Healthwatch Bath & North East Somerset

healthwatch Bath and North East

healthwatch

Somerset

Annual Report 2018-19

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Message from our Team Manager

This has been an exciting year for Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) as we began our new contract to deliver Healthwatch until 2021.

As always my annual message is directed towards our team of 14 volunteers. I am incredibly proud of each and everyone of them and the commitment they have shown to the new service. The Care Forum has delivered Healthwatch in B&NES since its inception in 2013. The new contract introduced a new funding model and the sad loss of our project development officer. This in turn required us to think more creatively about how we could deliver the service and continue to effectively champion the views of local residents. Despite some initial doubts, the volunteers have embraced the new model and are heading up the project through our newly formed Executive Board, setting work priorities and monitoring how well we are doing.

One of our greatest challenges and successes this year was the introduction of our Community Pot, a small grant scheme for voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations who want to work with us to explore the views and experiences of local residents, particularly those people and/or communities with protected characteristics or who are seldom heard.

We were delighted to fund five fantastic projects and look forward to receiving the findings of their work next year. Keeping our ears to the ground and knowing what the 'live' issues are around health and social care is key. Our new quarterly 'what matters to you?' public events help us to do this and identify areas of focus for our engagement work. This year the volunteers have led on the engagement work that we have undertaken, working in partnership with VCSE organisations and groups to reach local people and gather their views and experiences.

Finally, we were delighted to be able to work with our partners at Healthwatch Swindon and Healthwatch Wiltshire to carry out some engagement work around the NHS Long Term Plan. As part of a national campaign titled #whatwouldyoudo we worked together to gather over 600 survey responses and carry out focus groups around the future of NHS services in England. We look forward to sharing the findings from this work with you next year.



Alex Francis Team Manager - Healthwatch B&NES

Changes you want to see

Last year we heard from 203 people who told us about their experience of a number of different areas of health and social care. Here are some examples of the changes that you want to see.





+ Clearer information about prescriptions, particularly what is available from GPs and what needs to be purchased over the counter



+ Shorter waiting times for appointments with primary care services and referrals to hospital



+ More transport options for people who live in North East Somerset, particularly to help them access medical appointments

About us

Healthwatch is here to make care better

We are the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share their views with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.



Our staff team (L-R):		
Alex Francis	Team Manager	
Pat Foster	Volunteer Support Officer	
Vanessa Scott	Marketing & Communications	
	Administrator	

Our vision is simple

Health and care that works for you. People want health and social care support that works - helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.



Our Purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.

Our approach

People's views come first - especially those that find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.

People are at the heart of everything we do

We play an important role bringing communities and services together. Everything we do is shaped by what people tell us. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- + Visiting services to see how they work
- + Running surveys and focus groups
- + Going out in the community and working with other organisations

Our main job is to raise people's concerns with health and care decision-makers so that they can improve support across the country. The evidence we gather also helps us recommend how policy and practice can change for the better.

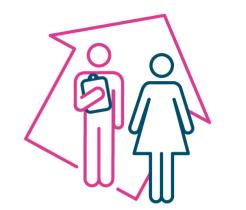


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Highlights from

our year

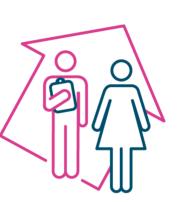
Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2018-19. **Our resources:**



203 people shared their health and social care stories with us.



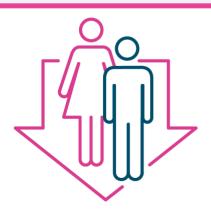
We have 14 volunteers helping to deliver our work.



