

# Marlow Community Hospital

**Enter and View Report**



**April 2025**

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## Visit details

Details of visit	
<b>Service Provider</b>	Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
<b>Service Address</b>	Victoria Road, Marlow SL7 1DJ
<b>Date and Time</b>	23rd April: 10.30am – 12.45pm
<b>Authorised Representatives</b>	Oonagh Browne and Jennifer Cassidy

## Summary of findings

We heard from nine patients, two relatives and five members of staff.

These findings represent an account of what we observed and heard on the day that we visited:

- + There is a newly built accessibility ramp to the rear of the main building (Entrances 2 and 3). We were told that was not in use because the hospital is waiting for new signage to clearly indicate the ramp's location
- + The temperature in the hospital hub was very hot especially in one of the accessible bathrooms which used to store equipment. The door was closed as it was not used by patients/staff
- + The battery in the wall clock in the waiting room needed replacing
- + Patients were **very satisfied** with their care and treatment in the Community Assessment and Treatment Service (CATS) and Warfarin clinics. Most said that the location of the hospital hub was convenient for them and that the staff were excellent. However, some told us that there was not enough space for parking
- + When asked for suggestions for improvements, one patient said that a podiatry clinic would be useful. We heard that most patients were happy with the services available at the hub and that they preferred attending appointments there rather than nearby acute hospitals
- + We observed that two patients had turned up to clinics on the wrong day. Staff checked their invitation to appointments on the booking system, these indicated that the appointments were scheduled for a different upcoming date. One patient was still seen, 1-2-1, by a member of the healthcare team despite the mix up
- + We spoke to two relatives and heard that the following information was out of date:

- the contact number for Marlow Community Hospital from Google search results (01628 482292)
  - the information given by NRS Healthcare for equipment collection at Marlow Community Hospital (the hospital no longer has this service)
- + We spoke to staff in various roles both onsite and offsite (occupational health outreach). Most said that they liked the 'working environment' at the hospital hub and that patients like it too. Challenges for staff included:
- limited parking, sometimes being blocked in by colleagues
  - liaising with estate maintenance services to ensure that jobs get done
  - ensuring that [NRS Healthcare](#) deliver equipment that matches the exact specification given

## Recommendations

The following recommendations have been suggested to Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust based on our conversations and observations during the visit.

### Communication with patients, staff and NRS Healthcare

- ☒ Continue to ensure that patients receive clear appointment details including directions for patients attending a clinic for the first time. Where possible, have patients confirm their appointment details when they book or receive text reminders
- ☒ Keep staff updated about timelines for new signage to the accessible ramp so that they can keep patients and visitors informed
- ☒ Ensure that NRS Healthcare have accurate information about equipment collection for patients i.e. equipment collection at Marlow Community Hospital Hub. Also, look at ways to ensure that NRS healthcare deliver equipment ordered by staff in accordance with their specifications

### Online contact details

- ☒ Where possible update internet search engines with the correct telephone number for the hospital hub

## Services available

- ☒ Continue to review services available at Marlow Community Hospital Hub and explore possibilities for new clinics in the future

## General estate maintenance

- ☒ Replace wall clock battery in waiting room
- ☒ Ensure that over-heated rooms which are not in regular use, i.e. the room for storing equipment, are well-ventilated by keeping the door and windows open to maintain a good circulation of fresh air

## Service response to recommendations

The following response was received by email on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025.



### Buckinghamshire Healthcare

NHS Trust

Stoke Mandeville Hospital

Mandeville Road

Aylesbury

Buckinghamshire

HP21 8AL

9 June 2025

Dear Oonagh

#### **Response to Healthwatch Bucks Enter and View Visit Report – Marlow Community Hospital**

**Date of Visit: 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025**

Thank you for your detailed report following your Enter and View visit to Marlow Community Hospital. Your insights are vital for enhancing patient care and experience.

We appreciate the positive feedback on staff, care, and treatment in our Community Assessment and Treatment Service (CATS) and the Warfarin clinic. We are also pleased that patients find the location convenient compared to nearby acute hospitals, and we aim to maintain these high standards.

However, we acknowledge the need for clear appointment details, directions, parking information, and contact details, as consistency has been lacking.

Below is our action plan addressing the report's recommendations:

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

Providing a range of acute and community services across  
Buckinghamshire Chair: David Highton Chief  
Executive: Neil Macdonald

## Action Plan in Response to Recommendations

Recommendation	Action	Timeline
Continue to ensure that patients receive clear appointment details including directions for patients attending a clinic for the first time. Where possible have patients confirm their appointment details when they book or receive text reminders	Review and update current appointment letter process within CATS Contact outpatient clinic leads to request review and update of letters used for Marlow based clinics	31 May 2025  31 May 2025
Keep staff updated about new signage to the accessible ramp so they can keep patients and visitors informed	New signage is now in place	14 May 2025 – completed
Ensure that NRS Healthcare have accurate information about equipment collection for patients i.e. equipment collection at Marlow Community Hospital Hub. Look at ways to ensure that NRS healthcare deliver equipment ordered by staff in accordance with their specifications	Meet with NRS Operations manager  Raised at NRS 'Drop in Surgery'	31 May 2025  16 May 2025 – completed
Where possible update internet search engines with the correct telephone number for the hospital hub	Communications team to request Google update information	19 May 2025 completed
Continue to review services available at Marlow Community Hospital Hub and explore possibilities for new clinics in the future.	Escalate to Care group leads for consideration	19 May 2025 – completed
Replace wall clock battery in waiting room.	Replace batteries	14 May 2025 – completed

Recommendation	Action	Timeline
Ensure that over-heated rooms which are not in regular use, i.e. the room for storing equipment, are well-ventilated by keeping the door and windows open to maintain a good circulation of fresh air.	Request estates to review the room for ventilation options and turning the individual radiators in this room to lower setting.	19 May 2025 - Completed Heating has now been turned off.

We appreciate Healthwatch Bucks' insights and are committed to improving patient and staff experiences at Marlow Community Hospital. Our action plan demonstrates our dedication to positive changes based on feedback. We will monitor progress and keep Healthwatch Bucks updated.

Thank you for your valuable input and support in enhancing our care.

**Yours sincerely,**



Raghuv Bhasin

Chief Operating Officer

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust



## What is Enter and View?

Enter and View visits are carried out by local Healthwatch to find out how health and social care services are being run. They make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The law allows local Healthwatch to see how a service is delivered. We can visit hospitals, care homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. We talk to the people who use the service and their families/carers and sometimes staff.

We talk to these people to help us understand what is done well and what could be done better. We then share this learning with others.

We do not look for issues around the safety of people (safeguarding) during our Enter and View visits. We report any concerns as set out in our policy. We tell members of staff who want to raise an issue about where they work to talk to the CQC. This way they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

## Methodology

The visit was prearranged with Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust community nursing team leads and an explanation of the purpose of our visit was also provided.

On arrival we (Authorised Representatives) introduced ourselves to the CATS and hospital hub manager, we discussed details of the visit. During this conversation we checked whether any patients should not be approached for any reason.

We used a semi-structured conversation approach to gather feedback from patients and staff. Conversations and observations were recorded via hand-written notes.

A risk assessment was completed before the visit in accordance with Healthwatch Bucks internal policies and procedures.

## Background

Marlow Community Hospital Hub provides local care to people in Marlow and surrounding areas. CATS is one of the services available at the hospital. It has a team of nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, GPs and health care assistants who provide support for frail and/or older patients with complex needs.

Marlow Health Clinic is also located at the community hospital. It offers a range of weekly clinics including warfarin (a blood thinning medication) and midwife services.

The League of Friends of Marlow Hospital works with the local community to support the hospital's patients and staff. The League funds services at the hospital from day-to-day contributions to bigger projects. Together with Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust, they funded a new kitchen and recreation area for teams who work at the hospital.

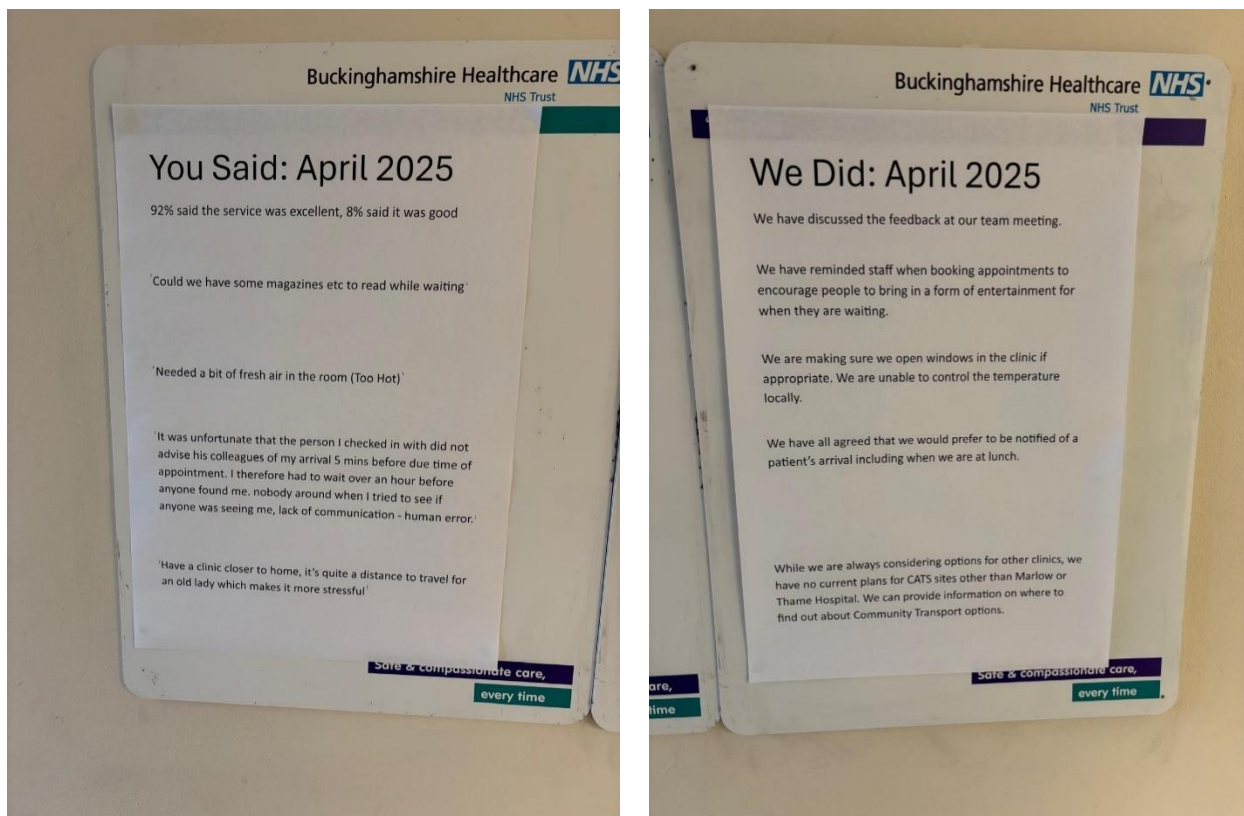
## Building tour

We were given a tour of the premises by the CATS and community hub manager.

### Community Hospital Hub

The tour began in the main hospital hub area. We were told that the CATS clinic was taking place during our visit. There was a whiteboard in the corridor showing patient bookings for that morning.

Information boards included 'You said, We did' posters to show how the hospital hub has responded to patient feedback. 92% said that the service was **excellent**, 8% said that it was good.



**Picture 1: You said/We did posters**

The temperature of the building was very hot. There was no ventilation in one room which was used as storage for equipment. We were told that this room had originally

been used as an accessible bathroom when the community hospital had inpatient wards.

The consultation/treatment rooms were clean and free from clutter. Some of these were in use with patients during our visit.

There is a large waiting area in this section of the building. The wall clock displayed the wrong time. There were information leaflets about local service providers stored neatly on the bookshelf, as well as local neighbourhood/community magazines.



**Picture 2: Waiting room in community hospital hub**



**Picture 3: Old ramp at main entrance and new ramp at side entrance**

## Marlow Health Clinic

The Marlow Health Clinic has a separate entrance to the main hospital hub. It has a small car park with limited spaces for patients. The midwife clinic had just finished when we arrived. There were patients and visitors waiting in the main reception area for the warfarin clinic. Most seats in this area were occupied. There is also an overflow waiting area with more seating by the entrance with a wall mounted poster board displaying information about local health and social care services.



**Picture 4: Overflow waiting area at Marlow Health Clinic**

## What we heard

### Patient feedback

We heard from nine patients across the CATS and warfarin clinics. Most patients told us that:

- they attended regular clinics at the community hospital hub
- the hub was very convenient for them to reach
- they preferred going to local appointments rather than going to appointments at neighbouring acute hospitals
- parking was sometimes a problem – limited spaces
- staff were very kind and attentive



## Care and treatment

Patients were mostly positive about their care treatment across both clinics.

“They do my international normalised ratio (INR). If the reading is too high, they will give me direct 1-2-1 support. They’re excellent.”

One patient told us about additional services available at the health clinic:

“They even have batteries for hearing aids, saves going to Wycombe Hospital”

When asked about suggestions for improvements to services, one patient said that a podiatry clinic would be useful:

“They used to have a chiropodist here, but they don’t anymore. It moved back to Wycombe Hospital.”

## Parking

Many patients said that there was not enough parking. One patient said that entering/exiting the carpark was dangerous as cars park on Glade Road, directly before the turning for the health centre which blocks the view of approaching traffic for drivers leaving the carpark.

Another patient told us that they did not know if parking restrictions applied onsite at the health centre:

“Parking is confusing. Do you pay or not?”

However, we heard from one patient who told us that parking was not a problem for them that day.

“It took five minutes to get here, and parking was easy.”

## Appointments

Most patients said that they knew where to go and what to expect from each appointment.

One patient told us that they did not know which entrance to use for their first appointment (Health Clinic or Community Hub entrance). They said that they travelled

by taxi and the driver was confused. When asked if they were given information about the appointment with directions, they confirmed that they got a text about but said:

“The instructions were not good.”

Another patient told us that they requested a letter from the CATS team to notify them of their next appointment. They were told a letter would be sent to them by post.

We **observed** that two patients (one in each clinic) had arrived for their appointment but got the dates mixed up. Staff were very empathetic and checked the booking system to ensure that these patients had received the correct appointment details (they confirmed that patients were sent the correct information). One of the patients was given a 1-2-1 consultation at the clinic despite the mix up.

## Feedback from relatives

We spoke to two relatives during our visit. One was not there with a patient. They told us that they arrived in person to make an enquiry.

Both said that the hospital was local to them and easy to reach. However, one relative said that they would like support with getting the patient to appointments. We also heard that two pieces of communication information were out-of-date:

- the contact number for Marlow Community Hospital on Google (01628 482292)
- the information for equipment collection at Marlow Community Hospital from NRS Healthcare as the hospital no longer has this service

## Staff feedback

We spoke to members of staff in the community health clinic and hub. All the staff told us that they enjoyed working at the hospital hub.

### Benefits

Staff told us that they liked working there because:

- the environment is calm, and colleagues are friendly
- they are well supported by managers
- patients seem happy and like having care closer to home

### Challenges

The main challenges that we heard were:

- parking can be difficult, sometimes being blocked by colleagues
- estate and facilities issues in the building, keeping on top of maintenance jobs
- NRS healthcare sometimes deliver equipment which is not to specification i.e. height of rails for occupational therapy

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank the patients, visitors and hospital staff at Marlow Community Hospital Hub for sharing their feedback with us.

## Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025. Our report reflects feedback from people **at the time** of our visit.

If you require this report in an alternative format, please contact us.

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