

WELLBEING CEILIDH™ STARTER PACK

A participation framework for creating
welcoming and inclusive community ceilidhs.



Founding Community Member Edition
Version 1.1

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A participation framework for creating welcoming and inclusive community ceilidhs.

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Published July 2026

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WELLBEING CEILIDH™

A participation-focused approach to building wellbeing through music, movement and community.

OUR PURPOSE

- Belonging
- Participation
- Music & Movement
- Accessibility
- Community

THE WELLBEING CEILIDH FRAMEWORK™

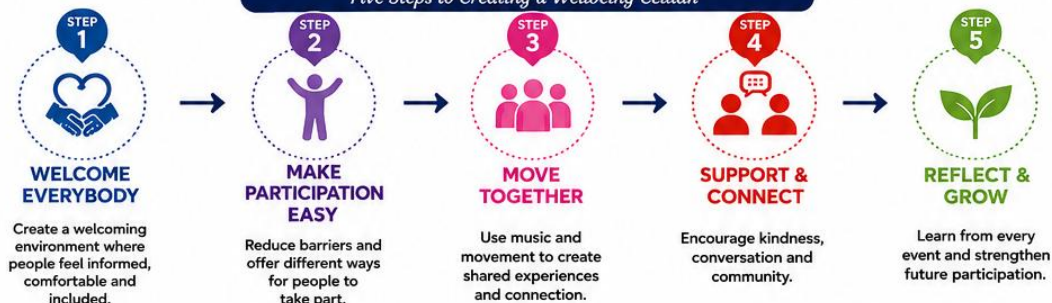
Our Six Principles

Belonging is the foundation from which participation grows.



THE WELLBEING CEILIDH METHOD™

Five Steps to Creating a Wellbeing Ceilidh



ACCESSIBILITY BY DESIGN

Ask throughout the event:
How can we help more people participate?

- Physical**
Removing physical barriers
- Sensory**
Considering sight, sound, space and sensory needs
- Cognitive**
Making information clear and easy to understand
- Social & Cultural**
Welcoming diversity and valuing different backgrounds
- Emotional**
Supporting confidence, choice and inclusion

THE WELLBEING TEAM

Visible people who help create a welcoming environment through:

- Welcome**
A warm greeting and friendly presence
- Encourage**
Positive support and reassurance
- Include**
Helping everyone feel part of things
- Signpost**
Connecting people to information and support
- Support Participation**
Offering practical help so more people can take part in ways that suit them

A WELLBEING CEILIDH™ IS:

- ☒ Welcoming
- ☒ Inclusive
- ☒ Accessible
- ☒ Community-centred
- ☒ Participation-focused
- ☒ Non-clinical

We focus on strengths, choice and participation — not diagnosis, treatment or clinical outcomes.

THE WELLBEING CEILIDH™ MODEL



Creating opportunities for participation, connection, belonging and wellbeing through music, movement and community.

Introduction

Founder's Note

Ceilidhs have always been about more than dancing.

At their best, they bring people together through music, movement and shared experience. They create opportunities for conversation, laughter and connection across generations and communities. People do not need to be expert dancers to take part. In many ways, the ceilidh has always been a celebration of participation.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ did not begin with a desire to change that tradition. It began with a different way of looking at it.

Throughout my work, I have become increasingly interested in participation: what enables it, what limits it and why it matters so much for our health and wellbeing. Looking at the ceilidh through this participation lens led me to a simple realisation. Many of the qualities that make a ceilidh such a valued community tradition are the very qualities that help people thrive. Movement, music, shared purpose, social connection, belonging and enjoyment all contribute to healthier individuals and stronger communities. These are not new ideas. They have always been part of the ceilidh.

The same is true of accessibility. Accessibility is not an afterthought or something that sits alongside the event. Communities have always adapted activities to welcome children, older adults, beginners and people with different levels of confidence, experience and ability. The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ simply encourages us to become more intentional about that process. It invites us to notice the barriers that may still exist, to think creatively about how they can be reduced and to recognise that meaningful participation may look different from one person to another.

This Starter Pack introduces the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™. It is not a set of rules or a prescription for running events. Instead, it offers a way of thinking about participation, accessibility and community while respecting the traditions that have enabled ceilidhs to bring people together for generations.

I hope this publication encourages you to look at your own community through the same participation lens. Every event will be different, and every community will continue to teach us something new. By remaining curious, listening to those who take part and being willing to make small, thoughtful adaptations, we can create more opportunities for people to participate, build connections and experience a sense of belonging together.