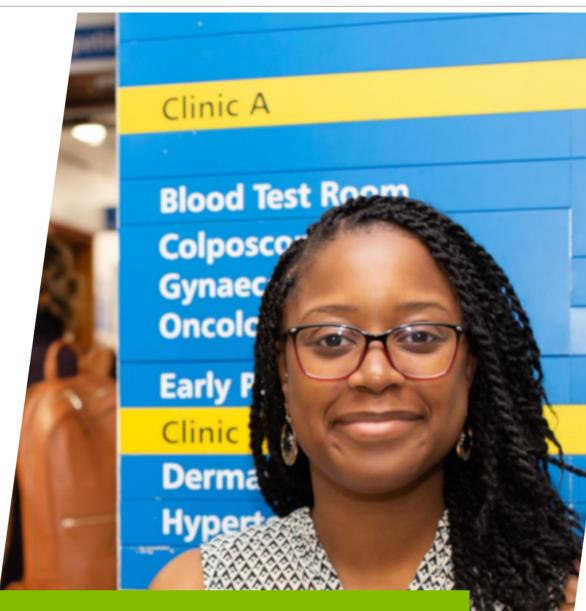
We attended 29 community events and groups to understand people's experiences.



65% people who contacted Healthwatch were signposted to further information, support and advocacy.



14% more people engaged with us through our website and social media this year



How we've made

a difference



Changes made to your community

Find out how sharing your views with your local Healthwatch has led to positive changes to health and social care services in Bath & North East Somerset. We show when people speak up about what's important, and services listen, care is improved for all.

Take a look at an example of a local Healthwatch demonstrating how they have made a difference in their community.

'What matters to you?'

This year we launched a new element to our service: quarterly 'what matters to you?' public meetings.

These meetings provide an opportunity for local people and voluntary sector partners ('our network') to share issues, concerns and questions with Healthwatch, and find out information about what is happening with health and social care services in B&NES.

These public meetings take place on different days and times and at a variety of venues across the district. They help us to keep in touch with what is happening 'on the ground' for local people.

Following each of these meetings, the Healthwatch B&NES Executive Board - a group of local residents who oversee how the project is run - meets to discuss the feedback that was received and consider whether further work needs to be carried out in order to find out more.

The issues people raised with is this year:

- + Non-emergency patient transport services
- + Over the counter prescribing
- + Changes to direct payments

Healthwatch volunteers subsequently carried out seven engagement activities with local communities and groups to understand these issues in more detail. The reports of which are being finalised and will be available to view on our website in summer 2019

W: www.healthwatchbathnes.co.uk



Working in partnership with VCSE organisations to boost our reach into the community

Healthwatch gathers the views of local people and shares them with commissioners and providers in order to highlight what is being done well and where things could be improved. However we cannot carry out this work on our own - voluntary, community sector and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations are crucial in helping us to reach the local community and understand how health and social care services are working in B&NES.

This year saw the launch of another new element to our service - the Healthwatch B&NES Community Pot. VCSE organisations and groups operating in B&NES can apply to receive a one-off grant up to £5,000 to fund a piece of work or project that complements the aims of Healthwatch, as follows:

- + Support local people to take part in planning and influencing local service provision
- + Work to improve the patient and user experience so that there is greater

satisfaction in health and social care services in B&NES

- + Help to identify health inequalities and propose solutions to address the gaps
- Signpost local people to help them to find the services they need when they need them
- + Enabling people to raise issues about services with local commissioners and providers
- + Work to improve the awareness and profile of Healthwatch B&NES

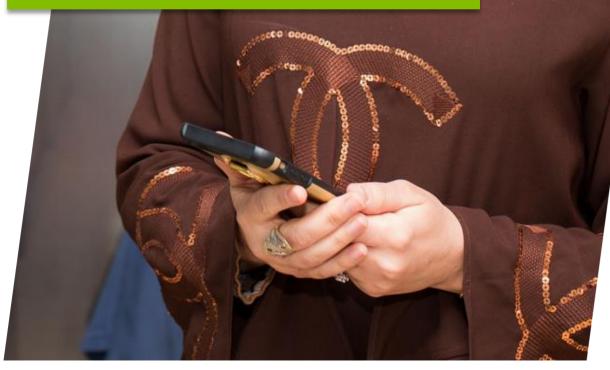
The Healthwatch B&NES Executive Board was delighted to award five grants totalling just over £20,000 to VCSE organisations to undertake projects around topics including: children and young people's experiences of using mental health services; the experiences of LGBTQ+ people living in rural areas, bereavement in care homes settings and carers' empowerment.

