



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE



**Capabilities in Academic
Policy Engagement**



The Wellbeing Roundtable approach

A guide to creating effective wellbeing frameworks

We want economic growth for the region. But this can't come at the cost of other important things. Our health. Our relationships. Our homes. Our ability to participate as citizens. Our access to green spaces. Growth that damages these things isn't growth at all. And it isn't good for anyone.

So, we worked with a roundtable of experts to come up with an evidence based guide - which balances the social, economic, environmental, and democratic needs of our residents and region. The roundtable was enormously helpful by providing a diversity of thought and helping drive forward this ambitious programme of work.

This framework shapes everything we do – how we create policy, design programmes, spend public money, and use our democratic powers. It means we rightly focus on building a better life for people.

Mayor Jamie Driscoll



The existence of a wellbeing framework is not enough to ensure its use in decision making and its impact in policy implementation. The Wellbeing Roundtable approach shows clearly how collaborative, iterative and evidence-based ways of working, involving stakeholders from across government and society, are needed to put people's well-being at the heart of policy practice.

Katherine Scrivens, OECD



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Preface

The Wellbeing Roundtable approach was written for policy makers and practitioners who want to put wellbeing at the centre of decision making. It provides practical, evidence-based guidance to demystify the process of developing wellbeing measures and frameworks that change practice.

The guide is organised into two parts. The first half (pages 2-7) introduces the Wellbeing Roundtable approach, offering context, key definitions, an overview of the research methodology and a planning tool, the Wellbeing Framework Canvas. The second half (pages 8-16) provides detailed guidance and case studies to help readers with each of the nine steps involved in designing, delivering and implementing the findings of a Wellbeing Roundtable.

The Wellbeing Roundtable approach was written by Dr Max French (Northumbria University) and Ben Thurman (Carnegie UK), with assistance from Jennifer Wallace (Carnegie UK) and Dr Jill Wales (Northumbria University). It was designed by Alison Manson (Carnegie UK) and funded by Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement (CAPE) Collaboration Fund.

The content of the guide is informed by those who have already made this journey. We are indebted to the 39 members of our expert panel who helped develop the Wellbeing Roundtable approach by sharing lessons learned from eleven leading wellbeing frameworks. Among them are the following:

Bryan Smale (**Canadian Index of Wellbeing, Canada**); Vivienne Avery (**London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure, Greater London Authority**); Pétur Berg Matthíasson (**Indicators for Measuring Wellbeing, Iceland**); Dominick Stephens (**Living Standards Framework, New Zealand**); Amanda Bailey, Behnam Khazaeli, Ben Thurman, Laura Seebohm, Leigh Mills, Prof. Mark Shucksmith, Rhiannon Bearne (**Wellbeing Framework for the North of Tyne, North of Tyne Combined Authority**);

Aideen McGinley, David Sterling, Helen Johnston, John Woods, Quintin Oliver, Will Haire (**Programme for Government, Northern Ireland**); Eleanor Rees (**UK Measures of National Well-being Dashboard, Office for National Statistics**); Kate Scrivens (**Measuring well-being framework, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development**); Allan Campbell, Angus Hogg, Antony Clark, Prof. Duncan Maclennan, Jamie Livingstone, Prof. Jan Bebbington, Jennifer Henderson, Jimmy Paul, Sir John Elvidge, Paul Allin, Sarah Davidson, Shelagh Young, Tim Ellis (**National Performance Framework, Scotland**); Marie Brousseau-Navarro, Peter Davies (**Wellbeing of Future Generations, Wales**); Graham Long (**Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations**); Amanda Janoo, Liz Zeidler and Jennifer Wallace (multiple frameworks).

The Wellbeing Roundtable approach



*At the national level, **round-tables** should be established, with the involvement of stakeholders, to identify and prioritise those indicators that carry the potential for a shared view of how social progress is happening and how it can be sustained over time.'*

Final Report of the 2008 [Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress](#)

In February 2008, President of France Nicolas Sarkozy asked the economists Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen and Jean Paul Fitoussi to review how national progress could be measured beyond the narrow frame of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Since the publication of their report, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates more than half its member states have established national wellbeing frameworks to reorient policymaking toward our collective wellbeing.

However, while we understand better *what* to measure, there remains little practical guidance on *how* to construct and implement effective wellbeing measures and frameworks. Critical decisions - such as who to involve in framework design, which forms of evidence to gather and prioritise, how to meaningfully engage the public, and what institutional arrangements best promote implementation - are often taken without full awareness of possible options and likely outcomes.

