



# A Decade of Change

The profound societal impact of  
your wellbeing decisions

**Gethin Nadin**

Chief Innovation Officer, Benefeflex

# About Gethin Nadin

## Chief Innovation Officer, Benefex

- Multi-Award-winning Psychologist
- 2 x Bestselling HR Author
- Fellow, King's College London King's Business School
- Global Top Employee Experience Influencer 2021 - 2024
- Chair of the Workplace Wellbeing Action Group (WWAG)
- Chair Policy Liaison Group (PLG) for Workplace Wellbeing



HR  
Thought  
Leader of  
the Year  
2024



HR  
Professional  
of the Year  
2024

★ Author of the Year 2024

★ 7<sup>th</sup> HRs Most Influential Thinker 2023

★ UK Mental Health Campaigner of the Year 2023



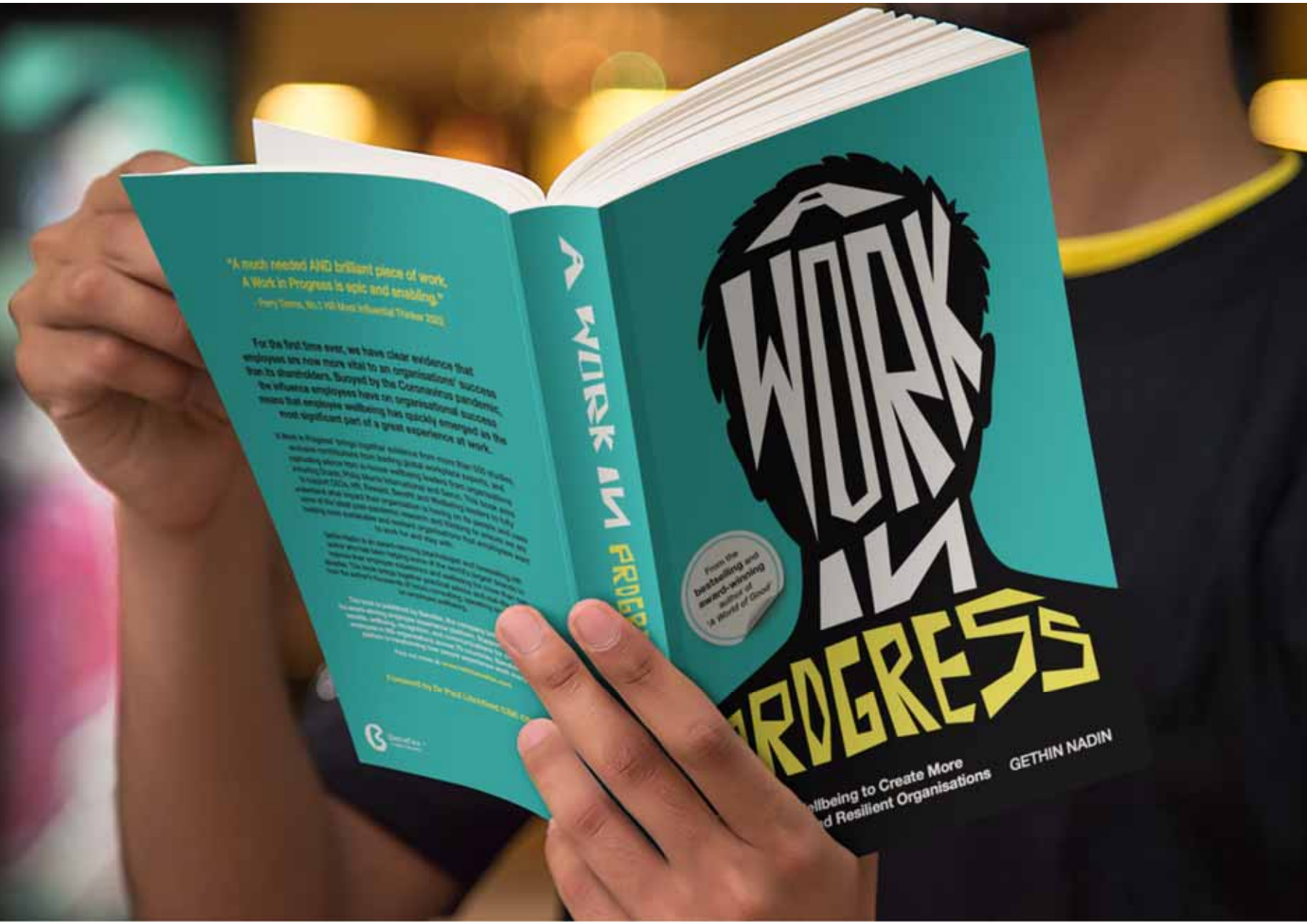


**Wellbeing at work isn't new.**  
The workplace evolves when  
behaviour meets policy change.



**Benefeflex**  
A Zellis Company





"A much needed AND brilliant piece of work.  
A Work in Progress is epic and enabling."  
-Fortune, No. 1 HR Most Influential Thinker 2022

For the first time ever, we have clear evidence that employees are now more vital to an organisation's success than its shareholders. Survived by the Coronavirus pandemic, the evidence employees have for organisational success means that employee wellbeing has quickly emerged as the most significant part of a great experience at work.

