

# Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent

Annual Report 2017/18





# Contents



Message from our Chief Officer	3
Who we are	4
Meet the team	5
Your views on health and care	6
Helping you find the answers	9
Making a difference together	11
It starts with you	18
Our plans for next year	20
Our people	22
Our finances	24
Contact us	27



# Message from our Chief Officer

Our report details highlights of our work this year and I hope you find it to be an enjoyable read. Firstly, I would like to thank our dedicated team of staff and volunteers without whom our work would not be possible.

This year we have continued our role as a critical friend at the Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups Future of Community Hospitals meetings and at the Health and Care Transformation Board (the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) Board Meeting). Both community hospitals and the STP have been highlighted as priority areas by our local residents who have also expressed concern about patient need not being met if the processes of change and transformation do not involve the public. We have communicated your concerns at various forums and as a result more public opportunities for you to have your say have been put in place.

**Head of Communications and Engagement, Stoke-On-Trent and Staffordshire CCGs**

“... directly due to Healthwatch feedback, the CCGs revised their approach to the way they provided information prior to engagement events. They have also made a difference to the way in which the evaluation of the quality of services are being assessed. We are very grateful for their support and look forward to another proactive year of working in partnership together.”

We have held discussions with CCG and STP leaders to emphasise the absolute need to ensure



that you are given the opportunity to share your views and thoughts about our local health and care system. As events progress from engagement to consultation we will continue to strive for all in our communities to have their say and to share their experiences.

During September the Care Quality Commission (CQC) visited our city to carry out a local system review of health and social care systems with a focus on individuals over 65 years old. We participated in this review and shared your feedback with the CQC. The published report ([www.cqc.org.uk/localsystemreviews](http://www.cqc.org.uk/localsystemreviews)) contained various recommendations and we are working with both health and social care leaders to progress work which we hope will improve the services in our area.

Moving into next year there will no doubt be much discussion about what our health and care services could look like in the future and I look forward to our ongoing journey of championing the public voice in the way your services are developed.



# Who we are



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

We want to know what is important to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need. Your views come first, especially those who find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find ideas that work. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.

As well as championing your views locally, we also share your views with Healthwatch England who make sure that the government put people at the heart of care nationally.

## 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.

# Meet the team



**Simmy Akhtar**  
Chief Officer



**Dave Rushton**  
Engagement Officer



**Paul Astley**  
Project, Data  
Management & Analysis  
Officer



**Michaela Chan**  
Communications,  
Information & Signposting  
Officer

## Our Team

This year two members of staff left our team. David Bourne retired and Rachel Dean left her role as Volunteer Co-ordinator for a new opportunity closer to home. Furthermore, one Board Member, Abi May resigned from our Management Board to pursue other projects. We would like to thank David, Rachel and Abi for their contributions and wish them the very best for the future.

## Decision making and how we involve the public and volunteers

We are supported by a wonderful team of dedicated staff and volunteers. Our volunteers attend monthly Volunteer Meetings, Volunteer Mental Health Group Meetings, Volunteer Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Meetings, complete Enter and View Visits, offer valuable feedback to health and care stakeholders and support our engagement activities.

At our Annual Meeting in November 2017 attendees told us their health and care priorities. These were similar to those identified by the public (via feedback received and at events), our volunteers, staff and our Management Board.

## Our Management Board members in 2017-2018 are:

- Lloyd Cooke (Chair)
- Andrew Thompson
- Hilda Johnson
- John Farrar
- Denise Deakin
- Mike Dixon
- Abi May (resigned March 2018)



# Your views on health and care



## Listening to local people's views

This year, we have played an active part in 83 community events, some of which were organised by our partners across the local health and care sectors, while others have been initiated by ourselves to generate conversation and obtain feedback from diverse groups across the city.

It is not possible to list all the events that we have attended this year and so we have detailed a small selection below:

- Expert Citizens Insight Awards
- Changing Lives
- Older People's Engagement Network
- Future of Community Hospital Events
- Hanley Stroke Association
- Bentilee Community Tenants Group
- Maternity Services Liaison Committee
- Deafday
- Vulnerable Women's Action Group
- Cerebra Children's event

We have met with many different people of all ages, from the elderly through to students, people of different genders and sexuality, different faiths and groups of people with a range of mental health issues and disabilities.