That's why we are introducing the 'Wellbeing Roundtable' approach, the first end-to-end guidance for developing and embedding a wellbeing framework. It builds directly on the [Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report](#) recommendation, and draws on evidence from a detailed review of international practice and insight from the 39 members of our expert panel.

This guidance is for policy professionals and practitioners in government and other civic organisations. It includes practical support and flexible guidance to help navigate the critical decisions involved in creating or revising an effective wellbeing framework.

This guidance will help readers to:

- develop evidence-based, balanced and representative wellbeing frameworks
- take advantage of available tools and techniques to simplify the process, and
- maximise the potential of wellbeing frameworks to be implemented effectively in practice

The Wellbeing Roundtable approach

Preparation

Deliberation

Implementation



1. Assessing feasibility
2. Forming commitments
3. Recruiting stakeholders

4. Agenda setting and facilitation
5. Adapting a wellbeing model
6. Gathering statistical evidence
7. Engaging the public
8. Presenting the wellbeing framework

9. Supporting implementation

What is a Wellbeing Roundtable?

The 'Wellbeing Roundtable' is an end-to-end approach to constructing a wellbeing framework. This process takes practitioners through three stages:

- **Preparation:** Establishing the conditions for taking forward a Wellbeing Roundtable
- **Deliberation:** Gathering evidence, engaging stakeholders, and formalising a wellbeing framework
- **Implementation:** Transferring the final wellbeing framework to its responsible owners and using it to change practice

In the truest sense to the [Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report](#), this involves the creation of an independent multi-stakeholder 'roundtable' which meets regularly to take a wellbeing framework from ambition to action. In navigating 9 key steps on this journey practitioners are guided on how to build effective partnerships; engage the public in meaningful deliberation; and keep focused throughout on the ultimate implementation and usage of the wellbeing framework.

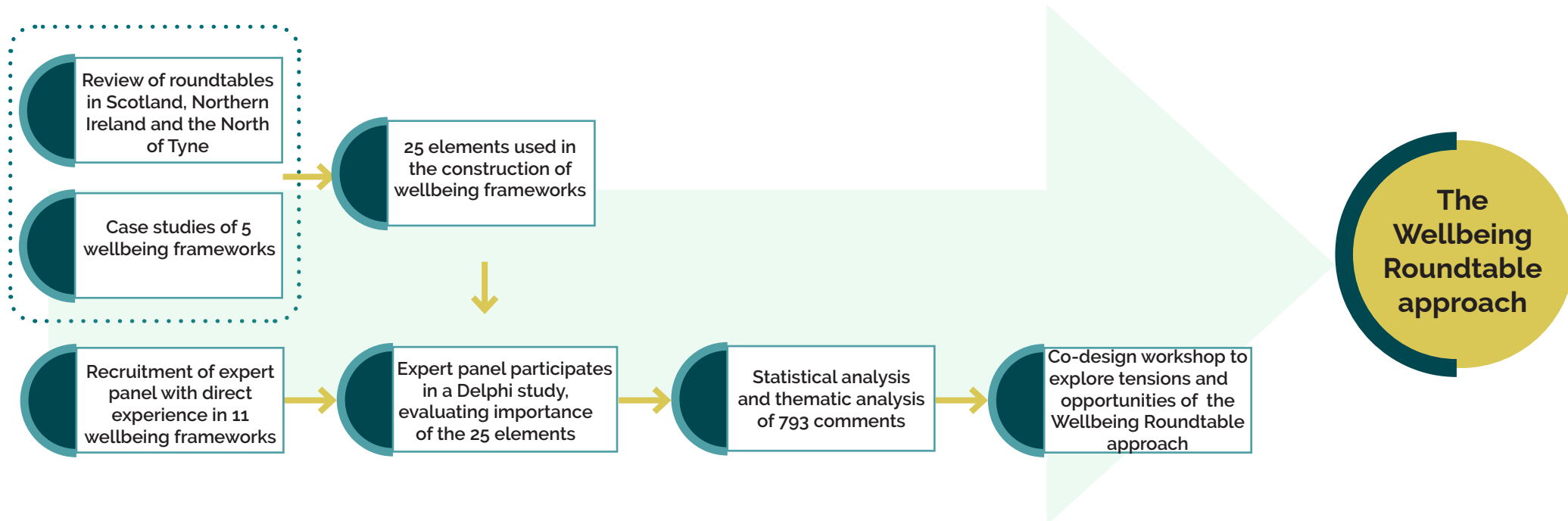
However, we recognise not every organisation can, or should, follow a step-by-step approach to the letter. We have developed a Wellbeing Roundtable Canvas to help readers adapt this guidance to their own distinctive contexts.

