



# Neighbourhood Health Centres

## Insight Report September 2026

## Contents

|                                                                                                               | Page |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Who are Healthwatch North East Lincolnshire?                                                                  | 2    |
| Mission Statement                                                                                             | 3    |
| What are Neighbourhood Health Centres?                                                                        | 4    |
| Context and Scope                                                                                             | 5    |
| Methodology                                                                                                   | 6    |
| Key Findings                                                                                                  | 7    |
| What services and features do you respondents think should be included in their local NHC?                    | 7    |
| What barriers do respondents think prevent people from accessing care locally? How do we remove the barriers? | 10   |
| What do respondents think would make the centre welcoming, inclusive and effective for the community?         | 13   |
| Conclusion                                                                                                    | 16   |
| Appendices                                                                                                    | 17   |

## Who are Healthwatch North East Lincolnshire?

Healthwatch North East Lincolnshire (HWNEL) is the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. HWNEL exists to make sure that people are at the heart of their care. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. HWNEL share their views with those with the power to make change happen. We also help people find the information they need about services in their area. HWNEL has the power to make sure that people's voices are heard by the government and those running services. As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them. Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people. In summary, HWNEL is here to:

- Help people find out about local health and care.
- Listen to what people think of services.
- Help improve the quality of services by letting those running services and the government know what people want from health and care.
- Encourage people running services to involve people in changes to health and care.

# Mission Statement



## Our vision

To bring closer the day when everyone gets the care they need.



## Our mission

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



## Our approach – what is important to us?

- **Listening** to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- **Including** everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- **Analysing** different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- **Acting** on feedback and driving change.
- **Partnering** with the Government, health and care services and the voluntary and community sector to make care better whilst retaining our independence.

## What are Neighbourhood Health Centres?

Neighbourhood Health Centres have been proposed as part of the Neighbourhood Health Framework 2026<sup>(appendix 2)</sup> in furtherance of the government's 10 Year Health Plan for England 2025<sup>(appendix 2)</sup>. The Neighbourhood Health Framework is intended as a joint endeavour between the NHS and local authorities alongside wider partners.

Its stated aims are:

- *To improve people's health and care outcomes, reduce health inequalities and help them stay well at home*
- *To organise services around the person with more convenient, personalised and joined-up care*
- *To reduce pressure on more acute services – including hospitals and care homes*
- *To cut waste and duplication*
- *To help the NHS deliver against core targets*

The Neighbourhood Health Framework policy paper describes the purpose of NHCs as follows:

*Neighbourhood health centres (NHCs) will be seen as the place to go for most health needs in every community. They will:*

- *bring together GP services with a mix of community, local authority and civil society sector services*
- *allow staff to join up care, which is better for people and communities*
- *make care easier to access and easier to deliver, while also reducing pressure on other parts of the system*

The government has stated it aims to implement 120 NHCs by 2030 and a total of 250 by 2035.

## Context and Scope of the Project

Healthwatch North East Lincs were approached by North East Lincolnshire Council and asked to complete a survey to gain an understanding of local people's views on Neighbourhood Health Centres.

They sought to identify:

- The services and features that respondents would value in their local NHC
- The barriers that prevent people from accessing healthcare and how respondents feel these barriers might be overcome
- Residents' views of what would make the NHC welcoming, inclusive, and effective for the community

## Methodology

Healthwatch NEL gathered feedback by completing surveys with members of the public and health and social care professionals. Feedback was gathered from visitors to a total of 17 different local venues including GP practices, healthcare services and community and voluntary services (see below). 48 people participated in the survey in person.

Data was also captured using an online survey accessible through a QR code advertised on social media and displayed at Healthwatch engagement events. The online survey gathered a further 6 responses.

In total 54 people gave their feedback.

The survey consisted of three open-ended questions. Common themes and ideas were identified from the feedback and have been summarised in the next section.

The venues where the surveys were completed are as follows:

| Place / Event                                               | Number of Responses |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Carers Festival, Riverhead Square, Grimsby                  | 10                  |
| Humberston Park School SEND Event, Grimsby                  | 4                   |
| The Comeback, Grimsby                                       | 4                   |
| Burchester Court, Grimsby                                   | 5                   |
| St. Andrews Hospice, Grimsby                                | 3                   |
| Great Escape, Grimsby                                       | 3                   |
| Adapted Bikes (CPG) – Lincs Inspire Leisure Centre, Grimsby | 3                   |
| Lincs Inspire – Grimsby Library                             | 2                   |
| Carers Support Service, Grimsby                             | 2                   |
| Assisted Living Centre, Grimsby                             | 2                   |
| Navigo House, Grimsby                                       | 2                   |
| Freshney Green PCC, Grimsby                                 | 2                   |
| Recovery Garden Drop In, Grimsby                            | 2                   |
| Learning Disability Celebration Day, Café Aspire, Grimsby   | 1                   |
| Opendoor Surgery, Grimsby                                   | 1                   |
| Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital, Grimsby                  | 1                   |
| SENDIASS Event, Town Hall, Grimsby                          | 1                   |
| Online                                                      | 6                   |