Thank you for being part of that journey.

Dr Joanna Byers

Founder, Vital Adaptation Ltd

Welcome to the Wellbeing Ceilidh™

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ brings people together through music, movement and participation. This Starter Pack introduces the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™, a participation framework that supports communities to create welcoming, accessible and wellbeing-focused ceilidh experiences.

The framework has been developed to support anyone involved in planning or delivering a ceilidh. Whether you are a caller, musician, organiser, volunteer, venue, community group or simply someone interested in making community dancing more inclusive, the ideas within this publication provide a shared way of thinking about participation.

This publication is intended to support reflection rather than prescribe a single way of working. Every community is different, and every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ will develop in response to the people who attend, the setting in which it takes place and the experience of those involved in organising it. The framework is designed to support thoughtful decision-making, creativity and continuous learning, recognising that there is no single model of a perfect event.

As you read through this Starter Pack, you will be introduced to the commitments that underpin the Wellbeing Ceilidh™, the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™, the Ceilidh Method™ that brings those ideas into practice and the Participation Review™, which supports ongoing reflection and improvement. Together, they provide a practical way of thinking about how community dancing can create more opportunities for participation, connection and belonging.

Welcome, and thank you for being part of the continuing story of the Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

What is a Wellbeing Ceilidh™?

ceilidh (*traditionally pronounced "KAY-lee"*)

The word *ceilidh* comes from the Scottish Gaelic language. Although traditions vary across Scotland and beyond, a ceilidh has long been a way of bringing people together through music, dancing and community.

A Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is a community ceilidh that uses the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™ to create opportunities for more people to participate, connect, belong and experience wellbeing through music and movement.

It builds on the long tradition of ceilidh dancing by applying a participation-focused approach to planning, delivery and reflection. Rather than assuming that everyone will participate in the same way, the framework encourages organisers to consider what might help different people feel welcomed, included and able to take part.

A Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is not defined by a particular venue, programme of dances or style of music. It can take place in village halls, schools, community centres, care settings, outdoor spaces, festivals and many other settings. Some events may involve energetic dancing throughout the evening, while others may include opportunities to sit, observe, sing, clap, move gently, chat with others or simply enjoy being part of the atmosphere. Participation is not measured by how much someone dances. It is about creating opportunities for people to engage in ways that are meaningful to them.

Every person arrives with their own experiences, strengths, identities, relationships and aspirations. Factors such as age, health, disability, neurodivergence, gender, culture, language, confidence, caring responsibilities, financial circumstances and previous experiences may all influence how someone experiences a ceilidh. These experiences often overlap, and no two people will participate in exactly the same way.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ encourages organisers to remain curious about these differences rather than making assumptions. By noticing barriers, listening to people's experiences and making thoughtful adaptations where appropriate, it becomes possible to create environments where more people have opportunities to participate in ways that work for them.

For this reason, every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ will look a little different. The framework is not intended to create identical events or prescribe a single way of working. Instead, it provides a shared way of thinking about participation while allowing each community to respond to its own people, traditions and local context.

Ultimately, a Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is about creating opportunities for people to come together through music and movement, where as many people as possible feel welcomed, valued and able to participate in ways that are meaningful to them.

Our Commitments

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is guided by five simple commitments. Together, they create the culture that sits behind every event, shaping not only what happens during the evening but also how each event is planned, delivered and reflected upon.

We will strive to create spaces where people feel:

- Welcome
- Safe
- Included
- Respected
- Valued

Participation is always voluntary. People may dance enthusiastically throughout the evening, join in for a single dance, participate from a chair, enjoy the music, chat with others or simply observe. Every form of participation has value.

The purpose of a Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is not to create perfect dancers or perfect events. It is to create opportunities for more people to participate, build connections and experience a sense of belonging within their community.

What a Wellbeing Ceilidh™ Is and Is Not

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is a participation framework that supports communities to create welcoming, accessible and inclusive ceilidh experiences. It provides a shared way of thinking about participation, while recognising that every community, venue and event will be different.

The framework encourages organisers to consider how music, movement, environment and community can create opportunities for more people to participate in ways that are meaningful to them. It is intended to complement, rather than replace, the experience, creativity and local knowledge of those organising each event.

A Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is:

- a community ceilidh guided by the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™
- a participation-focused community event
- an opportunity for people to come together through music, movement and shared experience
- an environment that encourages accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- part of a wider approach to supporting health and wellbeing through community participation

A Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is not:

- therapy
- counselling
- diagnosis
- treatment
- a clinical service
- a replacement for professional health or social care support

Many people experience positive effects from participating in community activities, including improvements in confidence, connection and wellbeing. However, the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ should be understood as a community activity rather than a healthcare intervention. Where people require professional assessment, treatment or ongoing support, they should be encouraged to access appropriate health, social care or community services.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ does not require organisers to have a healthcare background. The framework has been designed so that community organisers, callers, musicians, volunteers and organisations can apply its principles within their own roles and areas of responsibility.

Participation, Consent and Choice

Participation is always a matter of choice.

Some people will dance every dance. Others may choose to dance for one set before sitting down. Some may enjoy listening to the music, watching others, chatting with friends, helping to welcome new participants or simply being present within the atmosphere of the evening. These are all valid ways of participating.

No one should feel pressured to dance, to disclose personal information or to take part in any activity that feels uncomfortable. Respecting individual preferences, personal boundaries and different ways of participating is fundamental to creating an environment where people feel safe, valued and included.

Consent, choice and dignity sit at the heart of every Wellbeing Ceilidh™. Organisers should seek to create environments where people feel able to make their own decisions about how, when and whether they participate, knowing those choices will be respected.

The Wellbeing Team

Some Wellbeing Ceilidhs™ include trained Wellbeing Team volunteers who help create a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment throughout the event.

Their role may include welcoming participants, helping people feel orientated within the venue, offering practical assistance where appropriate, encouraging participation without pressure and signposting individuals towards further sources of support if requested. They contribute to the overall atmosphere of the event, helping people feel comfortable, connected and included.

Wellbeing Team members do not provide therapy, counselling, diagnosis or clinical care. Their role is to support participation while working within clear professional and organisational boundaries.

Like the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ itself, the Wellbeing Team continues to evolve through experience, reflection and community learning. Every event offers opportunities to understand participation more deeply, refine practice and continue building communities where more people have opportunities to take part.

Looking Ahead

The introduction has described the purpose and values of the Wellbeing Ceilidh™. The next section introduces the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™, exploring the principles that underpin the framework and how they support participation, accessibility and community wellbeing in practice.

Part 1 - The Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™

What is the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™?

The Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™ provides the foundation for every Wellbeing Ceilidh™. It brings together the principles that guide planning, participation, accessibility and continuous learning, offering a shared way of thinking about how communities can create welcoming and inclusive ceilidh experiences.

Rather than prescribing a single way of organising an event, the framework supports thoughtful decision-making. It recognises that every community is different, and that each Wellbeing Ceilidh™ should reflect the people, traditions and local context in which it takes place.

The framework explains the principles that underpin the Wellbeing Ceilidh™. The Wellbeing Ceilidh Method™, introduced in Part 2, builds on these principles by providing a practical approach to putting them into practice.

Our Vision

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ seeks to create communities where more people have opportunities to participate, build connections and experience a sense of belonging through music and movement.

The framework recognises that participation contributes to health and wellbeing, and that small, thoughtful adaptations can help community activities become more welcoming and accessible for many people.

Our long-term vision is for the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ to become an evidence-informed participation framework that supports communities, organisations and practitioners to create inclusive ceilidh experiences while respecting local traditions and community identity.

The Six Principles

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is guided by six principles. Together they provide the foundation for planning, delivering and reflecting on every event.

Although presented separately, the principles are not intended to be understood in isolation. They form a connected framework in which each principle strengthens the others.

Belonging is the foundation of the Wellbeing Ceilidh™. When people feel welcomed, respected and valued, participation becomes possible. From there, organisers can think

about accessibility, community care and the role of music and movement in bringing people together. Reflection then helps every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ continue to learn and evolve.

The principles are therefore not a checklist. They are a shared way of thinking about participation, community and wellbeing.

1. Everyone Belongs

Everyone should feel welcomed, respected and valued, regardless of their age, health, disability, neurodivergence, culture, confidence, previous experience or any other aspect of their identity or circumstances.

A Wellbeing Ceilidh™ creates opportunities for people to belong exactly as they are. Belonging is not something that people earn through participation. It is the starting point.

2. Participation Over Performance

Success is measured by participation rather than perfection.

The emphasis is on joining in, having a go and enjoying the experience rather than getting every step right. Some people will dance throughout the evening. Others may participate from a chair, watch, rest, join in gradually or simply enjoy the atmosphere. These are all meaningful forms of participation.

The question is not whether everyone danced.

The question is whether everyone had opportunities to participate in ways that were meaningful to them.

