



# **Annual Report**

# **2015**

Company Number 01806096  
Charity Number 295976

February 2016

# Our Mission

The Network of Wellbeing (NOW) enables people who are active on wellbeing, particularly at the community level, to talk to and work with each other.

Our vision is of a world where everyone's wellbeing needs are met within the planet's natural limits. By wellbeing we mean happy people, healthy communities and a sustainable planet. We believe that people's happiness depends in part on the health of the communities in which they live and work. This, in turn, depends on the fairness of society as a whole, and the long-term health of the natural world on which we all depend.

At the start of 2015, NOW reviewed its strategy, and set itself three new strategic aims:

- To build a network of people and organisations who are committed to the concept of holistic wellbeing.
- To co-create and promote activities that enable people to improve their wellbeing in ways that support the wellbeing of their community, society and the planet.
- To identify and implement actions or research to further the wellbeing agenda nationally and internationally.



Community Potluck in Totnes to celebrate International Day of Happiness 20th March 2015

# Building a network

## Exploring Wellbeing

NOW spreads awareness of wellbeing by inviting key thinkers and activists to contribute to its blog and by filming interviews for its website.

In 2015 we ran a series of blogposts, videos and events to mark International Day of Happiness, World Environment Day, Buy Nothing Day, and the COP21 Climate Change negotiations.

Issues highlighted included how nature can make you happy, the importance of connecting with others, the benefits of making and sharing and the role that political action has in enhancing wellbeing.

Prominent contributors in 2015 have included urban birder David Lindo, Jonathon Porritt, Dame Fiona Reynolds, Tony Juniper, stuffocation-author James Wallman, Caroline Lucas MP, Phillipe Sands QC, George Monbiot, Professor Sarah White of Bath University and Galgael Trust pioneer Alistair McIntosh.



David Lindo



Jonathon Porritt



Caroline Lucas MP



Alistair McIntosh



Professor Sarah White



George Monbiot

## Building wellbeing together



Alan Watson Featherstone

NOW brings people together by organising events of our own and by promoting events organised by others.

In Totnes we hosted public talks featuring rewilding pioneer Alan Watson Featherstone and the Bhutanese activist Drona Chedri.

In July we made a film of the University of Cumbria's *Leading Wellbeing Research Festival* at Brathay Hall.

In October, we sponsored and made a film of the annual *Resurgence Festival of Wellbeing* in London. We organised the second day for the festival, themed around "*Wellbeing in Action*".



*Leading Wellbeing Research Festival*



*Resurgence Festival of Wellbeing*



"Wellbeing in Action" workshop at *Resurgence Festival of Wellbeing*



# Wellbeing in the Community

## In Totnes...

NOW runs monthly community potlucks in Totnes where people come together to enjoy a shared meal. In March, over 300 people attended a special Potluck to celebrate International Day of Happiness, with the poet Matt Harvey and Totnes' Mayor Jacqui Hodgson.

In May, NOW launched the Totnes Wellbeing Fund, which gives seed grants to people and groups with great ideas to improve wellbeing locally. In 2015, beneficiaries included Follaton Forest Garden, the Castle Meadow Bee Group, Dangerous Dads, Gardening for Health, the Magic Dye House, Wild and Curious and Foxhole Community Garden.

We also ran regular events, including a Forage Walk for World Environment Day and stalls at the Mayor's Picnic and Totnes Pride.

We canvassed local opinion and visited Frome's share shop as part of a process to explore the potential to set up a share shop in Totnes.



Matthew Harvey & Jacqui Hodgson with Larch Maxey



Potluck on International Day of Happiness



Forage Walk on World Environment Day



Follaton Forest Garden Picnic



Frome Share Shop



Myrtle Cooper of Wild and Curious



Friends of the Earth Wellbeing Workshop, London

## ...and elsewhere

NOW helps people to develop and promote wellbeing activities outside Totnes. We are currently working with ten communities from Darlington to Plymouth. We have a partnership with Friends of the Earth to support community wellbeing workshops throughout the UK.

In August we organised the "*Wow your Community*" workshop for wellbeing professionals and activists from all over Devon, on how to use the Wheel of Wellbeing to get individuals and organisations interested in wellbeing locally.

In October, we hosted a workshop, using a *Design Thinking Methodology*, for residents in Whitleigh, Plymouth to learn more about what works for wellbeing in their community.



Design Thinking workshop, Plymouth



Design Thinking workshop, Plymouth



Wow your Community Workshop



Design Thinking workshop & Food Sharing Event, Plymouth



# The Changing Face of NOW

2015 was a year of big change for NOW.

In late 2014 we appointed Roger Higman to be our first Director.

In February, with Charities Commission approval, the former Environmental Research Association (ERA), which has managed NOW as a project, was renamed the Network of Wellbeing as an independent charity in its own right.

In October we said goodbye to the wonderful Ed Posey, who had served as an ERA trustee for many years and hello to two new trustees, Jane Acton and Stewart Wallis.

2015 also saw turnover in the staff team. Our interns Jesus Martin and Beth Thomas left us in the first half of the year, after excellent service. Later, in December, our wonderful Totnes Coordinator, Mirella Ferraz, left to have a baby. We were fortunate to be able to appoint Kate Reed and Kim Schilling as cover for her while she is away.

NOW currently enjoys the support of seven Trustees...

John Elford (chair)  
Margaret Woodward  
Stewart Wallis  
Satish Kumar

Nigel Woodward  
Bridget Norland  
Jane Acton

...and employs a team of six staff, all of whom are part time.

Roger Higman  
Florence Scialom  
Kate Reed

Larch Maxey  
Josh Malkin  
Kim Schilling



Roger Higman at the *Resurgence Festival of Wellbeing*



Kim Schilling



Kate Reed

# In 2016...



George Monbiot & Alan Watson Featherstone with Larch Maxey



Lorenzo Fioramonti

...the Network of Wellbeing plans to:

- host two big public talks, in January, by activists, George Monbiot and Alan Watson Featherstone, in Exeter and Plymouth;
- host a public talk in Totnes, in February, by the economist Lorenzo Fioramonti;
- support a week of wellbeing activities in the Isle of Man in February, in partnership with EcoVannin and Friends of the Earth;
- work with Exeter Community Initiatives to set up a Community Potluck in Exeter- and continue to run Potlucks in Totnes;
- celebrate International Day of Happiness and World Environment Day;
- share more inspiring and thought-provoking blog-posts and videos about wellbeing;
- decide by June whether and how to set up a Share Shop or Library of Things in Totnes;
- explore new ways to support wellbeing activities and projects outside Totnes;
- fund, in July, another tranche of Totnes wellbeing projects;
- host, in late Autumn, a national conference of wellbeing activists.



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