



# Your care, your voice

Annual Report 2017/18

# Highlights from our year

This year at least **43** services have made changes as a result of our recommendations



We've reached over **half a million** people on social media



We've recorded **389** experiences from Wokingham Borough residents



Our **40** volunteers contributed over **264** hours - worth **£198,095\***



We've made **74** visits to local services



Our reports tackled issues ranging from dementia to hospital discharge



Our helpdesk took **129** calls averaging **45** mins each

We've given **229** people information and advice



# Who we are



Healthwatch with the winning group of pupils from Bulmershe School, Worlds of Opportunity(WOOP) event

**Healthwatch Wokingham Borough supports local people to have a say about health and social care services. We work with services to make them better.**

We want you to share your experiences of using health and care with us - both good and bad. We use your voice to encourage those who run services to act on what matters to you.

We are uniquely placed as a national network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area of England. Healthwatch England make sure that the government put people at the heart of care nationally.

### How do I benefit from what Healthwatch does?

- You can speak to us about what you think of local services - good or bad.
- We are interested in everybody's views, from all parts of the community.
- Where possible, we will let you know when changes are planned to services in your area, and help you to have a say.
- You can ask us for information about health and social care services available locally.

### Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.

People's views come first - especially those who find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find ideas that work. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.

### Why should I get involved?

Speak to Healthwatch Wokingham about your experiences of any NHS or social care service, and help make them better for you, your friends and family. It's easy to get in touch - you can phone, email, chat online, or meet us in person. Just a few moments of your time could make a big difference.

**"I'd like to thank Healthwatch Wokingham. You helped arrange a meeting with the clinic, who apologised for my bad experience and made changes as a result. And I'm now connected into carers' services and the assessment team."**



# Your views on health & care



## Listening to people's views

We provide an impartial, free, confidential and independent advice, information and signposting service to deal with health or social care issues for anyone living in Wokingham Borough.

We have a telephone helpdesk that you can call on **0118 4181418** or you can speak to a Healthwatch officer in the community.

This year over **229** people were directed to the right information, service or agency. This includes **129** calls to our helpdesk. The average time spent on recorded calls, including research was over 45 minutes. The longest time spent on a case was over two hours.

## Making sure services work for you

We visited over 75 services including

- Berkshire Care Home
- Suffolk Lodge
- Belamie Gables
- Down Lodge
- 4 Extra Care schemes
- Prospect Park Hospital
- Frimley Hospital



Our visiting team members include Jane Lord, Roger Kemp, Rebecca Day, Pauline Manser, Jenny Gilbert, Susan South, Patricia Harcourt, Ulla Isaksen, Margaret Campbell White, Nick Campbell White, and Tony Allen. We offer regular training on Enter & View, dementia awareness and mental health first aid.

## Case Study: Getting mum a flu jab

Mrs K contacted us. She is a carer for her mum who has dementia and refuses to leave their home. Mrs K wanted to arrange a flu jab for herself and her mum at home. She spoke to her doctor on three occasions over three months but no progress was made. Mrs K was becoming weary with the effort and worried about the implications should either of them catch flu. Healthwatch Wokingham liaised with the GP surgery and district nurses to explore the breakdown. Mrs K and her mother received their flu jab at home within a week.

## Case Study: Prescription charges

Previously, GPs could prescribe people with coeliac disease 'units' of gluten-free food to help manage their condition. In 2018, Wokingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) launched a consultation about providing gluten-free food on prescription. Healthwatch Wokingham encouraged local residents take part in the consultation, and we met with a local coeliac group. We raised concerns with the CCG about how changing the policy would affect the health of people on low incomes unable to afford gluten-free products in the shops. However, from February 2018, gluten-free products were removed from prescriptions.

## Community Research Projects

Following the success of our previous Community Research Project schemes, we opened the fund again this year to encourage to new ways to explore people's experiences of local health and care services and improve wellbeing in the community.

We funded five initiatives. We have shared their final reports with relevant organisations and we are working to ensure these vital voices are heard by the decision-makers and that they make a difference.