Whether adopting or adapting this guidance, the Wellbeing Roundtable approach focuses on the key decisions which determine whether a wellbeing framework attracts the support of stakeholders, becomes credible and authoritative, and ultimately shapes policy and delivery.

How was the Wellbeing Roundtable approach developed?

Carnegie UK have undertaken three Wellbeing Roundtables: in [Scotland](#) in 2011 (in partnership with the Sustainable Development Commission in Scotland), [Northern Ireland](#) in 2015, and the [North of Tyne](#) in England in 2021. Alongside this first-hand experience, the Wellbeing Roundtable approach builds on a collaborative research project undertaken between Northumbria University and Carnegie UK, which involved a review of international practice and a multi-round Delphi study of expert opinion. The research contributions are summarised in the diagram on page 5.

Research contributions to the Wellbeing Roundtable approach



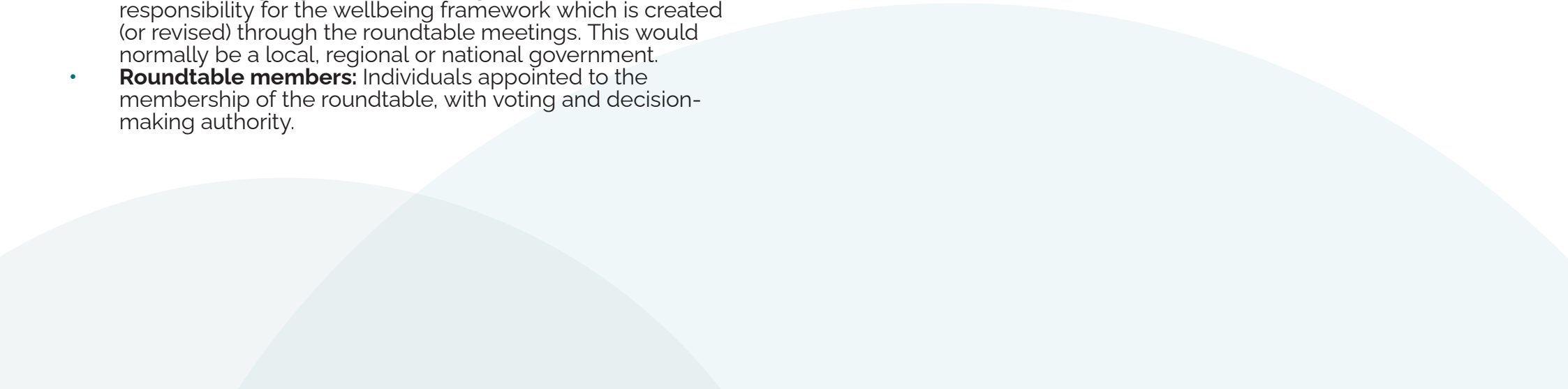
How to use this guidance

This guidance can be used as a step-by-step model or adapted to fit the context and requirements of any wellbeing journey.

Pages 8-16 present evidence-based guidance for navigating each of the 9 key steps involved, drawing heavily from the insight from our expert panel. Each section lays out key options, recommendations and case studies to help inform decision making.

Page 7 introduces the 'Wellbeing Roundtable Canvas': a self-reflection tool for policy teams and other actors to help strategise, plan and manage their own individualised wellbeing journeys. Interested practitioners can move between the Wellbeing Roundtable Canvas and the evidence-based guidance for each step to develop an approach tailored to their own context.

The following sections use some technical language to describe key roles involved in a Wellbeing Roundtable:

- **Convening organisation:** An organisation which brings together the key actors involved in the Wellbeing Roundtable process and may also provide secretariat support for roundtable meetings.
 - **Implementing organisation:** An organisation with ultimate responsibility for the wellbeing framework which is created (or revised) through the roundtable meetings. This would normally be a local, regional or national government.
 - **Roundtable members:** Individuals appointed to the membership of the roundtable, with voting and decision-making authority.
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1. Assessing feasibility

How bought in are leaders to the process?

What existing policy priorities and strategic ambitions can the wellbeing framework enhance?

How can the public be engaged in the roundtable process?

What structure and organisations can support the ongoing integration of the wellbeing framework?

2. Forming commitments

What informal or public commitments would be helpful from the main implementing organisation(s)?

What formal and binding commitments seem necessary?

How comfortable is the implementing organisation(s) with these commitments?

How can the implementing organisation(s) be convinced to respond to roundtable recommendations?

3. Recruiting stakeholders

Which stakeholders have most influence over the success of the roundtable/ how can they be engaged?

What level of involvement is appropriate for the main implementing organisation?

How can chairing uphold both partnership with and independence from the main implementing organisation?

What are the demands and expectations of prospective roundtable members?

