



Asset managers have an interest in the outcome of a health and wellbeing review, which will inform their view of a property's health and wellbeing performance and decisions regarding future health and wellbeing investment. Property managers play a central role in co-ordinating the arrangements for a health and wellbeing review, with input and support from facilities managers.

There are a range of ways in which health and wellbeing can be reviewed at a property. A number of examples are described below:



## 1: ASSESSMENT OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING FOCUS AREAS

### Building Location Assessment: WalkScore

Assessing a property based on its proximity to local amenities, and how accessible these are without the use of a car, can be an important factor in determining one aspect of the property's health and wellbeing credentials. One way to achieve a quantitative assessment of this factor is by using [Walk Score](#). This tool attributes a property with a 'Walk Score' out of 100 based on its postcode.

Not all elements of a property's health and wellbeing performance are due to actions, infrastructure or interventions initiated by the building or property management teams. Knowing the context of the local area in which an asset sits can help to inform which health and wellbeing initiatives that are provided at a building.

For example, if a property sits in an area where local amenities are not located within walking distance, then this may guide the property's strategy towards providing useful features such as on-site catering amenities with healthy eating options. Auditing the building's location is an important first step in this.

### Building Access Assessment: Commuter Survey

Carrying out a qualitative study of commuter infrastructure and habits through interviews and questionnaires with stakeholders is an important method through which to assess current and future requirements relating to building users getting to and from the office.

Outcomes from commuter surveys and discussions can result in major infrastructure changes and additions such as cycle facilities, for example, or the addition of shower and locker facilities. They can also result in 'softer' improvements, such as the provision of the Cycle to Work Scheme, for example, employees or interest free travel cards.

A commuter survey will ask questions which focus on finding out what the current commuting habits of building occupants are and considering these against their expectations and aspirations.

There are also more quantitative approaches to assessing commuter infrastructure at a property. For example, in order to assess the effectiveness of cycle storage provision at specific property companies often use commercial schemes such as [Cycling Score](#) and [Five at Heart](#), which offer an assessment with supplementary advice from a specialist cycling facility consultants. Cycling Score will produce a certification while Five at Heart's feedback provides guidance on how to improve cycling facilities.

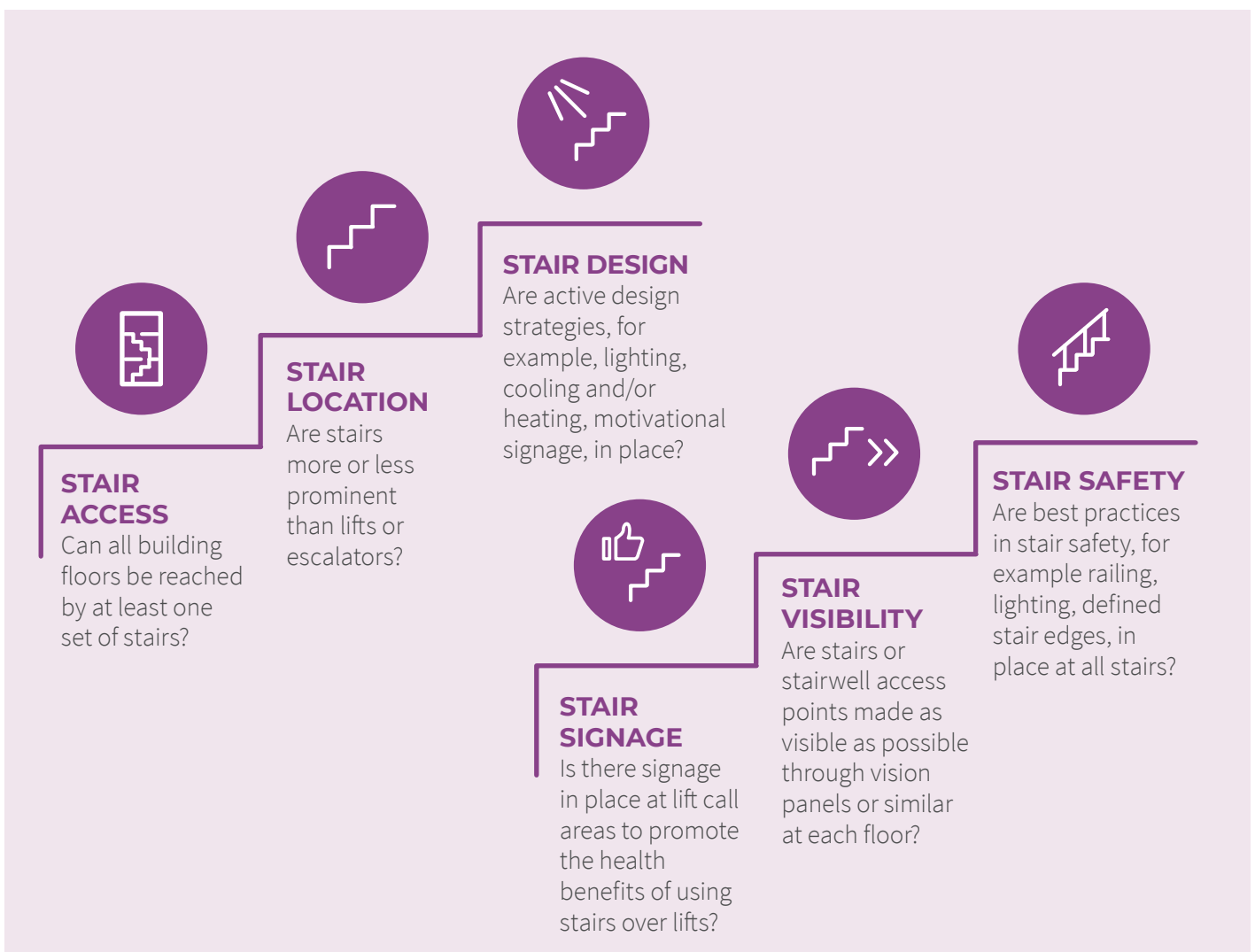
## Active Opportunities Assessment: Stairs

Stairs and stairwells are often an under-used features in many buildings. Increasingly, the benefits of stair use as a health and wellbeing resource has highlighted by their inclusion in standards and certifications, such as the Well Building Standard and the Fitwel Certification Tool, for example.

