



Together we can

Healthwatch Bedford Borough
Annual Report 2022–23

healthwatch
Bedford Borough

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"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."

Louise Ansari, Healthwatch National Director

Message from our CEO

Healthwatch Bedford Borough has worked tirelessly over the past decade to support people living and working in the Borough, representing their health and social care interests and giving a voice to individuals or groups who are often seldom heard.

Following a recent successful tender process, Engaging Communities Solutions CIC (ECS) was appointed by Bedford Borough Council to provide Healthwatch services from January 2023.



Elizabeth Learoyd
CEO

Having joined the Healthwatch Bedford Borough team as CEO, I have seen the hard work and dedication shown by our small team to ensure local residents get their voices heard and that our work has impact throughout the Borough. Both locally and nationally, this past year has been challenging for people when using health and social care services. The care system has faced unprecedented demands, whilst having to cope with insufficient resources.

During the past few months, we have worked hard to build on the great work that had already been achieved by the previous provider and continue to build new relationships which will ensure our focus remains on implementing and delivering our plan for the contract to maximise the impact the organisation can have.

Our [Community Nursing Report](#) engaged with families and carers about their experiences of accessing community nursing, the value of the service, and how it could be improved. In July 2022, our joint [Enter and View visit to Bedford Hospital](#), with Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire provided insight into the experiences of patients and service users and sought to make recommendations for improvement, whilst highlighting existing areas of good practice. Over the coming year, we have a renewed focus on our Enter and View programme and will be completing 12 visits over the next year to maximise the insight we get.

During the past year, Healthwatch Bedford Borough have also been working tirelessly on 'The Denny Review; A rapid evidence review of the health inequalities experienced by the local communities of Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes', a Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care System (BLMK ICS) commissioned piece of work.

The project aimed to highlight the health inequalities for those that may be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, living in deprived areas of Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes. Full report to follow in due course.

Message from our CEO

We will be seeking to widen our reach across communities, ensuring that we make every effort to listen to those who are seldom heard or excluded. [Our work programme](#) projects for 2023/24 include a range of issues such as;

- Access to GP Services
- Access to NHS Dentistry Services
- Young People's Mental Health and
- Preconception (a year long project across the BLMK ICB footprint, working alongside Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire, Healthwatch Luton and Healthwatch Milton Keynes).

We are fully aware that gathering feedback against such a broad spectrum of health and social care issues is challenging for us as a small team therefore since the beginning of the new financial year in April 2023, we have focused our resources on recruiting more volunteers and Board Members for the Advisory Board, as well as increasing our outreach and engagement programmes, to reach more people and communities.

Our Healthwatch Bedford Borough team and small cohort of volunteers will continue to work tirelessly this year on behalf of Bedford Borough citizens. Nevertheless, we are reliant on service user feedback and experiences. The more we gather, the greater the influence we can have on local health and social care services.

Finally, I would like to thank our predecessor contract holder Healthwatch Bedford Borough CIC and its Directors for their endeavours and wish them well for the future.



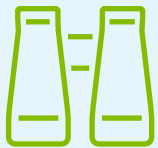
“Healthwatch Bedford Borough has continued to play a vital role in supporting the local Public Health and Health Protection teams during this past year. Not only in terms of sharing key messages with communities and via their social media platforms, and contributing to delivery of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment but also by using their deep local knowledge and community insights to help ensure that the diverse needs of all our local communities are taken into account when planning, delivering and monitoring service provision. We thank them for their continued dedication and support.”

Ian Brown - Chief Officer for Public Health - a shared service across Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes

About us

Healthwatch Bedford Borough 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.



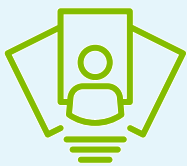
Our vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



Our mission

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

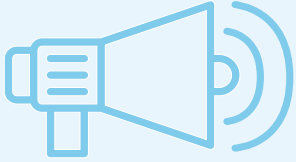


Our values are:

- **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



508 people

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

200 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

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

Our most popular report was our

Listening Survey

which highlighted areas 135 local residents, and stakeholders wished us to focus on during 2023/24



Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

3

volunteers who give up their time to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2022-23 we received

£94,685

£71,070 with the previous provider and £23,615 for ECS our current provider.

