



Our Work In West Berkshire

Annual Report 2018-19





Healthwatch West Berks

Our Year

“The Council and its partners forming the Health & Wellbeing Board welcome the contribution made by Healthwatch West Berkshire in monitoring the health and social care systems in West Berkshire, and bringing these observations to, and for, our attention.”

Councillor Rick Jones, Chair of the West Berkshire Health and Well Being Board

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"Thanks once again for the support extended, definitely gave us more confidence and your suggestions helped. Would surely share about Healthwatch West Berks with friends as well."

Healthwatch West Berkshire Client

Message from our Chair

Welcome to the Healthwatch West Berkshire Annual Report for 2018/19.

This report highlights the very real impact that has been made on local health and care services by the work of Healthwatch West Berkshire.

Looking back over what has been a busy and successful year, I cannot fail to be inspired by the hard work, enthusiasm and dedication shown by our Chief Officer, members of staff, our volunteers and Board members. That we have achieved what has been achieved in the face of continuing funding cuts is amazing.

The NHS celebrated its 70th “birthday” in July 2018. It is now looking to the next ten years and a fundamental restructuring of healthcare provision is underway. It is crucial that the voice of you, the customers of health and social care provision, continue to be heard and be consulted throughout this period of change. Enabling the patient voice to be heard is what we have done, what we do and will continue to do in future. We have the power to make sure that those in charge of the provision of services hear what people’s experiences are of those services.



‘Looking back over what has been a busy and successful year, I cannot fail to be inspired’

Mike Fereday, HWWB Chairman



We have continued to highlight issues surrounding mental health and our report on the fourth **“Thinking Together”** event, a “Co-produced Mental Health Crisis Review”, produced many recommendations for improvements. This report and our report on “Rough Sleepers”, which focused on the access to, and experience of, Health and social care services, provided much food for thought for the Health and Well Being Board, its Mental Health Action Group and other agencies, some even National.

As a note we did not use our ‘Enter and View’ powers this year. This is due to a good working relationship with our local CQC (Care Quality Commission) Adult Care Quality Team at West Berkshire Council and I’m pleased to say, a good standard of care generally in West Berkshire

Our ongoing outreach events have enabled entire communities within West Berkshire to share their experiences about their health and welfare provision, and to propose sensible ways in which these could be improved. In concluding, I must stress that we could not have made the impact we have without the willingness of statutory bodies and Health and Social care organisations to listen, work with us and respond positively to the issues raised on behalf of local people.



Mike Fereday
Healthwatch West Berkshire Chair

Changes you want to see

Last year we heard from 7,643 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.



+ There should be access for rough sleepers to health and social care services and an end to rough sleeping in West Berkshire



+ Mental health crisis services need reviewing in West Berkshire



+ Those with disabilities should have a forum in which to voice their opinions and be heard



+ Those in the BAMER (Black, Asian, Minority, Refugee) community need to be heard

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.

As Chair of Healthwatch England, it's my role to make sure your Healthwatch gets effective support and that national decisions are informed by what people are saying all over England.

If you were one of the 400,000 people who shared their experiences with us last year, I want to say a personal thank you. Without your views, Healthwatch wouldn't be able to make a difference to health and social care services, both in your area and at a national level. One example of this is how we shared 85,000 views with the NHS, to highlight what matters most, and help shape its plans for the next decade.

*If you're part of an organisation that's worked with, supported or responded to **Healthwatch West Berkshire**, thank you too. You've helped to make an even bigger difference.*

None of this could have been possible without our dedicated staff and volunteers, who work in the community every day to understand what is working and what could be better when it comes to people's health and care.

If you've shared your views with us then please keep doing what you're doing. If you haven't, then this is your chance to step forward and help us make care better for your community. We all have a stake in our NHS and social care services: we can all really make a difference in this way.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Robert Francis'.

Sir Robert Francis QC
Healthwatch England Chair

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.





Highlights from our year

"Our relationship with Healthwatch continues to grow and flourish. The opportunities that have been offered to the students, have been both rewarding and meaningful. The support and development given by Healthwatch team has been fantastic and we thank them for their ongoing partnership with Newbury College."
Julie Barker, Work Placement Co-Ordinator Newbury College

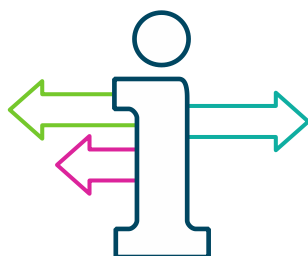
Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2018-19. **Our resources:**



62 people shared their health and social care story with us, 39% more than last year



We have 18 volunteers, from all different backgrounds helping to carry out our work. A total of 646 volunteer hours



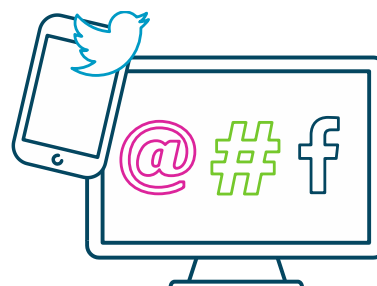
25,565 people accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support, 36% more than last year



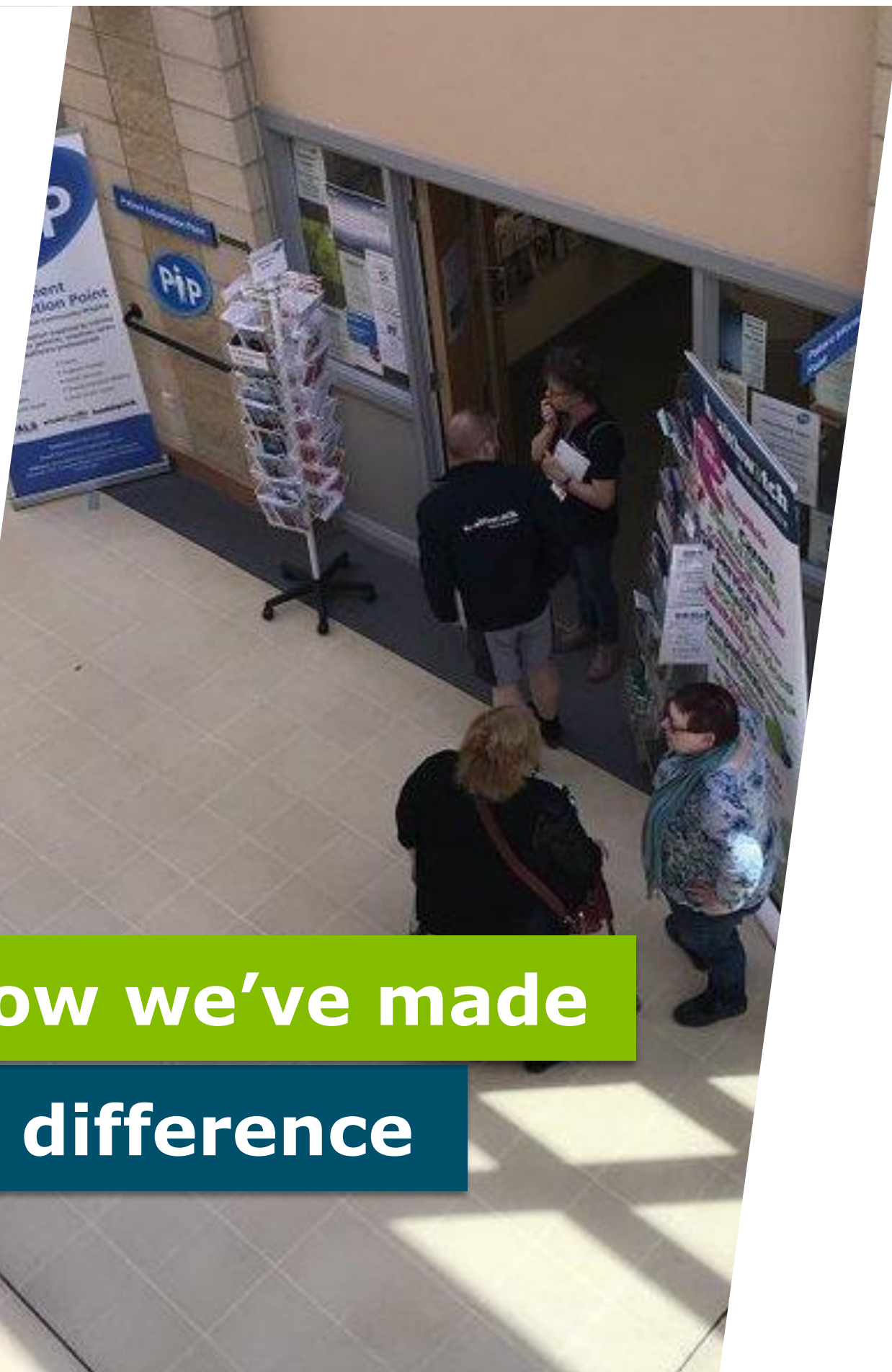
We visited 17 services and 39 community events to understand people's experiences of care. We also attended 244 meetings



