

Healthwatch Bucks **Annual Report 2024 – 2025**

Unlocking the power of people-driven care



healthwatch
Bucks

Contents

Message from our Chair and Chief Executive	3
About us	4
How we work	6
Our year in numbers	8
A year of making a difference	9
Working together for change	10
Making a difference in the community	11
Listening to your experiences	12
Hearing from all communities	13
Enter and View	22
Patient Participation Groups	23
Volunteering	24
Paid for projects	26
Signposting	27
Our finances	28
Statutory statements	30
Stay in touch	32

Here is a list of abbreviations frequently used throughout the document:

BOB	Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West.
BHT	Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust.
Bridgit Care	A digital platform and support network for carers.
GP	General Practitioner.
HASC	Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee.
ICB	Integrated Care Board.
ICS	Integrated Care System.
NHS	National Health Service.
OHFT	Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.
Opportunity Bucks	These are 10 wards identified by Buckinghamshire Council as those where residents experience a combination of inequalities.
PPG	Patient Participation Group.
SEND	Special educational needs or disability.

Joint message from our Chair and Chief Executive

This year has seen us do even more to listen to what you have to say about health and social care in Bucks, and to use it to champion improvements.

In Spring, in addition to our regular engagement programme, we ran our first ever roadshow 'From Buckingham to Burnham'. We connected directly with communities across the county, meeting and hearing from over 500 of you – an incredible amount.

Our community research programme recruited, trained and supported three Bucks residents to build the skills and confidence to do meaningful research in their own communities. Through this and our toolkit, which we developed in collaboration with Buckinghamshire New University, we continue to build and nurture relationships with people and communities who face health inequalities.

We launched our new website, designed to make it easier for you to find the information you're looking for, contact us and share your feedback on local health and social care services.

A huge, heartfelt thank you to our volunteers, staff and directors whose hard work ensures that your voice is heard and that your feedback drives real change.



Our projects this year reflected a diverse range of voices across Bucks on topics such as:

- Women sharing their thoughts and ideas on what a dedicated Women's Health Hub should look like.
- Young people talking about what it's like to access a GP.
- Vulnerable migrants talking about their healthcare experiences.
- People using mental health inpatient and crisis services and people using community hospitals through our Enter and View programme.



John Meech, Chair



Zoe McIntosh, Chief Executive

About us

Healthwatch Bucks is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure National Health Service (NHS) leaders and decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. Through our signposting service, we can also point you in the right direction if you're struggling – helping you to find reliable information and advice.



Our vision

is that your experiences, ideas, and opinions make a positive difference to the way health and social care is provided in Bucks.



Our mission

is to make sure the voices of people using health and social care services are heard, considered, and acted upon.



Our objectives are:

- We listen, so we understand what you think about health and social care.
- We influence the right people so that your views can make a positive difference to services.
- We help to improve the way local health and social care services are commissioned and delivered.



healthwatch
Bucks

Have your say
on health and
social care

healthwatch
Bucks

Spring Roadshow 2025

Come and talk to us about your
experience of local health and social care
services

HADDENHAM

Friday 7 March

Haddenham Library 10-11am

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL

Community Health Initiative

PUMP IT UP!
MAKE A START TO A HEALTHY HEART

**Blood Pressure
Checking Point**

Check your blood
pressure here for free

**LOVE
YOUR
HEART
BUCKS**

REAL STORIES

ABOUT REAL STORIES

healthwatch
Bucks

Letting
Influence
Chance

Not just a story!
You can leave feedback about a service instead.

PUMP IT UP!
CHECK YOUR
BLOOD
PRESSURE
HERE FOR
FREE

healthwatch
Bucks

How we work



As a Bucks resident, you can:

- **Contact us** through our website or on the phone if you have questions, concerns, or positive stories to share about a local health and social care service.
- **Rate and review** specific health and social care services quickly and easily on our website.
- **Call us or contact us by email** if you're struggling to access a service you need. We will signpost you in the right direction.
- **Pop along to one of our regular events.** Once a month we will be at a location near you, ready to hear your stories and invite you to participate in our latest research projects.
- **Come and see us at local events** organised by other community and voluntary organisations. You can find out where we will be by following us on social media or visiting our events calendar on our website.
- **Have your say on specific issues** through our online surveys, snapshot questionnaires, focus groups or one-to-one interviews.
- **Reach us through your local Patient Participation Group (PPG).** Every General Practitioner (GP) practice is required to have a PPG, which is made up of patients, doctors, and practice management, working together to help the practice work as well as it can for everyone involved.
- **Attend one of our Board meetings** in public or send in questions for consideration by our directors.

Influencing the right people

Our reports are always shared with local people and partner organisations as quickly as possible.

They include practical recommendations that are based on what we have found out – steps that commissioners, policymakers, and service providers can take, and which we believe will help make health and social care services better.