A Work in Progress brings together evidence from more than 100 studies, including interviews with leading global workplace experts, and leading UK and Irish HR and wellbeing leaders from organisations who report their organisation is leading on the people and wellbeing agenda. The book offers practical advice and real-world examples of how to create a culture of wellbeing that employees can see and feel.

Written by an award-winning entrepreneur and bestselling author, Gethin Nadin is a leading expert in the world's largest wellbeing market. The book offers practical advice and real-world examples of how to create a culture of wellbeing that employees can see and feel.

Foreword by Professor Sir John Cridland, former Chair of the Skills and Apprenticeship Commission, and former Chief Executive of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Foreword by Dr Paul Lubatkin, former CEO of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.



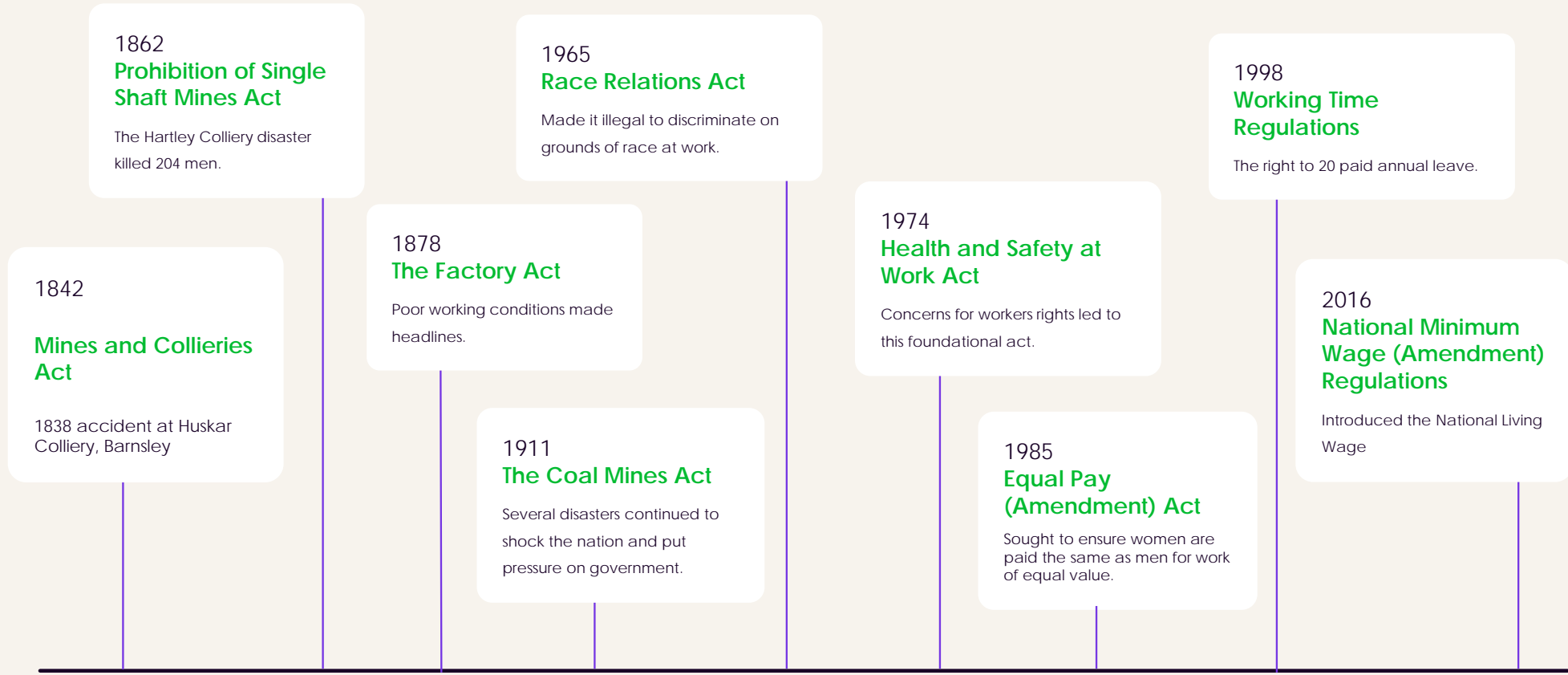
From the bestselling and award-winning author of 'A World of Good'

