



Our social value commitments

2025-2030



Committed
to quality



healthwatch
Brighton and Hove

Our commitment

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is committed to delivering social value.

Social value (SV) is about making sure that we have an overall positive impact on our people and communities. SV can be divided into three main areas:

- social: improving the wellbeing of individuals and communities, encouraging interconnectedness and mutual support among people.
- economic: promoting economic policies and business practices that uplift society's wellbeing.
- environmental: the importance of sustainable processes that take care of both the social and physical environment, ensuring a viable future for everyone. We have published our climate commitments separately.

Our SV goes beyond delivering on our core Healthwatch contract requirements, and are the additional community benefits we plan to achieve.

Our plans link to Brighton and Hove city Council's [Orbis](#) policy, [carbon neutral 2030 programme](#) and objectives for Healthwatch.

As part of our commitment, we will routinely review and update our policies and also publish an annual report describing the SV we have made and actions we are working on. We will also include a summary in our statutory Annual Report.

Supporting our staff

Our SV outcomes are designed to attract and retain the best employees and volunteers, reduce absenteeism, improve work-life balance and improve productivity.

As part of a package of support, over time we will offer:

- A free [Employee Assistance Programme](#) to support well-being.
- Hybrid working, allowing people to work at home with appropriate equipment provided.
- Flexible working, including part-time roles and we will consider the appropriateness of job sharing.
- Staff paid time off work to volunteer locally.

We already provide a wide range of SV for our employees, including being a Real Living Wage employer and offering a flexible working environment, to ensure that all individuals can thrive in their caring roles and careers. Our approach enhances staff well-being and improves staff engagement.

Volunteering opportunities

A dedicated Healthwatch staff member leads the recruitment and ongoing support for our volunteers.

Offering volunteering opportunities provides a number of benefits:

- Ensuring the community shapes our work.
- Helping to scale up our operations, without creating additional financial strain. In 2023/24, volunteers provided 4,200 hours of support, equivalent to an estimated £92,000.
- Increasing local community cohesion, with volunteers connecting through their roles, fostering a greater sense of community spirit.

Additional activities we will undertake are shown on the next page.

Area	Our actions
Offering flexible opportunities	We will offer flexible opportunities including short and long-term roles, flexible hours, virtual volunteering and options to allow volunteers to pause their activities with us but remain on our books.
Enhancing our recruitment practices	<p>To diversify our volunteer base, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse and update our volunteer role descriptions, as necessary. Analyse volunteer equalities data to inform future recruitment approaches. Collaborate with partners to promote our range of volunteering opportunities and advertise roles with organisations that support people we would like to attract. Promote volunteering to varied groups by working towards becoming accredited as a dementia friendly organisation and by making a commitment to sign the Armed Forces Community Covenant.
Supporting local students	To support university students to be 'work ready' we will offer volunteer placements and job training e.g. how to write a C.V. We will advertise paid roles to final year students to support the wider aim of retaining skilled people locally.
Recognising impact	We will hold regular volunteer appreciation events and evaluate volunteer satisfaction allowing us to improve and adapt our programme. We will provide a bespoke newsletter showing our volunteers how their contributions support our work as well as keeping them up to date.
Nature and environment	We will update our policies to support staff to undertake paid local volunteering activities.

Supporting carers

We will support carers by identifying and removing barriers to working or volunteering with us and to support their well-being.

Area	Our actions
Promoting wellbeing	We will explore the appetite for creating an internal network for carers, where staff and volunteers can connect, share experiences, and offer mutual support. We will work with the Carers' Centre to provide carers with access to helpful information.
Offering flexible opportunities	To remove employment barriers, we will identify staff who are carers and implement flexible working practices within 12 weeks of contract start date.
Organisational focus	Our policies include equal opportunities for promotion, career development, and professional growth. We will update our recruitment policies to extend guaranteed interviews to those who are carers (as well as, final year university students and ex armed forces personnel).

Supporting victims of domestic or sexual violence

Healthwatch fosters a safe, inclusive and supportive working environment, helping to deliver the [Pan-Sussex Strategy for Domestic Abuse](#) and [Community safety and crime reduction strategy](#). We include the protection of victims of [Modern Slavery](#) in our approach.

Area	Our actions
Workplace safety	To protect people's safety, we will update our Domestic Violence Policy and be explicit about protections we offer.
Promoting wellbeing	To demonstrate a culture of safety, a named person will lead delivery of our commitment of supporting staff and volunteers who may be victims of domestic violence.
Training and awareness	To improve understanding of domestic violence and how to respond to a disclosure, we will identify training for staff and volunteers.
Raising awareness	We will raise wider awareness of Domestic Violence and the support available at events we attend or host, through our press and media work and via our newsletter.
Joining the Employer's Initiative on Domestic Abuse	This will ensure our policies and procedures are up to date and demonstrate our culture of safety. We will publicise that we have made the pledge.
Offering wider support	We will make sure that everyone understands we have a zero-tolerance approach to Domestic Violence. We will take steps to protect staff and volunteers and support behaviours by signposting to relevant frontline support services.



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