## Key Findings

### Question 1 'What services and features do you think should be included in their local NHC?'

Participants in the survey were asked the question, 'What services and features should be included in the Neighbourhood Health Centre?'

The most common themes have been summarised. A full list of themes and how frequently they occurred can be found in the appendices.

#### GP and Diagnostic Services

18.5% of respondents stated that they would like to be able to see their GP at the NHC.

The second most frequently mentioned diagnostic service was blood testing, which was included in 13% of survey responses.

Several respondents referred to the Community Diagnostic Centre within the Freshney Place shopping centre and indicated that a similar service within the NHC would be useful. Respondents valued not having to go to hospital for diagnostic testing, citing shorter waiting times and ease of travel.

*"There should be more services available [in the community] so you don't have to go to the hospital."*

**Male participant visiting Lincs Inspire Library, Cleethorpes**

Access to a 'walk in' GP service was also frequently mentioned (11% of responses), with some respondents indicating a preference to sit and wait to be seen over prearranging an appointment with a GP, which was seen by some as an unnecessary barrier to accessing care (see 4.2 below).

Other common themes included health checks, diagnostic scans, specialist nurse appointments, minor injury unit, and X ray.

#### Specialist Services

Mental health services were the most frequently mentioned specialist service that respondents would like to see at their local NHC, raised in 20% of survey responses (rising to 26% when more specific services such as psychiatry and counselling were included in this total).

*"Mental health services should be present so your GP has someone to signpost you to to talk about how you feel, or to consult with on*

*treatment and support options. This would reduce the number of people being prescribed medication they don't need and get them into talking therapies and other non-medical support."*

**Female participant attending The Carers' Festival**

*"There needs to be more mental health services - there is nowhere to go."*

**Female participant attending The Carers' Festival**

11% of respondents advised they wanted to see dentists based at the NHC, many saying they have been unable to register with an NHS dentist in the area.

A further 11% said they would like services to support people with drug, alcohol or other addictions to be based in the NHC.

*"They should prioritize substance misuse services in areas where substance misuse is highest."*

**Female participant visiting Freshney Green Primary Care Centre**

Another theme that was frequently mentioned was services to support with diet, healthy eating and weight management, occurring in 11% of responses.

Other common suggestions included an in-house pharmacy, podiatry services, sexual health services, and support workers to help with benefits, form filling etc.

## **Social, community and education**

Many people who engaged with the survey prioritized social resources in addition to healthcare. 28% of those surveyed felt that they would benefit from social groups based in the NHC, some suggesting groups targeting particular demographics such as older people.

Other suggestions included activity groups, keep fit classes, coffee mornings, educational classes and groups for children with SEND.

## **Accessibility**

17% of those who responded to the survey noted the need for adaptations to ensure the centre is accessible and inclusive for all, with wheelchair accessibility being mentioned frequently.

A sensory-friendly environment was also mentioned by 7% of those we spoke to, with respondents valuing an environment that is inclusive for autism, learning disabilities

and sensory sensitivity. It was suggested that consideration be given to light levels, noise levels and strong smells e.g. from cleaning products.

*“It should be inclusive and accessible for autism and learning disabilities. There should be a particular room that is a quiet space with low lighting, not overstimulating and with no clinical smell.”*

**Female participant visiting the Humberston Park School SEND event**

## **Information and Communication**

Clear information about services and resources available at the centre was prioritised by many participants, with 7% requesting a clear information board in the waiting area to inform the public about what is available. Others commented that clear up to date information should be available in multiple languages and be accessible online as well as on noticeboards.

## **Facilities**

A substantial (15%) number of respondents said they would like a café or coffee shop as part of the NHC, while others suggested water fountains, drinks stations or vending machines.

*“There should be somewhere you can have a drink and relax,”*

**Female participant visiting the Humberston Park School SEND event**

*“There should be a café so you can sit and have a cuppa.”*

**Female participant visiting the Humberston Park School SEND event**

## **Travel and Transport**

Some participants prioritised a central, easy to access location for the NHC. People spoke about this in more detail under question 2.