A WORK IN PROGRESS

WORK  
IN  
PROGRESS

Wellbeing to Create More Resilient Organisations  
GETHIN NADIN

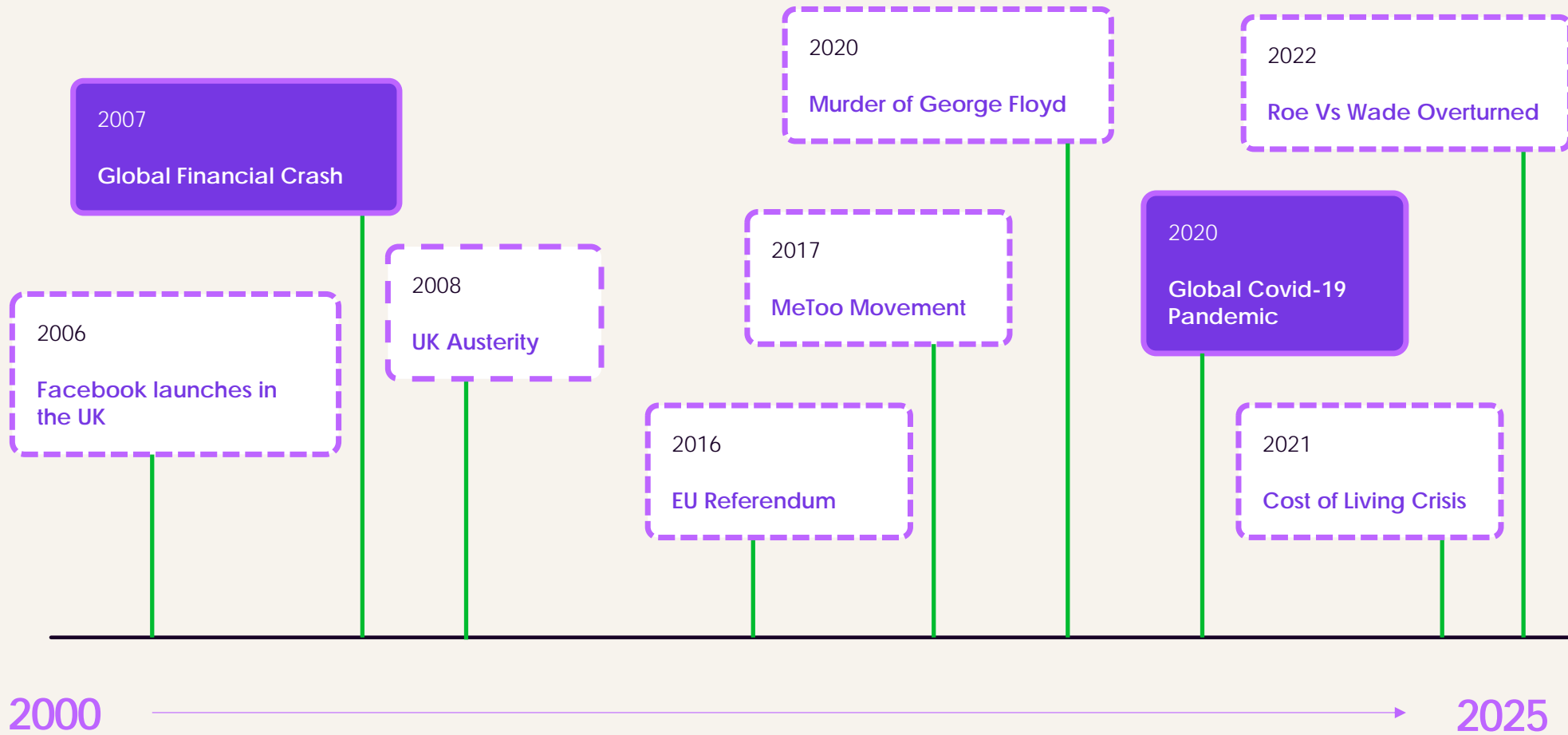
# Change happens when behaviour meets policy...



1800's → 1850's → 1900's → 1950's → 1970's → 1990's → 2000's



# Society changes and the workplace changes with it





The UK is sick and  
getting sicker.

Our success as employers and as a nation is being hampered by poor wellbeing



A chef wearing a white toque and uniform is focused on a task in a professional kitchen. The background shows shelves with various kitchen items and warm lighting. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

