

Annual Report

2017/18





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Message from our Chair

Jenny Baker has been our Chair almost since the start. She ensures that we continue to make a difference in health and social care.



Jenny Baker OBE, Chair

This has been another demanding but rewarding year for Healthwatch Bucks. Under the leadership of our Chief Executive, Thalia Jervis, we have been able to reach more people and to complete more projects than ever before. This report contains many examples showing how our work has benefitted local people.

We have been guided by our ambition to make changes for the better to the way health and social care are delivered in our county.

Since our resources are limited, we will continue to focus our work on three priority areas:

- Transition to and within social care
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Prevention and primary care.

This is a time of great change in the way health and social care services are delivered in Buckinghamshire as those in charge start to put in place plans for more joined-up care across the county. We want to make sure that your views are taken into account in planning new local services.

In August 2017, we were awarded a new two-year contract by Buckinghamshire County Council to serve the people of this county from November 2017 to October 2019. Despite reduced funding we were pleased to win the contract since we have spent the last four years evolving the best service we can.

This contract will allow us to build on the excellent work we have already done in the community to capture and promote your experiences and ensure people are at the heart of our local health and social care services.

Please keep talking to us to ensure that what you have to say gets heard!

Message from our Chief Executive

I have been heading up Healthwatch Bucks for nearly two years now and I am amazed over and over again by how much we achieve. The biggest challenge for me is fitting it all into this report.



Thalia Jervis, Chief Executive

Last year over 1000 people gave us their views on health and social care. And we made sure that those in charge listened to what you had to say. We fed into over 190 health and social care meetings across the county. It's all part of making sure that those who make decisions listen to people's views about the way services are delivered.

Our many projects also took us out and about. We went on to the streets of Buckinghamshire to ask about community pharmacies. We used questionnaires to contact people about telecare.

We went to where services are delivered to find out about your experiences of GP surgeries, care homes and a hospital pharmacy.

There are some great examples in this report of what can happen when providers listen and take action because of what you have said to us.

Looking ahead, we will make sure that we are hearing from all the different communities across Buckinghamshire. We will look for new ways to generate funding so that we can continue to help improve the range and quality of the services.

We will also take the way we work with volunteers to the next level. All this will help us continue to deliver for the residents of Buckinghamshire despite our reduced funding.

2017-18 has been a year of achievement. And that is thanks to the hard work and dedication of our directors, our volunteers and our staff. I hope you enjoy reading all about it.

Highlights from our year



15

reports we've written on health & social care issues



224

people we've spoken to in care homes about the quality of care provided



194

meetings we've attended about health & social care to represent you



38

Events we've attended to talk to you



820

pieces of feedback we've collected from local people



2126

hours contributed by our volunteers

Meet the team



Who we are

Healthwatch Bucks is one of 152 local organisations set up by government to ensure that decision-makers and health and social care services put the experiences of people at the heart of their work.

Our vision is that your experiences, ideas and opinions make a change for the better in health and social care in Buckinghamshire.

You need services that work for you, your friends and your family. That's why we want you to share your experiences of health and social 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 always ask ourselves
“What difference does this make?”

We have three main objectives

- To listen so that we understand what you think about health and social care
- To influence the right people so that your views can make a difference to health and social care services
- To change for the better the way health and social care services are set up and delivered.

The way we work

Independent - of those who buy, design or deliver health and social care services

Listening - to understand your views on health and social care services

Active - we get out and about and make things happen

Focused - our work is targeted on our priority areas

Balanced - we work across health, wellbeing and social care

Volunteer based - volunteers are at the heart of what we do

Collaborative - we work with others to reach more people.



Healthwatch Bucks with Martin Tett, Leader of Bucks County Council, at the Bucks County Show

Your views on health and social care



Listening to people's views

In June 2017, we celebrated the collection of nearly 1500 comments about 150 health and social care services over three years. We explained what we had learned in our *1000 Voices* report.

We made a short film that showed the difference that people's voices had made in dentistry, GP surgeries and care homes. Over 60,000 people saw the video posted on Facebook between June and August 2017. Building on that, we talked to people at 38 events across the county, including the Afro-Caribbean Health Jamboree in High Wycombe and a Special Educational Needs event in November.

