

# The value of listening

Healthwatch Bury  
Annual Report 2023–2024



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**"Over the last year, local Healthwatch have shown what happens when people speak up about their care, and services listen. They are helping the NHS unlock the power of people's views and experiences, especially those facing the most serious health inequalities."**

Louise Ansari, Chief Executive at Healthwatch England



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# Message from our Chair

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## The Healthwatch Bury Annual Report presents us with an opportunity to pause and reflect upon our busy year.

I hope you find it useful in providing insight into the impact we have had; on how we've spoken up for people's rights to health, helped to improve their access to healthcare, and gathered feedback that has enabled us to drive and influence change and shape local services. Our Annual Report speaks for itself in this respect, charting how our reach continues to expand, how our team supports hundreds of people each year to access the healthcare that they need, providing signposting, information, and feedback to them on how we have taken their views forward, and helped to make improvements. Our case studies illustrate positive ways in which local people have been empowered, how we anonymise their feedback on healthcare received whenever requested and continue to support our services to respond to changing needs, helping to ensure that patients are offered a range of ways to make appointments with health professionals, including those who are digitally or socially excluded, and carers.

I want to extend a huge thank you to Adam Webb, our Chief Officer, and all the team, who work tirelessly to ensure the voices of the citizens of Bury are engaged with, listened to, and actively heard, implementing an ambitious Enter and View programme which shines a light upon good practice and surfaces sub optimal standards and outcomes in healthcare services which are commissioned through the public purse. We are also indebted to our members, our volunteers, and our partners and allies for their steadfast support. My personal thanks are extended to the Healthwatch Bury Directors, who have grown in strength and capability over the last year, as we continued to use our statutory position to support change and improvement for local people. And finally, we couldn't have done it without you, the people of Bury, who have taken time to share your views, opinions and experiences with us, providing us with evidence of what good looks like and what needs to improve – in short, the intelligence with which to spot trends and create change.



**“Whilst the work we do has positively touched the lives of countless individuals across the Borough, we cannot afford to be complacent. Insight gathered throughout the year confirms that the need for support and system navigation prevails and is growing within all the communities of Bury, not least because of the pressures and budgetary constraints that our public services face. With this backdrop, our role as a watchdog for health and social care services has never been more important.”**

**- Ruth Passman, Chair Healthwatch Bury**





Each year our Healthwatch Board and team meets to set in place a challenging programme of work, and this report touches upon our key priorities for 2024-5, placing a laser focus upon helping people to navigate the healthcare system, improving access, uncovering health inequalities and unmet need, and supporting service improvements. I'm looking forward to us creating a positive impact and improvement wherever we can. Next year, we face challenging times once again and pledge to move forward with positivity, working alongside all those who live, work and volunteer in Bury, to meet local challenges with additional resolve and an exciting new resource. We shall soon be opening accessible 'shop front' premises in the centre of Bury, where people can visit us face to face for help and advice and join in engagement activities so 'watch this space'! The team are planning a great launch programme for our new premises, as well as a programme of Public Meetings.

Whilst the work we do has positively touched the lives of countless individuals across the Borough, we cannot afford to be complacent. Insight gathered throughout the year confirms that the need for support and system navigation prevails and is growing within all the communities of Bury, not least because of the pressures and budgetary constraints that our public services face. With this backdrop, our role as a watchdog for health and social care services has never been more important.

The Annual Report also shows the benefit and power of Healthwatch Bury working strategically, and it has been my pleasure to continue to work alongside our partners, and to represent Healthwatch Bury, and our citizen voices, on the Health and Wellbeing and the Locality Board.

I am confident that Healthwatch Bury will continue to be a driving force for positive change in our local health and care landscape. With our commitment to amplifying the voices of those we serve, we will strive to build a healthcare system that is truly inclusive, responsive, and equitable for all. Thank you for your continued support.