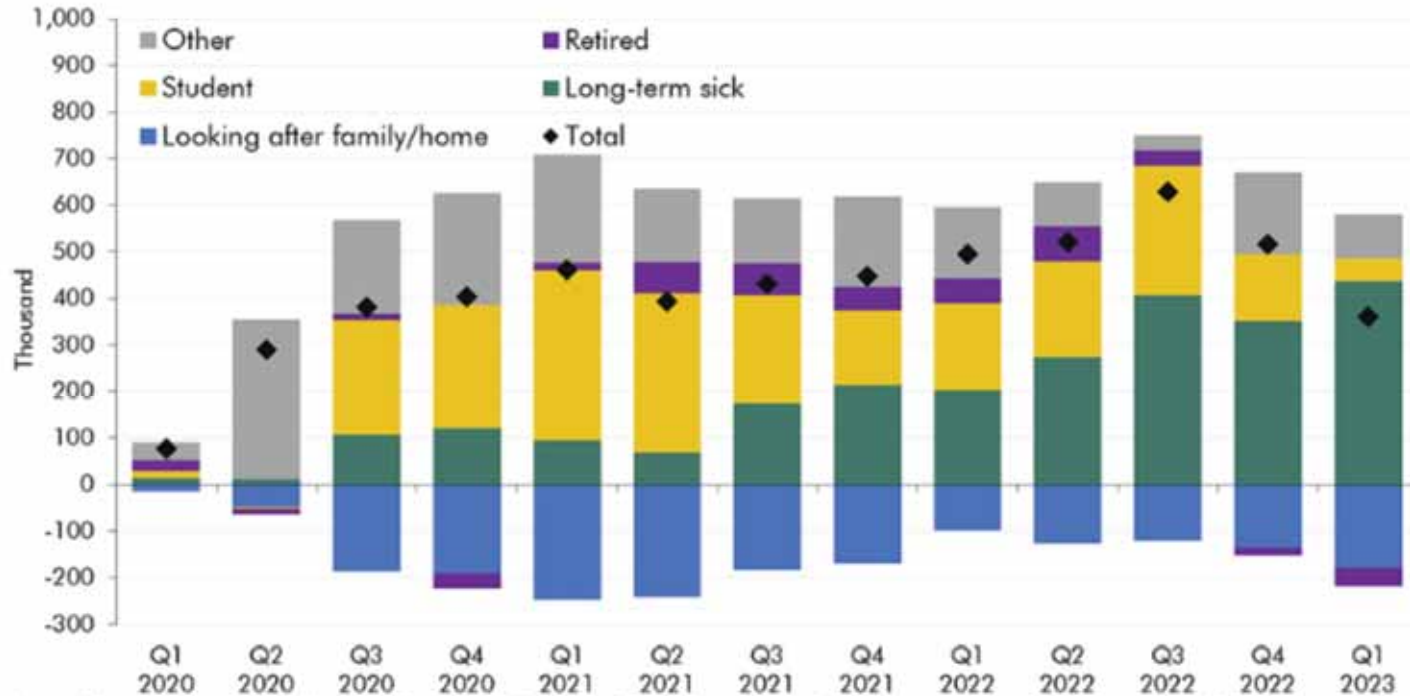
MORE THAN

6%

ARE NOT WORKING  
DUE TO ILL HEALTH



**Chart 1.1: The rise in working-age inactivity since early 2020**



Note: Changes are shown relative to December-February 2020 – the pre-pandemic low-point for the 16-64-year-old inactivity rate.  
Source: ONS

**1.6** This rise in health-related inactivity seems to be driven by the interplay of three main causal factors, some of which pre-date the pandemic:




# This is a fiscal threat to our country

Poor wellbeing becomes a vicious cycle

 Getting sick increases your chances of unemployment by 112%

 An employee off work ill for more than 6 months has a 90% chance of never returning

 Economic inactivity due to ill health leads to £15 billion in higher government spending





The economic burden of  
poor workplace wellbeing.



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Poor wellbeing now costs UK employers more than

**£100 BILLION**

Disney



TESLA





# The Economic Burden of Poor Wellbeing

For a 1,000-person employer, absence costs alone are now £2 million every year.

Salespeople who rate their mental health as “good” or higher sell significantly more than others.

Poor wellbeing impedes product innovation

Employers with lower overall workplace wellbeing have lower customer loyalty





Council satisfaction scores **correlate directly** with employee wellbeing scores



Higher employee wellbeing is linked with **lower patient mortality**

Higher levels of wellbeing lead to **quicker patient recovery**



Lower staff stress leads to **fewer patient falls**



NHS culture even impacts a patient's **ability to self-care** after discharge

# UK Productivity Relies on Healthy People

**FIGURE 2.1**

The estimated cost of working through sickness far outweighs that of taking sick leave  
*The change in the cost of presenteeism and absenteeism if we had the same rates as found in 2018*

