



Healthwatch Oxfordshire

Annual Impact Report 2025-2026

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Thank you to everyone who has helped us over the last year, including:

- Members of the public for sharing their views and experiences with us
- Community and voluntary organisations, including Patient Participation Groups, for working with us to ensure more people's voices are heard
- Providers and commissioners of health and social care services for listening to and acting on the voices of Oxfordshire residents
- Health and social care staff for their continued hard work and dedication
- Our brilliant team of staff, Trustees and volunteers for everything they do to support our work.



“Healthwatch Oxfordshire plays an outstanding role in championing the voice of patients and communities in Oxfordshire.”

Adam Briggs, Deputy Director of Public Health at Oxfordshire County Council

A message from our Chair

Welcome to our Annual Impact Report 2025–26, celebrating our activities and achievements of the past 12 months.

Over the past year, we have strengthened our relationships with patient groups, as well as community and voluntary organisations, to ensure all voices are heard and that health equity remains a priority. This report reflects the dedication of our small team in building and nurturing these connections. By listening carefully and engaging meaningfully with our communities, we are helping to drive improvements where they are most needed across health and social care services.

In what has been another busy year, we have listened to issues the public have raised with us, including about mental health support, GP access, men's health and urgent and emergency care. We highlighted areas for improvement in the NHS App and ensured the voices of 684 people using women's health services informed regional and national strategies. We used our Enter and View powers to speak directly with people using services. We continued to champion community-led research and co-produced a practical 'How to Guide' to support communities to do their own research.

Again, the year ahead is one of huge change, both to our NHS and social care services, and the local government landscape. The NHS Modernisation Bill outlines the abolition of local Healthwatch as an independent voice. Whatever the future holds we remain committed to listening to your experiences and sharing them with the people in power to improve local services.

We are grateful to the residents of Oxfordshire for placing their trust in us. I would also like to thank our dedicated staff team, Trustees and volunteers and all the hardworking staff across health and social care services in our county. Most importantly, thank you to everyone who shared their experiences with us this year. Please continue to tell us what is working well and what needs to improve so that together we can shape better services for all.



Barbara Shaw
Chair
(elected 2025)



"Independence, trust and partnership are central to the way we work – we know that meaningful listening to the voice of lived experience is critical to shaping health and social care services to meet the needs of our population. This is more important than ever – making sure no-one is left behind."

About us

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is your local health and social care champion.

We ensure that NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve local health and social care services. We can also help you find reliable and trustworthy information and advice about local health and care services.

Our aims and values



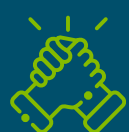
Supporting you to have your say

We make sure you have opportunities to have your say about the NHS and social care services you use



Ensuring all voices are heard

We know that everyone needs to be included in the conversation, especially those who aren't being heard



Working together to improve services

Based on what we hear, we inform service providers and commissioners about what is working and what could be better to help improve services for all



Our values are:

- Equity
- Collaboration
- Impact
- Independence
- Truth

Our year in numbers

A snapshot of how we listened, supported and amplified local voices to strengthen health and social care across Oxfordshire.

Listening and informing



4,671 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us



316 people came to us for advice and information about local health and social care services



562 people submitted a review of their experience of using a health or social care service via our Feedback Centre



4,196 people received regular news updates from us by subscribing to our newsletter or following us on social media

Making a difference to care



We published **33** reports about the improvements people would like to see in health and social care services

How we work



We received **£290,833** from Oxfordshire County Council for our work in 2025–26



We employed **6** members of staff (3 full-time and 3 part-time)



