

# Making a real difference together

Healthwatch North Tyneside  
**Annual Report 2025 – 2026**



# Contents

|                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Chair's Introduction                                 | 3  |
| About Us                                             | 4  |
| Our Aims                                             | 6  |
| Our Year in Review                                   | 7  |
| Improving Health and Care Services in North Tyneside | 8  |
| Information and Signposting                          | 16 |
| Hearing From People Across North Tyneside            | 19 |
| Our Work for the Year Ahead                          | 23 |
| Our Volunteers                                       | 26 |
| Our Finances                                         | 27 |

## Special thanks

We would like to thank all of the residents of North Tyneside who have taken time to share their views and experiences. Particular thanks to the people involved in our co-production and user groups.

We have seen a lot of changes in personnel at our partner organisations, with people we have worked closely with for years, leaving. In particular we would like to thank Eleanor Binks, Wendy Burke and Julie Firth, who have all retired from their leadership roles at North Tyneside Council and supported our work. We would also like to thank members of the Integrated Care Board's Local Delivery team who have moved on.

Finally, we would like to pay tribute to Sarah Harrison, founder of Sarah's Star and a champion of support for people living with cancer and other incurable illnesses, who sadly died in December 2025.



# Message from our Chair



**Chair**  
**Carol Nevison**

## Welcome to our Annual Report for 2025/26.

In this report, we highlight the real improvements being achieved through the involvement of service users, taking co-production approaches wherever possible. We are proud of the role we play in supporting these positive changes.

Residents, service users and carers in North Tyneside have once again been incredibly generous with their time. They continue to place their trust in us by sharing their views and experiences of local health and care services. We work hard to ensure that providers and commissioners hear these voices and respond meaningfully to what residents tell us.

As a charity, our mission is to bring about real change that improves health and care services. We firmly believe that involving service users is the most effective way to achieve this. In recent years, we have invested in developing our co-design and co-production skills, while also working closely with partners—particularly the Adult Social Care team at North Tyneside Council—to create meaningful opportunities for service users and carers to be actively involved in shaping services. This will remain a priority in our work in the coming year.

Partnership working is central to our success, and we are grateful for the continued support of our partners. Our relationships with voluntary sector organisations and community groups across North Tyneside are vital in helping us connect with residents and reach diverse communities to hear what matters to different people.

We continue to play a leading role in coordinating the work of the North East and North Cumbria Healthwatch Network, and in leading its relationship with the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB). This collaborative approach enables us to raise concerns collectively and ensure that the voices of local people inform regional and local decision-making. These relationships continue to deepen and strengthen.

We are operating during a time of significant uncertainty for Healthwatch. The Government's plans to abolish Healthwatch are deeply disappointing. We are working closely with the Healthwatch Network across England and with other patient organisations to ensure that independent user voice is not lost as system changes are proposed.

The Trustees of our charity are determined to ensure that independent user voice remains embedded within any future system in North Tyneside, and are committed to ensuring that our vital work continues. The next 12 months will be challenging as we respond to and adapt to emerging opportunities and changes.

I am incredibly proud of everything we have achieved, and of the continued dedication and commitment of our staff, volunteers, trustees and partners during these challenging times.

Thank you again for supporting us.



# About us

**Healthwatch North Tyneside is your local health and social care champion. We ensure that health and social care providers, and decision-makers hear your voice and use your views to improve services. We also help residents find reliable, trustworthy information and advice.**

We aim to shape and improve local health and social care services by showing how listening and involving people can lead to meaningful change.

## What we do:

- Provide information and signposting
- Hear people's views and feedback about health and care services
- Help services to improve by listening to and involving service users and carers

## Who we are

We are a small independent charity, based in Wallsend, with trustees, staff and volunteers from across North Tyneside.

Our work is funded by a service delivery contract with North Tyneside Council, and through grants/contracts with commissioners, providers or grant funders for specific projects.

We are part of a network of over 150 local Healthwatch, who operate in every local authority area in England. This network was established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, with the aim of putting patients and the public first.

Our Healthwatch Board work on a voluntary basis to provide oversight, direction and quality assurance. Our board ensure that our work reflects the concerns and interests of people across North Tyneside. They all act as trustees of our charity.