We suggested 57 improvements, of which 35 have been adopted by services to make health and care better in our community



This year we reached 1,244,085 people via our website and social media. This is a 38% increase from last year



How we've made a difference

“AGE UK Berkshire have an excellent relationship with Healthwatch West Berkshire, we work together to ensure that comments and feedback on NHS services in West Berkshire from older people are heard and responded to. They are friendly, inclusive and a proactive organisation.”

Fiona Price, Chief Executive AGE UK Berkshire

Changes we made to our community

Healthwatch West Berkshire makes a real difference to people's lives in our community. We listen to everyone, and speak to those who don't come forward, this means that we are able to champion even those who are often marginalised and whose voice is seldom heard.

This year we have reached out to the homeless and rough sleepers, the disabled, young people and the BAMER community demonstrating how we can make a difference to our community.

Creating a seismic shift for rough sleepers in West Berks

Many individuals and those working in the voluntary sector with the homeless and rough sleepers, told HWWB that our local services do not truly understand the challenges there are for people who do not have a home. This group, we were told, found it difficult to access support because they lacked a permanent address, phone number or identification. Although NHS guidelines say that GP services cannot refuse to register someone because they do not have proof of address, we were told that there were examples locally of this being the case.

To understand the issues for this seldom heard community, the HWWB team met with 14 rough sleepers, and spoke to the charities and statutory bodies involved with them in order to gain an overall picture of the situation within the West Berks area, with a view to raising awareness of this issue.

The rough sleepers HWWB spoke to, who were not accessing health services, told us of the issues they face accessing GPs, dentists and mental health support - and of the low trust levels they have for support services.

Using these views, and other information gained in our research of the rough sleeping community we launched a huge local media campaign to *End Rough Sleeping in West Berkshire by 2020* to create noise about the issue. Our research led us to create a comprehensive report on the situation in our area. *The Homeless And Rough Sleepers Report 2018* was formally presented through the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board (WBH&WBB), which our local MP, Rt Hon Richard Benyon, specially attended in May 2018.

Our work in this arena led to wide spread coverage on local broadcast, print and online media, and resulted in our MP raising the issue with the Minister of Health.

Donated gloves for the homeless in Newbury



"I believe HWWB offer much needed scrutiny on behalf of both the members of Eight Bells and also the wider community. The work that has been done by them in both mental health and homelessness arenas has resulted in members of Eight bells getting support that may otherwise have been unavailable"

Steve Masters, Chair of Trustees Eight Bells For Mental Health

How our work with rough sleepers has made a difference

As a result of our work there has been a seismic shift in the way the rough sleeping community is approached in our area, with major changes to processes and policy. Indeed, at the May 2018 meeting it was decided a sub-group reporting into the WBH&WBB entitled the *Homeless Strategy Group* (HSG) would be formed. The group, which HWWB is part of, is made up of key local statutory partners, including Housing, Adult Social Care, Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (BWCCG), Better Communities Together (BCT) and Thames Valley Police; as well as with local homeless and Mental Health voluntary organisations. The HSG decided to base their actions on all the 14 recommendations we made in the report, which included setting up a multi-agency plan, *The West Berkshire Winter Plan 2018-19*, in order to deal with the rise in Rough Sleepers and improve their outcomes within our area.

Additionally, as a result of our joint work, West Berkshire Council received £212,000 extra funding from National Government via the Rough Sleepers Initiative Fund, in order to help rough sleepers in our area with complex needs and plans. These monies have, for the first time, enabled NHS Health Outreach and Dental Outreach for rough sleepers to operate in West Berkshire, along with a dual diagnosis key worker. Also, it helped finance existing and additional outreach work, as well as allowing the HSG to roll-out the radical *Housing First* programme within West Berkshire.

HWWB played a key role in securing a building in the centre of Newbury, free of charge, to be used as a night shelter for those remaining on the street.

The West Berks Right To Healthcare Card



Working with a local campaigner, liaising with both the building owner, the West Berkshire Homeless Charity (WBH) and Statutory Services, the building was secured, then made safe and warm for rough sleepers to move into in late January. With a capacity of 13, it was full almost every night and in fact ended up looking after 20 + people, through to the end of March 2019. WBH managed to house some of this number and HWWB ensured they were in contact with health and dental outreach services. We also worked on a couple of serious, long-term rough sleeper clients who were very unwell. Working closely with West Berkshire Council's Community Mental Health Team, the MEAM (Make Every Adult Matter) co-ordinator and Blue Light Project for those with serious alcohol issues; both are now receiving help and one is off the streets. The shelter remained open past its original March 31st end date thanks to a cash injection from the RSI funds given to WBC.

HWWB also launched its access to services initiative, via the *West Berks Homeless Card*, which was adopted and distributed via all local services. Furthermore, with the help of our local MP, HWWB wrote to Baroness Blackwood about the much maligned HC1 form, which makes obtaining free treatment and prescriptions extremely difficult for the homeless, and which HWWB believes is detrimental to members of our local community. Our team continues to follow this up with the MD of the NHS Business Unit and NHS England.

HWWB's influence on the issue has continued to be far reaching. Following joint meetings with our four local Acute Trusts to discuss the lack of guidance on discharge of the homeless from hospital, we were invited to the *National NHS England Homeless Forum* conference, which was working to contribute to the newly published *NHS Long Term Plan* in February 2019 and specifically mentions rough sleepers. Additionally we were asked to present our work at the *Thames Valley NHS Quality Surveillance Group*, which oversees strategic level change across the Thames Valley, thus allowing us an opportunity to inform its health inequalities strategy.