3. Accessibility by Design

Accessibility begins with planning.

Rather than waiting for barriers to arise, the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ encourages organisers to think proactively about how more people can participate from the outset.

Accessibility considers the many factors that influence participation, including the physical environment, communication, sensory experiences, cognition, confidence, culture and social connection.

It is not an additional feature or a final adjustment. It is a principle that shapes every stage of planning, delivery and reflection.

4. Community Care

Communities become stronger when people care for one another.

A Wellbeing Ceilidh™ encourages kindness, encouragement, shared responsibility and respect. Participants, volunteers, musicians, callers and organisers all contribute to creating an environment where people feel welcomed and supported.

Community care is not clinical care. It is people looking out for one another in ordinary, human ways.

Everyone has a role in helping others feel included and able to participate.

5. Music, Movement and Joy

Music and movement create opportunities for connection, expression and shared enjoyment.

The purpose is not performance, but participation. Dancing together, laughing together and sharing experiences help strengthen relationships, build confidence and foster a sense of belonging.

Music and dancing bring people together, but it is the relationships that grow through these shared experiences that lie at the heart of the Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

6. Learn and Evolve

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ provides opportunities to learn.

Reflection, feedback and lived experience all contribute to the ongoing development of the framework. Organisers are encouraged to notice what supported participation, what barriers remained and what could be improved in the future.

The Participation Review™ provides a structured way of reflecting on each event and supports continuous learning over time.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is an evolving framework, shaped by the communities who use it.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ Model

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is built on a series of connected ideas. Each layer supports the next, creating a practical approach to participation, accessibility and community learning.

Purpose

Creating opportunities for participation, connection, belonging and wellbeing.



The Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™

The principles that guide every Wellbeing Ceilidh™.



The Wellbeing Ceilidh Method™

A practical approach to putting those principles into practice.



Accessibility by Design

Considering participation throughout planning, delivery and reflection.



Participation Review™

Learning from every event through structured reflection and continuous improvement.



Growing Communities

Strengthening participation, connection and wellbeing over time.

An Evolving Framework

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is intended to continue developing through experience, reflection and community learning.

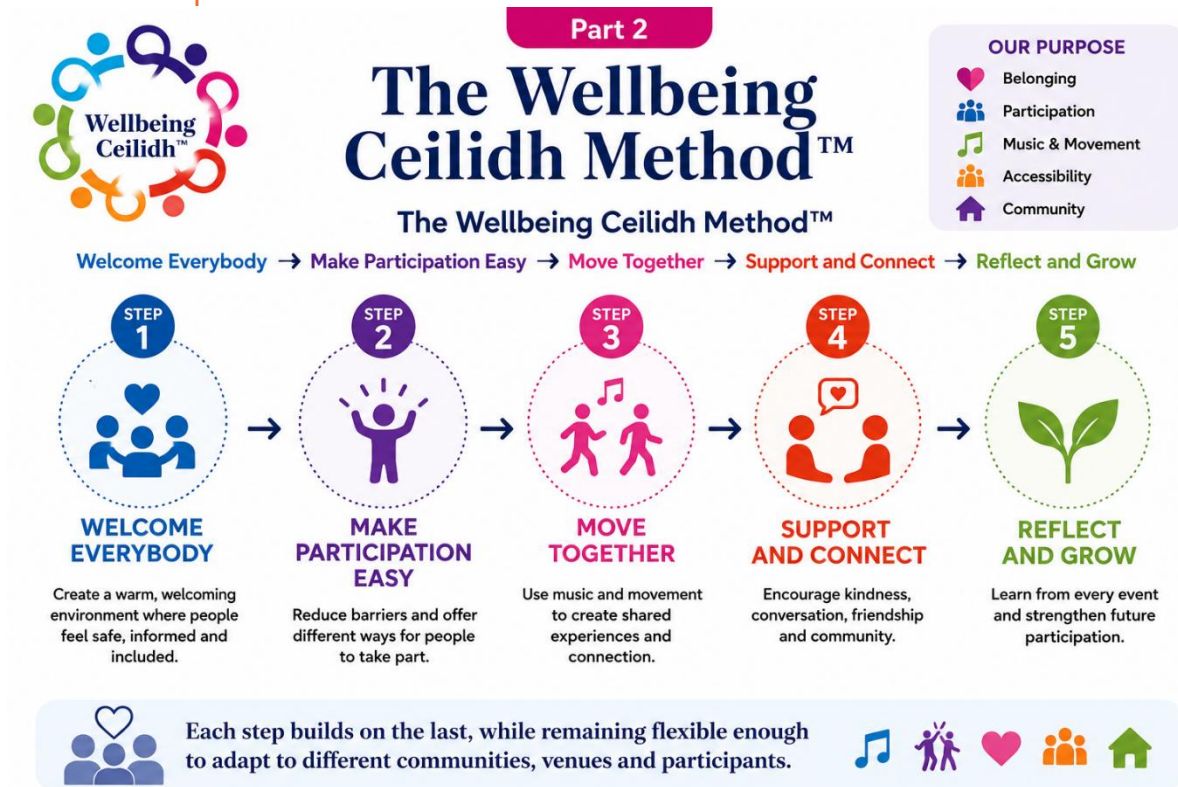
As communities use the framework in different settings, new ideas, adaptations and examples of good practice will continue to emerge. This Starter Pack introduces the Founding Community Member Edition of the framework. It establishes the principles that underpin the Wellbeing Ceilidh™, while recognising that meaningful learning comes through practice, collaboration and shared experience.