### Wellbeing in Wokingham event

Brighter Berkshire is a community-led year-long initiative which aims to reduce stigma about mental health and improve local opportunities.

Their award funded an event aimed at reducing stigma around mental health.

Over 80 members of the public enjoyed 20 stalls, speakers, and musical performances. Attendees highlighted the need for holistic care and we fed this back to support the Council's commissioning plans for a Recovery College.

**"It was seriously enlightening and to be honest I am feeling more positive about the resources and support out there."**

### Deaf Positives' accessibility investigation

We wanted to find out how effective organisations had been at implementing the new legislation Accessible Information Standard, particularly in relations to Deaf People.

Healthwatch funding enabled a user-led organisation called Deaf Positives to visit 34 health and care settings, carry out an online small-scale survey, and conduct a focus group with three Deaf service users to capture specific examples.

Most staff were friendly and welcoming towards our Deaf mystery shoppers. Yet we were disappointed to find organisations in general seemed ill-equipped to meet their information and communication needs.

The exercise revealed four key deficiencies and we made six recommendations to improve the situation. We produced two factsheets at the request of a care organisations outlining good practice for front line staff.

## LINK Visiting Scheme Community Kitchen Project

The main focus of the Community Kitchen Project was to alleviate the impact of loneliness and isolation for older people which can cause feelings of loneliness, anxiety and depression. Beign lonely can affect lifespan and is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day

40 people were invited to attend. The LINK specifically invited older people who struggle on a Sunday with no family or friends. They grouped people on tables and facilitated conversation.

Each session has included whole family groups, ages ranging from 8yrs to 100yrs! The children enjoyed playing games with older people, doing some easy cooking projects such cookie-baking, and entertaining everyone with their musical skills. Time was set aside to discuss health and social care in Wokingham Borough and the results were passed to Healthwatch Wokingham.

### Unlock Your Wellbeing tea parties

Another Community Research Project was carried out by Unlock Your Wellbeing who delivered wellbeing workshops in Shinfield, the first with a small group of mums struggling with their wellbeing and their babies. The second workshop was for a small group of elderly Shinfield residents, who really enjoyed the session on Happiness - a lively discussion was had, and they commented that it enabled them to talk about things they didn't usually discuss.

A third workshop was held at Alexandra Place (Extra Care Living) in Woodley. There were three sessions - Happiness, Wellbeing and Resilience, attended by 40 people in total. Participants enjoyed a fun slant on topics which - again - were unusual for them to discuss, and many commented that they would be trying the strategies introduced and change their focus.

## Weekly blog and newspaper column

Our Wokingham Times blog offers us the opportunity to communicate - online and in print - with Borough residents on a regular basis. In many cases people get in touch with us as a direct result of reading our blog on a specific topic.



# Making a difference



## Creating Dementia-friendly environments

We wanted to capture the experiences of people living with dementia so we would be better able to champion their rights and preferences.

We worked in partnership with **Suffolk Lodge Care Home** to observe the physical environment to test how dementia friendly it was, identify key features that can be applied in order to help the person living with dementia live well and experience as much independence as possible. The manager welcomed our recommendations and has invited us back next year to assess the environment again.

## Extra Care environment

We interviewed residents, staff and family members at the 3 existing extra care homes in order to make recommendations for the 2 new facilities being built in 2017.

All 6 of our recommendations have been considered by **Optalis** and actions have been taken to ensure each one is addressed.

## People's experiences of leaving hospital

Working in partnership with neighbouring Healthwatch organisations, we surveyed people who had been in hospital to share their experience of being discharged. 114 people responded.

We identified good practice, particularly in relation to staff being kind and treating people with dignity and respect.

We also identified several areas that should be reviewed, such as

- the implementation of electronic record-keeping to improve communication
- how medications are written up by doctors and the use of pharmacy runners to speed up medication collection on discharge
- how Care Coordinators lead discussions about care at home, and how involved a person is in their care plan.

