

The value of listening

Healthwatch Bromley
Annual Report 2025-2026



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Message from our Chair

I am pleased to introduce the Healthwatch Bromley Annual Report for 2025 – 2026, on its great range of work as the independent champion of Bromley health and care service users, even though under threat of abolition. In June we heard the shattering news that the Health Secretary was to abolish all local and national Healthwatch organisations, bringing some of their functions under a new directorate in the Department of Health, devolving others to local authorities. This change requires legislation, as prefigured in the recent King’s Speech. At the time of writing, eleven months after the announcement, few details are yet available; this delay and uncertainty is having a negative and unfair impact on HWB staff and volunteers.

Throughout this year HWB had 2.2 full time equivalent staff, and was fortunate to retain the same valuable, experienced and committed people. This low level of staffing means we use our much appreciated volunteers, including committee members, to deliver much of our contracted work. HWB continued to articulate the voices of Bromley residents across the borough, making sure they were heard and considered by those who provide, commission and monitor local health and care services. Highlights of our work included:

- Report on the experiences of housebound people with long term conditions, based on the intensive investigation done last year. ICB colleagues recently confirmed that our report strongly influenced the development of a new SELICB project focusing on this vulnerable group.
- Major engagement exercise with patients of the Chartwell ward at the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH), their families and concerned professionals, responding to local public disquiet about proposals by King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT) to change their delivery of inpatient cancer care.
- Examination of and report on Bromley drug and alcohol services, and the views and experiences of users, their families/carers and health professionals, barriers to access and services’ impact on users’ health.
- Study of and report on patients’ experiences of NHS maternity services provided by KCHFT, which has agreed a seven-point action plan responding to each of the recommendations made in HWB’s report.
- Representation on a plethora of partnerships, boards and committees, to share intelligence and influence improvements in and continuity of care, at Bromley, SEL and regional meetings. Attendance at events such as the official opening of the Bromley Health and Wellbeing Centre.

We have continued to collect detailed information on Bromley residents’ experiences of health and care, led by our Patient Experience Officer and published quarterly, though the volume of this work was reduced slightly in quarters three and four to allow the detailed work noted above. We completed eight ‘Enter and View’ (E&V) studies of local health and care services, mainly nursing and care homes. We shared reports and recommendations with providers, most of whom responded positively and detailed how they would follow the recommendations, which we trust will improve....

Message from our Chair

residents' experiences. We provided information and advice to 82 residents on access to and choice of health and care services.

We work closely with our neighbour Healthwatch Lewisham and have good relationships with local Healthwatch in other South East London boroughs. This year, due to the pending structural changes, our committee members and staff have had greater contact with other local Healthwatch across London and nationwide.

HWB has six active committee members who bring local and professional knowledge and experience to planning, research, reporting, local engagement, E&V, meetings and events. This year we recruited a new member with current NHS experience.

In 2026 – 2027, probably our last year, we hope to focus further on digital aspects of health and care, already started this year, also sexual and mental health services available to Bromley residents. You will find further information about all the above in this report. We are immensely grateful to HWB staff and volunteers for their commitment and dedicated work, particularly in the context of threatened abolition.

Helen Norris

Chair, Healthwatch Bromley

About Us

Healthwatch Bromley 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.

Our vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



Our mission

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



Our values are:

- **Listening** to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- **Including** everyone in the conversation – especially those whose voices are heard least often.
- **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.

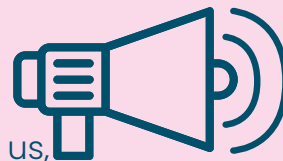


Year in Review

Reaching out

2,474 people

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.



82 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as accessing mental health services and managing the cost-of-living crisis.

Making a difference to care

We published

15 reports

about the improvements people would like to see in health and social care services. Our most widely read report was

Access to health and social care services for housebound people who have a long-term condition



Health and social care that works for you

Over the year, we were lucky to have

14 volunteers and 3 interns who donated

1,835 hours to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2025-2026 we received

£82,000 which is the same as the previous year.

We have

3 staff who work 2.2 full time equivalent hours.



How we've made a difference this year

Spring



We organised and carried out 55 face-to-face patient engagement visits at community events, wellbeing cafes, hospitals, health hubs and GP practices.



We sent responses to the following 2024 – 2025 Quality Accounts – King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust, St Christopher's Hospice, and Bromley Healthcare.

Summer



We promoted various external opportunities, including Support for people with autism aged 16+, Singing for Hypertension and Bromley Y Emotional Wellbeing webinars.



We finalised our substance use survey questionnaires with Change Grow Live and London Borough of Bromley.

Autumn



We prioritised gathering feedback on The Chartwell Trust, due to the urgency, therefore the Patient Experience Report targets were not our main focus.



We conducted two Enter & View visits, at High View Care Services (December) and Oak Lodge Care Home (November).

Winter



We published the Healthwatch Bromley Report: Service Users views on The Chartwell Unit – Winter 2025.



