

STRENGTH BASED LEARNING PROGRAMME 25/26.

Working with our communities in
a strength-based way.

With Sneha Salel and Rhodri James.

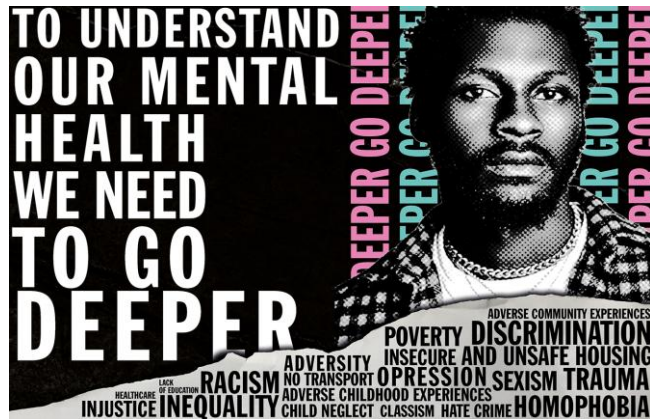
PLATF **FORM**

For mental health and social change
Dros iechyd meddwl a newid cymdeithasol

WHO ARE WE?

- We work alongside 300 staff
- Support 15,000+ people a year
- 150 projects and services
- Work in five Welsh Health Board areas and fifteen local authorities

- **Crisis prevention and home:** crisis services, supported accommodation, homelessness prevention and specialist housing support
- **Employment, volunteering and skills development:** work placements, peer mentoring, qualifications and community support
- **Children, young people and families:** wellbeing programmes, one-to-one and group support, peer networks, out of hours drop-in, community projects
- **Wellbeing:** talking therapies, clinical supervision, workplace wellbeing, trauma informed organisation development and bespoke consultation
- **Campaigns and influencing:** growing the movement for social change, and campaigning for a better future for mental health



