



# Together

we're making health  
and social care better

Annual Report 2022–23



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"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."

**Louise Ansari**  
**Healthwatch National Director**



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# About us

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## Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is your local health and social care champion.

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



### The Healthwatch vision

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



### The Healthwatch mission

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



### Healthwatch values are:

- **Listening** to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- **Including** everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voices heard.
- **Analysing** different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- **Acting** on feedback and driving change.
- **Partnering** with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.

# Message from our Chair



**Geoffrey Bowden, Chair  
Healthwatch Brighton and Hove**

It has been a year of change. We bid farewell to my predecessor Fran McCabe, who retired and to fellow board members Karen Barford, Neil McIntosh and Catherine Swann. Chief Executive David Liley also retired, and we welcomed Alan Boyd as our new CEO.

In the meantime, the NHS and social care has rarely been out of the headlines. Sometimes for the wrong reasons, but also for the right ones – particularly when highlighting the dedication of NHS staff striving to deliver care under the strains and stresses of Covid and its aftermath.

Throughout, we have played our role by listening to the concerns of local people and shining a light on areas where our recommendations could lead to service improvements, whether that was looking at the availability of NHS dentistry, access to GP services, or digital exclusion. Exercising our powers under Enter and View, which had been suspended during Covid, gradually restarted.

Our home team produced 16 reports, and, in the process, engaged with more than 1,500 individuals. Additionally, we arranged panel discussions to identify the public's priorities for our workplan and organised a conference looking at the impact of the new Integrated Care System.

***“None of this would have been possible without the dedicated support of our 45 volunteers, who clocked up 4,500 hours gathering data and attending meetings on our behalf. In fact, we were represented at more than 980 decision-making meetings last year.”***

We have worked with neighbouring Healthwatch and collaborated with third sector organisations, such as Brighton and Hove Switchboard, all of which and much more, is covered in this annual review of our work.

**Geoffrey Bowden**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey Bowden'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

## What other organisations say about us

"Healthwatch continues to make a significant and positive difference to the lives of people who have a mental health problem, a learning disability or who are neurodivergent in Brighton and Hove. We are constantly striving to improve the quality of care we provide to the local communities we serve. Healthwatch is a valued partner in helping us achieve this."

**Dr Jane Padmore, Chief Executive Officer  
Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**

"We are delighted that Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is represented at Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust's (SCFT) Patient Experience Group. They bring rich and valuable insight as well as a local health perspective to support SCFT deliver our ambitions within the Patient and Carer Experience and Involvement Strategy."

**Howard Prescott, Associate Director of Quality and Safety,  
Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust**

"It's been 10 years now since Healthwatch was established. Over that time our relationships have matured and embedded. The Council welcomes the role that Healthwatch plays in putting the peoples' voices at the heart of health and social care in the city and respecting their independence. I look forward to their continuing future critical challenge and observations / recommendations on how services are delivered to our local population."

**Rob Persey, Executive Director  
Health & Adult Social Care, Brighton and Hove City Council**

"We have worked closely with Healthwatch Brighton and Hove over the last year, and really value their support, thoughtful input and commitment to ensuring that the voices and experiences of the people and communities of Brighton and Hove are at the centre of our work and help to further improve health and care in the city. In partnership, we have focused together on the development of our system five-year health and care strategy and our Shared Delivery Plan, and a number of key areas including outpatient transformation and the redesign of non-emergency patient transport services. We have also worked collaboratively with Healthwatch to develop and use surveys effectively as a way to obtain views of local people on our priority areas of work."

I would also like to share our thanks to David Liley, who has been a key partner working with health organisations in the city for many years, and we look forward to our continued work with the new leadership and team to ensure that we focus on the needs of those living in Brighton and Hove, ensuring that the changes made can have a real impact on their health and their lives."

**Lola Banjoko, Executive Managing Director of Commissioning  
for Brighton and Hove at NHS Sussex**

*"Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is an essential partner in our Sussex health and care system who enable the voices of people and communities across our city to be heard so that we can improve our health and care services to meet these needs. The Healthwatch team has also been a constructive and collaborative partner in the development of our five-year Sussex Integrated Care Strategy - Improving Lives Together - which has been built on what people and Healthwatch have told us.*

*As we finalise our Shared Delivery Plan, which sets out how we will turn this vision into reality, I look forward to continuing to work with the team at Healthwatch Brighton and Hove so that we can join-up and improve the access, experience, and outcomes from our health and care services to make a real difference to the lives of people in our city."*

**Stephen Lightfoot, Chair of NHS Sussex**

*"Joint working between Healthwatch Brighton and Hove and University Hospitals Sussex has continued to have positive impact on our services and the experiences of our patients throughout 2022/23. Support and challenge from Healthwatch, and representing the voice of our patients, has informed many improvements, including those relating to communication, feeding and our emergency department.*

*We are grateful to Healthwatch for their continued enablement of the patient voice and being a key partner for us in Brighton & Hove. We look forward to continuing this valuable work and developing further ways we support and enable one another for the benefit of our patients."*

**Dr Nicole Chavaudra  
Director of Patient Experience, Engagement and Involvement  
University Hospitals Sussex**

*"By engaging with people to ensure that their voices are heard, Healthwatch obtains feedback directly from those receiving care and support from the home care providers commissioned by the council. This feedback provides valuable insight into the experiences of those in receipt of these services, including what works well and areas for improvement. Healthwatch acts on the feedback they receive to support positive change for individuals alongside facilitating constructive developments within the sector."*

**Claire Rowland, Health and Adult Social Care Commissioner  
Brighton and Hove City Council**

*"I very much welcome the development of a new Sussex wide role that builds on the existing constructive relationships NHS Sussex holds with our three Healthwatch organisations. Healthwatch play a critical role in helping the voice of local people to be heard and we are committed to continuing to strengthen how we work together."*

**Tom Gurney, Chief Communications Officer  
NHS Sussex**



# Our work this year

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why over the last year we have gathered your views on topics, including GP access, dentistry, mental health, the quality of home care and many more. This allowed us to understand the full picture and feed your views back to services to help them improve.



# Our work on Dentistry

## Availability of NHS dentists

People have continued to tell us about their difficulties in accessing NHS dentists and we have heard of people only being offered private treatment.

We have continued to raise the impact this is having with partners and decision makers including NHS England, the Local Dental Committee (which represents dental practices in the South-East) and city leaders for health and social care.

### To support patients, we published:

- A [bulletin](#) on the dental crisis in June to give background to the current crisis, a compilation of people's concerns and actions we'd taken.
- We led the development of a **Healthwatch in Sussex** patient leaflet, working with local dentists to produce '[A Healthwatch guide to your rights and accessing the treatment you need - what you need to know](#)'. This is available on our website and was shared with every dentist across Brighton and Hove, as well as Councillors and MPs.

### We continue to push for reform and better access to NHS dentistry:

- We led a joint response to a Parliamentary Inquiry on dentistry which was [published](#) on March 7th 2023.
- We have asked 16 questions in Parliament to the Minister for Health with the help of Caroline Lucas MP's office - read our [report](#).
- We have given media interviews to ensure the impact this is having on people is not forgotten.

*"I have been trying to get an appointment, but they have had no dentists for the last **6 months** and not likely to have in future.*

*I am a pensioner, non-taxpayer so very limited income and cannot pay privately for treatment."*



*"Neither my partner nor I have had a dentist **since the pandemic started.***

*We have called numerous dentists, constantly searched the NHS website (which never seems to get updated) and **really don't know what else we can do?"***

## Working across Sussex

See our **Healthwatch in Sussex** section to learn about the work on dentistry we undertook with our colleagues in Healthwatch in West and East Sussex.

# Our work on General Practice

## Access to GP appointments across Sussex

The impacts of Covid-19 continue to affect access to primary care. People have shared with us their difficulties in getting appointments and repeat prescriptions.

We conducted a survey asking for people's opinions about GP access and their preferences for online and face-to-face appointments and 851 people across Sussex responded. We compared some findings with a June 2020 project to see how people's views and experiences had changed in the two years since the pandemic.

### Key findings:

- More than half of people had delayed making appointments when in need.
- Hybrid appointments (remote and face-to-face) were preferred by over two-thirds of people.
- 1 in 6 people did not want any form of remote appointment.
- Most people want an appointment without delay, and a more precise time to get a phone or video call.