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ contributes to that learning. By reflecting on experience, sharing ideas and remaining open to improvement, communities become active contributors to the ongoing development of the framework.



Part 2 - The Wellbeing Ceilidh Method™

From Principles to Practice



The Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™ describes the principles that underpin every Wellbeing Ceilidh™. The Wellbeing Ceilidh Method™ describes how those principles come to life.

Rather than prescribing a fixed sequence of activities, the Method offers a flexible approach that can be adapted to different communities, venues and participants while remaining true to the values of the Framework.

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ will look a little different. The people, setting, music and activities may change, but the purpose remains the same: to create opportunities for participation, connection, belonging and wellbeing.

The Method brings together five interconnected stages. Together, they support organisers to create environments where more people feel welcomed, included and able to participate in ways that are meaningful to them.

Step 1: Welcome Everybody

Participation begins long before the first dance.

The way people are welcomed, greeted and introduced to an event shapes whether they feel comfortable enough to take part. A warm welcome communicates a simple but powerful message:

You belong here.

Creating a welcoming environment may involve providing clear information before the event, offering friendly greetings and introductions, explaining what to expect and reminding people that participation is always voluntary. For some people, simply knowing they are free to observe, rest or join in gradually removes significant barriers to participation.

Purpose

Help people feel welcomed, informed and able to participate in ways that work for them.

Questions for Reflection

- Does everyone know what to expect?
- Have we created an environment that feels welcoming?
- Have we considered barriers that might prevent people feeling able to join in?
- Have people been given permission to participate at their own pace?

Practical examples are explored further in the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ Facilitator Guide.

Step 2: Make Participation Easy

Participation should feel inviting rather than intimidating.

People experience barriers for many different reasons. One person may hesitate because of limited mobility. Another because they are anxious about making a mistake. Another because the environment feels overwhelming. Someone else may simply need more time to observe before joining in.

The same behaviour can reflect many different experiences. Rather than asking "*Why aren't they joining in?*", the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ encourages organisers to ask:

"What might help this person feel more able to participate?"

Participation may look different for every individual. Watching, listening, joining for one dance, participating from a chair, taking regular breaks or returning after some time away are all meaningful forms of participation.

Purpose

Reduce barriers so that more people feel able to participate.

Questions for Reflection

- Can people participate at their own pace?
- Are different ways of participating visible and valued?
- Are instructions simple and reassuring?
- Is participation encouraged without pressure?

Examples of practical adaptations are included in the Accessibility Guide.

Step 3: Move Together

Shared movement creates shared experience.

Whether people dance enthusiastically, sway gently to the music or simply clap along from a chair, moving together creates opportunities for enjoyment, confidence and connection.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ values participation over technical performance. The aim is not perfect dancing. It is creating shared experiences through music and movement that help people feel connected with one another.

Purpose

Create opportunities for people to connect through music, movement and shared experience.

Questions for Reflection

- Are people enjoying themselves?
- Are participants connecting with one another?
- Does the atmosphere encourage participation rather than performance?
- Does everyone have opportunities to participate in ways that suit them?

Step 4: Support and Connect

Some of the most meaningful moments happen between the dances.

Conversations over refreshments. Welcoming someone who has arrived alone. Introducing two people with shared interests. Sharing laughter after getting a dance wrong.

These everyday interactions help transform a social event into a community.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ recognises that belonging grows through ordinary acts of kindness and community care. Some events may include Wellbeing Team volunteers who help create a welcoming atmosphere, encourage inclusion and signpost people to additional sources of support where appropriate.