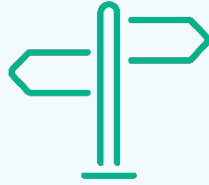
We currently employ

5 staff

1 full-time equivalent and 4 part-time who help us carry out our work.

How we've made a difference this year

Spring



Run our signposting and advice service, offering local residents and professionals support and guidance.



Worked with partners on the planning of the BLMK ICS DENNY review.

Summer



We carried out a series of Enter & View visits to Bedford Hospital A&E department, Urgent Treatment Centre and the Acute Assessment Unit.



We supported the #BecauseWeAllCare campaign, which saw 54,000 people come forward to tell us about issues they faced with services.

Autumn



We hosted a focus group with Community Nurse Fellows and local Healthwatch colleagues, looking at barriers and challenges to accessing community nursing.



We undertook a bespoke piece of work for the BLMK ICS DENNY review, looking at health inequalities in marginalised communities.

Winter



We surveyed local people to find out what our priorities should be for the forthcoming year.



Attended virtual community events and meetings to improve the profile of the Healthwatch Bedford Borough brand.

10 years of improving care

This year Healthwatch celebrated its 10 year anniversary. For 10 years we have listened to the public's feedback and used it to improve services. Changes include:

How have we made care better, together?

Hospital Discharge

We conducted a study looking at hospital discharge and made a series of recommendations.



Bedford Borough Health & Wellbeing Fair 2019

During 2019, Healthwatch Bedford Borough, in partnership with ACCM UK, hosted the region's first large-scale health fair. This saw 58 exhibitors provide information and diagnostics, 3 clinic rooms and a well-being programme of 7 local practitioners offering sessions to the public during a day long event.

NHS Long-Term Plan

We undertook a large piece of work with local Healthwatch colleagues, which included multiple focus groups pertaining to the subject of general access to NHS services, mental health provision, cancer health and care services.



COVID-19 Pandemic

We worked with commissioners and service providers, supporting them in delivering both service delivery change updates and promoting the vaccine roll out.

Deaf Community Access

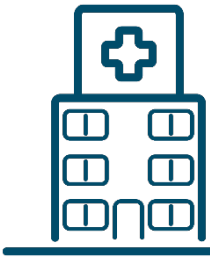
We have undertaken several pieces of work looking at Deaf access to health and social care services. This has included having a designated email address assigned to the local hospital.





Listening to your experiences

Services can't make 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.



Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Enter & View Project

During the month of July 2022, Healthwatch Bedford Borough, in collaboration with Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire, conducted a range of Enter & View visits to Bedford Hospital NHS Trust departments. The four departments visited over a number of 13 visits were as follows:



- General A&E
- Pediatric A&E
- Acute Assessment Unit
- Urgent Treatment Centre

The main aim of these visits was:

- to engage with patients, carers and relatives present in the wards/ departments highlighted above to understand their experience of visiting the service;
- to engage with staff to understand the pressures and demands on their time and to highlight their ideas to improve patient experience;
- to observe how dignity is being respected;
- to identify examples of good working practice;
- to observe patients engaging with staff (clinical and non-clinical), and their surroundings.

