

# Good Vibrations

Magazine — Issue 2

**Welcome to the second issue of Good Vibrations from Age NI, supported by the Department for Communities' Warm, Well and Connected programme.**

It's aimed at addressing loneliness, isolation, emotional wellbeing, physical activity and eating well. Thanks to their funding, organisations such as the Healthy Living Alliance, Rural Support Networks, Carers NI and Age NI are delivering information, inspiration and activities to help

you to stay well and keep connected, with the support of 1500+ brilliant rural organisations. Try our Good Vibrations Take 5 Tracker inside and read about the support available in every corner of Northern Ireland. You'll find contact details on the back, so get in touch – we're all here to help.



Linda Robinson, Chief Executive, Age NI



## Staying Connected with Deirdre Hargey



Minister for Communities



**Lockdown has been extremely tough for everyone. As Minister for Communities, I had to respond urgently to the drastic changes in people's lives caused by the pandemic.**

In the middle of the first lockdown in June, I took ill and was admitted to hospital for emergency surgery. During my recovery, it reminded me that your health is your wealth, and my main strength was my family and friends.

As I work every day and most nights, it is important to build in some time to maintain connections. I have 7 brothers and sisters and I am very close to my Mummy. I don't want to miss out on seeing my nieces and nephews grow up.

When it comes to simple pleasures, the things that make me happy are doing the weekly shop, cleaning, doing crafts and walking (when I can motivate myself). I like to unwind to music and I enjoy a wide range from pop and R&B to traditional Irish and folk, which reminds me of my Daddy. I have a few TV guilty pleasures include Eastenders and House of Cards, along with documentaries on politics, social

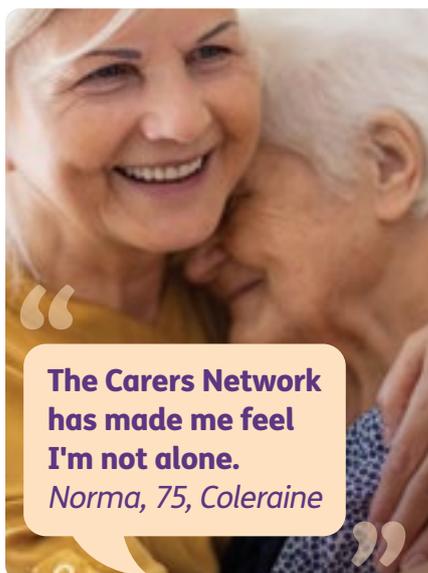
issues and international stories; I love understanding what makes people tick.

If you're asking me if I'm keeping active, the honest answer is, not enough. I used to play Camogie, but like many people, work takes over. Keeping active definitely has a positive impact on your mental health and makes you more alert.

I have been fortunate to use technology to connect with friends and family. As humans, we like to interact and this pandemic has restricted that. It's a challenge for many using or getting access to technology and we need to find ways of connecting people to reduce isolation and loneliness.

However, I have seen first-hand how this pandemic has brought out the caring side in people and it has encouraged me to see individuals and organisations looking after their neighbours and community. We need to create a greater sense of community and encourage this more.

# Warm, Well & Connected Partners



**The Carers Network has made me feel I'm not alone.**  
*Norma, 75, Coleraine*

## Carers NI

If you are looking after a family member or friend who is ill, elderly or who has a disability, looking after yourself is just as important as looking after someone else. Lockdown is hard and caring responsibilities can make this feel very lonely.

Carers NI is here to make life better for carers, with expert advice and support. The carers network connects carers, allowing you to share your experiences and reduce your feelings of isolation. No-one has to care alone.

As part of the Warm, Well and Connected programme, the Carers Collective has just been launched. Carers can take part in Zoom education sessions to help take care of themselves and learn activities to do with loved ones they look after.

**Find out how to connect with Carers NI on the back page.**

## Rural Communities

If you live in the country and you're struggling to stay connected during lockdown, the network of rural voluntary organisations and community groups may be the link you're looking for.

These groups are offering lots of activities designed to support and boost people's wellbeing while they stay safe at home.

With online workshops, you can have a go at bird watching, get gardening and grow your own, or try your hand at art & crafts. Get active and feel good by moving to music, improve your balance with tai chi, or try armchair yoga for some gentle movement to reduce stress, improve concentration, ease joint pain and increase mobility. If you're not online, ask about their activity packs for all ages. *DfC in partnership with DAERA have funded the Rural Support Networks.*

**You will find details of all the local groups on the back page.**



**The yoga really helped me unwind.**  
*Jean, 67, Newry*



**The online classes have kept us going.** *Richard, 81 and Rosa, 82, Derry*

## Healthy Living Centre Alliance

The Healthy Living Centre Alliance is an active network of 29 community-led health improvement organisations across Northern Ireland. Healthy Living Centres do a brilliant job of connecting people to health and public services. Thanks to funding from the Department for Communities, they are currently offering over 200 free online workshops and programmes to help us get connected, take care of ourselves and learn new skills.

Try online yoga, Chi Mi or Soulsa dance classes, access advice on mental and emotional wellbeing or have a go at intergenerational cooking or art classes.

All the activities are online, so no matter where you are located, you can access them.