While the homeless and rough sleeping cohort continues to demonstrate huge inequalities, with a life expectancy difference of 33 years, HWWB continues to be involved in this key area, working to influence and improve the situation both locally and nationally to make a difference for all those living in our area and to inform commissioning and policy.

Thinking Together so that everyone is heard

Following a significant change in how services for community Mental Health were commissioned and provided in West Berkshire, HWWB were asked to create an inclusive, safe community event for service users, volunteer organisations and professionals to come together to allow them to voice their opinions and thoughts on the changes. We called the event *Thinking Together*.

Having successfully co-created and managed three *Thinking Together* events, where what was good and what didn't work so well in West Berkshire was openly discussed, in 2018 our fourth *Thinking Together* event focussed exclusively on Mental Health Crisis, at the request of service users. The event was an open forum where we discussed what Mental Health Crisis meant to service users - and also to the professionals present! What were the triggers and what were the options available to get help?

During the *Thinking Together* event, we captured the stories and ideas of the 80 assembled people. Subsequently, HWWB produced a report, which we then circulated to all key stakeholders, including those who took part. The report laid out a range of issues with the service and offered recommendations for improvement, particularly the necessity for a review to the Mental Health Crisis service provision.

In parallel to the event report, we used our influence as a key board member of the West Berkshire Health and Well Being Board (WBH&WBB), to drive the set-up a new sub-group of the called the Mental Health Action Group (MHAG) (which we

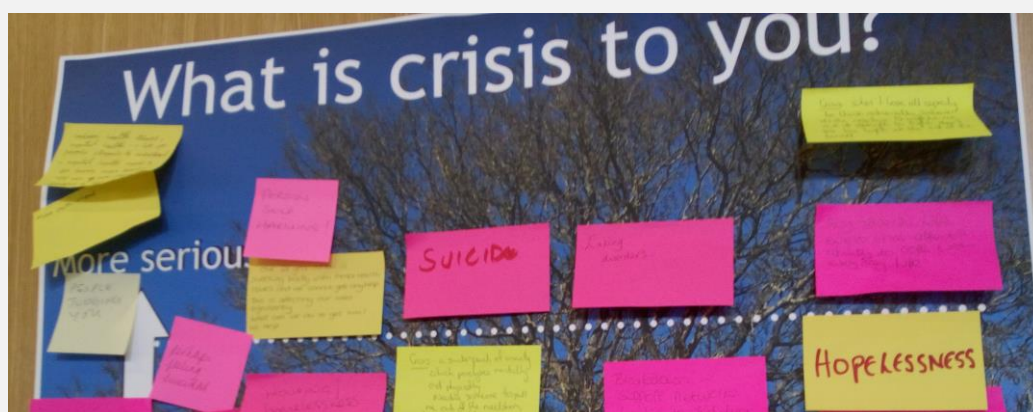
briefly chaired). This group had agreed to a Co-Produce a Crisis Review as one of its key aims in 2018-19; this was also a written priority of the wider WBH&WBB.

In November 2018 a quality visit undertaken by the Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (BWCCG) to the Crisis Line Service, found similar issues to our report, related to response levels and inadequacies in provision. This report described the service: "as shocking". #

As such the evidence from our report, along with that found by the BWCCG and pressure from the MHAG, working with our local voluntary group partners (including: Open for Hope, Eight Bells and Recovery in Mind), has led to a review of Crisis Services in West Berkshire. Subsequently, this resulted in larger review across the whole Berkshire West footprint - our work within this group has impacted further on the work of the BOB (Berkshire West/Oxon/Bucks) Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP), which has Mental Health as a key work stream.

(see below)
www.berkshirewestccg.nhs.uk/media/2702/bw190311-bw-quality-committee-chairs-report.pdf

What is crisis to you tree - Thinking Together 4



Being an inclusive voice

The HWWB received feedback from individuals, as well as from various disability groups. Additionally, according to our partners at the West Berkshire Living Independent Network (WBLIN), the West Berkshire Disability Alliance (now defunct) and the West Berkshire External Disability Scrutiny Board (DES), there were major issues facing people with disabilities in our community with accessing a variety of services in the West Berkshire area, which was affecting their health and well-being.

Therefore, HWWB in partnership with a range of local volunteer groups and local statutory bodies, as well as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), decided to put together a pan-disability workshop. The idea being to provide an opportunity for anyone with a disability to have their voice heard at an informal, easy-to-access event. We called the event *The Voice of Disability*. In order to reach the widest audience the event was publicised both online and via traditional media, as well as through the various support groups in our area. The event itself featured table discussions led by representatives from the various stakeholder groups. Designed to cover a range of issues, we invited key speakers to lead discussions regarding Transformation & Care Partnerships, 'How you would like your Well Being to be Improved' led by Public Health: How technology might be helpful and other issues important to the cohort.

During the event each table created notes that were put up on the walls of the room for everyone to see. Additionally, notes were taken of the overall responses by one of our volunteers. Our creative and inclusive event allowed us to gain an insight into the issues that many of those with disabilities, who had previously been unheard, were facing - from issues with cars parked on pavements to accessing care in their homes. Subsequently, a report was written jointly by our volunteers and WBLIN.

A draft report was presented to the WBH&WBB in early January, which included wide ranging recommendations resulting from the event. It was decided after this presentation that all 17 recommendations should be responded to by the WBH&WBB partners for formal presentation at the Public Board Meeting at the end of May 2019.

The *Voice Of Disability* report has had an immediate positive effect. The RBH has agreed to an Access Review - as problems with wheelchairs and disabled toilets were highlighted. Additionally, the WBH&WBB has been asked to say how its work ensures that those with disabilities are taken into account by its various subgroups and how it ensures their voice is heard - this is already being reviewed.

HWWB believes that when the *Voice Of Disability* report is formally launched it is likely to affect the creation of policy and provision of services by both the West Berks Council and its key partners. We are now aiming to repeat the event, thus creating a two way forum between service users and providers of services - and ultimately commissioners and controllers of policy in West Berkshire. Therefore, our work will ensure that those with disabilities are able to speak in a friendly and positive environment, in which they know those who create policy will hear their voice.



Tell us, and experts from West Berkshire Council Adult Social Care, local Health professionals and voluntary support groups, your thoughts and experiences. Help guide future service design and have your voice heard.

Have your say

Share your ideas and experiences and help services hear what works, what doesn't, and what you want from care in the future.

w: www.healthwatch.co.uk

t: 03000 683 000

e: enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk

Collaboratively working to engage with hard to reach groups

In 2017 HWWB created a Community Engagement Programme (CEP), to engage with our community in collaboration with local providers. We awarded a number of grants to assist in reaching out to hard to reach groups. One of these grants was given to Dr Deepak Ravindran, the Clinical Lead in Pain Medicine at RBH (Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust), to undertake pilot research into the Fibromyalgia Spectrum of conditions with young adults aged 16-30, to explore the transition arrangements for adults with the conditions.

In the first instance HWWB worked with Dr Ravindran to reach out to the West Berkshire GP practices via the Berkshire West CCG, in order to distribute a survey to the target age group to discover the resources and support available within the West Berks community. The aim being to develop resources to improve life quality of sufferers in our area. Additionally we ensured the HWWB CEP Grant attracted match-funding by signposting the Greenham Common Trust funding resource.