**Keep up to date with what we are doing, health and social care developments as well as guides, how-to's and plenty more.**

**Visit our website at [healthwatchbury.co.uk](https://healthwatchbury.co.uk)**

**You can also find us on LinkedIn, Facebook, X (formerly twitter), Instagram or sign up to our e-bulletin.**



**Contact [info@healthwatchbury.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbury.co.uk) for more information or assistance.**



## Healthwatch Bury is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

### Our vision

A world where people who live, work, volunteer, study and use services in Bury can all get the health and care they need.



### Our mission

To make sure Bury people's experiences help make health and care better.



### Our values are:

- **Listening** to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- **Including** everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- **Analysing** different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- **Acting** on feedback and driving change.
- **Partnering** with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.



# Year in review

## Reaching out:

**793 people**

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.



**325 people**

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and the cost-of-living crisis.

## Making a difference to care:

We published **3 reports** about the improvements people would like to see in health and social care services.

Our most popular report was



### Our Enter & View report on Burrswood Care Home

which highlighted the issues raised by residents, families and staff at the service.

We also published **over 100 news stories** about health and social care developments on our website, and published many guides to help you get the care you need.

We published **4 activity reports** showcasing what we have been up to and highlighting issues to the health and care commissioners and services.

## Health and social care that works for you:

We're lucky to have

**25**

outstanding volunteers who gave up **22 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2023 - 24 we received

**£122,000**

which is the same as the previous 10 years.





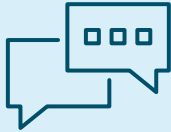





We currently employ

**6 staff (3.5 full time equivalent)**

who help us carry out our work.

# How we've made a difference this year

Spring	 <p>We highlighted concerns of people in Bury around access to pharmacy services and changes in provision.</p>	 <p>We took steps to get people the support they needed while waiting for planned care, involving patients in creation of new waiting well resources.</p>
Summer	 <p>Our team actively kept track of all vacancies to register with NHS dentists to help people that were struggling to get one themselves.</p>	 <p>We worked with our largest hospital trust to involve patients in improving accessibility of patient letters .</p>
Autumn	 <p>We raised issues in accessing sexual health services being experienced, particularly by women, to the providers to improve their referral process</p>	 <p>We worked with our local Mental Health Trusts to review quality assurance procedures in the aftermath of the Edenfield Scandal.</p>
Winter	 <p>We helped people access appointments and medical records via the NHS app, holding sessions to teaching people how to use it and supporting them if they couldn't.</p>	 <p>We helped people suffering in the cost-of-living crisis to access foodbanks, housing assistance and help with prescriptions.</p>

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# Your voice heard at a wider level

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## We collaborate with other Healthwatch to ensure the experiences of people in Bury influence decisions made about services at Greater Manchester Integrated Care System (ICS) level.

This year we've worked with Healthwatch across Greater Manchester, where we:



Gathered opinions from across our local communities and used our knowledge to contribute towards the development of the Greater Manchester Dementia United Quality Standards, the Greater Manchester ICS People and Communities Engagement Strategy and the Shanley Report.

Undertook a Greater Manchester Children and Young Peoples (CYP) Mental Health Project, with a focus on on pathways to mental health support. This project gathered peoples lived experiences of existing service provision across Greater Manchester. Recommendations and findings will be fed back to GM and local commissioners and providers to help shape future service delivery.



Appointed 3 key roles to the Healthwatch in Greater Manchester partnership. These include an Independent Chair of the Network, Chief Coordinating Officer and Administration and Data Officer. These roles will drive forward the leadership, coordination and delivery of the All Age Strategy 2022-2025 alongside partnership working across the Greater Manchester Healthwatch Network.

Worked in collaboration with Greater Manchester Patient Services to co-produce ongoing reports throughout the year which identify challenges and share the lived experiences of the people of Greater Manchester. We have, and will continue to, ensure their voices are heard throughout the Greater Manchester ICS through their Quality and Performance Committee.