## Question 2 'What barriers do you think prevent people from accessing healthcare and how could the barriers be removed?'

### Transport

54% of survey responses cited difficulty getting to appointments as a barrier to accessing healthcare, with respondents emphasising a lack of suitable bus services, travel time and distance, and lack of nearby parking as issues affecting their ability to access care. Lack of appointment options for people who are housebound or have limited ability to travel due to a disability was also raised.

Participants advised this barrier could be removed by planning regular bus services to the centre or placing centres in areas already well served by public transport.

### Availability and Booking of Appointments

The most common theme within this category was lack of flexibility around appointment times, with 9% of respondents saying that not being able to book appointments at evenings and weekends prevented them from accessing healthcare.

7% of people who participated in the survey said that long queues to speak to someone on the phone were a barrier to accessing healthcare.

Other common themes included difficulty using online booking systems, waiting times for appointments and difficulty using automated telephone systems.

Suggested ways to remove these barriers included expanded opening hours to accommodate those in work, and offer a 'walk in' GP service.

### Information

Difficulty accessing information about what services are available was seen as a barrier to accessing healthcare (mentioned by 7% of participants), including information not being available online. Out of date information both online and on noticeboards was also seen as an issue.

19% expressed that clear, up to date information about services and activities should be posted on noticeboards, on websites and on social media. Some participants also noted that information should be accessible and jargon-free.

*"Lack of awareness of services can be a barrier - it's not always clear what's on. They should put information on social media as well as print media for people who can't get online."*

**Female participant visiting the Carers Festival**

## Accessibility and Inclusion

Accessibility barriers such as lack of wheelchair access and lack of adaptations for a variety of disabilities were raised as potential barriers to accessing services.

To remove this as a barrier participants emphasised the need for disabled access, wheelchair access, elevators, and changing facilities with hoists and beds for adults with disabilities.

## Staff Attitudes and Communication

Many patients emphasised that the attitudes and the way staff communicated with them was important in feeling able to access services. 7% of those who participated said that feeling dismissed or not listened to created a barrier to accessing healthcare and a further 3.5% said that unfriendly staff when they call to book an appointment put them off attending. In total, 20% of people cited reasons related to staff attitudes or communication as a barrier to accessing healthcare.

Patients said reception staff should make people feel welcome and relaxed, with one participant saying staff training could support with communication.

*“People will be put off coming if they’ve felt fobbed off or not listened to in the past.”*

**Female participant visiting the Carers Festival**

*“Not having felt listened to in the past makes it hard to feel able to go back again.”*

**Female participant visiting The Comeback**

*“Feeling like staff don’t care or that they don’t like an individual is off-putting.”*

**Male participant visiting The Comeback**

*“They can remedy it by making it a positive experience. They should try to make people feel relaxed and able to open up...have staff that people can relate to and build trust with. Make people feel good about coming back!”*

**Male participant at The Great Escape**

## Social, Emotional and Mental Health Related Barriers

Participants reported a variety of social, emotional and mental health related barriers to accessing healthcare. These included worries about wasting doctors' time or taking up an appointment someone else might need more, anxiety around appointment booking or attending the service, difficulty asking for help and not being able to see the same professional at every visit.

It was suggested that these barriers might be reduced by ensuring staff who answer the phones are friendly and reassuring. It was also suggested that being able to see the same professional at every visit would reduce anxiety around attendance.

*"A lack of consistency in who you're seen by makes it hard to build trust."*

**Male participant at The Great Escape**

*"Attending appointments can be stressful."*

**Male participant at The Carers Festival**

*"Being worried you're wasting the doctor's time by calling with a minor issue [can be a barrier]."*

**Female participant at The Comeback**

*"Not being seen by the same person every time I come and having to explain the same thing over and over, especially when it's a sensitive topic."*

**Male participant at The Great Escape**

## Systems and Referrals

11% of respondents said that issues around systems and referrals created a barrier to accessing care. Complicated referral pathways, red tape, and being passed between services were given as examples.

*"There's too much red tape. Referrals should be simple and straightforward. Cut out the middle man!"*

**Male participant at Navigo House**

## Question 3, 'What would make the centre welcoming, inclusive and effective for the community?'

### Staff Attitudes

Participants in the survey emphasised that staff attitudes were the most important factor in making the centre welcoming. 26% stated that welcoming, friendly reception staff were important to their experience of the centre.