Subsequently, in order to engage a wider audience we suggested that we work together to create an event at which a special screening of the International, Award Winning film *Unrest* would be shown. HWWB liaised with its contacts at Newbury College, and obtained a copy of the film to be shown at the event. We worked with Dr Deepak to reach the widest possible audience. We launched a marketing campaign using the international hashtag #MillionsMissing within the media and recruited a Newbury College student volunteer to undertake online work to create noise about the event and improve reach to the audience, working with the local fibromyalgia support group to ensure inclusivity.

The event was extremely successful with 52 sufferers from our community attending the event. At a time when the condition was raised in Parliament,

the #MillionsMissing theme, highlighting sufferers missing from their own lives, created impactful photography, while the attendance of the CEO of RBH and the Principal of Newbury College added kudos to the event.

To give the campaign longevity, HWWB worked with Dr Ravindran to create a second event at West Berkshire Community Hospital (WBCH), where the emotional BBC documentary *'My Fibromyalgia and Me'* was shown. Again, HWWB facilitated a marketing campaign to provide greater reach and engagement with the target community.

Representatives from local services attended and gave brief presentations. These included specialist psychologists and physiotherapists, the RBH Integrated Pain and Spinal service (IPAS) team, West Berks Therapy Centre, a nutritionist, a GP and her patient, all of whom were available to discuss symptoms and treatments during a lively networking session.

The events provided an opportunity for sufferers to learn about local services and for one-to-one advice, and allow data-collection for the research. As such HWWB's CEP provided an opportunity for sufferers to discover more, and to improve the treatment of this unseen, little understood spectrum of conditions, with more events to follow in July 2019.

Fibromyalgia Event at Newbury College & WBCH





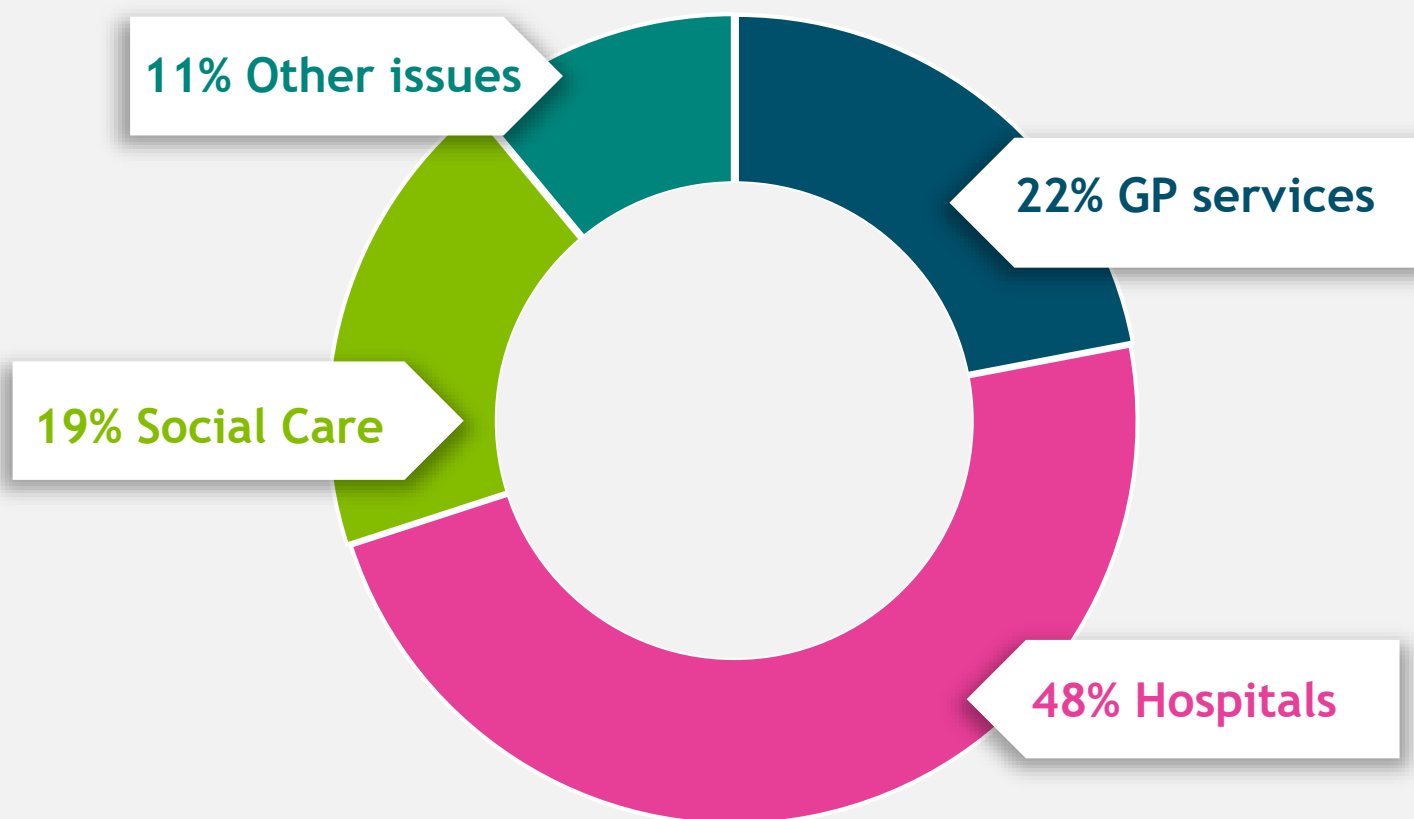
Helping you find

the answers

What services do people want to know about?

People don't always know how to get the information they need to make decisions about their own health and care. Healthwatch plays an important role in providing advice and pointing people in the right direction for the support they need.

Here are the most common things that people ask us:



John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford



How do we provide people with advice?

Finding the right care or support can be worrying and stressful. There are a number of organisations that can provide help, but people don't know where to look. Last year we helped 25,565 people access the advice and information they need.

You can come to us for advice and information in a number of ways including:

- + Specific advice and information blogs online
- + Our prepaid post 'Contact us' form
- + At community events
- + Promoting helpful services across our social media channels
- + Over the phone 9am - 5pm Monday - Friday

Ensuring everyone has their voice heard

West Berks Mencap (WBM) approached HWWB in July 2018 regarding one of its clients with Learning Disabilities (LD). WBM was concerned about the treatment the client had received while at Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH). We were able to advise, signpost and liaise on their behalf

WBM had concerns regarding the care of someone while they were being treated for a hip procedure during their stay in hospital and when discharged. Additionally, during their time as an inpatient they were deemed 'difficult', as they had refused to have the energy supplement they were given, and therefore they suffered weight loss.

WBM highlighted issues including:

- + Poor understanding of communicating with a patient with LD by consultants
- + Not ensuring the carers understood the procedures being undertaken
- + Failing to register the client's variable mental capacity during their period of care
- + Not providing adequate information at the time of discharge to the patient or their carers

HWWB met with WBM and advised them to write to the PALS team at RBH, and the CCG, copying us in on the letters.



'WB Mencap are now working in partnership with RBH, assisting in training and induction sessions'

This resulted in RBH agreeing to a local resolution meeting, which included the specialist LD Nurse and surgical team involved.

At the meeting, the team apologised and agreed to new training protocols involving WBM.

At the meeting, RBH acknowledged the information they had provided whilst the client was an inpatient and in the discharge summary was inadequate and unclear. Additionally, it was agreed that subsequent attempts to obtain clear information by the carers had been equally difficult.