We're members of several key local committees, including the Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board and Buckinghamshire Health and Social Care Select Committee (HASC).

Like our project reports, our annual report is published on our website. It is made available to the public and to our partner organisations.

Changing the way health and social care services are delivered

Our reports reflect the views of Bucks residents on particular aspects of health and social care services. By listening to what you have to say, we make recommendations to decision-makers on ways health and social care services can be improved. We ask the recipients of our reports, providers and commissioners who are responsible for delivering these services

– for example, Buckinghamshire Council and Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) – to respond to our recommendations. We publish their responses along with our reports on our website.

We follow up on our recommendations to assess whether they have helped make a difference to services. We may also receive follow up reports from decision makers, such as BOB ICB or Buckinghamshire Council. These explain the practical impact our research has had and outline any work still to be done.

How we make decisions

Our Board is made up of volunteers – non-executive directors – who help to make decisions about what we do. The board meets four times per year, either online or in person.

Any Bucks resident can attend a Healthwatch Bucks board meeting or send in a question they would like answered by the directors. We share details of when and where meetings will be held, and how to submit queries, on our website and on social media.

The board has oversight of our activities and scrutinises our work to make sure the projects we undertake reflect the concerns and interests of local communities. They make decisions on our annual priorities and how Healthwatch Bucks is organised.

When recruiting new members to the Healthwatch Bucks board, we try to ensure we include people from different parts of Bucks, and from different ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. We want to make sure our board consists of local people who have great ideas and relevant expertise to share, and that it enables us to think about the issues that matter from a wide variety of perspectives.



Our year in numbers



Listening



2,950
experiences



223
signposting
requests



Influencing



13
Reports



270
Meetings

A year of making a difference

Below is just a snapshot of what we got up to this year.

Spring (April – June)

- We collected women's feedback on health services and what they wanted from a health hub.
- We published a report on experiences of accessing a dentist as a new patient.
- We published a report on transitioning from Children to Adult Health Services for those with a special educational need or disability (SEND).
- We attended community engagement events including Bucks Adult Learning Health and Wellbeing Fayre.

Summer (July – September)

- We published our engagement strategy detailing how we plan to engage with the community over the coming years.
- We hosted a public webinar about the new Medical Examiner Service.
- We published our joint (with Healthwatch Oxfordshire and Healthwatch Reading) report on children's oral health.
- We published our report on PPGs in Buckinghamshire.
- We attended many events including Peace in the Park, BHT open day, and the Health and Wellbeing Day at Chesham Elgiva.

Autumn (October – December)

- We talked to vulnerable migrants about their experiences of accessing health care and published our research into it.
- We talked to young people about their knowledge and experience of seeking GP care.
- We hosted our public webinar about preparing for winter in Bucks.
- We released our community research toolkit.

Winter (January – March)

- During our Spring Roadshow, we visited 16 locations across Bucks.
- We carried out free blood pressure checks after becoming a 'Pressure Partner' with Buckinghamshire Council Public Health.
- We undertook a mystery shopping exercise to see how people could obtain information about looking for social care support for an adult.
- We attended the Bucks Youth Voice Summit.
- We published our report on Children and Young People's access to GP healthcare.
- We hosted a public webinar on the Pharmacy First service.
- We asked Bucks residents their thoughts on what our annual priorities should be for 2025–26.
- Our annual volunteer survey demonstrated significant rise in volunteers looking to gain new skills and experience to boost their CV. We are fulfilling our objective to help people gain skills/experience as 86% of our volunteers feel that volunteering enables them to achieve this.

Working together for change

We collaborate with other Healthwatch to ensure the voices of people in Bucks are amplified and to influence decisions made about services at BOB ICB level.

This includes representing the BOB Local Healthwatch on the ICB sub-committee, Population Health and Patient Experience Committee and we in turn are represented by other BOB Healthwatch in other forums including the ICB "Prevention, Population and Health inequalities" forum.

This year we published a joint report with our colleagues in Oxfordshire and Reading on children's oral health for BOB ICB as part of the Core20PLUS5 Connectors Programme. Core20PLUS5 is a national NHS programme working towards reducing health inequalities. We presented the findings to BOB ICB and made recommendations based on the insight our Community Connectors gathered to the ICB and to our local public health teams.



Making a difference in the community

With funding from BOB ICB and help from Bucks New University, we created a free and easy to use community research toolkit. The aim of the toolkit is to reduce and address health inequalities by empowering local people to lead research in their own communities.

Community-led research ensures that the research is built on lived experiences, builds trust, and captures authentic voices that might otherwise be overlooked. By working with community members, we're better able to understand local needs, identify barriers to healthcare, and develop solutions that fit the needs of the community.

This year our Engagement Lead, Aamna, our Community Researcher Fiaza, and Community Connectors Giovanna and Luisa completed their Health Coaching course. This training was provided by Buckinghamshire Health and Social Care Academy and is fully NHS Personalised Care Institute (PCI) accredited.