# Listening to your experiences

**Services can't make effective improvements without hearing your views. That's why, over the last year, we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feed this back to services and help them improve.**

# Giving people the ability to access essential care

**This year we have prioritised spending time with people who have had significant barriers to accessing healthcare and helping them to understand their rights and negotiate the system.**

Following work we carried out to identify groups of people in Bury that have been telling us that they are struggling to navigate the health and care system, we set up opportunities to speak to them in person. Taking a 'drop-in' model, where we would be available to talk to individuals to listen to the issues they were facing, regularly arranged to let them know when and where they could reach us, we found that there were plenty of people who were otherwise not having the help they needed made clearly available to them. We were able to prepare with the most up to date information available to help and to arrange further contact when needed to work through complex issues.

## Our specialist drop-ins included

Housing association tenants

Homeless people

Refugees and asylum seekers (including those fleeing the war in Ukraine)

Job centre sessions



## What did you tell us about?

- Some people were being given incorrect information about requiring ID to register with a GP and access GP appointments, and some were even told that nationals of particular countries were not eligible for primary care GP services..
- The reliance on apps and digital literacy to book appointments, access records and information was a significant barrier to those who struggle with technology and access to it, or those who struggle with English.
- That current systems available to book GP appointments were problematic for those that don't have regular reliable access to a telephone.

## What difference did this make?

- We were able to ensure that official communications went out and were fully understood by reception staff of the current rules and processes set out by NHS England about requirements for ID and eligibility for all to book appointments with a GP.
- People were given assisted to book essential appointments by our staff, and alternatives put in place for those that help them.
- We have increased knowledge of our offer of assistance to those underserved groups, people that work with them and professionals wanting to hear from them

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# Listening to people using care-homes and using their experiences to push for improvement

**Taking action on concerns we had received, Healthwatch Bury decided to use our statutory powers to carry out an Enter & View visit to a local care home.**

Our team of trained representatives went to see first-hand how the service was being delivered, what the environment and atmosphere was like and to speak to those that were there.

We spoke to residents, staff and management, as well as gathering feedback from friends and carers of those in the home and discovered there were many issues. Our team escalated the concerns to the local authority and Care Quality Commission and it triggered an unannounced inspection.

Our team found that:

- Activities have been identified as a concern as it was reported residents on the dementia ward were not being included and this had been added onto the care teams list of tasks who were struggling with time and needed to prioritise personal care..
- Residents were also not permitted to go outside due to a fence being removed and the home expressed no plans to erect a new one.
- Food was not available outside of set mealtimes and families were told to bring additional food in to supplement what was offered, on top of a £200 per month increase in fees.

## What difference did this make?

- The inspection from the CQC following our report led to a rating of inadequate in all 5 key areas. This was followed by a team put together including the local NHS partners and Council services working intensely with the service to turn things around
- Capacity was reduced and some residents moved to alternative accommodation while a positive transformation occurred. Places are now opening up and the latest inspection has shown huge improvements.

Since our visit, extensive work has been undertaken by teams from Bury Council, local NHS services such as Medicines Optimisation teams, GPs, the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch Bury has been involved throughout, able to inform the families and friends of residents of developments and changes.

Our relationship with these services has improved and we are a key part of quality assurance and scrutiny having proved how our intelligence can effectively aid improvement and provide an early warning.



**“they do not value the residents as people but more as ‘pound signs and income”**

- Member of care staff interviewed by Healthwatch Bury during the visit

# Three ways we have made a difference in the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.

## Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

**It's important for services to see the bigger picture. Hearing personal experiences and the impact on people's lives provides them with a better understanding of the problems.**

We highlighted the issues people have had in accessing dementia assessments following our report last year. Local plans to establish a dementia steering group, and overarching Dementia strategy and quality assurance process have all involved us and highlighted the issues we raised. We will continue to ensure service users and their families will be represented in the process.



## Getting services to involve the public

**Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.**

Following the BBC Panorama programme that brought to light many problems at the Edenfield Centre Mental Health Unit in Prestwich, we have worked with our local providers to improve feedback and quality assurance processes in facilities delivering services in the borough, including private providers who deliver NHS services which has previously been something the system is not very good at. We are also working on improving reporting mechanisms to ensure concerns are responded to quickly and appropriately.