### Compared to our 2020 survey:

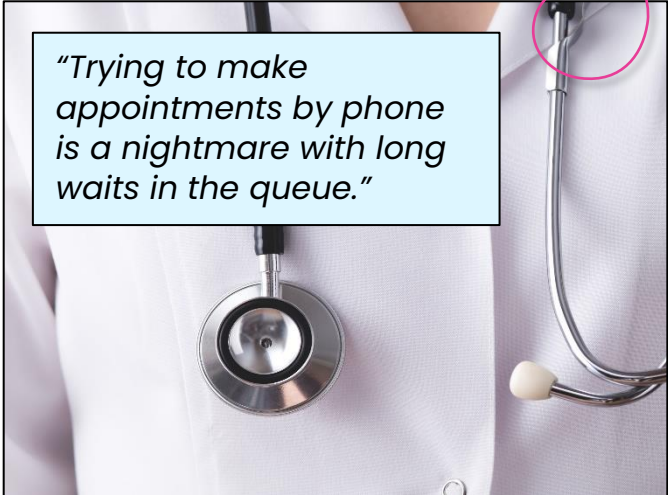
- A preference to see a GP without delay had increased significantly.
- A greater proportion of people showed some criticism towards remote GP appointments.
- More people agreed that 'only having phone or video appointments' would put them off getting support.
- Fewer people agreed that 'you could get just as much advice by phone or video compared to a face-to-face'.

### Our impact

Our findings have been shared with the Chief Primary Care Officer at NHS Sussex. We also issued press release, resulting in an interview with BBC Sussex. Our data ties in with the ICS priorities where 'further increasing access to GP services' was announced as one of four top priorities for the NHS in Sussex this year.

### What next

We plan to further analyse the comments made by those who participated in our survey and to hold conversations with people to learn more about their experiences and opinions.



*"Trying to make appointments by phone is a nightmare with long waits in the queue."*



*"My current GP practice has excellent access to both appointments and information. I can book appointments online or use the app. They then phone but will get you in for a face-to-face very quickly if needed. The receptionists are also lovely and cannot do enough to help."*

[Read the GP Access Report](#)

# Our work on General Practice

## New Larchwood Surgery Hours

In 2021, New Larchwood Surgery reduced its opening hours to the concern of local residents, who asked for our help. We surveyed 385 patients to find out about the impact of this change, with **59%** of people being dissatisfied with the new opening hours and **81%** wanting to see the surgery open for longer.

By escalating patient's voices, we helped them reverse the decision and additional funding helped secure further sessions at the surgery, opening four days a week. In November 2022, our work supporting the patients of New Larchwood Surgery received a Highly Commended award from Healthwatch England.

*"Many congratulations - your local Healthwatch has been shortlisted for one of these awards because your efforts and dedication have resulted in real impact, ensuring patients' voices are heard."*

*Our impact awards demonstrate the many ways Local Healthwatch represent their communities and act as a force for positive change both locally and nationally."*

**Sir Robert Francis KC**

Then Chair of Healthwatch England



*"I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the sterling work you put in on our behalf. Now we have the final findings from you and consequently, the resulting actions from the CCG and GPs at the surgery."*

**Anna de Wit, Chair, Coldean Residents Association**

[Read the Press Release](#)

## Review of GP websites

Our volunteers conducted an independent review of the websites for all 34 GP practices in Brighton and Hove. We found a vast difference in the quality of, and ease of access, to information and identified websites that we felt needed support.

Read more about this pan-Sussex project in the [Healthwatch in Sussex](#) section.

## 5-year Review

This year, we looked back at our work on GP services over the last five years, summarising the key areas we have investigated since 2018. Our report highlights how much has changed, and what hasn't. We used your insights and escalated these with providers of GP services, those who commission primary care, the CQC and Healthwatch England.

[Read the report](#)

# Our work with Local Hospitals

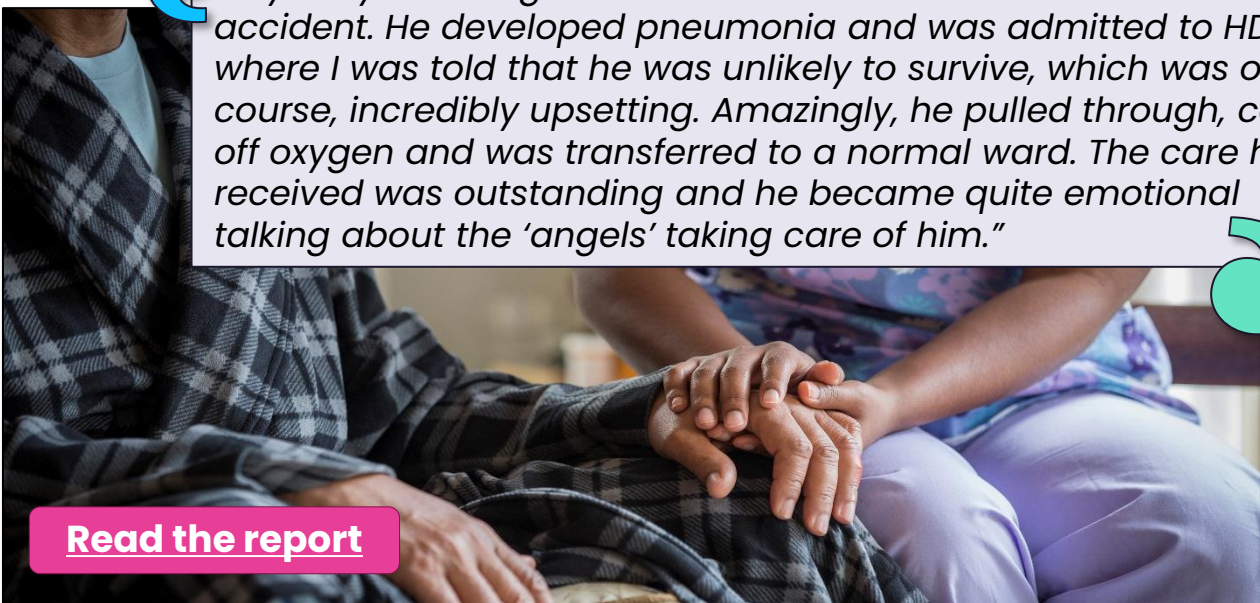
Three local hospital Trusts provide care for patients across Sussex and in this section, we describe some of our partnership working over the past year.

## University Hospitals Sussex Trust

### Our Enter and View visits

Our Enter and View powers allow us to visit care settings to review them. Using these powers our volunteers visited Solomon Ward, which supports stroke patients. They also undertook food tasting on the Renal Unit where they raised concerns about a lack of engagement between some clinical staff and patients. We discussed the findings with the Trust which were described as "very powerful". In November, the Trust told us they had used our feedback to support patient mealtimes by:

- Liaising with dietitians and health care staff to hone their skills.
- Discussing this with senior nurses, who took our findings back to their wards to discuss with their teams.
- Exploring aligning visiting times with mealtimes so that patients can be supported by their loved ones and utilising volunteers to help.



*"My 92-year-old grandfather was admitted to RSCH after a car accident. He developed pneumonia and was admitted to HDU where I was told that he was unlikely to survive, which was of course, incredibly upsetting. Amazingly, he pulled through, came off oxygen and was transferred to a normal ward. The care he received was outstanding and he became quite emotional talking about the 'angels' taking care of him."*

[Read the report](#)

### Volunteers reviewing patient leaflets

Three Healthwatch volunteers are members of the Trust's 'Carers Patients Information Group'. This year, as part of this team, they reviewed 21 patient leaflets covering topics as diverse as radiotherapy, endometriosis and virtual wards. Their suggested improvements have been incorporated to improve the language and content so that the final leaflets offer the best advice possible to patients.

[Read the patient leaflets](#)

### Volunteers supporting good Food and nutrition

Two volunteers attend the Food Improvement Group giving their insight on initiatives to improve food nutrition. Their contributions are warmly welcomed by the Trust.

# Our work with Local Hospitals

## Supporting Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment programme (PLACE)

In October, our volunteers joined the Healthwatch staff team to help University Hospitals Sussex Trust (UHSx) complete their 'PLACE' assessments, which focus on the environment where care is delivered to people, such as hospital wards.