We also urged people to feedback on our website and talked with them on social media and through our newsletter. As a result, we gathered another 820 pieces of feedback over the past year. Our social media work was also shortlisted for the Third Sector Excellence Awards.

We ran projects to hear from different communities:

- We surveyed over 160 users of telecare, mostly over 75, about their views of the services provided by the County Council.
- We heard the views of 41 people with hearing loss about GP services and maintaining hearing aids.
- We worked with Talkback to listen to the views of those with learning disabilities on what helped them and what stood in the way of having their annual health checks.
- We started working with Bucks MIND to talk to people who self-harm to understand their experiences with Accident and Emergency.

Making sure services work for you

Enter & View is the legal power, which allows us to visit places where health and social care services are provided. We go in, look at what is taking place and collect the views of users, carers and relatives from a lay person's point of view.

Over the past year we carried out three types of Enter & View visits in care homes, a GP practice and a hospital.

Care Homes

We made 24 Enter & View visits into care homes and talked to 224 people to ensure that residents are treated with dignity. For each visit we wrote a report to point out good practice and we recommended improvements for 23 care homes. We publish these reports on our website and share them with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Buckinghamshire County Council. As a result of our visits, 17 care homes have told us about changes they have made.



This year we visited 24 care homes to review the quality of care

Enter & View

As well as visiting 24 care homes, we also went to a GP practice and Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

GP Practice

As a result of feedback from members of the public and the CQC, we visited one GP practice to look at the patient experience before, during and after an appointment.

Our report identified good practice and made some practical recommendations. The practice said they would be working with their Patient Participation Group to take action on our suggestions. Their CQC rating has now improved to “Good”.

Hospital

We visited the pharmacy at Stoke Mandeville Hospital as a result of feedback from the public and the findings of the Health and Adult Social Care Discharge Report 2017. We shared our findings with Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust and the CQC.

Following our work, the hospital agreed to set up an area next to its pharmacy for patients to talk to staff in private. The Trust also agreed to follow our recommendations on signs and patient information.

“It brought home how important the Healthwatch Bucks Dignity in Care project is. No other organisation can just concentrate on whether care is dignified for the individual. I really believe we do make a difference to improving dignity in care, even if sometimes it’s only in a small way.”

Healthwatch Bucks Enter & View Volunteer

We depend on volunteers

None of this would have been possible without the support of our volunteers who have been trained to Enter & View health and social care services. Thank you to all of them.

Elizabeth Abbott, Liz Baker, Jean Button, Jenny Cassidy, Sheila Cotton, Pauline Garmon-Jones, Joy Johns, Graham Faulkner, Deborah Sanders, Diane Rutter, Deborah Tymms, Judith Vivis, Judith Young, Susan de Kersaint-Seal, Gloria Haynes, Sue Trischitta.



We made suggestions for hospital pharmacies after an Enter & View visit to Stoke Mandeville Hospital

How your experiences are helping to influence change

We work hard to make a difference.

We have presented at many large events including the Dignity and Respect Awards, the Community Impact Bucks Digital Conference, the Bucks Health and Social Care Summit and the Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust Leadership Event.

We have joined the new Adult Social Care Transformation Board and continue to attend key meetings such as the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee where we speak up for you and remind everyone of the need to listen to what users have to say.

We listen to what local people tell us through our projects and we try to make sure those views make a difference.

Home to Health

In May 2017 our *Home to Health* report looked at how to make it easier for volunteer drivers to take people to hospital appointments. Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust will work on our proposals with Community Impact Bucks.

“We think this is something we should do more of. We’ll be spotlighting good practice and ideas across the practices in Buckinghamshire.”

Zita Caulkin, Senior Commissioner for Learning Disabilities & Autism

Staying Healthy with a Learning Disability

We worked with Talkback to understand how people experience annual health checks. Our findings fed into the Clinical Commissioning Groups’ action plan *Staying Healthy - Closing the Gap* on health inequalities for people with a learning disability.

Changes included sharing good practice and producing an easy read feedback form for people to complete after their health check.

Calling from the Doorway

We worked with Action on Hearing Loss to talk to 41 people with hearing loss about their experiences with GP surgeries. We also asked them about the services that help them with the upkeep of their hearing aids.