## Improving care over time

**Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with services to consistently raise issues and bring about change.**

We have been bringing in experiences and feedback we have gathered into the process to redesign how intermediate care is delivered in Bury. Our enter & View visit to the current intermediate care facilities allowed us to make sure fresh and up-to-date experiences a core part of the intelligence and guidance we provided. As plans and strategy are being developed, we are using this to be sure designs are appropriate and inclusive for all those who may need it.



There's a summary of other some outcomes we've achieved this year in the Statutory Statements section at the end of this report.





# Hearing from all communities

**Over the past year, we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard, and services meet their needs.**

**This year we have reached different communities by:**

- Holding drop-in sessions to help homeless people access services that they needed.
- Working with Asylum seekers, refugees and immigrant communities (such as those from Ukraine displaced by war) to ensure they can understand their rights and what care is available to them.
- Listening to those with sensory loss and physical disabilities to understand the barriers they face in getting GP appointments.



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# Supporting those needing sexual health services

**We heard from people that were having problems understanding and accessing sexual health services in Bury and neighbouring boroughs and so looked into it.**

We found that it was exclusively women coming to us with problems accessing the services, including people from vulnerable groups. Information given on websites was not accurate, some reported having no responses from calls or messages and waiting times were very long.

## What we have done

- We met with the provider to highlight the issues people were having.
- We passed on the details of those that had come to us (with their permission) to be contacted directly to arrange appointments.
- We offered support in informing people of processes, pathways and what they can expect from the services as well as sharing developments and changes as they arise.

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## Making sure 'Pharmacy First' fits in Bury

**The NHS has made moves to make pharmacies the first port of call for a growing number of conditions in an effort to reduce demand for GP appointments and to streamline the experience for many people.**

We have worked with local commissioners and providers to understand what this will mean for people and help direct them as appropriate.

We have collected feedback from pharmacy users and how the experiences have been and shared information, including:

- *When is it right to go to the pharmacy instead of a GP or A&E?*
- *What services can they provide?*
- *Does this change what people can access a GP and other services for?*
- *Can they prescribe medication?*

We will continue to be part of a process that monitors how things are going, how they can be improved and feeding back any intelligence we have.

We will also continue to ensure we are keeping the public informed of any changes as they happen.



## Advice and information

**If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Bury is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, making a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.**

### **This year we've helped people by:**

- Assisting people to access the services they need
- Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access NHS dentistry
- Supporting people to look after their health during the cost-of-living crisis

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# Understanding patient communication needs

**It's essential that people have clear, accurate communication about their care. So Healthwatch Bury has been looking at the ways services communicate with their users.**

We have found that complaints and concerns we collect are very often about the communication people receive from the services they are using (or trying to access). These can vary from problems with understanding signage at hospitals, inconsistencies with patient letters, lack of interpreters or complex jargon used in descriptions.

So we are continuing to make it a priority to understand issues and help services to improve how they communicate.

## **What we have done so far:**

- Reviewed patient letters for Northern Care Alliance, assisting in their standardisation and accessibility work.
- Worked with groups with sensory impairment to understand their communication needs and feed back to the services that need help to get it right.
- Assessed signage at Fairfield Hospital to highlight issues in 'wayfinding'.
- Helped people access interpreting services appropriate for their needs and translated information for them.

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# Increasing digital literacy in Bury