Aamna puts her Health Coaching training into action during engagement visits, where she confidently empowers residents to share their feedback and feels better equipped to support them.

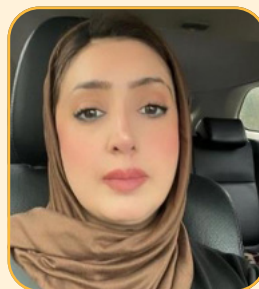
In addition to Aamna's Health Coaching skills, we're happy to now offer free blood pressure checks at our events. This new service is made possible through our partnership with Buckinghamshire Council Public Health, as part of the Pump it Up Pressure initiative.

We offered support and mentoring to three community researchers.



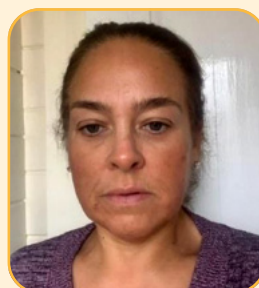
Kitty - a mother to four children, two of whom have additional needs. Living in Wycombe in an area classed as having high levels of deprivation. Kitty has faced multiple layers of deprivation in her life and brings this to the role of community researcher.

"...By sharing our stories, we began to find our voices. Each tale I heard filled me with courage and inspired me to advocate for our community's needs."



Fiaza - a Pashto speaker from the Bucks Pakistani community who amplifies the voices of women in her community.

"They have learned that they do not have to struggle in isolation; they have voices and a community that listens. We have a long journey ahead to keep them engaged, as they are tired of tokenism."



Melissa - a 48 year-old from the Romany Gypsy community.

"I felt heard and valued, and for this, I am grateful. Being part of this project has empowered me as a proud woman of the Romany Gypsy community."

Listening to your experiences

Getting out and talking to the public is a crucial part of our work and we have significantly increased both the number of events we attended and the number of people we spoke to this year.

Our Spring Roadshow was a huge success, we connected with people across the county,

gathering feedback on a wide range of health and social care services. By actively listening, we have been able to connect many individuals with the additional support they need through our signposting service. We're excited to continue reaching even more community members in the coming months, ensuring your voice is heard and truly makes a difference.

Spring Roadshow



16
Locations



8
Days

We connected with over
500 PEOPLE



Top positive theme from feedback



Quality of care

People were most positive about the kindness and care provided in general practice and hospitals.

Top negative theme from feedback:



Access to services

The most common complaint we heard was about the lack of appointments in general practice.



114
Events attended this year

This includes 11 Community Action Days (held in Opportunity Bucks wards), Chesham Peace in the Park, The Festival of Wellbeing in Wycombe, Hilltop Community Centre's Health Awareness Day, events at Health on the High Street (Unit 33) and many more.

We expanded our regular library visits to include Burnham as well as Buckingham, Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Chesham.

2000+ Meaningful conversations with people

had whilst out and about in the community – hearing first-hand about health and social care services.



Hearing from all communities

We're here for all residents of Bucks and that's why, over the past year, we've worked hard to reach out to those communities whose voices may go unheard. The following pages explore these efforts and the results.



Access to GP care as a young person



Our aims

After talking with the Youth Voice Bucks Executive Committee, we heard that young people wanted to know more about how to get help from their GP. Some weren't sure where to go for help in different situations, and some didn't know when they were expected to do this independently of their parents/carers.



What we did

To learn more, we asked young people about their experiences at their GP surgery. We collected 88 responses from our survey and 16 from two focus groups.



What we found out

- Two thirds of young people said their parents/carers made their appointments. Half of these teenagers said they did not know how to make an appointment by themselves.
- 44% of young people didn't realise that when they turn 16, their parents or carers can no longer see their NHS health information. A third of respondents, already 16 years of age (or older), said they were not aware of this.
- Many young people found it hard to get help from their doctor because they could not make calls or go to appointments while in school, college, or work. They also faced issues with transportation or didn't fully understand how to use online options like the NHS app.
- Many young people said they would like to get health information from an app or an NHS website.



Our recommendations

Our key recommendations made to BOB ICB were:

- Ensure young people are made aware of the changes in data sharing when they turn 16.
- To improve young people's knowledge, share information about other topics that affect their health and well-being through the platforms they use, such as apps and social media.
- Tell young people more about the benefits of signing up for the NHS app and how to do it.
- Encourage practice staff to treat teenagers as equal partners in their health and check that they understand what is said to enable them to manage their health and well-being.



Our impact

- BOB ICB have shared this with the Bucks General Practice Provider Alliance (GPPA). The primary care team will talk to Buckinghamshire Council colleagues to try to link with schools to promote the changes that affect young people at 16.
- They will also look to work with the Youth Voice Bucks group to develop a video to improve young people's knowledge of topics that affect their health and well-being and how to use the NHS app, through the platforms they use, such as apps and social media.
- The primary care team will also encourage practices to highlight the changes that affect patients at 16. Promotional material will also be circulated which can be displayed within the practice.
- Our report was presented at the BOB ICB System Quality Group. They noted that the ICB will take our recommendations forward and share our report across Oxfordshire and Berkshire West.