*“Support and challenge from Healthwatch, and representing the voice of our patients, has informed many improvements, including those relating to communication, feeding and our emergency department.*

*We are grateful to Healthwatch for their continued enablement of the patient voice and being a key partner for us in the city.”*

**Dr Nicole Chavaudra**

Director of Patient Experience,  
Engagement and Involvement, UHSx

**We visited three hospitals and various wards.** The Trust recorded all of our observations and suggested improvements. We also observed mealtimes which were well organised, offering excellent quality and choice to patients.

We attend meetings at the Trust and meet regularly with the Director of Patient Experience to share and learn more about patient insight and initiatives to improve care.

We share your feedback with them, good and bad.

## Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT)

Our volunteers and staff visited Mill View Hospital and Rutland Gardens, to carry out PLACE visits for SPFT, which runs both sites.

Our findings were very positive and the Trust welcomed our observations and recorded any minor repairs or actions that were needed.

We also meet regularly with the Trust's senior team to discuss patient insight and learn more about their work.



*“Healthwatch continues to make a significant and positive difference to the lives of people who have a mental health problem, a learning disability or who are neurodivergent in Brighton and Hove.”*

**Dr Jane Padmore**  
Chief Executive  
Officer, SPFT

[Read the report](#)

## Sussex Community Foundation Trust (SCFT)

A volunteer regularly attends the Trust's Patient Experience Group where we share and learn more about patient insight and initiatives to improve community care. Their role brings *“rich and valuable insight as well as a local health perspective to support SCFT deliver our ambitions.”*

# Our work on Social Care

## Restarting our Homecare Check project

In November 2022, we restarted our project previously called 'Lay Assessors' and rebranded this as 'Homecare Check' to more accurately reflect the work we do. We had paused the project in February 2020 to deliver our award-winning Hospital Discharge service that we ran during the Covid pandemic.

Homecare Check is run in partnership with the local council. Our volunteers regularly visit and interview local residents who have home care services provided by independent companies, but paid for, either fully or partly, by the council. We report our findings to the council monthly so they can share them with the care providers and assess the quality and safety of services provided.

### Key findings since November 2022

Out of 95 people interviewed:

- **93%** thought it was very/extremely useful that feedback was used to assess the performance of their home care provider.
- **89%** agreed or strongly agreed they were happy with how their carers treated them.
- **88%** were extremely or very satisfied with the help they got from their providers.
- **80%** felt their care package met their needs.
- **28%** had made a complaint and though most were satisfied with how the complaint was handled, several were not satisfied
- **11** Service users were referred for a care package review.
- **11** were signposted to other services, including their GP, Together Co, and given information and encouraged to speak to their homecare providers about additional support needs.
- **3** were referred for safeguarding concerns.



Though individual concerns were raised around issues of communication and being informed of changes, the majority of those we spoke to were pleased with how their carers treated them, thought they did a great job and were satisfied with the help they received from their care provider.

*"Feels that new staff are not given enough time for training. Often only shadow a couple of visits and then expected to visit alone."*

**Volunteer Lay Assessor**

# Our work on Mental Health

We were commissioned by Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) and NHS Sussex to explore the experiences of those who use mental health services and of using accommodation that provide mental health support.

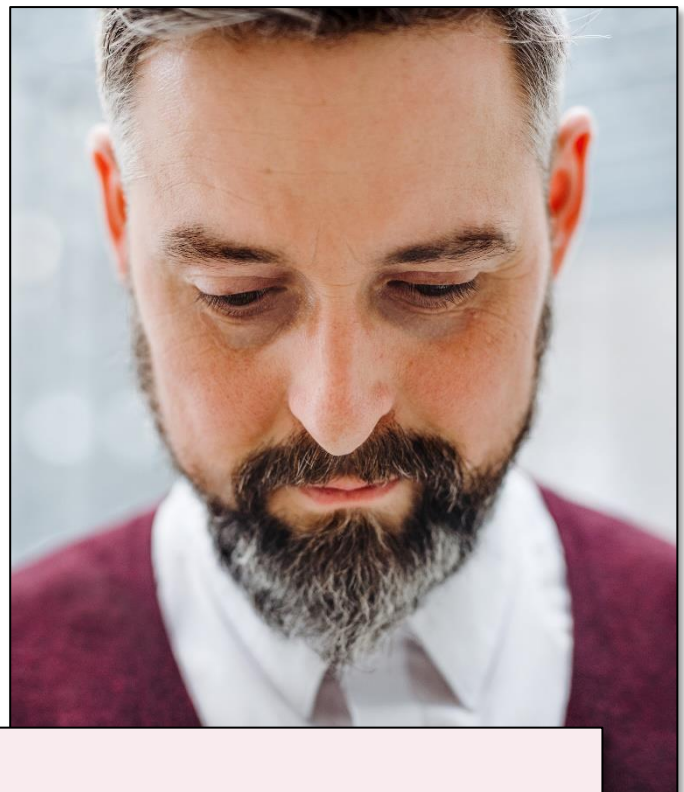
The purpose was to help inform two important documents both of which will have long-term impacts for service provision. The first was the Brighton and Hove Mental Health and Housing Plan and the second was the Mental Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2023.

We received 137 responses to a survey aimed at those who use services and 96 from professionals. We conducted 4 in-depth interviews with service users. We also ran an online poll requesting suggested improvements to mental health services in the city.

We used the findings to make 12 recommendations, aimed at making more effective use of existing resources.

Our recommendations have been shared at the city's Mental Health Oversight Board. They have been welcomed by the Executive Managing Director at NHS Sussex and at the Mental Health JSNA Board.

BHCC and NHS Sussex also welcomed our recommendations saying they would be "used to inform" both the Housing Plan, JSNA and "other areas of mental health transformation including the transformation of community mental health services and crisis care."



## People told us

*"My support was excellent. I can't really criticise it."*

*"I did not feel like my views were listened to until I was properly in crisis, and even then, the options I was offered were incredibly limited which didn't meet what I needed."*

*"The NHS gave me a list of charities when they refused to help me, but they weren't available, or the wait list was too long or too expensive. I have struggled terribly for months with my mental health but there is no help."*

[Read the full report](#)

# Our work on Maternity

Last winter, we interviewed five women (four mothers and one partner) about their emotional wellbeing during pregnancy, **during birth and the post birth period.**

Our interviews spanned the two years since March 2020 and included the pandemic period. We asked people about the general care and support they received as well as any mental health issues they had experienced during this time.

Our key findings, shown on the next page, were fed into a national report by Healthwatch England. We will be publishing our own report this summer.



## People told us

*"She just was the right person for us in terms of she didn't try and make it fluffy."*

*"The assumption that you have post-natal depression, rather than recognising you are having an emotional response to an emotional situation, which is appropriate, but those feelings need acknowledging."*

*"It isn't usually during the immediate post-natal period that the mother needs support, as you are just dealing with the baby, it is often months' later, and there is rarely any follow-up."*

[Read the full report](#)



## Key findings:

### During pregnancy

- People wanted clear and honest communication pre-birth to prepare them for a difficult birth, being a Mum or what to expect with morning sickness.
- They also wanted to see better levels of understanding about anxiety during pregnancy and appropriate provision of services, such as someone to talk to.

### In-hospital experience

- Again, people wanted clear and honest communication. One Mum was told *"this hospital is full, try the next"* having been advised to visit there.
- Listen to the Mum's instincts. One expectant Mum was sent home although her "gut instinct" was that something was wrong, and she was taken in by ambulance the next day.
- A lack of support. A Mum in labour was left alone for 12 hours with no support or pain relief and *"felt she was not wanted there"*.
- Unnecessary medical procedures. A Mum was given a C-section when an earlier assessment could have offered inducement.
- Lack of information. A new Mum who was separated from her newborn was not kept informed about how her baby was doing.