4. Agenda setting and facilitation

Who will provide facilitation and secretarial support for the roundtable?

How many roundtable meetings are expected, what topics should they address?

How can chairs ensure all roundtable members participate in discussion on an equal basis?

What is the right balance between tight facilitation and open discussion in meetings?

5. Adapting a wellbeing model

Which wellbeing model should be adopted?

How can the model be woven through the work of the roundtable?

How should the model be adapted to fit its context?

6. Gathering statistical evidence

What indicators and data sources are available to help understand local wellbeing?

What indicators should feature in the wellbeing framework?

How can statistical data be summarised and presented to inform roundtable deliberations?

What data gaps and deficiencies are likely, and how should these be navigated?

7. Engaging the public

What opportunities for deliberation and interaction do the public have?

How do the different modes of participation complement one another?

How can participation be equitable and inclusive of a broad range of voices?

How will experiential evidence be captured, processed and presented to inform the roundtable's deliberations?

8. Presenting the wellbeing framework

What decision making process will be used to select outcomes and indicators?

What other elements (e.g. values, milestones) would support implementation?

How should statistical evidence be balanced with evidence from public participation?

How can the design of the wellbeing framework attract interest and support communication?

9. Supporting implementation

What recommendations would best support implementation?

What are the risks and barriers to adoption of the framework, and how can these be minimised?

What structures can support implementation, scrutiny and accountability in the longer term?

Should the roundtable reconvene to assess progress?

Guidance for navigating key steps



1. Assessing feasibility

The first step is to determine if conditions are sufficiently supportive for undertaking the Wellbeing Roundtable and implementing the resulting wellbeing framework. Our expert panel considered three factors important for the initial conditions: support from key organisational leaders, buy-in from the public and external stakeholders, and sufficient implementation possibilities.

Support from the key implementing organisation(s) for the wellbeing framework was considered a crucial precondition. Senior leaders can authorise engagement with the roundtable and are also critical in enabling the wellbeing framework to shape policy and practice. Preliminary meetings with senior leaders can be helpful in assessing support, building trust, and addressing any concerns.

Our expert panel also stressed the primacy of independence to the legitimacy and credibility of the Wellbeing Roundtable. The expert panel cautioned that any senior leaders involved as roundtable members should understand their role as participants rather than directors.

Scoping meetings with external stakeholders can help engage local ambitions and activity and identify external risks to the process. A new wellbeing policy agenda is likely to overlap with pre-existing local initiatives and campaigns. One risk is that the Wellbeing Roundtable becomes understood as a top-down strategy imposed from afar, rather than a shared mission with local roots. We recommend investing in stakeholder relationships and public engagement to understand local dynamics and ensure broad based support. An open public event to discuss and co-design the ambitions of a wellbeing framework can be a good way to do this.

It is possible and sometimes necessary to construct a wellbeing framework without an implementation plan. However, our expert panel saw value in scoping implementation possibilities as early as possible. Early conversations with implementing organisation(s) and external stakeholders should look far ahead to the ultimate use of the wellbeing framework. This may include considering who will be responsible for integrating the wellbeing framework, who could provide support, scrutiny or accountability, and what available powers might speed effective implementation.



Case study: Deploying legislative powers for implementation in Wales

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 placed new statutory duties on public bodies to respond to Wales' wellbeing framework, and empowered two institutions, Audit Wales and the Future Generations Commissioner, with support and challenge powers to support culture change over the long-term. These powers supported a [higher degree of implementation](#) over time than in comparator countries.



2. Forming commitments

It is not uncommon for a Wellbeing Roundtable to proceed without a firm commitment to adopt and implement the final wellbeing framework. However, our expert panel saw benefit in encouraging the implementing organisation(s) to make binding commitments to the process at outset.

First, senior leaders could make a public statement of support for the Wellbeing Roundtable and to organisational engagement with the wellbeing framework. This can help signal intent and energising others to participate, though a verbal commitment remains vulnerable to changes in leadership or political priorities. A better outcome is to secure tangible organisational buy-in, through, for example, a commitment to embedding the wellbeing framework in a central strategic document (e.g. business strategy, programme for government or corporate plan).

If an external convening organisation is involved, there may be value in a written bilateral document that sets out expectations and responsibilities, such as a Memorandum of Understanding. While non-binding, this would formalise expectations, again insuring the process against leadership change and policy churn.

Many of our expert panel also advised light-touch commitments around implementation. While there may be valid reservations to committing to specific implementation objectives, an organisation might be convinced to provide an official response to the final recommendations – including those on steps toward implementation – produced by the roundtable.

