



Healthwatch Stoke on Trent
Annual Report 2016/17



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Message from our Chair

It is with great pleasure that I write this message in our fourth Annual Report. This year we have continued to raise awareness about the role of Healthwatch in our communities, with our partners and stakeholders.

We have spoken to a diverse range of people about their experiences of health and social care.

In the current climate, with all the challenges, transformations and possible future changes in the health and social care sector, it has never been more important to have an independent organisation like Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent, to whom the public and patients can turn to and have their voice heard.

The number of people contacting us to share their stories has increased and we have been able to share these anonymously with commissioners, providers and other relevant organisations.

This year it came to our attention that homeless individuals in our City were finding it difficult to access GP services and receive the treatment that they required. The effect of this difficulty was that their health was deteriorating and they were likely to

find themselves attending their local A&E with a much more severe condition.

We worked with Voices of Stoke and Expert Citizens and found that many GP Practices were refusing to register homeless individuals unless they have proof of identity. We raised this with Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and communications have been sent to all GP Practices in the City informing them that proof of identity is not a requirement of registration. We continue to work on this important issue this year too.

This is just one example of the significant change in practice that we endeavour to achieve that will result in a more positive experience for our population.

In the coming year, we will continue to listen to your views and raise issues with the right people to bring about the right change for you.

I hope you enjoy reading about our work and I look forward to no doubt what will be another busy year for our small team and our wonderful volunteers who always aim to support you in influencing the way your health and social care services are planned, purchased and provided.

Every Blessing
Lloyd Cooke, Chair

Message from our Chief Officer

It has been a busy and challenging year and our primary objective has been to speak to as many people as possible about their views of health and social care services in our City.

We truly believe that the only way to achieve the right care in the right place for our residents is to talk to you and include you in conversations about your services.

This report does not detail every single piece of work that we have done this year, but it does include key highlights.

A local concern this year has been and continues to be the temporary closure of community hospital beds and the provision of adequate community services if these beds are not available in the future. In response to this concern we carried out an independent survey and put your concerns to Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) who provided a written response to questions you raised.

Our conversation with the CCG about the importance of engagement and consultation about the future of community hospitals is ongoing.

The development of the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) across the country continues and Stoke-on-Trent is no exception. We have a seat on the Health and Care Transformation Board and the

Communications and Engagement workstream. Sitting in these meetings has allowed us to raise the need to talk to people about what the STP means on the ground. In response to this need we held Conversation Stoke events which gave you the opportunity to speak to clinicians, raise your concerns and participate in discussions about what future services should look like.

The STP continues and in the coming year we will promote the need for further inclusion of the public and patient voice in the development of what future options may exist for your services. We will highlight the importance of talking to you in your communities.

"I wanted to write to you to record my thanks for hosting the public engagement events for the STP and for all the work you and your team have done to make them happen. Undoubtedly there is much more engagement work to be done but this is a good start and helpful in enabling us to be able to reflect feedback on the work to date. We need to ensure we keep this up..."

Penny Harris, STP Programme Director

There is so much more detail in this report about our work this year so do keep reading to find out more. Finally, I would like to thank our wonderful team of volunteers, staff and the Board for their continued hard work and dedication, without which all this would not be possible.

Simmy Akhtar, Chief Officer

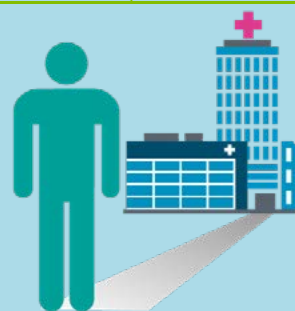
Highlights from our year

We have over 1700 followers on Social Media and continue to increase this daily



We have hosted STP Case for Change events in Stoke

<http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/our-work/sustainability-and-transformation-plans-stps/>



We have visited 18 local services and our reports can be viewed at

<http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports/>



Our reports have tackled local issues ranging from Community Hospital Beds to Homeless Access to GP's

<http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/projectreport/>



We have established a Transgender Health and Social Care listening group called New Leaf



We have joined our local Dementia Action Alliance and have delivered Dementia Friends sessions in our community



Who we are

It is likely that each one of us will use health and care services in our lifetime. We all want services to work well for us, our family and friends and that is 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.

We are uniquely placed as a national network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England.

Our vision

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent will be clearly recognised as a strong, credible, influential and independent organisation that has at its heart the users of health and social care services. It will be representative of, and accountable to, the local community, ensuring that the views of all local people are heard and effectively used to help shape local health and social care services.

It will use evidence to underpin its priorities and target its efforts and will work in partnership with existing networks and services to achieve improved health and social care outcomes and reduce health inequalities within the City of Stoke-on-Trent.

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent will provide good value for money making the best use of its resources by seeking to avoid duplication with other bodies in the City of Stoke-on-Trent and working creatively with them to deliver the most cost-effective solutions to achieve its chosen priorities.

Our aim

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent will enable a strong voice, and provide support to local people and community and voluntary groups so that they can influence the way their health and social care services are planned, purchased and provided.

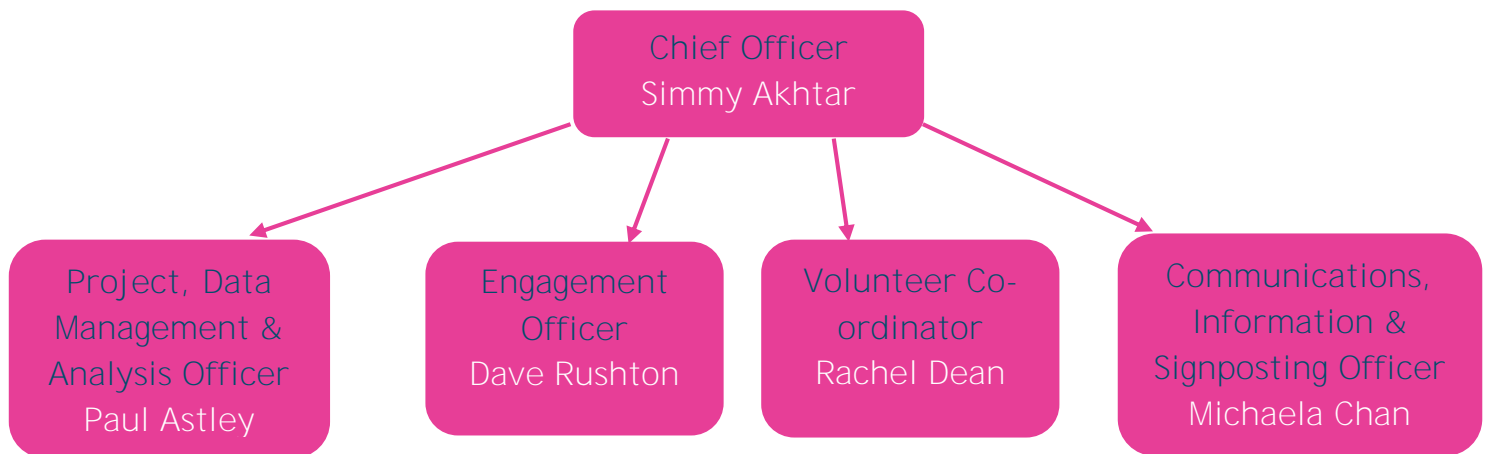
Our priorities

- Continuing Strategic Engagement and increasing public awareness of local Healthwatch
- Collaborative working information sharing and challenge
- Better Care Fund - monitoring the integration programme
- New Model of Care Step Up/Step Down-measuring patient transition and ongoing monitoring of service for improved patient pathway and high-quality community intervention
- Care Act Implementation - patient and public awareness and understanding
- JSNA Development of local data contributions - continued role in challenging JSNA evidence collection and the way it informs Health and Wellbeing Board work
- CAMHS and Mental Health service access and transition issues - continued monitoring and challenge of progress against local priorities
- Royal Stoke transition - monitoring and feedback on patient experience and involvement

- Managing the ongoing Enter & View Programme - further recruitment and training of representatives
- Promotion of the Dignity & Respect Charter - on behalf of Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Continued volunteer recruitment, induction, assignment, training and management



Our Healthwatch Team



Our Board

Role	Name
Chair and Trustee	Lloyd Cooke
Board Member	Denise Deakin
Board Member	Mike Dixon
Board Member	John Farrar
Board Member	Abi May
Board Member and Trustee	Andrew Thompson
Board Member	Hilda Johnson



*Your views on
health and care*

Listening to local people's views

We receive feedback from people by telephone, email, our on-line feedback centre, social media and face to face.

During the year, we organised or participated in 87 community events, across the city. These events were themed across a wide range of topics, including explaining our vision, aim and role together with receiving feedback from our local population about community hospitals and the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Sustainability and Transformation Plan.

At each of these events we captured opinions and issues, including compliments and concerns, raised by attendees as well as feedback from those who could not attend (via either telephone, survey or social media). All views are recorded on our CRM database; themes are identified and fed-back to relevant organisations.