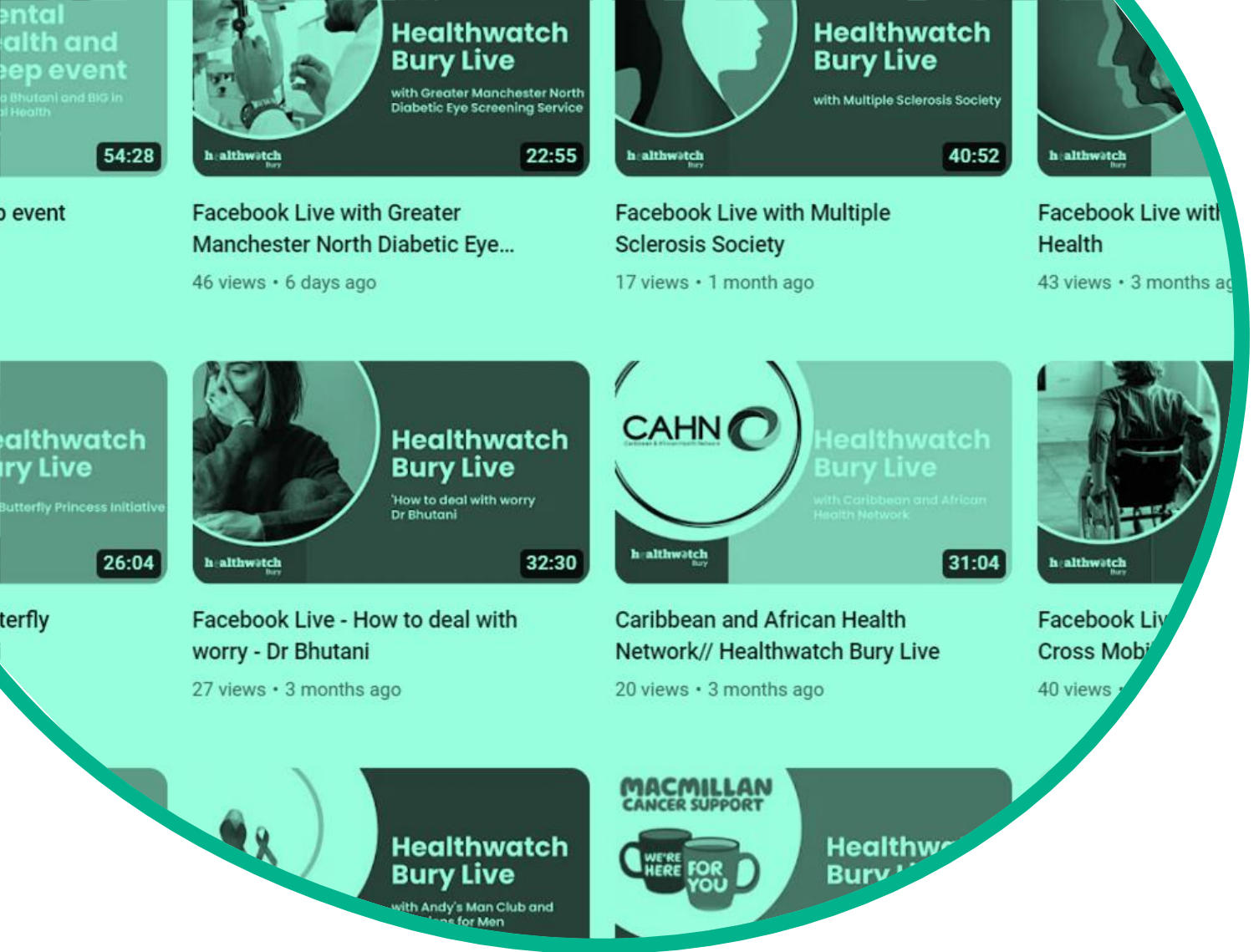
**Digital tools can make a positive difference to healthcare – but only if it's clear how to use them.**

Thousands of people are finding it easier to use digital health services in Bury, after Healthwatch Bury started offering guidance and learning sessions.

Digital platforms increasingly have a place in healthcare for things like booking appointments, especially after the pandemic. But there's a risk of exclusion for people who aren't confident with these services or can't access them.

## **Healthwatch Bury wanted to make sure everyone could get the benefits of digital services.**

- So, we ran face-to-face workshops at GP surgeries and one-to-one coaching at drop-ins to support people who are struggling with it to understand and confidently use online services.
- As well as making things easier for patients, the work has helped reduce time and money spent on calls to GP surgeries, and empowered patients to anticipate and act on their needs.
- We have registered people who couldn't do it themselves, set communication preferences and given people a full understanding of how to access their health information via the NHS App.