During this reporting period our trustees were: Carol Nevison, Jackie Doughty, Paula McCormack, Bea Groves-McDaniel, David Slater, Peter Berrie, Ian Paul Greenway, Maxine Ulrich Houston, Paul McKelvie and Lyndsay Yarde (from April 2025).

## Our strategic work

Healthwatch North Tyneside is represented on North Tyneside's Health and Wellbeing Board by our Director and Chair. We also play an active role in other strategic boards and groups that oversee and deliver operational work around health and care issues in North Tyneside, although many of these are changing due to NHS reorganisation.

## Working together for change – The NENC Healthwatch Network

All 14 Local Healthwatch in the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) have formed a network which enables us to work together on a regional and area basis. With funding from the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB), our Healthwatch Network appointed co-ordinators to represent users' views and facilitate engagement projects and the gathering of region-wide public feedback.

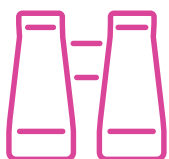
A Healthwatch Network Representative sits on the ICB and ensures the public voice is heard at Integrated Care Systems level, influencing decision making across the whole of the NENC ICB.

Healthwatch North Tyneside plays a key role in negotiating and managing these arrangements on behalf of the network. We were selected by our peers to provide financial and facilitation support for the NENC Healthwatch Network. Our Director, Paul Jones, acts as coordinator for the Healthwatch organisations in the North area and leads on several region-wide research projects.



**healthwatch**  
North East and North Cumbria

# Our aims



## Our vision

People's experiences, views and needs are sought, valued, and acted upon as part of the planning and delivery of health and care support in North Tyneside



## Our mission

To champion the experiences, views, values and needs of local people to positively affect the health and social care services in North Tyneside



## Our Values and what they mean to us

- **Meaningful involvement** – We help local people to shape and improve the services they use, encouraging decision makers to adopt co-design, co-production and other participatory approaches
- **Empowering** – We are open and inclusive and strive to understand and empower everyone to have their voices heard equitably
- **Working together** – We build effective relationships with communities, organisations, providers and decision makers, working in partnership where possible, to maximise the opportunities for change
- **Trust** – We are trusted to be honest about what people tell us and to voice concerns where necessary
- **Independence** – We champion what people tell us matters to them and act as a critical friend to providers and decision makers
- **Evidence based** – We are led by the information we gather from residents. We look at both what works well and what could be done better
- **Impact** – We are focused on achieving meaningful change for residents

# Our year in review

## Our work has helped deliver:

- The opening of a new mental health crisis support service
- The commissioning of a new post-diagnostic support for autistic adults
- The implementation of a new young carers support pathway
- New information resources co-produced with people with lived experience



## Listening to resident's views

- 4,702 residents shared their views and feedback with us – more than ever before
- We engaged with 2,115 residents at 71 community events to raise awareness of our work and answer questions
- 1,011 adult carers told us about their experiences of being a carer in North Tyneside



## Health and care that works for you

- We had 4.6 full time equivalent members of our staff team on average during the year
- We received £177,778 core contract funding from North Tyneside Council to deliver the Healthwatch Service in North Tyneside
- We secured £54,928 of additional funding for our project work in North Tyneside and our work supporting our Healthwatch regional network



# Making a real difference with local residents

We believe that involving service users leads to better services. That's why we're committed to making real improvements based on what residents tell us. We encourage providers and decision makers to listen actively and involve people in shaping the services they use.

Changing how services operate, or commissioning new ones, also takes time before residents feel the benefits. We work closely with providers and commissioners to deliver both short-term improvements and long-term system change.

Co-design and co-production also takes time and investment, and we are committed to creating meaningful opportunities for service users and carers to be involved.

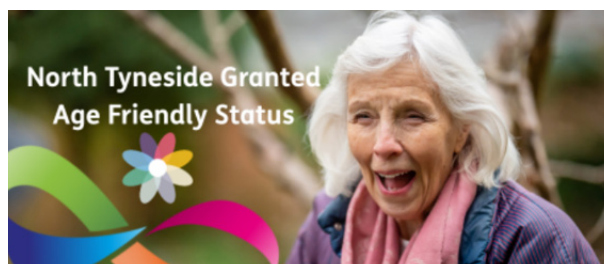
We really appreciate providers' and commissioners' openness and commitment to improve services.



# Age Friendly North Tyneside

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Following our 2024 engagement activity with Age UK North Tyneside, in which 970 people shared their views on what would make North Tyneside more age friendly, we have made significant progress.