Over the past six months we received 30 signposting enquiries and spent approximately 15 hours responding to them.



Listening to your experiences

Services cannot make improvements without hearing your views. That is why, over the last year, we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and pass on feedback to providers and commissioners to help support better service delivery.

Patient Experience Programme

Through our Patient Experience Programme (PEP), we hear about the experiences of residents and people who have used health and care services in our borough.

They tell us what is working well and what could be improved, allowing us to share local issues with decision makers who have the power to make changes.

Every three months we produce a report to raise awareness of patient experience and suggest how services could be improved.

Methodology



Carrying out engagement at local community hotspots such as GP practices, hospitals and libraries.



Encouraging conversations on social media and gathering online reviews.



Providing promotional materials and surveys in accessible formats.



Training volunteers to support engagement across the borough, allowing us to reach a wider range of people and communities.

Healthwatch independence helps people trust our organisation and give honest feedback which they might not always share directly with local services.

Between April 2025 – March 2026, we reached out to faith groups, community centres and support groups across Bromley to hear voices of residents who might not otherwise be heard.

How we use the reports

Our local Healthwatch has representation across a wide range of meetings, boards and committees across the borough, where we publicise the findings of PEP reports.

Additional Deep Dives

PEP reports function as a standardised general overview of what Bromley residents have told us within the last three months. Additional deep dives relating to the different sections can be requested and are dependent on additional capacity and resource provision.

Patient Experience Programme continued.....

Yearly Comparison

To judge whether experiences of health and care services are improving we compare our data throughout the year. The chart below highlights the percentages of positive feedback each service has received.

Service Type	Q1 (Apr-Jun 25)	Q2 (Jul-Sep 26)	Q3 & Q4 * (Oct 25 – Mar 26)
GP	79%	60%	61%
Hospital	71%	84%	81%
Dentist	72%	81%	81%
Pharmacy	83%	56%	71%
Optician	60%	100%	100%

What does this tell us?

- Feedback from Hospital services was generally positive,
- Positive experience of GP services saw a decrease of 19% from Q1 to Q2 and this was maintained for Q2-Q4.
- Positive experiences of dental and optician services increased across the year
- Experience of pharmacy services changed throughout the year, with a significant drop in 'positives' in Q2 but a later resurgence.

Changes to the Patient Experience Report

We made some small changes to how we report patient experience last year. Due to capacity and staffing we combined Q3 and Q4 data to produce one report to cover both quarters.

In addition, we have begun asking people in more detail about their experience of using the NHS app and MyChart, with the aim of producing a short report about what's working well and what could be improved for Bromley residents.

Patient Experience Programme continued.....

GP Services

So that we can understand ongoing or emerging issues in the borough we compare the top positive and negative issues throughout the year. We have highlighted in dark pink or bright green any issues which have arisen in at least three quarters. The same issue can be a top positive and a top negative because of different patients' experiences of services.

Positive

Q1	Q2	Q3 & Q4
Quality of treatment	Staff attitudes	Staff attitudes
Appointment availability	Quality of treatment	Quality of treatment
Getting through on the telephone	Appointment availability	Quality of appointment – telephone consultation
Staff attitudes	Getting through on the telephone	Online consultation (app/form)
Online consultation (app/form)	Treatment and care (experience)	Appointment availability

Negative

Q1	Q2	Q3 & Q4
Appointment availability	Appointment availability	Appointment availability
Getting through on the phone	Getting through on the phone	Getting through on the phone
Quality of treatment	Staff attitudes	Quality of treatment
Online consultation (app/form)	Management of service	Online consultation (app/form)
Staff attitudes	Quality of treatment	Communication with patient (treatment explanation, verbal advice)