*"I'd like to see happy, smiley faces when I walk through the door."*

**Female visitor to Navigo House**

*"A welcoming receptionist, not grumpy or snappy."*

**Female visitor to the Assisted Living Centre**

*"A relaxed environment with real people, not just screens."*

**Female visitor to the Carers Festival**

People also mentioned that staff should reassure patients that they will be listened to. Others mentioned that professionals should show a willingness to have difficult conversations when needed, a sense of humour, and place an emphasis on building relationships with people.

A further theme identified was that staff should take a proactive and positive attitude towards health, focusing on healthy lifestyles and preventing illness rather than just treating health issues.

*"They should take a proactive, positive approach with an emphasis on staying healthy, not just treating illness."*

**Female visitor to The Comeback**

### Environment

17% of the people we spoke to said that they prioritised a homey, non-clinical space when designing the NHC. A relaxed, informal atmosphere was another common theme (9% of responses) with comfortable seating (7%).

*"The waiting area shouldn't feel like a waiting area - it should feel relaxed and homey."*

**Female visitor to the Carers Festival**

*"It shouldn't feel like a surgery - it should be an informal setting."*

**Male visitor to Opendoor Surgery**

Many people (17% of responses) said that in order to be inclusive of autistic people, people with learning difficulties and people with sensory sensitivities, the NHC should be designed as a sensory-friendly environment. Suggestions for creating a sensory-friendly environment included designated low light/low noise areas, designated low light/low noise times of day, and a sensory room.

*“There should be designated quiet and low lighting times for people with sensory processing issues.”*

**Female visitor to Freshney Green PCC**

*“The environment should be calm to help relax people as waiting rooms can be stressful especially for people with SEND.”*

**Female visitor to Carers Festival**

Other suggestions included a café (11% of responses), a bright and airy space, plants, flowers, fish tanks and a lack of clinical smell.

*“There should be plants and comfy chairs, tables with flowers on, a fish tank and classical music playing. It should have a clean modern look.”*

**Male visitor to Navigo House**

*“The place should smell nice, not like a hospital.”*

**Female visitor to the Carers Festival**

Some respondents also said they would like there to be an area for children to play while they wait for their appointment.

*“The waiting area should have things for children to do to help them stay calm.”*

**Female visitor to the Carers Festival**

## **Inclusion**

9% of people who responded prioritised disabled access when considering how to make the centre inclusive. Wheelchair access, hoists and changing facilities, and elevators were also mentioned as important for inclusion. Other considerations included gender neutral facilities, information being available in a variety of formats and languages, and an overall helping environment.

*“You should work with people from all walks of life and not judge.”*

**Female visitor to the Carers Festival**

*“Everybody has got to feel welcome.”*

Female visitor to Learning Disability celebration Day

*“There should be access for all groups, including those with a disability.”*

Male visitor to Burchester Court

## **Convenience and Ease of Use**

While many respondents indicated an interest in using the NHC as a social and community venue, others prioritised convenience, efficient service and ease of use (7%). Some respondents also mentioned they would like a way of being updated on waiting times (4%).

*“You should be able to get in and out quickly.”*

Male visitor to Opendoor Surgery

Respondents gave a variety of ideas on what would make the service user friendly for them, including booking appointments through an app, the ability to arrange for appointments with different services to be on the same day, an improved queuing system, and having the option to talk about minor health problems.

## **Information**

Some respondents indicated that clear information is part of what would make the service effective. Ideas included: ensuring information about services and activities is easy to access and all in one place; that provision should be made to share information with people who aren't online; transparency about treatment choices, and use of reflexive marketing.

## **Safety and Sustainability**

Sustainable practice was a priority for one respondent, who suggested solar panels, recycling initiatives and other eco friendly practices. Another resident advised that safety was a priority and suggested an ethos of 'designing out crime' e.g. by limiting Wifi access after hours and installing mosquito alarms.

## Conclusion

Respondents of North East Lincolnshire were keen to give their views on Neighbourhood Health Centres. Many of those who we spoke to were not aware of the Neighbourhood Health Framework prior to taking part in the survey. However, most found the concept easy to understand and indicated being largely in support of the implementation of Neighbourhood Health Centres.

A wide variety of themes and priorities were identified, with respondents drawing on their own and their loved ones' experiences of healthcare to explain the factors that are most important to them. Where respondents referred to ongoing issues with health or adult social care, they were signposted to appropriate services.

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch North East Lincolnshire would like to thank everyone who contributed their views to this project. We would also like to thank the services and staff at the 17 different venues where the survey was offered.

