

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Workplan of Projects, April 2025 – March 2026

This document describes the health and social care projects that Healthwatch Brighton and Hove has identified it plans to work on over the next year. It also describes other topics which we are keeping under consideration and our internal projects that support the successful operation of our organisation. Our Board approved the workplan in July.

Our 2025/26 workplan is subject to change in light of the June 2025 government [announcement](#) that Healthwatch is to be closed down. This will result in the loss of independent services which act solely to listen to, and speak up on behalf of, patients. As we obtain more information about what these changes mean and any timescales involved, we will review our capacity to deliver the projects detailed below. In August, Our Board agreed to invest no more than 10% of our efforts in challenging the government's decision, as we believe that retaining independent services is in the best interests of local residents. We will also dedicate time to working with partners at NHS Sussex and the Council on the proposals to transfer our function to these organisations (TBC).

Projects are identified by Healthwatch using a range of sources including patient feedback, from the numerous meetings that we attend, from intelligence shared with us by partner organisations, from issues we know to be of interest to Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission (national focus), and from our other engagement activities. Decisions as to which projects we will take forward are made in line with our [Decision Making & Prioritisation Policy](#) and [Engagement Plan](#).

We also deliver work which has a Sussex-wide impact, in partnership with our colleagues in Healthwatch [West](#) and [East Sussex](#). Our work involves collating feedback, investigating and escalating issues as appropriate, and issuing regular polls on a variety of topics.

Alongside detailed projects, Healthwatch will escalate issues where it receives intelligence to suggest there is a significant problem, and whether this can be delivered within our capacity and remit. Our escalation routes are varied and include to the four Sussex Hospital Trust's Senior Leadership Teams, the [Care Quality Commission](#), [Healthwatch England](#), our [Integrated Care System](#) and the city's [Health and Wellbeing Board](#) and [Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#).

We deliver projects with the help of our dedicated volunteers and in partnership with local voluntary and community groups and other organisations. You can read more about our work, volunteer roles, partnerships and the impacts we have made in our latest [Annual Report](#) covering the period April 2024 to March 2025. We publish reports detailing our work and recommendations on our website www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk

Projects led by Healthwatch Brighton and Hove		
Primary Care	Hospital visits and reviews	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodingdean Medical Centre. We will carry out a follow-up survey of patient's experiences of this practice following our engagement in 2024. We will report the results back to the Practice, as well sharing these with NHS Sussex and the Care Quality Commission. • Experiences of GP services amongst the trans, non-binary and intersex community. We will publish the results of our project work that we carried out earlier this year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter & Views: we will carry out statutory visits over the course of the year to various services and report our findings. • Mystery shops: we will carry out a series of visits across the Royal Sussex County Hospital to assess how well reception staff are applying the Trust's new Welcome Standards (occurring throughout the year). 	
Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPTS)	Refugees and asylum seekers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working across Sussex, we will lead work to conduct a patient-led review of the new NEPTS service to understand what is working well and whether any improvements are needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Sanctuary-on Sea, a refugee and asylum-seeking support organisation, we will focus on the experiences and inequity of refugees and asylum seekers in accessing health services and receiving care, via a series of focus group and a survey. 	
Social Care	Mental Health and housing	Young Healthwatch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Care checks: we will interview people about the quality of the care they receive in their homes and report findings to the Council (ongoing throughout the year). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of Neighbourhood Mental Health Teams. We are finalising plans which would see us delivering a service-user led review of this new model of mental health provision across the city, working with NHS Sussex leads and a range of partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaping: we will finalise our work exploring how children with Special Educational Needs use vapes, which we started earlier this year.

Men's health	Hypertension (high blood pressure)	Climate project and wellbeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will engage with people who identify as men, which are an engagement priority group for us, with a focus on learning more about their wellbeing and mental health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will publish the outcomes from our work with other local voluntary groups, focussing on the identification of and support to patients with high blood pressure and high risk of hypertension. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with other local voluntary groups, we will explore people's attitudes towards making positive environmental changes within the context of promoting their health and wellbeing.

Our regular and routine activities		
Communications	Events	Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will provide a Helpline for public queries or concerns. We will routinely share advice & guidance on our website and social media platforms. We will issue our regular newsletter to the public. We will publish ad hoc bulletins with news, information, surveys, etc. We will publish reports detailing our work and any recommendations we have made. We will publish our performance report every six months. We will give media interviews on health and social care topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will hold our public Board meetings 4 times a year. We will attend public events to speak to people about their experiences of health and social care services and raise awareness of our role. We will promote events via our newsletter, bulletins and website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work with partners to help us hear from diverse communities. We will attend a range of meetings to learn about changes to services and represent the patient voice. We will meet routinely with staff at our local hospital Trusts, the Care Quality Commission, NHS Sussex, and the Public Health team at the Local Authority to share insight and ask questions. We will escalate concerns and request answers from the system. We will continue to be involved in the city's Safeguarding work and Chair the Safeguarding Adults Review group.

Volunteers	Commitments	Performance monitoring & reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will routinely recruit new volunteers and support our existing volunteers. We will issue a volunteer newsletter. We will routinely review and update our website to ensure it is accessible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to explore our carbon footprint and determine how we can reach net zero in line with our published plans. We will deliver on our published social value commitments. We will renew our Cyber Essential IT security. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will publish our annual review of our helpline data. We will publish our Annual Report by 30 June 2025. We will publish a review of our equalities data. We will carry out an internal staff and volunteer satisfaction survey. We will carry out an external stakeholder survey. We will routinely review and update our policies and publish these where relevant.

Healthwatch in Sussex projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three Healthwatch in Sussex teams will continue to deliver a series of bimonthly polls to sense check the public's opinion/ experiences on a range of topics. These short surveys will give us high-level insight which we can use to identify larger projects and also raise emerging issues with NHS Sussex. We will deliver our Sussex-wide review of Non-Emergency Patient Transport (see above). Other projects are to be determined.

Topics under consideration		
The following topics were also identified as part of our Decision Making & Prioritisation Policy . We will determine our capacity to take these forward as projects as well as what the nature of those projects might be.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women’s health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safeguarding adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carers’ experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young carers /people’s experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hospital care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pharmacy provision
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Care homes / Adult Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• -	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• -

Get in touch – our contact information



Click [here](#) to share your experiences and feedback with us. Thank you

For enquires or help

Email us at office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk or contact us through our [website](#)

Call us on 01273 234 040 – Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm

Write to us at:

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove
113 Queens Road,
Brighton
BN1 3XG

Freepost RTGY-CZLY-ATCR, Healthwatch Brighton and Hove, Brighton, BN1 3XG

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