### Post-childbirth experience (back home)

- A lack of peer-to-peer support was available, for example, for a Mother who had lost a twin.
- Inappropriate comments made by staff. In one case a midwife provided unwanted and upsetting "advice" on familial relations which were unconnected with the maternity experience.
- No consistency of care. One Mum benefitted from seeing the same Community Midwife from pre- to post-birth. Other Mums expressed they would have liked this.
- Poor GP check-up after 6-8 weeks. These checks focus on the physical health of baby and not the Mum or their emotional health.
- Lack of proactive emotional support. The real need for emotional support was often only identified 6-12 months later, once the immediacy of baby's needs had lessened or the Mum's had returned to work.

### Other concerns

- Partners feeling left out. One Mum mentioned that her husband was never asked about his experience and in another case, an LGBTQ+ partner was questioned on her status as a parent (at A&E).



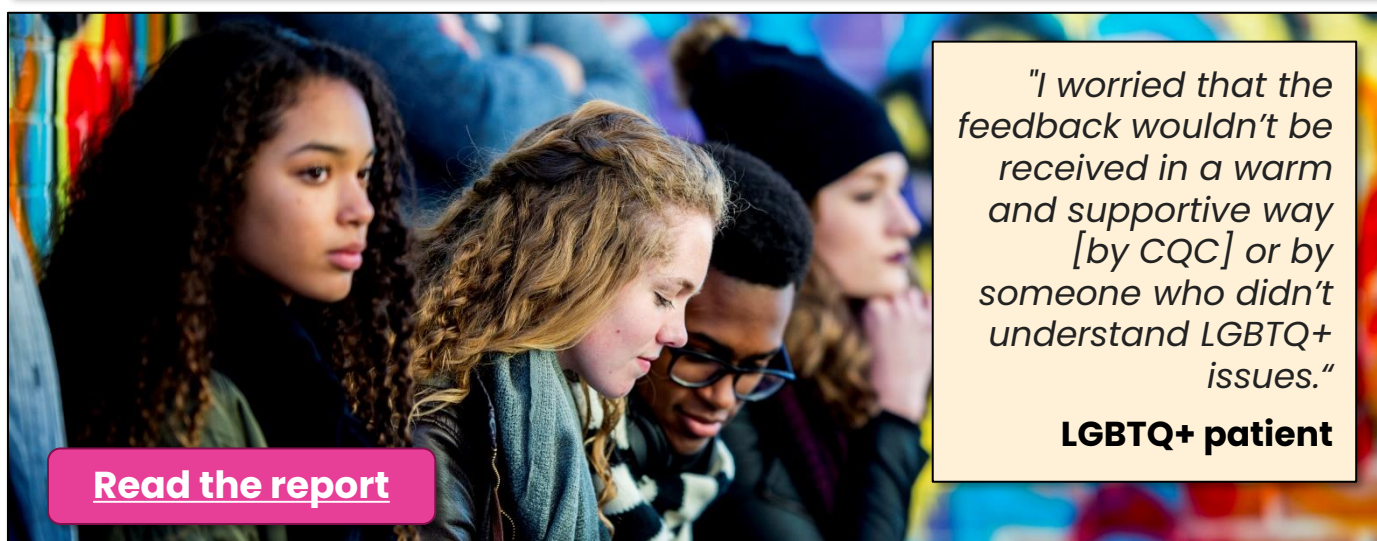
# Our work supporting LGBTQ+ communities

We joined forces with Brighton and Hove Switchboard, a local charity that provides a range of support to the local LGBTQ+ population of our city.

We worked together to collect LGBTQ+ patients' experiences of using health and social care services. We also asked them how existing feedback systems could be improved to encourage them to share their experiences. A total of 120 people completed our two surveys, including 59 young people. People shared their views through focus groups, and we interviewed leads of local LGBTQ+ groups and conducted one-to-one interviews with local people.

Healthwatch and Switchboard shared our findings with the CQC, who had asked us to run this project as they wanted to increase their levels of engagement with different communities. Since our report, we have met Switchboard and the CQC several times to discuss the progress being made against our 17 recommendations, and we have been heartened by the response.

We said	CQC response
Feedback forms should be more inclusive and shorter	CQC is working with its LGBTQ staff network and Switchboard shared guidance on using inclusive language and CQC is reviewing the number of questions they ask
CQC should use online and social media to attract feedback from younger LGBTQ+ people	CQC has recruited 11 young people to act as online and media advisers to support their work
CQC should use QR codes to make it easier to access feedback forms	CQC tested this approach which was successful so more QR codes will be used in the future
CQC need to tell people how their feedback is used to make improvements to services	CQC are exploring different options to tell the public how their feedback is processed and used in their work



[Read the report](#)

# Our work tackling the closure of toilet facilities in the city

In January 2023, we received enquiries through our helpline about public toilet facilities closing in various locations across the city. Concerns were also shared by the communities supported by the Friends, Families and Travellers charity (FFT).

In response, we and FFT wrote to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee expressing our concerns in liaison with and on behalf of members of the public who had contacted us. On February 14th, 2023, we received a reply from Councillor Phélim Mac Cafferty committing more funding to keep as many public toilets available as possible, describing how they intend to continue to fund public services, including public toilets.

## Impact of closures

The closures could impact on many people, including some who have protected characteristics including families, pregnant and menstruating women, elderly people, people with long-term incontinence issues, those that are wheelchair bound and with other mobility issues, carers, school groups, and people from the travelling community.

The city could also suffer as a tourist and holiday destination, as some visitors could be reluctant to spend time in locations where there are no public facilities.

*"There is a clear correlation between issues surrounding hidden Traveller incontinence and lack of accessible sanitary facilities.*

*The closure of toilet facilities increases the likelihood of health inequalities faced by members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities."*

**Jonathan Jones**  
**Outreach - Mental Health Officer**  
**Friends, Families & Travellers**

[Read more details](#)



The Council has since developed a plan for the medium to long term provision of public toilets. At the time of writing, refurbished toilets include Kings Esplanade, Daltons, Station Road and the Saltdean Undercliff public toilets. Read more [here](#).

The intelligence we gathered enabled us to effectively contribute to the reversal of the plans to close public toilet facilities in the city.

# Some of our other work

## Helpline

Two long-standing and brilliant Healthwatch volunteers have supported us by running our Helpline service, answering your calls and emails. This year they received 240 helpline enquiries with the main area of concern being how to make a complaint about health or social care services or treatment, followed by enquiries about accessing NHS dentistry and GP appointments.

*"Just wanted to say a big thanks for being really helpful and supportive at a time when I was feeling very distressed."*

**Helpline User**

## Outpatient patient engagement workshops

We were commissioned by NHS Sussex to run four workshops with people who had experience of the outpatient system. Over the course of four weeks, 35 participants from across Sussex were provided with information to read and videos to watch to increase their knowledge of various initiatives that are designed to transform the system. Participants spoke about their own experiences and used their increased knowledge to provide suggestions as to how the initiatives could work and how to overcome potential barriers. Our results will be published this summer.

## Healthwatch Conference

We organised the 'Healthwatch, NHS and local people in collaboration: Southeast Regional Conference' on 28th June 2022, alongside our Healthwatch partners in East and West Sussex, Surrey, Kent and Medway.

65 people attended to hear from keynote speakers Louise Ansari, Director of Healthwatch England and Stephen Lightfoot, Chair NHS Sussex about the future of the new Integrated Care System for Sussex and partnership working.

*"The Healthwatch Regional Conference came at a crucial time... focusing on what Healthwatch does best, interrogating the detail, questioning the NHS jargon, and providing timely meaningful critical feedback."*

**Tom Goodridge,  
Director of Communications NHS  
Sussex**

[Read our Conference report](#)

## Supporting the Digital Inclusion Strategy

Health services are increasingly going online but not everyone can easily access these alternatives. This year, we have described the impact of 'digital exclusion' feeding this into meetings we attend, such as the Digital First Working Group. Our reports contributed to the Brighton and Hove Digital Inclusion Strategy 2023-2027. Our recommendations were well received by the Brighton and Hove Executive Leadership Team.

*"Pulls together a very compelling argument for a more joined up approach and to share learning from the variety of initiatives in the city."*

**B&H Executive  
Leadership Team**

[Read our Digital Exclusion report](#)



# Healthwatch in Sussex

## A local Healthwatch partnership

Over the past year, the three Healthwatch teams in Sussex have collaborated as **Healthwatch in Sussex** to capture and share feedback on dentistry, long COVID, primary care access, dementia, outpatients and more. Partnership working enhances our ability to champion public and patient voice on these and other health and care themes at a Sussex-wide level.