The timeframe for these projects spans financial years so most of the projects are still underway. We hope to share findings from them during summer/ autumn 2019.



Our volunteers

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How do our volunteers help us?

At Healthwatch B&NES we couldn't deliver our service without the support of our 14 volunteers that work with us to help make care better for their communities.

What our volunteers do:

- + Raise awareness of the work we do in the community
- Visit services to make sure they're meeting people's needs
- + Support our day to day running e.g. governance
- + Collect people's views and experiences which we use in our reports



Volunteers providing leadership for the project

A change in the way that Healthwatch B&NES receives its funding (with effect from 1 April 2018) resulted in us reviewing our governance and the roles that lay people have in running Healthwatch B&NES.

Our newly established Executive Board provides leadership, sets work plan objectives and oversees the delivery of Healthwatch B&NES to ensure that it effectively captures the public 'voice' and uses its role to influence and shape the provision of local health and social care services. The Board comprises nine members, five of whom are lay representatives. The lay roles are as follows:

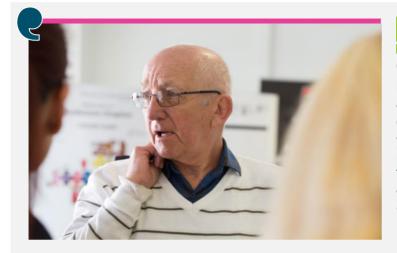
- + Lead for Enter and View and Quality
- + Health and Wellbeing Board representative
- + Provider link: Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH)

- + Provider link: Virgin Care B&NES
- + Provider link: Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

A new aspect of our service is to have 'provider link' volunteers. These volunteers aim to work closely with key NHS Trust personnel to help facilitate regular dialogue, share feedback from the public and increase understanding around the work that each organisation is doing.

This approach is well-established with the RUH, where our lay representative is a valued member of the Patient Experience Group, has regular meetings with the Trust Chair and Head of Patient Experience, and has involvement more widely in RUH activity, e.g. providing lay representation during staff recruitment.

Working to improve the quality of local services



Reviewing NHS Quality Accounts

One area of work that our volunteers work particularly hard on is to review NHS Quality Accounts.

Quality Accounts are released during spring each year. Healthwatch volunteers read, comment and produce a formal written response to each report. They then meet with NHS providers throughout the year to track their quality improvement work and the impact it is having on patients.

BaNES Clinical Commissioning Group's Quality Committee

BaNES Clinical Commissioning Group has a quality committee which meets every other month. Healthwatch's lead for quality and enter and view attends this meeting to share any feedback that we have received about NHS commissioned services, and findings from any Healthwatch engagement activity.





Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for more volunteers.

If you are interested in volunteering get in touch: w: www.healthwatchbathnes.co.uk t: 01225 232 401