Wellbeing Roundtables might be financed by implementing organisations, convening organisations, or a mix of the two. In some circumstances, funding power may be used to bring actors together based on a binding and enforceable contract, with funding dependent on pre-agreed objectives. If this approach is taken,

it will be critical to ensure that the trust and partnership working integral to Wellbeing Roundtables is not replaced by a transactional dynamic based on funder power.

Finally, some members of our expert panel expressed discomfort with seeking firm commitments at outset. Pressing strongly for commitments may seem restrictive and dissuade implementing organisations from engagement. In other cases, formal and binding commitment may be judged unnecessary or impossible. Indeed, Carnegie UK's [Wellbeing Roundtable in Northern Ireland](#) involved little organisational commitment but nonetheless achieved a high level of organisational support. Where formal commitments are limited, a more integrated and cooperative approach to partnership working may be required throughout.



Case Study: Forming commitments for a Wellbeing Roundtable

In Scotland, First Minister [Nicola Sturgeon delivered a speech in 2018](#) to mark the revision of Scotland's National Performance Framework (NPF). She articulated the NPF as a way to focus “not just on the wealth of our nation but on the wellbeing of the nation”. And she invited other organisations to participate within a broader collective wellbeing agenda. The NPF gained support amongst many civil society organisations, with some voluntarily adopting the framework and its outcomes.



3. Recruiting stakeholders

For a wellbeing framework to be considered legitimate and hold political weight, our expert panel felt that the roundtable needs a broad representative membership and independent leadership.

By international comparison, roundtables with a membership of 8-14 individuals seem to balance diversity in membership with the productivity of a small, focused group. Roundtable membership has tended to predominantly involve senior figures from public bodies, business and third sector communities. While uncommon so far, direct representation of community representatives and social activists could broaden the roundtable's pool of expertise and influence.

Our expert panel advised that senior officials from the implementing organisation (e.g. a national government or local authority) be represented on the roundtable. This can ensure the roundtable keeps in tune with strategic ambitions and help prepare the implementing organisation to take ownership of the wellbeing framework.

A danger however is that implementing organisation involvement threatens the roundtable's independence. To manage this risk, the implementing organisation should remain a significant minority voice in the roundtable's membership. Independent chairing can also help the roundtable balance partnership with the implementing organisation with independence of decision-making. Our expert group advised that an influential independent figure be appointed chair of the roundtable, or as co-chair with a senior representative of the implementing organisation.

Our expert panel relayed a set of characteristics for recruiting roundtable members. Members should bring particular strengths, such as influence over stakeholder groups or technical expertise needed to take forward the roundtable. They should be committed

to wellbeing as a policy agenda and shared mission, be prepared to leave organisational interests aside. Finally, roundtable members need to be prepared to commit to the workload involved, including meeting attendance requirements, in order to move forward together.

Roundtable members can also play valuable roles in leading elements of the work and championing the wellbeing agenda more broadly. In previous examples, members have facilitated public engagement, evidence gathering, or awareness raising. In many cases, roundtable members have actively advocated for the integration of the framework in their own organisations, providing an additional route to impact.



Case study: Balancing independence and partnership through chairing in Northern Ireland

The Wellbeing Roundtable convened by Carnegie UK in Northern Ireland used a co-chair approach. As an organisation based outside of Northern Ireland, it felt important that the work had ownership from senior stakeholders within the region. At the same time, Carnegie UK was keen to stress the independence of the process. The co-chair mechanism provided a way to balance independence and partnership. Having made the decision on that basis, they were then able to recruit co-chairs in a way that brought male/female leadership and diversity of professional experience.



4. Agenda setting and facilitation

Roundtable meetings involve focused deliberation to reach many decisions involved in creating a wellbeing framework. Our expert panel considered it critical that roundtable meetings are well-planned, tightly facilitated and focused on reaching consensus on the key issues required for this task.

In practice, roundtable meetings have been facilitated by convening organisations playing a secretariat role: gathering and summarising evidence in briefing papers, developing options appraisals for core decisions, delivering commissioned work (e.g. public participation exercises), supporting roundtable chairs to design and adapt roundtable meetings, and being the core point of contact for internal and external communication.

The three roundtables facilitated by Carnegie UK have involved 3-4 formal meetings over a 6-9 month period. We consider 4 meetings a bare minimum to incorporate exploration, relationship building, and meaningful deliberation. While each roundtable will have different needs, it has been useful to have a broad agenda and timetable in place to focus discussions. One suggestion from our expert group was to stage an initial exploratory roundtable meeting where this draft agenda be put up for debate and reconstruction.

Roundtable meetings carry a wellbeing framework from ambition to implementation, with meetings themed around core components. Our expert group considered it critical that this feature a plan for ongoing public engagement. Implementation should also be an ongoing concern, and some suggested it may be worth formalising a final roundtable meeting to discuss opportunities for impact beyond the roundtable's lifespan.