Our findings have been shared by the Clinical Commissioning Groups with all GP practices. Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust is offering awareness training to GPs.

Community Pharmacy

13 staff and volunteers visited 11 places and heard from more than 260 people. The County Council highlighted our report in its 2018 Buckinghamshire Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment which maps services across the county to guide decisions about the future.

Dentists

We updated our ‘mystery shopper’ project looking at the information about NHS dental services. Our findings showed that, despite changes to NHS Choices, the information had not improved. This has been highlighted with dental commissioners and NHS Digital.

Telecare

We heard from 162 people using the County Council’s telecare services and are now waiting for a reply to our proposals.

Helping you
find the
answers



Helping you get the information you need

Over the year, Healthwatch Bucks helped nearly 50 people who have asked us questions about health and social care. There are several ways people can reach us to find out what they need to know - our telephone line, website, social media and email at info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk

People raise lots of different issues. Most often they ask about dentists, GPs, mental health and hospital discharge. Last year we helped Magda, whose first language is not English, to find a complaint letter template, so she could express her opinion to her GP.

We also worked with Bucks MIND to help a lady who wanted to raise questions about a Community Psychiatric Nurse.

Thanks so much to you for your advice. I think this is just what we needed to start making some progress. I will share your information with my partner and his sister so that they can decide what they want to do next... Fingers crossed! I am so grateful for your help.

Bucks resident

Helping you find the right care

Since first delivering our Dignity in Care project in 2014, we have now visited more than 65 care homes. All our Dignity in Care reports are on our website and can help you choose a care home for you or a loved one.

Helping improve patient information

We worked with the Maternity Services Department and Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust to make their patient leaflets easier to read. We also produced our first signed report on access to services for those with hearing loss.

We helped share information with providers. Working with Action on Hearing Loss, we ran two networking events for care homes. One focused on sight loss and the other on hearing loss. They provided care home managers and staff with practical ways to improve the lives of their residents.

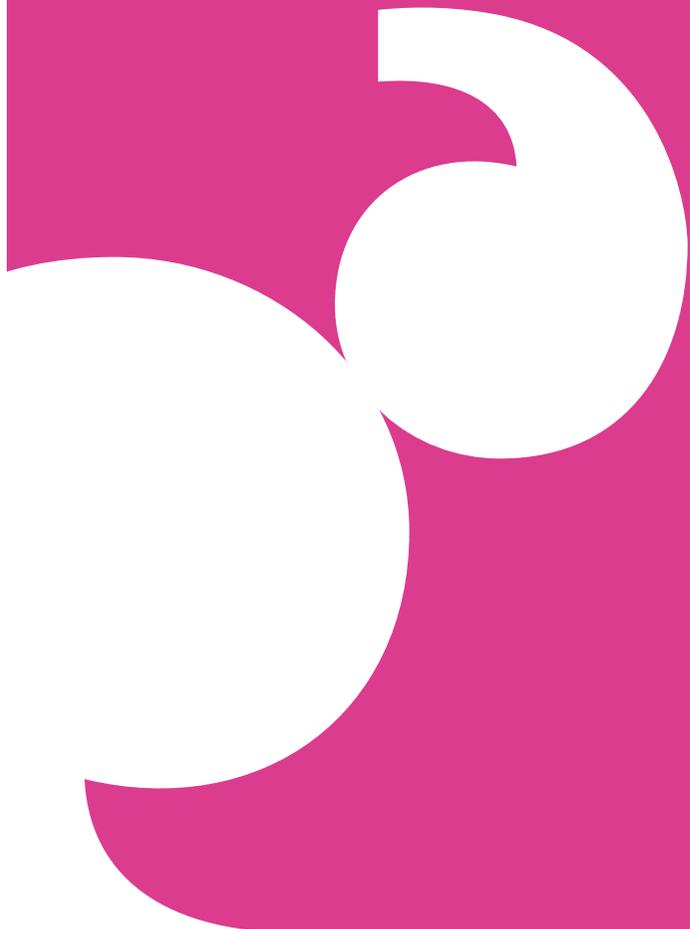
An enjoyable session. I learnt a lot today. I'm going to get a 'Hearing Champion' staff member to help all residents with a hearing loss.