Thank you for sharing the report with me. I have passed it on to the Youth Town Councillors. They equally felt the consultation opportunity was valuable. I hope we can find future opportunities for partnership.

Emily Campbell, Youth Initiative Officer, Aylesbury Town Council



The ICB welcomes the report and the comprehensive feedback in respect of the experiences of young people when accessing services from general practice and in particular when they were expected to do this independently of their parents/carers. The Healthwatch report provides a number of recommendations and the ICB will take these forward...

Rachel Corser, Chief Nursing Officer, BOB ICB

Finding information about social care support



Our aims

We talked with senior adult social care staff at Buckinghamshire Council and looked at the social care feedback we responded to in 2024. We decided to look at the first stage of many people's journey into looking for care or support for an adult – finding what is available and how to get it. We wanted providers to think about the challenges people face and consider ways to make accessing social care a better experience.



What we did

We undertook a mystery shopping exercise and made 60 contacts via phone, chatbot or searching on the website of Buckinghamshire Council, Carers Bucks and Prevention Matters.

Please note: the publication of this report was delayed due to the pre-election period.



What we found out

Our key findings included:

- Buckinghamshire Council website contains helpful information, but finding your way around could take a lot of time and be confusing.
- Few mystery shoppers who called the Council (unlike those who called Carers Bucks and Prevention Matters) were directed to other organisations for support.
- The Council's online self-referral form has a time restriction which some users may find challenging.
- There were several broken page links on the Council website, Carers Bucks website, and between Bridgit Care's online tool and Buckinghamshire Council website.
- Most calls to the Council were answered quickly. All calls to Carers Bucks were answered right away. However, when we called Prevention Matters, our calls went to voicemail, although they were all answered within 24 hours.
- All staff, in all three organisations, were professional and polite.
- Use of the Council chatbot could be frustrating if there was no customer service advisor available.
- We occasionally came across terminology which people might not understand.
- Callers to the Council were not offered information in large print or in other languages.
- The translation plug-in on the Carers Bucks website and on the Bridgit Care and Mobilise online tools did not work on laptops.
- People without access to digital devices were supported well by Prevention Matters. However, mystery shoppers calling the Council were often directed to look at the website or fill out an online form. Alternatives to help them were rarely suggested.
- We did not find information produced by Buckinghamshire Council about looking for adult social care support in any community location we visited.



Our recommendations

- Carers Bucks should ensure their website translation plug-in works on all devices and all links to website pages work.
- Connection Support (Prevention Matters) should add links to the Buckinghamshire Adult Care Services Directory to their website page and enhance the existing voicemail message.

Buckinghamshire Council should:

- Remind those answering adult social care calls to refer callers to local organisations who might also be able to provide support. Be aware that there are still many people who do not have digital skills or devices and need more phone support.
- Make improvements to the website to improve the customer experience.
- Review comments made about language and jargon.
- Ensure all front facing staff on chatbots or answering phones are aware of the translation services available and advertised on the website. Consider adding a translation tool/plug in to the website.



Vulnerable migrants report



Our aims

This project focused on refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants. We wanted to collect their experience of health care and share this information with providers of services so they could understand what affects these individuals when accessing care.



What we did

We collected feedback from 28 people. 24 completed a survey and four attended a focus group, or were interviewed by us.



Our recommendations

- Address health inequalities by ensuring GP surgeries provide clear information which includes information on how to complain, staff roles, the NHS app, NHS health checks and screening.
- Book interpretation services for appointments when needed and provide information in plain English for those who find reading English difficult.
- Ensure dentists make people aware that becoming a patient “does not mean you have guaranteed access to an NHS dental appointment in the future.”
- Buckinghamshire Council should provide more information about visiting an optician, local community transport schemes and services for children including information about free NHS services for those under 19 years of age.



What we found out

- 63% said it was easy to register with a GP.
- Two women were pleased with the cervical screening programme. However, there was poor awareness of the NHS checks or screening programmes.
- 1/3 had not seen a dentist in the UK and 1/2 had not seen an optician.
- Nine respondents had asked for mental health support, but not all had received it.
- Many only know what they are told, and what others from their community tell them.
- 48% said they could not read English well.



Our impact

- BOB ICB have said the Primary Care team will further publicise the Doctors of the World Safe Surgeries Scheme to encourage more doctors in Bucks to join in. They have provided more funding to help practices cover the extra time and costs health checks for new asylum seekers incur.
- The ICB Prevention and Health Inequalities Team is working on a Health Inequalities Action Toolkit highlighting the causes and effects of health inequalities and ways to improve equitable access.
- Buckinghamshire Council have amended their welcome pack to include the changes we recommended to them.
- One person took their children to the optician just a week after we informed them that they could get eye tests for free. Now the teenagers have glasses.
- The BBC website linked to our report in an article about Ukrainian refugees in Bucks.
- We have presented the report at several Board meetings including that of the BOB ICB System Quality Group Board, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (OHFT) Adult Mental Health Board and Buckinghamshire Council Health and Wellbeing Board.