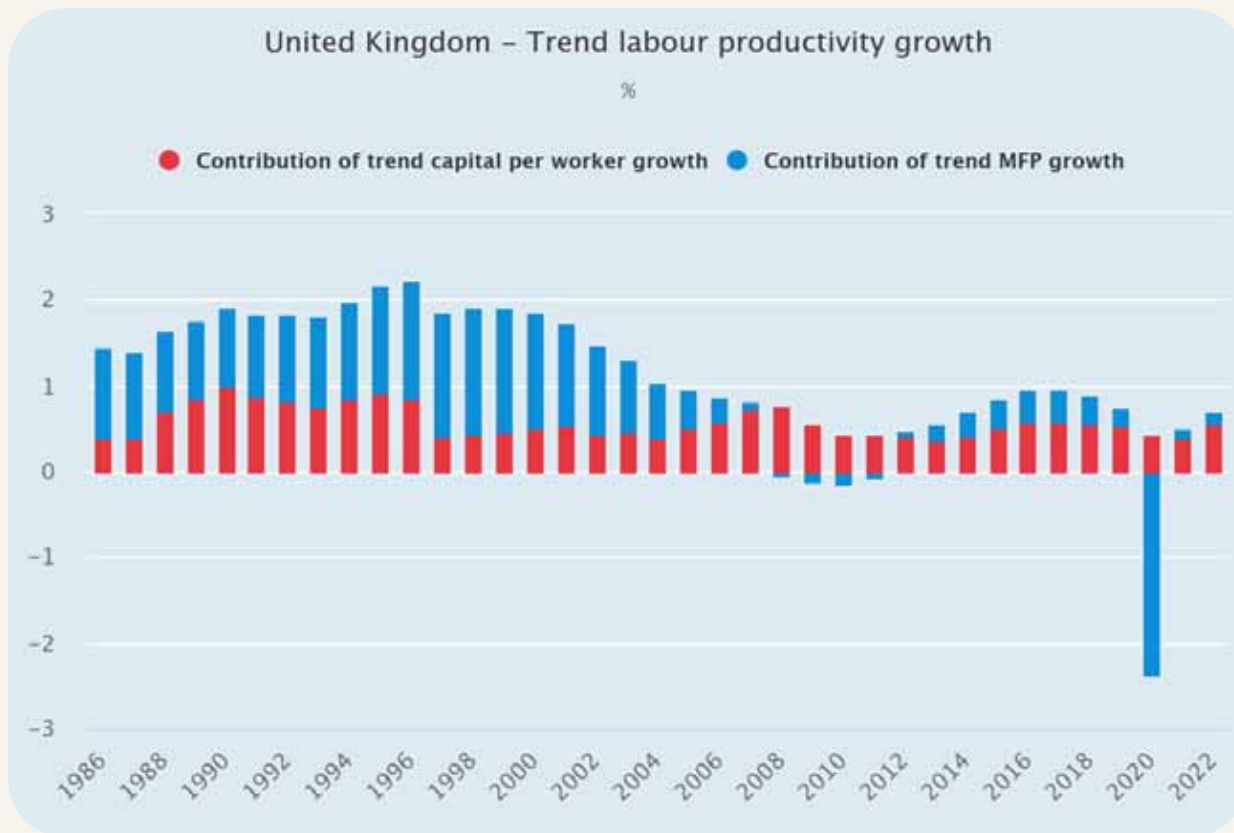


Source: IPPR analysis of Vitality's Britain's Healthiest Workplace surveys (2014–2024)



# UK Productivity Relies on Healthy People

The UK is the only OECD country to not regain its productivity levels from the 2008 financial crash.







The wellbeing *in* your organisation  
is the wellbeing *of* your  
organisation.

But it's also the wellbeing of your country... which is why employers are becoming agents of change.



A person wearing blue scrubs is sitting at a desk, using a calculator and a laptop. The person's hands are visible, one on the calculator and the other near the laptop. The background is slightly blurred, showing a clinical or office environment. The text is overlaid on the image in white.

8% of the US' annual healthcare costs are attributed to adverse experiences at work

**\$360 billion**



80%

CEOs feel pressured to  
improve employee  
wellbeing

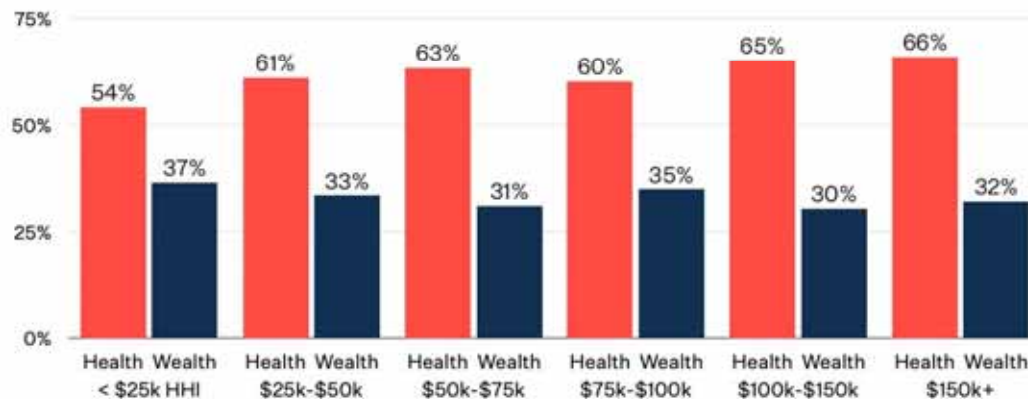


# Employees want to be healthier

82% of people now consider wellness a top priority

## The big picture: Health is wealth, and consumers will continue to prioritize it

Percentage of responses by income: If you could only choose one, would you rather feel 25% more healthy or earn 25% more money?



Data: Consumer Trends Survey, powered by toluo® Excludes "I don't know" responses. (n=3286)

The New Consumer | Coefficient





## The Health Hextad

### The significance of workplace wellbeing

**Total shareholder returns:** 30 years of data show us a direct correlation between total shareholder returns and higher employee wellbeing.



**Overall firm performance:**

The largest analysis of employee sentiment in history indicates a significant link between employee wellbeing and firm performance.



**Corporate valuations and reputation:**

Higher employee wellbeing correlates directly with higher corporate valuations and consumer views.