It was agreed that WBM had provided a Care Plan, which was not read and that it, vitally, had contained details of the patient's allergy to strawberries. The flavour of the energy drink refused consistently by the patient, which had been offered, was strawberry.

WB Mencap are now working in partnership with RBH, assisting in training and induction sessions to educate the staff at RBH on the importance of following Consent and Care Plans, as well as the results that 'good' or 'poor' care can have on a patient with LD.

We signpost people with a wide range of questions and issues

Ensuring pathways work

A person had been referred by his Doctor to Arthritis Care in December 2018, as part of their treatment under the Berkshire MSK (musculoskeletal) pathway for hip, knee and shoulder operations. Despite ringing the telephone number many times, and leaving answerphone messages too, they could not get through. They even returned to their GP, who equally struggled to make any progress in getting the referral accepted.

In January 2019 the patient contacted HWWB. We tried the numbers they had been given, equally without success. As this is a key service change for patients in West Berkshire, we felt it was important the situation was resolved quickly. We contacted the local CCG and Commissioners at NHS Bath Road, Reading, who were unable to offer any alternative numbers.

As a last attempt to solve the problem, in March 2019, HWWB contacted Arthritis Care's Head Office in London. We were finally able to speak to someone who could help, and were able to resolve the issue. The problem was largely caused by Arthritis Care changing its charity name to Versus Arthritis, and failing to update the commissioners regarding new contact details.

When we highlighted the patient's problem Versus Arthritis issued an immediate apology to the patient and to HWWB. They contacted the patient and gave them an immediate appointment to set them back on their treatment pathway. The CCG also updated its contact details.

Defrazzle Café, Newbury Job Centre



'HWWB are forthcoming and keen to work with multi-agencies, especially providing recent support to HOLT. They are champions working towards the best outcomes and encouraging within West Berkshire'.

Amanda McGee, Health Outreach Liaison Team Leader(HOLT)



Signposting services for all

We were approached in the late spring of 2018 by a person who was moved into the area, but had no local contacts and a bad relationship with their previous social services. They had been moved to a village out in the countryside of West Berkshire and had no access to transport or any family support close by.

Although they had quite high needs they had very little trust in Adult Social Services. When their local Surgery mistakenly allocated the wrong GP to the social worker liaising with the client, the client withdrew from talking to Social Services completely, wrongly thinking it was an error of Social Services making.

The person contacted HWWB and we were able to signpost advocacy services. Additionally, we arranged to meet the person. On finding out more it became apparent that the person really needed more help. Therefore, we arranged with their GP and Adult Social Care to have a meeting at which HWWB was present to discuss why communication had broken down. This resulted in a new assessment and the person reconnecting with Adult Social Care.



Our volunteers

How do our volunteers help us?

At Healthwatch West Berkshire we couldn't make all of these improvements without the support of our 18 volunteers who have undertaken 646 hours work with us to help make care better for our community.

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

Our volunteers are integral to the work of the HWWB team

Our volunteers have undertaken a wide range of work for us, which has been key to us being able to engage with our community. From attending board meetings and talking to people on the street, to liaising with charities and undertaking surveys. They attend strategic meetings and represent HWWB to ensure we are kept informed and that the public voice is heard.



Leena

Leena's background of public health in India gave her a unique insight when she came to the UK with her husband and she wanted to make use of her skills.

"I have been volunteering with Healthwatch West Berks since 2016. Since joining, I have been involved in a wide range of activities, including Enter & View, events like *Thinking Together* and other community outreach and engagement projects. I have also helped with analysis of Healthwatch data and reports". Additionally, Leena's language skills have helped HWWB gain feedback and contribute to events with our local BAMER community, who experience poorer health outcomes in general.

Martha

Martha brought her vast experience and local knowledge from her career within health and as a local councillor to HWWB. This has been invaluable to us in her role as a Board Member and active volunteer.

"I've enjoyed assisting Healthwatch West Berkshire in its role of highlighting matters of public concern regarding local health and social care. Its community events and campaigns have focussed on areas previously neglected; such as provision of mental health services, healthcare for the homeless and access to health services for our black and ethnic minorities"



'I am proud to be a part of Healthwatch team and working for the community. I'm looking forward to work with in the future as well.'

Leena Sakhiya, Volunteer

What our volunteers do...

We value our fantastic volunteers and their contribution to our work, they truly help make a difference to the lives of people in our area.



Megan

Megan initially came to HWWB from Newbury College, as part of her work experience. She volunteered with the team on its Community Engagement Programme, with Dr Deepak Ravindran, working on the Young Adults with Fibromyalgia project. Her on-line skills led to her creating a new web-page and Facebook group for the local Fibromyalgia support group, which was used to assist in the launch of an awareness event at West Berkshire Community Hospital.

Karen

Karen retired from Education gradually, and became involved with various support agencies when she cared for an elderly aunt. This sparked an interest in health and social care and has led to her sitting on various NHS local and national boards. For HWWB she is a Board member, a campaigner and key HWWB representative and report writer.

“I have enjoyed working for our local Healthwatch, contributing to various reports, including *The Voice Of Disability*. Currently, as part of my role, I am endeavouring to encourage the various local charities to work more collaboratively and come together within a central community hub.”



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.healthwatchlocal.co.uk
 t: 01635 886 210
 e: contact@healthwatchwestberks.co.uk

Please join us for a special screening to launch
Young adult CFS/ Fibromyalgia sufferers research

UNREST

A film about life, family, love... and living with ME

20th June 2018 at 6pm

The Forum, Newbury College, RG14 7TD

"It has been a great pleasure to work and collaborate with Healthwatch West Berkshire. The HWWB team has supported the RBH Department of Pain Medicine in organising a screening of Unrest at Newbury College, and an awareness evening for Young patients with Fibromyalgia in West Berkshire Community Hospital. The team also made us aware of the opportunities to increase support and source more resources and funding by recommending us to Greenham Common Trust. Apart from these activities which directly helped us, [...] they have provided and organised a number of events promoting better community cooperation in West Berkshire and certainly have been a powerful force for good in our area."

Dr Deepak Ravindran, Clinical Lead Pain Medicine, RBH



Places limited - Please register to join us at: www.healthwatchwestberks.org

With special guests:

Steve McManus, CEO of Royal Berkshire Hospital and

Dr Deepak Ravindran, Clinical Lead for Pain Medicine at Royal Berkshire Hospital

Refreshments available

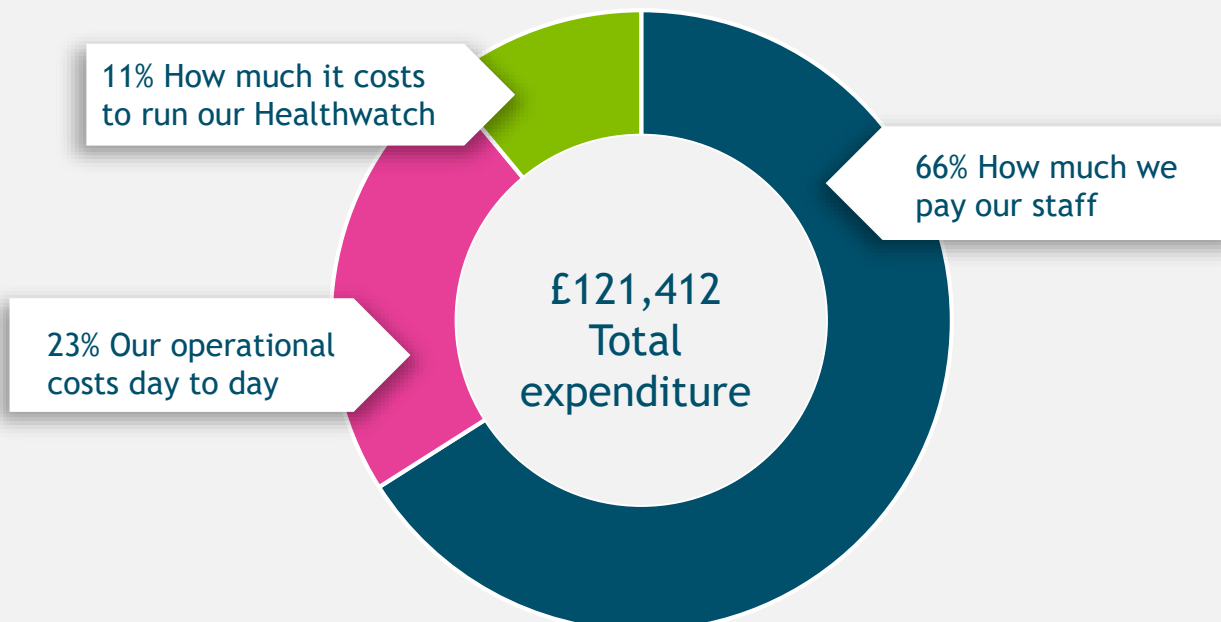
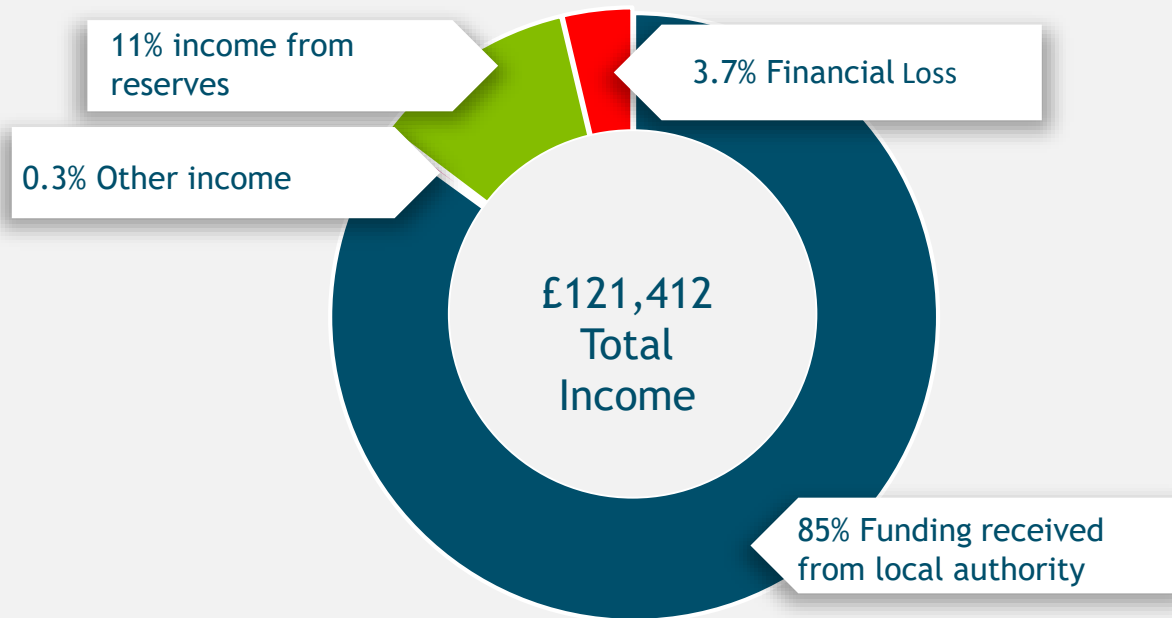


Our finances

How we use our money

To help us carry out our work, we are funded by our local authority. In 2018-19 we spent £121,412.

We had to rely on reserves to operate as reported, though still had a budget overspend of 3.7 %



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 and charities that have contributed to our work
- + And to the partners and organisations that we work with on a daily basis, including: the local NHS Trusts, Berkshire West CCG, the CQC, West Berkshire Council, Newbury, Thatcham and Hungerford Town Councils, the Newbury Weekly News and other local media, Newbury College, Greenham Common Trust, Thames Valley Police, Gecko Communications and seAp

“We have found HWWB’s work with the homeless and rough sleeping community in our area exemplary. Its Report and work into the issue in our area had a dramatic effect on how both the issue and individuals are viewed and treated in West Berkshire by statutory bodies”.

Linda Fergusson, Trustee Loose Ends

“HWWB has often challenged the status quo seeking change and have remained true to their cause with the support they have provided both strategically and operationally. They have given an objective and unique view point which has been valuable in informing and implementing partnership work with vulnerable and deprived individuals”.

The Better Communities Together Team





Our plans for next year

"I've been pleased to collaborate with Healthwatch West Berkshire on the vital need to improve end of life care in our area. I know they really prioritise working with other organisations to boost their impact and make sure they benefit residents and patients across the West Berkshire area."

Councillor Rachel Eden - Co-ordinator for Dying Matters, Berkshire

Message from our Chief Officer

Looking back over the past year, I believe I can say it has been our best year of operation for many reasons, but chiefly the team has started to have a real impact. Additionally, we were delighted, as part of a seAp bid, to have won the tender to run Healthwatch West Berkshire for at least a further three years (and perhaps five). I feel this is a great endorsement of all our hard work in the previous year, which has, I hope, had a positive effect on Health and Social Care services in West Berkshire

LOOKING BACK

We went into 2018/19 following a year in which Healthwatch West Berks helped change the entire debate about rough sleeping in West Berkshire, via our ground breaking *Homeless And Rough Sleepers Report 2018*. Our Report, highlighted West Berkshire as an outlier, not only in the total numbers of those sleeping rough, but also in the lack of service provision there was in our area, in comparison with adjacent local authority areas that share the same Clinical Commissioning Group. I am proud that the changes we achieved have had a dramatic effect locally and indeed, some have affected policy nationally.

Last year we committed to finding out more about the experiences of the Disabled population in West Berkshire and this year we produced a highly successful event, *The Voice of Disability*. Following the event, we have written a report that has, even before its publication, proved effective in shifting the approaches of statutory services locally.

An advantage of maintaining the contract for HWWB has been that our work within the area of Mental Health for service users has led to our creating a well-respected and attended forum, *Thinking Together*. To date there have been four *Thinking Together* events with more than 300 people taking part in them, which have resulted in further meaningful reviews of the *Crisis* services, not only in West Berkshire, but as part of the broader Berkshire West CCG now ICS (Integrated Care System). This is ongoing review and will assist in ensuring that service users voices are heard.



'I am proud that the changes we have achieved have had a dramatic effect locally and indeed, some have affected policy nationally'

Andrew Sharp, Chief Officer HWWB

Additionally, we were pleased to be able to continue with our successful Community Engagement Programme (CEP) via a joint Fibromyalgia research project with the lead Pain Consultant at the Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust Hospital, which has the support of its Chief Executive Officer, Steve McManus.