# Appendices

## 1. Breakdown of responses by theme & number of times mentioned

### Q1: What services and features do respondents think should be included in their local NHC?’

| Accessibility                                                                                                                                                                      |    | Specialist Services                                            |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Adaptations for people with mobility or physical health needs e.g. ramps, lifts, wide doors, chairs with arms, extra time to respond to appointment call                           | 9  | Mental health services                                         | 11 |
| Sensory-friendly environment, accessible for people with autism, learning disabilities and sensory sensitivities - consider light levels, strong smells, noise levels, quiet zones | 4  | Dentist                                                        | 6  |
| Open evenings and weekends                                                                                                                                                         | 2  | Healthy eating, diet and weight management                     | 6  |
| Flexible opening times                                                                                                                                                             | 1  | Drug and alcohol service                                       | 6  |
| More availability of appointments                                                                                                                                                  | 1  | Pharmacy                                                       | 5  |
| In person appointments                                                                                                                                                             | 1  | Podiatry                                                       | 5  |
| Provision for home visits for housebound patients                                                                                                                                  | 1  | Sexual health service                                          | 4  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    |    | Support worker for help with forms, set up ID, benefits advice | 4  |
| Information and Communication                                                                                                                                                      |    | Optician                                                       | 3  |
| Signposting information & information about services available in the centre                                                                                                       | 4  | Audiology                                                      | 3  |
| Information packs, guidance to tell patients about next steps                                                                                                                      | 2  | Physiotherapy                                                  | 2  |
| Staff to direct you where you need to go, rather than relying on touchscreen displays                                                                                              | 2  | Focus Adult Social Care                                        | 2  |
| Photograph of the building online                                                                                                                                                  | 1  | VCSE Services                                                  | 2  |
| Pictures of practitioners so patients know who they will be meeting                                                                                                                | 1  | Interpreters/Translators                                       | 2  |
| Information boards, leaflet displays                                                                                                                                               | 1  | Psychologist                                                   | 1  |
| Information about how to access mental health services                                                                                                                             | 1  | Counselling                                                    | 1  |
| Easy-read information                                                                                                                                                              | 1  | Mood clinic                                                    | 1  |
| Dogs allowed                                                                                                                                                                       | 1  | ADHD Screening                                                 | 1  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    |    | Learning disability support                                    | 1  |
| Facilities                                                                                                                                                                         |    | Smoking cessation                                              | 1  |
| Café                                                                                                                                                                               | 8  | Rehabilitation                                                 | 1  |
| Drinks station                                                                                                                                                                     | 3  | Falls Clinic                                                   | 1  |
| Water fountains                                                                                                                                                                    | 2  | Dietician                                                      | 1  |
| Vending machines                                                                                                                                                                   | 1  | Community connectors                                           | 1  |
| Childrens Play Area                                                                                                                                                                | 1  | Age Concern                                                    | 1  |
| Phone charging station                                                                                                                                                             | 1  | Friendship at Home                                             | 1  |
| Public toilets                                                                                                                                                                     | 1  | Andy's Man Club                                                | 1  |
| Gym                                                                                                                                                                                | 1  | Social prescribing                                             | 1  |
| Music                                                                                                                                                                              | 1  | Children's centre                                              | 1  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    |    | Diabetes nurse                                                 | 1  |
| Social, Community and Education                                                                                                                                                    |    | Stroke specialist                                              | 1  |
| Social Groups (Total)                                                                                                                                                              | 15 | Social workers                                                 | 1  |
| <i>Social groups (general)</i>                                                                                                                                                     | 10 | Victim support                                                 | 1  |
| <i>Social groups (for older people)</i>                                                                                                                                            | 3  | Debt support                                                   | 1  |
| <i>Social groups (for parents)</i>                                                                                                                                                 | 1  | Carers Support                                                 | 1  |
| <i>Social groups (for men)</i>                                                                                                                                                     | 1  | Senior care advisors                                           | 1  |
| Activity groups                                                                                                                                                                    | 3  | SEND support                                                   | 1  |
| Coffee mornings                                                                                                                                                                    | 2  | Complaints area / Link to PALS                                 | 1  |
| Arts and crafts                                                                                                                                                                    | 1  |                                                                |    |
| Life skills classes                                                                                                                                                                | 1  | GP & Diagnostic Services                                       |    |
| SEN Groups                                                                                                                                                                         | 1  | GPs                                                            | 10 |
| Children's groups                                                                                                                                                                  | 1  | Blood testing                                                  | 7  |
| Cooking groups                                                                                                                                                                     | 1  | Walk in GP unit                                                | 6  |
| Workshops                                                                                                                                                                          | 1  | Health checks                                                  | 3  |
| Keep active groups                                                                                                                                                                 | 1  | Scans                                                          | 3  |
| Learning days                                                                                                                                                                      | 1  | Specialist nurses                                              | 3  |
| Healthy lifestyles groups                                                                                                                                                          | 1  | Minor injury/ailment unit                                      | 2  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    |    | Community diagnostic centre                                    | 2  |
| Travel & Transport                                                                                                                                                                 |    | X Rays                                                         | 2  |
| Central/easy to access location                                                                                                                                                    | 3  | Someone to support with understanding test results             | 1  |
| On a bus route                                                                                                                                                                     | 1  | Blood pressure monitoring                                      | 1  |
| Plenty of parking                                                                                                                                                                  | 1  | Blood bourne virus testing e.g. Hepatitis, HIV                 | 1  |
| Combined/coordinated appointments so multiple trips aren't needed                                                                                                                  | 1  | On-the-day testing                                             | 1  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    |    | Medication Reviews                                             | 1  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    |    | Specialists                                                    | 1  |