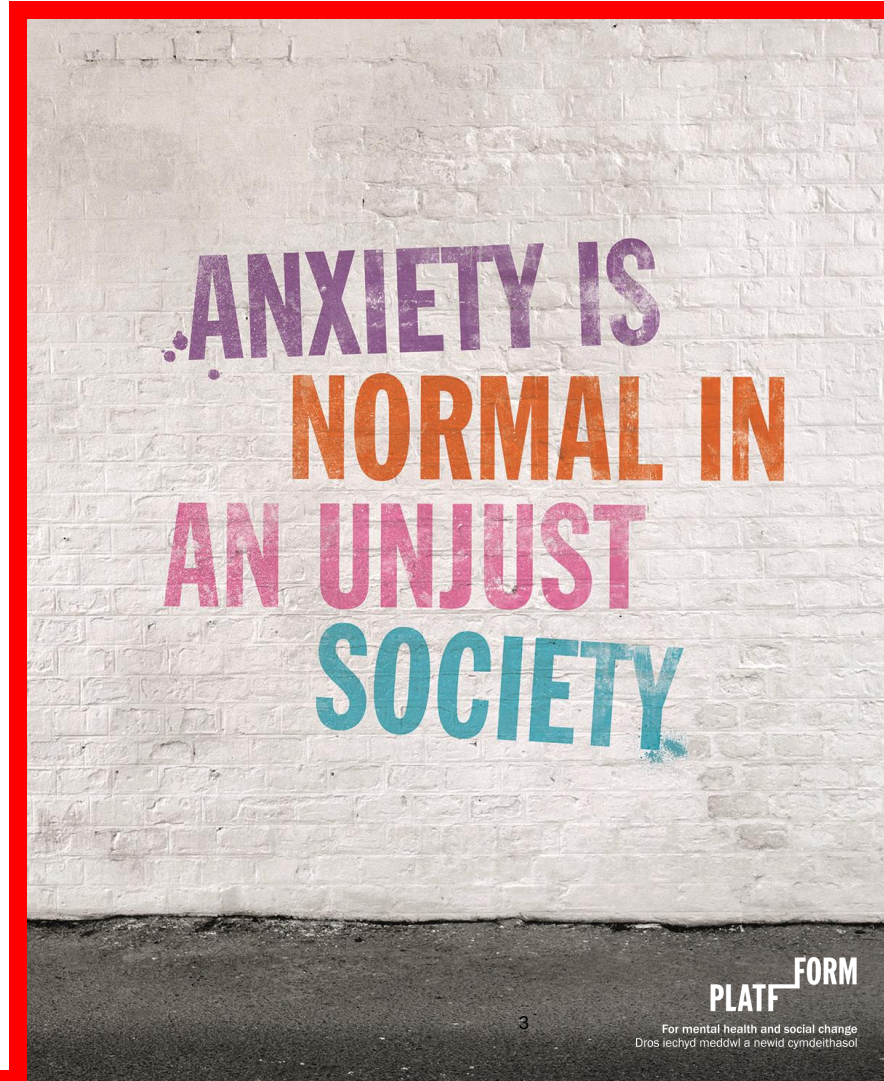
PLATFFORM'S MISSION

To change the dominant narrative around mental health

- By advocating for the role that trauma, life experiences and socio-economic circumstances have on our mental health + ability to heal.
- By making the evidence for this accessible to help shift public perceptions.

To make our 'helping systems' work better for people

- By changing how we provide services to people in distress.
- Focus first on the mental health, housing, homelessness, and young people's systems we interact with.



Context

Clinical Psychology

Focus: Individual mental health and wellbeing

Scope: Assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental health and psychological issues

Work Settings: Hospitals, health centres, community mental health teams, and social services

Key Characteristics: Focuses on individual pathology and provides direct therapy.

Community Psychology

Focus: The community as a unit of study and its impact on individuals

Scope: Understanding social factors influencing mental health and promoting social change

Work Settings: Community organisations, research settings, and advocacy organisations

Key Characteristics: Emphasises social environments, community-based interventions, and empowerment.

Community Psychology



Collaboration and Community Strength

- Strength-based approach
- Social justice
- Multilevel perspective
- Empowerment and participation
- Collective wellness



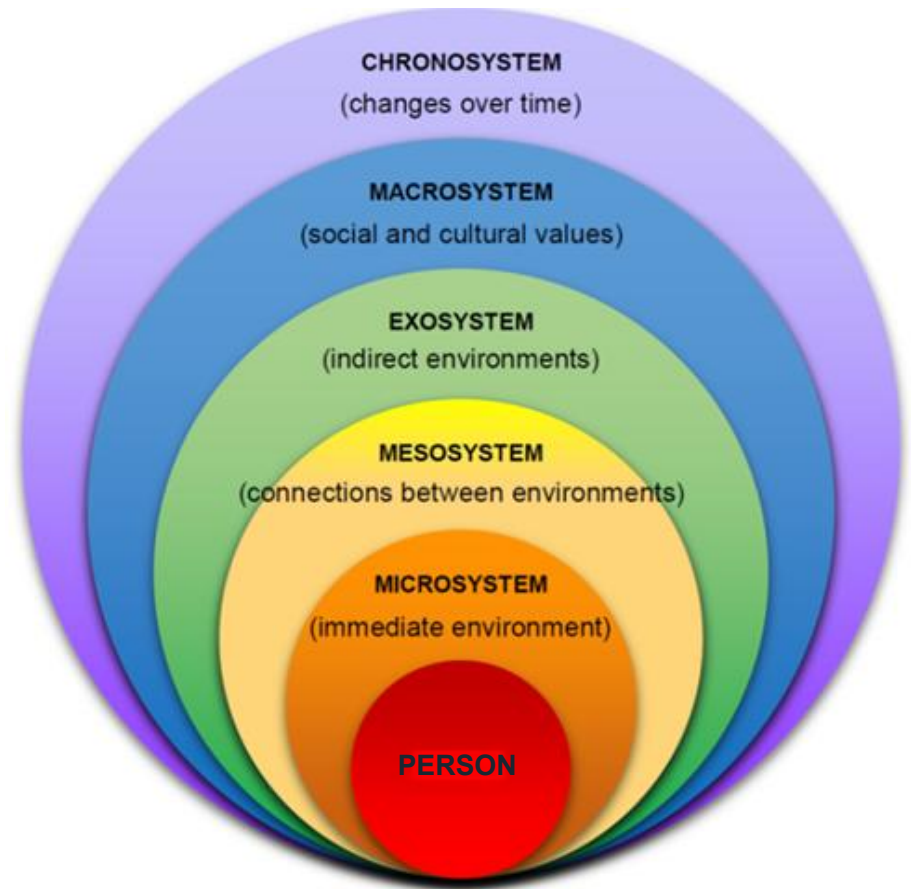
Power Sharing

- Individual and collective action
- Building capacities
- Focus on social justice
- Participation and decision-making