“Discharge delays due to the pharmacy are a frequent problem. I have on previous occasions been told to go home and return the next day (a return trip of 30 miles) to collect drugs. “

Royal Surrey County Hospital feedback

## Royal Berkshire Hospital and volunteer drivers

Every day, Wokingham Transport Scheme volunteer drivers take vulnerable elderly and disabled residents to appointments at the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

Healthwatch Wokingham is working with one of the drivers and the Trust to explore possible ways that volunteer drivers might be used as a resource by the hospital to help with getting people home safely following discharge.



## How your experiences have helped us influence change

### Updating online information

Many people tell us how they are not able to find the information they need on websites.

We raised this with **Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust** who explained that they relied on individual services to ensure the details on their website was up to date. However, based on our feedback, they realised this was not enough and decided to conduct an overall check every six months.

### Supporting our carers

Wokingham Borough Council asked us to produce a **GP Carers Toolkit** for use by GPs. Almost 14,000 people in the Borough (that's 9% of the population) identify themselves as an unpaid carer. Unpaid carers save the state huge sums of money. GPs often say that people don't disclose their caring role, but known carers sometimes say they haven't been offered help. The toolkit contains information and resources for carers, reminding GPs of the importance of identifying carers as well as making it easy for them to pass on details of support available.

“It wasn't until recently that I realised that I could be entitled to extra support as a carer. I've cared for my husband for years but no one told me before. My GP was aware that I look after my husband. If you don't have information ....then you will never know what support you can get.”

53

### Influencing inspections

Monthly teleconference calls with the various **Care Quality Commission** Lead Inspectors have provided an information-sharing channel. Intelligence we have forwarded to the CQC has shaped their inspections.

### Sharing experiences of Prospect Park Hospital

The six Healthwatch in Berkshire worked together to make 11 visits over the course of one week, twice a day to 5 wards, speaking to 41 inpatients at the main hospital for **people with mental health conditions** in Berkshire.

We wanted to capture the experiences and views of some of the least-heard, vulnerable people from our community. We wanted to hear what matters most to them, capture suggestions for improvements, and highlight examples of good practice.

Staff attitude, care and friendliness was the most common response from patients asked to identify one good thing about the hospital. More staff was the improvement most suggested by patients.

Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust described the report as informative and responded to each recommendation. Healthwatch are pleased to hear that a clinical review forum has been implemented between Crisis Resolution, Home Treatment Teams and Community Mental Health Teams for patients who have had multiple admissions.

### Highlighting mental health

We have supported the formation of **Wellness in Wokingham Action Group** (WIWAG) who want to promote good communications across the Borough around mental health and wellbeing. The official launch of this group will coincide with World Mental Health Day in October 2018.



# Our People



## Decision making

Decisions about Healthwatch activity are made in an accountable, open and transparent way at Board meetings which are held in community venues throughout the Borough and are open to the public.

## Healthwatch Champions

We have over 40 Healthwatch Champions volunteers who enable us to be at many more events. They also share feedback about health and social care services from their personal networks in their communities. Our champions were involved in a variety of ways including visiting services; leading research projects; and being health and care ‘mystery shoppers’. Some received extra training to become Enter and View authorised representatives.

“I enjoy gathering information online and working on my own initiative to organise it. What motivates me is my accuracy and presentation of my work.”

Healthwatch volunteer Muriel Longhurst

## Brighter Berkshire Bus Tour #WMHD 2017

Healthwatch, Brighter Berkshire & Optalis Supported Employment Service hired a minibus and spent World Mental Health Day travelling to locations around the Borough. We talked to residents about mental health, handed out leaflets and signposted to local and national organisations.

## Berkshire Care Home

In our visit to Berkshire Care Home we heard from residents, family members and the manager about the difficulty in accessing local NHS dentists, particularly for those who have mobility issues. Many dentists do not have hoists to move patients from wheelchairs into the dental chairs.

As a result, there is a concern that not all residents are having regular check-ups. Healthwatch Wokingham has been working to highlight the issue and liaising with the manager who has been trying to resolve the issue.