Care Home Representative



We can help you choose a care home for you or a loved one

Making a difference together



Buckinghamshire County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups also funded us to do extra work

Dignity in Care

Our Dignity in Care project is in its fourth year. We visited and reported on 24 care homes where we talked to residents, staff and relatives.

Our *Dignity in Care Annual Report 2017/18* highlighted the changes made as a result of our work. These included appointing a Dignity in Care Champion and new activity co-ordinators. Other changes involved extra training and producing menus and signs in pictures as well as words.

We now take part in the Quality Surveillance Group meeting and can bring our findings directly to those responsible for residential care.

Patient Participation Groups

We continued to support Patient Participation Groups (PPGs). We focused on those in Aylesbury Vale to encourage them to use our toolkit and to share best practice with each other.

We have also worked with these groups to distribute feedback packs to local surgeries so that people can tell us about their experiences of health and social care.

“Thank you very much ... for taking the time to visit us this evening. I hope both myself and my teams were accommodating to your visit. It was a pleasure to share our work with you and introduce you to the people we support. I look forward to reading our report!”

Care Home Manager

Real Stories

Our Real Stories campaign has brought the experience of service users and providers to life. So far we have run real stories on diabetes, losing a loved one to cancer, NHS 111 complaints process, depression, maternity services and visiting care homes.

Our work has been covered in local newspapers and through radio interviews with staff members. That’s one of the ways we have been able to tell others about what you have to say.

Working with other organisations

We have regular information sharing meetings with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and share our reports with them. The CQC was set up as part of the Department of Health & Social Care to regulate and inspect health and social care services in England.

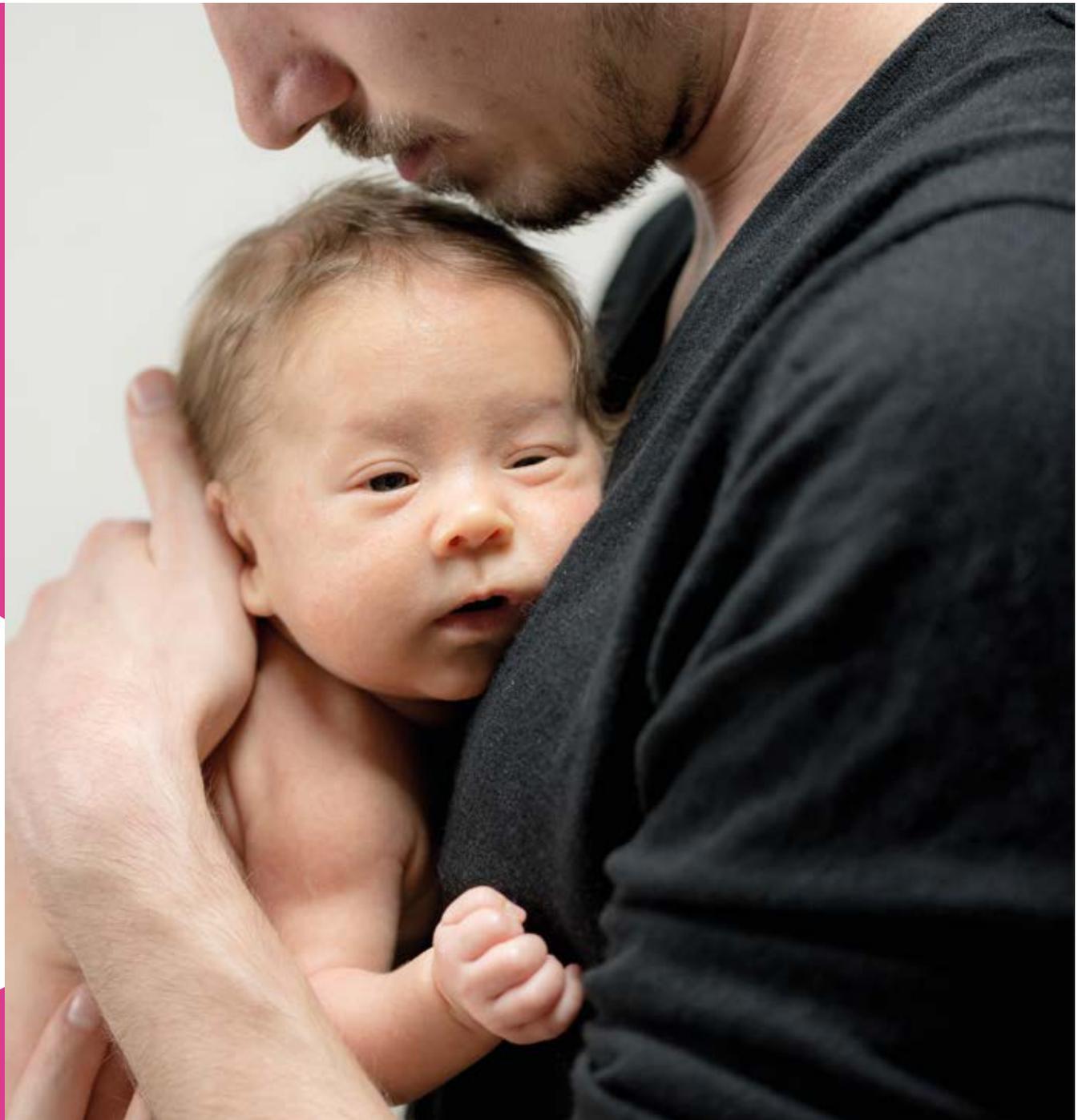
We share all our information and reports with Healthwatch England. We have fed into their reports on dentists, care homes and home care services. Their newsletter also mentioned our activities on Mental Health Awareness Day.

