



## Speaking up for better care

Healthwatch Wokingham Borough  
Annual Report 2025/26

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**Lead, Healthwatch  
Wokingham Borough**  
Alice Kunjappy-Clifton



"Healthwatch Wokingham Borough ensures local people's experiences shapes health and social care decisions. We engage with residents across the borough via surveys, focus groups and targeted engagements in neighbourhood settings.

We continue to use our statutory powers to hold services to account and work constructively with partners to ensure residents' voices are heard and acted upon. Community insight has been shared with commissioners, service providers and system leaders, informing service discussions and improvement work.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who has supported us during this period through sharing feedback, collaborating with us and working together to ensure the public voice truly matters."

# A message from our Advisory Group

It is a real honour to write my first foreword as Rotating Chair of Healthwatch Wokingham Borough's Advisory Group. I step into this role at a pivotal moment and alongside a newly appointed Advisory Group, bringing fresh energy while building on a strong foundation.

I met the Healthwatch team at a local volunteer event, and throughout my career, I have focused on helping people make informed decisions that lead to positive change. Healthwatch shares that aim; ensuring people's voices help shape health and social care, now and in the future.

This year's report highlights the power of listening and turning people's experiences into meaningful change. From challenges in GP access to heightening the voices of South Asian women and improving women's health services, the focus has remained clear: ensuring people are listened to and their feedback drives real improvements in access, experience and outcomes.

By analysing people's experiences and identifying themes, Healthwatch provides vital insight to NHS and local authority partners. As the NHS delivers its 10-Year Plan, with shifts from hospital to community, analogue to digital, and treatment to prevention, our role is to ensure these changes reflect local people's needs and experiences.

As Rotating Chair, I am proud to support this work; strengthening relationships, deepening engagement and ensuring impact remains at the heart of everything we do.

My thanks go to our staff, volunteers, partners, and above all, our residents.

**Paul Broerse – Advisory Group Rotating Chair, Healthwatch Wokingham Borough**



**Advisory Group  
Rotating Chair**  
Paul Broerse



“Healthwatch Wokingham Borough ensures the voice of the community is understood at the Integrated Care System level, influencing decision-making and working alongside other Healthwatch to strengthen the collective voice of residents to help improve services and care across the region.”

# About us

Healthwatch Wokingham Borough is your local health and social care champion.

We ensure that NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



## Our vision

To bring closer the day when everyone gets the care they need.



## Our mission

To make sure that people's experiences help make health and care better.



## Our values are:

**Equity:** We're compassionate and inclusive. We build strong connections and empower the communities we serve.

**Collaboration:** We build internal and external relationships. We communicate clearly and work with partners to amplify our influence.

**Impact:** We're ambitious about creating change for people and communities. We're accountable to those we serve and hold others to account.

**Independence:** Our agenda is driven by the public. We're a purposeful, critical friend to decision-makers.

**Truth:** We work with integrity and honesty, and we speak truth to power.

# Our year in numbers

In 2025/2026 we supported more than 5000 people to have their say and get information and advice about their care. We employed 5 staff and our work was supported by 10 volunteers.



## Reaching out:

**2860** people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care. The top three themes across the borough were issues with **booking appointments, access to services, and communication with patients.**

**2,811** people came to us for clear advice and information on topics such as the NHS App, GP practices and other primary care services.



## Championing your voice:

We published 1 report about **South Asian Women's Health** (please see page 20 for more details)

Our most viewed report on our website this year was **Empowering young women: improving sexual health awareness and services.**



## Statutory funding:

We're funded by Wokingham Borough Council. In 2025/26 we received £123,232 which is the same as last year.

# A year of making a difference

Over the year we've been out and about in the community listening to your stories, engaging with partners and working to improve care in Wokingham Borough. Here are a few highlights of the many activities we have completed.

Spring



Our report, *Empowering Young Women: Improving Sexual Health Awareness and Services*, led to greater involvement of young people helping to shape health services. Healthwatch Youth were invited to join a focus group with the Florey Clinic team to help shape future service improvements.

In partnership with Royal Berkshire Hospital, we set up a quarterly engagement pop-up stand with Healthwatch Reading, that gave patients a regular voice in shaping services, helping identify what is working well and where improvements are needed.

Summer



Strengthened our partnership with The Link Visiting Scheme through the NHS App project, gathering feedback from older people on appointments, online services, and GP access while providing advice and signposting at their regular Friendship Table coffee mornings.

Our joint Annual Report 2024/25 Launch with Healthwatch Reading attracted up to 90 attendees, highlighting our impact, introducing the NHS 10-Year Plan locally and emphasising the importance of public voice in improving services and care.

Autumn



Our NHS App project continued through engagement with diverse communities across the borough, gathering feedback on usage, benefits and barriers to help improve accessibility and effectiveness for local people.

We played a key role within the ongoing Wokingham Borough Council Physical Activity Steering Group by contributing to the development of a strategy focused on creating a more physically active and healthier community across the borough.

Winter



Through our volunteer recruitment drive, we recruited four new Advisory Group members and one Healthwatch Youth volunteer, strengthening community involvement in our work and supporting a refreshed Advisory Group. Recruitment remains ongoing.

Invited to present to the Youth Council on the work of Healthwatch and digital health, including our NHS App project. The session sparked valuable feedback and engaging discussions, deepening our understanding of young people's experiences, perspectives and priorities for local health services.

# Thinking together and making a difference

**In July 2025, through our 'Thinking Together' community engagement model, we brought together more than 90 attendees at our joint 2024/25 Annual Report Launch with Healthwatch Reading. Attendees included NHS organisations, councils, the voluntary sector, the Integrated Care Board (ICB), community leaders and wider system partners, reflecting the strong trust placed in Healthwatch as an independent voice for local people.**

Our launch celebrated the achievements and impact of both Healthwatch work, whilst also introducing the first local discussions on the Government's NHS 10-Year Plan and its emerging Neighbourhood Health Programme.

As one of the first local discussions on these changes, our launch created an early space for attendees to consider what this could mean in practice for communities and local services.

Through presentations, guest speakers, our interactive live poll and Q&A sessions, attendees explored the opportunities and challenges of delivering more joined-up, community-based care through the emerging Neighbourhood Health Programme.

Dr Priya Singh, Chair of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) (now known as Thames Valley ICB) also contributed to the discussion, highlighting the importance of neighbourhood working and partnership-based approaches.