## Q2: 'What barriers do you think prevent people from accessing healthcare and how could the barriers be removed?'

| Barriers                                                                                          |    |                                                                                                 |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Travel & Transport                                                                                |    | Lack of Information                                                                             |   |
| Difficulty getting to the centre (total)                                                          | 29 | Lack of information available about services                                                    | 4 |
| Travel /transport issues (general)                                                                | 8  | Out-of-date information on websites                                                             | 2 |
| No suitable bus service                                                                           | 7  | Inconsistent messaging about health                                                             | 1 |
| Travel time or distance                                                                           | 5  | Lack of clear information about finding buildings                                               | 1 |
| Lack of parking                                                                                   | 4  |                                                                                                 |   |
| Limited mobility                                                                                  | 3  | Accessibility and Inclusion                                                                     |   |
| Affordability of taxis                                                                            | 1  | Lack of wheelchair access / other accessibility barriers                                        | 2 |
| Fear of travelling to a high crime area                                                           | 1  | Lack of understanding of additional needs                                                       | 1 |
| Being housebound                                                                                  | 1  | Lack of lifts                                                                                   | 1 |
|                                                                                                   |    | Lack of adaptations for dyslexia                                                                | 1 |
| Availability and Booking of Appointments                                                          |    | Stigma around learning difficulties                                                             | 1 |
| No availability of appointments outside of working hours / having to book time off work to attend | 5  | Visual impairment barriers                                                                      | 1 |
| Waiting times on the phone                                                                        | 4  | Services requiring ID or proof of address                                                       | 1 |
| Difficulty using technology e.g. online system                                                    | 3  | Having to complete a form to access a service                                                   | 1 |
| Waiting times for appointments                                                                    | 2  | Lack of inclusivity                                                                             | 1 |
| Having to speak to an automated system                                                            | 2  |                                                                                                 |   |
| Lack of emergency appointments                                                                    | 1  | System and Admin Issues                                                                         |   |
| Waiting lists for services                                                                        | 1  | Bureacracy and red tape                                                                         | 2 |
| Inability to register with a service (e.g. NHS dentist)                                           | 1  | Complicated referral or registration pathways                                                   | 2 |
| Worrying about not getting an appointment                                                         | 1  | Feeling passed between services                                                                 | 1 |
| Inconsistent appointment times                                                                    | 1  | Being redirected to A&E                                                                         | 1 |
| Difficulty rebooking missed appointments                                                          | 1  |                                                                                                 |   |
| Not being able to speak to a doctor or nurse on the phone                                         | 1  | Time Pressures                                                                                  |   |
| Not being able to ring up at 8am                                                                  | 1  | Short appointment slots                                                                         | 4 |
| Being asked to share health information with care navigators                                      | 1  |                                                                                                 |   |
| Over reliance on phone triage                                                                     | 1  | Continuity of Care                                                                              |   |
| Schools not allowing time off for appointments                                                    | 1  | Not seeing the same professional on every visit                                                 | 2 |
|                                                                                                   |    | Having to explain the same issue multiple times                                                 | 1 |
|                                                                                                   |    | Not seeing the professional you have requested e.g. being passed to a nurse instead of a doctor | 1 |
| Staff Attitudes and Communication                                                                 |    | Not getting a follow up call                                                                    | 1 |
| Feeling 'fobbed off' or not listened to                                                           | 4  |                                                                                                 |   |
| Unfriendly or disrespectful staff on the phones                                                   | 2  | Social, Emotional and Mental Health barriers                                                    |   |
| Not feeling cared about by health professionals                                                   | 1  | Worrying about wasting professionals' time / that others need appointments more                 | 3 |
| Doctors not spending enough time understanding patient needs                                      | 1  | Anxiety or lack of confidence booking appointments                                              | 2 |
| Impersonal service                                                                                | 1  | Mental health                                                                                   | 2 |
| Worries about negative experiences being repeated                                                 | 1  | Stress around attending the practice                                                            | 1 |
| Patient confidentiality                                                                           | 1  | Fear of hearing bad news about health                                                           | 1 |
|                                                                                                   |    | Being 'in denial' about health issues                                                           | 1 |
|                                                                                                   |    | Pride around asking for help                                                                    | 1 |
|                                                                                                   |    | Agoraphobia                                                                                     | 1 |
|                                                                                                   |    | Isolation                                                                                       | 1 |
|                                                                                                   |    |                                                                                                 |   |
|                                                                                                   |    | Environment                                                                                     |   |
|                                                                                                   |    | Waiting areas not suitable for long waits e.g. uncomfortable chairs                             | 2 |
|                                                                                                   |    | Clinical feel to centre                                                                         | 1 |