Purpose

Strengthen connection, belonging and community through everyday human interaction.

Questions for Reflection

- Do people feel welcomed beyond the dancing?
- Are quieter participants included?
- Are opportunities for conversation available?
- Is kindness visible throughout the event?

Further guidance is available in the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ Facilitator Guide.

Step 5: Reflect and Grow

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ provides an opportunity to learn.

No event will remove every barrier, and no organiser will anticipate every need. Reflection is therefore an essential part of the Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

Through observation, feedback and shared learning, organisers gradually develop a deeper understanding of what enables participation within their own communities.

The Participation Review™ provides a structured way of reflecting on each event, helping organisers identify what supported participation, what barriers remained and where future improvements can be made.

Purpose

Support continuous learning so that every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ strengthens future participation.

Questions for Reflection

- What supported participation today?
- What barriers remained?
- What surprised us?
- What is one thing we could improve next time?

Bringing the Method Together

The Wellbeing Ceilidh Method™ is not a checklist. It is a way of thinking about participation in practice.

Every community, venue and group of participants will be different. The Method encourages organisers to remain curious, responsive and willing to adapt while remaining grounded in the six principles of the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™.

Together, the Framework and the Method create a practical approach to building communities where more people have opportunities to participate, connect, belong and experience wellbeing through music and movement.

Part 3 - Accessibility by Design

What Does Accessibility by Design Mean?

Accessibility is one of the six principles of the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™.

Rather than being considered after an event has been planned, accessibility is part of the thinking from the very beginning. It shapes how organisers plan the environment, communicate with participants, support different forms of participation and reflect on each event.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ recognises that people experience community activities in different ways. Physical health, sensory differences, cognition, communication, confidence, culture, previous experience and life circumstances can all influence how someone participates.

Accessibility by Design begins with a simple question:

How can we help more people participate?

The aim is not to remove every barrier. Some barriers cannot be removed completely. Instead, Accessibility by Design encourages organisers to notice barriers, reduce them wherever possible and create environments where people have genuine opportunities to participate in ways that are meaningful to them.

Accessibility Benefits Everyone

Accessibility is sometimes thought of as something designed for a small number of people.

In practice, many of the adjustments that make an event more accessible improve the experience for everyone. Clear information helps first-time visitors. Opportunities to rest benefit people of all ages. Flexible participation reduces anxiety. Simple instructions build confidence. Offering choice helps people feel respected.

Designing for inclusion rarely benefits only one group. More often, it creates a better experience for the whole community.

Accessibility Is About Participation

Within the Wellbeing Ceilidh™, accessibility is about far more than entering a building.

It is about creating the conditions that allow people to participate.

This means helping people to:

- feel welcomed
- understand what is happening
- make informed choices
- participate at their own pace
- contribute in different ways
- experience connection and belonging

Participation may look different for every individual. Some people will dance throughout the evening. Others may participate from a chair, observe before joining in or simply enjoy the music and conversation. Each of these represents a meaningful way of taking part.

Different People Experience Different Barriers

People may experience barriers for many different reasons, many of which are not immediately visible.

Someone standing quietly at the edge of the room may be recovering from illness, managing chronic pain or fatigue, feeling overwhelmed by noise, anxious about getting the steps wrong, unfamiliar with ceilidhs or simply waiting until they feel ready to join in.

The same behaviour can reflect many different experiences.

Accessibility by Design encourages curiosity rather than assumption. Rather than asking:

"Why aren't they joining in?"

it encourages organisers to ask:

"What might help this person feel more able to participate?"

Thinking About Accessibility

Accessibility is rarely one single issue. Different aspects of an event often interact, shaping how people experience participation.

Organisers are encouraged to think broadly about accessibility throughout planning, delivery and reflection.

Physical accessibility

Can people move around safely and comfortably?

Are there different ways to participate?

Are opportunities to sit, rest and rejoin the event available?

Sensory accessibility

How might lighting, sound, noise and the physical environment affect different participants?

Can sensory overload be reduced where possible?

Cognitive accessibility

Is information clear and easy to understand?

Are instructions simple?

Do people have opportunities to observe before joining in?

Social and cultural accessibility

Does everyone feel welcomed and respected?

Are assumptions being avoided?

Are different identities, cultures and experiences recognised and valued?

Emotional accessibility

Do people feel safe to participate without pressure?

Can they observe, take breaks or leave and return without judgement?

Is kindness visible throughout the event?

Accessibility Grows Through Choice

One of the simplest ways to improve accessibility is to increase choice.