**Stock market performance:**

Organisations with high levels of employee wellbeing, have outperformed the stock market over the last 25 years.



**Profitability:**

Data from over 1600 listed companies reveals a statistically significant relationship between profitability and employee wellbeing.



**Resilience to volatility:**

During economically challenging times, the relationship between employee wellbeing and company performance is heightened.



# Wellbeing Prism Castle



## 01 Structural Design

Ensuring we are limiting the harm we cause to employees. Quality leadership, recognition, realistic expectations, communications, fair pay etc.



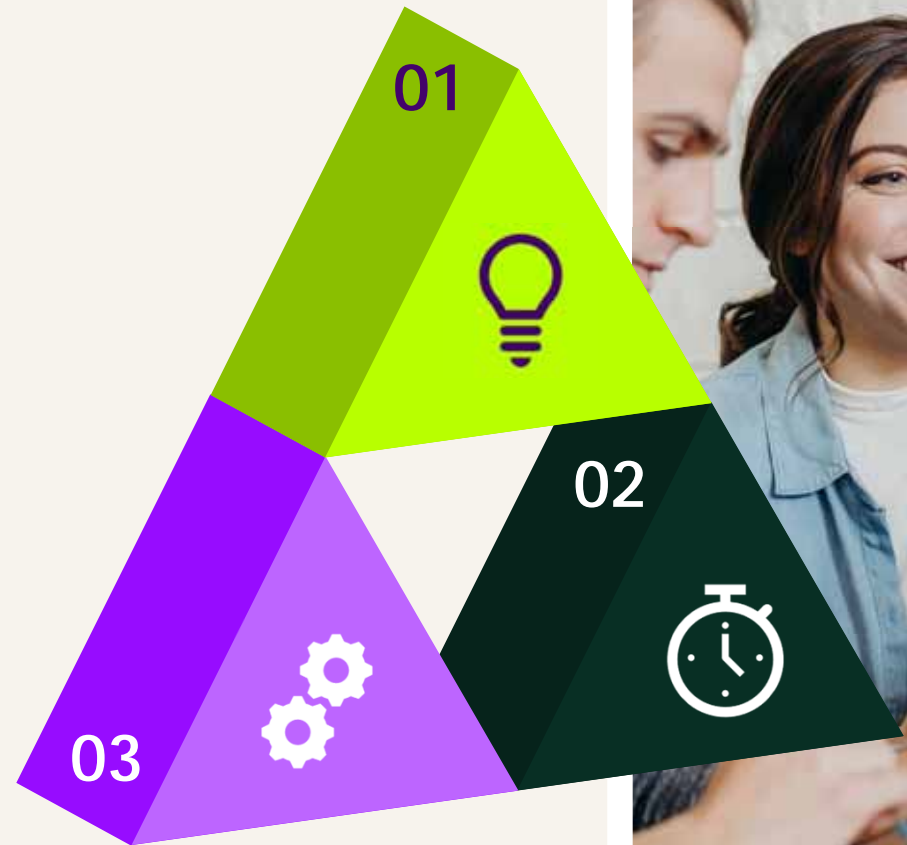
## 02 Individual Behaviour

How an employee manages their own wellbeing. Movement, healthier eating, cessation of bad habits, quiet reflection, destress, camaraderis, support networks.



## 03 Wellbeing Support

Giving employees access to the space, the time and the opportunity to improve their wellbeing and recovery quickly from setbacks.



01 Structural Design

The better you are treated  
at work, the better your  
overall health.

The workplace is a significant contributor to a happy and healthy life.



## 01 Structural Design

# The Workplace Matters

Work itself is a health *outcome*

□ **Good quality work is therapeutic.** It can reverse the adverse effects of poor wellbeing.

😊 **A great employee experience can “significantly predict”** life satisfaction.

🥑 **A greater employee experience** is associated with healthier pattern of dietary behaviours.





A photograph of two women walking on a paved sidewalk. The woman on the left has dark hair and is wearing a light-colored jacket and dark pants, carrying a baby in a grey carrier. The woman on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a green jacket, a yellow top, and blue jeans, holding a red mesh shopping bag. They are both smiling and holding hands. The background shows trees and a building.

The decisions  
**you** make will  
are changing  
the world...

## 01 Structural Design

# When you write policies and design working practices...

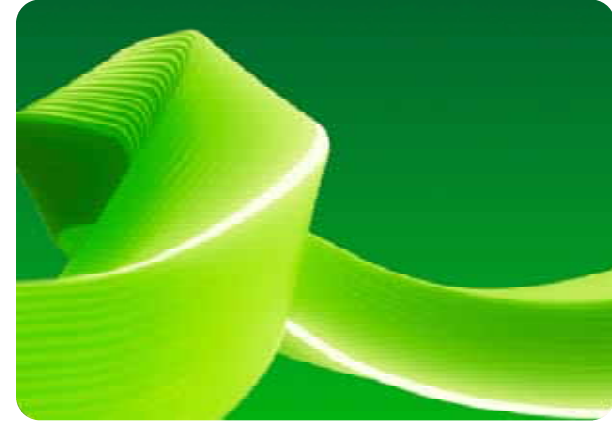
- ❤️🩹 **Anti-Bullying/Harassment policy:** Less cardiovascular disease
- 🕒 **Flexible working:** Improves mental health
- 📄 **Zero-hour contracts:** Lead to higher mental health problems
- 💰 **A Living Wage:** Decreases depressive symptoms
- 😷 **Paid Sick Leave:** Lower mortality rates and the spread of flu
- 🏆 **Employee Recognition:** Higher mental health