Our collaborative working has been recognised and acknowledged as good practice by our national body Healthwatch England and NHS Sussex, and we will continue to work together to ensure that people sit at the heart of health and care services over the next 12 months and beyond.

# GP Website Reviews

Last year, Healthwatch in Sussex were invited by NHS Sussex to complete a pan-Sussex review of all GP websites. This included 34 practices in Brighton and Hove.

Findings from the pan-Sussex review were presented and discussed with stakeholders at the Digital First Working Group on 11th August 2022.

Following further consideration by the Digital First Board in September, a plan was approved to offer financial support to those practices identified as being most in need to help them improve their website content and format.

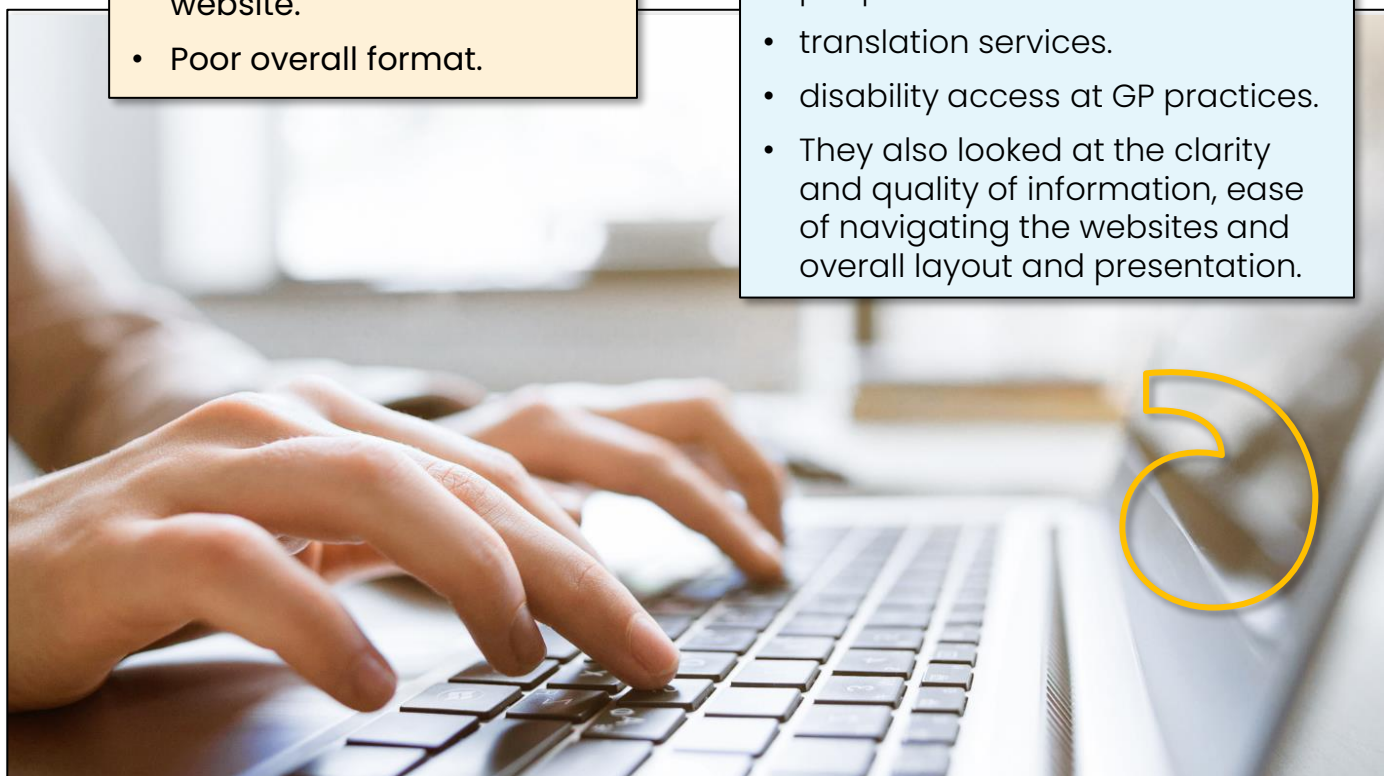
This improvement work has already started meaning that patients should start to see some improvements to GP websites.

**The most in need websites all had the following in common:**

- A lack of information (or poor clarity and lack of consistency).
- Difficulty in navigating the website.
- Poor overall format.

**Between September to October 2022, volunteers looked at:**

- whether the websites had patient notices about Covid-19.
- how to book an appointment.
- the types of appointments available (remote, or face-to-face).
- options to book or receive a repeat prescription (online, email or post).
- information for new patients wishing to register.
- advice about who to contact in an emergency (e.g. NHS 111).
- how to make complaints or provide feedback.
- specific information about services such as mental health or support available for young people and carers.
- translation services.
- disability access at GP practices.
- They also looked at the clarity and quality of information, ease of navigating the websites and overall layout and presentation.



# Dentistry

Access to NHS Dentistry is an issue that has affected many patients across Sussex, and as Healthwatch in Sussex we:

**Developed a Healthwatch in Sussex patient leaflet** called '*A Healthwatch guide to your rights and accessing the treatment you need*'. We produced this by working with local dentists.

[What are your rights?](#)

**Submitted a joint response to a Parliamentary Inquiry on dentistry**, which was published on March 7th 2023. We described the local impact and made suggestions for how the current crisis could be improved.

[Read the response](#)

**Undertook further patient engagement from December 2022 to January 2023.**

This followed a Government and NHS announcement of changes intended to support improvements in dentistry provision. We wanted to learn whether these changes had led to any improvements in the experiences of patients.

We met with the NHS Sussex lead for Pharmacy, Optometry and Dentistry in January 2023 to discuss what we'd heard from patients and what the ICS's plans were.

As part of this, we learnt that the ICS is creating a new dental working group and Healthwatch in Sussex will be involved. Healthwatch now also has quarterly meetings with the ICS lead.

**Across Sussex, we found some alarming findings, and that people in Brighton and Hove were more dissatisfied:**

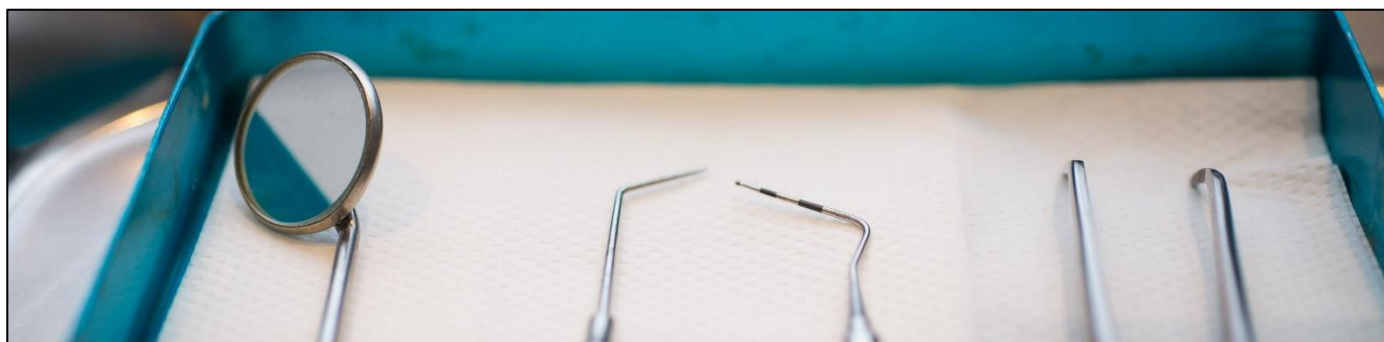
62% of people were not confident about their ability to access NHS dental services over the next 12 months, either for themselves or others. For Brighton and Hove residents, this was 70%.

45% of people told us they were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied about their ability to find a dentist offering NHS treatments. For Brighton and Hove residents, this was 65%

42% of people were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied with the waiting times to see someone. For Brighton and Hove residents, this was 57%

[Read the report](#)

We have continued to share our insight with Healthwatch England to support their campaigning to improve dental access and provision. [Read more here.](#)



# Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service

The Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS) is a Sussex-wide service, transporting patients to and from their appointments, seven days a week, providing around 300,000 journeys a year. Healthwatch in Sussex has carried out four separate patient reviews of the service since 2016, with our latest report published in 2020.