We have engaged with many different groups of people of all ages, from pre-teen to some over ninety years old, most local faith groups, most ethnic backgrounds, people of all genders and sexuality as well as many people with a range of disabilities and mental health issues. During the coming year we will endeavour to increase our reach and speak to those individuals who are seldom-heard.

At each meeting or event, we provide anonymised feedback forms which give people the opportunity to voice their views in a confidential, safe and secure manner. We also keep accurate notes of topics and points raised so that these can be recorded onto our CRM. Where appropriate, we will pursue all issues logged from these sessions with the appropriate provider and/or

commissioner to try to secure improvements to health and social care.

- We have a run a series of meetings to specifically engage with younger people throughout the city at various locations, including Stoke-on-Trent College, Sixth Form College, Newcastle-under-Lyme College, Staffordshire University, Keele University and Shout Out Stoke.
- At the other end of the age spectrum, we work closely with the OPEN group (Older Persons Engagement Network) and attend all their events, which attract approximately one hundred people over the age of fifty to discuss and comment on wide ranging matters of health and/or social care across the City. We also hold regular engagement sessions with people from the 'Live at Home' schemes across the City to gather their views.
- We carry out a considerable amount of work with groups who may feel disempowered and vulnerable. Examples here include working with Voices of Stoke, Expert Citizens and Newleaf.
- Voices of Stoke work with homeless people in the city, particularly those with drug and/or alcohol related problems. We have participated in a nationally recognised project concerning this sector of the public and the problems they encounter seeking GP appointments.
- Newleaf is a group set up by ourselves to specifically work with those who identify as transgender. We wish to supply anonymised evidence about patient experience to the CCGs to ensure sufficient consideration is given to this under represented group.
- Although we do not specifically target people who live outside the city of Stoke-

on-Trent, we attract a significant number of those who live in the nearby areas who receive health and/or social care from service providers within the City boundary. We receive enquiries from organisations such as North Staffordshire Carers Association, North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare Trust and, of course, from those patients who have received treatment from **the Royal Stoke University Hospital** (the regional acute hospital and part of the University Hospital of North Midlands Trust).

What we've learnt from visiting services

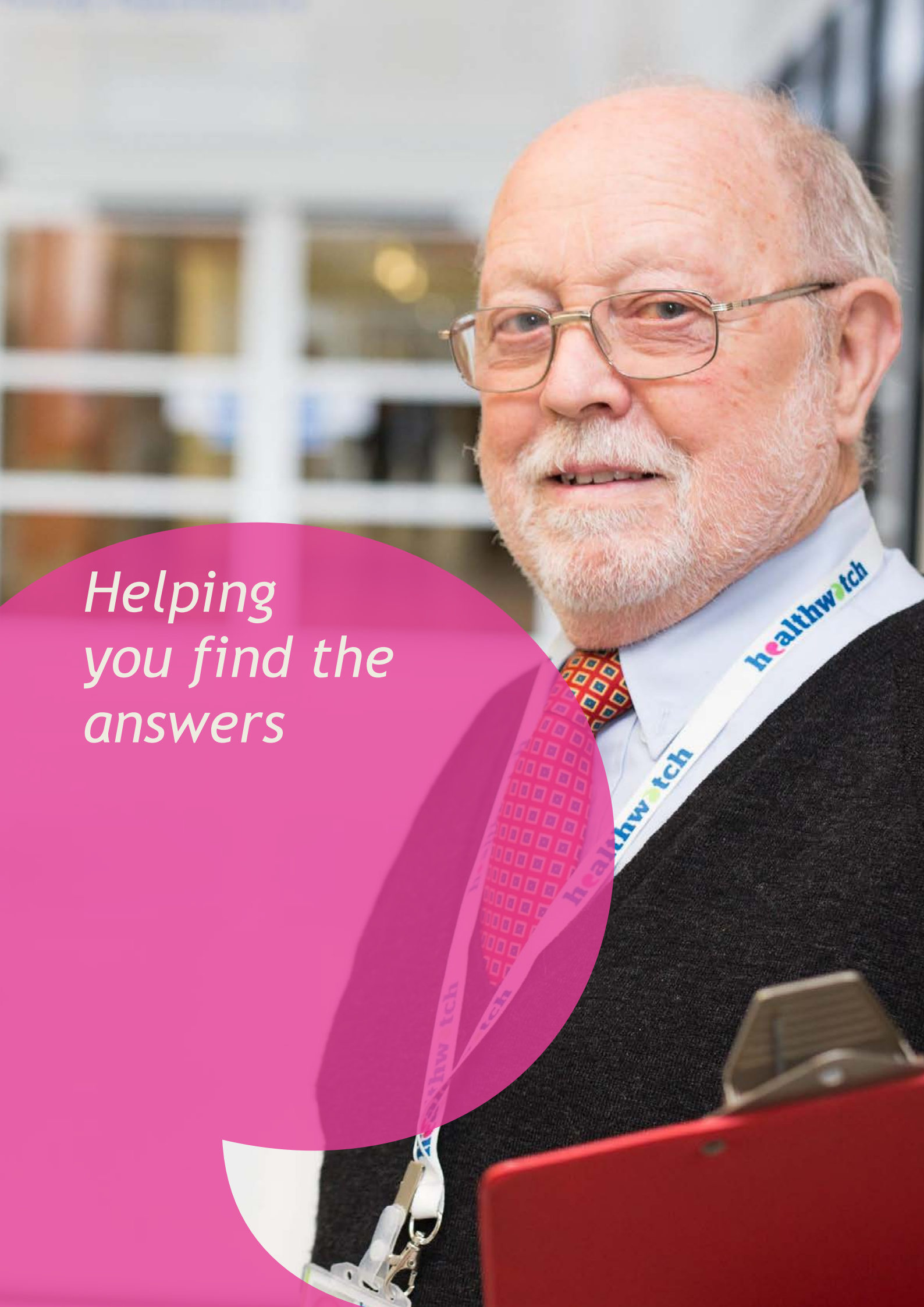
- During the year, we undertook eighteen Enter and View visits to facilities across the City. We were greatly assisted in carrying out this work by our team of wonderful volunteers.
- We always choose our Enter and View visits based on one of three possible reasons:
 - 1) If we have received information about a particular organisation or facility;
 - 2) If we have information about a particular aspect concerning several locations (for example, quality of food)
 - 3) If we are carrying out a project and need to visit several facilities to obtain information.
- Of the eighteen visits undertaken, two were to the wards within the acute hospital while the remainder were visits to care homes and nursing homes.
- We are pleased to report that most of the places visited were of a good standard and patients/residents we spoke to on the day were content to be there. This

feedback was further evidenced by carers and/or family and friends.

- Wherever our Enter and View Representatives saw examples of poor practice or had other concerns, these issues were reported to and discussed with the manager at the end of the visit. Other, less urgent comments were included in an Enter and View report where recommendations were included at the end of each report (all our published reports are available at <http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports/>).
- On several occasions, we have carried out a re-visit to locations where recommendations have been made in earlier visits, to see how improvements have been made.
- By having a rigorous Enter and View policy and schedule we try to ensure that the health and care provided to patients and residents across the city is maintained and hopefully improved.
- To do this, we are dependent on our team of volunteers. We remain thankful to them for their willingness to get involved. Thankfully, they also find the visits of interest and use, as the quote below (from a recently recruited volunteer) shows:

"The Enter and View went really well today and I enjoyed it. xxxxx was great and I felt very comfortable and aware of what needed to be done. I was wondering if you have any future dates for visits? I would like to do another as soon as possible as it was a fantastic experience and can see why they are so important"

.....



*Helping
you find the
answers*

Our Social Media Presence

Facebook - our last quarter of the year showed that our posts reached 5490 people.

Twitter - we now have 1485 followers.

Website - during the last quarter we achieved 6214 page views and 2516 visitors.

Newsletter - we also produce a monthly newsletter which includes useful local information

www.healthwatchstoke.co.uk/about-us/newsletter

All GP practices in Stoke-on-Trent receive paper copies to display in their reception area for patients to read and take away if they wish to.



How we have helped the community access the care they need

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent provides a information and signposting service to the public together with a printed directory that was distributed across the city and can be found online

<http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/healthwatch-stoke-health-social-care-signposting-directory/> . Our website also has an online Feedback Centre which gives the public the opportunity to detail views

about a specific health and social care service wherever they have access to the internet.



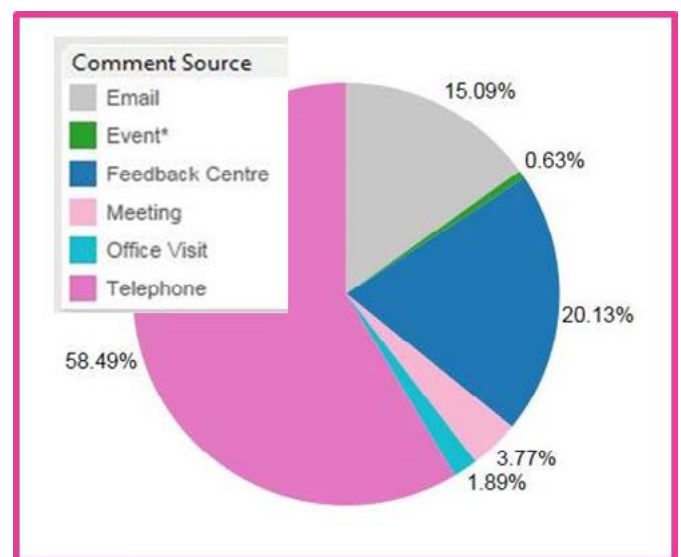
This online directory of local services also provides the public with the opportunity to review these services. Some people may not wish to complain but do want to share their experience.

The Feedback Centre is accessible at www.healthwatchstoke.co.uk

People are also welcome to contact the office directly. The office can advise on complaints procedures as well signposting to sources of help.

Healthwatch was contacted 159 times in 2016/17 (see below).

Methods of contacting Healthwatch Stoke





" Thank you to Healthwatch, the service received has been nothing less than exemplary"

Client feedback



Case Study One

A client phoned the Healthwatch Office to ask for help. He described struggling for a medication review with his practitioners. The medication was for his mental health and he described how he is in crisis. The client was becoming desperate, describing travelling up to the A&E, only to be told they could not help. He described having nowhere left to turn and being upset.

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent directed the client to the correct patient liaison service (PALS). After gaining consent from the client, PALS contacted them and assisted the client with his situation further.

Case Study Two

A client telephoned Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent to ask how to make a complaint against the receptionist at their GP surgery. The client felt that they had been misled as to the availability of their GP. The client also said that they also needed help with writing a letter of complaint.

A Healthwatch staff member directed the client to a local advocacy service for help with writing the letter. Also, the client was advised about the correct complaints procedure and was informed that the first step should be to speak to the practice manager.

*Making a
difference
together*



How your experiences are helping influence change

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent supports patients and the public to achieve positive change to services by gathering and analysing evidence that we can share with those that deliver relevant services. We do this in two ways:

- Firstly, through recording people's stories when they contact Healthwatch or when we speak to them at events or meetings.
- Secondly, through projects that investigate a theme.

Over the last year Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent has worked on various themes and produced several reports. These have ranged from gathering people's thoughts about community hospital beds to the experiences of parents of children with special educational needs.

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent is keen to use the intelligence it gathers to influence change. To do this, it maintains strong relationships with providers and commissioners. These relationships not only offer the opportunity to work in partnership, but also to be able to share important learning with the right people at the right time.

Outcomes can come a long time after a project has ended. In 2017, a previous report about the Frail Elderly and Discharge written in 2015 was presented at an event organised by Stoke on Trent City Council. It

was used to inspire potential service providers to design new services.

In 2017, the same paper was used as evidence supporting a bid associated with health literacy and the elderly elsewhere in the UK.

Working with other organisations

An important piece of work in 2016-17 was the Gatekeepers Project. This work was carried out in partnership with local organisations Voices of Stoke and Expert Citizens. The report found that, despite NHS guidance to the contrary, some GP surgeries were refusing to register homeless clients unless they produce identification. For someone of no fixed abode, this is difficult to provide. This requirement could result in homeless individuals being unable to receive the right treatment in the right place so, for example, they may have no choice but to present at their local hospital for treatment.



The report received national media coverage such as Radio 5 live and was presented at various forums such as at Staffordshire University. Also, a working group of senior practitioners was set up locally to monitor and improve services for the homeless. Cards have been designed for potential patients and the staff who work

with them. It is hoped that this will aid access for this vulnerable group. The Gatekeepers report is accessible at: <http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/projectreports/>

Another long-term focus has been mental health services for young people. In 2016, the Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent Mental Health Sub-Group, a committee of volunteers, launched an initiative called 'While We Were Waiting'.

While We Were Waiting

This project is about understanding what happens to patients, their families and others whilst waiting for mental health services for young people.

We need your stories about this issue. We'll then share them with health providers and others so that they can be used to improve services.

Find out more:
<http://bit.ly/WhileWaiting>
#wwwwaiting

Free EVENT –
While We Were Waiting
– Everything CAMHS

Saturday October 22nd
Opens at 10:00am,
Doors close for performance at 15:00hrs
The Mitchel Memorial Theatre

NEW VIC
borderlines

Borderlines will be working with you to create a piece of theatre which tells the story of how a wait for mental health services impacts.

- WaveMaker (Minecraft & Making)
- Arts and Crafts
- Speak to Health Providers

Booking – <http://www.waiting.eventbrite.co.uk>

Contributors under the age of 18 should attend with a responsible adult.
Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Registered Charity No. 1111421

Working with the Stoke Parent Carer Forum, a family event was held at the Mitchell Arts Centre (above flyer), interviews were taken as well as online surveys and focus groups. The project was promoted widely across both education and health sectors, raising awareness of this important issue. The findings from this project will be published in 2017/18.

Case Study

Mrs X has multiple conditions. She is wheelchair bound. Her husband, Mr X is her full-time carer.

When arranging an appointment through the GP surgery for the hospital, Mr X requested that an ambulance be booked and that he be included as a carer. Mrs X is eligible for non-emergency patient transport services (PTS). The receptionist at the surgery assured him that this had been done. However, when the ambulance arrived Mr X was told that there was no place for him and that this is policy.

This trip can take a long time. For example, Mr X described how on one occasion the clinic was running late which led to the ambulance slot being missed and reassigned. This resulted in a three hour wait at the hospital. Mr X felt that his wife shouldn't be left for this duration of time without his support. He finds it stressful waiting for her safe return. Also, Mrs X's consultant shared concerns her about being alone in appointments. The client felt that neither his role as carer nor her vulnerable state was recognised.

Healthwatch Stoke was able record Mr X's story. This story was then shared with commissioners. The client reported that the situation had been resolved and he was now able to travel.

Outpatients Project

Our volunteers visited out-patient clinics and gathered over 1000 responses to questionnaires as service users were referred for and attended appointments. They also spoke to staff at the hospital, specifically reception staff about their experiences.

The final report was shared with the out-patient team who considered ways to improve signage, calling systems and seating.

<http://bit.ly/HWSOutpatientsRep>

"I would like to thank Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent for this comprehensive Outpatient report which was made possible by the dedication and commitment of their volunteers. This is an excellent example of partnership working to improve the patient experience by identification of what really matters to our patients. It is reassuring to know that the great majority of patients are happy with the service they receive at Royal Stoke University Hospital."

*Director of Nursing - UHNM
(Outpatients Report)*

Neurology

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent has been engaged in work around Neurology for some time now. Our previous project about Parkinson's Disease formed part of the evidence base for the recruitment of additional specialist nurses.

Building upon previous work and in partnership with Healthwatch Staffordshire, surveys were distributed to Neurological patients from the UHNM and across the county. This work continues.

Deaf Community

We developed a paper using existing data that explored the experiences of the deaf community when accessing health services.

<http://bit.ly/hwsdeafcom>

Primary Care Strategy

We worked in partnership with three other local Healthwatch to gather feedback about GP services. This involved volunteers gathering stories in GP surgeries across the City.

<http://bit.ly/primcarestrat>

For all focussed work, volunteers can contribute to the planning and delivery of them. This can be through volunteer engagement meetings where updates on current work are delivered or more practical hands-on participation.

Sharing our Learning

Both we and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) gather intelligence that can be used to help monitor the quality of services. Arrangements are in place so that information can be shared between the organisations. For example, the CQC may request information about an organisation that they are about to inspect where we have already carried out an Enter and View visit.

Information gathered by us such as stories and reports are also shared with Healthwatch England. Healthwatch England use this information to identify trends on a national basis. An example of how this can raise awareness of an issue to a national audience can be found at

<http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/news/raising-awareness-experiences-homeless-people>

We also share reports with the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). It is hoped that this adds to the local evidence base and ability to identify needs and priorities.

<http://webapps.stoke.gov.uk/jsna/reports.aspx>

Learning is also shared through sitting on steering groups at different organisations. In 2016/17 we sat on steering groups for Health Literacy and the development of the local Information and Advice Strategy at Stoke City Council.

How we've worked with our community



An important concern for the citizens in Stoke-on-Trent in 2016/17 was the future of community hospital beds.

In response to the concerns raised we put out a call for comments and opinions about these proposed changes and received over a hundred responses. It was then possible to formulate these comments into questions to be put to the local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

" Thanks for including the STAND report on closing Community Hospitals within your report"

Stoke-on-Trent Area Network for Disability

The answers shared by commissioners feature in the final report. The public had the opportunity to share their views with an independent body and to have any concerns responded to formally by the CCG.

To further support conversation about the above changes, we provided an independent chair at two public CCG engagement events.

Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) Conversation Events

“We need to link in with communities to understand what assets there are and direct people to them when needed”

Participant - Conversation Event

In November and December 2016, we hosted two events in Stoke-on-Trent which gave the public the opportunity to attend and speak to clinicians and STP leaders about the case for change.

Attendees were involved in round-table discussions about different topics including urgent and emergency care, digital, prevention and well-being, and enhanced primary and community care. We also hosted a question and answer session. Our report can be viewed at: <http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/our-work/sustainability-and-transformation-plans-stps/>



The feedback at these events was captured in our report and fed-back to the STP 'Together We're Better' Programme Board.



Conversation Event- Bridge Centre

Health and Wellbeing Board

We sit on the Stoke-on-Trent Health and Wellbeing Board and feedback the views, themes and trends that are shared with us by patients and the public together with sharing our report findings to ensure that positive action is taken. <http://webapps.stoke.gov.uk/jsna/reports.aspx>

Volunteers

Our volunteer roles are as follows:

Enter and View Representative Volunteer
Enter and View representatives are our eyes and ears on the ground. They visit a wide range of local care settings to observe how health and social care services are being provided and if the needs of the patients or residents are being met. They share examples of best practice and make recommendations for improvement where there are gaps in the service being offered.

Healthwatch Engagement Volunteer
Engagement volunteers are our voice in the local community. They promote Healthwatch by telling friends, family, neighbours and colleagues about our work; encouraging them to share their experiences with us. They help people to understand that telling their story can change things.

Healthwatch Representative Volunteer
Representatives are the face of Healthwatch; attending meetings and events with local service providers and commissioners. They represent the organisation to ensure that patient and service user voice is heard and acknowledged, that's a pretty powerful voice to have.

Get in touch and help spread the Healthwatch Message

For more information or to register as a volunteer please contact our Volunteer Co-ordinator:

Rachel Dean
Volunteer Co-ordinator
Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent
Tel: 01782 603081
Mob: 07540 669965
Email: rachel.dean@healthwatchstoke.co.uk

Volunteer with us

VOLUNTEER GET INVOLVED!

YouthWatch Volunteer

YouthWatch is for 14-25 year olds who have an interest in health and social care and taking an active approach to ensure that their voices, experiences, ideas, concerns and views are heard.



*It starts
with you*



Healthwatch works best when it works with you.

Voices of Stoke and Expert Citizens are organisations that works with people with multiple needs including substance abuse, mental health and homelessness. Voices staff working on the ground reported that there were some difficulties in securing access to GP services for their clients.

“ local GP practice close to Martins temporary accommodation, they declined due to Martin being NFA (no fixed abode) and refused to register as a temporary patient.”

Voices Case Worker

For this group of patients, access to a GP is important. Firstly, they may be more in need of services and secondly, a GP can act as a gateway to other services through referrals.

“ . . . homeless people tend to have a much greater need for health and care services than the general population, but they find it much more difficult to access”

Stoke Homelessness Review

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent met with Voices of Stoke staff to discuss these issues and devise a way to gather evidence. It was decided that the best method was to carry out a mystery shopping exercise. This exercise found that just under half of GP's in Stoke-on-Trent said they would register someone who is homeless. Official guidance states that they should be registered. A

report was written that explained the findings.

This report led to outcomes including:

- Discussions on local and national radio (BBC Five Live)
- All practices across Stoke-on-Trent being informed by letter of their responsibilities in this regard
- Was considered as the local Homeless Strategy was taken forward
- A working group has been set up locally to monitor services for this group
- A card detailing the rights of homeless access to GP's has been produced

“ Thank you for providing us with your report detailing the experiences of patients and their advocates in accessing GP practices. I found your report to be extremely informative and it has highlighted areas for improvement locally to ensure access to GP Services for some of our vulnerable patients”

Chair, Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group



*Our plans
for next
year*



What next?

Our priorities have been agreed through listening to the public at various events, formally and informally throughout the year and by interrogating our CRM to identify emerging themes that suggest there may be a need for further work.

We also listen to commissioners and sit in strategic meetings as well as being informed by national policy and strategy. The end result is a series of high level priorities that we have put together with our Board's endorsement to focus on in the coming year.

However, the health and care economy is responsive to those unplanned events which occur. It is therefore recognised by the Board of Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent that some pieces of work will arise that are not part of the bigger plan, but to which it will be necessary to respond. Our plans have an element of flexibility which will support the need to be reactive and responsive.

- The future of Community Hospitals continues to concern our local population and we will strive to ensure their voice is heard
- The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Sustainability and Transformation Plan is ongoing and we will support the Together We're Better Programme Board to engage and fully consult with residents in the city of Stoke-on-Trent
- We will gather evidence of the experiences of those being discharged from hospital and ensure that this is shared with relevant providers and commissioners

- We will continue to identify mental health themes and support our Mental Health subgroup to achieve positive and meaningful change for service users
- We will engage with all communities and raise awareness of local Healthwatch
- We will promote the Dignity and Respect Charter on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Board

These key work areas will be underpinned by responsive work that arises throughout the year and is important to patients and service users.





Our people

Decision making

We are an independent organisation which strives to ensure that the local population has a voice in decision-making in the health and social care sector.

We are supported by our Management Board and have a wonderful team of dedicated staff and volunteers.

Our Annual Meeting in November 2016 was well-attended and attendees identified priorities for the coming year too which were not dissimilar to those identified by the public, our team and the Board. Furthermore, our engagement with young people has informed our priorities for the coming year.



How we involve the public and volunteers

Our volunteers are at the heart of everything we do, offering valuable skills and time to help make a difference to health and social care across the City. Volunteers help us to expand our influence and reach by attending professional meetings and events on our behalf. Our volunteers are also involved in undertaking Enter and View visits to services across Stoke-on-Trent that have NHS funded patients.

To keep in touch with our volunteers, we hold monthly Volunteer Engagement Meetings and send out Volunteer Bulletins. The meetings offer the opportunity to update the volunteers on any projects we are currently working on and to gather any patient experiences from them. We have also used them to gain volunteer feedback on documents produced by the Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group and the Quality Accounts from local service providers. A range of guest speakers have been invited to the meetings to give the volunteers an overview of what is happening in services more widely in the community, including Staffordshire and Shropshire Blood Bikes and the Services Manager from Telecare and Physical Disability Services.

As an off shoot to our main volunteer meetings, we have a Mental Health Sub Group, who meet on the third Wednesday of every month. They are involved in projects that focus on this particular aspect of Health and Social Care and played a large role in the While We Were Waiting project mentioned earlier on in the report.

Since April last year, we have recruited twelve active volunteers to a variety of roles within Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent.

To expand our volunteer base to make sure it is more reflective of the city we work in and to ensure we are engaging with everyone in the community, our aim over the next six months is to set up a YouthWatch, which will be aimed at 14-25 year olds.

To promote YouthWatch, we have delivered talks to health and social care students at Newcastle-Under-Lyme College. As part of this, students were asked to think of three things within Health and Social Care that were important to them. This feedback has informed our priorities for the coming year.

“ Thank you for coming in today, we have had great feedback from the students and staff! I will forward the information onto the students, thank you for thinking of us!”

Health and Social Care Placement Officer, Newcastle-under-Lyme College

To build partnerships within the local community, we have delivered presentations on who we are and what we do to the local branches of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Staffordshire Police. As our emergency services have regular contact with people in the community, we felt it was important for them to have an awareness of the work we do; especially as we are all working towards one common goal, improved health and wellbeing across the City. As part of this partnership, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service have delivered Olive Branch training to our volunteers to give them an increased awareness of how they can help those who are most vulnerable within the community.

Towards the end of last year, Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent joined the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Dementia Action Alliance.

The Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) is a network of businesses, organisations and community individuals who want to improve the lives of local people affected by dementia through action. As part of our action plan, our Volunteer Co-ordinator, who is a trained Dementia Friends Champion, has delivered Dementia Friends sessions to both our volunteers and members of the public. We have also used our social media to advertise local dementia support groups and events that took place during Dementia Awareness Week 2017.

“ The Dementia Friends session was interesting and informative. I took away quite a bit of new knowledge. It helped make more sense of experiences I’ve had with people who are living with dementia, and I hope it means I will be more aware moving forward. I signed up as a Dementia Friend and have already spoken with a few people about the main points of the presentation.”

Attendee at a Dementia Friends Session

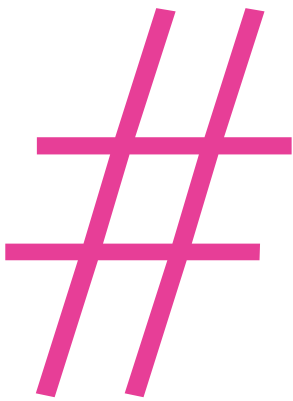




Our finances

Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	£195,000
Additional income	£5,405
Total income	£200,405
Expenditure	
Operational costs	£60,772
Staffing costs	£130,829
Office costs	£17,863
Total expenditure	£209,464
Balance carried forward	£25,187







Contact us

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Facebook: [Facebook.com/Healthwatch-Stoke-on-Trent](https://www.facebook.com/Healthwatch-Stoke-on-Trent)

Name and Address of contractors:

VAST, The Dudson Centre, Hope Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5DD

We will be making this annual report publicly available on the 30th June 2017 by publishing it on our website and sharing it with Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Group/s, Overview and Scrutiny Committee/s, and our local authority.

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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healthwatch

Stoke-on-Trent

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