# Thinking together and making a difference (continued)

Our launch event also took place shortly after the Government announced the closure of Healthwatch across England and plans to bring public voice functions in-house within NHS organisations and local authorities.

Since 1974, England has benefited from an independent public voice in health and social care. Closing Healthwatch will end more than 50 years of independent representation for local people.

This context strengthened discussions at the launch about the role and importance of public voice in shaping care and services, particularly within the emerging Neighbourhood Health Programme. Attendees widely recognised the importance and continued need for independent public voice at a time of significant system change.

Our launch event created an important valuable space for discussion, collaboration, networking and shared learning. Our live poll captured key themes and concerns, reinforcing system-wide interest in the future of public voice:

## Loss of the independent voice

"No patient voice, no review, no accountability, no change, no co-production, no unity, no representation"

## Loss of local knowledge and lived experience

"Views, opinions and voices will be lost"

## Poorer quality of service and care

"Access issues, poor outcomes, organisation complacency"

## Reduced trust in services

"Biased decisions – reduced trust in services, lack of accountability"

## Less ability to influence change

"Services wouldn't receive constructive feedback missing the opportunity to improve"

# Thinking together and making a difference (continued)

Our launch event highlighted the importance of involving local people from the outset to ensure health and social care and services reflect real needs and experiences. We showcased our work and demonstrated the value and impact of public voice in practice.

Our launch helped raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Health Programme and supported early thinking on more joined-up, community-based care.

Working with Healthwatch Reading, we have helped and continue to help ensure the programme aligns with local needs and reflects community views and feedback, ensuring public voice is at the heart of its development.

Key impacts are set out in the infographic below, with this work continuing through ongoing engagement and partnership.

## Event impact



- 1 We held the first local discussion on the NHS 10-Year Plan and the Neighbourhood Health Programme.
- 2 Greater recognition and understanding of the importance and impact of independent public voice and the vital work we do.
- 3 Stronger system-wide partnerships and increased engagement from councils, the NHS, and other organisations wanting to work with us; recognising our impact, trusted relationships and community connections.
- 4 Played a key role to ensure the Neighbourhood Health Programme reflects the needs, experiences and expectations of local people and communities. We are now consultants supporting its local planning, including sharing our "Thinking Together" engagement model to keep public voice at the centre of its development.



"Over [...] time, Healthwatch and yourself [Alice Kunjappy-Clifton, Lead, Healthwatch Wokingham Borough] directly have been both a support of Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust as well as a critical friend when we needed to do better. I thank you personally for your support, approach and advocacy of our amazing teams at the Trust."

**Steve McManus – Chief Executive Officer, Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust**

# Thinking together and making a difference (continued)



"Please convey to your team my thanks for taking both the time and effort of putting on yesterday's meeting which showcased Healthwatch annual reports for Reading and Wokingham [Borough].

Annual reports are often seen as "must do brochures" rather than documents that can point to best practice, examples of great quality health and care, or as signposts to potential or actual health and care issues that are facing the community.

The range of voices that you managed to attract to your meeting as well as the healthy numbers in the audience, are a testament to the importance of Healthwatch as an organisation that champions patient voice.

Each of the speakers bought a valuable set of learning to the proceedings. It was good to get a helicopter perspective of the 10-year plan and the Dash review, and these were complimented so well by the local reports from Healthwatch officers, demonstrating how Healthwatch has been able to address strategic issues in a practical way.

I particularly enjoyed listening to the beginnings of how we need to develop integrated neighbourhood partnerships – and these will be informed and complemented also by the important work being carried out in the public health domain.

I'm glad that you included Nick Fellows who brought us a very innovative community vision for working in the borough. This alongside the other volunteer organisations will help to address the current health inequalities that we see across the whole of the UK not just in our area.

I can understand that the future of Healthwatch as an organisation is held in the balance, whilst our government decide on how patient voice should be heard and acted on. In that interim period, we value the work of all the voluntary sector organisations, Healthwatch included, who stand in the gap for us.

We need to stand together as voluntary sector organisations in order to support the ongoing work of Healthwatch and to ensure that this valuable work is not lost in the government scramble to rationalise or save money."

**Douglas Findlay – Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley**

# Thinking together and making a difference (continued)



"The launch event was incredibly valuable and well organised, with a high calibre line up of relevant speakers.

It was particularly helpful to be there amongst this diverse group, not only for the opportunity to get my message across, but to learn from others about critical developments in the sector.

What I was able to take away, in relation to Neighbourhood Health plans, enabled me to become more engaged and ensure colleagues were better informed, leading to positive action on our part that will hopefully help to shape new services for the communities we work with and ensure their needs are both heard and responded to."

**Nick Fellows – Chief Officer, The Wokingham Volunteer Centre and Chair, Community Vision 2035 (Wokingham Borough)**



"Attending the Healthwatch launch event and participating in discussions around the NHS 10-Year Plan reinforced my absolute belief that meaningful positive change and outcomes happen when we genuinely listen to the community who use services and involve them in shaping solutions.

I have been consistently impressed by the way Healthwatch Reading and Healthwatch Wokingham [Borough] bring people together, residents, partners and decision-makers to ensure the public voice is heard and responded to.

The positive outcomes we have seen through an approach of collaboration clearly demonstrate the real value of partnership working and the difference it can make to local communities.  
Thank you Healthwatch!"

**Denise Challis – Chair, Royal Berkshire Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership**

# Thinking together and making a difference (continued)



"What stood out most was not only the depth of insight from local communities, but also the strong presence of health and social care professionals. Their attendance reflected clear support for Healthwatch as an independent voice, even where it provides constructive challenge and scrutiny of services.

I have a unique perspective, having been directly involved on the ground in mobilising the contracts when they transferred to The Advocacy People. From that mobilisation through to seeing the genuine change being achieved by our teams of paid staff and volunteers, it has reinforced for me how essential it is that people have the opportunity to speak to someone who is independent and objective. In a period of uncertainty, this is more important than ever because services are stronger, fairer and more effective when they are shaped by the people who use them."

**Sarah Deason – Chief Operations Officer, The Advocacy People**



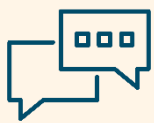
"One of the key things I took away from the Annual Report launch event was the importance of ensuring that the public voice remains central within healthcare and social care. Feedback from patients, carers, families, and communities provides an essential perspective that professionals and organisations may not always see through data or operational reporting alone.

I reflected on how valuable lived experience is in shaping services that are compassionate, inclusive, and responsive to people's needs. Hearing examples and discussions at the event reinforced that engagement should not simply be a formality, but an ongoing conversation where people feel their views genuinely influence decisions and outcomes."