These standards both broadly assess stair provision at buildings by asking the following questions:

- Stair Access: Can all building floors be reached by at least one set of stairs?
- Stair Location: Are stairs more or less prominent than lifts or escalators?
- Stair Design: Are active design strategies, for example, lighting, cooling and/or heating, motivational signage, in place?
- Stair Signage: Is there signage in place at lift call areas to promote the health benefits of using stairs over lifts?
- Stair Visibility: Are stairs or stairwell access points made as visible as possible through vision panels or similar at each floor?
- Stair Safety: Are best practices in stair safety, for example railing, lighting, defined stair edges, in place at all stairs?

The importance of access to stairs has been further brought into focus by the COVID-19 Pandemic and as such this facet of health and wellbeing is of increased importance to both asset and property managers, as well as building occupants.



### **Internal Air Quality (IAQ) Assessment**

Conducting regular indoor air quality testing helps to ensure that a property is safeguarding the health and wellbeing of its occupants and is also acting to promote health and wellbeing through the provision of clean air. There are generally two ways of assessing internal air quality:

1. On an ongoing basis using sensor-based technology.
2. On a periodic basis by sampling and analysing the internal air quality of a building.

Even before the COVID-19 Pandemic the importance of internal air quality in buildings was growing rapidly: Coronavirus has only served to catalyse this.

A number of assessment tools have grown in tandem with this increased demand for knowledge and peace of mind that buildings are doing enough to maintain good internal air quality.

[The Reset Standard](#) and [AirRated](#) are useful certification tools. These schemes:

Test internal air quality (using sensors) against a number of benchmarks.

Enable certified buildings to signal that they fulfil their health and wellbeing obligations to their occupants and market this through an independent and stringently tested certification:

### **Assessing Access to Natural Daylight and Views of Nature**

Although access to natural light can be assessed using sensor-based technology or basic calculations available through the Fitwel and Well certification tools.

Likewise, when assessing access to views of nature, technological is not required as the assessment can be calculated through equations.



## **2: DOCUMENT REVIEW**

Ensuring that a property has the correct health and wellbeing policies and processes in place, and that these are recorded correctly and are readily available to relevant building users, is important. Some of these documents will be considered core to building operations and some will be optional extras.

The following health and wellbeing documents are highlighted as being of importance as part of Fitwel:

- A Smoke Free Policy for All Indoor and Outdoor Areas within the Building Boundary.
- Asbestos Control and Abatement Documentation.
- An Indoor Air Quality Policy.
- A Green / Sustainable Purchasing Policy.
- An Integrated Pest Management Plan.
- Bathroom Cleaning Protocol / Schedule.
- Break Area(s) Cleaning Protocol / Schedule.
- A Water Management Plan.
- A Healthy Food and Beverage Policy.
- An Emergency Preparedness Plan, for example, fire.

Conducting a review whether the above documentation is in place and the relevance of each document to a particular property is an important process to undertake.

### 3: OCCUPIER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Carrying out a qualitative assessment of occupiers' perceptions of the health and wellbeing performance of a building through interviews and questionnaires is an important method to assess current and future health and wellbeing requirements at an asset.

Occupant satisfaction surveys are important to identify where health and wellbeing actions, infrastructure and initiatives are working well, and also to identify opportunities for improvements in health and wellbeing performance.

### 4: POST-OCCUPANCY EVALUATIONS

Post-occupancy evaluations (POE) provide a useful tool to enable asset managers to understand how a property's performance in operation compares to the original design intent. This enables informed decisions regarding where there is potential to invest in improvements, as well as lessons learned for the design of future projects.

The UK Green Building Council's '[How to execute high-impact post-occupancy evaluations](#)' sets out the process for implementing a POE, and highlights the following benefits from doing so:

- Long term improvements in building performance Evolution of your project
- Added value to clients
- BREEAM credits
- LEED credits
- Improvement in design quality

Explicitly referencing health and wellbeing as a core component of a POE emphasises the importance of the issue and ensures that the general benefits noted above are applied to health and wellbeing alongside other priority topics.

Health and wellbeing elements that could be included in a POE include, for example:

**Health and well-being features:** The extent to which features within a property that have been designed specifically with health and wellbeing in mind are operating an intended. This may include, for example, cycling facilities and shower areas, biophilic design elements or break-out spaces with ambient lighting design.

**General features influencing health and wellbeing:** The extent to which general features within a property, that have potential to influence health and wellbeing performance, are operating an intended. This may include, for example, infusion of natural light to internal offices spaces away, effectiveness of air conditioning units in maintaining air quality or perceptions of occupiers relating to pedestrian access routes to public transport or cycleways.

### 5: RATINGS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Often, the wider health and wellbeing credentials of a property are assessed using a recognised rating and certification tool. Two established health and wellbeing certifications are the Fitwel Certification Tool and the Well Building Standard.

While retaining a US focus, both standards have recently made big steps to broaden their geographical approach and are now emerging as key certification tools for the UK and European Markets.

Alongside covering a property's wider sustainability performance, [BREEAM](#) certifications also look at health and wellbeing within their assessment as a meaningful part of the overall certification.