This year, we have been working closely with those responsible for commissioning a new transport service, from 2025. Through this regular collaboration, we have ensured that your views and ideas about how the service can be improved are reflected in the revised service specification – this is the document that sets out what the provider of the service must deliver. This means that your views lie at the heart of this service’s redesign. We have been asked to join the panel which will assess the bids to run the service. We will ensure that any provider has a clear focus on delivering the best service for patients.

## The service must now include:

- a requirement to deliver better communications with patients so that they are advised when their transport will be arriving.
- a dedicated focus on renal patients.
- a requirement to establish and host fully accessible patient forums so that your views are regularly collected.
- a requirement to better promote alternatives to NEPTS for those who are not eligible for the service.



*“Frustration with waiting, without knowing when they will arrive.”*

**Service User**

*“We have worked closely with Healthwatch over the last year and have received wonderful support and thoughtful input into our redesign of non-emergency patient transport services. They have encouraged us to consider from the outset how this service impacts and supports patients and in so doing have co-designed a service which puts quality and patient experience at the heart of the service.”*

**Sarah Mackmin-Wood, Associate Director of Urgent and Emergency Care South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS)**



# Long-Covid Survey

Our survey explored people's symptoms of Long-Covid and the impact of this on people's lives. Long-Covid is a new and evolving condition brought on by a Covid-19 infection. The precise causes are not clear, and their impacts can vary from person to person which can create issues for diagnosis, treatment and management of the condition. As more than 500,000 people across Sussex have contracted Covid-19, this will affect the wellbeing of some of our population, both now and in the future.

We asked people if they had sought advice, including from the Post-Covid Assessment and Support Service (PCASS), and people's views about the type of follow-up assistance and care that would be most helpful in meeting their needs.

*"Since opening in 2021, PCASS provided care and rehabilitation for long COVID to more than 3,300 patients. The service has been continuously developing. We welcome the findings of the Healthwatch report and are now working closely with our partners to further develop and raise awareness of the service."*

**Dr Dinesh Sinha, Chief Medical Officer NHS Sussex**

94 people replied and the survey helped to understand public and patient experiences. It enabled us to produce recommendations that have been shared with health and care providers and decision-makers.

Our report was published in March.

We are continuing to work closely with NHS Sussex to follow up on our recommendations, monitor how residents are affected by Long-Covid and share the feedback we receive.

[Read the report](#)

## Liaison Role

NHS Sussex and Healthwatch in Sussex have worked in partnership to create a new role, which is being delivered by **Katrina Broadhill**. Katrina's role will support the three Healthwatch in Sussex teams in their work engaging with the health and care system which can be complex and hard to navigate. The role will support communication between Healthwatch and NHS Sussex and make it easier to share insight from local Healthwatch into programmes of work.



*"I am passionate about creating a fairer and more equitable society. As an intermediary to the three local Healthwatch in Sussex, this new role gives our integrated care system a single route to Healthwatch for all Sussex-wide activities, simplifying and sharing communication and provision of Healthwatch insight."*

[More about the Liaison Role](#)

# Reports Published 2022-23

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We published 16 reports this year describing our work and your experiences of health and social care services.

1. [Feedback on the A&E Department, Royal Sussex County Hospital](#)  
- April 2022
2. [Healthwatch continues to support our city's COVID-19 Vaccination Enquiry Service](#)  
- May 2022
3. [NHS dentistry - a Healthwatch bulletin](#)  
- June 2022
4. [Supporting LGBTQ+ people in Brighton and Hove to share their experiences of health and social care services](#) - June 2022.
5. [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove - Annual Report 2022](#)  
- June 2022
6. [Typologies of digital exclusion - A Healthwatch report](#)  
- July 2022
7. [Mental Health Services in Brighton and Hove - experiences of service users and professionals](#) - July 2022
8. [Healthwatch, NHS and local people in collaboration: Southeast Regional Conference, 28th June 2022](#) - July 2022.
9. [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove helpline enquiries April to June 2022](#)  
- July 2022
10. [Enter & View Report: Royal Sussex County Hospital July 2022](#)  
- August 2022
11. [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove helpline enquiries July to September 2022.](#)  
- October 2022
12. [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove six-month Performance Report](#)  
- October 2022
13. [Our enter and view report on Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust sites](#)  
- November 2022.
14. [Access to GP appointments across Sussex - public opinion.](#)  
- January 2023
15. [Healthwatch Helpline service - Public enquiries report during Oct - Dec 2022 - January 2023.](#)
16. [Healthwatch - Our focussed work on GP services in Brighton and Hove](#) - March 2023.

Read the reports at  
[HealthwatchBrightonandHove.co.uk/news-and-reports](https://www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/news-and-reports)



# Volunteers

We're supported by an amazing team of volunteers, who are at the heart of what we do.

Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working on health and social care, and what needs improving.

This year our volunteers:

- Visited people in their homes to ask about their home care.
- Reviewed patient leaflets produced by our local hospital.
- Attended community events on our behalf.
- Carried out Enter & View visits to local services to help them improve.
- Reviewed GP and dentist websites to review accessibility.
- Answered people's questions and queries on our Helpline and signposted them to support.
- And much more.

# Volunteers



## **Finnur Bjarnason – Homecare Check**

“Being part of the Homecare project has been very rewarding. Not only have I felt like I was able to make a difference and contribute to the community, but the home visits have also been very memorable.

They give the opportunity to have conversations with people of such varying backgrounds and with such different stories.

The whole team at Healthwatch is also very supportive and friendly, as are the other volunteers. I think it's great way to engage and volunteer.”

## **Elaine Foster – Homecare / Helpline**

“I've been a volunteer with Healthwatch Brighton and Hove since 2020.

I first worked on the hospital discharge project and now, with a fellow volunteer, I answer queries via the website and Helpline. I deal with a wide range of requests from health service complaints to community engagement.

It's a very valuable resource for patients and the public and an interesting project to be involved in.”



## **Dr Khalid Ali – Director**

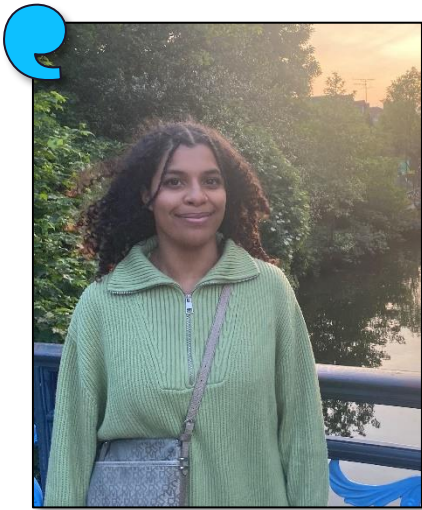
“Working as a Director on the Healthwatch Brighton and Hove board over the last two years has been a rewarding experience on several fronts. Hearing from people using health and social care services was an eye-opener on 'what matters' from a user's perspective.

Sharing people's lived experience with their care providers has challenged the 'status quo' and resulted in improvements in access to primary and secondary healthcare.

I work alongside an inspiring team of volunteers and staff who always go the extra mile to support their clients and each other. My work here has been educational, impactful and fun.”

**To learn more about volunteering with us,  
call 01273 234 040 or email [interested@hwbh.co.uk](mailto:interested@hwbh.co.uk)**





## Reemanne Baghdadi - Student

"My time spent volunteering with Healthwatch has been very enjoyable! As a public health student, I have been given the opportunity to explore health and social care through a lens that I would not have through studies alone. I have worked on two fantastic projects.

The Outpatient Transformation workshops was so eye-opening, to hear peoples lived experience and their invaluable feedback on how to improve the services they use. I have also been given the opportunity to carry out independent service mapping in Brighton, equipping me with skills that will benefit me greatly.

The Healthwatch team have always made me feel appreciated and supported and I hope to continue to support the team. "

## John Gough - Meeting Representative

"I have been volunteering for Healthwatch as a Meeting Representative for the last year and it's a role I would recommend to anyone who has an interest in being part of a team that's aim it is to improve our local Health Services.