Ecological Perspectives

- Interdependence
- Adaption
- Cycling of resources
- Succession



Models

Place-based approach

Trauma-informed practice

Human Learning Systems (HLS)

Asset-Based Community Development
(ABCD)

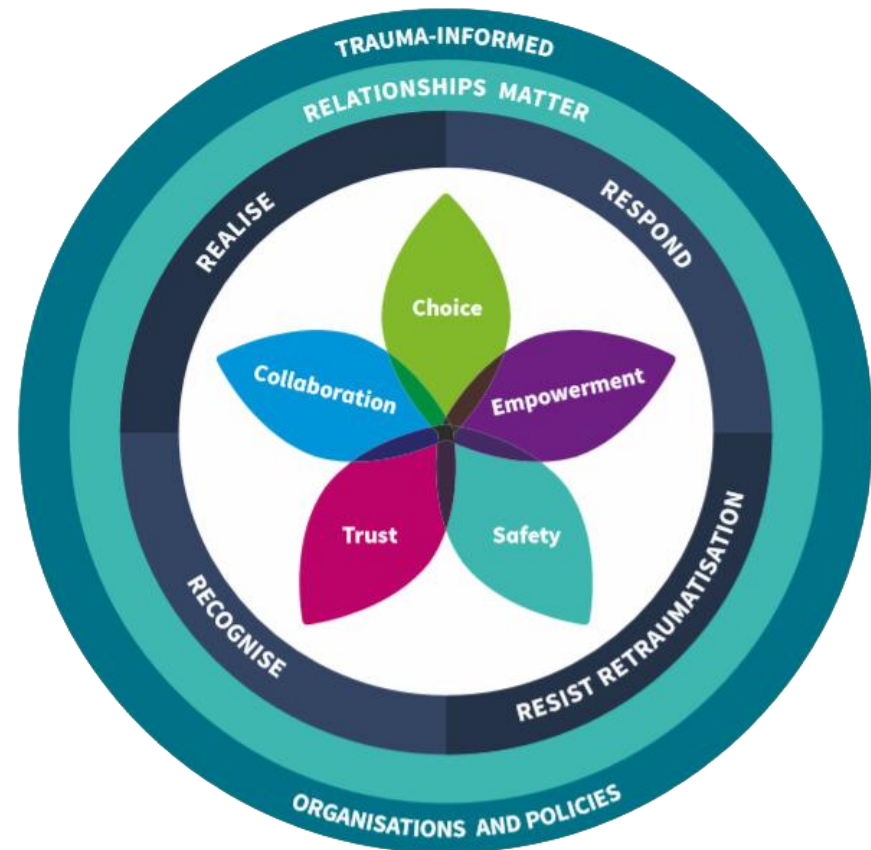
Place-Based Approach

- Focus on a specific location
- Community engagement
- Collaboration and partnership
- Local resource utilisation
- Long-term commitment