**Stephen John – Head of Operations, The Advocacy People**

# Working together for change

We worked with neighbouring Healthwatch to ensure people's experiences of care in Berkshire West are heard at the Integrated Care System (ICS) level, and they influence decisions made about services at BOB ICB (now Thames Valley ICB). Here is an example of this work, this year:



## Working together to improve maternal mental health

Working with Healthwatch Reading, we have continued to push forward conversations on maternity and mental health following our review of our 2023 joint addendum to Healthwatch England's report *Left Unchecked: Why Maternal Mental Health Matters – A Berkshire West Perspective*, alongside wider national maternity reports, including *the Independent Investigation into Maternity and Neonatal Services in England – Interim Report* (Feb 2026), which highlighted ongoing concerns in maternity care across England.

A key focus of this work is addressing maternal mental health and reducing suicide risk within the first year after childbirth. We have now progressed this locally with the Reading Suicide Prevention Group and across Pan Thames Valley to help ensure support systems are joined up and gaps in provision are identified.

We also continued working with Royal Berkshire Hospital and the ICB to share feedback and raise concerns about postnatal care, women not feeling listened to and the need for stronger mental health support during and after pregnancy.

In response, the ICB has increased awareness across primary care and will be delivering sessions with Thames Valley Primary Care Networks to improve conversations and engagement with women about their mental health needs.

In Wokingham Borough, we are working with Children and Young People's Partnership and Wokingham Borough Council Public Health on their views of health visiting services and the perinatal support pathway to help strengthen early identification and to support for mental health concerns.

# Working together for change

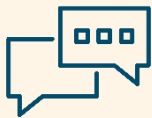
The Advocacy People hold the service contract for 7 Healthwatch; Hampshire, Portsmouth, Reading, Somerset, Southend, West Berkshire and Wokingham Borough.

the  
advocacy  
people®



## A collaborative network of local Healthwatch:

The Advocacy People have provided consistent infrastructure, governance, and operational support to the seven hosted Healthwatch, enabling them to work both locally and collectively. This includes shared leadership, senior guidance, and coordination across contracts. We have created space for collaboration, ensured consistency where needed, and supported each service to retain its distinct local voice.



## A big conversation:

The seven local Healthwatch hosted by The Advocacy People have worked closely together in the last year. We have been proactive in our learning objective which was to understand the changing landscape for Healthwatch in response to Government proposals announced last July to transfer the functions of local Healthwatch to Integrated Care Boards and Local Authorities.



## Building strong relationships to achieve more:

The Advocacy People supported the seven Healthwatch to lead meaningful community conversations by providing practical tools, coordination, and strategic oversight. This included enabling shared knowledge, supporting engagement planning, and facilitating the exchange of approaches and learning. We ensured local teams were equipped to respond to community priorities while linking these insights into a broader, coherent narrative at a regional level.

# Making a difference in the community

We bring people's experiences to healthcare professionals and decision-makers, using their feedback to shape services and improve care over time. Here are two examples of this work in Wokingham Borough this year:



## An inclusivity charter for Patient Participation Groups:

**We work behind the scenes to consistently raise issues and bring about change.**

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) Inclusivity Charter was created by Healthwatch in Berkshire West for PPGs in Wokingham Borough, Reading and West Berkshire after an incident at a PPG meeting showed the need for clearer expectations on how people should behave and work together.

The charter, available to PPGs across Berkshire West, sets out simple shared rules to support respect, inclusion and good communication to ensure meetings are safe, welcoming and open to everyone to take part.

We continue to support PPGs across the area by sharing learning and good practice as they develop locally. Our aim is to make sure patient voices are not just heard but really help shape how services listen, learn and improve.



## Supporting a healthier and more active Wokingham Borough:

**By involving local people, services help improve care for everyone.**

We have played an active key role in the Wokingham Borough Council Physical Activity Steering Group, helping to develop a healthier, more active borough by ensuring adherence to all the Marmot Principles and promoting equity throughout planning and consultation.

We have championed the importance of residents' voices throughout the process, ensuring that people's experiences, needs and barriers are reflected in decision-making. This has included promoting inclusive, person-centred language and helping engagement reach under represented communities and those facing greater health inequalities.

We will continue to support and give guidance on public engagement and consultation to help ensure the strategy is meaningful, accessible and represents all communities across the borough.

# Listening to the communities' experiences

Services can't improve if they don't know what's wrong. Your experiences shine a light on issues that may otherwise go unnoticed.

This year, we've listened to feedback from all areas of our community. People's experiences of care help us know what's working and what isn't, so we can give feedback on services and help them improve.



"The public voice is essential in helping to improve health and social care services. Listening to the voices of Wokingham Borough residents is at the heart of Healthwatch. Every experience and every view shared with us helps to make sure services are shaped around what matters most to local people. Improvement can only happen when we understand what is not working."

**Alice Kunjappy Clifton, Lead, Healthwatch Wokingham Borough**



# Turning lived experiences into action against racism

## Working together across systems to address racism and strengthen trust in care

Feedback and lived experiences from borough residents highlighted the impact of racism and discrimination on people's health, access to services, and overall wellbeing. People told us that racism is being experienced in everyday life, in the community and within health and care settings affecting safety, trust and confidence in services.

### What we did:

- We raised concerns with Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH) about racism affecting patients and staff from the borough.
- Worked closely with RBH to support on improvements needed for addressing racism, which included:
  - > understanding the system-wide triage approach to support hospital staff experiencing racism
  - > understanding RBH's "Up the Anti" programme
- Through our work with RBH, feedback from borough residents and national evidence, we identified a clear need for a broader approach to tackling racism across the borough and Berkshire West. Locally, this aligns with Wokingham Borough's commitment as a Marmot place which focuses on reducing health inequalities by tackling the wider factors that affect people's health, including racism and discrimination. As no single organisation can address this alone, we recommended a community conversation bringing together key partners to share experiences, identify solutions and working together to agree collective action, including local councils, the Integrated Care Board, NHS trusts, Thames Valley Police, community leaders and faith groups.

### Our impact

- Elevated local dialogue around the ongoing impact of racism on services across the borough.
- Encouraged direct action to tackle these issues through a commitment to anti-racist policy.
- Our recommendation for a broader community conversation on racism and inequality is now being taken forward. The event is currently in development and will take place in the new working year 2026/2027. It will involve the NHS, local authorities, community groups and other partner organisations.