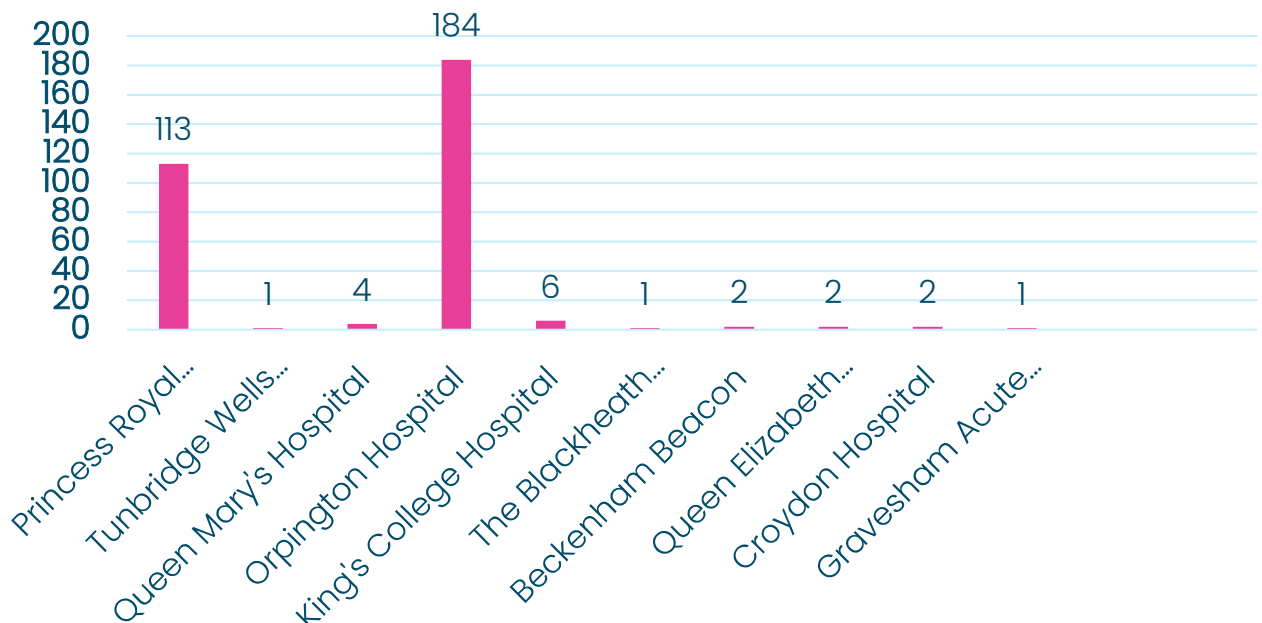
Reviewed Hospitals – Q3 and Q4

Bromley residents access different hospitals depending on factors such as choice, locality and specialist requirements. During the last six months we heard about patients’ experiences at:

Hospital	Provider
Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH)	King’s College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Orpington Hospital	
King’s College Hospital Denmark Hill	
Queen Mary’s Hospital	
Beckenham Beacon	
Tunbridge Wells Hospital	Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust
Croydon Hospital	Croydon Health Services NHS Trust
The Blackheath Hospital	Circle Health Group
Gravesham Acute Care Centre	Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust

Between October 2025 and March 2026, the PRUH and Orpington received the most reviews. Healthwatch Bromley visits both sites weekly. Additional patient experiences were collected through face-to-face engagements and online reviews.

Hospital by number of reviews



What patients told us..

"The online app is quite useful once you are used to it."

"Lots of access to support services whilst on the ward."

"Brilliant practice. Doctors are excellent and very empathetic and professional. Reception and admin staff very helpful."

"Fantastic hospital - staff are very helpful Very clean and tidy."

"Very quick to get appointments, staff are great, no complaints."

"Friendly knowledgeable staff, lots of care when on the ward."

"Online consultation is poor,, and it is impersonal. No physical contact with the GPs."

"Car parking for disabled badge holders is limited."

"We're still registered here, but I've given up - we now pay for private GPs if we need to see someone."

"Everything seems okay except waiting times, too many patients and not enough staff."

"Very poor service for housebound patients."

"Terrible pharmacy service. Very long waits. Disorganised."

Deep Dive One : Maternity Services

The maternity services project began in July 2025 and was developed in partnership with key stakeholders. We also worked closely with NHS South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB) colleagues to identify suitable survey questions for service users and their carers.

Focusing primarily on King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT) service users, the project aimed to gather evidence and feedback on access to maternity services, to help bridge gaps and elevate the standard of maternity delivery to meet evolving needs.

Participants

The project focused on the perspectives of service users, recognising their invaluable insights into service delivery. We heard from 242 people about their experiences. Of these:

- 82% shared feedback about maternity services at the Princess Royal University Hospital
- 239 identified as women (including trans women)
- 53% were aged between 25 - 34 years
- The majority (60%), was White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
- 62% were on maternity leave
- 27% lived in the Bromley Town Ward, 19% in Orpington.

Findings and Recommendations

Whilst the majority (92%) of survey respondents rated their overall experience as positive, we made seven recommendations to continue to improve service user experience.

Recommendations include:

- Strengthen communication with service users throughout maternity care
- Improve communication and information sharing between maternity and primary care services
- Provide clear information about maternity tests, appointments and vaccinations
- Provide timely information about waiting times and discharge processes
- Improve maternity facilities and the hospital environment
- Improve patient catering within maternity services
- Strengthen workforce planning within maternity services.

The full report can be found on our website, along with responses from the key stakeholder. We will conduct a follow-up exercise in six months to identify which recommendations have been implemented to support the local community.

Deep Dive Two: Bromley Drug and Alcohol Services – views and experiences of users

Healthwatch Bromley examined the current, local landscape of substance misuse services, and the experiences and views of service users, as well as those of their families/carers and healthcare professionals.

The project collected evidence and insights about personal experiences of accessing drug and alcohol support, the impact of services on users' health and wellbeing, potential barriers to accessing services and areas for improvement within the current system.

Aligned with the objectives of Bromley's Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (CDAP), we engaged with service users, families/carers, and professionals directly through surveys and focus groups.