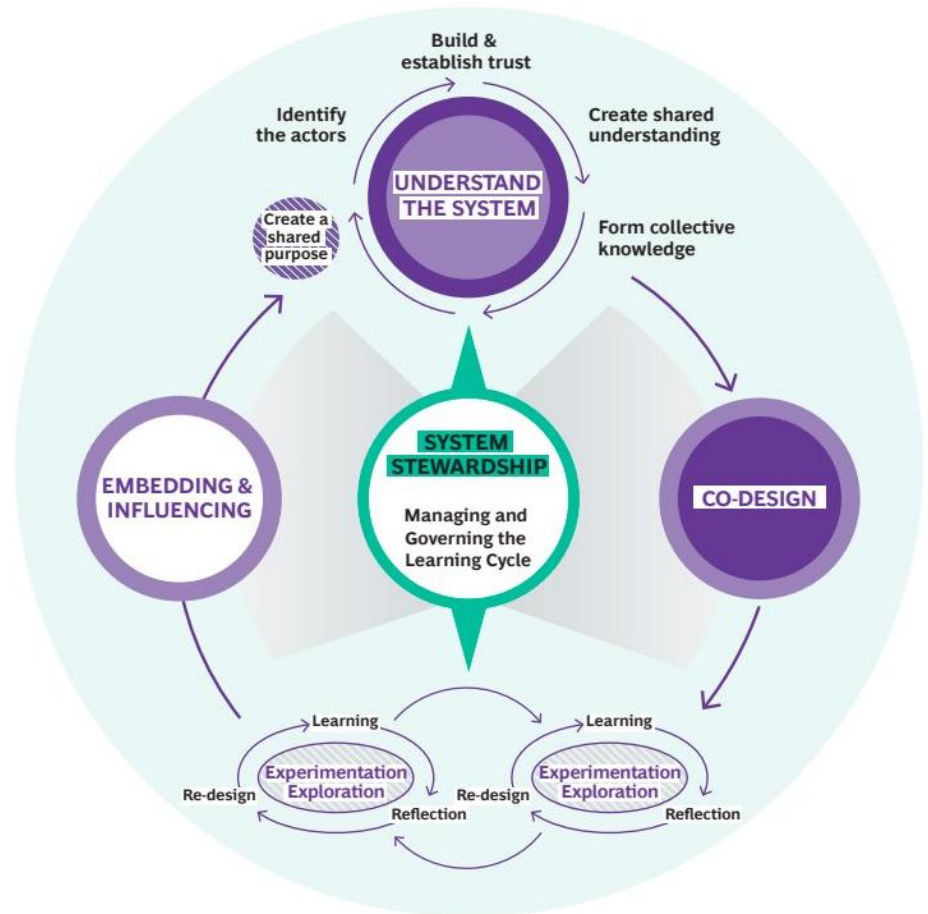


Trauma-Informed Practice

- Safety
- Trust
- Choice
- Collaboration
- Power-sharing
- Cultural considerations



- Human-centred
- Continuous learning and adaption
- Relationship-based approach
- System-wide change
- Measuring what matters



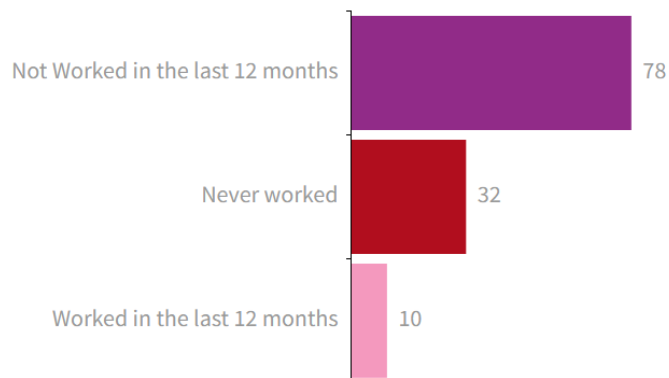
ABCD

- Strength-focused
- Community-driven
- Emphasis on relationships/connections
- Asset mapping
- Interdependence

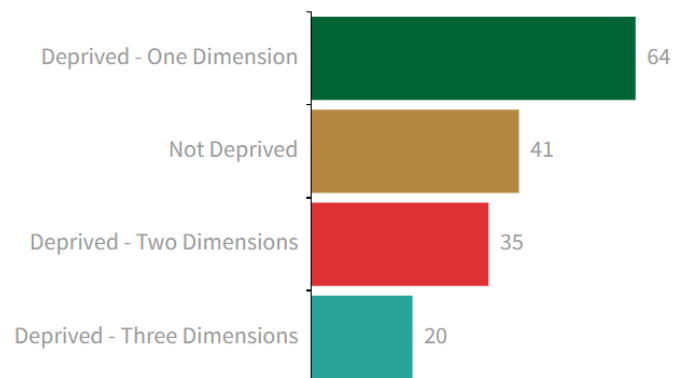


Area Context

Unemployment Type



Households by deprivation



	2011	2021	10y change (pp)	UK Average	postcode vs UK (pp)
Very good health	48.6%	42.4%	-6.2%	48.4%	-6.0%
Good health	27.2%	26.3%	-0.9%	33.6%	-7.3%
Fair health	15.5%	16.8%	1.3%	12.7%	4.1%
Bad health	6.8%	11.5%	4.7%	4.0%	7.5%
Very bad health	1.9%	3%	1.1%	1.2%	1.8%

2021 ONS figures for wider area

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Stories from the Community

What's the History?