e: info@healthwatchbathnes.co.uk

our finances

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How we use our money

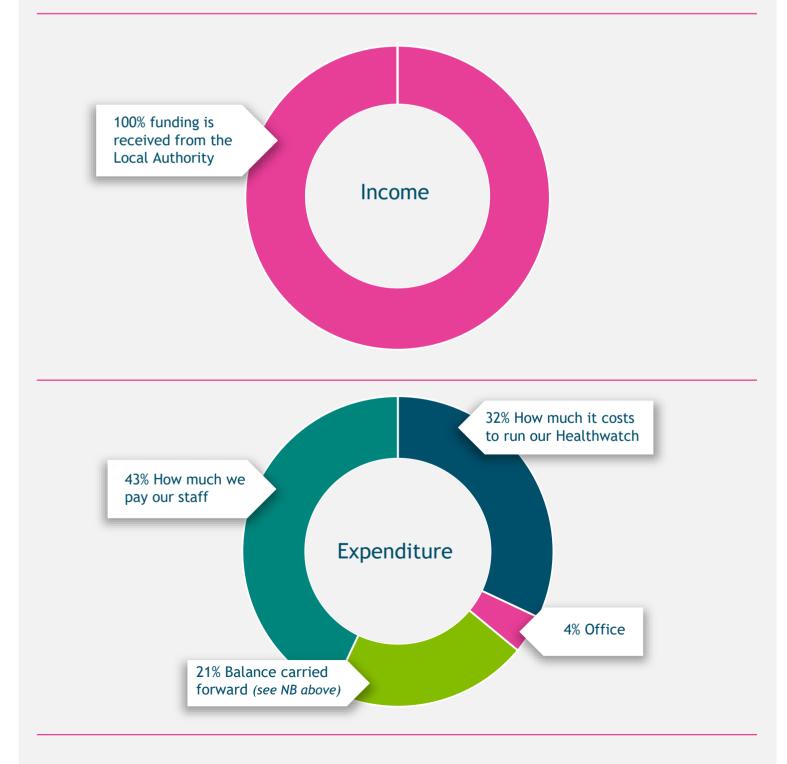
To help us carry out our work, we are funded by our local authority. In 2018-19 we spent £82,237.

Income:

+ Funding received from local authority

Expenditure

- + How much it costs to run Healthwatch
- + How much we pay our staff
- + Our operational costs
- + Balance carried forward (*NB* this money represents budget used for the Healthwatch B&NES Community Pot. This funding is received halfway through the financial year and projects run for 12 months, i.e. spanning two financial years)



Our plans for

next year

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meaning tell

Message from our CEO

I feel privileged to have been involved in Local Healthwatch from very early on, having started out as a project coordinator for Healthwatch at The Care Forum back in 2013. It's amazing to look back and see how Healthwatch has gone from strength to strength during this time. We've learned some vital lessons along the way, often simply by listening to our volunteers who keep us grounded in the regions we serve.

Over the past year: We successfully tendered to continue delivering Healthwatch in Bath and North East Somerset and have implemented our new service delivery model, which has volunteers at its very heart.

Our new model relies on strong volunteer involvement, with volunteers leading on project work, liaising with key providers and representing the project in the community. It took a few months to implement the new service, but the volunteers have risen to the challenge and are showing real leadership.

Looking ahead to 2019/20: Volunteers and project staff have been busy working on several engagement projects, including community conversations around non-emergency patient transport services and over the counter prescribing. During the next six months we will share findings from this work and continue our 'what matters to you?' public meetings to identify new 'live' topics for B&NES residents.

During summer 2019 we look forward to receiving reports from the five VCSE organisations that we have funded through our new Community Pot and working with them to elevate the voices of the people they have engaged with to influence service delivery. Planning health and social care services for the future continues to be a local, regional and national priority. Over the last year Healthwatch B&NES has continued its involvement in the local sustainability and transformation partnership and developing conversations around the integration of services. This will continue to be a priority for us during 2019/20.

Healthwatch has been at the forefront of engagement around the NHS Long Term Plan through the national #whatmatterstoyou campaign and we look forward to sharing these results during the next financial year.



Morgan Daly Chief Executive Officer, The Care Forum

'This year I've been impressed by the leadership shown by our staff and volunteer board'

Thank you

Thank you to everyone that is helping us put people at the heart of health and social care, including:

- + Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- + All of our amazing staff and volunteers
- + The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work



Contact us

Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset The Care Forum The Vassall Centre Gill Avenue, Fishponds Bristol BS16 2QQ

+ 01225 232 401 + <u>info@healthwatchbathnes.co.uk</u>

- + @hwbathnes
- + www.healthwatchbathnes.co.uk

Contact us: The Care Forum The Vassall Centre Gill Avenue, Fishponds Bristol BS16 2QQ + 0117 965 4444 + admin@thecareforum.org.uk

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North East Somerset The Care Forum Gill Avenue Fishponds Bristol, BS16 2QQ

Healthwatch Bath and <u>www.healthwatchbathnes.co.uk</u> t: 03000 683 000 tw: @Hwbathnes fb: facebook.com/Hwatchbathnes