Participants

We heard from 43 people about their experiences; 28 were service users, 13 health professionals and two were friends and family of service users. Of the 28 service users:

- 54% identified as female, 45% as male
- 29% were aged between 45 – 54 years, only 4% between 75-84
- Most (82%), were White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
- 40% were in paid employment, 25% not in employment/ not actively seeking work or retired
- 29% considered themselves to have a long-term health condition and 7% were disabled
- More respondents live in Bromley Town than any other ward.

Findings and Recommendations

People accessing drug and alcohol support services often engage with a range of interventions as part of their recovery journey. Their experiences provide valuable insight into what feels most helpful and meaningful in practice. The feedback collected highlights clear themes around the types of services that worked well for them, illustrating the importance of personalised support, peer connection and integrated approaches in promoting stability and ongoing recovery.

Recommendations include:

- Strengthen cross sector coordination
- Enhance communication and referral feedback
- Review aftercare and transition pathways
- Expand outreach and awareness
- Support workforce development and resilience

The full report can be found on our website, along with responses from the key stakeholder. We will conduct a follow-up exercise in six months to identify which recommendations have been implemented to support the local community.

Deep Dive Three: Service Users' Views on the Chartwell Unit

In September 2025, following an internal review of inpatient cancer care provided on the Chartwell ward, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust began developing proposals to change their delivery of inpatient cancer care.

These new proposals would mean that blood cancer (haemato-oncology) inpatients currently cared for on the Chartwell ward in Orpington would instead be treated at KCH, Denmark Hill site in Camberwell, a specialist centre for haematological conditions.

The Chartwell Cancer Trust is a charity which works to raise funds for cancer patients in South London, North Kent and East Surrey. It launched a petition against King's proposals, claiming that relocating the care of haemato-oncology patients away from the PRUH would raise extra travel and cost burdens for patients and their families.

At the London Borough of Bromley (LBB) Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting in September 2025, concerns were raised about the lack of communication about these changes and lack of patient engagement.

A special committee meeting was held in November 2025 specifically to discuss these proposed changes, and they were discussed again as an agenda item at the committee's January 2026 meeting. At the time of writing there is at least one more meeting planned.

Healthwatch Bromley had discussions with all groups and undertook a major engagement exercise with patients, families and professionals. The King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust also carried out patient engagement activities across the Chartwell Unit, including outpatients, from October to December 2025. The main focus of the engagement exercise was to examine the experiences of Chartwell patients. For comparison, some data was collected about patient experiences at KCH, Denmark Hill, but only a small volume due to time constraints.

Findings and Recommendations

We asked participants to rate their overall experience of the service they received on a scale of 1-5; where 1 = Very Poor and 5 = Very Good. 162 of the 235 participants rated their overall experience as 'Very Good' and 54 as 'Good'.

Recommendations include:

- A review of PRUH parking usage should be carried out (including the 41 allocated spaces for electric cars.)
- Options to make the journey to Denmark Hill easier for patients and visitors should be considered, including:
 - Introduction of a shuttle service between the two sites
 - Giving clear information to patients who may be eligible for financial assistance for travel, including the criteria for offer of refunds.

The full report can be found on our website, along with responses from the key stakeholder. We will conduct a follow-up exercise in six months to identify which recommendations have been implemented to support the local community.

Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE)

PLACE assessments provide motivation for improvement and a clear message, direct from patients, about how the environment or services could improve.

The assessments involve local residents – called patient assessors – going into hospitals, as part of a team, to assess how the environment supports the provision of clinical care, assessing aspects like privacy, food, cleanliness, general building maintenance and the extent to which the environment can support the care of people with dementia or a long-term condition (LTC).

“I believe Healthwatch Bromley plays an important role in the Oxleas PLACE assessments, as we meet regularly with people in the community and hear about their experiences and those of family members in local health care settings. Views of patients in mental health settings are often underrepresented, so these PLACE assessments allow us to represent their views, and use our experience to suggest improvements and changes to wards, activity rooms and communal areas. During this assessment we visited the wards at Green Parks, talked to staff including an occupational therapist and sampled the food. We were given time to provide constructive feedback on how to make these environments work best for the patients who spend time in them.” **HWB Staff Member**

“We joined 2 Oxleas staff members and another person with lived experience to inspect the physical environment and food patients experience when resident on the wards at Green Parks. This was mainly an observational visit but also included conversations with patients. Our findings were then reported against a national framework with recommendations for improvements over the next 12 months. The Oxleas team was very helpful answering any queries, and any urgent issues identified during the visit were escalated immediately.” **HWB Committee member**





Hearing from all communities

Over the past year, we have worked hard to engage people from all communities in Bromley. We believe it is important to reach the communities we hear from least often to gather their feedback, publicise their views and experiences and make sure that local services can change to meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Contacting local organisations and establishing new relationships within the community, e.g. children and family centres, faith groups and wellbeing cafes.
- Sharing our findings with local council and NHS leaders, third sector organisations and the South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB)

Three ways we have made a difference in the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences are not often heard about.

1. Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of hearing and using local people's views and experiences to help improve care for everyone.

We enabled people to share their feedback and encouraged them to participate in several local forums, including:

- Bromley Independent Living Forum, Bromley X by X
- Have Your Say On Wheelchair Service, NHS
- One Bromley health and care partners service development forum for Bromley residents with multiple long-term health conditions.



2. Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

It is important for services to see the bigger picture. Hearing about real, individual experiences and their impact on people's lives provides them with a better understanding of the problems.

We encourage Bromley residents to increase their confidence and ability to influence the local health and care system. We continue to develop our Patient Experience Programme with the support of local partners and our advisory committee. We carried out 346 engagement visits (partnership, patient engagement, committee meetings and representation).



3. Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with services to raise issues and bring about change.

We carried out eight Enter and View (E&V) visits, making recommendations based on our observations and discussions with service users, family members, staff and management. We take a partnership approach with providers. We share draft reports before publication, include providers' responses, and follow up each one to check progress and offer support to meet our recommendations.



A summary of other outcomes we achieved this year is included in the Statutory Statements section at the end of this report.

Enter and View Programme

One of our statutory functions is to carry out Enter and View (E&V) visits to health and social care services in the borough.

The Health and Social Care Act (2012) mandates local Healthwatch Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies.

E&V visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of best practice from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.



We carried out eight E & V visits

We developed our methods, to ensure safety and infection control, and liaised with our colleagues at Bromley Council and our committee members to identify health and social care services suitable for the programme. We visited the following:

- High View Care Services
- Oak Lodge Care Home
- Angelina Care Services
- Regency Court
- Beechmore Court
- Elmstead Care Home
- The Sloane Nursing Home
- Park Avenue Care Home



What our Authorised Representatives had to say

Our staff and volunteers are required to undertake appropriate training and DBS checks to become Enter and View Authorised Representatives (ARs). The main aim of these visits is to allow our team to obtain feedback direct from service users and their families, staff and management to obtain a full picture of the facility and produce a comprehensive report with recommendations for improvement.



“I really enjoy doing Enter and View visits as they give us the opportunity to experience the atmosphere and culture of care homes and other social care settings firsthand. We have the opportunity to engage with staff members, residents and their families and the conversations that we have with them add depth to the written feedback forms we receive.

It is encouraging to observe those services which successfully put the residents at the heart of what they do and to see how staff interact with them in a friendly and genuine manner.

Some services also manage to adapt and make small changes to the interior or gardens in order to enable residents to feel safe and at home in their environment. Examples include bedroom doors that are redecorated to look like front doors and a corridor that was transformed to look like a high street complete with hairdressers and post office! Staff, in the main, are receptive to the feedback we give and appreciate our independent role representing the voices of residents and their families..”

HWB Patient Experience Officer



“Leading on Enter and View visits for Healthwatch Bromley has given me valuable insight into the experiences of people receiving care and support across local care homes, nursing homes and specialist services, including a neurological rehabilitation centre. Through speaking with residents, patients, relatives and staff, I have been able to gather meaningful feedback that highlights both positive practice and opportunities for improvement. I have particularly valued the opportunity to amplify people’s voices and help contribute towards improvements in the quality, dignity and compassion of care provided across Bromley’s health and social care services.”

HWB Projects Officer

Reporting our findings

Each service provider is required to respond to a Healthwatch E&V report and its recommendations within 20 days of receiving the report (exceptionally, up to 30). They should describe actions to be taken, or reasons for no action. An example is described below. Responses are published with reports on our website.



High View Care Services, December 2025

High View Care Services is a community-based neuro-rehabilitation provider supporting adults between the ages of 18–65 with acquired brain injuries, neurological conditions, and co-occurring needs (mental health, substance misuse, physical recovery, and complex social backgrounds).

Finding: The house number is written in words rather than numerals, which makes it hard to identify from the street.

Recommendation: We recommend that the house number is also displayed in numerals to make the property easier to identify

Response: A new porch will be installed in the next couple of months, and the house number will be in numerals and not written words.

Oak Lodge Care Home

Oak Lodge Care Home is situated in Beckenham. With a capacity of 22 beds, the home is split across two floors and provides a range of respite care, long-term residential care and residential dementia care. It is privately own and run by Oak Lodge Care Home Ltd.

Finding: No handrails in downstairs corridor.

Recommendation: We recommend provision of handrails downstairs.

Response: This is a positive and constructive recommendation. The provision of handrails downstairs would further enhance safety by offering additional support and stability for residents, particularly those with reduced mobility. This improvement would help promote confidence, independence, and overall wellbeing while moving around the environment – May 2026.



Enter and View Visits 2025 – 2026

Name	Type of service	Recommendations
High View Care Services	A community-based neuro-rehabilitation provider supporting adults between the ages of 18-65 with acquired brain injuries	Based on the analysis of feedback obtained, we are impressed with the service and only have one minor recommendation to make.
Oak Lodge Care Home	A care home situated in Beckenham, with a capacity of 22 beds.	17 recommendations made and we received a formal response from the registered manager.
Angelina Care Services	Located in Penge, the home provides 24-hour residential care for adults (18+) diagnosed with mental health conditions.	Eight recommendations made. We are waiting for a formal response from the registered manager.
Regency Court	An extra care housing scheme managed by Anchor Limited, close to Bromley Common. There are 60 flats, and referrals are through the London Borough of Bromley.	18 recommendations made. We are waiting for a formal response from the registered manager
Beechmore Court	Situated in Bickley, the 37-bed residential care home is operated by Cedarmore Housing Association, a not-for-profit organisation with a Christian ethos.	Three recommendations were made and we received a formal response from the registered manager.
Elmstead Care Home	In Chislehurst, the home is operated by Bupa UK. It is a 40-bed residential care home split across three households.	Seven recommendations were made and we received a formal response from the registered manager.
The Sloane Nursing Home	Located in Beckenham, It is one of five homes operated by Mills Family Ltd. The 36-bed nursing home provides nursing and palliative care.	12 recommendations were made and we received a formal response from the registered manager.
Park Avenue Care Home	Owned by Excel Care, and situated in Bromley, the home has a capacity of 51 beds and provides a range of respite and long-term residential care.	Four recommendations were made and we received a formal response from the registered manager.



Advice and Information

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.

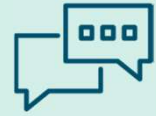
This year we've helped people by:

- Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need, including registering with a GP practice
- Supporting people to look after their health and wellbeing.

Listening to people's issues and providing appropriate support

Here are some examples of how we helped residents with queries last year.

It is important that we listen carefully to people's queries and provide appropriate information and signposting.



We took a call from a resident who was 31 weeks pregnant and wishing to get the whooping cough vaccine before 33 weeks. She was unsure where to go for this and had been given unclear instructions.

One of our team members spoke to the South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB) Vaccinations Programme team who kindly provided these useful details for our enquirer: There is a walk-in service every Thursday from 10.30-3.30 or she can contact her GP who can provide the vaccination. The Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) team is working on an appointments system which will make arrangements much easier.



How to make a complaint

Sometimes a complaint can be exhausting, mentally and physically. Having an advocate means someone is there to support you.



A resident got in touch regarding an email she had sent to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in 2025, stating that there had been no change in their child's behaviour and needs. The child remains out of mainstream education and receiving home tutoring arranged by the school, having been on the CAMHS waiting list for almost a year. The resident requested urgent allocation to a CAMHS practitioner. They had received no response to the original email and wanted to escalate further.

Our team gave them the details of how to raise a complaint with the service, and information on Advocacy for All (AfA), in case they wanted further complaint support. We also recommended that they call us back about any further issues or with any questions.



Responding to residents' queries

We provide information and signpost residents to local services and community organisations. People can access advice and information on line, by phone or face-to-face.



A Bromley resident wanted to know South East London Integrated Care Board's commissioning policy for hybrid closed loop technology for adults with Type 1 Diabetes. Their child had been told by a consultant at Beckenham Beacon that he is eligible for technology to manage his diabetes, but as there is a five year roll out they added his name to the waiting list. They were told that if in the meantime the family was to seek help privately, the child would be removed from the list and never again be eligible. The parent called Healthwatch Bromley to check if this information was correct.

Our team provided the following information and signposting:

- South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB) contact details and SEL ICB Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) phone numbers
- Beckenham Beacon PALS phone numbers
- Advice on how and where to obtain a copy of both services' policies to check and find out about implications for waiting list position if privately funded.

We also gave them the details for Advocacy for All (AfA) – in case they wished to complain with the help of Bromley's independent health complaints advocacy (IHCA), though this is a protracted process.

We recommended that they call us back, should they face further issues or have any questions.



Prioritising patient safety

It's essential that people have access to care and that services make any appropriate adjustments to ensure patient safety.



We spoke to a resident ringing on behalf of his wife, who was having issues with changes to her usual brands of medication. She was confused about different brands, which had possibly resulted in a urinary tract infection (UTI) and could have led to her taking the wrong drugs.

The husband had complained to their local pharmacist about the frequent brand changes. They had been trying to get the usual brands but this had not always been possible. All the pharmacist could do was print out a prescription and try to get the medication from another pharmacy.

We spoke to the South East London (SEL) Pharmacy Lead, who advised that the resident's medication be reviewed because the specific capsule she wanted was no longer available. The resident also planned to escalate this as a national problem with medication. There is an issue with different medications looking the same (e.g. the colour/s or particular shape/s). When taking them, if there is no consistency of appearance this is very confusing for some residents, particularly those with dementia, as they are not easy to identify.





Volunteering

HWB is supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of what we do. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we are able to understand what is working well and what needs improving.