## Roger’s story

Roger has been volunteering with Healthwatch since 2013.

“I’ve really enjoyed volunteering and being able to reach out to vulnerable people who are left behind in our society; listen to their experiences; and enable their voice to be heard by decision-makers.

“Being able to talk with the Chief Executive of the Royal Berkshire Hospital about how volunteers might be used in order to help people get home from hospital is really exciting.”

# Who we've worked with

## Wokingham Borough Council

- Health & Wellbeing Board
- Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Wokingham Integrated Strategic Partnership (WISP)
- Community Health And Social Care Steering Group (CHASC)
- Strategic Partnerships
- Providers Forum
- Safeguarding Boards
- Voluntary Sector Recommissioning workshops

## Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust

- Patient Engagement Group
- CAMHS participation group
- Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE)
- Comment on Quality Account

## Royal Berkshire Hospital

- PALS liaison
- PLACE assessments
- Comment on Quality Account



## Other Healthwatch

- East Berkshire Group
- West Berkshire Group
- Thames Valley Group

## Healthwatch England

- Communications Working Group
- Thames Valley Networking Group
- Escalating issues & insight

## Community & Voluntary Sector

- Twyford Village Partnership Health Group
- Community Navigators
- Wellness in Wokingham Action Group
- Voluntary Car Drivers Forum
- SEAP Advocacy

## Berkshire West CCG

- Governing Body Meetings
- Quality Meetings
- Better Care Fund
- Joint Primary Care Co Commissioning
- Priorities Committee
- Integrated Care
- Future In Mind Group

## GP Alliance

- Patient Participation Groups

## Frimley Health Foundation Trust

- Patient Information Group
- Patient Experience Group
- PLACE assessments
- Comment on Quality Account

## Other NHS

- Thames Valley Strategic Network
- Quality Surveillance Group
- Planned Care Group
- NHS 111
- Thames Valley Clinical Senate



# Our finances & future plans

## Healthwatch Expenditure

The total expenditure for the financial year was £107,677. The funding comes from Wokingham Borough Council.

Income	£
Funding from Wokingham Borough Council	107,677
Other income from NHS	0
Total income	107,677

Over 85% of our costs are fixed and just over 10% is discretionary for us to use on project work and promotion.

Healthwatch will continue to ensure that value for money is achieved in undertaking all its activities.

## Plans for the year ahead

1. Supporting you to have your say
2. Providing a high quality service
3. Ensure decision-makers listen to your views to help improve health and care

# Final word from our Chair

And after five years, have we fixed everything? Of course not. But have we changed things? Yes we have.

We've been able to voice the concerns of Wokingham residents and get changes made. These stories continue to appear in all of our reports and campaigns and research. And along the way we are able to compliment and acknowledge great health and social care as well.

These days not even Parliament seems to last five years. But I'm pleased to say that Healthwatch Wokingham Borough has gone through that barrier. Without being too clichéd, we build upon our success, and this is down to our team of staff and volunteers.

This annual report provides a snapshot of the high quality service that we deliver, we have engaged with hundreds of residents, listening to what you have to say and ensuring that your voice at the forefront of services, decisions and improvements.



Our work programme for 2018/19 is challenging but will focus on areas of care which have not been scrutinised recently.

I would like to thank our Board members, volunteers and staff in advance for their support and dedication in carrying out our ambitious work plan.

Jim Stockley, Chair



# Contact us

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Registered Company (08561195)

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Apps: Speak up Wokingham App (available from App Store or Google Play)  
Appyness App (available from App Store or Google Play)

## Our partner organisation (sub-contractor):

Name: Help & Care  
Registered Address: 896 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH7 6DL



# About this report

Our annual report will be publicly available on our website by 30 June 2018. We will also be sharing it with Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group, Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Wokingham Borough Council.

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you require this report in an alternative format please contact us at the address above.

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## Stay in touch!

Help improve health & care - tell us your experiences.



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