- Closures to coal and steelwork industries
- Austerity measures and skewed data on multiple deprivation
- Growth in adversity and neglect
- Shift in demographics
- Harmful narrative



“I liked where I was staying before...then I went to jail. When I came back out, they said if I don’t take this house, I’d be homeless”

*“It was either going to be *these flats* or I’d be homeless, they said I could go Rhymney, but I won’t have the kids.”*

*“Before I moved in here the word *name of flats* petrified me” has this changed since you moved 8 years ago? “oh, yes... things still happen but it’s not as bad as it sounds”*



building a Platform for voices

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Stories from the Community

What maintains these challenges?

- Limited access to services and provisions
- Disconnection from wider community
- Unsafe, neglected and unsanitary living conditions
- Lack of security
- Services 'firefighting'
- Lack of trust in services

Stories from the Community

Strengths and Skills – What can we build on?

- Resourceful and reflective
- Skills
- Good relationship with local provisions
- Roles in the community
- Initiative to support each other
- Diversity in needs



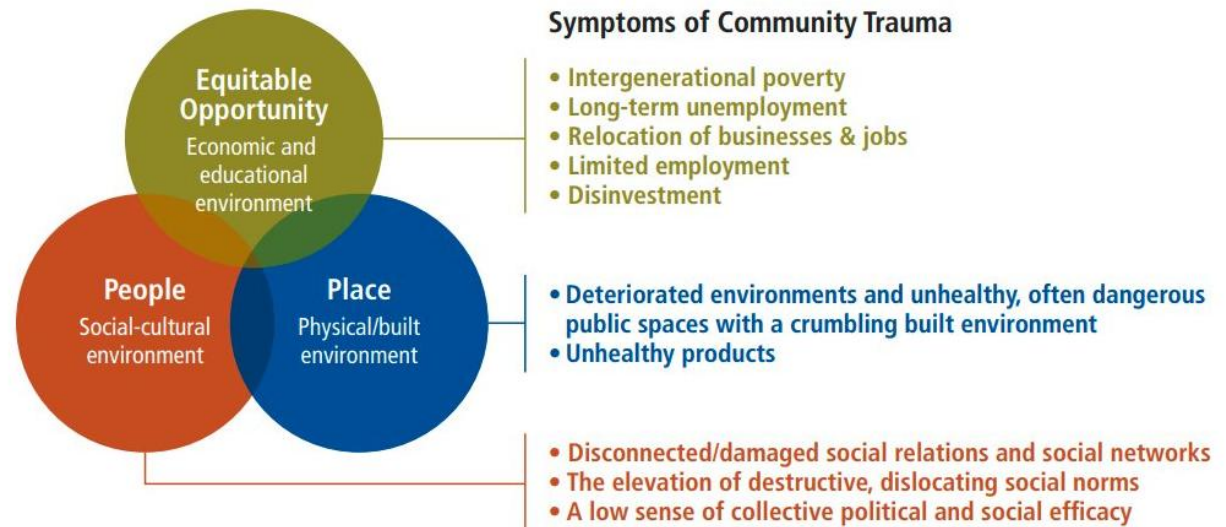
Research and Action

Formulation

- Getting an accurate representation from the community
- Not telling people what their issues are / Community-led
- Focus on context
- Holistic Understanding

Implementation

- Addressing challenges
- Continued collaboration
- Sustainability
- Ongoing evaluation



Community Assessment of Strengths and Needs

Engagement, Formulation-driven, Coproduction, place-based and community led

1. Residents

- Speed of Trust
- Meet people where they are at
- Dig deeper

2. Stakeholders

- Local assets and services
- Worked alongside local assets



Participatory Action Budget

1. Reactive fund pathway

- Wellbeing Fund
- Pop ups
- Breakfasts
- Resident circles



2. Proactive fund pathway

- Sustainable projects and outcomes
- Access to Digital Resources
- Storytelling and Illustrations



Challenging the Narrative

"Living here's been very stressful, I don't like letting other people know where I live cause they'll judge me" - resident from the community