At each event, we hand-out anonymised feedback cards, so that we can record any stories, issues, complaints and compliments that people want to share with us. This feedback is recorded on our CRM system, which allows us to identify local themes and subsequent priorities.

This year, we engaged with more than 2,000 people and have increased the number of active volunteers to 38. Our volunteers are dedicated individuals who recognise the importance of the work we undertake and volunteer their time to ensure the public voice is heard by both commissioners and providers.

## Working with Young People

We have spent time working with schools and colleges across our city. Engagement sessions were held with students and lecturers at Staffordshire University, the Sixth Form and Newcastle Colleges and a local secondary school. This has helped us to understand the priorities of young people and their families.

Our project called '*While We Were Waiting*' involved recording stories from younger people and their parents/guardians who have been waiting for referrals to CAMHS. We have subsequently had meetings with the *Reveal Theatre Group*, who are very keen to develop this work into a series of workshops to be run in schools across the city, promoting greater tolerance and understanding of mental health.



## Newleaf

Another area in which we have been involved concerns the work of the Newleaf Transgender (Trans+) group. For more on this work, please see later in the report "*How we've worked with our community - Newleaf*".



New  
Leaf

A new listening service  
for trans people



## What we've learnt from visiting services

Our Enter and View team has continued our program of work throughout the year, undertaking a series of visits to hospital wards, health and care services and care homes in the City. We carry out Enter & View visits:

- When we receive concerns from a patient, carer, or family member
- As part of our ongoing Dignity and Respect program we talk to those who receive care and ask their opinions about the care they receive

More recently, we have begun carrying out visits to CCG commissioned care homes to report the quality of care provided.

We have 35 trained Enter and View volunteers and 5 are trained to lead the visits. When our Enter and View Representatives see examples of poor practice or have other concerns, these issues are reported to and discussed with the manager at the end of the visit. Other, less urgent comments are detailed in the Enter and View report as recommendations. To view our Enter & View reports, please see:

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

Feedback from a Service Provider following an Enter & View visit:

*“Once again thank you for taking the time to meet with myself yesterday. This was a really positive meeting from our perspective and we very much welcomed the observations of your team.”*

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.

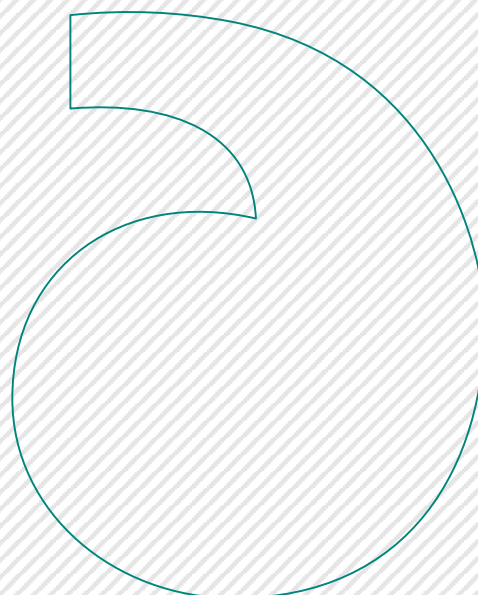
To do this, we are dependent on our team of volunteers and are thankful to them for their dedication.

*“Thank you for sharing the report with us; we're really grateful to have your support in improving service delivery; I have added a few minor comments to the attached.”*

Senior Commissioner, City of Stoke-on-Trent

## Community Drug and Alcohol Service (CDAS)

This year also saw the collapse of Lifeline, a national drugs and alcohol organisation which was commissioned by Stoke-on-Trent City Council to deliver local drugs and alcohol services. As a result, the Council commissioned North Staffordshire Combined Health Care Trust, AddAction and Bac O'Connor to provide these services to ensure continuity of care for clients. To evaluate this service, one of our dedicated volunteers has completed a Quality Review with the new providers and this will be published in 2018.