### How do I sign up?

- 1 Visit the website to find the map of Healthy Living Centres [www.hlcalliance.org/#map](http://www.hlcalliance.org/#map)
- 2 Choose a Healthy Living Centre to see what each has on offer
- 3 Select *More Information* and book online

# Good Vibrations Take 5 Tracker



**This tracker has been developed using the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing, five simple ways to maintain and improve your wellbeing – think of them as your five-a-day for feeling good.**

While current restrictions limit our usual routines, we can think creatively about how to build these five steps into our daily lives. To get you started, Age NI has created its Good Vibrations Take 5 Tracker.

Every day, reflect on each of these five steps which are important to your wellbeing. Think about how much attention you gave them in your daily routine and give yourself a score for each area in the tables below. At the end of each week, add them up to note a weekly total.

**1 point** - I'm getting started (less than 5 minutes)

**2 points** - I'm doing well (up to 15 minutes)

**3 points** - I'm doing great! (more than 30 minutes)

## Weekly Progress

This is your personal tracker, it's not a competition. Do what YOU can do and aim only to improve and to try new things.

It takes time to form a habit. Keep a weekly score and see if you can keep it going for a month.

## Weekly Total

Week 1 Total

Week 2 Total

Week 3 Total

Week 4 Total

**At the end of each week reflect on:**

**3** Things I have enjoyed doing

**3** Things I plan to do next week

Download another copy from: [www.ageni.org/take5tracker](http://www.ageni.org/take5tracker)

### Connect



**Connect with other people:** family, friends and neighbours. Social relationships are important to support wellbeing. Spend time developing and nurturing them. Building connections will support and enrich you every day.

week	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1							
2							
3							
4							

### Be Active



**Exercising makes you feel good.** Find an activity you enjoy, one that suits your level of mobility and fitness. Being physically active will also promote and support your emotional wellbeing. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate activity five times a week.

1							
2							
3							
4							

### Keep Learning



**Try something new, rediscover an old hobby or sign up for a course.** Take on a different responsibility, fix a bike, learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy. Learning new things will make you more confident, as well as being fun to do.

1							
2							
3							
4							

### Take Notice



**Stop, pause, or take a moment to look around you.**

What can you see, feel, smell or even taste? Look for the beautiful, new or unusual things in your everyday life, which you may not have noticed, and think about how they make you feel.

1							
2							
3							
4							

### Give



**Do something nice for a friend or stranger,** thank someone, smile, volunteer your time or consider

joining a community group. Look out as well in. Seeing yourself and your happiness linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and will create connections with the people around you.

1							
2							
3							
4							

# Get in Touch



## Are you interested in accessing support from the Warm Well and Connected Programme?

You can find out more information on local activities and programmes to boost your emotional wellbeing and reduce feelings of social isolation, by contacting any of the partners in this newsletter or visit:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-practical-support-individuals](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-practical-support-individuals)

## Carers NI



For information on Carers NI, including its upcoming Care for a Cuppa network sessions, contact **028 9043 9843**, email [advice@carersni.org](mailto:advice@carersni.org), find them on Facebook [www.facebook.com/CarersNI](https://www.facebook.com/CarersNI) or online: [www.carersuk.org/northernireland](http://www.carersuk.org/northernireland)

## Healthy Living Alliance

Visit [www.hlcalliance.org](http://www.hlcalliance.org) to find your local services or call **028 9031 0346**



Healthy Living Centre Alliance

## Age NI

**If you are concerned about yourself, a family member or friend, do not hesitate to contact Age NI – we are here to help! Get in touch via freephone **0808 808 7575** or email [advice@ageni.org](mailto:advice@ageni.org)**

Age NI is providing online Good Vibrations workshops for older people, hosted by its team of wellbeing experts. Check out Age NI on Facebook for details of live webcasts: [www.facebook.com/agenicharity](https://www.facebook.com/agenicharity) and watch video content: [www.youtube.com/AgeNIorg](https://www.youtube.com/AgeNIorg)

### Move with Mary



Gentle strength & balance exercises

### Take Notice with Frank



Calm your mind to live in the moment

### Eat Well with Jane



Healthy recipes & nutrition

### Life Stories with Geraldine



Share your memories & tell your story

## Rural Support Networks

### Cookstown & Western Shores Area Network Stewartstown

**Tel:** 028 8773 8845

**Email:** [wwc@cwsan.org](mailto:wwc@cwsan.org)

### County Down Rural Community Network Downpatrick

**Tel:** 028 4461 2311

**Email:** [info@countdownrcn.com](mailto:info@countdownrcn.com)

### Northern Area Community Network Cushendall

**Tel:** 028 2177 2100

**Email:** [registration@nacn.org](mailto:registration@nacn.org)

### Omagh Forum for Rural Associations Omagh

**Tel:** 028 8225 1559

**Email:** [info@omaghforum.org](mailto:info@omaghforum.org)

### TADA Rural Support Network Portadown

**Tel:** 028 3839 8888

**Email:** [info@tadarsn.com](mailto:info@tadarsn.com)

### RAPID Community Network Killaloo, L/Derry

**Tel:** 028 7133 7149

**Email:** [registration@rapidni.com](mailto:registration@rapidni.com)