Being a Meeting Rep has given me the opportunity to listen to, collate and present the views of our local citizens to Healthcare Professionals, and has at the same time given me an insight into appreciating at first-hand, the work and dedication that NHS Staff apply to their various roles.

I've really enjoyed being a small part of this process of improvement - which hopefully will, through the involvement of local people eventually benefit everyone."



## Ian Bretman - Meeting Representative

"I had served on an NHS Board in London before moving to this area and was keen to make use of my experience and to learn more about the services provided to the local community. I was asked to represent Healthwatch on the Sussex-wide Primary Care Commissioning Group and the Sussex Community Foundation Trust's Patient Engagement Group and have been doing this for the past few months.

As well as attending the meetings themselves, I liaise with Healthwatch staff before the meeting to see if there are matters they would like me to raise, and I also provide a short report back after the meeting about what was discussed.

It's been very interesting to attend these meetings and I have found NHS staff that I've worked with very welcoming and keen to develop their understanding of patient experience. The Healthwatch team is likewise very supportive and friendly."



# Volunteers

## Fran O'Neill – Enter & View / Helpline

"I first started at Healthwatch towards the end of 2019, on the hospital discharge wellbeing service that focused on calling people recently discharged from hospital to check they had the support they needed. It became more pertinent in early 2020 when the pandemic started and little face-to-face contact for people being discharged from hospital.

It was good to use some of my hospital skills and knowledge to help support people. The program was very successful (and highly commended!) and ran for over two years. At six months, I moved onto the vaccination helpline, which was also very rewarding.

I now deal with messages left by people looking for information or advice. It's less demanding as I'm now back at work, but I am free to do what I like and can, and totally supported by the team. They are only ever an email or a phone call away and usually have the answers to the question you may be asking, and if they don't, they find out! I have been on training courses to support what I need and gatherings where we meet other volunteers, which is nice. There are ongoing projects you could be involved in with plenty of variety. I would recommend joining Healthwatch if you can!"



## Chris Jennings – Meeting Representative / Support

I have been representing Healthwatch on the Local Dental Committee for East Sussex and Brighton & Hove and at meetings of the Routine Dentistry Managed Care Network for Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

Doing this, I can relay information to dentists on the problems patients and the public raise with Healthwatch and also feedback to Healthwatch the dentists' perspectives on their problems, concerns and initiatives.

This contributed to some useful products such as "Dentistry – A Healthwatch guide to your rights and accessing the treatment you need" and helped raise the profile of the problems being experienced by patients in accessing NHS Dental care. I have also been undertaking some data collection and analysis work on some of the Healthwatch surveys, which is work I enjoy and uses skills gained when I was working.

Most recently I have acted as a note-taker for the series of Deliberative Engagement Workshops run by Healthwatch in Sussex and the NHS to test and obtain feedback on plans for Outpatient Transformation. It is good to see all the Sussex Healthwatch working together and beginning to engage with the new Sussex Integrated Care Board now running local services.

**To learn more about volunteering with us,  
call 01273 234 040 or email [interested@hwbh.co.uk](mailto:interested@hwbh.co.uk)** 

# Authorised Representatives

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During this year we had **52 Authorised Representatives** able to review services, attend decision-making forums and speak up for patients and care service users.

This was made up of **45** volunteers – including directors – and **7** members of staff.

Alan Boyd	Hilary Martin
Alastair Hignell	Howard Lewis
Angelika Wydra	Jo Kaddish
Asher Foister	John Gough
Barbara Myers	Judi Holly
Bob Deschene	Karen Barford
Brigid Day	Leah Ashley
Cara Redlich	Lester Coleman
Caroline Trimby	Lynne Shields
Catherine Swann	Maureen Smalldridge
Chris Jennings	Mazzie Sharp
Christine D'Cruz	Michelle Kay
Christopher Morey	Neil McIntosh
Cindy Willey	Nicholas Gorvett
Clary Collicutt	Nick Goslett
Conor Sheehan	Paul Koczerzat
David Liley	Peter Burton
Dr Khalid Ali	Robin Guilleret
Duncan Stewart	Roger Squier
Elaine Crush	Sophie Crowton
Elaine Foster-Page	Sophie Reilly
Francis McCabe	Sue Seymour
Fran O'Neill	Sylvia New
Geoffrey Bowden	Tracey Tremlett
Gillian Connor	Vanessa Greenaway
Hadi Kebbeh	Will Anjos

**Thank you**

# Our last 10 years...

# 151 Volunteers Contributed over



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**Including 25  
Volunteer Board  
Members**

**to help our community**

**We made 1,761  
Recommendations**

**10,500  
Health &  
social care  
meetings**

**44,000  
people  
engaged**



**594  
Services  
reviewed**

**3,300  
helpline  
enquiries**

**25 Staff Members**



**390 Press Releases  
& media interviews**



**4 Awards**





## This year was a special celebration for us as we marked our 10th anniversary.

At the heart of everything we've done have been our city's residents. None of this could have been possible without the efforts of all the people who have worked for us, our various Board members and our outstanding volunteers. [Read our report.](#)

We could also not have succeeded without the support of our various partners working across the voluntary and community sector, NHS services, the Council, our other Healthwatch colleagues, and those who commission and deliver services.

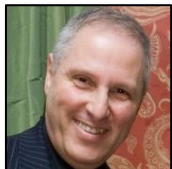
**To everyone who has been involved in our success – thank you.**

A potted history of key dates	
2012	Healthwatch is set up under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.
2013	Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is formally inaugurated in April 2013. We are hosted by Community Works and our first staff team join us. We also publish our first report.
2014	The Mayor of Brighton & Hove formally launches Healthwatch Brighton and Hove on 5th March. We are formally registered as a Community Interest Company on 14th October. Our first volunteers join us this year.
2014 / 2015	Our Board of Directors is formed. We begin our Enter and View Visits to local health and social care services, launch our newsletter and start our public helpline. More than 1000 people sign up to receive our newsletter.
2015	We become an independent Community Interest Company in April.
2016	We win two Highly Commended awards from Healthwatch England for our partnership working.
2017	We set up our monthly volunteer led visits to our local hospitals.
2017	We establish our Young Healthwatch.
2017 / 2018	Young Healthwatch publishes their first report looking at Accident & Emergency (A&E) experiences of mental health services.
2019	We launch our Homecare check service, still operating today.
2020	We start to issue our COVID bulletins and start our award-winning Hospital Discharge project. More than 70 volunteers support our work throughout the pandemic.
2021	We win our third Highly Commended award from Healthwatch England for our Hospital Discharge project. Our End-of-Life project is also shortlisted. Our volunteers speak to 1,700 people recently discharged from hospital.
2022	We win our fourth Highly Commended award for our work in helping patients to overturn a decision to reduce opening hours at a local GP practice. We are also awarded a 3-year direct contract renewal to continue running Healthwatch for the city.

# Chair & Directors

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**Our board of directors are all volunteers**



**Geoffrey Bowden**  
Chair



**Christine D'Cruz**  
Director



**Karen Barford**  
Director



**Howard Lewis**  
Director



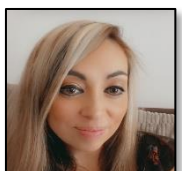
**Angelika Wydra**  
Director



**Dr Khalid Ali**  
Director



**Alastair Hignell**  
Director



**Sophie Crowton**  
Director




**Gillian Connor**  
Director



**Christopher Morey**  
Director

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## Goodbyes

 "I joined Healthwatch as a volunteer in 2014 and became a board member the following year. I've seen a transformation from an organisation with very little profile with the public, health service providers or commissioners to one that has one making a real difference in helping shape the delivery of health and social care services across our city, as well as a truly effective campaigning force, ensuring that health and social care users and their families have their voices heard and listened to."



I look forward to watching Healthwatch Brighton & Hove continue to grow in strength as a patient champion over the years to come."

**Neil McIntosh** ~ Director from October 2015 to October 2022

 Catherine Swann is a senior public health civil servant and chartered psychologist with over 20 years' experience in national NHS and academia.

She has been an invaluable member of the board, and over the years made a great contribution to our work.