# Helping you find the answers

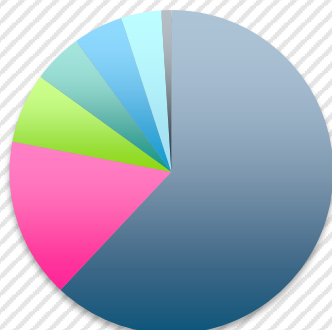


## How we have helped the community get the information they need

- We provide information and signposting service to the public by phone, email or through the health and social care signposting directory, which can be found at: [www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/healthwatch-stoke-health-social-care-signposting-directory/](http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/healthwatch-stoke-health-social-care-signposting-directory/)
- Our online Feedback Centre offers the public a chance to share their views about a specific health and social care service and also gives them the opportunity to review services. The Feedback Centre is accessible at: [www.healthwatchstoke.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchstoke.co.uk)
- People also contact our office directly to receive information about complaints procedures and we signpost to relevant organisations.

## Methods of contacting Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent

### Feedback Source



- Telephone
- Meeting
- Office visit
- Engagement
- Feedback Centre
- Email
- Post

## Our Social Media Presence

- **Facebook** -our posts have achieved 62,125 impressions.
- **Twitter** - we have 1647 followers and this number is increasing daily.
- **Website** -we have achieved 29,494 page views and 13,998 visitors.
- **Newsletter** - we produce a monthly newsletter which includes useful local information. [www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/newsletters/](http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/newsletters/)

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.



« I look forward to the Healthwatch magazine, a lot of information about what is happening. Well done for the people who get all the information, I hope you keep going. »





# Making a difference together



## How your experiences are helping to influence change

We support patients and the public to achieve positive change to services by gathering and analysing evidence that we can share with those that deliver these services. We do this in two ways:

- By recording people's stories when they contact Healthwatch or when we speak to them at events or meetings; and
- Through projects that investigate a theme which has been highlighted by the feedback we receive

Over the last we have worked on various themes and produced several reports. These have ranged from understanding the experiences of older people in hospital to monitoring changes to audiology services in the Stoke-on-Trent. We are keen to use the intelligence we gather to influence change.

## Project –Patient centred discharge

My Care My Way is a program initiated by the local CCG's. It was designed to reduce the length of stay in hospitals as well as delayed transfers of care. Based upon a philosophy of *home first*, services are arranged so that patients are supported to leave hospital more quickly.

A previous project conducted by us about hospital discharge found that a significant number of older people did not understand what was happening to them in hospital or during discharge. We found that patients were not always encouraged to participate in their own care and there was much scope for improvement in communication generally. This presents a risk for patients if they are not properly supported in their own home.

We worked in partnership with University Hospital of North Midlands (UHNM) to understand the experiences of this vulnerable group. It was hoped that a better understanding of this might improve the ability of patients to participate in their own care, thus improving outcomes, patient safety and reducing readmissions.

A survey was carried out and a report written. Not only was this shared with hospital staff, it also helped to inform the improvement of communication between staff and patients in other areas, such as Health Literacy.

<https://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/projectreports/>

### Statement from UHNM NHS Trust

*“University Hospital North Midlands NHS Trust continues to have a strong working relationship with Healthwatch Stoke on Trent. Healthwatch provide invaluable support by listening to our patients and sharing their views, feedback and concerns in an independent, structured way.*

*This relationship helps us to ensure our improvement programme is truly patient focused and the Trust recognises that this is key to offering assurance to our local community, patients and commissioners. We look forward to continuing working together to improve the patient experience with new initiatives into 2018/19 and beyond.”*



## Project – While We Were Waiting

A long-term project called While We Were Waiting came to its conclusion this year. As a result of this work we were able to share ways to improve things for children with Special Educational Needs.

Parents, staff and others spoke to us, our Mental Health Group and partner organisations including The Stoke Parent Carer Forum in late 2016 and early 2017. Parents described how they sometimes struggled with peers and professionals who do not understand what it is like to live with a child with learning difficulties. Their knowledge may sometimes be based on unhelpful stereotypes. This left parents feeling alone and unsupported. One parent said:

*“I had everyone giving me lots of different opinions, (such as) he needs disciplining, he just needs a good smack to maybe he is autistic . . . different opinions. I just started blaming myself as a parent”.*

The report aimed to influence change by sharing these experiences, along with others shared by staff that explained how things can be improved, especially when health services interact with education. We have been spreading the learning in the report. We sit on a group that looks at services for children at Stoke-on-Trent City Council and we presented our findings here, inspiring discussion about the impact of changes to school nursing and the value of communities. We also met to discuss our findings with the Clinical Director for the Learning Disabilities Directorate at North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust.