Thank you for the report, it made interesting reading regarding the challenges faced by vulnerable migrants in Buckinghamshire. We are happy to take on board your recommendations for the Council. Changes are currently being made to our Welcome Packs and an updated version will be shared with you in the next few weeks. Amendments are also being made to the relevant webpages.

Kim Parfitt, Buckinghamshire Council



The ICB welcomes the report and its recommendations and the comprehensive feedback in respect of the experience of the vulnerable migrants you have engaged with.... The ICB is extremely grateful for Healthwatch's input into our Inclusion Health Oversight Group and looks forward to continuing our work to support these vulnerable groups.

Dr Nick Broughton, CE, BOB ICB

Women's Health Hubs



Our aims

We wanted to know about women's experiences of gynaecological services, sexual health, and reproductive care (excluding maternity services). We also wanted to know what they wanted from a women's health hub in Bucks.



What we did

Between May and July 2024, we collected feedback from almost 400 women via an online survey and in person at community events, focus and discussion groups.



Our recommendations

These included:

- BOB ICB should raise awareness of the services offered at a sexual health clinic (including cervical screenings and access to contraception) through greater publicity.
- They should listen to what women have shared about how they want a women's health hub in Bucks to work and create one that
 - offers prompt appointments with professionals trained in women's health that deal with more than one issue in one appointment.
 - is a physical place to visit which is convenient and provides local access to a range of services for all women.
 - teaches and encourages women to take charge of their own health and ask for help when they need it.
- They should ensure that everyone knows what to expect from a women's health hub in Bucks and make it easier for women to access services.
- BHT should improve awareness of 'Health on the High Street' so more people are aware of the services available there.



What we found out

- Women had a good experience of women's health services when they received good treatment, clear communication from professionals, and were treated with kindness and respect.
- Women struggled to access women's health services when they had to wait for appointments, appointment times were not convenient, or they could not get to where services were being delivered. Some also felt they were not being listened to, and didn't know what services were available.
- Different groups of women faced different barriers when accessing services. These included an absence of translation services, and being dependent on others or public transport to get to an appointment,
- Most women had not heard of the Women's Health Strategy or the creation of women's health hubs. Many said these could ease pressures on other services such as GP surgeries and improve access to care.



Our impact

- BOB ICB has said that as part of their women's health strategy and developing improvement plan, they would create an effective communication plan. This would encourage greater uptake of cervical screening and outline the services that women's health hubs will provide.
- They have also committed to work to ensure patients feel listened to, and ensure patient information is inclusive. They will continue to work with providers to ensure that all women who need an interpreter have access to one.
- Healthwatch England asked us to be part of a presentation reflecting nationwide Healthwatch work on cervical screening.



A really great report about what women want from women's health services

Sue Edwards, Insight Manager,
Healthwatch England



We welcome the Women's Health Hub Report and the recommendation to 'Improve awareness of 'Health on the High Street' ... In response we are developing a communications plan to increase awareness

Raghuv Bhasin,
Chief Operating Officer, BHT



As partners across Buckinghamshire, BOB ICB thanks Healthwatch Bucks for their report and will continue to review and monitor where we can make improvements to the health of women.

Dr Nick Broughton,
CE, BOB ICB



What makes this report really great is that Healthwatch Bucks reached out to Asian women. They translated their survey into Urdu and Pashto and ran focus groups with Asian women. This, plus the number of women they reached, meant they could analyse the data by different demographic variables.

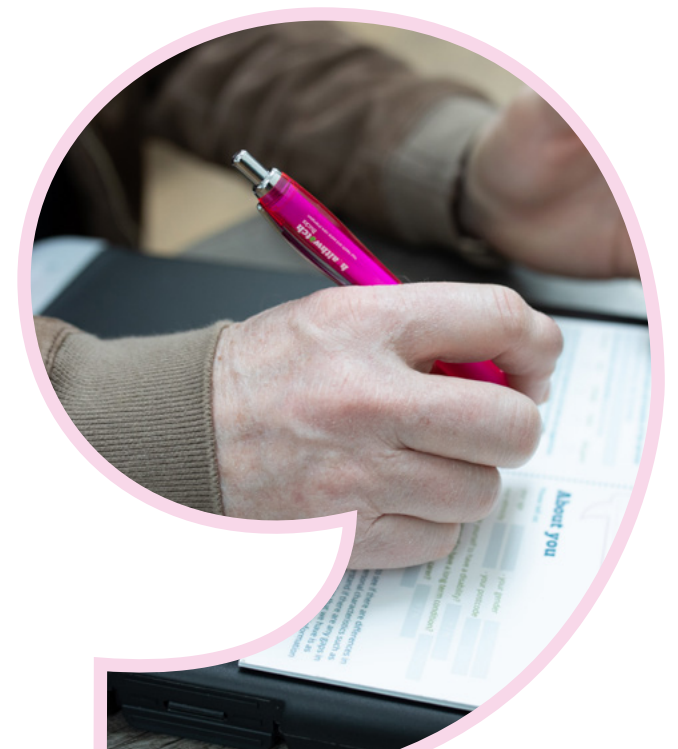
Sue Edwards,
Research and Insight Manager, Healthwatch England.

Enter and View



We relaunched our Enter and View Programme, visiting 10 health and social care services covering mental health support, acute children's services and community hospitals.

We made 61 recommendations in total to two healthcare trusts and these have resulted in tangible action plans and improvements from these providers.



Patient Participation Groups

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) are a way for patients to get involved with their GP practice – helping to represent the community patient voice in decision-making and are an important link between the practice and its patients.

Bucks PPGs have been busy this year with a variety of activities including patient surveys and associated action plans, helping to run digital cafes and I.T. helpdesks, volunteering at vaccination clinics, helping at patient well-being events, producing newsletters and even a patient video on how to use the NHS app.

Following on from a survey carried out in early 2024, we published our report on Bucks Patient Participation Groups in August and have been working with the BOB ICB to implement many of the recommendations.

These include a refresh of our PPG toolkit as well as producing a PPG recruitment guide and supporting video animations. Quarterly PPG network meetings are jointly hosted by Healthwatch Bucks and BOB ICB.

We continue to provide ongoing in person and online support to both PPG patient leads, and GP practice staff as needed.

We host lunchtime webinars for PPG members which are also open to the public. These have covered a variety of topics including Pharmacy First, the Medical Examiners service and Preparing for Winter. Recordings of our webinars are available on our website, and we look forward to introducing more topics in the year to come.

Contact your local GP practice if you would like to join a Patient Participation Group, or would like more information on them.



Volunteering

Our volunteers play a vital and valuable role in helping local people have their say on health and social care. They really are at the heart of what we do.

Their contribution and support helps us to understand what is working well in health and social care and what needs to be improved, so we can make a difference to the way health and social care is delivered for Bucks residents.

This year we benefited from the support of 32 generous volunteers and eight Directors who gave 1484 hours to help us make health and social care better for people in our community.

Our volunteers gave us time which equates to almost a full-time staff member.



Jenny

I've been volunteering with Healthwatch Bucks since 2013, first as a Board Director and then as Chair. I now volunteer in other ways including representation at external meetings and supporting the team with outreach activities.

I enjoy engaging with the highly committed and knowledgeable team of other volunteers and staff and the opportunities offered for reaching out to new communities and voices through other organisations.

I'm proud to be the Healthwatch Bucks' representative on the ongoing Bucks Cancer Lived Experience Partnership – Your Voice Matters.

Su

When I joined Uni, there were multiple options for volunteering. I decided to be a part of this team because everybody was so passionate about what they were doing for Healthwatch.

You have an opportunity to meet so many different people, and you feel quite enriched with the experience yourself.

Health is everything to an individual. So, when we're talking to people about something that is very core to them and telling them that there are ways that we could actually improve their experiences that is quite rewarding.

I helped with the Enter and View programme. The difference that I could make along with the team, it gave me goosebumps. (When I went there and realised that I was doing this for the benefit of society, it was fantastic.)

Mark

I have found doing voluntary work for Healthwatch Bucks invaluable, it gave me some work experience, something to put on my C.V., fitted around my caring commitments, and within a short time a well-paid job.

I had been out of work for several years, my work coach suggested I do some voluntary work. I was very impressed with the Feedback Processing role as it was only for a couple of hours a week at home and would fit around my caring commitments. I was provided with a laptop and training.

My job is to publish feedback that has been left on the Healthwatch Bucks Website about patients experiences at Doctors, Dentists, etc. It is interesting extracting out, storing, and processing data.



Kai Kahembe
Director, Honorary Treasurer

"I joined the Healthwatch Bucks Board as Honorary Treasurer in November 2024. Since joining there has been a period of significant change across the health and social care landscape – developments that have been both dynamic and transformative.

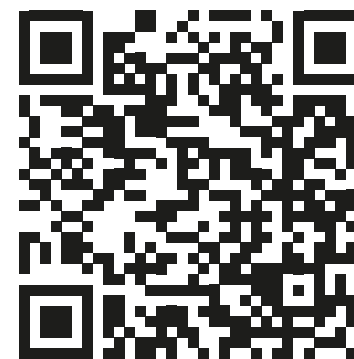
Amid this evolving environment, it has been deeply rewarding to serve on the Healthwatch Board— developing strategy to ensure the voices of our community are not only heard, but acted upon. Supporting accessible, inclusive, and effective health and care services for all remains the heart of our mission, and I'm excited to continue working alongside the dedicated volunteers, staff, and fellow board members to champion our shared values and am optimistic the positive impact we can and will continue to make together."

Do you feel inspired?

Give **Melanie** a call on **01494 974201** or email **volunteering@healthwatchbucks.co.uk** to find out more about volunteering with Healthwatch Bucks.

Our volunteer programme is supported by funding from the Rothschild Foundation, the Anson Charitable Trust and The Clare Foundation.

Scan to find out more:



Paid for projects

In addition to our core Healthwatch projects, we also undertake paid for projects in line with a code of conduct which upholds our independence and transparency.

In October, we gathered feedback on behalf of BHT from people using services at Unit 33, Health on the High Street. We heard 53 voices in total. 42% said that the sign 'Unit 33' did not grab their attention and 36% said that there was no space for private conversations. Now there is a new sign and a private pod at the premises.

We started to collect patient, carer and staff experiences on the Hospital at Home (virtual wards) programme in March. This insight will be used to inform service development for BHT's ongoing evaluation of the programme. The findings and recommendations from this report are published on our website.

Health on the High Street in Friars Shopping Centre, Aylesbury, is a joint healthcare initiative between BHT and Buckinghamshire Council to serve local communities better.



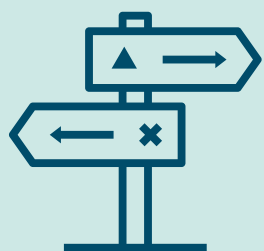
Signposting

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch is here for you.

In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, making a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

The information we gather through our signposting and feedback service helps us build a picture of the key issues affecting Bucks residents' experiences of health and social care.

This information is then shared with the system at meetings including with the Care Quality Commission and with our NHS and Local Authority colleagues. In addition, this year we have developed and delivered signposting training for the Healthwatch network.



Number of
signpostings
in 2024 – 25:

223

Case studies

Priya's* father had chosen to have a do not attempt resuscitation (DNAR) on his medical records. However, following a more recent medical assessment decided that this is no longer what he wanted. We were able to give Priya the information she needed so that her father could get the DNAR removed.

George* needed to attend a hospital appointment but was unable to afford a taxi fare and was not eligible for the Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS). We put George in touch with the Community Transport Hub so that transport arrangements could be arranged for him to attend his appointment.

Yousef* had problems with his electric wheelchair for 3 years and was struggling to get a resolution. We were able to put him in touch with the Wheelchair Service so he was able to get the issues fixed.

Emma* had a baby outside of the UK. The baby and both parents are now permanently back in the UK. We were able to help Emma understand how she could get her baby registered with the local GP surgery as well as organise any relevant baby immunisations that her baby had not yet had.

*These are not the real names of the individuals who contacted Healthwatch Bucks.



Our finances

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	
Funding received from local authority for the provision of Healthwatch	£190,975	Staff Costs	£282,012
Additional Funding – Note 1	£258,081	Operational Costs – Note 3	£108,406
Income brought forward from 2023/24 – Note 2	£18,333	Support and administration	£77,523
Total income	£467,389	Total Expenditure	£467,941
		Net Deficit	£552

Notes:

1. Includes **£58,910** for Independent Health Complaints Advocacy.
2. Income not recognised in 23-24 carried forward into 24-25 for work to be completed.
3. Subcontractor costs of **£106,296** are included in 'Operational Costs'