How we’ve worked with our community

We attended 194 meetings last year to speak up for you.

We work closely with the main organisations in health and social care such as the local Clinical Commissioning Groups, Bucks County Council, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust. We also partner with local charities and not-for-profit organisations such as Talkback, Action for Hearing Loss and Bucks MIND.

Jenny Baker, Chair of Healthwatch Bucks, represents us on the county’s Health and Wellbeing Board where local leaders come together. Our Chief Executive serves on the Health and Social Care Select Committee and we take part in many other meetings across health and social care.



“One of the first opportunities to really have some detailed feedback from partners and what it was like for them during the birth of their baby. It really gave us an opportunity to improve.”

Heidi Beddall, Head of Midwifery and Lead for Gynaecology, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Thanks to George, birthing partners are now better supported throughout the maternity process. A good start in life makes all the difference, so it's vital that partners are helped in what they need to do to make that happen.

George told us that he felt that he could have had more help when his wife gave birth to their first baby. We had heard the same from other partners as well. At Healthwatch Bucks we listened to their concerns and decided to talk to more partners to find out about how they found the maternity process.

We brought together 18 partners in two focus groups and talked through their experiences before, during, and after birth. We worked with Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust (BHT) from the start and one of their Midwifery Teams attended one of our focus groups.

We pulled together what partners had to say into a report which showed how much they appreciated the work of the Midwifery Teams and made some recommendations about what should happen next.

BHT Midwifery Teams used our report to create an action plan and real change has taken place.

The Midwifery Teams have now:

- reviewed all information with the role of the partner in mind
- revised the Birth Reflections Service feedback form to include a section for partners
- updated the Trust's *Following Birth* web pages to provide the information that partners had asked for such as podcasts on feeding and changing nappies
- included a partner role in emergency training for the maternity team
- provided guidance to midwives on making people understand that all their advice is professional and not just personal opinion
- used the Trust's newsletter to Practice Development Midwives to remind staff that “it's scary for the partner to be left alone in that room with no knowledge of what's happening to the person they love the most.”
- encouraged staff to talk to partners: “keep updating the partner with progress”
- added helpful information on the website about the role of birthing partners

Most exciting of all, the Trust has a new policy saying that the birthing partner should not remain for more than 20 minutes without an update when separated from the mother.

George commented, “That would have made such a difference to me when my wife had our first baby. I know other dads that have been left alone in this situation and it's really tough for them.”

Our plans for next year



Our top priorities for next year

1. Transition to and within social care
2. Mental health and wellbeing
3. Prevention and primary care

These priorities will guide all aspects of what we do:

- Working with those groups whose opinions are often not taken into account
- Staying involved with key health care changes that will affect the lives of people in this county
- Attending the most important meetings where the future of health and social care is discussed and we hear about how services are performing.

We will continue to inform people who ask for our help on what to do next when they are talking to health and social care services. We will carry out a programme of projects which are supported by the funds we receive from the County Council although these will be less than in the past.

Our work will include:

GP Enter & View

To understand patients' experience of the service provided by a GP practice and make practical recommendations.

Urgent Care

To find out what people know about the services when they need urgent care and why they use different services.

Dignity and Self-Harm

To hear about urgent care services from the experience of people who self-harm.

Readability

To look at what Bucks County Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group and Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust put on their websites and suggest what could be done to make them easier to read.

No fixed abode

To see how easy it is to register with a GP if you cannot provide an address.

We will also design an additional project on social care to understand user experience of services in this area.

Added funding will enable us to continue our work with Dignity in Care to the end of March 2019 and with the Patient Participation Groups to the end of September 2019. We will also start a new piece of work with Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust visiting their services to understand your experiences.

Over the next year we will aim to do more through work funded from a variety of sources. We will also focus on developing the way we work with volunteers.

All of this is to make sure that Healthwatch Bucks continues to punch above its weight in making local people's voices heard.

Our people



Policy and direction

Policy and direction are set and overseen by a Board of Directors, led by Jenny Baker OBE, who has completed four years as Chair.

Other members of the Board are: Barry Clarke OBE (Vice Chair), Shade Adoh, Graham Faulkner, Nicola Gilham, Jo Fairley, Mimi Harker OBE (joined September 2017), Howard Mordue, Chris Purves, David Pugh (stepped down in November 2017), Jackie Westaway and Katharine Woods.

We also have a Chief Executive's Advisory Panel. This panel of volunteers takes the evidence collected by Healthwatch Bucks and acts as an advisory group to help focus on key issues to be presented to the Board for final decision-making.

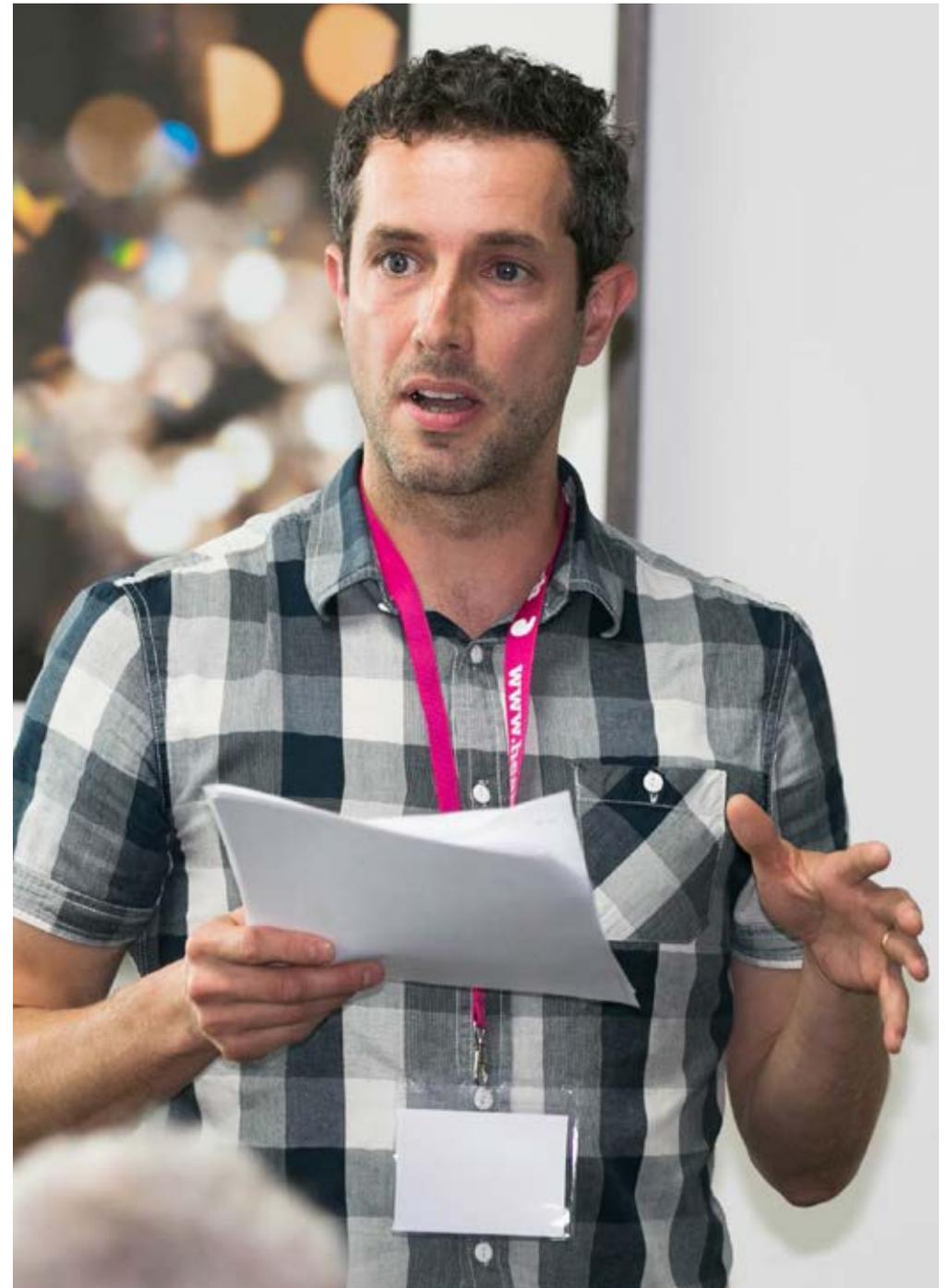
Our Advisory Panel Members are: Elizabeth Abbott, Janice Campbell, Mike Etkind, Graham Faulkner, Ron Newall, Barbara Poole and Deborah Sanders.

The Board and Advisory Panel are made up of expert volunteers with a wide range of background experience.

Decision-making

Healthwatch Bucks holds all Board meetings in public and we upload agenda papers on our website. You can read all about them at <https://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/category/minutes-papers/>

We invite members of the public to take part and ask questions. Every year we produce a Strategic Priorities report to explain how we have decided our areas of focus. This is where we link what we plan to do to the feedback we receive from local people.



How we involve the public and volunteers

Volunteers carry out a wide range of different roles in Healthwatch Bucks. Their work helps us in many different ways:

- Making decisions and providing insight - our Board and Advisory Panel lead on planning and decision making
- Enter & View - our trained volunteers visit and view health and social care services across the county
- Engagement and delivery - our volunteers take part in meetings and projects as well as providing specialist support on some projects

Our volunteers represent us on local boards and other forums including:

- Bucks Local Pharmaceutical Committee
- Bucks Adult Safeguarding Board
- Clinical Commissioning Group Engagement Steering Group
- Mental Health Partnership Board

We have reviewed the way we work with volunteers and have set up new volunteer roles including a Healthwatch Bucks Horizon Scanner and a Healthwatch Bucks Photographer. We also benefited from an expert volunteer who helped us plan a secure future for Healthwatch Bucks.



Thanking our wonderful volunteers with afternoon tea

Our finances

This table shows the provisional position for the year end 2017-18 with a balance brought forward of £48,131 in line with Board expectations. The carry forward declared in the 2016/17 annual report is also shown, and has been spent on projects in the year.

At the year end, the carry forward was committed as project and staffing spending into 2018/19. The summary information is subject to audit and approval by the Board of Directors in September 2018.

INCOME	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	187,475
Additional income	32,447
Total income	219,922

EXPENDITURE	£
Operational costs	18,742
Staffing costs	157,659
Office costs	28,930
Total expenditure	205,331
Carry Forward from 2016/17	-33,540
Balance brought forward	48,131

Get in touch

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Our annual report will be publicly available on our website from 30 June 2018. We will also be sharing it with Healthwatch England, Care Quality Commission, NHS England, NHS Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Overview and Scrutiny Committee/s, and Buckinghamshire County 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.

Governance:

Healthwatch Bucks Ltd, is a company (Registration number 08426201), which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Community Impact Bucks, a charity (Registration number 1070267).