### 03 Wellbeing Support

## When you offer the right benefits...

- 🚲 **Cycle to Work Schemes:** Less prescribed drugs
- ❤️ **Health Screening:** Saves 100,000 lives a year
- 👤 **Income Protection:** Leads to more talking therapies
- 🚑 **Health Insurance:** *“significant determiner”* of life satisfaction
- 🦷 **Dental Insurance:** Drives down instances of cardiac arrest







When you *lead*  
your organisation  
and your people...



A photograph of Michael Scott from the TV show 'The Office' sitting in his cubicle. He is wearing a brown suit and a light-colored tie. The cubicle wall behind him is covered in various papers, photos, and a calendar. On his desk, there is a computer monitor, a keyboard, a mouse, a telephone, and a lamp. The text 'What you do matters. You matter.' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

What you do matters.  
You matter.



**Working nine to thrive.**

Your decisions profoundly impact  
employee life.





Parents absence from mealtimes impacts **socioeconomic competency** in their children



Working over 40 hours significantly and **negativity impacts sleep**



More supportive workplace policies **lead to more gender equal societies**



When a parent is overworked, their children suffer.







## Emotional transmission.

A great employee experience contributes significantly to a great life experience.



# The Gain Spiral

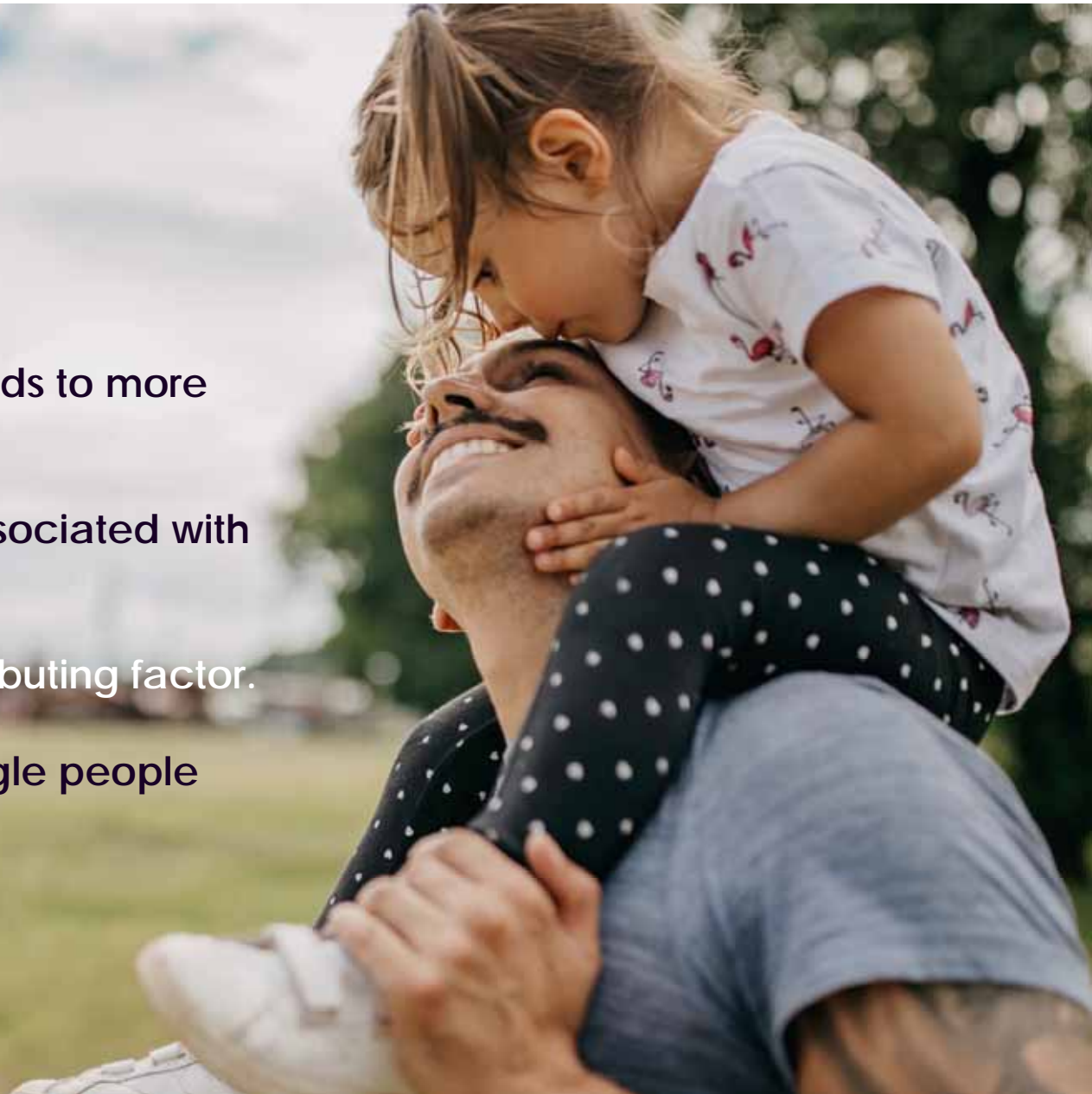
One parent's negative week at work leads to more negative child behaviours.