Storytelling and Narrative approach

Illustrations project



Evaluation

- Ripple Effects Mapping
- Storytelling
- Feedback

Please
tell us
about

- How you are feeling
- What you'd like to see more of
- Feedback from the day

FEELING GOOD AFTER A
FULL BREAKFAST

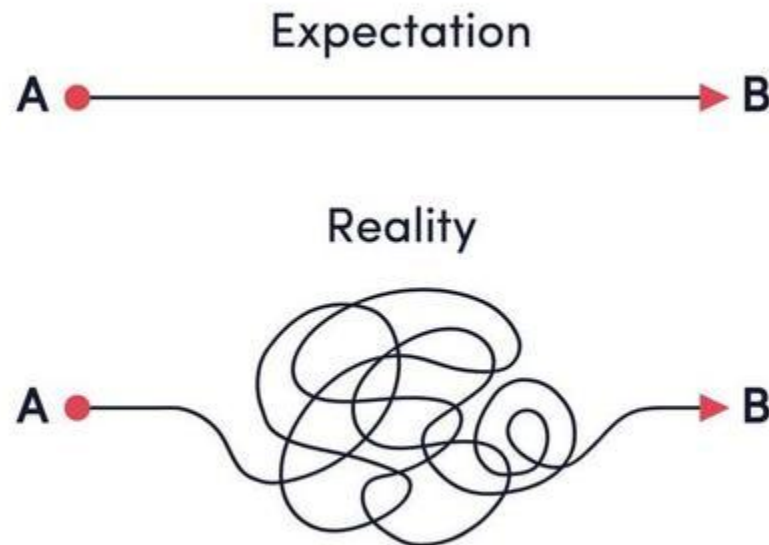
MORE CLEAN SHED'S
AND GARDENS CUT BACK.

NICE TO SEE EVERYONE
FOR BREAKFAST.

"I don't feel comfortable with a lot of people, I never open up like this...knew you were genuine when we met, felt non-judgmental and like a normal conversation Thank you so much for helping me get back on track" - resident from community

Challenges in working in a strengths-based way

- Current systems and their effect on services
- Realities of working in a community setting
- Our team



Where do we go from here?

- Modelling collaborative ways of working
- Honesty, transparency, listening and being community-led
- Re-evaluating and having compassion for the community and ourselves

“Thank you for the help. Before you two, it felt like I was taking one step forward and two steps back” resident from the community

“It’ll be nice to see the community spirit back instead of what we see everywhere now. What you’ve done is amazing, thank you. Since you two have been here, feels like things have been moving forward” - Local Café director

“Thanks everyone. Nice to see a positive outcome for a change. Teamwork makes the dream work” - Antisocial Behaviour Officer

Sustainable outcomes and Building Connections

- Place, People and Equitable Opportunities
- Trauma-Informed training and Reflective Practice
- Sharing our learnings to inspire and support organisations





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UPCOMING STRENGTHS-BASED SESSIONS:

Storytelling to make changes in the system

11th September, 9:30 – 11:30

Holding boundaries in a broken system: being kind isn't being nice

13th November, 9:30 – 11:30

Looking after our wellbeing as campaigners for change

12th February, 9:30 – 11:30

Recordings of previous session are available on our Youtube channel:

[Strength based learning programme - YouTube](#)

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PLATFFORM WELLBEING SUPPORT

Supporting others

- **A relational approach to mental health** – a non-medicalised lens on understanding mental health.
- **Strengths-based Working**– how can we work differently with people we support?
- **Creating the Conditions for Strengths-based working** – How can we create the systems internally to remove barriers to strengths-based working?
- **Clinical Supervision** – our services see a lot of difficult things – how do we support our teams with that?

Supporting ourselves

- **1:1 Talking Therapies**
- **Wellbeing Training** – Topics such as Burnout, Stress, Anxiety, Self-care, being trauma informed.
- **Compassionate leadership programme** - developing emerging leaders
- **Reflective Practice Workshops** – Putting into practice
- **Coaching** – developing thinking with goals and stuckness



www.platffomwellbeing.com

PLATFFORM WELLBEING CORE TEAM



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**WE WOULD LOVE
YOUR FEEDBACK**



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STAY IN TOUCH

Platform

Bluesky – platform.org

Instagram – @weareplatform

Facebook/LinkedIn – search 'Platform'

Platform Wellbeing

Instagram – @platformwellbeing

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Join our mailing lists

<https://tinyurl.com/platform-mail>

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THANK YOU.