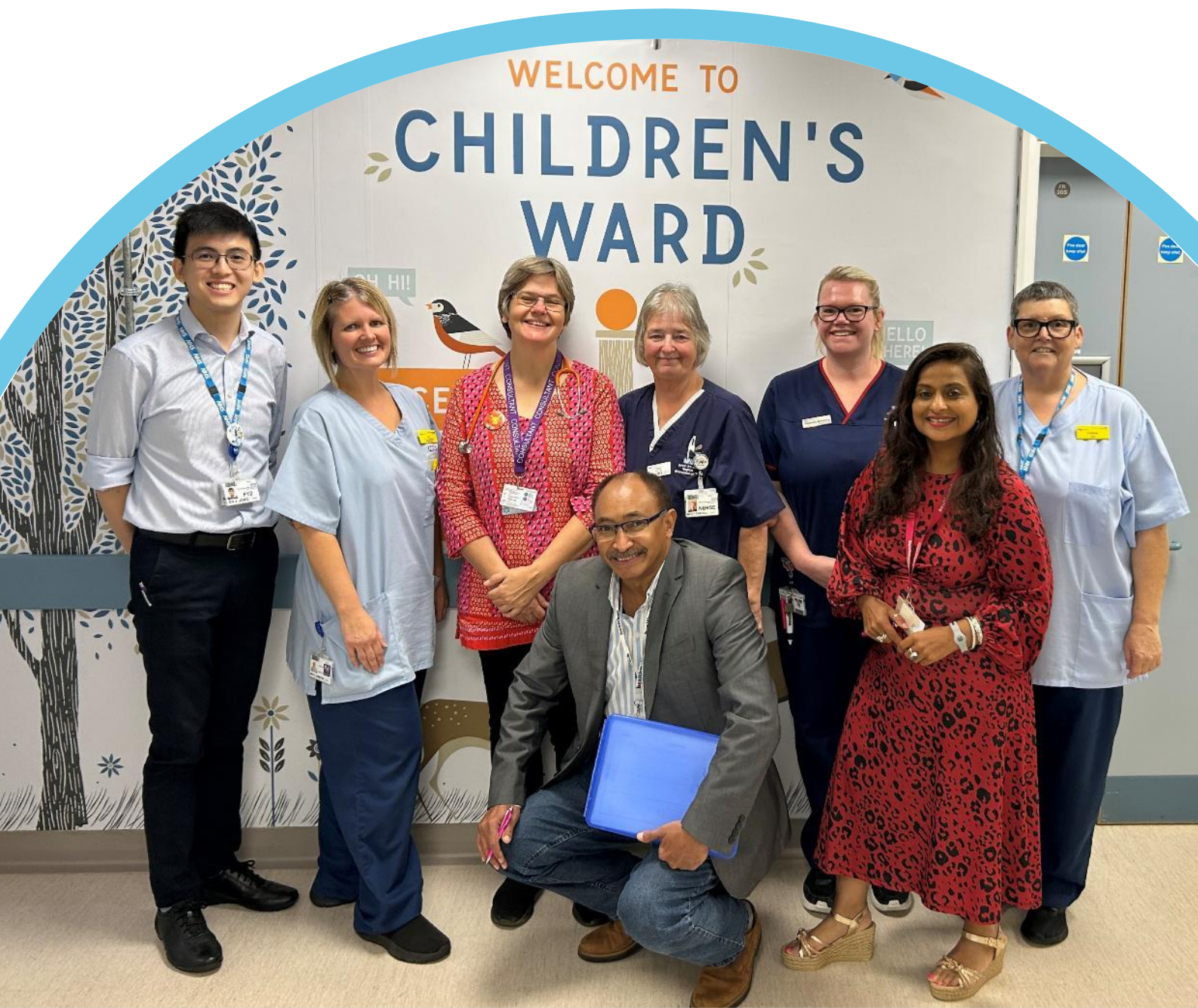
We were supported by **3** volunteers and **6** Trustees who gave up their time to help support and steer our work

Listening to your experiences

Hearing from people using health and social care services in Oxfordshire is essential to help highlight areas that can be improved or changed.

Our team reaches people through being out and about, on the streets, at community centres, events and hospitals, and through our focused Enter and View visits. We also gather people's views through our Feedback Centre and by running surveys on specific topics.

The next few pages give some examples of our work and how we shared your feedback with health and social care service commissioners and providers to help improve care for everyone.



Digital health care and the NHS App

As the 10 Year Health Plan for England prioritises a move from analogue to digital NHS services, we highlighted the importance of including all residents in this shift.

We used an online survey and face-to-face outreach to hear from **823** people about their experiences of using the NHS App and other digital health services.

Key things we heard:

96%

of online survey respondents had heard of the NHS App. People said they find it convenient, efficient and it helps them feel informed about their health

“All the information and services that I need are at hand 24/7.”

25%

of those we spoke to face to face had not used the NHS App due to barriers like low confidence, poor access to technology, cost and language barriers

“My English language is not very good, so I struggle with technology.”

What difference did this make?

Based on recommendations we made in our report, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) and Oxfordshire County Council committed to actions including:

- Creating an NHS App webpage
- Continuing to improve broadband access in rural areas and supporting digital cafés
- Ensuring that GP practices continue to offer non-digital options.



“Feedback of this quality plays a key role in shaping our ongoing work to make the NHS App more inclusive, user friendly and responsive to people’s needs.”

Dr Nick Broughton, Chief Executive at Thames Valley Integrated Care Board

Please note: In April 2026, BOB ICB and Frimley ICB came together to form Thames Valley ICB. In this report we will refer to BOB ICB as this was the organisation we worked with in 2025–26.

“Just listen to me” – using women’s health services

We gathered insight about women’s health services, including examples of good practice and challenges accessing the right care.

We used an online survey, outreach, in-depth interviews and focus groups to hear from **684** women and people who use women’s health services.

Key things we heard:

We heard about examples of good practice, but that these experiences are not consistent. People told us about challenges accessing joined-up care, not feeling listened to, long waits for specialist clinics, and a lack of clear, culturally appropriate information, including about menopause.

27%

of women and people who use women’s health services said they did not get the help they needed (online survey)

“I have heavy periods and the GP said, ‘nothing can be done’. I just feel left to manage this.”

“They could send you leaflets when you reach 40, and make it accessible in different languages, saying ‘if you feel like X, talk to your doctor’.”

What difference did this make?

Based on recommendations we made in our report, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust took forward several actions, including creating a new webpage and resources for those on a waiting list for the Chronic Pelvic Pain clinic.

Our report also directly informed Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board’s (BOB ICB) women’s health strategy.



“Healthwatch reports are a key part of our insights that inform strategy and planning. We are currently drafting our women’s health strategy for this year, and key aspects of this report are included in our priority setting.”

Heidi Beddall, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer at BOB ICB

Urgent and emergency care

We found out about people's experiences of navigating urgent and emergency care services and getting the care they needed.

322 people shared their experiences with us through an online survey, outreach and follow-up phone conversations.

Key things we heard:

Many people were able to navigate the urgent and emergency care system and were positive about the care they received.

However, we also heard that some people faced difficulties, resulting in poor experiences or delayed care. People told us that they found that information about urgent care services was confusing and not accessible to all – especially when under stress.