## Informing online

**Our Youtube channel now has more than 50 videos providing information from support groups and services, helping people understand the support that is available.**

We have been broadening the spectrum of subjects covered and organisations we have worked with to address areas people have asked for information about. Audio-visual information is supported by subtitles and transcripts can be translated if required, making us more accessible.

### **Our other online highlights include:**

- Publishing over 100 news and information articles about health and care affecting people in Bury on our website.
- Collecting more than 250 survey responses on our SmartSurvey platform, giving us easy, rich and varied avenues of feedback.
- Updating our LinkedIn page keeps the professional world up-to-date with our work and events, which has resulted in more partners and stakeholders getting involved with us.
- Using social media to give us the ability to collect feedback both directly, as well as using it as an 'ear to the ground' to find out what views are locally.





## Knowledge on the web

We provided many guides, explainers and updates on our website alongside local news and developments around health and social care.

Covering all sorts of topics, there is a wealth of useful content constantly being updated to help people in Bury understand and navigate the system.

However we can also use our website to see where people need the most help – Our guide to ‘How can you find an NHS dentist?’ was consistently one of our most popular pages, as was info on Bury sexual health services, which suggest people need better information on the subjects.

## Seeing and hearing

Since April 2022 we have published 48 of our live information sessions on Youtube, giving an ever-growing library of audio-visual information presented by services and groups themselves in their own words.

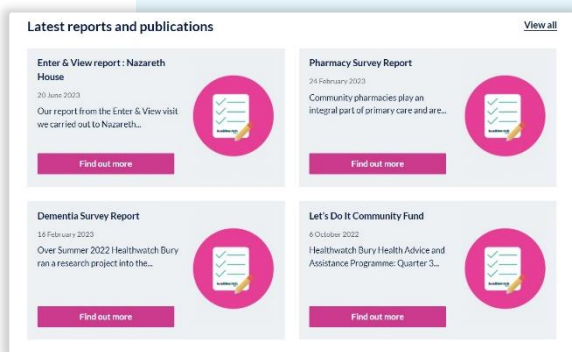
Covering subjects including Cervical Cancer Awareness, the role of community pharmacy, Bury Hearing Hub, Menopause awareness and plenty more, the sessions contain lots of background and also include a Q&A session at the end.



## Gathering reports

Our work often results in us creating reports on the areas we have been working on. You can find all these in the ‘Reports’ section of our website, along with past Annual reports, board minutes, activity reports and more.

Keep an eye out for our upcoming reports, including Enter & View reports and those on areas we are focussing on, such as the upcoming report on prescriptions.







## Our board & team

**Our board of directors comprises of a dedicated team who use their considerable skills, experience and knowledge to steer the work of Healthwatch Bury.**

The board are:

Ruth Passman (Chair), Alan Norton (treasurer), Tan Ahmed, Alison Slater, Masoud Sanii, Florence Sokol, Gita Bhutani and Jeff Glasser (stepped down November 2023)

### **Do you feel inspired?**

We have the opportunity to recruit more experience, skills and knowledge to our board, so please get in touch today if you think you are interested.



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# Our staff team



Adam Webb – **Chief Operating Officer**

Annemari Poldkivi – **Research & Public Participation Officer**



Andrea Wilson – **Administration & Social Media Officer**

Shirley Waller – **Engagement Officer**



Charlotte Foster – **Volunteer Coordinator**

Beverley Santana Vega – **Engagement & Project Officer**



Laura Vallance – **Project support**





# Volunteering

**We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of what we do. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving.**

## **This year our volunteers:**

- Visited communities to promote their local Healthwatch and what we have to offer
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views
- Carried out enter and view visits to local services to help them improve



Since I began as a volunteer for Healthwatch Bury, I have seen a real growth and increase in their work. More projects are being taken on all the time, for example, for people with dementia and their families, access to GPs for people with sensory disabilities and Enter and View visits. Also many more outreach visits are taking place, for example on park benches, at Prestwich Clough day to name two. Park bench surgeries , attended by a couple of staff and a volunteer, involve a banner describing what Bury Healthwatch is all about. Also a variety of leaflets on topics in which people may be interested. Parks are chosen to catch passers -by who may be walking through for many reasons and give opportunity to talk face to face.