Our expert panel preferred roundtable meetings centre on core decisions in formalising a wellbeing framework rather than open, generative discussion. But they also warned against squeezing out opportunity for reflection and adaptation needed to navigate

emergent issues. Where required, snap meetings or working groups can be arranged to work around an established agenda.

Roundtable meetings can be held online (as with the North of Tyne, due to restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic), however experience suggests these make it harder to form the lasting relationships built through in person meetings. A blended model might address this, with in person meetings focused on relationship building and exploratory work, and shorter online meetings focused on operational matters.



Case study: Template roundtable meeting structure

Roundtable meeting	Key Topics
1. Co-design (optional)	Co-design meeting structure and workplan. Agree partnership and working relationships. Initiate public engagement and evidence gathering.
2. Set up	Deliberate over evidence gathered. Select a wellbeing model. Develop a plan for public engagement. Develop a plan for indicator development.
3. Initial evidence deliberations	Deliberate over evidence gathered. Make decisions on additional evidence gathering and public engagement mechanisms.
4. Longer-term evidence deliberations	Discuss longer-term public engagement and evidence gathering mechanisms. Make final decisions about evidence gathering and public engagement.
5. Framing and recommendations	Agree key outcomes, indicators and other components of wellbeing framework. Finalise recommendations for adopting and implementing the wellbeing framework.
6. Progress review (optional)	Analyse progress with adopting and using the wellbeing framework. Provide renewed recommendations to improve implementation.



5. Adapting a wellbeing model

There has been significant progress in measuring wellbeing and practitioners can take advantage of well-established models and frameworks. Our expert panel's recommendation is to adopt and adapt an existing framework, rather than start with a blank sheet.

The [Shared Ingredients for a Wellbeing Economy](#) report describes a range of wellbeing models in practice. While each model has distinctive characteristics, the consensus is that they share more in common than they hold in difference. Roundtables might structure an early meeting on the relevant merits and fit amongst existing frameworks, and how to adapt the model chosen to a local context.

Starting with a pre-existing wellbeing model can provide a common frame of reference and a shared language in roundtable meetings. It can assist with practicalities, such as how briefing papers are presented, and how evidence is gathered and synthesised in roundtable meetings.

For example, the North of Tyne roundtable chose to use Carnegie UK's 'SEED model', which brings together social, economic, environmental and democratic wellbeing. The SEED model formed the parameters of the literature review, the public participation workshops and the domains of the final wellbeing framework. Using a model across the roundtable's functions can help surmount lengthy theoretical discussions of wellbeing which can bog down meetings and impede progress.

However, as the [Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi report](#) noted, any valid wellbeing framework must be situated in a particular time and place. The roundtable's job is to meaningfully localise the chosen framework, taking aspects which are useful (e.g. in analysing evidence or framing the final wellbeing framework) and disregarding elements which do not fit. Another advantage is that

the roundtable can look to country and government experiences of adapting these existing frameworks: for example, [New Zealand's Living Standards Framework](#) which adapted the OECD's approach to 'measuring well-being and progress', or the North of Tyne's aforementioned application of Carnegie UK's SEED model.

Some of our expert panel felt it important that there be an option to develop a bespoke wellbeing framework from the ground up. An example of this is the [He Ara Waiora](#) framework, also developed in New Zealand, which was established from first principles to situate wellbeing in a context appropriate to Māori history and community life. If this alternative path is chosen roundtable meetings would require a more substantial development stage in addition to the agenda outlined in the previous step.



Case study: The Shared Ingredients for a Wellbeing Economy

At a headline level there is a key narrative running through all these models and the wider 'wellbeing' or 'new' economy movement. They are all, in some shape or form and with differing nuances of language, calling for a focus on:

- Delivering the conditions for people to thrive and flourish (ie. to prosper)
- Delivering this fairly, so everyone benefits
- Delivering sustainably so the planet and future generations can also thrive

All models share a call for the same fundamental shift: A move away from a singular focus on driving economic growth as an end in itself, towards a focus on growing the known drivers of a range of interconnected outcomes that improve lives – now and in the future.

[Liz Zeidler, 2022, [The Shared Ingredients for a Wellbeing Economy](#)]



6. Gathering statistical evidence

Wellbeing frameworks require robust statistical data to provide insight into the key dimensions of collective wellbeing. Our expert group told us that gathering and analysing relevant statistical information was an essential capability in developing an effective wellbeing framework.