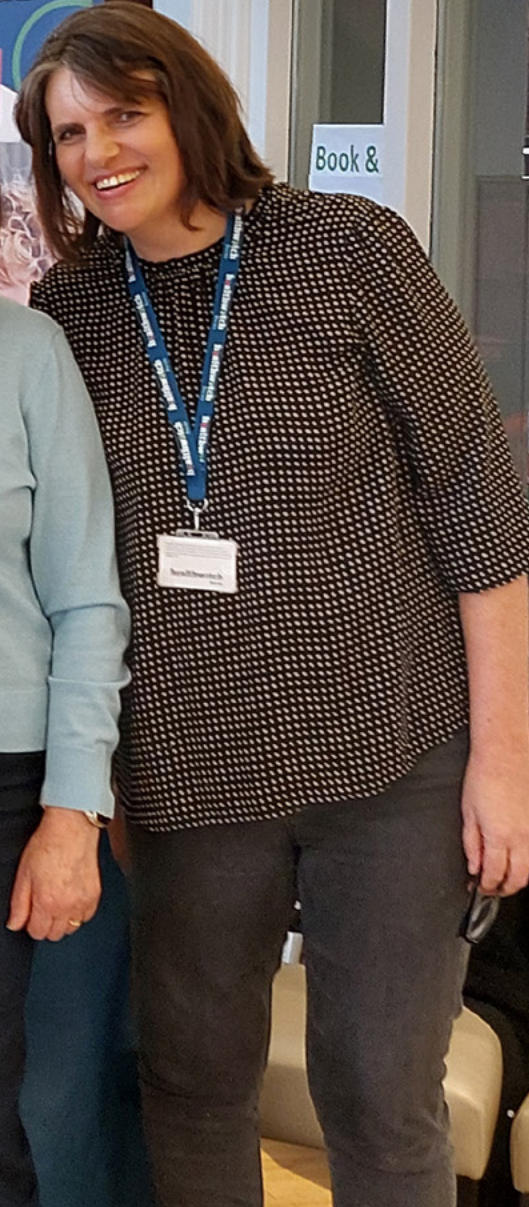
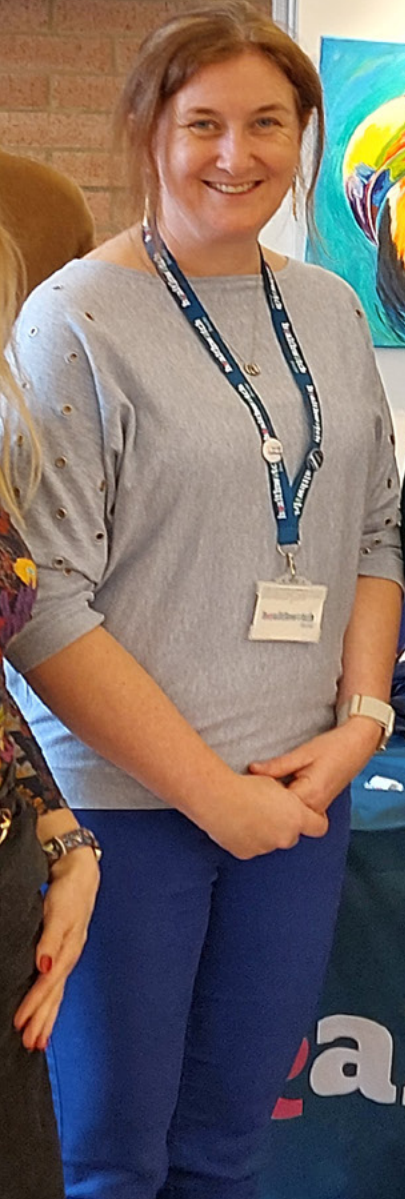
Additional Income includes:

- **£2,600** received from Healthwatch England for signposting training delivery
- **£16,000** received as grant funding for a volunteer coordinator role
- **£115,208** from BOB ICB for PPG support and engagement and health inequalities programme

Welcome to
Marlow Methodist Church
Sharing God's Love

7 Mar 2025

our settings the passwo



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL
SALUS Community Health Initiative

UMP IT UP
A START TO A HEALTHY

essu

healthwatch
Bucks

Have your say

he

ai

Book &

Statutory statements

**Healthwatch Bucks,
PO Box 958, OX1 9ZP**

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

The way we work.

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

Our Healthwatch Board consists of eight members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight, and scrutiny of our activities. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2024-25, the Board held four meetings in public and made decisions on matters such as agreeing our annual priorities and scrutinising and approving our annual/statutory 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 can provide us with insight into their experience of using services. During 2024-25, we have been available by phone, email, provided a web form 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 will publish it on our website and in print.

Responses to recommendations

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

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

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

In our local authority area, for example, we take information to Buckinghamshire Council's Health and Wellbeing Board, the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Development Group and the Buckinghamshire Executive Partnership Delivery Group.

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care system. For example, we attend and contribute to Regional System Quality Committee

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

Enter and View

We have a legal power to visit health and social care services and see them in action. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Local Authorities Regulations 2013 places a duty on health and social care providers to allow Authorised Representatives of Healthwatch to carry out Enter and View visits.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Bucks is represented on the Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board by our Chair, John Meech. Healthwatch Bucks is represented by our Chief Executive, Zoe McIntosh, on the Buckinghamshire Health and Social Care Select Committee as a non-voting member of that Committee.

Healthwatch Bucks is represented on Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership by a trustee of Healthwatch Oxfordshire.

Healthwatch Bucks (via our Chief Executive) also represents Healthwatch Oxfordshire, Healthwatch West Berkshire, Healthwatch Reading and Healthwatch Wokingham on the BOB ICB Population Health and Patient Experience Committee.



Stay in touch

We work all year round on behalf of the people of Bucks. You can keep up with what we're doing on social media, via our website and through our monthly email newsletter.

Healthwatch Bucks, PO Box 958, OX1 9ZP.

 HealthwatchBucks

 @HW_Bucks

 Healthwatch_bucks

If you need help, have a query about a health or social care service or want support with making a complaint, you can contact us by email, on the phone or by post.

 www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk

 01494 324 832

 info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk