





© Healthwatch Bucks 2017

The text of this document (this excludes, where present, the Royal Arms and all departmental and agency logos) may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context.

The material must be acknowledged as Healthwatch Bucks copyright and the document title specified. Where third party material has been identified, permission from the respective copyright holder must be sought.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk)

You can download this publication from [www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk)



# Contents

Message from our Chair .....	4
Message from our Chief Executive .....	6
Highlights from our year .....	8
Who we are .....	9
What you told us about what you think of services .....	10
Helping you navigate local services .....	12
How we have made a difference .....	14
Making people's voices heard .....	18
Our plans for next year .....	22
Our people .....	24
Our finances .....	26
Contact us.....	28



# Message from our Chair

## Jenny Baker looks back on another year of progress for Healthwatch Bucks.



Jenny Baker OBE  
*Chair, Healthwatch Bucks*

As I look back proudly on our work over the last year I am inspired by all the hard work, enthusiasm and success.

While our service will face funding cuts in the year ahead, this Annual Report speaks for itself in giving voice to the people of Buckinghamshire.

This report highlights the very real impact on local health and care services now resulting from Healthwatch Bucks' activity.

Our vision 'that your experiences, ideas and opinions make a positive difference to the way health and social care is provided in Buckinghamshire' is at the heart of everything we do and we remain committed to delivering a local Healthwatch service that offers local people the opportunity to do exactly that.

With another year of increasing success under our belt, this report contains many examples of the excellent work undertaken.

Our team has worked unceasingly to juggle a busy schedule of engagement, partnership work, representation and reporting.

Some of our work is also ongoing and about building relationships thus inevitably taking a little longer to mature.

But we couldn't achieve any change for local people without your voices, your views, your volunteering efforts and the important contributions of our Chief Executive, staff, directors, and partner organisations.

We also couldn't have made the impact we have without the willingness of statutory and health and social care organisations to listen, work with us and respond positively to the issues we raise on behalf of local people.

We hope you will enjoy this summary of our past year's performance and will join us in celebrating the undoubted achievements of Healthwatch Bucks.





# Message from our Chief Executive

**Healthwatch Bucks is making a difference in health and social care across the county.**

I was pleased to take over the leadership of Healthwatch Bucks in June 2016 and to inherit a skilled and committed team of staff and volunteers.

We have successfully delivered on all the plans we outlined in last year's Annual Report and have a clear strategy to fulfil our unique role as the voice of patients and service users throughout Buckinghamshire.

**We are here to ensure that local decision-makers and health and social care services put the experiences of people at the heart of their work.**

Our social marketing campaign has significantly increased awareness of what we do and has helped us attract more feedback from patients and users across a wide range of health and social care services.

Our project work has covered several different services including transport, partners' experience of birth, dentists, general practitioners and mental health peer support.

Looking ahead, we have a clear strategy to hear what people have to say and to influence policy and practice in the county.



**Thalia Jervis**  
*Chief Executive, Healthwatch Bucks*

We will continue to focus our work on the services which most people use, but will also make sure that decision-makers understand the experience and needs of those groups whose opinions are not often heard. We want to ensure that as many people as possible are able to express their views about the proposed changes in the way services are delivered.

We will continue to prize our independence and run our organisation professionally and with integrity. As always, we will remain open and transparent and will welcome anyone who wants to come to one of our board meetings which we hold in public at different places across the county





# Highlights from our year

We have 413 followers on Facebook - far more than any comparable local Healthwatch



Our volunteers contributed over 437 days - an increase of 53% on the previous year



Since we started we have received over 1500 comments about health & care services



Our reports have tackled issues ranging from community transport to GP waiting rooms



We've attended over 100 meetings to represent user views on health and social care



We visited and reported on 24 care homes in Bucks







# Who we are

We know that you want services that work for you, your friends and family. That's why we want you to share your experiences of using health and care services with us - both good and bad. We use your voice to encourage those who run services to act on what matters to you.

Healthwatch Bucks is one of 148 independent 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

Our vision is that your experiences, ideas and opinions make a positive difference to the way health and social care is provided in Buckinghamshire.

## Our mission

Our mission is to ensure that the collective voice of people using health and social care services is heard, considered and acted upon.

## Our objectives

We have three main objectives:

- to **listen** to you, the residents of Buckinghamshire, so we understand what you think about health and social care;
- to **influence** the right people so that your views make a difference to health and social care services;
- to **change** for the better the way health and social care services are commissioned and delivered.

We always ask ourselves “what difference does this make for patients and other service users?”

## The way we work

Everything we do is guided by our principles. We will be:

**Independent:** we are independent of those who buy, design or deliver health and social care services.

**Listening:** we focus on understanding what your views are on health and social care services.

**Active:** we get out and about and make things happen.

**Focussed:** our delivery is targeted on our priority areas.

**Balanced:** we work across the health, wellbeing and social care agendas.

**Volunteer based:** volunteers are at the heart of Healthwatch Bucks.

**Collaborative:** we work with other people to extend our reach.

**Sustainable:** we will support our core business with additional income streams.

**Signposting:** helping you work out where you need to go to get the services you need.





We can help you...

Are you struggling with...  
or social care...  
Are you confused by...  
the system...  
Don't let...

What you told us about what you think of services

## Listening to local people's views

Healthwatch Bucks has made huge strides in listening to local people.

Our website now enables everyone to rate and review services: [www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk)

We ran a social media campaign to raise awareness of Healthwatch Bucks and to ask for feedback. This campaign resulted in a significant increase in public awareness and participation, and has been short-listed for a national marketing award.

We have also been out and about to hear from you. We went to over 40 events and have run projects to hear the views of underrepresented groups.

We talked to mental health service users about peer support and we heard the views of young people on social media.

We worked with Healthwatch Windsor, Ascot & Maidenhead to understand patient views around discharge from Wexham Park Hospital.

We talked to over 275 people who live and work in care homes through our Dignity in Care project.

By the end of December 2016, we had received over 1500 pieces of feedback on over 170 named services.

## We got the most comments about:

**Appointments:** 63% of our feedback is negative with a focus on the way appointment booking works.

**Quality of treatment:** 68% of our feedback is positive - you appreciate your care professionals.

**Staff attitudes:** 62% of our feedback is positive, although 31% of feedback shows you do encounter unhelpful staff.

**General compliments:** some people just tell us they like the services they get generally. We received more than 150 comments like this.

**Waiting times:** the fifth most common area with most of the feedback being negative.

## What we've learnt from visiting services

We have used our Enter and View powers to visit 24 care homes to look at whether residents were being treated with dignity. After each visit we make recommendations about how their services could be improved.

We have prepared two good practice guides - on meaningful activities in care homes and on the use of visual cues. We have prepared an overarching report which has been sent to Buckinghamshire County Council.

 "I decided to volunteer as the Dignity in Care project seemed so valuable. Visiting residential and nursing homes unannounced is a useful way of highlighting issues and good practice."

Joy Johns,  
Healthwatch Bucks volunteer.

We also visited 47 GP surgeries to look at their waiting rooms and find out how easy it was for patients to find information.

We wrote to each GP practice visited with recommendations about how they could improve the waiting room for their patients and published a good practice checklist for GPs to use on an ongoing basis.



Helping you  
navigate local  
services

## We help you find the information you need to find the right care

We know that getting the right care can be complicated, so we have different ways to help you.

**Our telephone line:** We speak to people and offer help and advice where we can, we direct them to our partners when they need specialist or one-to-one support.

**Our website:** we have a special section on our website which tells you who to talk to about what. We have added a directory of services for young people with mental health conditions. Over 120 people have visited it so far. We produced a true story film to go with the directory - Abbey's story was about her friend Ben who lived with a mental health condition.

**Our email address:** we also respond to queries via email - so get in touch at [info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk)

## We provide information to help you find the right care

**Our Dignity in Care reports:** we visited 24 care homes in Buckinghamshire last year. If you are looking for a care home for you or a loved one, our reports will help you decide on the right one.

“For me, the experience showed that the Dignity in Care project really is working in the community. The information on the website was easy to access.”

Member of the public

**Our Guides:** sometimes making the most of an appointment can be difficult but getting your message across is important if you are going to receive the care you need - so in March, we published a very short guide to help people when they visit their GP.



*Our staff team (from left to right):  
Thalia Jervis, Phil Thiselton,  
Alison Holloway, Belinda Burke,  
Karmen Ivey and Helen Smith*

## We help improve the information available

We knew that sometimes it can be difficult to work out what NHS services a dentist delivers so we phoned every dentist in the county to find out what they offered, and compared this to the information on their website and on other websites such as NHS Choices.

We discovered that it is not easy to find accurate information about NHS Dental Services and have told each practice individually what they need to do to update their information.

We have also been working with GPs to help them improve the information available to patients in their surgeries and on their websites.

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark top, is looking slightly to her right with a gentle smile. She is holding a white card with colorful illustrations of people. The card contains text about seeing a GP and home care. The background is softly blurred, showing other people in a social setting. There are large, semi-transparent green and teal circular shapes overlaid on the image, framing the text.

How we  
have made a  
difference

Have you  
seen your  
GP recently?

Have you  
visited  
Care Home?

What was it like?

Tel: 01223 313131

# How your experiences are helping influence change

We work hard to make sure that what we do has an impact. We always ask ourselves “what difference does this make for patients and service users?” We know that our reports have brought about change. This is some of the work we did this year.

## Dentistry

We told Buckinghamshire County Council and NHS England, South Central Commissioners about the findings of our survey of 77 dental practices in the county.

We asked the Commissioners to follow up on our findings that information about NHS services was often inaccurate or not up-to-date. We also contacted each dental practice to tell them what they needed to do to provide more useful information.

Our report also contributed to the national Healthwatch England work on dentistry to improve communication with patients.

We will want to make sure that, in the future, NHS Choices has correct information about dental services.

## General Practitioners

We visited GP waiting rooms to see if we could find information easily. We also checked the websites and out-of-hours telephone messaging system of all GPs in the county. We found lots of examples of good practice.

We wrote to all 52 GPs with their results in February. So far twenty of them have got back to us.




## Patient Participation Groups

We have entered our second year of working to support the development of Patient Participation Groups (PPGs). These groups are a valuable way for GPs to hear what their patients think.

We have focused on helping surgeries where the patient group is at an early stage in development.

We have also worked to build the strength of the PPG network across Buckinghamshire. That's why we ran a workshop to help set up area networks so that patient groups can help and support each other. Two patient group networks have been launched so far.

 “Healthwatch Bucks have played a crucial role in developing and supporting PPGs. They are now building self-sustaining PPG networks.”

Paul Henry,  
Chair CCG ESG



## Dignity in Care

**We visited 24 care homes to ensure that they treat their residents with dignity.**

We have followed up with the care homes to establish what they have done with our recommendations. Fourteen got back to us with progress reports.


These included updates telling us that they now:

- make pureed food more appetising by using piping techniques
- publish a weekly activity schedule in word and pictorial format
- use pictorial menus for residents
- make daily activity schedules available with menus on the dining room tables

- make subtitles available on some TVs
- use liquid level indicators that attach to teacups for residents with a visual impairment.

The Quality in Care team at Buckinghamshire County Council built on our recommendations around meaningful activities for residents by creating a workshop on Person-Centred Activities.

They have also followed up our recommendation to support those with macular degeneration by adding a study day on Sight Loss Awareness to their training directory.

 “The independence and lay perspective brought by the Healthwatch volunteers is important to the CQC.”

Daniel Lloyd,  
CQC Inspection Manager



## Care Quality Commission

We know that the Care Quality Commission listens to what we say and encourages people to look at the feedback on our website.

They make use of our Dignity in Care reports and consider comments on our website when planning their inspections.

## Healthwatch England

We share all our information with Healthwatch England and have fed into their reports on Dentistry, Dementia Services and Social Care Assessments.

We have been active across a number of Healthwatch England reference groups, including those for Research and for the development of the Customer Relationship Management System.



## Working with the community

Jenny Baker, Chair of Healthwatch Bucks, is our statutory representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board where leaders from the local health and social care systems come together.

One of our directors asked them for clarity on the funding arrangements for the Disability Support Grant which was reinstated in full.

Volunteers are essential to the way we work and help us in many different ways:

**Making decisions and providing insight:**  
our Board and Advisory Panel lead on planning and decision making.

**Enter and view:**  
our trained volunteers visit and review local health and social care services throughout the county.

**Engagement and delivery:**  
our volunteers represent us at events and meetings and provide specialist support to some of our projects e.g. by running workshops and providing data analysis.

“I was struck by the fact that Healthwatch Bucks was going to listen to people, take note of their comments and do something about them.”

**Elizabeth Abbott,**  
Volunteer and Vice Chair  
of the Local Eye Health Network

### Representation:

we are represented by our volunteers on local boards and partnerships including:

- Local Eye Health Network
- Bucks Adult Safeguarding Board
- Quality and Performance Meeting
- Transforming Care Partnership
- Bucks Local Pharmaceutical Committee.

We have been increasing the number of volunteers and have recruited several new roles, including a Healthwatch Bucks photographer and a sustainability expert.

**Further growth in our team of volunteers will continue to be a priority.**



Healthwatch Bucks volunteers take a break in a meeting with the staff team



# Making people's voices heard

Steph Edus

Newcastle U



# Case Study 1: Abbey's story



## Abbey featured in our video about her friend Ben, a young man with mental health issues.

Abbey told us how difficult it was for young people who had a friend with mental health issues to understand what was happening and reach out for support.

We worked with her and talked through her experiences with her friend Ben. Ben was a talented young man whose mental health issues ultimately resulted in him taking his own life.

We created a film about Abbey and Ben's story. In it, Abbey explains how things might have ended differently but for so many ifs:

*If things had been done differently  
If help had been available earlier on  
If she had known what to do to help him*

We showed their film at our public board meeting and extensively through social media.

After helping Abbey to tell her story we put together a mental health directory to enable young people and their friends and families to access help more easily. More than 170 people have accessed that information.

We are also working with Bucks MIND to ensure that our directory is incorporated into their guide for mental health services for Buckinghamshire. Mental health remains a top priority for Healthwatch Bucks as an organisation.

You can see the true story of Abbey, Ben, and his mental health illnesses at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqMLMpg00bg>



# Case Study 2: Dignity in Care Meaningful Activities



## A great example of activity planning in one of the care homes we visited.

When we visited care homes as part of our Dignity in Care Project, we talked to residents and staff; it became clear that there was an opportunity to do more to make life more meaningful for individuals.

We not only shared this information with those in charge of funding places in care homes but also published a good practice guide on meaningful activities. This highlighted some of the great work we had seen in care homes to enable each resident to lead as fulfilling a life as possible.

We went back to the care homes who attended the workshop to find out what they had done differently as a result.

Care homes told us they had made lots of changes including:

- Engaging with the local library and setting up a reminiscence box activity for their residents.
- Making links with some other homes local to them and networking with managers there.

“We had a lunch meeting where we shared ideas.”

- Holding a Christmas bazaar for the first time at the end of November.
- Having a local school with 30 children visit for the first time.
- Having about 20 twiddle muffs knitted for residents by the local knit and natter group.



A woman with long brown hair is looking down at a brochure she is holding. The brochure is blue and white with the text 'Your voice counts' and 'healthwatch' visible. The background is blurred, showing a bright circular light and some greenery. There are large, semi-transparent pink and green circles overlaid on the image.

# Our plans for next year

## What next?

We are clear about our priorities and plans for the year beginning 1 April 2017.

### Our priorities for 2017 - 18 are:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Prevention and Primary Care
- Transition to and within Social Care

These priorities will guide all aspects of our work which will include:

- Engagement with those groups who are under-represented when opinions are sought or decisions made.
- Staying involved with key healthcare developments 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 where we hear about how services are performing.

## Our projects

At our Board Meeting in Public in March 2017 we agreed an ambitious but realistic programme of projects for 2017-18 over and above our ongoing work in listening, signposting and bringing issues to the attention of those responsible for our health and social care services.

We'll be following up on the work we have done in previous years and completing reports in progress at the end of March 2017 on access to services for those with learning disabilities and those with hearing loss. We will also continue to visit and report on care homes until the Dignity in Care funding ends on 31 October 2017.

## In addition, our new projects include:

**Change in the health and care system:** to ensure that patients and service users have a voice in the changes to services proposed in the Sustainability and Transformation Plans for the county.

**Dignity, respect and self-harm:** to look at the experiences of adults who have self-harmed, during treatment at primary and urgent care services.

**Community pharmacies:** to find out what people know about what they offer and to understand why people access different services.

**Telecare:** to learn about the experience of telecare from those who receive it.

**Access to doctors:** to what extent are people of no fixed abode able to access GP services?

**Hospital pharmacies:** using our right to Enter and View to understand patients' experience of Stoke Mandeville hospital pharmacy and make practical recommendations.

**Patient Groups:** to engage with Patient Participation Groups to create an additional route for gathering patient insight for the health and social care system as a whole.

**Future funding:** we need to find new ways to generate funding so that we can continue to improve the range and quality of services we provide.



Our people



## Decision-making

Healthwatch Bucks holds all Board meetings in public. Each meeting focuses on a particular priority area followed by a decision-making Board Meeting.

In order to prioritise issues for the Board Meetings 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.

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

Using this process, we are able to link the feedback we receive on a day-to-day basis through to the prioritisation of our work programme.

## Our professional team

We have a small staff team, supported by a large and growing number of volunteers.

Our professional team of two full-time and four part-time staff members is based at Monks Risborough and is led by Chief Executive Thalia Jervis who took over the leadership in June 2016.

Thalia is supported by Phil Thiselton, Head of Research and Intelligence; Karmen Ivey, Communications and Engagement Lead; and two Project Managers: Alison Holloway and Helen Smith, who is replacing Victoria Young whilst she is on maternity leave.

Our Administrator Bill Dempsey, one of the founder members of the team, retired in March 2017 and was replaced by Belinda Burke who joined us in May.

## Board and Advisory Panel

Volunteers carry out a wide range of different roles in Healthwatch Bucks. Policy and direction are set and overseen by a Board of Directors, led by Jenny Baker OBE who has completed three years as Chair.

### The other members of the Board are:

*Shade Adoh, Barry Clarke OBE, Graham Faulkner, Nicola Grimshaw, Jo Fairley, Howard Mordue, Chris Purves, David Pugh, Jackie Westaway and Katharine Woods.*

### Our Advisory Panel members in 2016/17 were:

*Janice Campbell, Graham Faulkner, Ron Newall, Barbara Poole and Deborah Sanders.*

## Volunteers

Directors and Advisory Panel members also carry out programme work along with other volunteers including those who have been trained to Enter and View health and social care facilities:

*Elizabeth Abbott, Liz Baker, Jean Button, Jenny Cassidy, Sheila Cotton, Pauline Garmon-Jones, Joy Johns, Janice Milsom, Alison Lewis, Diane Rutter, Deborah Tymms, Judith Vivis, Judith Young.*

## How we involve the public and volunteers

We aim to involve the public in all stages of our work. Our agenda is driven by the 'voices' we receive and the recommendations of our Advisory Panel.

We make all key decisions in public and aim to be fully transparent by maintaining a commentary of our activities through social media. Our Twitter feed offers a timeline of activity during the year.

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark, wavy hair. She is wearing a black and white horizontally striped shirt and a red lanyard with the Healthwatch logo and website address. The lanyard text includes 'www.healthwatch' and 'Healthwatch'. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. Two large, semi-transparent circular overlays are present: a green one on the left and a pink one on the right, both containing horizontal lines.

# Our finances

The table below shows the provisional position for year-end 2016/17 with a surplus of £29,043 in line with Board expectations. At the year-end, this was committed to contingency provision and project spending and carried forward into 2017/2018. The summary information from the full financial statements is subject to audit and approval by the Board of Directors in September 2017.

<b>INCOME</b>		<b>£</b>
<b>Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities</b>		<b>200,000</b>
<b>Additional income</b>		<b>34,636</b>
<b>Total income</b>		<b>234,636</b>

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>Operational costs</b>		<b>83,988</b>
<b>Staffing costs</b>		<b>160,540</b>
<b>Office costs</b>		<b>26,966</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>271,494</b>
<b>Balance brought forward from 2015/16</b>		<b>-65,901</b>
<b>Balance carried forward</b>		<b>29,043</b>



## Contact Us:

**Address:** Healthwatch Bucks  
6 Centre Parade,  
Place Farm Way,  
Monks Risborough,  
Buckinghamshire HP27 9JS

**Phone number:** 0845 260 6216

**Email:** [info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk)

**Website URL:** [www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk)

**Twitter:** @HW\_Bucks

**Facebook:** HealthwatchBucks

## 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).

We will be making this annual report publicly available on 30 June 2017 by publishing it on our website and sharing it with Healthwatch England, Care Quality Commission, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Group/s, 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.