Much progress has been made in improving the quality and accessibility of wellbeing data, with most OECD countries now publishing indicators of wellbeing in their national statistics. Statistical evidence is patchier at a locality-level, however specialised measurement frameworks have recently emerged. For example, the Centre for Thriving Places' [Thriving Places Index](#) collates local statistics into accessible dashboards which enable quick comparison between localities.

Accessing statistical information takes time and technical skills. These abilities can be carried into the roundtable by suitably experienced implementing or convening organisations, or can otherwise be commissioned from external organisations familiar with wellbeing measurement. One enduring challenge is that there are often many data sources from which wellbeing measures must be sourced. This can be tackled by undertaking or commissioning a local wellbeing assessment which gathers and analyses statistical information about residents' lives. For example, in the North of Tyne this was achieved by conducting a literature review which served as the key briefing paper for the roundtable's first meeting.

Gathering statistical evidence should inform the selection of outcomes and indicators within the final wellbeing framework. Our expert panel cautioned however that statistical availability should not constrain the scope and ambition of the Framework. It is perfectly reasonable for wellbeing frameworks to have a proportion of indicators under development. For example, the Scottish Government's [National Performance Framework](#) was established in 2007 but still lacks data for some of its key National Indicators,

as do many of the indicators used to assess progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals. While bridging data gaps is important, measurement is a developmental process that need not slow implementation efforts. The Wellbeing Roundtable can provide recommendations to help the implementing organisation(s) begin to develop a full statistical dataset and get to work in spite of immediate data deficiencies.



Case study: GLA dashboard

The [London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure](#) has a data dashboard allowing users to explore 64 indicators across 7 wellbeing domains. The Greater London Authority (GLA) could access a wide range of statistical data across London Boroughs, which enabled analysis of key wellbeing indicators amongst communities. Before selecting its indicators, the GLA undertook a broad community engagement process, asking Londoners about their experience and priorities for wellbeing. This ensured indicator selection was led by citizen priorities rather than data availability. Data consistency was an enduring challenge, with London Boroughs each collecting and using data differently. The GLA therefore took a pragmatic approach to the construction of its dashboard, using data which was good enough rather than seeking perfection.



7. Engaging the public

Any wellbeing framework must reflect the history, culture, ambitions and priorities of its time and place. Our expert group considered that roundtables should offer multiple avenues to engage and involve the public in its deliberations. An effective approach to participation provides valuable evidence for constructing the wellbeing framework and also contributes to its democratic legitimacy.

Public participation is now standard in the creation of wellbeing frameworks. Online surveys, public consultations or calls for evidence are commonly adopted, and helpful in reaching large numbers of people. Some organisations, such as the UK's Office for National Statistics or Germany's Bundestag (its federal government), have hosted public events, surveys and open workshops reaching many thousands of participants. Involving the public in these types of open consultation can reveal broad trends and can bolster the democratic credentials of the wellbeing framework. However, applied in isolation, these methods can be extractive and at times offer only a superficial level of engagement.

Our expert panel considered it essential to offer more deliberative opportunities for participation, which allow participants not just to share their existing viewpoints, but to develop them through interaction and dialogue. Our expert group felt Wellbeing Roundtables should, at a minimum, develop mechanisms to actively engage communities and demographics which might be overlooked or excluded from consultation exercises. Facilitated community workshops, such as those undertaken in [The Wales We Want](#), provide an adaptable model for engaging communities in a collective conversation.

Future Wellbeing Roundtables have an opportunity to further improve the quality of participation. For example, roundtables could commission collaborative and community-led research, engaging

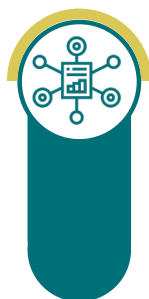
communities, anchor organisations and grassroots organisations to conduct and present research on wellbeing on their own terms. Deliberative approaches like citizens' juries and citizens' assemblies provide options for carrying out more extensive deliberation, but have been rarely adopted in practice.

Finally, our expert panel felt it important that roundtables offer multiple formats of participation in order to accommodate the range of preferences amongst the population. This is important because it allows roundtable members to understand and reflect a wide range of experiences, which strengthens the confidence in the final wellbeing framework.



Case study: the *Gut Leben in Deutschland* national dialogue

Germany's Federal Government initiated a multi-faceted national dialogue it called *Gut Leben in Deutschland*. The government enlisted the help of civil society to engage a diversity of voices, supporting national and local civic organisations to lead more than 200 community-based workshops. Alongside this, the public could respond to questions about wellbeing in a short online form or return postcards handed out at government events and attached to major newspapers. The national dialogue eventually engaged more than 15,000 people and became the core evidence underpinning the government's wellbeing framework.