|                                                                                                 |    |                                                                                                |   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Solutions</b>                                                                                |    |                                                                                                |   |
| <b>Staff Training</b>                                                                           | 6  | <b>Appointment Flexibility</b>                                                                 |   |
| <i>Training on trauma informed practice</i>                                                     | 1  | Offer a walk in service                                                                        | 2 |
|                                                                                                 |    | Provide appointment times to work around working hours e.g. early mornings, evenings, weekends | 2 |
| <i>Training (general)</i>                                                                       | 1  | Improve flexibility to rebook missed appointments                                              | 1 |
| <i>Training on additional needs</i>                                                             | 1  | Better access to emergency appointments                                                        | 1 |
| <i>Training on learning disabilities</i>                                                        | 1  | Offer longer appointments slots                                                                | 1 |
| <i>Training on respectful communication</i>                                                     | 1  |                                                                                                |   |
| <i>Training on building trust &amp; rapport</i>                                                 |    |                                                                                                |   |
|                                                                                                 |    | <b>Continuity of Care</b>                                                                      |   |
|                                                                                                 |    | Enable patients to be seen by the same professional at each visit where possible               | 1 |
| <b>Accessibility</b>                                                                            |    | Improve follow up after appointments                                                           | 1 |
| Disabled access (general)                                                                       | 7  | Ensure consistent messaging and advice                                                         | 1 |
| Wheelchair access                                                                               | 2  |                                                                                                |   |
| Elevators                                                                                       | 2  |                                                                                                |   |
| Hoists and beds for changing                                                                    | 2  | <b>Waiting Times</b>                                                                           |   |
| Dyslexia-friendly signage/resources                                                             | 1  | Reduce waiting times on the phone                                                              | 2 |
| Support for people with visual impairment                                                       | 1  | Improve booking systems                                                                        | 1 |
| Assistance with forms and registration                                                          | 1  |                                                                                                |   |
| Longer appointments for people with additional needs                                            | 1  | <b>Systems and Referrals</b>                                                                   |   |
| Access for mobility scooters                                                                    | 1  | Simplify referral pathways to services                                                         | 4 |
| Inclusive of people with PEG feeds                                                              | 1  |                                                                                                |   |
|                                                                                                 |    | <b>Service Capacity</b>                                                                        |   |
|                                                                                                 |    | Greater availability to appointments                                                           | 2 |
| <b>Communication</b>                                                                            |    |                                                                                                |   |
| Clear, easy to access information about services and activities posted both in print and online | 10 | Reduce waiting lists                                                                           | 1 |
| Use accessible language, reduce jargon                                                          | 2  | Improve access to NHS dentists                                                                 | 1 |
| Keep information boards and online information up to date                                       | 2  | Provide alternatives to attending A&E                                                          | 1 |
|                                                                                                 |    |                                                                                                |   |
|                                                                                                 |    | <b>Customer Service</b>                                                                        |   |
|                                                                                                 |    | Reception staff should make people feel welcome and relaxed                                    | 4 |
| <b>Transport and Location</b>                                                                   |    | Make it easy to speak to a person, not an automated system                                     | 1 |
| Ensure the site is easily accessible by bus                                                     | 3  | Reduce stigma around seeking support for certain health conditions                             | 1 |
| Choose sites that are close to local communities                                                | 1  | Reassure people that they are not wasting anyone's time                                        | 1 |
| Provide adequate parking                                                                        | 1  | Staff should aim to build trusting relationships with patients                                 | 1 |