Of the four departments visited by Healthwatch representatives, many issues and concerns were raised by patients, relatives and staff. Predominantly, the main areas of concern were as follows:

Lack of communication between:

- Staff within the hospital
- Hospital staff and other healthcare professionals
- Hospital staff and patient/carers
- Shortage of staff
- Long waiting times

- Lack of adherence to the NHS Accessible Information Standard for patients with additional communication needs

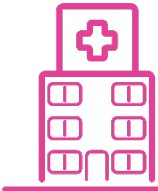
Identified by staff:

- Insufficient time to attend training
- Low morale – staff feeling undervalued



“Staff need to communicate better between themselves as Mum says that she has to relay all the information again every time someone new asks her a question”

Anonymous, from Bedford



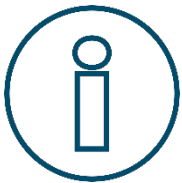
Following analysis of all the feedback received, Healthwatch Bedford Borough and Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire recommended the following to help improve patient experience when visiting Bedford Hospital:



- **Reduction in waiting times and information** – One of the main issues highlighted throughout the report is the length of waiting times across all departments. Clearly contributory factors have to be considered, such as current staff shortages across the entire health and care system, however, we would recommend that the correct waiting times for each department should be clearly displayed for patients, and regularly updated, so they can determine how long they are likely to be waiting, and to better manage expectations.



- **Interpreters** – A review of awareness and/or staff training to recognise when an Interpreter may be required and to be aware of the process/protocol – many patients are not being asked if they require an Interpreter, and there is also lack of information provided in different languages, therefore a review is recommended.



- **NHS Accessible Information Standard (AIS)** – It was highlighted by Healthwatch representatives that the Standard is not generally being adhered to by the hospital. Healthwatch would recommend training and education on the AIS for all staff. More information about the AIS and adherence can be found in a previous [Healthwatch report called Seen and Heard](#).



“More Doctors and nurses needed so people can be seen quicker”. *Anonymous, from Bedford*

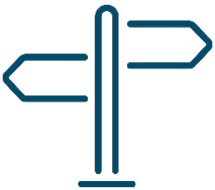




- **Additional support for nursing staff** – As staff indicated that morale is generally low, and some staff do not feel valued, we would recommend the provision of additional support and training, with regard to staff wellbeing, to include managing stress, mental health, mindfulness, etc., and the ability to take downtime to access these resources.



- **Freedom to Speak Up Guardians** – The majority of staff did not have any awareness of who the Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Guardians are and how to contact them. Healthwatch would therefore recommend that all staff are given this information with immediate effect.



- **Improve signage in all departments** – Healthwatch are aware that building works have had an impact on signage around the buildings, however, the signage around the departments visited were found to be insufficient and not always visible including that of fire exits and exit routes. This affects patient safety and we would therefore recommend a review and update of current signage in and around the buildings. In addition, all staff should be trained in fire evacuation procedures which should also be included in their induction and updated according to changes.



- **Offer healthier snack options and drinks in vending machines** – Many patients are in the department for some time and the provision of healthy snacks should be reviewed to promote healthy eating. This is particularly pertinent for those patients and carers living with Diabetes.



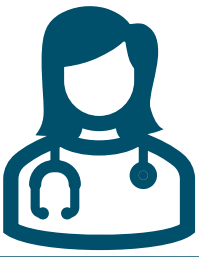
- **Provide more privacy for patients who may be breastfeeding** – The provision of breastfeeding areas needs to be urgently reviewed, including signage displaying rooms available for nursing mothers. Regular maintenance checks – to ensure public areas are in good working order and safe from the risk of harm to members of the public and staff.



- **Regular maintenance checks** – to ensure public areas are in good working order and safe from the risk of harm for members of the public and staff.

Scan to read the full report





Community Nursing

To understand public perceptions on the value of community nursing, Community Nurse Fellows in the East of England commissioned local Healthwatch to engage with patients, families and carers about their experiences of accessing community nursing, the value of the service, and how it could be improved.

Community nurses provide invaluable care to people in their own homes, care homes, or close to where they live, in clinics, GP practices across every village, town and city in the country. They also provide outreach services to those who may not have a secure home.

Local Healthwatch in the East of England carried out online and face-to-face focus groups. based on the following:

- How patients, carers and families have been supported by community nurses
- Barriers and challenges in accessing community nursing
- Experiences of using out-of-hours support from community nurses
- Experiences of providing feedback and/or making a complaint
- The value of community nursing and how the service could be improved

What did we find?