# Digital futures: what local voices told us about the NHS App

Our joint Healthwatch NHS App project explored how people in Wokingham Borough and Reading use the NHS App, and why some people do not use it, based on 1,432 survey responses and qualitative feedback. It sits within the context of the NHS 10 Year Plan, which sets out the NHS App as the main “front door” to NHS services, and builds on our previous local Healthwatch work highlighting ongoing barriers to digital access.

Through surveys and conversations with residents, we gained valuable insights into how people use the NHS App, the benefits it provides, and the barriers that can prevent people from accessing digital healthcare services. This project is helping to raise awareness of community issues and concerns, identify opportunities for improvement and support the development of more accessible, effective and equal access to local health services and care.

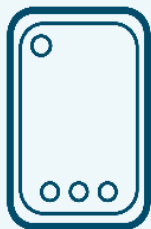
We will be publishing our key findings in the new working year and sharing these with leaders and key decision makers. These findings will also feed into our other projects in the new working year.

## What we did

In Wokingham Borough we:

- Launched a face-to-face community engagement programme:
  - Attended **29 community events** with **1791 people** in attendance
- Gathered **qualitative feedback**; residents' views and experiences through informal conversations and discussions at community events
- Collected **409 online surveys**
- Collected **544 paper surveys**
- We sent initial findings to the ICB for review and comment

## Some key findings:



**Two-thirds of surveyed residents across Reading and Wokingham Borough report using the NHS App.**

**One-third of surveyed residents in Reading and Wokingham Borough do not use the NHS App.**

**Multiple healthcare apps and digital platforms are causing confusion and frustration amongst residents in Reading and Wokingham Borough.**

# Digital futures: what local voices told us about the NHS App (continued)

## Our impact so far

### In the community

- Better understanding of the NHS App and how to access services and manage care.
- Increased confidence using the NHS App and digital health tools, leading to better management of health, appointments and healthcare services.
- Greater awareness of local support to get help to use the NHS App and other digital NHS services.
- Improved understanding of patients' rights, data usage and future NHS changes.
- Greater awareness of the value of sharing experiences and how feedback shapes local health and social care services.

### The ICB

- Welcomed our findings and confirmed that the NHS App barriers identified, including login issues, usability, awareness and trust, reflect wider national feedback.
- Recognised that digital services can improve access to care but must not create or worsen inequalities. Our findings reinforced the importance of addressing digital exclusion.
- Clarified responsibilities, confirming that NHS England manages the NHS App and national communications, while local NHS organisations support patient access and use.
- Acknowledged its role in coordinating services and tackling health inequalities, highlighting ongoing work to improve digital inclusion and maintain non-digital access.
- Confirmed commitment to working with Healthwatch to develop solutions to improve confidence, trust and inclusion in digital health services.



"This work continues with ongoing engagement between Healthwatch and system partners to support improvements in digital access, inclusion and patient experience."

**Alice Kunjappy-Clifton, Lead, Healthwatch Wokingham Borough**

# Championing South Asian women's voices in healthcare

This year, we published our South Asian Women's Health report in which findings were shared in last year's Annual Report. The report captured the experiences of over 110 South Asian women when accessing healthcare services and information. The report is also relevant to the National Women's Health Strategy and Wokingham Borough Council's Marmot Principles; supporting a more equitable and community-informed approach to health and care.

The report's findings include issues with access to female healthcare practitioners, long-term health conditions, appointment flexibility and experiences relating to health literacy and access to information.

## What we did

Following the report's publication, we shared the report with:

- Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Primary Care Networks
- Wokingham Borough Council
- Community organisations

## Our impact and outcomes

- Received positive feedback; the report will be part of wider discussions around the local Women's Health Strategy and for Integrated Neighbourhood Partnership planning.
- Presented findings to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), where the importance of addressing health inequalities within the borough was recognised.
- Supported ongoing discussions around health literacy and accessible healthcare.
- Health literacy is recognised by partners and decision makers as an area for further exploration through future collaborative community work.
- Strengthened engagement between us (Healthwatch) NHS, local authority and voluntary sector partners.
- Increased wider recognition and importance of community voice shaping services and reducing inequalities.

# Championing South Asian women's voices in healthcare (continued)

## Our impact and the ICB

Our report influenced the ICB to formally recognise key healthcare inequalities affecting South Asian women across the borough and consider these within future strategic planning.

### Areas acknowledged included:

- Access to female healthcare practitioners
- Long-term health conditions
- Health literacy and accessible health information
- Translation support and digital accessibility
- Reasonable adjustments in care and appointments

### The ICB confirmed the findings will:

- Inform the emerging clinical strategy for the new Thames Valley ICB
- Be considered in the development of the new Thames Valley ICB website
- Support continued collaborative working with healthcare providers and partners in the area



"[The report] will be of great value as we develop neighbourhoods and identify how we can improve access to services."

**Caroline Vaas – Director of Public Health, Wokingham Borough Council**

"We are committed to supporting a greater focus on inequalities including in terms of ethnicity and race as part of the work on Women's health hubs in particular [...]. If commissioned and if we are selected then we would like to ensure this focus as part of our proposal"

**Amit Sharma – Clinical Director, Earley Primary Care Network**

"It makes for a truly interesting reading. Your findings make absolute sense to me from the perspective of culture and gender. As we have discussed, many of the preferences articulated by those who participated may also resonate for other communities too. I am delighted to view what look to be very workable practical steps which in turn could better the experience of South Asian women in regards health care"

**Phil Bell – Chief Executive Officer, Involve Community Services**

More quotes on this report can be found on page 36.

# Hearing from all communities

We're here for all residents of Wokingham Borough. That's why, over the past year, we've worked hard to reach out to those communities whose voices may go unheard. The following pages highlight a few of many examples of this work.

**Every member of the community should have the chance to share their story and play a part in shaping services to meet their needs.**

**This year, we have reached different communities by:**

- **Direct work with communities:** We attended and spoke at a range of local events and community gatherings, including school assemblies and coffee mornings. We also held hospital and university pop-up stands to listen to people's experiences, gather feedback and share advice and information. This helped us understand what matters most to local people and to build trust through face-to-face conversations.
- **Listening to voices:** We had face-to-face conversations with communities who are often less heard. This helped us understand their views and to ensure their experiences are listened to, valued, and used locally to inform action.
- **Turning feedback into action:** We also used community surveys to hear from more people and gather wider views for our project work. This feedback was shared directly with NHS leaders and other decision-makers so it can be used for future planning and to improve services and make them better for everyone.