The Healthwatch West Berkshire team has worked individually within our area, alongside other local Healthwatch colleagues, on the first ever *National Healthwatch England Survey*. The survey focused on the new *NHS Long Term Plan*. With terrific support from partners including seAp LD Advocacy, West Berkshire Mencap and the Patient Information Point volunteers, we were able to complete 342 surveys. I am delighted to report that this was the highest number of surveys collected in our 'BOB' (Berkshire West/Oxon/Bucks) region and the 7th highest in England.

Have
your
say

Talk
to us...

NEXT STEPS

- + Play an active role in the *Homeless Strategy Groups Winter Plan 2019* and its development of the *Health and Well Being Centre* for the vulnerable.
- + Launch the *Voice of Disability Report* to the Public, following its discussion by the West Berkshire Health and Well Being Board
- + Ensure the review of *Crisis Services* by the Berkshire West ICS is truly 'Co-produced' and results in meaningful change for those suffering from Mental health issues in West Berkshire Launch the *Healthwatch England Long Term Plan Report* for our BOB (Berkshire West/ Oxfordshire/ Buckinghamshire) Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP)
- + Continue to raise the awareness of Fibromyalgia/ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)/ ME in young people, to help improve treatment and professional acceptance of this debilitating condition

HWWB at Annual Health and Wellbeing Board Conference, Shaw House, Newbury



LOOKING AHEAD

HWWB will continue to follow up with work already undertaken around Rough Sleeping, Mental Health issues and those with disabilities in our community, as well as assisting anyone who contacts us to raise an issue.

We will also look to broaden our work to cover *End of Life and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services* (CAMHS) issues. Additionally, we will look further at cross-border outpatients issues, where services are often poorly understood - and we have discovered evidence that transfer of records or scans is problematic and often follow ups cannot be undertaken locally, due to the system anomalies outside the Berkshire West CCG area. HWWB will also look to work collaboratively with our local Healthwatch colleagues in both Berkshire West and the wider BOB STP footprints, where significant change is planned, following the publication the *NHS Long Term Plan* in February 2019.

Our team already has a major *End of Life* event planned in October 2019 with an excellent group of speakers confirmed. We have a CAMHS focus group set for July and later in the year we are beginning to look at holding a joint *Thinking Together Event* with the Berkshire West CCG, West Berkshire's MHAG, local voluntary Groups and service users to help shape the Crisis service review.

BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES

As with all HWWB's work, we are greatly affected by limitations in resources and funding, which materially affects the areas and speed with which we can work across the wide area of issues and challenges covered in Health and Social Care. Only our Board, Partners and volunteers enable us to do the work we currently do to effect change and improvements in local Health and Social Care services within the West Berkshire area, as well as the day to day work that the public approaches us with. For many in our community, the cuts to numerous services in the last few years now often mean that HWWB is contacted as a 'last hope' for help - often sadly out of our reach or scope to help meaningfully.

However, we have built up a good level of trust with both commissioners, service providers, key officers, volunteer organisations and service users. This gives us a great opportunity to bring people together - and, we have found our work to be very successful in driving improvements, as well as, when necessary, highlighting failings in how care is provided.



'This gives us a great opportunity to bring people together - We have found our work to be very successful in driving improvements, as well as, when necessary, highlighting failings in how care is provided'.

Andrew Sharp, Chief Officer HWWB

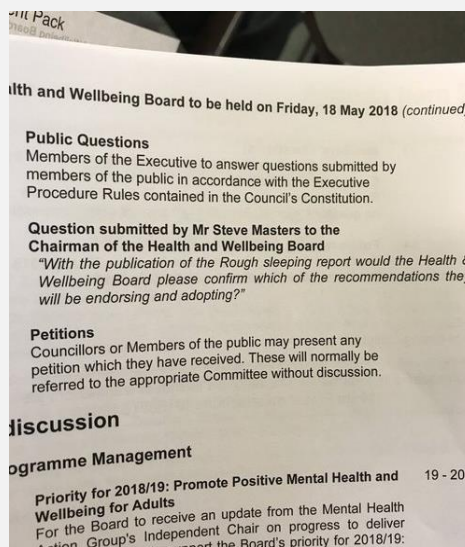
AND FINALLY. THANK YOU ...

So, finally a huge thank you to everyone in West Berkshire who has responded to us, contacted us, volunteered for us and taken time to offer their stories and views. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the organisations who we work with on a daily basis and their staff who offer support to help find solutions or help to improve services for the public. We would like to thank our remarkable volunteer Board Members, who give up so much to support our work and ensure we are doing it in an appropriate manner. Thanks go to seAp for all their help and support in successfully keeping HWWB functioning, and compliant with good practice.

Finally, I would personally like to give a huge vote of thanks to all our volunteers and HWWB's small team of committed staff, who work so tirelessly to try to help and make a difference.

Andrew Sharp

Healthwatch West Berkshire Chief Officer



Your HWWB team

- Andrew Sharp, Chief Officer
- Alice Kunjappy-Clifton, Development Officer
- Michelle Paice, Admin & Digital Officer P/T
- Nathan Pope, Information & Digital Media Officer P/T

Your HWWB board

- Mike Fereday, Acting Chair
- Martha Vickers
- Karen Swaffield
- Judy McCulloch
- Anne Philips
- Dr Adrian Barker
- Ann Standen, seAp Berkshire

HWWB Report discussed at public WBH&WBB



It has been a very positive to work with and support a number of events that Healthwatch have run in the last year. Healthwatch have shown that they are able to run and organise events with a strong service user focus. The work they do ensures that vulnerable groups are really heard and are able to contribute to the conversation about how a range of services support them in West Berkshire. The ability to deliver events that are genuinely open and inclusive happens when an organisation really understands the community it is looking to support. One of my roles within Social Services is to better link our staff to community groups so we can work alongside them - Healthwatch help us to do this work more effectively.

Mike Harling, Principal Social Worker, Adult Social Care, West Berkshire Council



Are you looking for help?

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

w: www.healthwatch.co.uk

t: 03000 683 000

e: enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk

Contact us

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- + Twitter: @HealthWWBerks
- + Facebook: facebook.com/HealthwatchWestberkshire
- + Instagram: @HealthwatchWestBerkshire
- + Website: www.healthwatchwestberks.org.uk

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TN34 1TL

- + Telephone: 0330 440 9000
- + Email: info@seap.org.uk

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you need this in an alternative format please contact us.

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“Healthwatch is a vital component within the local democratic process. Independent scrutiny plays a key role and takes the voice of patients to the heart of local decision making.”

Garry Poulson, Chairman of Suicide Prevention Action Group, Director of Volunteer Centre West Berkshire



Some of our media coverage



Young adults who suffer from fibromyalgia/CFS/ME and specialists who provided advice, holding signs describing the conditions, along with their carers, friends, family and members of the Newbury Fibromyalgia Support Group

Fibromyalgia event reaches out to young people



Specialist psychologist Integrated Pain and Spinal Service Dr Oh Choudhury, specialist physiotherapist IPASS Russell George, £100 voucher winner Katrina Cilliers, chief officer of Healthwatch West Berkshire Andrew Sharp, Royal Berkshire Hospital clinical lead for pain medicine Dr Deepak Ravindran and £30 voucher winner Katherine Poernig

Newbury Weekly News

at the heart of your community
Follow us through the week @newburytoday



Insight into chronic fatigue syndrome

Award-winning film being shown at Newbury College as part of project for young people suffering with the condition

...the award-winning film 'Insight into Chronic Fatigue Syndrome' is being shown at Newbury College as part of a project for young people suffering with the condition. The film, which was produced by the charity 'Living with ME/CFS', provides a personal insight into the lives of young people who suffer from the condition. It is being shown at Newbury College as part of a project for young people suffering with the condition. The film is being shown at Newbury College as part of a project for young people suffering with the condition.