Elected Mayor Karen Clark made creating an Age Friendly North Tyneside a key election pledge, and this is now embedded as a priority within the Council's *Our North Tyneside* plan.

Using the evidence base created by our research and the commitment to support this agenda from partners, North Tyneside achieved Age Friendly status in October 2025.

## What's next?

## Age Friendly

An action plan is currently being developed with key partners, based on the priorities identified by residents through our research. Our contribution includes:

- Supporting and facilitating co-production activities
- Our *Bladder and Bowel Worries* project
- Our *Travel, Health and Care* project

# Improving experiences in the Emergency Department

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Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust funded us and Healthwatch Northumberland to gather feedback from users of the new Front Door Service in the Emergency Department at The Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital, Cramlington. We spoke to 690 service users who told us they valued the speed, efficiency and reassurance the service gave, and suggested several ways in which it could be further developed and improved. The Trust have now embedded the Front Door service into the Emergency Department and have acted on much of the feedback.

People tell us they are now better able to get access to the appropriate care.



# Better access to dental care and information

Over the last two years, we have worked closely with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and our 13 local Healthwatch colleagues across the North East and North Cumbria to understand and respond to people's concerns about access to dentistry. The ICB funded our Healthwatch network to undertake a research project in 2024, and 3,800 residents shared their views. Key concerns raised included access to urgent dental care and routine dental services.

## National Action

Our report formed the basis of Healthwatch England's submission to the Government's consultation on the dentistry contract. When the new contract was announced, several of the issues raised began to be addressed.

## New Urgent Dental Access Centre In North Shields



The ICB published their new oral health strategy 2025-27, in response to the issues residents shared with us during our research. A key element of this strategy was the commissioning of 109,000 additional urgent dental care appointments across the region each year, alongside improvements to how people access these services.

We worked closely with the ICB to develop, pilot, and roll out new Urgent Dental Access Centres (UDACs), with 30 centres now commissioned across the North East and North Cumbria.

The North Shields Urgent Dental Access Centre provides more than 20 urgent appointments per day. These can be booked by anyone experiencing an urgent dental need. There are also three additional UDACs within a 10-mile radius.

Recent feedback to Healthwatch North Tyneside shows a significant improvement in access to urgent care. However, residents remain very concerned about the lack of routine NHS dental care in the area.

## Co-producing Better Dental Information

Residents told us it was difficult to find reliable information about oral health and how to access dental services. In response we worked with residents in North Tyneside, Northumberland and Stockton to develop clearer and more accessible information about dental care.





The ICB has since updated and significantly improved dentistry information on its website, distributed a co-produced leaflet across the region explaining how to access urgent dental care, and invested additional funding into the NHS 111 dental service.

The ICB also launched the Be Smile Smart oral health campaign, which we supported by involving residents in its development alongside public health teams.

## What's next?

## Dentistry

- Continue working with the ICB to involve residents in developing information campaigns
- Champion the need to improve access to routine NHS dental care

## Improving Mental health support

Mental health has been a focus of our research and involvement activities since 2016. Many of the themes people tell us about have remained frustratingly consistent – access to support when it is needed, being passed between services, and the availability of high-quality information.

We work closely with Launchpad North Tyneside and other partners to involve people with lived experience in developing and improving services. We received funding through the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme to involve residents in service change.

### Better access to crisis support

The Anchorage – a new safe, haven funded by the ICB, opened in July 2025 in Wallsend. This long-awaited, community-based service provides emotional and practical support to Tyneside residents aged 18+ who are experiencing mental health crisis or distress. It is open daily from 2pm to 10pm and offers face-to-face, online, and telephone support.

We worked with Launchpad North Tyneside to involve over 130 people with lived experience of mental health crisis in identifying the location of the service and shaping what the safe haven in North Tyneside should offer. Over two years, residents shared their views and helped design this service.

A total of 619 people have used The Anchorage in its first nine months. The service provider, Everyturn Mental Health, has also located some of its other services within the building, enabling users to receive a more holistic package of support.