This is all as well as keeping up with legislation, linking in with the national Healthwatch body, networking locally to name a few other tasks. As a volunteer, it keeps me up to date in what is happening in the health and social care field nationally as well as in my local area. It allows me to meet up and work with employees and other volunteers so enhances my life as a retiree but I hope some of my experience brings a little value to the organisation.

**Florence –  
Volunteer for Healthwatch Bury**



## Do you feel inspired?



We are always on the lookout for new volunteers, so please get in touch today.

 <https://healthwatchbury.co.uk/volunteer>

 0161 253 6300

 [info@healthwatchbury.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbury.co.uk)





# Enter & View Report

Holt House

Visit  
Repe

## Enter & view authorised representatives

These are our Healthwatch Bury volunteers that have gone through our thorough Enter & View training processes and have passed the relevant Disclosure and Barring checks, enabling them to conduct visits on behalf of Healthwatch Bury.

- Caroline Sutcliffe
- Florence Sokol
- Alison Slater
- Alan Norton

In addition to the above, our staff team have also undergone the training and checks and are authorised to conduct Enter & View visits.





# Finance and future priorities

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

## Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£122,000	Expenditure on pay	£141,320
Additional income	£8,800	Non-pay expenditure	£18,767
		Office and management fees	£12,186
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£130,800</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£173,249</b>

\*Income for Greater Manchester Healthwatch delivery not included.

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## Additional income is broken down by:

- £2,000 received from Healthwatch England for work on a project.
- £2,000 received from the local ICS for joint work on a project.
- £800 funding received from a local charity to support their project.

## ICS funding

Healthwatch across Greater Manchester also receives funding from our Integrated Care System (ICS) to support new areas of collaborative work at this level, including:

Purpose of ICS funding	Amount
Greater Manchester Network funding for single point of contact and administrative hub.	£ 99,000

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## Next steps

**Over the next year, we will keep reaching out to every part of society, especially people in the most deprived areas, so that those in power hear their views and experiences.**

We will also work together with partners and our local Integrated Care System to help develop an NHS culture where, at every level, staff strive to listen and learn from patients to make care better.

Our top three priorities for the next year are:

- 1. Tackling inequalities** – Helping improve the outcomes for those that the system isn't working well for
- 2. Uncovering unmet needs** – Amplifying the voices of those who are missing out on vital support
- 3. Improving navigation** – Helping people find their way around the complex world of health and social care to get the help they need.



# Statutory statements

**Healthwatch Bury CIC, 56–58 Bolton Street, Bury, Greater Manchester, BL9 0LL**

Healthwatch Bury uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.



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# The way we work

## **Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making**

Our Healthwatch Board consists of 7 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of our activities. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2023/24, the Board met 8 times and made decisions on matters such as Our future public engagement plans, our contract with Bury council and its specifications as well as the future of our premises.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities by using public feedback, consulting with representatives and patient groups, involving volunteers and lay people in our Enter & View panel and inviting participation in our AGM.

## **Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences**

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible can provide us with insight into their experience of using services. During 2023/24, we have been available by phone, and email, provided a web form on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website and will also have copies available at our engagement events as well as our AGM.

## **Responses to recommendations**

We had no providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations.

## **Taking people's experiences to decision-makers**

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insights and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area, for example, we take information to Health Scrutiny Committee, Social Care Risk Escalation Group, the System Assurance Committee, Public Health Delivery Partnership, Elective Care and Cancer Recovery Board and several more.

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers in the Greater Manchester Integrated Care System. For example, we have a representative on the GM System Quality group. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

# Strategic representation

A key part of the role that we have played in carrying out our statutory responsibilities over the last year is our membership of and participation in the Bury Health and Wellbeing Board. As Chair, Ruth Passman has represented Healthwatch Bury on the Board, providing strategic input, constructive challenge and using influencing skills to ensure that the voice of services users, carers, patients and the public is heard. Working in collaboration with leaders from the healthcare system, the public, voluntary and community sector and a range of local stakeholders, this has enhanced our strategic impact last year, in close alignment with our input into the broader Greater Manchester (GM) programme of work to secure Healthwatch representation at all levels as we moved to an Integrated Health System.