Alice Kunjappy-Clifton Healthwatch West Berkshire

Newbury Weekly News

at the heart of your community
Thursday May 24, 2018, £1

Call to end rough sleeping by 2020

Health councillor not confident target could be achieved in timescale

WEST Berkshire Council has been urged to make a commitment to ensure no-one is sleeping rough in the district by 2020.

At a meeting of the council's health and wellbeing board last week, the chief officer of Healthwatch West Berkshire, Andrew Sharp, called on board members to set a date.

However, the council's executive member for health, Dominic Boeck (Con, Aldernaston), said he was reluctant to do so, because he is not confident it can be achieved.

It was also claimed that a more strategic approach to tackle homelessness is needed in West Berkshire if the district is to help the most vulnerable.

West Berkshire Council, agencies and voluntary groups will combine their expertise to draw up an action plan to respond to the "important topic with an increasing profile".

The plan, in response to a report into rough sleeping and homelessness in the district, was laid out at the meeting.

Healthwatch West Berkshire's 'Homeless and Rough Sleepers Report 2018', published in February, found that there had been an "unprecedented rise" in the number of people sleeping rough in the district. It said that the official figures, which predict there are around 20 people in West Berkshire, were "a major under-estimation".

Government statistics show that the number of rough sleepers per 1,000 households is 50 per cent higher in West Berkshire than the national average (0.31 compared with 0.2).

At the meeting, Mr Sharp said: "Let's get a commitment to this happening. I would like the board to come out and say 'we want to end rough sleeping by... I would like it to be 2020'."

Mr Sharp also highlighted the disparity of services across Berkshire. He said that Reading and Bracknell had outreach health centres for the homeless, but added there is currently no such facility in West Berkshire. The Healthwatch report found that an acknowledgement between homelessness, mental health and healthcare needed to be strengthened and, of the 14 people interviewed in the report, 50 per cent said mental illness was one of the contributing factors to becoming homeless.

"I think we need to square some of these anomalies in West Berkshire," Mr Sharp said, also calling on the board to do more to cut rough sleeping in the district ahead of the Government target of 2027.

Chairing the meeting, Mr Boeck said: "I agree with you that 2027 is a long time and we need to do something about it. I'm not happy about setting a date at this meeting without having the confidence of bringing it about."

Although no firm commitment was made, members agreed to ensure that a winter plan for rough sleepers was in place.

The homelessness forum has been asked to become a sub-group within the board to help shape an action plan on its steering group. Board member and West Berkshire Local Police Commander, Chief Insp said that the move would be a strategic approach.

She said: "I think the it's a little bit too tactical more strategic view of a cross West Berkshire, it slightly more strategic approach. I think something could come forward. I think the emphasis is there."

Speaking on what was meeting, Mr Sharp said: "We have started getting seldom heard with the times front and centre."

Mr Boeck said: "I'm what's been agreed. We should have an a but it needs to come from a group. We shouldn't be them."

Event will discuss disability issues to help shape the future

PEOPLE with disabilities are being given the chance to speak up about issues that concern them at the Voice of Disability event in Thatcham next week.

This collaborative event between various health and social care agencies, including West Berkshire Council Adult Social Care, is an opportunity for anyone affected by disability, who has experienced any of the services available within the West Berkshire area, to help guide the design of future services for those with disabilities.

Representatives from a wide range of local health and social care agencies will attend the event, which will be in the form of a tabled discussion.

To assist in the provision of special access, transport and dietary requirements, those wishing to attend are asked to register by contacting Healthwatch West Berkshire at contact@healthwatch-westberks.org.uk or (01635) 760 341.

The event will be held at Thatcham Catholic Hall on Thursday, November 15, between 10.30am and 2pm.



Healthwatch West Berkshire Andrew Sharp chief officer: 'Let's get a commitment to this happening'

Ref: 09-19185

"Why don't we be at the forefront of getting out of this? We have three times the homeless number of Bracknell and twice the national average."

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Newbury Weekly News

at the heart of your community
Thursday May 24, 2018, £1



Garages destroyed by fire

TWO garages in Thatcham destroyed by fire after being lit by lightning on Monday.

The force of the strike blew the roof of one of the garages, which was damaged another.

The Thatcham fire station was called to the scene and firefighters worked for about an hour to bring the fire under control.

The fire was caused by lightning striking the roof of one of the garages. The force of the strike blew the roof of one of the garages, which was damaged another.

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The Thatcham fire station was called to the scene and firefighters worked for about an hour to bring the fire under control.

Newbury Weekly News

at the heart of your community
Thursday March 29, 2018, £1

Thinking together for mental health

Professionals and volunteers discuss ways to improve services

Report by FRONA TOMAS frona.tomas@newburynews.co.uk

HEALTHWATCH West Berkshire (HWB) held a collective thinking forum last week to explore how mental health services can be better delivered in the region.

Called Thinking Together, the event at Newbury Baptist Church, involved health professionals, voluntary groups and service users who united to discuss how mental health patients in crisis can receive the best care.

Among the organisations present were Berkshire Health Care Trust, West Berkshire Council, Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group and SEAP Advocacy.

They were joined by several volunteered groups including Loose Knits, Eight Balls for Mental Health, Open for Hope and Recovery in Mind.

The forum began with a personal exploration of what being in 'crisis' meant to those present. Responses ranged from 'having work deadlines' before the computer breaks down to 'feeling suicidal' and being unable to climb down.

Some service users shared their own moving experiences of mental health and recounted real life testimonies of going through crisis points in their lives.

Recommendations from the forum included better supervision and training for staff, a greater show of empathy and understanding towards patients and better cross collaboration between services.

Independent Chair of the Mental Health Action Group Matthew Broray said listening to users' experiences of mental health would be used not to expand the number of mental health services in the district, but to make existing ones more efficient.

Another key recommendation the forum made was the need for greater continuity for staff who support mental health sufferers on a one-to-one basis, a move supported by HWB chief officer Andrew Sharp.

Some of the stories he heard were absolutely heart wrenching - like people harming themselves - it's really troubling," Mr Sharp said.

"One of the recommendations was that staff are better supported, looked after and understood when it comes to dealing with front line services."

"Some said that each time they see someone, they see a different person. We have to build an empathy with those people with a condition - it's not okay for those patients who do not have a well-balanced condition to see someone different."

Mental health will be one of two priorities of West Berkshire's Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) in April. The chairman of the board, James Fredrickson, said it was already using the feedback from the event to assess how mental health outcomes could be further improved in the coming year.

He said: "Thinking Together is a fantastic way to hear first hand how our residents are using the services we provide. Their views are invaluable and help all local care providers reflect on how they can continually improve the services they offer."



The collective thinking forum at Newbury Baptist Church



ANDREW SHARP Healthwatch West Berkshire



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