**Catherine Swann** ~ Director from October 2015 to October 2022

*"I am so grateful as someone living in the City for the huge positive impact that the dedicated team of staff and volunteers have on local health and social care services. The team go above and beyond their commissioned requirements to ensure that they respond to the current and future needs of the local community and this was particularly evidenced by their swift adaptation of services during the Covid-19 pandemic.*



*It has been an absolute honour to be a small part of Brighton and Hove Healthwatch's journey over the last four years. All the very best."*

**Karen Barford** ~ Director from April 2019 to June 2023

*"It has come to the time for me to retire after 6 years as Chief Executive with Healthwatch Brighton and Hove, 10 years with Healthwatch and 50 years working in Health and Social Care. My first job was as a porter in a hospital in Belfast, so in that time I have gone literally from the Boiler Room to the Board Room.*



*Healthwatch in Brighton and Hove is going from strength to strength, with new leadership, staff and a fresh commitment to promoting patient and public voices. The post-Covid world is full of change in health and social care and it has never been more important to design the future learning from people, families and communities who use services today. At a time of upheaval, Healthwatch brings HOPE = 'Hearing Other Peoples Experiences'. Let us use those experiences to call our leaders to account and build a better future.*

*Thanks again to all the team at Healthwatch and the whole Health and Care Community locally for providing me with the privilege to lead, to serve and to make a difference."*

**David Liley** ~ Chief Executive from April 2016 to February 2023



Learn more about our directors at  
[healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/our-board](https://healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/our-board)

# Staff Team

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**Alan Boyd**  
Chief Executive

**Dr Lester Coleman**  
Head of Research

**Will Anjos**  
Project Coordinator

**Clare Funnell**  
Communications  
& Engagement Officer

**Michelle Kay**  
Project Coordinator

**Clary Collicutt**  
Project Coordinator

**Katy Francis**  
Project Support Officer



*Left to right: Katy, Will, Clare, Michelle, Clary, Lester and Alan.*

Learn more about our staff at  
[healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/our-staff](https://healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/our-staff)

# Message from our Chief Executive

“A year of change”.

“This feels like the best phrase to describe the last 12 months. In July, a new Integrated Care System, Sussex Health and Care, was created to deliver more joined-up services to ensure people receive the best care possible. A new Board, NHS Sussex, was also created to oversee its work and set the priorities for all NHS organisations in Sussex. The CQC, the independent regulator of health and social care in England, has implemented a new approach to their work and there have also been changes to the leadership at other Healthwatch teams in East and West Sussex.



And even at Healthwatch Brighton and Hove in the last year, we have appointed a new Chair, Geoffrey Bowden, and new CEO – me! Most recently, we’ve welcomed new staff members, Katy and Clare to our team and we are pleased to host Katrina Broadhill in a brand new strategic role, which is already delivering closer working between all three Sussex Healthwatch teams and the health and care system. We’ve also warmly welcomed some amazing new volunteers and said a fond farewell to David Liley, former CEO and Fran McCabe, former Chair.

*“Regardless of the changes that are happening, Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will be here to listen to patients, gather their experiences and views and ensure health and care providers listen and act on them.”*

That is a lot of change. Sometimes change can feel overwhelming but it is also an opportunity to step back, reflect, try new things and strengthen relationships – and that’s what I hope Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will achieve over the next year.

Throughout this period of change, Healthwatch staff team and volunteers, existing and new, have continued to deliver excellence in public engagement and high-quality reporting. Projects delivered by Lester, Michelle, Will and Clary with the support of our dedicated volunteers, have continued to help services improve in the city and across Sussex. Recognition for the quality and impact of our work came in the form of another ‘Highly Commended’ award from Healthwatch England.

Regardless of the changes that are happening, we will be here to listen to patients, gather their experiences and views and ensure health and care providers listen and act on them. Ultimately, it is your stories that help create change, so thank you on behalf of myself and the wider team for sharing them with us.”

**Alan Boyd**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alan Boyd', written over a light blue horizontal line.

# Finance

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

## Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£178,600	Expenditure on pay	£198,778
Additional income	£94,748	Non-pay expenditure	£30,505
		Office & management fee	£19,142
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£273,348</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£248,425</b>

### Additional income includes the following project work:

- Exploring Dementia Pathways in Sussex
- Delivering a council funded Homecare Check
- Exploring Mental Health & Housing
- Delivering an Outpatients series of workshops
- Running a Discharge Project
- Working to amplify LBGTQ+ voices
- Delivering Healthwatch Engagement Activity
- Organising a Healthwatch England Regional Conference
- Conducting interviews on Maternal Mental Health



# Future Priorities

## Our areas of priority for 2023–24

### 1. Hearing from more people via partnership working

We will continue to form strong relationships and deliver more projects in partnership with local Voluntary and Community groups. This will mean that we hear from more people and more communities in the city, including those whose voices are less prominently heard at the moment. By working with community partners, we will support the overarching ambition to reduce health inequalities across the city.

As part of this, we will focus on hearing from more Children and Young People.

### 2. Escalating your concerns

We will continue to capture your views, experiences and opinions. We will do this through our projects and helpline, but also by attending more public events and through partnerships with other local organisations. We will support them to get their service user's views heard in forums that Healthwatch has privileged access to such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Sussex Integrated Care Assembly and others.

Key areas of focus for us will be to help improve access to services, notably primary care services such as GPs, dentists and others.

### 3. Continuing to act as a 'critical friend'

We will continue to work in partnership with system leaders and providers and challenge them to demonstrate how they have used feedback from patients to deliver improvements. We will offer our continued support to help them achieve this.

At the same time, we will monitor and challenge the progress made by our Integrated Care System against their published priorities to deliver better joined-up care for everyone.

We will use our independence from the NHS and Council to help achieve this.

In addition to these priorities, we will also work harder to raise public awareness of what we do and the impact that our work has.





# Statutory statements

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove, Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton BN1 3XG.

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.



# The way we work

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

This past year, our Healthwatch Board has consisted of 10 members who have worked on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities.

Our Board has ensured that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2022/23 the Board met 6 times and made decisions on matters including the appointment of a new Chair, a new Chief Executive, and signed off our financial accounts.

### 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 have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of using services.

During 2022/23 we have been available by phone, email, provided a webform on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it online, to our local Healthwatch Community, share with Healthwatch England, promote to the local media and present the report formally to the Brighton and Hove Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee .

## Taking people's experiences to decision makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

For example, we take information to the city's Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Overview Scrutiny Committee. We routinely meet with senior representatives at our local hospital Trusts and Care Quality Commission. We also sit on the city's Adult Safeguarding Board.

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers across the Sussex Health and Care Partnership (our Integrated Care System). We hold a privileged seat at our city's Health and Care Assembly and Patient Experience Committee.

We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

# Glossary

- + **A&E**     **Accident & Emergency Department**  
Also referred to as ED for Emergency Department.
- + **BHCC**     **Brighton & Hove County Council**
- + **CQC**     **The Care Quality Commission**  
The independent regulator of health and social care services in England.
- + **ICB**     **Integrated Care Board.** Whose main role is to agree the strategic priorities and resource allocation for all NHS organisations in Sussex.
- + **JSNA**     **Joint Strategic Needs Assessments**  
Bring together evidence from a range of sources to improve the health and wellbeing results of the local community and reduce inequalities for all ages.
- + **RSCH**     **Royal Sussex County Hospital.** Part of University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust. The Hospital is an acute teaching hospital in Brighton.
- + **SHCP**     **Sussex Health and Care Partnership**  
Is an Integrated Care System (ICS) which serves a population of more than 1.7 million people in Sussex.
- + **SPFT**     **Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust**  
A specialist NHS organisation providing mental health, learning disability and neurodevelopmental services to people living in South East England
- + **SCFT**     **Sussex Community Foundation Trust.** The main provider of community NHS health and care across Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, High Weald Lewes and Havens and West Sussex.
- + **ICS**     **Integrated Care System**  
A way of working that brings together all the health and care organisations in a particular local area, to work together more closely.
- + **UHSx**     **University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust**  
The main hospital trust which includes RSCH, Worthing Hospital and Princes Royal.





## Healthwatch Brighton and Hove

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 [healthwatch-brighton-and-hove](https://www.linkedin.com/company/healthwatch-brighton-and-hove)