Fathers work satisfaction is positively associated with lower parenting stress.

Half of UK divorces cite work as a contributing factor.

Longer working hours leads to more single people with poor eating habits.

Parental workplace recognition creates improvements in children's lives.





**A better country is in reach.**

HR and wellbeing decisions profoundly impact societal behaviours.



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## Wellbeing leads to higher community participation

Employees who feel taken care of at work increase their civic engagement

Higher workplace support correlates with more cohesive and vibrant societies

Satisfied workers grow local economies





## Work-related stress is toxic to our communities

Work stress increases the likelihood that someone will be involved in a car crash

Workplace stress leads to more problems with drink

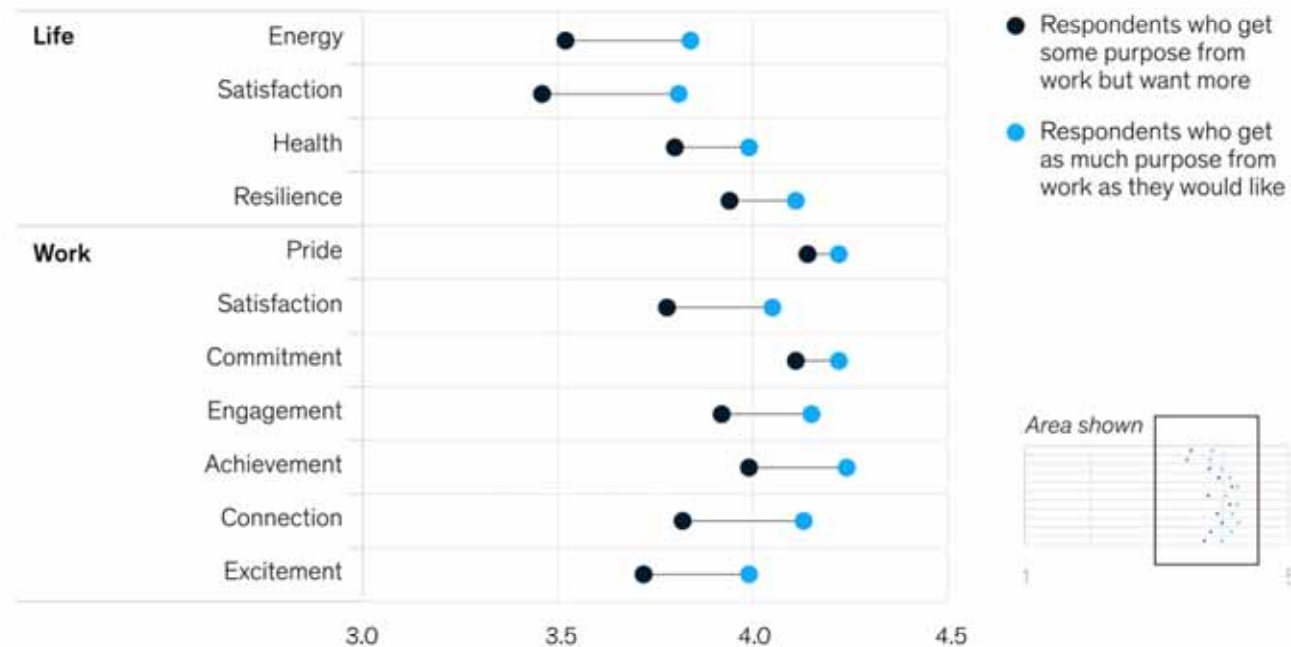
Less stress and work conflict leads to more recycling





## Employees who get the purpose they want from work report better outcomes at work—and in life—than their less-satisfied peers.

Purpose in day-to-day work,<sup>1</sup> score (5 = high, 1 = low)



Note: All the differences shown between the 2 groups of respondents are statistically significant except for work pride and work commitment, although both are directionally consistent with the other findings.

<sup>1</sup>Question: "To what extent is your individual sense of purpose defined by work?" vs "How much of your work needs to be aligned with your purpose?"

Source: McKinsey Individual Purpose survey, August 2020 (n = 1,021)

McKinsey  
& Company

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**“The decisions you make echo far beyond the workplace, influencing the health, happiness and prosperity of generations to come”**

**“This is your moment to lead with purpose, to harness the power of wellbeing as a force for profound organisational and societal change”**





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