Participants should feel able to decide how they engage with the event. They may dance enthusiastically, join in for one dance, participate from a chair, watch before joining, avoid physical contact, take regular breaks or simply enjoy the music without dancing.

Participation should always be invited.

It should never be expected.

Accessibility Is a Shared Responsibility

Creating accessible community experiences is not the responsibility of one individual.

Callers, organisers, volunteers, musicians, venue staff and participants all contribute to creating an environment where people feel welcomed, respected and able to participate.

Accessibility is therefore not simply something that is provided.

It is something that is created together.

An Ongoing Journey

Accessibility is not a checklist that can be completed once.

Communities change. People change. Understanding develops.

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ provides opportunities to learn from participants, volunteers, callers and organisers. Those experiences strengthen future events and continue to shape the ongoing development of the Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

Accessibility by Design in Practice

This section introduces the philosophy of Accessibility by Design within the Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

Practical guidance, including venue considerations, communication strategies, inclusive dance adaptations, sensory environments, volunteer roles and accessibility tools, is explored in the **Wellbeing Ceilidh™ Accessibility Guide**.

A Simple Reminder

Accessibility by Design means:

- thinking ahead
- noticing barriers
- offering choices
- encouraging participation
- learning continuously

Accessibility is not separate from the Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

It is part of what makes it a Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

Part 4 – Getting Started

Bringing the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ to Life

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is unique.

Different communities, venues, participants and organisers will shape each event in different ways. There is no single "correct" way to deliver a Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

What matters is remaining grounded in the principles of the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™, using the Wellbeing Ceilidh Method™ to guide your thinking, and continuing to learn from every event.

You do not need to create the perfect Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

You simply need to create opportunities for people to participate, connect, belong and experience wellbeing together.

Start small.

Stay curious.

Keep learning.

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ becomes part of the journey.

Before Your First Wellbeing Ceilidh™

Rather than working through a checklist, begin by asking yourself a few simple questions.

These prompts are designed to support reflection and planning. There are no right or wrong answers, and every community will be different.

Who are we hoping to welcome?

Think about the people your event is designed to include.

Who is this event for?

Who might particularly benefit from opportunities to connect, participate and belong?

What might make participation easier?

Think broadly about the different ways people may experience barriers to participation.

What practical choices could you offer?

How might you create an environment where participation feels welcoming rather than intimidating?

What might help more people feel able to join in?

How will people connect?

A Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is about more than dancing.

How will people have opportunities to meet one another, share conversations, laugh together and feel part of the community?

How will quieter participants be welcomed into those moments of connection?

How will we learn?

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ provides an opportunity to learn.

How will you reflect afterwards?

Whose experiences will you listen to?

What will help make the next event even more welcoming and inclusive?

A Final Planning Reminder

As you begin, remember that accessibility is not something that happens after an event has been planned.

It is woven throughout every stage of the process.

The most important question is:

"Have we created as many opportunities for participation as we reasonably can?"

No event will remove every barrier.

No organiser will anticipate every need.

What matters is approaching each Wellbeing Ceilidh™ with curiosity, kindness and a willingness to learn.

Part 5 – Learning Together

The Participation Review™

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ provides an opportunity to learn.

No event will remove every barrier, and no organiser will anticipate every need. Communities change, people change and our understanding continues to develop over time. Reflection is therefore an essential part of the Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

The Participation Review™ is a simple reflective tool designed to help organisers learn from each event. Rather than evaluating success or failure, it encourages curiosity about what supported participation, what barriers remained and what might help create even more welcoming and inclusive experiences in the future.

The review is intended to support continuous learning rather than measure performance. There are no perfect events. Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ offers opportunities to strengthen future practice.

Small improvements, made consistently over time, can have a meaningful impact on participation, belonging and community wellbeing.

The following pages contain the Participation Review™ template, which can be adapted to suit different communities, venues and events.

A Final Reflection

Success is not measured by how many people danced.

Success is measured by whether people had meaningful opportunities to participate in ways that felt right for them.

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ contributes to our shared understanding of how music, movement, connection and accessibility can strengthen participation, belonging and wellbeing.

Thank you for helping the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ continue to learn and grow.

The Participation Review™

Learning from Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™

Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ provides an opportunity to learn.

The Participation Review™ is a simple reflective tool designed to help organisers understand what supported participation, where barriers remained and how future events can become even more welcoming and inclusive.

The review is intended to support continuous learning rather than evaluate success or failure. There are no perfect events. Every Wellbeing Ceilidh™ offers opportunities to strengthen future practice.