This year our volunteers:

- Carried out Enter and View (E&V) visits
- Engaged directly with the local community at events and meetings
- Supported communities to share their experiences of accessing health and social care services in the Patient Experience Programme
- Reviewed and commented on service specifications
- Acted as HWB representatives at meetings with local partners
- Supported data analysis and writing of research project reports
- Developed our social media presence, including a bi-monthly newsletter.

Volunteering



“Volunteering with Healthwatch Bromley and Lewisham has given me a clearer understanding of how people across the borough experience their local health and care services. Hearing service users speak openly about their challenges and expectations has shown me how important it is for their voices to be recognised and reflected in service improvement. These conversations have helped me appreciate the impact that small changes can make when they are informed by real experiences.”



“I am a new volunteer...I have a background in journalism and assist with writing and editing some of their quarterly newsletters, help with proofreading reports and other communications, and enter anonymous patient response details onto the database.”

I have learnt more about how the NHS works both locally and nationally and have picked up new skills including how to create newsletters using a platform called Mailchimp.

I recently took part in an Enter & View visit, which was interesting to be part of. I have found everyone at Healthwatch so passionate about what they do, striving to improve services, patient care and experience.”



Volunteering



“Working with both Healthwatch Bromley and Healthwatch Lewisham was a unique, very valuable, and enriching experience. The engagements encouraged me to step outside my comfort zone and converse with patients and community members while also contributing to the improvement of public health and social care services. I was continuously inspired by the team's commitment to amplifying individuals' voices and creating positive change. It was refreshing to see that sense of community within the office as well.”

As an international citizen, my knowledge of the public healthcare system in the UK was limited, but this experience inspired me to keep myself educated on social issues beyond my own country. Working with Healthwatch allowed me to explore different London boroughs, connect with diverse communities, and see firsthand the positive impact that intentional advocacy can have. The work Healthwatch does is crucial, and it is driven by a very capable team that consistently goes above and beyond to serve the public. Thank you for such a wonderful experience!”

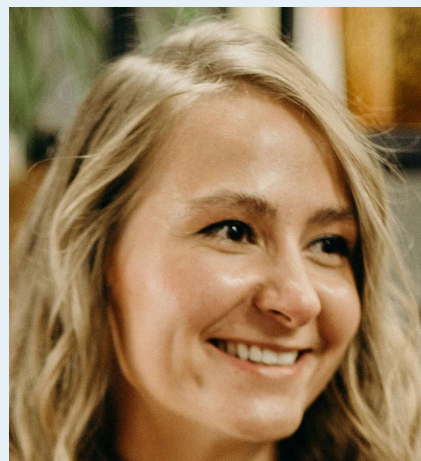


Volunteering



"My experience at Healthwatch Bromley was truly unforgettable. As a psychology student from the United States, I had the opportunity to learn about a different healthcare system and gain valuable insight into how it operates. I was given opportunities to work on projects related to psychology, allowing me to develop skills and experience that will support my future career.


One of my key responsibilities was creating Healthwatch Bromley's quarterly report using data gathered from patient experience surveys. This enabled me to strengthen my data analysis, reporting, and communication skills while helping to ensure that patient voices were accurately represented. The team I worked with was incredibly supportive and genuinely passionate about Healthwatch's mission and the impact it has on the community. Through this experience, I gained greater confidence in engaging with patients and members of the public, as well as applying data to inform meaningful insights. I am extremely grateful to the entire team for making my placement such a rewarding experience."



Do you feel inspired?

We are always on the lookout for new volunteers, so please get in touch today.

 www.healthwatchbromley.co.uk/volunteer

 **0203 886 0752**

 info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk



Finance and future priorities

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	£82,000	Expenditure on pay	£66542
Additional income	£0	Non-pay expenditure	£3458
		Office and management fees	£12,000
Total income	£82,000	Total expenditure	£82,000

*These figures are unaudited.

Finance and future priorities

Integrated Care System (ICS) funding

Healthwatch Lambeth and Healthwatch Greenwich receive funding from our Integrated Care System (ICS) to support South-East London Healthwatch representation at this level.

Purpose of ICS funding	Amount
Participation and Involvement in SEL ICB governance meetings (x13)	£1,755
Producing the South East London Quarterly Insight report	£810
Total income	£2565

Next steps

Over the next year, we will continue to engage with people across the London Borough of Bromley, especially under-represented groups, and pass on their views and experiences of health and social care services to those with the power to make positive changes.

We will address the issues which concern residents the most, including access to GP appointments, waiting times and referrals.

We will work with partners and our local Integrated Care System (ICS) to help develop an NHS culture where, at every level, staff listen to and learn from patients, to make care better.

Our top three priorities for 2026–2027 are:

1. Mental Health
2. Sexual Health
3. Digital Inclusion



Statutory Statements

**During this year, Healthwatch Bromley operated from
The Albany, London SE8 4AG**

Contract holding organisation:

**Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC), 45 St
Mary's Road, London E5 5RG**

**Healthwatch Bromley 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 Committee consists of six local volunteer members who provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. They take decisions about priority areas of work that reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. In 2025 – 2026 the Committee met six times and decided on matters such as quality account responses, service specifications, Enter and View, patient engagement, representation and research projects. We involve local people and partners in deciding our work priorities.

Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences

We use a wide range of approaches to give as many people as possible the opportunity to provide us with insight into their experiences of using services. During 2025 – 2026 we have been available by phone and email, provided a webform on our website and through social media, and attended many meetings of community groups and forums. We make this annual report available as widely as possible, by publishing it on our website and social media platforms and distributing it to local partners.

Responses to recommendations

There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England, so no resulting reviews or investigations.

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

We pass on the insight and experiences shared with us to people who can make decisions about health and care services. We take information to a broad range of governance meetings across Bromley.

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers in the South East London Integrated Care System (SEL ICS). SEL Healthwatch organisations produce a joint report of activities, which is shared widely. In addition, we provide updates on Healthwatch activity to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Engagement Assurance Committee and to the System and Concerns Group. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Representation

We attended many key strategic and operational meetings in 2025–2026 where we represented the voices of Bromley residents, encouraged public involvement and shared our intelligence.

Examples of meetings where we presented the patient voice:

- Bromley Health and Wellbeing Centre Project Group
- Bromley Healthcare – Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG)
- Bromley Healthcare / One Bromley – South East London (SEL) Engagement Practitioners Network Meeting
- Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB)
- Bromley Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB)
- Bromley Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee
- Bromley Primary Care Oversight Group
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Group (JSNA)
- King’s College Hospital Patient Experience Committee
- King’s College Hospital Mental Health Advisory Group
- One Bromley Communication and Engagement Sub-Group
- One Bromley Local Care Partnership Board
- Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust and SEL Healthwatch services
- Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Steering Group
- SEL Chief Officers Healthwatch services
- SEL Women’s and Girls’ Health Network



Appendix



Photo: Healthwatch Bromley

Demographics – PE Programme

Gender	No of Reviews
Man (including trans man)	331
Woman (including trans woman)	990
Non- binary	1
Other	
Prefer not to say	424

Age	No of Reviews
Under 18	11
18-24	31
25-34	192
35-44	187
45-54	100
55-64	174
65-74	232
75-84	290
85+	138
Prefer not to say	211
Not provided	

Ethnicity	No of Reviews
British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish / Welsh	1,033
Irish	12
Gypsy/Roma/Irish Traveller	2
Any other white background	57
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	16
Indian	12
Pakistani	5
Any other Asian background/Asian British background	43
Asian and White	2
African	45
Caribbean	21
Any other Black / Black British background	34
Black African and White	2
Black Caribbean and White	2
Arab	4
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic group	11
Any other ethnic group	9
Prefer not to say/ do not answer	222

Demographics – PE Programme

Sexual Orientation	No of Reviews
Asexual	6
Bisexual	16
Gay man	2
Heterosexual (straight)	1,126
Lesbian / Gay woman	5
Pansexual	4
Prefer to self-describe	6
Not known	1
Prefer not to say/ do not answer	333

Long-term condition	No of Reviews
Yes	413
No	836
Not known	12
Prefer not to say/ do not answer	274

Unpaid Carer	No of Reviews
Yes	98
No	989
Prefer not to say/ do not answer	427

Employment status	No of Reviews
In unpaid voluntary work only	28
Not in Employment & Unable to Work	71
Not in Employment / not actively seeking work – retired	561
Not in Employment (seeking work)	25
Not in Employment (student)	23
Paid: 16 or more hours/week	267
Paid: Less than 16 hours/week	40
On maternity leave	79
Prefer not to say/ do not answer	652

Disability	No of Reviews
Yes	243
No	899
Not known	12
Prefer not to say/ do not answer	273

Demographics – PE Programme

Religion	No of Reviews
Buddhist	8
Christian	679
Hindu	28
Sikh	4
Jewish	10
Muslim	37
Spiritualist	12
Other religion	244
No religion	200
Prefer not to say/ do not answer	320

Pregnancy	No of Reviews
Currently pregnant	76
Currently breastfeeding	84
Given birth in last 26 wks	48
Not known	33
Not relevant	816
No	33
Prefer not to say/ do not answer	655

Area of the borough (Ward)	No of Reviews
Beckenham Town & Copers Cope	103
Bickley & Sundridge	26
Biggin Hill	34
Bromley Common & Holwood	143
Bromley Town	113
Chelsfield	20
Chislehurst	37
Clock House	6
Crystal Palace & Anerley	20
Darwin	10
Farnborough & Crofton	27
Hayes & Coney Hall	86
Kelsey & Eden Park	1
Mottingham	10
Orpington	263
Penge & Cator	51
Petts Wood & Knoll	33
Plaistow	6
Shortlands & Park Langley	7
St Mary Cray	37
St Paul's Cray	37
West Wickham	37
Out Of Borough	136
Prefer not to say/ do not answer	224



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