“There are far too many options... it is difficult to navigate where to go first.”

“I cannot read or write English about access to the health service which is local to me.”

What difference did this make?

Providers and decision-makers responded to our report and committed to improving people's experiences by:

- Developing a new overarching Oxfordshire Urgent and Emergency online service with clear information
- Working to ensure consistency across all providers' websites.

We also presented this report to the Urgent Care System Delivery Group to inform their planning for winter 2025-26.



“The feedback from residents in the report is incredibly valuable.”

Karen Fuller, Director of Adult Social Care at Oxfordshire County Council

Sharing your experiences with decision-makers

We share all our reports – based on your feedback – with health and social care decision-makers to ensure your voices directly shape local services.

Your feedback about GPs

We heard from **786** people about using GP services between April 2025 and March 2026. While most people were positive about the quality of care, we also heard of challenges accessing GP services – including contacting practices and booking appointments – as well as difficulties getting prescriptions and interpreting support.

 **“The majority of my experience with this GP has been spent trying to get access.”**

We presented our findings to Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s working group on GP services and shared our report with Oxfordshire GP Alliance, Oxfordshire Place Based Partnership and Thames Valley Integrated Care Board to support learning, insight and future commissioning of GP services.

Your feedback about mental health services

We heard from more than **100** people about seeking support for mental health in 2025. People told us they valued compassionate care when they accessed the right help, but they also described long waits and challenges finding support.

 **“Waiting lists for treatment after mental health diagnosis is far too long.”**

We have shared a summary of what we heard with key decision-makers.

Your feedback about Cora Health (formerly Connect Health)

We heard from **90** people about using Cora Health, which provides musculoskeletal services, between January 2025 and January 2026. We heard some positive feedback about timely and effective care; however, most people told us about challenging experiences, including poor communication, unclear information, difficulties making convenient appointments, long waits, cancelled appointments and problems with referrals.

 **“Bureaucratic nightmare. If you can't drive, good luck getting an appointment.”**

We sent our report and recommendations to Cora Health and the Integrated Care Board, which have outlined commitments for improvement.

Our Enter and View work

We have statutory powers under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to make Enter and View visits to publicly funded local health and social care services.

We make these visits to identify what works well and what could be better for people using those services. Based on what we see and hear from patients and staff we highlight areas of good practice and recommend improvements.

During 2025–26 we made **11** Enter and View visits.

An example of how an Enter and View visit made a difference

We visited the **Wintle Ward** at the Warneford Hospital in Oxford in November 2025. This is a female mental health inpatient ward run by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust. We spoke to three patients and nine members of staff.

During our visit, we heard positive feedback from patients about the staff and the care they received. We also identified several areas where improvements could be made. Oxford Health agreed to take forward a number of actions in response to our recommendations, including:

- The activity team is going to create additional colourful artwork for the ward entrance to make it more inviting
- Information on how to access interpreting support has been displayed on the main ward and added to patient welcome packs
- The activity team now provides an updated activity schedule every week, which is displayed in communal areas and copies are given to patients.



See **page 27** for details of our Enter and View reports published this year and examples of service improvements as a result, or you can read our reports on our website at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports



If you would like to become an Enter and View volunteer to support us with these visits, please get in touch!

Hearing from you out and about and through our Feedback Centre

Over the year we continued a busy programme of community outreach visits across the county to hear directly from people about their experiences of using health and social care services. These visits also enable us to explain our role and to inform people about services and support available locally.

We spoke to people at libraries, larders, community centres and on the streets, and attended community events, play days and festivals.

We also made regular visits to local hospitals run by Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

We share what we hear with providers and commissioners so they know what's working well and what could be better. The insight we glean helps inform our work and priorities, and our understanding of what is important to the public about their care.



“At OUH, we value the continued partnership and the valuable insights Healthwatch Oxfordshire provides... The constructive feedback, collaborative approach and commitment to amplifying patient and community voices make a real difference to how we learn, improve and deliver care across the Trust.”

Aletha Bicknell, Head of Patient Experience at OUH

Another important way in which we hear from people about their experiences of using local health and social care services is via our Feedback Centre.

This allows people to leave a short, anonymous review, which we then send on to the provider to ensure feedback is seen by those delivering care. We also follow up with providers on reviews of concern.

This year **562** people left a review, and we published **145** responses from service providers.

Please share your experience at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/feedback-on-a-local-service



Hearing from all communities

We continue to work hard to hear from all communities across Oxfordshire, including those who don't usually have a say.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Getting out and about across the county to speak to people in the places they live and work
- Continuing conversations and building trusted relationships with grassroots communities
- Reaching out to specific communities to amplify their voices, including the trans and non-binary community, rural communities, people using women's health services and working men
- Developing community-led research methods, resources and support with and for communities, enabling them to voice what matters most to them, including working with the Chinese community, Sunrise Multicultural Project and Black Women In Maternity
- Using creative and accessible communications, including social media, Easy Read and translated materials, film and art.



Hearing from older Chinese people

We heard from older Cantonese-speaking people about health and care.

We supported community researcher Derek Ng to interview **20** older Chinese people about their experiences of health and care services. We heard about language barriers and a lack of interpreting and communication support, including when booking and attending GP appointments. People suggested improvements in communication, including health and care services using text messages and visiting community centres to share information.

What difference did this make?

We have shared our report with health and care decision-makers and are developing a translated leaflet and community event to share information about health and social care services with the local Chinese community.



“I wish the key findings would ultimately lead to an improvement in services as well as narrowing the gap of health inequality in ethnic minority groups in Oxfordshire.”

Derek Ng, community researcher

Hearing about cancer and access to healthcare

We supported community research with South Asian women in Banbury.

Sunrise Multicultural Project wanted to understand the experiences of the communities they support in Banbury Neithrop and Ruscote, especially South Asian women. Using a community research approach, we helped Sunrise to run focus groups with **20** women who told us about their experiences of cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment, and of accessing healthcare more generally, which included long waits for appointments and difficulties getting interpreting support.

What difference did this make?

To help improve understanding of prevention, symptoms and treatment we arranged for breast care nurse, Sam Evans, of the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre, to visit Sunrise to answer questions from the group. We're producing a translated leaflet to help women share what they learned with their communities, and our findings have also informed the Thames Valley 10 Year Cancer Strategy.



“The impact is enormous, the ladies will share the information they received with family and friends, this will mean more ladies going for a mammogram, accessing their GP quicker if they have symptoms.”

Naseem Hussain, Sunrise community researcher

Hearing from trans and non-binary people

We asked trans, non-binary and gender diverse people across Oxfordshire about their experiences of using GP services in the county.

We heard from 45 local trans+ people in Oxfordshire as part of a national study commissioned by Healthwatch England. We heard some examples of good practice, where trans+ people were treated with respect and dignity, and had been able to access the care they needed. However, some of the trans+ people we spoke to did not feel confident using their GP practice and told us about the barriers and challenges they faced in accessing gender-affirming care.

What difference did this make?

We shared our report with local health system partners, including the Oxfordshire GP Network. Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board pledged to provide training for GP staff on understanding and competency in trans healthcare and to set up an LGBT+ page on their engagement website.



“Put simply when we are supported to transition to who we really are, we thrive.”

Survey respondent

Hearing from men in Faringdon

We spent time on the streets, shops and workplaces in Faringdon asking men what helps them stay healthy and well, and what makes this challenging.

Our visit in November was in support of the Oxfordshire Men's Health Partnership's annual *30 Chats In 30 Days* campaign, which encourages everyone, but particularly men, to have a meaningful conversation every day of the month. We spoke to 30 men, who gave us valuable insight into what affects their health and wellbeing, and highlighted practical ways that support could be improved.

What difference did this make?

We produced a summary of what we heard, which we shared with Oxfordshire Men's Health Partnership and local health and care decision-makers to inform the development and delivery of services for men.



“It's really important that men talk more about mental health and wellbeing.”

Man in Faringdon

Making a difference – Supporting community research

We have continued to play a key role in building community research skills and capacity in the county – using our relationships, expertise and hands-on skills to support the development of Oxfordshire Community Research Network and co-produce a practical community research ‘How to Guide’.

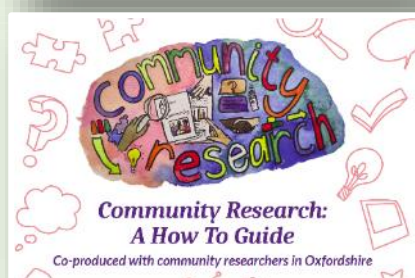
We brought together more than 20 grassroots community members to take part in four workshops sharing their knowledge, ideas and lived experience to co-create a ‘How to Guide’ for community research. The result is a colourful, engaging and accessible guide offering step-by-step advice for anyone beginning their journey as a community researcher.

We will keep working with communities to embed the guide and strengthen local research skills through training and development. We will also continue to support community researchers to explore the issues that matter most to them.

The four workshops were funded by Oxford University, via Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Community Research Network.

You can read or download the guide at

www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/community-research-how-to-guide



“This community-led How to Guide is a valuable resource for the Oxfordshire Community Research Network and for anyone interested in community research. It offers practical, accessible guidance to help organisations, communities and individuals design and deliver research that is genuinely inclusive, locally relevant, and capable of driving meaningful change.”

Dr Foyeke Tolani, Head of Research at Oxfordshire County Council

Thanks to all who helped create this guide, including community members from:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| ▪ Achi Afro Fitness | ▪ Northway Together | ▪ Oxford Gatehouse |
| ▪ African Families in the UK | ▪ OX4 Food Crew | ▪ Oxfordshire |
| ▪ Galhope Inspired | ▪ Oxford African Caribbean | ▪ Neighbourhood Plan |
| ▪ Gurkha Nepalese | Community Archive | Alliance |
| Community Oxfordshire | ▪ Oxford Community | ▪ Sudanese Community |
| ▪ LEAF Lived Experience | Action | Oxford |
| Advisory Forum | ▪ Oxfordshire Community | ▪ Transition Lighthouse |
| ▪ Mothers4Justice Ubuntu | Education Group | |

Making a difference – Supporting Oxfordshire's Marmot work

Oxfordshire, as a Marmot County, is working collectively to tackle health inequalities and improve health fairness. We have helped support this work by bringing communities and decision-makers together.

In June 2025, we brought together grassroots community groups, voluntary sector partners and decision-makers for an event exploring what an Oxfordshire Marmot Place means for people living and working in areas facing health inequalities.

This community-led event created space for community members to share lived-experience insights and highlight community-driven responses to issues such as food insecurity and poor housing. Health and social care partners reflected on work happening across the county to tackle the root causes of health inequity. Overall, the day underscored the power of communities in shaping solutions grounded in real experience – and the importance of ongoing dialogue, trust and strong relationships between communities and decision-makers.

Held at Rose Hill Community Centre and attended by more than 100 people, the event was funded by Oxfordshire County Council as part of the Marmot Oxfordshire programme. It was run in partnership with Oxford Community Action, Community First Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action.

“Bring the table to the community... not the community to the table.”
Community member



“Was so energising and reminded me we have to work very hard to connect with these residents, communities and grassroots organisations... and the challenge of democratising decision-making, involving people in the things we need to do as a system to deliver outcomes with the resources we have. Thanks to everyone involved, it was excellent.”

Dan Leveson, Director for Places and Communities at NHS Thames Valley

Other ways we've made a difference

There are lots of ways we make a difference. Here is a snapshot of some of our other work this year to listen to, engage with and keep partners and the public informed about our work strengthening health and care in Oxfordshire.

Spring

We held the first of our four **open forums** of the year, in which we invite members of the public to meet our team, hear about our work, ask us questions and tell us their views.



We launched our new and improved **website**, featuring a fresher design, an easier to use layout and updated content - including on the latest health and care news and developments.



Autumn

Summer

We spent a day in **Didcot** talking to people in the town centre and Great Western Park about their health and care. We shared what we heard with providers of local services.



We heard from more than **800 rural residents** about what supports their health and wellbeing. We will publish a report on this for the county council, later in 2026.



Winter

Supporting Patient Participation Groups

This year we continued to support Oxfordshire's Patient Participation Groups (PPGs), attending **23** group meetings to offer support and advice. We also continued to regularly share news and information and create opportunities for PPG members to engage with health and care providers and commissioners.

In August 2025, members of Charlbury PPG joined our Patient Engagement Lead, Jaz Kundi, to speak with residents in the town about their experiences of using the NHS App. The insights they gathered fed into our report on this - see **page 7** for more details about this.

“It was a great opportunity to talk to patients and hear their comments on this important topic, and we all enjoyed taking part.”

Susan Smith, Charlbury PPG



Championing patient voice

We worked with neighbouring Healthwatch organisations to ensure the voices of Oxfordshire residents were heard by the Integrated Care Board. We continued to press for independent scrutiny and a strong patient voice amid proposed changes to how people's views will be heard across the health and care system.

Collaborating across the ICB

This year, we have strengthened our relationships with local Healthwatch organisations across the Thames Valley, in readiness for the footprint of the Integrated Care Board expanding in April 2026. Together, we want to ensure that people's voices are effectively fed into decision-makers within the new Thames Valley ICB. We also highlighted the need for the new ICB to commit to meaningful public engagement in a response to its new draft operating model, which we submitted together with other local Healthwatch.

Following up on impact

Together with other local Healthwatch, we followed up with ICB commissioners to report on their progress against the recommendations we made in our report on children's oral health, which we published jointly with Healthwatch Bucks and Healthwatch Reading in 2024. A recent outcome of this work has been the ICB commissioning a Children's Oral Health Improvement Pilot to help children and families look after their teeth and gums by providing information, supporting people to visit the dentist, and improving access to preventative treatment.

Protecting independent patient voice

This year we have continued to champion the need for independent patient voice following Government proposals to abolish Healthwatch as outlined in the NHS Modernisation Bill. We will carry on working closely with health and social care commissioners and providers to shape and secure new models that protect and support independent representation for people using services in Oxfordshire.



"As the new landscape for patient voice emerges, we will continue in our commitment to act independently on your behalf to ensure your views are heard and acted upon to improve services in Oxfordshire."

Dr Veronica Barry, Executive Director of Healthwatch Oxfordshire

Information and advice

People across Oxfordshire can contact us for trusted information and advice about health and social care services. This helps them to get the right support – whether this is how to find an NHS dentist, register with a GP or make a complaint.

This year we've helped 316 people by:

- Providing up-to-date information about local health and social care services
- Linking people to reliable information they can trust
- Helping them to access the services they need.

We have also continued to promote and provide accessible, reliable and up-to-date health and social care information and advice via our website, social media platforms, leaflets and a range of other communication channels.

Our website offers the Recite Me accessibility tool, which includes a translation function, and we also provide links to translated and Easy Read leaflets and materials.



Enabling conversations with local health leaders

We hold regular webinars to help highlight the work of Oxfordshire services and organisations, and to give people the chance to hear directly from local decision-makers and learn about local and national health developments.

Over the last year we held six webinars attended by **256** people. We covered topics including *Living well in Oxfordshire*, *Cancer care and support*, and *Let's talk about menopause*, showcasing local services and support.

We also focused on *Neighbourhood Health* and the *10-Year Plan for England* to explore what these national developments might mean locally. Our final session, *Putting Marmot principles into practice*, highlighted the importance of tackling health inequalities in our communities.

“Thank you, very informative and useful.”
“Thank you very much for a helpful session.”
Webinar attendees



You can watch our webinars at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-webinars

Raising awareness of language support at GPs

We worked with Oxford Community Champions to make a film explaining the language support available at GP surgeries for people who speak little or no English.

In the short film, Carol Ball from Healthwatch Oxfordshire, explains how all patients have a right to an interpreter at any appointment they have with their GP and to translated medical information, including appointment and referral letters.

The film also outlines how to request an interpreter and highlights the importance of using professional language support.

You can watch this film at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-films



Our website has information about how to access local services, understand how the health system works and find trusted support. See www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/help-and-support or if you can't find what you need give us a call on **01865 520520**.

It's all about teamwork

We are supported by a team of amazing volunteers who give their time to help support and steer our work.

This year our volunteers:

- Joined us on community outreach at events across the county to speak to people about their experiences of using local health and social care services
- Carried out Enter and View visits to local health and care services to collect information about what works well and what could be better to help improve people's experiences.

We have six volunteer Trustees on our Board who bring experience and expertise to support our work and governance. We are also supported by two volunteer Ambassadors who attend the Oxfordshire Children's Trust Board and Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board meetings on our behalf.

Thank you so much to our volunteers for all their help and support.



Finance and future priorities

We receive funding to deliver the statutory Healthwatch function from Oxfordshire County Council, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Income 2025-26		Expenditure 2025-26	
Funding from Oxfordshire County Council	£290,833	Staff costs	£256,420
Additional income	£92,238	Non-staff costs	£102,301
		Office costs	£15,154
Total income	£383,071	Total Expenditure	£373,875

Please note these figures may be subject to minor amendments as they are yet to be verified by an independent examination.

The additional income received, as outlined above, enabled us to deliver a small number of projects, in line with our charitable objectives, including:

- Funding from Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) added to our capacity to support engagement in health and care and ensure the voices of Oxfordshire residents were fed back into the ICB
- Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) facilitated funding from Oxford University, via Oxfordshire Community Research Network, to deliver four workshops with community members to co-create a 'How to Guide' on community research
- OCC provided funding for research capturing residents' experiences of living in 14 rural areas in the county, as part of the Marmot Place focus on health inequalities
- A further grant from OCC supported the organisation of a community-led event bringing together community groups and decision-makers with a focus on the Marmot Place project.

Our priorities for 2026-27 build on what we have heard from members of the public, including via our information service, Feedback Centre, research and outreach work, plus our priority setting survey. Our plans also take into account the changing health and social care landscape and the uncertainty around our future.

Our priorities for the year are to:

- Continue gathering insight on people's experiences of secondary, primary and social care
- Carry out insight projects into health and social care where people experience inequalities, using a variety of methods, including community research
- Work constructively with all partners to explore ways in which an independent voice into health and social care services can be maintained in the future.

For full details see www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-priorities

Statutory statements

Healthwatch Oxfordshire, Office F20, Elmfield House, New Yatt Road, Witney, OX28 1GT. Healthwatch Oxfordshire uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

Involvement of volunteers in our governance and decision-making

Our board of six members work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of our activities. The board met five times and held four open forum meetings online and in person to enable members of the public to hear about our work and share their views. Every year we reach out to the public to help inform our focus and set our priorities for the coming year.

Ways we sought people's experiences

We continued to reach as many people as possible in order to hear their experiences and views of health and social care services.

This year we:

- Spoke directly with **1,566** people during outreach and at events across the county
- Received **1,509** responses to online and paper surveys
- Were contacted by **878** people by phone, email and our online Feedback Centre
- Held **6** webinars attended by **256** people
- Made **11** Enter and View visits
- Attended **23** Patient Participation Group meetings.

We proactively connected with seldom heard communities, for example, we linked to asylum seekers and refugees in supported accommodation. We supported community researchers to hear from their communities together, engaging with Chinese elders, Black women on their maternity experiences, and South Asian women on their views of cancer care. We gathered men's views through on-the-street conversations in Faringdon.

We took part in community and voluntary sector networks and supported public engagement in the early development of Neighbourhood Health. We continued to build links and relationships with community groups in the county's priority areas of health inequality and supported the development of Oxfordshire's Marmot Place with its collective focus on health inequality. We convened a community-led event for more than 100 grassroots community members to speak about their work to improve health and wellbeing in their areas, and to hear from decision-makers about the Marmot approach. We also reached out across the county to hear from people living in rural communities.

We received additional funding from Oxfordshire University via Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Community Research Network to run four workshops with grassroots communities to co-develop a How to Guide for community research.

Statutory statements

As part of our commitment to ensure our work is as accessible as possible, we produce Easy Read summaries of our research reports. Our website offers a translation tool, and we provide links to translated resources. We ensure our Annual Impact Report is shared widely. It is published on our website with both an Easy Read and summary, and paper copies are available.

Responses to recommendations

One provider did not respond to the recommendations we made in an Enter and View report, so we will continue to follow this up with relevant bodies. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to the Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations.

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

We actively seek ways to ensure people who make decisions about health and social care hear the insight and experiences that have been shared with us by the public. We promote opportunities for people to contribute to decision-making and local, regional and national strategy. Our webinars enable the public to engage directly with decision-makers and to ask them questions.

We take what we hear to key committees, including Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board, Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), Oxfordshire Place Based Partnership and Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) System Quality Group. We work with the five other Healthwatch organisations across the ICB area to bring a collective voice to committees. All our reports are shared with Healthwatch England and Enter and View reports with the Care Quality Commission.

Our newly designed website clearly demonstrates the impact of our work, www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-impact giving examples of how patient voice drives service development, improvement and change.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire representatives

In 2025–26 Healthwatch Oxfordshire was represented on the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board by our Executive Director Dr Veronica Barry and our Chair Barbara Shaw. Dr Barry also attended the Health Overview Scrutiny Committee and several committees and sub-groups of BOB ICB. Lay ambassadors have represented Healthwatch Oxfordshire on the Children's Trust and Health Improvement Board. See **page 31** for details of other committees and meetings we have attended.



"I wish to thank Healthwatch Oxfordshire for their extensive contributions to the Committee's work and insights into health and care services."

Councillor Jane Hanna OBE, Chair of HOSC

Statutory statements

Research report outcomes

This table shows some of the impact of our research reports published this year. All our reports can be read at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports-hub

Report	Impact and outcomes
Navigating urgent and emergency care services in Oxfordshire Published June 2025	▪ We presented this report to the Urgent Care System Delivery Group to inform their planning for winter 2025–26. ▪ Providers are developing a new overarching Oxfordshire Urgent and Emergency online service with clear information and working to ensure consistency across all providers' websites.
Using women's health services in Oxfordshire Published July 2025	▪ Our report is being used to inform the development of a women's health strategy for Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB). ▪ What we heard has also helped to bring about improvements in local services, including a commitment from Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to reduce waiting times for specialist women's health clinics, improve patient information about screening and procedures, and train staff in cultural competency and trauma-informed care.
Trans and non-binary people's experiences of GP services in Oxfordshire Published October 2025	▪ BOB ICB is looking into providing training for GP staff on understanding and competency in trans healthcare, and setting up an LGBT+ page on their engagement platform Your Voices. ▪ Primary Care Support England has updated its guidance on changing NHS gender markers, making it possible for people to keep their old NHS record if they want, and highlighting the option of a non-binary 'I' marker.
Digital health care and the NHS App: voices from Oxfordshire Published November 2025	▪ BOB ICB is developing a dedicated NHS App communications page on their website to provide residents with up-to-date, plain-language information about app features, benefits and data protections. ▪ Oxfordshire County Council is implementing a Digital Inclusion Strategy, including Giga Hubs which provide fast broadband to public services in rural areas, and a 'Digital Helpers' programme in public libraries.

Statutory statements

Enter and View

This year we made **11** Enter and View visits and published the reports listed below.

All our reports, which give details of the recommendations we made to providers and their responses, can be read at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports

This table gives examples of some of the changes to services which have been made as a result of our Enter and View work to help improve people's experiences.

In addition to the visits listed below, we also visited Well Pharmacy in Marston in June 2025, but the provider of the pharmacy did not respond to our report.

Provider	Example of our recommendation	Example of action taken by the provider
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Visit made in 2024-25

The Phoenix Ward at the Littlemore Mental Health Centre (OH)	Ensure patients are aware they can ask for additional snacks and refreshments in between meals if hungry.	Provider response: We will create a poster and add this in the dining room so that patients know that they can request additional snacks.
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Visits made in 2025-26

Connect Health clinics at: - Hanborough House, Botley - Bicester Community Hospital - Townlands Community Hospital at Henley-on-Thames (Connect Health is now known as Cora Health)	General recommendation for all three clinics: The presence of an admin staff at the reception could benefit patients to navigate the service and support the digital check-in.	Provider response: We are taking steps to improve the self check-in experience. We are enhancing guidance through audio messages and TV screens to support patients upon arrival. Additionally, we are updating messaging on check-in desks to provide clearer instructions and reassurance.
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Statutory statements

Provider	Example of our recommendation	Example of action taken by the provider
The Blue Outpatients Department at the John Radcliffe Hospital (OUH)	The OUH website should provide more comprehensive information about the unit and its services.	Provider response: We will ensure details about the department are included on the OUH website, including services and specialities we host and accessibility arrangements.
The Children's Ward at the Horton General Hospital (OUH)	Install hearing loops in the ward to enhance accessibility for patients with hearing impairments.	Provider response: We will work with the patient experience team to source a hearing loop for the ward.
Oxford Breast Imaging Centre at the Churchill Hospital (OUH)	Display a welcome sign in the entrance to the centre to create a more inviting atmosphere for visitors.	Provider response: This has been actioned, and a sign is now at the entrance to the department.
Wintle Ward at the Warneford Hospital (OH)	The activity board should be updated weekly with fresh content to enhance patient engagement in activities.	Provider response: This has been fed back to the activity team and each weekend an up-to-date activity schedule is shared with patients and displayed in the communal area.
St Leonard's Ward at Wallingford Hospital (OH)	Consider additional training for staff working with palliative patients.	Provider response: Additional training for healthcare assistants has been delivered by the Palliative Care Lead.
Ashurst Ward at the Littlemore Mental Health Centre (OH)	Provide and display clear information on how people can access an interpreting service.	Provider response: We have clearly displayed information on how to access interpreting services.

OUH – Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
OH – Oxford Heath NHS Foundation Trust

Appendix 1 – reports published

Research reports

- Digital health care and the NHS App: voices from Oxfordshire
- Trans and non-binary people's experiences of GP services in Oxfordshire
- Using women's health services in Oxfordshire
- Navigating urgent and emergency care services in Oxfordshire

Community research reports

- Hearing from older Chinese people in Oxfordshire – with Derek Ng and the Oxfordshire Older Chinese People's Centre
- "If we were treated the same as any other race" – submission to Amos Investigation by Black Women in Maternity
- What we heard about cancer and access to healthcare – with Sunrise Multicultural Project

Feedback reports

- What we heard about GP services in Oxfordshire April 2025 to March 2026
- Your feedback about Cora Health January 2025 to January 2026

Snapshot reports

- What you told us about using mental health services in Oxfordshire
- Hearing from men in Faringdon
- Your views on health and care in Didcot

Enter and View reports

- St Leonard's Ward at the Wallingford Community Hospital
- Wintle Ward at the Warneford Hospital
- Oxford Breast Imaging Centre at the Churchill Hospital
- The Children's Ward at the Horton General Hospital
- The Blue Outpatients Department at the John Radcliffe Hospital
- Well Pharmacy in Marston
- Connect Health – including clinics at Hanborough House at Botley, Bicester Community Hospital and Townlands Community Hospital at Henley-on-Thames
- Phoenix Ward at the Littlemore Mental Health Centre

Annual report

- Healthwatch Oxfordshire Annual Impact Report 2024-2025

Reports to external bodies

- Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – June, September and November 2025, January 2026
- Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board – July, September and November 2025, February 2026
- Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board – June, September and December 2025, March 2026

You can read all these reports at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports-hub

Appendix 2 – reaching out

Over the year we met with, heard from or worked with more than 60 groups and organisations. Examples include:

- African Families in the UK (AFIUK)
- Age UK Oxfordshire
- Agnes Smith Advice Centre
- Ark T
- Aspire
- Asylum Welcome
- Banbury Community Support Services
- Banbury Larder
- Banbury Sensory Baby Group
- Black Women in Maternity
- CAG Oxfordshire
- Carers Oxfordshire
- Charlbury Men's Group
- Cherwell VCS
- Citizens Advice Oxfordshire
- Community Albums
- Community First Oxfordshire
- Community Impact Bucks
- Cornhill Community Centre
- Dementia Friendly Abingdon
- Grimsbury Community Centre
- Helen and Douglas House
- Katharine House Hospice
- Keystone Hubs at Abingdon, Banbury and Chipping Norton
- Libraries – including Adderbury and Bicester
- Lived Experience Advisory Forum (LEAF)
- My Life My Choice
- Oxford Brookes University
- OX4 Food Crew
- Oxford Community Action
- Oxford Community Champions
- Oxford Health and Wellbeing Networks
- Oxford Hub
- Oxford Wellbeing Co-op
- Oxfordshire Asian Women's Voice
- Oxfordshire Community Education Group
- Oxfordshire Community Voluntary Action (OCVA)
- Refugee Resource
- Rose Hill Junior Youth Club
- SENDIASS
- Small Steps
- SOHA Housing
- Sudanese Community Education
- Sue Ryder
- Sunrise Multicultural Project, Banbury
- Syrian Sisters
- The Branch in Chipping Norton
- The Hill, Banbury
- The Sunshine Centre, Banbury
- Transition Lighthouse Empowerment Space
- Waste2Taste

In addition, we worked with several other grassroots groups to co-produce a community research 'How to Guide' – see page 16 for a list of groups involved.

We also attended more than 24 community events across the county, including:

- Abingdon Health Fest
- Bicester and Kidlington memory cafés
- Carers Oxfordshire Day
- Dementia Oxfordshire's summer information fair
- Health on the Move events in Banbury and Bicester
- Health promotion events in Rose Hill, Oxford City, Didcot, Wantage and Banbury Ruscote
- International Men's Day in Oxford
- Leys Afrobeats Festival
- OX4 Food Crew celebration event
- Oxford and Banbury Older People's Day events
- Oxford Eid Extravaganza
- Oxford Pride and Thame Pride
- Play Days in Banbury, Berinsfield, Henley-on-Thames and Witney

Appendix 3 – meetings attended

Over the year members of the team and Trustees have attended a range of meetings with groups, organisations and statutory bodies, including:

- Banbury Brighter Futures
- Bicester West Community Insight Profile steering group
- BOB VCSE Alliance
- Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board committees and meetings, including the System Quality Group, women's health strategy and digital inclusion meetings
- Care Quality Commission
- Cora Health
- Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch organisations
- Oxford Health and Wellbeing Partnership
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust Annual Meeting and strategy development
- Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Annual General Meeting, Council of Governors, Governors Constituency meetings and Patient Experience Forum
- Oxfordshire All-Age Autism Strategy launch
- Oxfordshire Children's Trust Board
- Oxfordshire Civilian Military Partnership
- Oxfordshire Community Research Network
- Oxfordshire Communities of Practice
- Oxfordshire County Council, district, parish and town councils
- Oxfordshire Dementia Action Alliance
- Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board
- Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board
- Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment working group
- Oxfordshire Marmot Steering Group
- Oxfordshire Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership
- Oxfordshire Men's Health Partnership
- Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership
- Oxfordshire Mental Health Prevention Concordat
- Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Health Planning working group and workshops
- Oxfordshire Palliative Care Network End of Life Care meetings
- Oxfordshire Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment working group
- Oxfordshire Place Based Partnership
- Oxfordshire Prevention and Health Inequalities Forum
- Oxfordshire Primary and Community Board
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board
- Oxfordshire Urgent Care System Delivery Group
- Patient Participation Group meetings and South Oxfordshire PPG Alliance
- West Oxfordshire Health and wellbeing Alliance meetings

Contact us for information,
support and to share your views
on NHS health and care services:

Qeynta in xog lagaa cawiyo
Kwa habari, msaada na sauti yako
juu ya afya na utunzaji

karik hakarak informasaun ka
suporta ka hakarak hato'o hanoin
ruma kona ba ajuda saude nian

هيلث ووتش للحصول على المعلومات والدعم وحاجتك
للصحة والرعاية

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