the Psychological Safety and Wellbeing of employees is increasingly being recognised and becoming a strategic priority; absence, presenteeism and productivity levels are now vital for leaders to control and manage.

Managing increasing customer expectations is adding significant pressure, local authorities are having to change their relationships with customers to better manage demands. There has to be a focus on best outcome-based value, balancing short and long term strategies whilst creating openness and transparency to the public on how authorities are working towards reaching their goals as spending constantly faces scrutiny.



Adult social care is amongst the most pressured environments often dealing with complete and challenging cases within tight financial resources. Balancing case load levels against skill levels and risk presents challenges for team leaders and managers.

Measurement of psychological safety allows you an insight into characteristics where employees feel:

- ❖ Included
- ❖ Safe to learn
- ❖ Safe to contribute
- ❖ Safe to challenge the status quo

All without fear of being embarrassed, marginalized or punished in some way

The value of collecting this data has provided local government teams tangible insights and practical recommendations to enhance the level of psychological safety, they have reduced staff turnover, attracted new staff, they are able to provide a higher quality service to clients and maintain staff moral in the most challenging of environments.

### Case Study - Darlington Borough Council



*“Over a 6-month period we increased the level of Thriving in our teams from 26.44% to 51.4% which has resulted in our teams being able to function more effectively without increasing our resourcing levels. The service we received from Wellbeing Works was first class, responsive, professional and practical – a great result for us.”*

**Christine Shields**, Assistant Director for Adult and Children's Services, Darlington Borough Council

## Team Works Can Help!

We have a range of options available:

- ❖ Become a certified Team Works partner and run Team Works surveys in-house at your convenience.
- ❖ Enlist our services, we will set-up the surveys, feedback the results, design and implement bespoke interventions.
- ❖ We will also deliver your results to the Board in a presentation, with question and answer session, if required.



# TeamWorks

Improving Psychological Safety

For further information about Team Works or becoming a Team Works partner please contact:

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**Other tools available from Wellbeing Works:**



**Wellbeing Works, 198 Heaton Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 5HP | [www.well-being-works.co.uk](http://www.well-being-works.co.uk)**

**Linked  Wellbeing Works**