# Young people's voices driving conversations on digital health

## Listening to young people's experiences to help improve digital healthcare services and accessibility.

As part of our community engagement work, we spoke with young people across schools, colleges and youth settings to better understand their experiences of healthcare and digital technology, including the NHS App. Below are just two examples of the many conversations, discussions and interactive engagement sessions where we gathered feedback, explored awareness, usage and barriers.

### University Technical College Reading (UTC)

We visited UTC and spoke to 240 students (Years 10–12, aged 14–17 years old) from Wokingham Borough and Reading. We shared information about our work, including our NHS App project, local primary care services and the Government's NHS 10-Year Plan. Students took part in discussions, completed our surveys and a short interactive poll. The session highlighted low awareness and use of the NHS App among young people, as well as a continued reliance on parents and online search engines for healthcare support and information.

### Wokingham Borough Youth Council

We joined a Wokingham Borough Youth Council meeting to introduce the work of Healthwatch and Healthwatch Youth, alongside sharing information about the NHS App and NHS 10-Year Plan. 10 youth councillors completed our survey during the session. During discussions we found that many were unaware of the NHS App and downloaded it during the discussion, while others highlighted difficulties accessing GP appointment and pharmacy features. The discussion also highlighted wider issues around parental consent, access to medical records and the need for GP surgeries to "unlock" certain app features for younger users.

## Our impact:

- Increased awareness of Healthwatch and the importance of young people's voices in helping shape healthcare services that work for the, now and in the future.
- More young people understand what the NHS App is, how it can help them manage their healthcare and where they can access support to use it; GP surgeries and our website.
- Increased awareness amongst young people of the Government's NHS 10-Year Plan and what it could mean for the future of healthcare services and their own experiences of care.
- Young people shared their experiences with us, helping to inform our ongoing work around improving digital inclusion and healthcare accessibility.
- Our NHS App survey, wider youth engagement activities, and the work of Healthwatch was shared with other schools through the Head teacher at UTC. This helped raise awareness of our role and ongoing work, while encouraging greater youth voice and participation across the local community.

# Hearing from diverse ethnic communities about healthcare

## Understanding experiences of women with English as a second language

We joined an English as a Foreign Language lesson at the Crescent Resource Centre in Lower Earley to gather feedback directly from women from communities that are often underrepresented in healthcare engagement.

The lesson was attended by 12 female students aged 24–44 years old, from China, Hong Kong, India, Iraq, Turkey and other European countries.

As part of the lesson, students listened to a presentation about our work and completed our NHS App survey. They shared their wider experiences of healthcare; access, communication and digital services. This included difficulties with usability and functionality of the NHS App to experiencing communication difficulties with local GP services, including issues relating to diagnosis, medication and accessibility.

We answered students' questions, provided information, advice and signposting where support was needed. The session created a safe and supportive environment where the students felt comfortable sharing their experiences and challenges.

### Our impact:

- Increased awareness of Healthwatch, the NHS App and digital health support available locally, along with awareness of where people can go for general help if they are having issues with GP surgery services etc.
- This work has highlighted the importance of inclusive and accessible community engagement, including supported environments to ensure all voices can be heard. It also helped build trust and strengthen engagement with diverse local communities whose experiences are often underrepresented.
- Strengthened relationships with the Crescent Resource Centre, with the tutor inviting us back to deliver further health and social care engagement sessions to gather feedback from students.
- The feedback and experiences shared with us will help inform and shape our ongoing work around improving digital inclusion, accessibility, digital technology and access to healthcare.



“The students felt the information was clear and useful. They thought [Healthwatch Wokingham Borough] were understanding of their language barriers and very helpful with completing the survey. Many students mentioned they didn't know about the NHS App and were thankful for the opportunity to learn about it.”

**Ashi Butt – ESOL Tutor**

# Strengthening support for dementia carers

## Using carers lived experiences to make change

We heard from a local carer supporting her mother with dementia who struggled to manage appointments and letters because she had to use a separate NHS App account. We raised this with local healthcare providers, BOB ICB and HOSC which has led to better digital support for carers in GP practices. In this case, the practice linked the patient's record to the carer's account as they are both registered at the same GP practice.

We also gathered feedback from carers through the Dementia Friendly Forum, ensuring local carers' voices were heard to help make GP surgeries more dementia friendly, which has led to improved staff training and shared best practice across GP services in the borough.

### Our impact

- Carers are now better supported to manage information through the NHS App via their GP practice.
- GP practices have improved dementia awareness and training, leading to more consistent care.
- Healthcare services and GP practices have a better understanding of barriers with dementia in some diverse communities, improving how they respond to patient and carers needs.

# Improving access to female GPs in the South Asian Community

## Community voices help to drive more inclusive GP services

We heard from a South Asian mother who struggled to access female GPs for herself and her daughters. For her and her family, this is an important cultural and religious need, which sometimes led to delays or avoidance in seeking care.

We helped her understand her rights under the NHS Constitution and supported her to request a female GP at her surgery. We raised this issue more widely with local healthcare services and within the community, providing information and advice through engagement work and our South Asian Women's Health report.

### Our impact

- Increased awareness of patients' rights within the South Asian community.
- Influenced local health leaders and commissioners to recognise the barriers and challenges facing the South Asian community.
- Influenced local health leaders and commissioners to review potential changes, such as better recording of patient preferences, helping to shape women's health services to make them more inclusive and responsive to women's needs.

# Speaking up for local people with rehabilitation and long-term condition needs

## Local voices help improve communication and service planning

Through feedback we gathered at a local engagement event, we learned that cardiac exercise classes and other rehabilitation programmes, including a long-term health condition gym programme and the Steady Steps falls prevention programme, were stopped by the council without notice, explanation or public consultation.

Local people who relied on these structured programmes for their health and wellbeing were affected. Some people had been using these services for longer than the intended 10–12 weeks, in some cases for several years.

Residents were still able to access other similar physical activity services in the borough, although this was unclear at the time of the change. Some people were also unable to access the new alternatives due to transport issues, costs and other barriers.

We shared this feedback with Wokingham Borough Public Health and other decision-makers. We asked for clear information about how the decision was made, what engagement took place and what support was available for those affected.

### Our impact:

We made sure the public voice was clearly heard and represented which led to this issue being formally reviewed by the council and ensuring improvements in how future service changes across the borough are managed.

While the council confirmed an Equality Impact Assessment had been completed, it acknowledged communication could have been significantly better. The council apologised for the mistakes made and committed to capturing lessons learned in a paper to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) as part of this wider review.

# In pictures: hearing from all communities

Some examples of our work across Wokingham Borough this year, in pictures:



# Healthwatch Youth

We have 4 fantastic volunteers who currently make up our Healthwatch Youth team who live and study in Wokingham Borough and Reading.

**Healthwatch Youth continued to champion the views of young people locally, so that services can improve to better meet their needs.**

**This year, the Healthwatch Youth team has been actively involved in:**

- Supporting our NHS App project by promoting it through community and university networks, including a pop-up stand at The University of Reading, university societies, such as the Autistic Students Society and Wokingham Baptist Church.
- Supporting our volunteering recruitment programme by attending recruitment events in Wokingham Borough.
- Continuing to support and promote the recommendations from our previous *Empowering Young Women: Improving Sexual Health Awareness and Services* report, contributing to ongoing improvements in sexual health service.

## Impact of our sexual health project

Findings and recommendations from last year's *Empowering Young Women: Improving Sexual Health Awareness and Services* continue to influence sexual health service improvements, with action taking place this year:

### ✓ Young people shaping services

The Florey Clinic invited Healthwatch Youth to take part in a focus group on local sexual health services. The team shared their views, helping to shape future service developments and highlight accessibility barriers, including the need for more accessible communication for the deaf community.

### ✓ Reaching more young people

Following our project recommendation, the clinic delivered a social media campaign that reached approximately 75,000 young people, increasing awareness of sexual health information.

### ✓ Supporting future improvements

Our project findings identified low awareness of HIV prevention services and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) amongst young women. This helped inform the development of 'PrEP on Wheels' service for 16–18 year olds. Launching in September 2026, it will improve access to HIV prevention medication. Healthwatch Youth will continue to support the clinic's future service developments and this new project.

# Healthwatch Youth

We have 4 fantastic volunteers who currently make up our Healthwatch Youth team who live and study in Wokingham Borough and Reading.

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"Thank you for coming in to meet with us last Friday, it was great to meet you and really useful to have the focus group [...]. It's always so beneficial for us to hear the voices of young people first hand so we can help create an accessible and approachable service based on their feedback."

## Florey Clinic team (The Florey Sexual Health and Contraceptive Services)



**Florey Clinic team:**  
Emily King and Paula Lane

**Healthwatch Youth team:**  
Bethany, Chloe, Jeanet and Leia

# Information and signposting

When you're struggling to find an NHS dentist, looking for help about how to make a complaint, or need advice about a good care home for a loved one – we're your first port of call.

**This year 2811 people have reached out to us for advice, support or help finding services. These conversations also help us to understand where, and how, your care can be made better.**

## **This year, we've helped local people by:**

- Providing up-to-date information and advice they can trust, over the phone, face-to-face, and online through our website and social media channels.
- Supporting them to access the services they need, helping them to navigate and use local health and care services more effectively.
- Supporting them to look after their health by providing information, listening to their experiences and signposting to appropriate services and support. This has enabled people to make informed choices and access the right care sooner, improving their health and wellbeing.
- Signposting people to additional services, improving their access to care and services, ensuring they can get the right support when needed.



# Filling the gap: connecting residents with information, guidance and support

**Bringing together accessible and translated information and resources to help local communities and residents use the NHS App confidently.**

As part of our joint NHS App project with Healthwatch Reading, we went out to local communities across the borough to gather feedback on people's experiences of using the NHS App. Some people told us of the difficulties they had using the app and the lack of clear information, advice and guidance to support them.

Drawing on this feedback and further research conducted by Digital Engagement (Healthwatch Wokingham Borough), a significant gap in locally available NHS App support materials and resources was found. NHS App support via webpages, social media content and resources from local NHS Trusts and the BOB ICB (now Thames Valley ICB ) was non-existent compared to other parts of England.

NHS England resources had no translated guidance and easy-read formats, and their webpages were often difficult to navigate, making it challenging for people to quickly find and understand the information and advice they needed.

To address this gap, a simple NHS App information and advice webpage was developed by Digital Engagement at Healthwatch Wokingham Borough to help residents understand what the NHS App can do, how to use it and where to get support. It was later adapted for Healthwatch Reading's and Healthwatch West Berkshire's websites.

Due to the lack of local resources, materials were found, reviewed and permissions sought from a range of external organisations, NHS trusts and charities in the South of England including; Black Country Integrated Care Board, Viaduct Care CIC, Caafi Health (Bristol), and several primary care networks across the South of England.

During this work, it was also identified that significant national NHS App changes were not being widely communicated at a local level. In response, key updates were shared through Healthwatch Wokingham Borough webpages, newsletters, social media channels, and community engagement events to improve awareness.

Our information and guidance has been well received and has highlighted a strong demand and need for clear, simple, accessible, and translated digital health information to support people to use the NHS App and manage their health through digital technology.

This work has also strengthened our wider understanding of digital barriers experienced by residents and communities and continues to inform our ongoing work with key service and care providers, around digital inclusion, accessibility, and confidence in using digital health services.

# Supporting access to GP online booking systems

**A resident shared concerns with us about difficulties she and her mother faced when trying to book GP appointments through the GP practice's online Anima system. When they were unable to access the service online, they found there was no telephone alternative available, creating barriers to accessing care.**

The resident had raised the issue with their MP and the Department of Health and Social Care who confirmed that all patients must continue to have telephone and in-person access to GP services alongside online and digital systems. The resident told us:



“When you ask to book an appointment with the receptionist, they say that they are not allowed to book you an appointment and that you need to go to Anima.”

We raised the issue directly with the resident's GP practice and shared wider community feedback with the ICB to highlight that some people are struggling with online-only booking systems and are at risk of being left out from services and care if they cannot use digital services.

The GP practice clarified how their appointment booking system works and highlighted support available for patients who need help accessing services digitally.

We shared this information with the resident, along with advice on how they can ensure accessibility needs are clearly recorded on their GP records, so they can have easier access to appointments in the future.

From this feedback and our work, we have been invited to work with the GP practice to review its booking processes and to help improve patient communication.

We are also planning wider engagement across the borough to understand residents' experiences of online booking systems and identify ways to improve accessibility. This theme has emerged across our wider work, including our NHS App project.



# Signposting University of Reading staff

**Working with Healthwatch Reading, we hosted a pop-up engagement stand at the Students' Union at the University of Reading to gather feedback on user's experiences of the NHS App.**

Along with students, seven staff members completed surveys and shared their experiences with us. Feedback highlighted a range of usability and technical challenges, including difficulties logging in and issues with managing linked family accounts on the NHS App.

We provided practical guidance and signposted individuals to their GP surgeries for additional support, helping improve awareness of this available support. For example, one staff member struggling to manage a family member's account and GP appointments in the app across two phones was unaware that GP services could help with this. We directed them to their GP practice to help set up appropriate access.

Despite our pop-up taking place during exam season, the engagement generated valuable feedback and highlighted the importance of face-to-face support in building confidence in using digital NHS services. This feedback will help inform our continued work to improve accessibility and awareness of the NHS App.

Bethany Brown, Senior Student Community Coordinator (Volunteering and Fundraising) at the University of Reading, reflected positively on our engagement, stating:



“Healthwatch Wokingham Borough have visited [The University of Reading] campus on multiple occasions and have been great at engaging students [and staff] in important conversations around their health and wellbeing, as well as sharing where they can access support and help make services better for all.”

# Showcasing volunteer impact

Our fantastic volunteers have given 155 hours to support our work. Thanks to their dedication to improving care, we can better understand what is working and what needs improving in our community.

## **This year, our volunteers:**

- Visited and spoke to different communities to promote our work
- Collected feedback, experiences and supported our communities to share their views for change and improvements to local services and care.

## **In addition, we launched a volunteer recruitment campaign (ongoing):**

- Recruited 4 x volunteer members to our refreshed Advisory Group
- Recruited 1 x volunteer community connector to help us engage and work with the Hong Kong community.
- Recruited 1 x Healthwatch Youth volunteer



# At the heart of what we do

From finding out what residents think to helping raise awareness, our volunteers have championed community concerns to improve care.



**Sue**  
Advisory Group  
member

Sue recently joined our Advisory Group after retiring from a 37-year NHS career in senior roles. She brings extensive experience to support our programme of work to improve NHS and social care services across the borough.

Passionate about tackling health inequalities, Sue is excited by NHS England's plan to develop a neighbourhood health service requiring the collaboration of all health and social care providers, breaking down organisational barriers, and putting patients centre stage. Sue is keen to support our future Neighbourhood Health workstream to improve access to services, reduce waiting times and ensure continuity of care.

A Wokingham Borough resident for 28 years, Sue has held a number of local voluntary roles. Sue also enjoys researching family history, travelling and aquafit.

As a passionate advocate for the deaf community, Bethany brings valuable lived experience and insight to her volunteer role with Healthwatch Youth. She has actively supported our NHS App project, took part in a Florey Clinic focus group and has completed outreach work within local community groups and churches to help engage more diverse voices.

Bethany is a graduate in Health and Social Care and volunteers at Wokingham Community Hospital and the Chemotherapy Ward at Bracknell Healthspace.

**"I am profoundly deaf and wear two cochlear implants to help me hear. I communicate through spoken English and lip reading. I am proud to be part of Healthwatch Youth and to help make sure more young people in our community have their voices heard."**



**Bethany**  
Healthwatch Youth

## Be part of the change

If you've felt inspired by these stories, contact us today and find out how you can be part of the change.



[www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)



0118 418 1418



[enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)

# Feedback on working with Healthwatch



## Community Pharmacy Thames Valley

"We are here for patients, especially those that are most vulnerable. Healthwatch are our eyes and ears for those unable to speak for themselves. Thank you – and we hope that we can continue the great work that you have started."

**David Dean – Chief Executive Officer, Community Pharmacy Thames Valley**

## Thames Valley Integrated Care Board

"The ICB has worked closely with Healthwatch Wokingham Borough and Healthwatch Reading to improve access to NHS dental services, particularly for adults and child for adults and children with additional needs. Healthwatch's work with these patients has provided valuable information about their experience of accessing and using NHS services with the local NHS then designing solutions to improve access to and responsiveness of the services."

**Hugh O'Keeffe – Head of Pharmacy, Optometry and Dentistry, Thames Valley ICB (previously known as BOB ICB)**

## Reading Community Learning Centre

"As CEO of Reading Community Learning Centre, I welcome this important report [Healthwatch Wokingham Borough South Asian Women Health Report] and the powerful insights it brings into the lived experiences of South Asian women accessing healthcare.

It highlights persistent inequalities, from barriers to booking appointments and navigating digital systems, to low health literacy and limited awareness of services, alongside the clear need for culturally appropriate, gender-sensitive care and more flexible, accessible provision [...] This reflects what we see every day: without culturally responsive, community-led approaches, many women remain excluded from the healthcare they need. It is vital that services listen, adapt, and work in partnership with trusted community organisations to break down these barriers.

This report is an important step in amplifying unheard voices and driving more equitable, inclusive healthcare for all women."

**Asiha Malik – Chief Executive Officer, Reading Community Learning Centre**

# Feedback on working with Healthwatch



## The Link

"Many of our Link friends at Wokingham Link Visiting Scheme manage to attend our weekly gatherings at our Link Thursdays held at Space for All. Most of our Link Friends are elderly and have a vast experience of interfacing with our medical services and appreciate having their experiences recorded by Claire from Healthwatch. Her regular appearance every month is advertised and her method of integrating into the groups ensures she receives worthwhile input for her investigation."

**Stuart Hayter – Digital Inclusion Officer, The Link**

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"Having a regular presence from Healthwatch Wokingham Borough at Link Thursdays has been a massive success! Not only has it allowed our Link friends and volunteers to engage in this much needed service, but also the wider community. Our Link Friends have told us how important it is to speak to someone face to face about accessing healthcare. It also makes them feel heard and valued. Claire is wonderful in engaging with people who may otherwise not seek out services such as Healthwatch – this is a very important piece of work – I feel she is really reaching those who need it. We are very proud to be part of making sure the community's voice is heard."

**Beth Holdaway – Activities and Events Manager, The Link**

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## Wokingham Borough Council

"Healthwatch have been an active stakeholder in the development of the Wokingham Physical Activity Strategy. Healthwatch have appropriately challenged colleagues across the system to ensure that they understand local need. They have championed an inclusive approach to physical activity locally, so that all residents are given the environment, infrastructure, and opportunities to move more as part of daily life."

**Karen Buckley – Public Health Services, Wokingham Borough Council**

# Feedback on working with Healthwatch



## Wokingham Borough Council continued...

'It was interesting to have Healthwatch join our youth council meeting and to hear about the work they are doing with young people as part of this piece of work [NHS App project] and more widely through their young volunteers. The Youth Council had the opportunity to contribute to the survey and have their voices heard about their use of the NHS app. It was also helpful to raise awareness as most of the group do not currently use the app, so hopefully they will be able to manage their health appointments more independently in the future!'

**Jo Dixon – Children's Services Participation Manager, Wokingham Borough Council**

"With six dedicated Community Engagement Officers working in different areas, the team takes time to understand the unique needs of each neighbourhood. By listening to residents and collaborating closely with local organisations, they identify gaps in support and respond through targeted engagement, community events and partnership working. This approach ensures that services and opportunities reach those who might otherwise feel overlooked or isolated.

Our partnership work with Healthwatch on their NHS App project is an excellent example of this approach in action. Through our close working relationship with Claire and the team, we were able to identify groups and events which were best suited to capturing feedback from residents and we were delighted to have a Healthwatch presence at these venues.

"Their respectful and inclusive approach to interacting with residents enabled those residents whose voices are seldom heard, to have the opportunity to share their experiences of navigating the NHS App and highlight the challenges they face in accessing healthcare.

"Whilst the App may work for many, it has the potential to widen health inequalities amongst certain groups within our community, and we are grateful to Healthwatch for their efforts in giving those residents a voice and look forward to continuing our partnership work in the future."

**Shabina Maher – Engagement Officer, Wokingham Borough Council**

# Finance and future priorities

We receive funding from Wokingham Borough Council under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to help us do our work.

## Our income and expenditure:

Income		Expenditure	
Wokingham Borough Council	£123,232	Employment costs	£86,217
BOB ICB Capacity Building Funds	£16,667	Other operating costs	£14,526
		Support and admin costs	£20,510
		Carried forward project work	£13,561
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£139,899</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£134,814</b>
		Surplus for the year	£5,085

## Integrated Care System (ICS) funding:

Healthwatch across Berkshire West also receive funding from our Integrated Care System (ICS) to support new areas of collaborative work at this level, including:

Purpose of ICS funding	Amount
BOB ICB Capacity Building Funds continue to contribute to extend the reach of Healthwatch engagement across Berkshire West.	<b>£16,667</b>

# Finance and future priorities

**Over the next year, we will keep reaching out to every part of society, especially people in the most deprived areas, so that those in power hear their views and experiences.**

We will also work together with partners and our local Integrated Care System to help develop an NHS culture where, at every level, staff strive to listen and learn from patients to make care better.

## **Our top three priorities for the next year are:**

### **1.Reducing health inequalities by amplifying the voices of those most affected**

We will continue to focus on communities that experience the greatest inequalities in access, experience, and outcomes. This includes residents living in areas of deprivation, ethnic minority communities, disabled residents, carers, older people and those who are digitally excluded. By prioritising lived experience and insight from these groups, we will ensure that decision-makers better understand where services are not working and what needs to change to deliver fairer, more inclusive care across Wokingham Borough.

### **2. Strengthening the public voice within Neighbourhood Health through meaningful community engagement**

We will strengthen the role of the public voice as a core part of Neighbourhood Health, ensuring community engagement is not an add-on but central to how services are designed and delivered locally. This includes working closely with neighbourhood teams, the voluntary and community sector, and residents to embed listening, co-production and feedback into neighbourhood-level planning. We will champion the role of residents as partners in care and ensure that local insight informs services closer to home.

### **3. Reaching seldom-heard communities and showing the impact of their voice**

We will proactively reach people whose voices are underrepresented by engaging in trusted community spaces, using accessible and culturally appropriate approaches, and offering multiple ways for people to share their experiences. Crucially, we will focus on demonstrating impact by showing how people's voices have influenced decisions, service improvements, and system learning. This includes stronger feedback loops to communities and clearer reporting on the difference that public voice has made.

# Statutory statements

Healthwatch England, 2 Redman Place, Stratford, E20 1JQ  
**The Advocacy People, PO Box 375, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 9HU**

**Healthwatch Wokingham Borough uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.**

## The way we work

### **Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making.**

Our Healthwatch Advisory Group consists of 4 members who work voluntarily to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of our activities.

Our Advisory Group ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

Throughout 2025/26, the Advisory Group was refreshed with new members and met twice to get to know the staff team and gain an understanding of our work and current projects.

## Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible can provide us with insight into their experience of using services.

During 2025/26, we have been available by phone and email, through our social media channels, provided a web form on our website, attended engagement events, forums and meetings with community groups.

We will ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website and publicise the report via our newsletters and social media channels.

# Statutory statements

## Responses to recommendations

All providers responded to our requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to the Healthwatch England Committee, so there were no resulting reviews or investigations.

## Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

We ensured that people who can make decisions about services heard about the insights and experiences shared with us. For example, in our local authority area, we took information to the local Health and Wellbeing Board, Wokingham Borough Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) and our Integrated Care Board.

We also took insight and experiences to decision-makers in the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System and worked with the other Healthwatch within this area to ensure voices were heard from all parts of the community. For example, we have a seat at the System Quality Group and the ICB Health Inequalities Board. We also shared our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

## Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Wokingham Borough is represented on the Wokingham Borough Health and Wellbeing Board by Alice Kunjappy-Clifton, Lead Officer for Healthwatch Wokingham Borough.

During 2025/26, our representative effectively carried out this role by sharing our work, future workplans and asking questions from the public perspective to ensure the public voice was considered in decision-making.

Healthwatch Wokingham Borough collaborated with 4 Healthwatch in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West to ensure Wokingham Borough residents are represented at place level (Berkshire West) and Integrated Care Board level.

The 3 Berkshire West Healthwatch (Healthwatch Reading, Healthwatch West Berkshire and Healthwatch Wokingham Borough) is delivered through representation at place level which was and continues to be shared between Alice Kunjappy-Clifton (Lead Officer, Healthwatch Reading and Healthwatch Wokingham Borough), Fiona Worby (Lead Officer, Healthwatch West Berkshire) and Jamie Evans (Area Director, Healthwatch in Berkshire West).

## Enter and view

There were no Enter and View visits conducted this year. Other methodologies better suited our work priorities, such as reaching out to residents through focus groups, surveys and community engagement programmes. For the work year 2026/2027, we will be thinking about the best ways to ensure our on-going projects are actioned as well as focusing on gathering views for our other projects. At this current time, we do not expect our project work to require an Enter and View methodology but this could change.

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