Event	Date	Venue	Organiser(s)

Before the Event

Who are we hoping to welcome?

Think about the people this event is designed to include.

- ☐ Older adults
- ☐ Families
- ☐ Young people
- ☐ People living with long-term conditions
- ☐ People experiencing loneliness
- ☐ New members of the community
- ☐ People living with disability
- ☐ People from different cultural communities
- ☐ Other: _____

What barriers might people experience?

Think broadly about participation.

People may experience physical, sensory, cognitive, emotional, social or cultural barriers.

What have we planned to support participation?

What adaptations, choices or opportunities have we intentionally included?

After the Event

1. Notice

Who seemed able to participate most easily?

Who appeared to experience the greatest barriers to participation?

Who appeared to want to participate but didn't?

What examples of meaningful participation did we notice?

2. Understand

What appeared to support participation?

What appeared to reduce participation?

Which barriers did we notice?

☐ Physical

☐ Sensory

☐ Cognitive

☐ Emotional

☐ Social

☐ Cultural

☐ Communication

☐ Other -----

Comments

What adaptations appeared particularly helpful?

Did anything surprise us?

3. Adapt

If we were running this Wellbeing Ceilidh™ again tomorrow...

What is one change we could make to support participation even more effectively?

4. Learn

What have we learned that could strengthen future Wellbeing Ceilidhs™?

Would this learning be helpful to share with the wider Wellbeing Ceilidh™ community?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comment

Part 6 – Join the Community

An Invitation

Thank you for exploring the Wellbeing Ceilidh™.

This Starter Pack introduces the principles, values and practical thinking that underpin the Wellbeing Ceilidh™. We hope it provides a strong foundation for creating community experiences where more people feel able to participate, connect and belong.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is not intended to remain a fixed model. Like the communities it serves, it will continue to evolve through practice, reflection, research and shared learning.

Every organiser, caller, volunteer and participant brings valuable experience. By sharing what works, what surprises us and what we continue to learn, we can strengthen future Wellbeing Ceilidhs™ together.

Continue Your Learning

This Starter Pack is the beginning of the journey.

Additional resources are being developed to support organisers in planning, delivering and reflecting on Wellbeing Ceilidhs™, including:

- **Wellbeing Ceilidh™ Facilitator Guide** — practical guidance for planning and delivering events.
- **Wellbeing Ceilidh™ Accessibility Guide** — practical ideas and adaptations to support inclusive participation.
- **Participation-Friendly Dance Library™** — dance profiles exploring participation, accessibility and adaptation.
- **Community Learning Hub** — shared ideas, examples, research and continuous learning from Wellbeing Ceilidhs™ across different communities.

Together, these resources aim to support a growing community committed to creating welcoming, inclusive and participation-focused community experiences.

The Ceilidh Club

The Ceilidh Club is the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ community of practice.

It brings together organisers, callers, volunteers and others who share an interest in creating welcoming, participation-focused community events.

Members will have opportunities to:

- connect with other organisers
- share ideas and practical adaptations
- ask questions
- reflect on experiences
- contribute to the ongoing development of the Wellbeing Ceilidh™
- access new resources as they become available

The community is guided by the same values that underpin the Framework: participation, accessibility, kindness, respect, curiosity, collaboration and continuous learning.

Stay Connected

If you would like to continue your journey with the Wellbeing Ceilidh™, we invite you to join our growing community of practice.

Whether you organise one event or many, every conversation, adaptation and reflection helps strengthen future Wellbeing Ceilidhs™.

Together, we can continue creating community experiences where more people feel able to participate, connect, belong and experience wellbeing.

Thank You

Thank you for being part of the Wellbeing Ceilidh™ journey.

We look forward to learning alongside you.

Terms & Conditions

Contact

For permissions, licensing enquiries or partnership opportunities, please contact:

Vital Adaptation Ltd

Email: vitaladaptation@gmail.com

Website: www.vitaladaptation.com

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Wellbeing Ceilidh™

Building participation through music, movement and community.

The Wellbeing Ceilidh™ is a participation-focused framework that helps communities create welcoming, accessible and inclusive ceilidhs where more people feel able to participate, connect and belong.

This Starter Pack introduces the Wellbeing Ceilidh Framework™, the Wellbeing Ceilidh Method™ and Accessibility by Design, providing a foundation for organisers who want to create community experiences that place participation at their heart.

Learn more

www.vitaladaptation.com



Vital Adaptation®

Navigating Health. Promoting Participation