One of our Expert by Experience team members wrote this poem about what a crisis support service should feel like:

### Self Xpression

*If you're in distress,  
Or, if life feels a mess,  
And you really, need to de-stress,  
Come along, and pay us a visit.*

*Everybody's welcome, with open arms,  
The perfect place, to get help from others,  
A hug in a mug, and a good old natter,  
The perfect place, for finding new friends.*

*Feel connected, instead of neglected,  
The perfect place, to feel more at ease,  
Where self expression, really does help,  
The perfect place, to just be yourself.*

*Rebuilding lives, and providing protection,  
The perfect place, for regaining your strength,  
Where bias and stigma, simply isn't welcome,  
The perfect place, to be proud of one's self.*

Vivian Curtis



Feedback has been very positive, with people receiving support not only for their mental health but also with housing and relationship issues.



## Piloting multi-disciplinary teams for planning support

A key frustration that users of mental health services have told us about repeatedly over the last 10 years is having to have multiple different needs assessments by each individual service and then being bounced between different services because they don't meet service criteria. To address this, we have encouraged Community Mental Health Transformation partners to develop a multi-disciplinary approach to assessing, reviewing and meeting an individual's support needs.

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW) is now leading a pilot involving GPs, community services, and the voluntary sector. The aim of this approach is to ensure person-centred care planning and to avoid individuals 'bouncing' between services.

## Mental health information

Since December 2025, we have been working with our Mental Health User Group to develop a new mental health information leaflet outlining community support available in North Tyneside. This will be published and distributed to health and community settings across the borough, replacing the existing leaflet originally co-produced in 2019 and regularly updated since.



### What's next?

- Review the impact of the multi-disciplinary team pilot
- Publish and distribute the new mental health leaflet
- Work with the ICB and CNTW to ensure service user voices are embedded in plans for neighbourhood mental health hubs

### Mental Health



# Real changes for autistic adults

Following our 2023/24 report in which 97 autistic adults and their supporters shared their support needs, it is encouraging to see some real changes taking place..

## New Post-Diagnostic Support Service for Adults

In response to one of the key recommendations from our 2024 report, the Integrated Care Board has commissioned a new post-diagnostic support service from Autism in Mind. This service is open for self-referrals and includes:



- **An eight-week psychoeducational course – ‘Me, Myself & Autism’:** A self-awareness course designed specifically for autistic individuals. It celebrates the unique characteristics of autism and addresses everyday challenges that autistic people may encounter.
- **Preventative support:** Both practical and emotional support for issues that autistic people may find challenging, delivered by people who listen, understand, and take their experiences seriously.
- **Workshops:** Sessions to help autistic adults understand and explore common issues they may face.
- **Wellbeing sessions:** Support for autistic adults who may be socially isolated or unable to access peer support in the community.

## Autism Better Together



This volunteer-run peer support and friendship group has gone from strength to strength. Responding to

feedback gathered by Healthwatch in 2024, as well as insights from their members, the group has expanded its offer to include evening and weekend sessions, alongside weekday drop-in sessions. Autism Better Together is supported by North Tyneside Council.



## Better support for young carers

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Last year, we published our report *What Matters to Young Carers*. Since then, North Tyneside Council has worked with North Tyneside Carers' Centre and young carers themselves to redesign the support pathway. This new pathway is being implemented from April 2026.

### What's next?

### Young Carers

On behalf of the Carers Partnership Board, we will undertake a further engagement exercise with young carers, starting in winter 2026, to understand the impact of these pathway improvements.

## Improving support for carers

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In summer 2025, we heard from 1,011 adult carers through our "*What Matters to Carers in North Tyneside*" survey. This was conducted on behalf of the Carers Partnership Board. We are grateful for the support of all members—particularly North Tyneside Carers' Centre, the Parent Carer Forum, PROPS, and several GP practices—which helped us reach carers they work with.



This was our third survey of this kind, and the results showed that there is still significant work to do to improve carers' experiences. Based on the recommendations in our report, the Health and Wellbeing Board has agreed to support a new action plan. Over the next two years, this plan aims to deliver meaningful improvements to carers' experiences while embedding co-design and co-production in developing these changes.

### What's next?

### Carers

We are committed to working with partners to deliver on the priorities for carers highlighted in our report and action plan. We will:

- Lead and facilitate co-production and co-design activities
- Lead improvements to information for carers in partnership with Adult Social Care
- Work with Northumbria Healthcare to identify how outpatient services could better support carers
- Support North Tyneside Council's review of respite and short-break provision, as well as carers' needs assessments

# Information and signposting

Providing health and care information is a core part of our work. We do this in two ways:

## 1. Supporting individuals

Residents regularly contact us for information about health and care services or to seek help resolving an issue. Over the past year, we supported 358 people who reached out through:

- Our information line: 0191 263 5321
- Social media
- Our website contact form
- Email: [info@hwnt.co.uk](mailto:info@hwnt.co.uk)
- Face-to-face engagement events across North Tyneside

## 2. Improving access to quality information

Residents consistently tell us that access to high-quality information is essential. We use their feedback to identify gaps, and work with commissioners and service providers to use co-design approaches to develop accessible, relevant, and easy-to-understand resources that meet local needs.



## Helping people get support

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Here are some examples of how we have helped local people with their health and care issues. People tell us they appreciate that we listen to them as well as value the support and information we provide.

**Getting resolution** – A resident was referred to us from a local charity after expressing dissatisfaction with the lack of information provided about a safeguarding concern that had been investigated. With the resident's consent, we raised the issue with our contact in Adult Social Care, who subsequently contacted the resident directly. We later received feedback indicating that the resident had a much better understanding of the situation and the reasons behind the decisions that had been made.

**Covid vaccine confusion** – A resident contacted us unsure whether they needed a COVID-19 booster. They had seen news reports and received a GP text but said 'I don't need another dose, I just had one a few months ago'. We explained current government guidance and how to access the vaccine. We also raised the need for clearer public information on booster requirements with the Immunisation Steering Group, as we had received several similar enquiries.

**How to choose a care home** – A resident at the coast contacted us about her mother who was in hospital and was told they needed to find a care home. They had been provided with some information but said 'I don't know where to start, but know they want her out quick'. We explained their options including what information to consider, how to organise visits, funding and talking to the social work team.

**Connecting to local support** – An older lady in the North West of North Tyneside called us feeling down and lonely, and needing help with practical things like gardening. We talked to them about what they were interested in and we made a referral to VODA Good Neighbours, connected her with AGE UK North Tyneside and contacted local churches and community groups to see what activities they were currently delivering including lunch clubs etc. She got back in touch several weeks later to thank us for our help and said she had been along to two groups and got support with her household tasks.

**Encouraging someone to take action** – At a community event, a resident shared concerns about managing their incontinence, which was affecting their confidence and independence. We explained the support available through the NHS and encouraged them to contact their GP to access continence services. By the end of our conversation, they said they felt listened to, supported, and "much better now I have a plan."

# Improving access to information

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We work closely with partners and service providers to enhance the quality and accessibility of information available to residents. As a founding member of the Living Well North Tyneside Partnership, we are committed to making sure everyone can easily find the support they need.

We are supporting North Tyneside Council to review health and care information needs and we are championing the importance of printed information as well as a telephone and online offer – reflecting what people tell us is important to them.

## Producing better information

We believe that information should be created with the people in mind that it's meant for. That's why we use co-production approaches to develop a range of resources. Our recent work includes:

- Information about safeguarding – in response to feedback from residents, we supported North Tyneside Council's Inspire Forum to develop leaflets about 'Safeguarding Adults – What to Expect' and 'Adult Abuse – Recognise and Respond'.
- Supporting the Integrated Care Board to work with service users to provide better information about:
  - Dental access
  - Oral health
  - GP practices and continuity of care
  - Pharmacy services
  - Sexual Health services for older adults

## What's next?

- Co-producing mental health support information
- Co-producing information about carers support
- Co-producing information about primary care
- Supporting a review of information needs in North Tyneside

## Information



# Hearing From People Across North Tyneside

We are here for all residents of North Tyneside. Over the last year, we've worked hard to reach all parts of our community. We engaged with 3,066 people at 74 community outreach events.

You might have seen Amanda and our team of Engagement Volunteers at:

- Community events like Wallsend Festival, Whitley Bay Fiestas and North Tyneside Together Festival
- Community venues including libraries, sports centres, shopping centres and parks (in the summer)
- Health care settings including North Tyneside General Hospital, the RVI, Freeman and GP practices

In addition we work with partners across North Tyneside to connect with people who access their services.



# Hearing from people across North Tyneside

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In addition to our community outreach events, we work closely with community groups and voluntary organisations to connect with the people they support. Without their help, we wouldn't have been able to hear from as many residents as we have. This year we stepped up our work through partner community organisations – funding them to gather people's views and experiences.

## Why this matters

Everything we do is grounded in the views and feedback of North Tyneside residents. We share what we hear with decision-makers and service providers so they understand what's working well and where improvements are needed. People's views also help us decide where to focus our efforts in the future.

### What's next?

### Involving People

#### **Helping people to improve services through co-production.**

When we are talking to people about their experiences of health and care services, we offer people the opportunity to get involved in future service development activity about the issues that are important to them. When opportunities to co-produce arise, we offer these to people on our contact list and also work with relevant user groups to recruit participants. This way we ensure we have a wide range of people and views involved in co-production activities.

## Children and young people have their say in 2026/7

We recognise that we have not focused much of our work on children and young people recently. We have been working with stakeholders, including North Tyneside Council's Participation Team and voluntary and Community sector (VCS) organisations, to develop a major programme of activities in 2026/27 to understand 'What Matters to Children and Young People in North Tyneside'. We will be funding local VCS young people's organisations to gather the views and feedback of the people they support, working with local schools and other key partners. We also plan to hear from parents and carers as part of this work. We aim to create a body of evidence to inform providers and commissioners of the views of young people about health and care issues that can influence decisions in future years.

# Engaging people on important issues

## – cancer awareness

When we ask people what we should focus our activities on, raising awareness of cancer and cancer prevention is always high on the list.

We worked with the Northern Cancer Alliance and North Tyneside Council's Public Health team to create a £12,000 grant fund, and additional training and support package, to fund voluntary sector organisations to:

- Raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of cancer
- Understand and address barriers to preventative screening
- Promote healthy behaviours to lower cancer risk

After a competitive application process, we funded the following six projects led by local community organisations. These projects will conclude by November and feedback from participants is so far very impressive.

### Springfield Community Association

Are working with groups using the Springfield Community Association building in Forest Hall to understand people's cancer related health concerns – covering a range of ages and potential barriers to accessing cancer screening. They are gathering feedback and views via a survey and discussions with users, and also hosting up to six face-to-face community conversations on key topics residents want to explore.



### Justice Prince

Are engaging with people in the Longbenton area and aim to reach those who would not typically access cancer screening – through door knocking, community workshops and connecting through pubs and social clubs.

They are creating community led information to increase awareness of signs and symptoms of cancer, as well as supporting people to make healthier lifestyle choices and access cancer screening.



## Workie Ticket Theatre

Are working with women across North Tyneside who may face barriers to accessing cancer screening—particularly survivors of domestic abuse, women with learning disabilities, and women in recovery.

They are running interactive workshops combining performance, conversation, co-creation, and refreshments. A reading of a short play about cancer will act as a catalyst for discussion on challenges around early diagnosis and treatment. This will then be used to create information resources shared by social media and community groups.

## Sarah's Star

Are producing and distributing a series of eight locally focused podcasts aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of cancer-related issues in the community, by working with people with lived experience and professionals. They are also gathering views and feedback from the community via surveys, focus groups and interviews to inform the podcasts, and support the sharing and evaluation of their impact on knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.



## Walking With

Are delivering awareness sessions to help asylum seekers and refugees recognise the signs and symptoms of cancer, understand the importance of screening, and learn how to access these services while identifying any potential barriers. They are also promoting the benefits of a healthy lifestyle by providing healthier choices within sessions and activities. This will include myth busting to sensitively address differing cultural perspectives and barriers.



## Whitley Bay Big Local

Are developing the skills of volunteers to have conversations about cancer with the community groups they facilitate at Big Local. Raising awareness of signs and symptoms, encouraging screening and talking through barriers experienced.

# Our work for the year ahead

Each year, we concentrate our work on a small number of projects looking at key issues. Our independent Board of Trustees decide our focus based on what residents and service users have told us is important to them through our engagement activities. We also discuss these plans with our stakeholders.

We have a number of projects continuing from last year that will conclude over the coming year. Our staff and volunteers are progressing with this work and the information we have gathered indicates these projects remain important to residents.

We are also looking at the long term future of our charity and our work, given the uncertainty created by the government's proposed changes to Healthwatch. We are taking the long term impact of our work more seriously than ever.