Our national body, Healthwatch England, have expressed an interest in the topic, describing the work of the Mental Health Group as “fantastic”.

Building on the recommendations in the report, we have convened regular meetings of researchers working within schools on mental health across the area to share learning.

Looking forward into 2018/19, Healthwatch has been developing proposals to provide an intervention in schools focussed upon tackling stereotypes.

<https://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/projectreports/>

### Statement from a Senior Commissioning Officer - Stoke-on-Trent City Council

*“Many thanks for the report ‘While We Were Waiting’.*

*The insight and messages are extremely useful and we will be looking at how we can use the evidence and feedback in our planning and commissioning of services for children and young people with mental health issues and special education needs.”*



**In 2017, Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent won an award at the Healthwatch England National Conference for its work in partnership with Healthwatch Staffordshire in engaging with the public about the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership.**

## Project – Audiology

Hearing aids help to improve independence and reduce social isolation, as well as enable better participation in the workplace. For their users, hearing aids are important devices.

Stoke-on-Trent people effected by mild to moderate hearing loss have recently experienced changes to audiology (hearing) services. Following concerns received, we designed a survey, asking people to share their experience about using these services and how the changes affected them.

Respondents who offered their opinions reported different concerns including waiting times and difficulties accessing services. Some mentioned issues they face with transport to different locations and disability access at some of the venues.

### Service user feedback:

*“Since this service has been discontinued at Kidsgrove, it took six months to make an appointment at Tunstall Specsavers. Why Tunstall? It is easy to access for people with disability. All the other Specsavers locations were difficult to access.”*

Another problem was an inadequate number of batteries, which resulted in repeated visits to a supplier. Keeping these visits to a minimum was described as especially important to those with caring responsibilities.

Our report made recommendations including prompt home visits and reasonable waiting times, so that patients are not left without this vital equipment for too long. We also recommended more flexibility around the number of batteries dispensed and clear information for service users about any further changes. These findings were included in a report written for the quality committee at the CCG and we are currently awaiting feedback.

You can read the full report here:

<https://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/projectreports/>

## Project - Gatekeepers



This piece of work started in 2015 and continues to shine a light on problems encountered by the homeless when attempting to register with a GP.

In 2017 we partnered with Voices of Stoke and Expert Citizens and launched a card (pictured above) intended to inform services users and staff of the right of homeless individuals to access GP services. Other local Healthwatch have sought our support to implement the initiative in different parts of the country. We are pleased that this work continues to produce real outcomes. We have a dedicated webpage which provides further support:

<https://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/our-work/gatekeepers/>

Partner organisations have hosted two groups of medical students who furthered the research into this important issue by continuing to engage with practices. The hope is to understand the barriers to providing access and address them.



The original report has now been added to national learning by being cited in a report by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Complex Needs and Dual Diagnosis.



## How we've worked with our community

We are well embedded in our community and engage with our residents to ensure views are captured and shared.

### Accident and Emergency

We were invited to work with a community group, Brinsley Befrienders, to host a session with participants, who were 75+ years old. They all contributed to a list of things that they want (or not) when they visit the A&E department at Royal Stoke University Hospital. Feedback included:

**"I want you to protect my dignity and cover me well" and, "I want to feel safe (I don't in a corridor)".**

We shared the results with senior health and care professionals who distributed these to staff on the front line too.

Download:

<https://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/When-I-go-to-A-and-E.pdf>

**"I will make sure that A/E staff are made aware of the issues raised in this document" - Dr John Oxtoby (Executive Medical Director)**

**"Thank you - this is really interesting as it demonstrates clearly what matters most to our patients. Can you please thank the group and let them know that I have shared the list with the A&E team." (Senior Patient Experience Staff Member)**

## STP and the over 75's

We are well positioned to share the views of the public about the STP. It is about the whole life course and is broken down into parts including, staying fit and well, staying independent and receiving care. We undertook a new initiative to speak to community groups about these three issues. The hope was to understand what is important to people and share this with the STP.



Findings demonstrated that NHS services are only part of the picture when it comes to staying fit and well. Things such as staying warm and having activities to keep people active and fend off loneliness are also very important.

**"It's easy for us to stay well as we are in a couple, but a friend of mine (a widow) has to make a real effort to go out" - Participant.**

Again, when it comes to remaining independent, things such as emergency call lines, transport and online shopping were mentioned alongside things such as properly trained carers.

Read what this group told us at:

<http://bit.ly/hwsstayingwell>

Comments from the group leaders:

**"Many thanks for coming out to us. The group really appreciate the fact that you gave your time to come and listen".**

## Newleaf

We have become increasingly involved with our local Trans+ community through the Newleaf Transgender (Trans+) group. Newleaf has continued to meet on a monthly basis and has grown in numbers. We have met Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to discuss the health and care issues raised by this community, as well as with the University Hospital of North Midlands (UHM), Staffordshire Police, the local Universities and Colleges and Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT).

Newleaf has sponsored training of two volunteers to enable a local branch of *Mermaids* to operate (*Mermaids* is the national charity supporting younger Trans+ children and their families). Previously, local people had to travel to Birmingham for relatively short meetings. *Mermaids* in Stoke-on-Trent will be launched in July 2018.



A new listening service  
for trans people

## Stoke Pride

We sponsored a stall at Pride 2017 to promote the Newleaf Group and received more than forty visitors during the day.

Several organisations also visited us, pledging support in areas of future partnership working.



### Comments from a parent:

*"I have expressed interest in setting up a local Mermaids group and have been supported by Newleaf to undertake training. Newleaf are now supporting me in looking at potential venues to have such regular meetings as part of Mermaids."*

*"Without Newleaf helping to take this forward these local families and children will be left in limbo and like myself and my son will be struggling to understand and feel supported during their children's transition."*

Furthermore, as part of our work around Trans+ issues, we are holding a full day event in June 2018 to which local GP Practices have been invited.

Both national and local speakers are attending and our main aim is to improve awareness and gain greater acceptance of the Trans+ community in health and care services.



## Working with other organisations

We continue to meet with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on a quarterly basis and share intelligence between us as appropriate. This approach allows us and CQC to avoid duplication and to highlight concerns in the hope of avoiding negative patient experiences.

We share local intelligence with Healthwatch England on a daily basis which in turn allows for the formation of national themes and emergence of national issues. This year we have supported Healthwatch England with their social care green paper submission to the Department of Health and Social Care. The purpose of this submission is to outline both Healthwatch England and the network's research and policy positions on social care to shape and influence the ongoing debate.

We maintain good working relationships with providers and commissioners. We also sit on a wide variety of different committees across both health and care. 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. We aim to be a critical friend and positive influencer.

## Supporting our Adult and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Scrutiny forms an essential part of the councillors role as a representative of the people. It enables non-executive councillors to take account of public service performance across the city.

Work was carried out by local councillors about GP Services in Stoke-on-Trent. We supported this with evidence and insight. We analysed data about local GP performance and presented it to a panel at Stoke-on-Trent City Council. We are currently awaiting publication of this piece of work.

### Council Staff

*"Thank you so much for pulling this together, I'm sure it will prove very useful."*

## Health and Wellbeing Board

We have a seat on the Stoke-on-Trent City Council Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board has representatives in attendance from both health and care sectors including commissioners and providers.

This gives us the opportunity to raise your concerns with all local organisations and to advocate the patient voice in local health and wellbeing matters.

### Stoke-on-Trent Health and Wellbeing Board Chair

*"The role Healthwatch have in ensuring that the voice of the patient is heard is vital to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and helps ensure services meet needs."*

We share our reports directly with the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This work is an ongoing assessment of the health and care needs of the city of Stoke-on-Trent.

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

it starts with  
**YOU**





Your story has the power to make change happen  
Share your experience with us

Tell us what you think of health and social care in Stoke-on-Trent

it starts with **YOU**

healthwatch  
Stoke-on-Trent

[www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk)

Use our Feedback Centre anonymously to tell us what you think about doctors, hospitals, opticians, dentists, outpatients and other health and care services in Stoke-on-Trent

Alternatively, email us at [info@healthwatchstoke.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchstoke.co.uk) or call us on 01782 683080

healthwatch  
Stoke-on-Trent

Simply write your story in the space below and post it back to us

NO STAMP REQUIRED

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent  
FREEPOST MD18303  
Dudson Centre  
Hoppo Street, Hanley  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST1 5DD

## #ItStartsWithYou

The more people share their ideas, experiences and concerns about the NHS and social care, the more services can understand what works, what does not work and what people want from care in the future.

Change really does start with you. We want to thank the public for coming forward with their experiences in 2017/18.

If it matters to one person, it's very likely that it matters to somebody else.

"In 2015 I had concerns regarding a fall suffered by an elderly vulnerable inpatient under supervision at RSUH. I contacted Healthwatch Stoke and presented my experiences to Healthwatch. Staff made enquiries which proved very helpful. The fall eventually led to an Adult Safeguarding (AS) enquiry led by Stoke Council. The AS enquiry decision seemed unreasonable for the fall victim. My concerns became protracted. Healthwatch have been extremely professional, through their support I was able to provide a voice for the elderly vulnerable patient.

After around two and a half years I won the right to appeal the AS decision. Yesterday the AS decision was reversed and proved in favour of the elderly vulnerable patient. The guidance provided by Healthwatch was effective, supportive and greatly appreciated."

(feedback from a member of the public)

## Case Study

We wanted a more inclusive way for the public to share their experiences anonymously with us. Many people in the city may be without access to or the knowledge of how to use the internet, so we designed feedback cards, with space on the back to share a story and provide a freepost address.

Following distribution of our feedback cards at local Mental Health Community Centres, we received feedback that highlighted certain emerging issues that patients face in these facilities. They included long waits for appointments and a lack of available alternative appointments when they need to cancel and rebook. People also complained about the quality of their appointments, their concerns and issues not being taken into account properly and the overall lack of service coordination.

The collected feedback was presented and discussed at our Mental Health Group meeting and they subsequently incorporated this into their work plan together with sharing with local providers.

Actions included our volunteers visiting Mental Health services, visiting their craft groups and talking to service users. We also met with service managers to discuss the idea of creating a charter of how people would like to be treated in mental health community centres. This work is ongoing.

# Our plans for next year



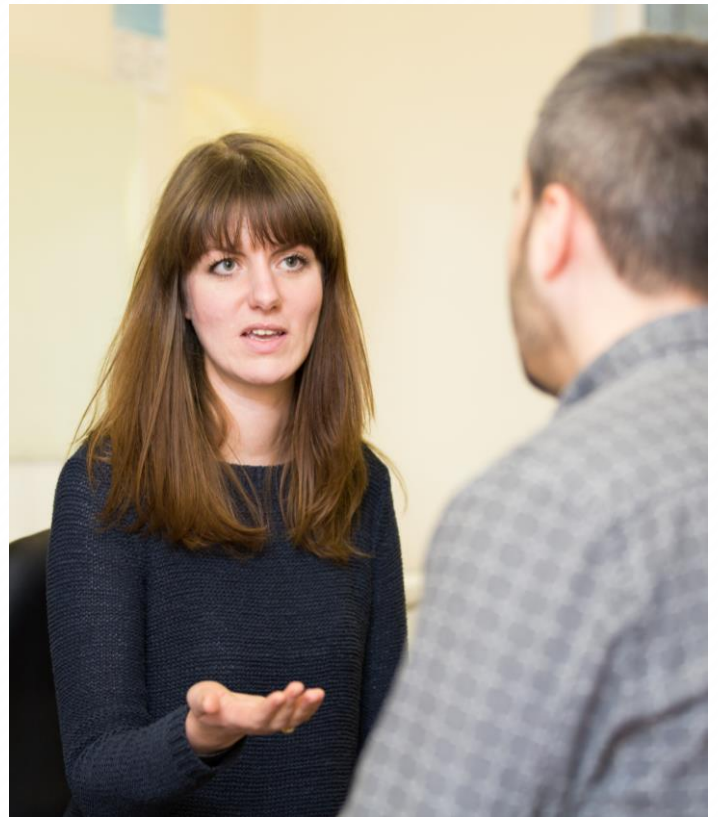


## What next?

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

We also 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 Management Board's endorsement to focus on in the coming year.

However, we need to be responsive when unexpected events occur in our health and care economy. To accommodate this, our plans have an element of flexibility. This means that we can use our resources to react accordingly.



## Our priorities for next year

1. The Future of Community Hospitals
2. The Sustainability and Transformation Partnership
3. Mental Health
4. GP Services
5. Continue to promote the Dignity and Respect Charter



# Our people





## How we involve our volunteers

We have a very active group of volunteers who scrutinise mental health services across the city. As well as being instrumental in the While We Were Waiting project, the group are also very visible in many committees at different organisations, effectively representing the patient voice. Members of the group maintain good relationships with staff in key positions in the local health and care economy. They are sometimes requested to attend our group to present improvement initiatives and explain how they maintain quality.

Recently, the group has had a very specific focus upon community mental health with members actively going out to speak to service users in community venues to understand their experiences. We also distributed our marketing materials which resulted in an increase in the feedback we receive about these services. Members also participate in quality visits with the Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Our volunteers have a passionate interest in being involved in the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) and in response we have formed a Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent STP Volunteer Group.

While awaiting firm engagement and development plans to be published by the STP, the group has been involved in various events to ensure they are able to participate, enabling the patient voice to be represented and heard appropriately at every stage.

For example, the group has been involved in sessions with West Midlands Academic Sciences Health Network, Keele University and the CCG following which they have commented on the vital need to improve Health Literacy, so that the public can fully comprehend what is to be proposed as part of the STP.

They also remain involved in recommending improvements to the Patient Transport system.

More recently, several members of this group have enrolled on the STP Ambassador Training Programme. This role will involve receiving public views and opinions which will be fed-back to the STP.

### Message from the chair of the Mental Health Group

*“The Mental Health Group Stoke on Trent is a formidable group working within Combined Healthcare’s Trust. The Mental Health Group has established itself in many mental health committees as a respected voice of the mental health service users. We are involved in everything from CAMHS Services through to Adult Services. At the moment we are working on attempting to create a transformation plan to make the CAMHS transformation to Adult Services painless. We have volunteers sitting on Leadership Boards who actually design services. Our voices are heard and looked on as the experts point of view.*

*Recently we have increased our membership and are still vetting even more. The beauty of our group is that there is a fair mixture of service users, carers, ex-nurses, ex-managers and professional mental health workers, who are all dedicated to improving mental health for service users. We even have in our group a Dementia Champion, to debate at the moment whether Dementia is a mental illness. We have a CQC who represents us on their visits. All in all our Mental Health Group goes that step further for service users, and more over we succeed.”*



# Our finances







Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	£195,000
Additional income	£3,475
Total income	£198,475
Expenditure	£
Operational costs	£59,084
Staffing costs	£132,918
Office costs	£10,965
Total expenditure	£202,967
Balance brought forward	£16,128



**“Great meeting today. I look forward to attending the focus group regarding the Health Literacy and would also like to attend the Citizen's Jury on Mental Health”**

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent Volunteer







# Contact us

**Address:** Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent  
The Dudson Centre, Hope Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5DD

**Phone number:** 01782 683080

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

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

**Twitter:** @healthwatchSoT

**Facebook:** Facebook.com/Healthwatch-Stoke-on-Trent

## Address of contractors

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

Our annual report will be publicly available on our website by 30 June 2018. We will also be sharing it with Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Overview and Scrutiny Committees, 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.

© Copyright Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent 2018

**healthwatch**



Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent  
The Dudson Centre  
Hope Street  
Hanley  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST1 6JH

[www.healthwatstoke.co.uk](http://www.healthwatstoke.co.uk)  
t: 01782 683080  
e: [info@healthwatstoke.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatstoke.co.uk)  
tw: @HealthwatchSoT  
fb: [facebook.com/Healthwatch-Stoke-on-Trent](https://www.facebook.com/Healthwatch-Stoke-on-Trent)