## Greater Manchester

This year we have strengthened our relationship with neighbouring Healthwatch organisations and worked with Healthwatch across the patch to put in place arrangements to host the GM Healthwatch Network in Bury.

This helps us to be at the forefront, ensuring that Healthwatch achieves a more united and powerful presence with which to influence decisions made about services at Greater Manchester Integrated Care System level.

Healthwatch Bury is represented on Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnerships by Danielle Ruane – Chief coordinating Officer of the Healthwatch in Greater Manchester Network, and Greater Manchester Integrated Care Boards by Heather Etherage – Independent Chair of the Healthwatch in Greater Manchester Network. Ruth Passman represents Healthwatch in Greater Manchester on the Population Health Committee; a committee of the NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board. In addition to being responsible for discharging the statutory organisational responsibilities of NHS GM, the Committee provides wider system leadership in relation to population health in Greater Manchester, with a primary focus on improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities.

We have continued to build a strong local identity in 2023-4, taking forward an enhanced programme of joint work with the CQC to ensure we are best placed to receive and provide local intelligence on matters of concern regarding local health care services.





## Enter and view

This year, we made 4 of Enter and View visits. We made 14 recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Care home – Burrswood	Patients raised safety concerns	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient safety improved.
Care Home – Holt House	Public requests for information	Wrote a report, shared findings with partners and made recommendations for improvements.
Intermediate Care Facility – Killelea House	To collect information prior to local service reconfiguration planning	Created report and associated recommendations to feed into future planning work.

## 2023 – 2024 Outcomes examples

Project/activity	Outcomes achieved
Health navigation drop-ins	Helped people access care services, report problems and gather intelligence.
Primary care access for people with sensory loss and physical disabilities	Helped people access primary care, improved knowledge and ability to use interpreters, service user experienced fed into service design and commissioning, provided information to staff around enhanced needs.
Patient letters	Assisted in redesign and standardising of patient letters from hospital trust, ensuring accessibility and comprehension of many groups.
Intermediate care	Provided intelligence, insight and experiences to enhance design of future service being scoped to cover Bury in coming years.
Dentistry	Monitored availability of places on NHS dentist patient lists and helped people get registered with an NHS dentist when they have not been able to themselves

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# Message from the Chief Operating Officer

**It is clear for all to see that NHS and social care services are under extreme pressure at the moment and the need for those services is huge.**

Budgets have been reduced for both services to deliver, and in the households of the people that need to use them and the cost of living is causing life to be very difficult for many.

That means that our work at Healthwatch Bury is more important than ever. Our helpline often fields calls from people who are desperate for assistance having been passed from person to person with no action or resolution, trying to find the right place to go. This is often as a consequence of many services being withdrawn, cut or under pressure to narrow their remit due to budget pressures, leaving people stranded.

As a result, our workload has increased and we are also under pressure to deliver with no extra resource, but we are committed to help those that need it and will do whatever we can to assist people in navigating the system, as well as amplify their voices when it comes to decision making around those services.

We have sought to secure our future in delivering an effective Healthwatch for the people of Bury and have arranged to move in to new premises. Working with local housing provider Irwell Valley, we will have a shop unit where people will be able to visit us in person for help and advice, as well as being somewhere we can hold engagement activities.

We have also agreed on a new contract with Bury council to continue to deliver Healthwatch for the coming two years at least, allowing us stability and giving those who use our service a promise we will be around for some time to come.



**Adam Webb –  
Chief Officer, Healthwatch Bury**

**“To be honest I had given up. I had been told ‘sorry, we can’t help’ so many times I thought that was it. I was in pain and I had no idea what my rights were and without your help I would still be in pain. I shouldn’t need your help to see a dentist, but I am thankful you did help.”**

**– A Bury resident on getting an emergency dental appointment**

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