# Key projects July 2026 – July 2027

## Overarching themes in this project work will be:

- Championing co-design and co-production – working with providers and commissioners to create opportunities for meaningful involvement
- Understanding and tackling health inequalities
- Improving access to reliable health and care information
- Ensuring voices from across our communities are heard

## Key projects we will conclude:

**Bladder and Bowel worries** – Our volunteer and staff team are busy with the community engagement for this project which looks at self-care, support from GPs and community services, and access to toilets

**End of Life and Palliative care** – Building on our work with the ICB in January and February 2026 on what a good death looks like, we will work with Northumbria Trust to better understand experiences of end of life care planning

**Safeguarding** – We will conclude our report of feedback from voluntary sector organisations and users about adult safeguarding systems

**Sexual Health** – We will bring together feedback from our children and young people's activities and over-50's work to better understand people's service needs and expectations



## New projects we will deliver

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**Travel, health and care** – People tell us that travel can be a real barrier to getting the care and support they need. We will deliver a project to understand people's views and experiences of travel relating to health and care

**Fit For the Future** – implementing the NHS 10 Year plan – The Government published its 10 year plan for the NHS in July 2025. It included significant changes to how NHS services are developed, delivered and run. We will work with NHS providers and decision makers to ensure local voices are heard in the way services change. Our work will likely focus on:

- Neighbourhood health
- Reviewing care pathways as set out in the recently published NHS Trusts Provider Collaborative strategy
- User and carer voice in NHS decision making

**Better understanding people's experiences** – we will conduct short projects on the following issues to find out more about:

- Post viral support
- Support with managing pain
- Continuing Healthcare funded care packages
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Annual Health Checks

### User involvement and co-production

We will continue to work with service providers and commissioners to create opportunities for meaningful involvement and co-production with service users and carers. We will continue to develop our expertise in this field.



# Our volunteers



Our team of amazing volunteers are at the heart of Healthwatch North Tyneside. Without their support, we would not be able to achieve what we do. During this period, 31 volunteers contributed their time to support our work. We will continue recruiting new volunteers and supporters to help us hear from even more local residents.

Our volunteers tell us they love being part of the Healthwatch team and feel they are making a real difference. In our volunteers survey they said they feel valued, supported and love the variety and flexibility. Our volunteers support us by:

- Talking with service users about their experiences of health and care services, carrying out interviews and surveys when visiting hospitals and other health and care settings
- Engaging with residents at community meetings and events, and raising awareness of Healthwatch
- Providing information about health and care services and signposting people to additional support
- Leading and supporting user and discussion groups
- Reviewing and analysing feedback from the public and contributing to reports
- Supporting the smooth running of our office and organisation
- Contributing to the development of our projects, surveys and ways of working

# Our Finances in 2025/26

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our Local Authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to fund the core Healthwatch service in North Tyneside.

| Income                                                                               |          | Expenditure       |          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| Healthwatch Core Services contract from North Tyneside Council                       | £177,778 | Staffing costs    | £127,729 |
| North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board Contribution to Local Healthwatch | £4,000   | Operational costs | £49,856  |
|                                                                                      |          | Governance costs  | £4,589   |
| Total income                                                                         | £181,778 | Total Expenditure | £181,904 |

We had planned for a larger deficit this year, but this didn't happen because we delayed launching some of our projects to avoid the run up to the recent local elections, this means the funds have been deferred into the next financial year. These activities have started in May 2026.

## Other funded activities

In addition to the core Healthwatch service above, we successfully secured additional funding, totalling £54,928, to support specific project activities and information campaigns during this period. This includes our ICB funded work to support the North East and North Cumbria Network and funds from the Northern Cancer Alliance and North Tyneside Public Health team toward our cancer grants programme. Before agreeing to undertake any additional funded activities, we ensure that they align with our values and ethos and do not compromise our independence. Some of this work and funding is being carried forward into the next financial year.

- **Community Mental Health Transformation** – North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- **Adult Social Care User Experience** – North Tyneside Council
- **Health Inequalities and Cancer** – Northern Cancer Alliance and Public Health – North Tyneside Council
- **User Experience** – Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- **North East & North Cumbria Healthwatch Network Coordination and project delivery** – ICB



We are committed to delivering the highest quality we can. Every 3 years we carry out an in-depth audit with Healthwatch England to ensure this.



Registered Charity Number 1160753

**Healthwatch North Tyneside**  
**Spirit of North Tyneside Community Hub**  
**2nd Floor Wallsend Library and Community Hub**  
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