8. Presenting the wellbeing framework

The framing of goals, indicators and other elements within a finalised wellbeing framework is the focus of the roundtable's deliberations. Our expert group noted this can be a contentious process, so it is important to make adequate time to reach consensus.

One key subject is the wellbeing 'outcomes', which communicate the strategic priorities of the framework. These should be few in number to aid comprehension, distinctive enough to not overlap considerably, and also expansive enough to provide a comprehensive picture of collective wellbeing.

Wellbeing frameworks also contain a set of measurable indicators which collectively determine whether progress is being made toward each outcome. In practice it is much harder to formalise a full set of indicators within the roundtable's lifespan, since this often requires protracted discussion about the reliability of indicators, and may require aggregation across different datasets. Our expert panel suggested that roundtables should develop an outline set of indicators if, as is likely, a full dataset cannot be developed within the roundtable's lifespan.

In addition to these core elements, roundtables could also consider developing other cross-cutting elements to help facilitate implementation. In existing examples, these include shared values and vision statements, which may be more translatable and relevant to a wider audience. Other examples such as Wales have developed a set of expected 'ways of working', judged necessary to adopt in order to achieve collective wellbeing ambitions, which can provide practical grounding to putting the framework into action.

Just as important as the framework's elements is its visual language. Frameworks should have a clear and attractive brand identity to aid communication, and a designed version which can be displayed on a single page. Design abilities is another critical skillset

which can be either provided by the convening organisations or commissioned externally.

Finally, our expert panel considered it important that Wellbeing Roundtables show their working, explaining in an easy-to-read public report how the evidence collected have fed into the framework's design. Showing how both statistical evidence and community participation have contributed to the framework is an important part of building support and legitimacy.



Case study: core elements of local, national and international wellbeing frameworks

Wellbeing framework element	Function	Example
Outcomes	Top-level goals which collectively set the agenda for the wellbeing framework. Express priorities and motivate stakeholders around a shared mission	The UN's 17 Sustainable Development goals Wales' 7 Well-being Goals North of Tyne's 10 Wellbeing Outcomes
Indicators	Provide a means of making sense of progress. Collectively set a direction of travel toward outcomes	The UN's 169 indicators Wales' 50 National Indicators North of Tyne's 54 indicators
Shared values / visions / ways of working	Provide a means for mainstreaming desirable actions and behaviours. Provide a process-based mechanism for accountability and reporting.	UN's three universal values within Agenda 2030 Wales' Five Ways of Working The North of Tyne's Vision Statement



9. Supporting implementation

Evidence suggests wellbeing frameworks will struggle to influence practice without a strategy for its use and integration. The roundtable's work does not conclude with construction of a wellbeing framework, rather its final stage is to establish the initial conditions for its implementation.

Implementation should be a constant concern informing decisions made at the preparation and deliberation phases, rather than a step confronted at the end. Our expert panel considered it critical that the roundtable produce clear recommendations for implementation in a final public report introducing the wellbeing framework. Recommendations should direct implementing organisations to pursue not only indicator development, but the broader cultural project of using the wellbeing framework to frame their strategic and operational practice. If agreed in step 2, the implementing organisation(s) could commit to provide a public response on progress relating to each recommendation.

The transition of the wellbeing framework from the roundtable to the main implementing organisation was considered a moment of risk by our expert panel. This can be minimised by winning the support and advocacy of organisational leaders through partnership in the roundtable, by actioning commitments formed in the preparation phase, and by maintaining close coordination with the implementing organisation.

Working in partnership with the implementing organisation, the roundtable could also identify organisational structures for implementation, for example identifying a particular team with responsibility for ongoing implementation. Roundtable members may also be willing to continue advocacy for the wellbeing framework and be encouraged to pursue the parallel implementation of the wellbeing framework within their own organisations.

Country-level experiences from Wales and Scotland suggest that a challenge and scrutiny relationship is also important to promoting implementation. Roundtables should consider if an external oversight or scrutiny body could be appointed to review progress with implementing the wellbeing framework. In certain cases, there may be an obvious candidate, like a regulatory, audit or oversight body. In other cases, the roundtable itself could commit to reconvene on an annual or biannual basis to assess progress made and provide renewed recommendations to promote further implementation.



Case study: Planning for implementation in the North of Tyne

In the North of Tyne, early scoping led to a multi-faceted plan for implementation. The North of Tyne Combined Authority identified a policy team to work in partnership with Carnegie UK to convene the roundtable and prepare for implementation. The wellbeing framework was arranged to be signed into action by the Combined Authority's Cabinet. Alongside this, an independent Inclusive Economy Board would provide an ongoing scrutiny and accountability regime for the wellbeing framework.





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