### Q3: What would make the centre welcoming, inclusive and effective for the community?

| Staff Attitudes                                     |    | Information                                                                                             |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Welcoming, friendly reception staff                 | 14 | Easy to access information about services and activities                                                | 1 |
| Reassurance that people will be listened to         | 2  | Information all in one place                                                                            | 1 |
| Proactive and positive approach to health           | 2  | Signposting and information in waiting areas                                                            | 1 |
| Compassion                                          | 1  | Consider people who aren't online                                                                       | 1 |
| Sense of humour                                     | 1  | Use reflexive marketing                                                                                 | 1 |
| Emphasis on building relationships with people      | 1  | Be transparent about patient choice of treatment                                                        | 1 |
| Willignness to have difficult conversations         | 1  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Non judgmental                                      | 1  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Staff that make you feel supported                  | 1  | <b>Convenience and ease of use</b>                                                                      |   |
|                                                     |    | Efficiency, fast service                                                                                | 4 |
| <b>Environment</b>                                  |    | Updates on waiting times                                                                                | 2 |
| Homey, non-clinical environment                     | 9  | User friendly services                                                                                  | 1 |
| Sensory - friendly space                            | 9  | Central app to book appointments                                                                        | 1 |
| <i>Designated low light/low noise hours</i>         | 3  | Services working together                                                                               | 1 |
| <i>Sensory room</i>                                 | 2  | Coordinating appointments to be on the same day                                                         | 1 |
| <i>Designated quiet spaces</i>                      | 3  | Rooms for hire for specialist doctors so you can be seen by a specialist without travelling out of area | 1 |
| <i>Sensory friendly lighting</i>                    | 1  | Ability to talk about minor health problems                                                             | 1 |
| Café                                                | 6  | Good queuing system                                                                                     | 1 |
| Relaxed, informal atmosphere                        | 5  | Better appointment times                                                                                |   |
| Soft comfortable seating                            | 4  | Toilet access                                                                                           | 1 |
| Childrens Area                                      | 4  | Parking                                                                                                 | 1 |
| A bright and airy space                             | 3  | Ease of contacting the service                                                                          | 1 |
| Fish tank                                           | 2  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Plants / Flowers                                    | 2  | <b>Sustainability</b>                                                                                   |   |
| Open spaces                                         | 2  | Sustainable practice                                                                                    | 1 |
| Staff in ordinary clothes, not lanyards or uniforms | 1  | Recycling                                                                                               | 1 |
| Should not smell clinical                           | 1  | Solar panels                                                                                            | 1 |
| Modern look                                         | 1  | Eco friendly practices that support the local area                                                      | 1 |
| Clean environment                                   | 1  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Comfortable temperature                             | 1  | <b>Safety</b>                                                                                           |   |
| Soothing music playing                              | 1  | Design out crime                                                                                        | 1 |
| Warm lighting                                       | 1  | Removeable benches                                                                                      | 1 |
| Good signage                                        | 1  | Turn off wifi after business hours                                                                      | 1 |
| Social areas                                        | 1  | Mosquito alarms                                                                                         | 1 |
|                                                     |    |                                                                                                         |   |
| <b>Inclusion</b>                                    |    |                                                                                                         |   |
| Disabled access                                     | 5  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Wheelchair access                                   | 3  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Welcome people from all walks of life               | 2  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Elevators                                           | 2  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Hoists and changing facilities                      | 2  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Gender neutral facilities                           | 1  |                                                                                                         |   |
| A helping environment                               | 1  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Easy read information                               | 1  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Information in different languages                  | 1  |                                                                                                         |   |
| Inclusive community                                 | 1  |                                                                                                         |   |
|                                                     |    |                                                                                                         |   |

## 2. Further Reading

The Neighbourhood Health Framework (2026) can be found at [Neighbourhood health framework – GOV.UK](#)

The 10 Year Health plan for England (2025) can be found at [10 Year Health Plan for England – GOV.UK](#)



Healthwatch North East Lincolnshire  
Office Suite 4  
Alexandra Business Centre  
Fisherman's Wharf  
Grimsby  
DN31 1UL

[www.healthwatchnortheastlincolnshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchnortheastlincolnshire.co.uk)  
t: 01472 361459  
e: [enquiries@healthwatchnortheastlincolnshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchnortheastlincolnshire.co.uk)  
🐦 @HealthwatchNEL  
📘 [Facebook.com/HealthwatchNEL](https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchNEL)