



Until now it has been a challenge to find a simple, yet credible and robust way to value general improvements in mental health within social impact analysis.

This ground-breaking research analysed national datasets to reveal the relationship between mental health and overall quality of life, or wellbeing. This analysis measured mental health using responses to the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS).

In partnership with Simerica, we have developed new wellbeing values that can be used to assess the value of the movement between any two points in the (short) WEMWBS scale. It is now possible to measure and value improvements in mental health in a way that is consistent with the existing Social Value Bank.

Establishing a greater understanding of the wellbeing value of improvements in mental health is a hugely valuable addition to the Social Value Bank. The new values broaden the set of tools available to enable a deeper understanding of the impact of a range of community interventions to both housing providers and others working with communities.

#### Who can use the new values?

- Those who **deliver mental health interventions** can use the values as a measure to understand and communicate their social value.
- Those who **make or influence policy decisions** can use the values to better understand the impact of mental health problems on individuals and the difference effective interventions can make.



#### Background

HACT has already made the link between wellbeing and social value by producing the Social Value Bank with Simerica, using the **wellbeing valuation approach**. Over 90 outcomes have been valued based on their relationship with life satisfaction. To do this, we analysed large national datasets to identify how people's wellbeing correlated to other aspects of their life, including employment status, financial inclusion, health, and feelings about their neighbourhood.

Despite updates and new values added to the Social Value Bank, mental health was previously covered by only a few values. Nevertheless, the outcome with by far the largest value in the Social Value Bank is *'relief from depression or anxiety'* at £36,766.

This reveals that mental health has a huge impact on overall wellbeing, but the use of this value is limited as it can only be applied if an individual's depression or anxiety is completely resolved. An intervention may improve an individual's mental health but may not go as far as to ensure recovery from depression or anxiety, and previously this improvement would have been missed. These new values enable us to value more gradual improvements in mental wellbeing.

Based on work funded by:



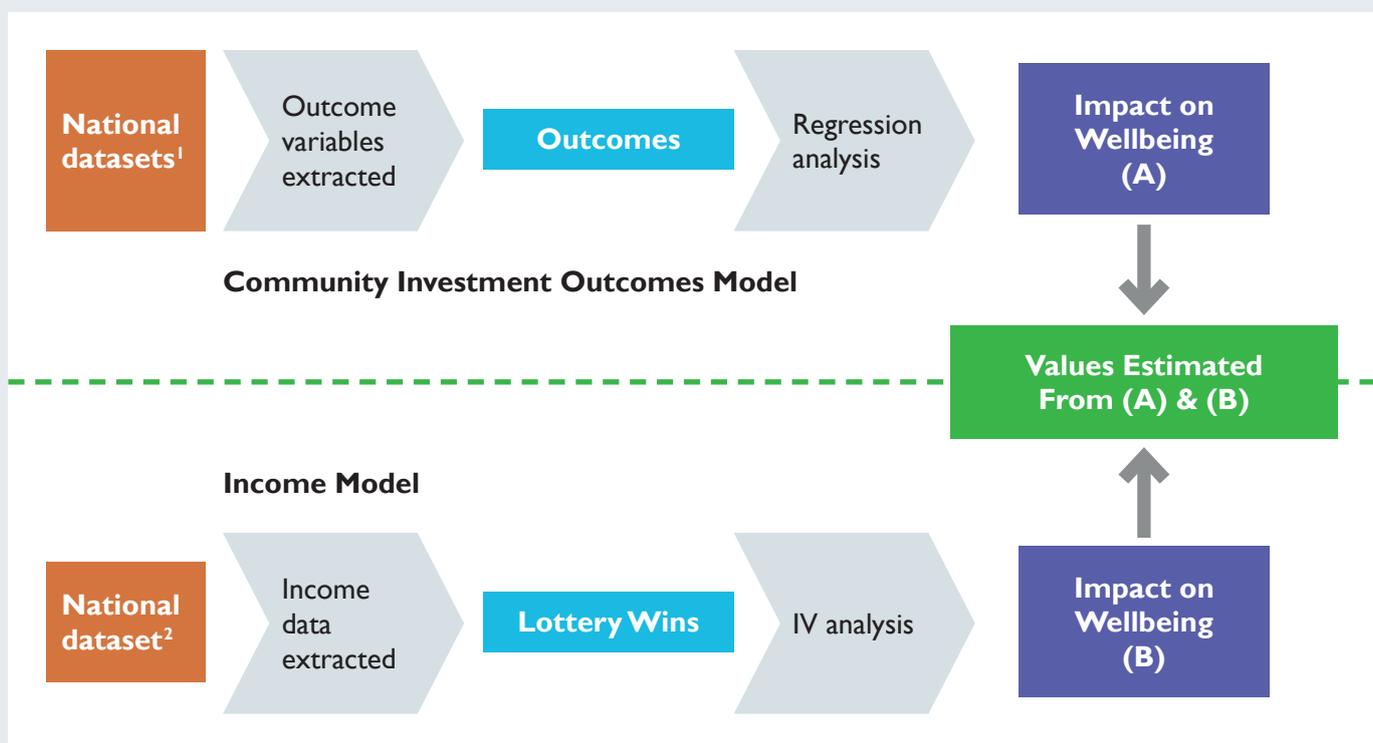
# What is wellbeing valuation?

Wellbeing valuation is the latest thinking in social impact measurement and features in HM Treasury Green Book, a guidance document for evaluation within Government.

The wellbeing valuation approach analyses people's self-reported wellbeing, e.g. how satisfied they are with their life on a scale of 0-10, and how this changes due to different life circumstances. Analysis reveals the impact of various outcomes (e.g. feeling belonging to the neighbourhood)

on life satisfaction and calculates the amount of money that would produce the equivalent impact on their life satisfaction.

For example, we may find that on average feeling belonging to the neighbourhood moves the average person 1 point up the 0-10 life satisfaction scale (having controlled for other factors). The data also reveals that an extra £3,753 also moves people 1 point up the same scale, giving us a monetary value for feeling belonging to the neighbourhood.



The wellbeing valuation approach is a good fit for this work as we can draw on people's lived experience of mental health, both good and bad, captured through their responses to WEMWBS and reveal how this impacts on their overall wellbeing, captured through their reported life satisfaction. Both of these measures are included in the national dataset, Understanding Society, so this was the focus of our analysis.



1. British Household Panel Survey: [www.iser.essex.ac.uk/bhps](http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/bhps)  
 Understanding Society: [www.understandingsociety.ac.uk](http://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk)  
 Crime Survey for England & Wales: [www.crimesurvey.co.uk](http://www.crimesurvey.co.uk)  
 2. British Household Panel Survey: [www.iser.essex.ac.uk/bhps](http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/bhps)

## What is WEMWBS?

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) is a list of 14 positively worded statements with five response categories designed to measure different aspects of positive mental health. The short form of WEMWBS (SWEMWBS) uses 7 of the statements scored on the same scale and is the version we have drawn on in this work.

The SWEMWBS questions meet various statistical tests of robustness and the scale has been academically validated. WEMWBS and SWEMWBS have been widely used in the UK and elsewhere, including in the Health Survey for England, the Scottish Health Survey, and the Department of Health's Public Health Outcomes Framework.

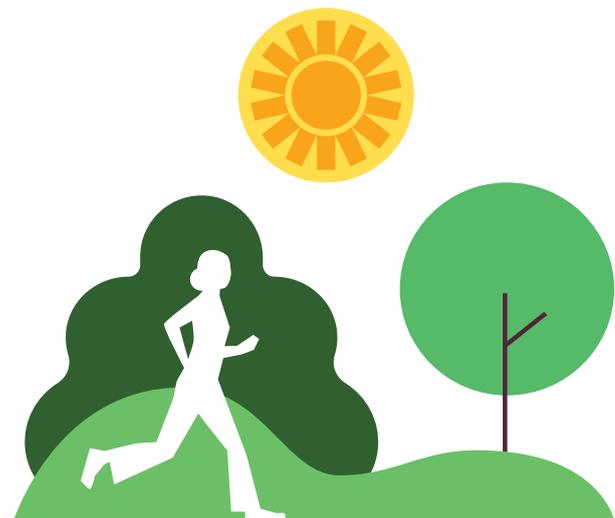
## The Short WEMWBS (SWEMWBS)

Statements	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
I've been dealing with problems well	1	2	3	4	5
I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	1	2	3	4	5

Respondents select a response for each of the statements. The scores for each statement (between 1-5) are added together to produce the overall score for each respondent.

The growing popularity of WEMWBS is driven by its academic rigour, credibility with and relevance to health audiences, and its ease of use. It has met the increasing demand for a good, practical way to measure mental wellbeing.

WEMWBS has played a key role in making mental health interventions tangible and credible to commissioners and influenced increased investment in mental health initiatives.



# The new SWEMWBS values and how to apply them

As with the existing Social Value Bank, the wellbeing valuation method was used to value movements on the SWEMWBS scale. These values represent the additional money, the average individual would need to improve their wellbeing, which is the same amount as the improvement in their SWEMWBS score.

Category	Overall SWEMWBS score	Full model value
1	7-14	£0
2	15-16	£9,639
3	17-18	£12,255
4	19-20	£17,561
5	21-22	£21,049
6	23-24	£22,944
7	25-26	£24,225
8	27-28	£24,877
9	29-30	£25,480
10	31-32	£25,856
11	33-34	£26,175
12	35	£26,793

## How to apply the values

We recommend that organisations delivering community based programmes conduct a proper evaluation with a control group to calculate the causal impact of the programme on the SWEMWBS score. If this is not possible, the second-best approach is to ask project participants to respond to the SWEMWBS statements before and after an intervention and record the total score (ranging from 7-35) for each person at both points.

1. Subtract the *before* value from the *after* value and subtract 27% as deadweight (see definition of deadweight below).
2. Sum the resulting values for all the participants to calculate the **total social impact**.
3. Minus the total costs to deliver the intervention from the total social impact to reveal the **net social impact**.

## What is deadweight?

As with all social impact measurement you will witness changes that would have happened anyway regardless of any specific intervention, known as deadweight. In the existing Social Value Bank, we ensure this is considered and discounted in a standard way using average deadweight figures from the HCA's Additionality Guide.

This states that **27%** of people experiencing a health improvement would have achieved it anyway. This proportion must also be subtracted from application of the new SWEMWBS values to prevent overclaiming. See examples overleaf.

## What is the relationship with values in the Social Value Bank?

The SWEMWBS measure should not be used to measure social impact in combination with values from the Social Value Bank. This is because SWEMWBS measures mental wellbeing and the values for the outcomes in the Social Value Bank already incorporate the impact on mental wellbeing (for instance, a person who gains employment is also likely to have lower anxiety and a person who dances frequently is likely to experience less stress due to increases in physical exercise).

Adding the SWEMWBS values and the Social Value Bank outcome values would lead to double counting. The SWEMWBS values should therefore be seen as an alternative to the outcomes values in the Social Value Bank. Organisations have the option of either measuring SWEMWBS and valuing the change in SWEMWBS or measuring the outcomes of a programme and valuing the outcomes in the Social Value Bank.

## Examples of how to apply the values

A couple in a flat were experiencing a neighbour noise issue. The neighbours played loud music each night preventing them from sleeping and ignored their pleas to stop. This carried on for months and caused them significant distress. One resident was signed off work with stress.

The housing provider intervened and resolved the issue, so the couple no longer had to endure the neighbour noise. The intervention costed £1,250.



	SWEMWBS 'before' score	Model value	SWEMWBS 'after' score	Model value
Tenant A	19	£17,561	24	£22,944
Tenant B	23	£22,944	26	£24,225

- After score model value - Before score model value  $\times$  (1-deadweight) = Per person social impact  
 Tenant A:  $\text{£}22,944 - \text{£}17,561 \times (1-0.27) = \text{£}3,929.59$       Tenant B:  $\text{£}24,225 - \text{£}22,944 \times (1-0.27) = \text{£}935.13$
- Tenant A social impact + Tenant B social impact = Total social impact  
 $\text{£}3,929.59 + \text{£}935.13 = \text{£}4,864.72$
- Total social impact – Total costs = Net social impact  
 $\text{£}4,864.72 - \text{£}1,250 = \text{£}3,614.72$

A resident in an end-terrace property hoarded materials to the point where it began to affect a retired neighbour. The neighbour was disturbed by the smell and vermin that resulted from the hoarding. This led to considerable anxiety and a reluctance to leave her property.

The housing provider worked with the tenant experiencing hoarding disorder and referred them to a specialist service involving counselling, which resulted in improvements solving the problem for the neighbour. The cost of the intervention was £3,500.

	SWEMWBS 'before' score	Model value	SWEMWBS 'after' score	Model value
Tenant	16	£9,639	22	£21,049

- After score model value - Before score model value  $\times$  (1-deadweight) = Per person social impact  
 $\text{£}21,049 - \text{£}9,639 \times (1-0.27) = \text{£}8,329.30$
- Total social impact = £8,329.30 (only one person is benefiting)
- Total social impact – Total costs = Net social impact  
 $\text{£}8,329.30 - \text{£}3,500 = \text{£}4,829.30$



## Next steps

Please visit [www.hact.org.uk](http://www.hact.org.uk) to access the full set of SWEMWBS values (including age and regional differentiated values), the methodology paper, and information on the development of associated tools to apply the values to your projects.

We will continue to develop guidance around the application of the values, particularly their relationship with the existing Social Value Bank.

If you have any questions, would like to know more about training or consultancy opportunities, or would like to discuss the possibility of developing new values, please contact: [info@hact.org.uk](mailto:info@hact.org.uk).

Please note – the new SWEMWBS values are covered by a creative commons license. For more information please refer to: [www.hact.org.uk/social-value-bank/licencing-information](http://www.hact.org.uk/social-value-bank/licencing-information).

We are grateful to Golding Homes, Mitie and Wellbeing People who commissioned the original work to develop the SWEMWBS values.



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[www.orbit.org.uk](http://www.orbit.org.uk)

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