It was evident that the majority of participants engaged with had very positive experiences under the care of community nurses. Many participants shared that they received high quality care and support, involvement in decisions around their care, timely communication from community nurses, and being treated with kindness, compassion and dignity. Participants also noted that community nurses made great efforts to communicate with their patients in ways they could understand, particularly with those who have additional communication needs, and also exercised cultural competency when delivering care to their patients.

As with any service, there were clear areas for improvement, with some participants receiving inadequate care from community nurses. Participants acknowledged that their poor experiences were a product of systemic issues and the pressures on the service, such as high caseloads and lack of staff. NHS England and other commissioning bodies need to ensure community nursing is appropriately resourced and funded, and need to look to recruit and retain the community nursing workforce, particularly specialist community nurses.

Across all focus groups, participants noted that communication from the community nursing administration teams was often poor, with participants not receiving a response for hours or in some cases days, resulting in their care being delayed.



Administrative errors and incompetence were also seen as common factors and highlights how the administration around community nursing must be a priority for improvement.

Participants also recognised the key role community nurses play in supporting patients, carers and families. Participants felt that this could be expanded by community nurses offering more signposting information, and receiving training, such as mental health training, to spot the signs of poor mental health.

Overall, participants are very satisfied with community nursing, and have great gratitude and appreciation for the service. Participants are keen for community nursing to get the recognition they feel it deserves and would like to see this reflected in greater resource and investment.



"I don't know how much training community nurses get but I think mental health is something that needs to be massively looked at. The community team are the people who are on the frontline and the people that may be able to refer patients to the right places. They are in a position to notice when people are at risk and could refer them to places to get the support they need."

Anonymous, from Bedford

"With my child, I was never ever offered any support with my mental health. At that time, I didn't even know that I was suffering with poor mental health after the trauma I went through and now I know to have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) but that was 18 months in. I think if people asked the right questions, they would have possibly seen the signs before even I did."

Anonymous, from Bedford



"I'd be concerned about saying something because of the repercussions of what it could mean for my child."

Anonymous, from Bedford

"I've never made a complaint or given any negative feedback, the care I receive is fantastic."

Anonymous, from Bedford

Scan to read the full report



Classification: Official

NHS
England

Value of Community Nursing:
Engagement with Patients, Carers and
Families across the East of England

To understand public perceptions on the value of community nursing, Community Nurse Fellows in the East of England commissioned local Healthwatch to engage patients, families and carers about their experiences of accessing community nursing, the value of the service, and how it could be improved.

10, 9 November 2022

Three ways we have made a difference for 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 service providers to see the bigger picture. Hearing first-hand patient and service users' experiences and the impact provides them with a better understanding of the challenges they face. This enables service providers to consider alternative options when looking at service redesign and service delivery.



Healthwatch Bedford Borough regularly share experiences people have voiced with them about the difficulties faced when accessing services. In July 2022 as part of our Community Nursing Report, we outlined the experiences of patients who shared that English was not their first language and that they stressed how important it is that community nurses explain information in an accessible way, so patients with a language barrier can ask the right questions and understand the care or treatment being given. *"Seldom heard communities might have language barriers. People are often scared and may not understand the treatment that is being delivered or why it is necessary. And they might not be able to say if they do not understand."* *"Translation is needed for some communities who don't understand or struggle with English."* *"There needs to be awareness of cultural and language barriers. Community nurses need to overcome them so the patient can understand what they are saying and so they can consent to the care they are being given."* *"Some people who are not English speakers would struggle to contact the teams especially if there was a problem or a concern around a person's condition due to difficulties in making themselves understood over the phone."* This was included in the report as a recommendation.

Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people in co-production, to improve services both now and for the future.



As part of our joint Enter and View visit to Bedford Hospital in July 2022 with Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire, by talking with patients and staff as part of the visits, we were able to gain valuable insight and make recommendations for improvements. In the Accident and Emergency Department, patients fed back on issues including follow-through and information on the next steps as patients were increasingly frustrated with being told what would happen next without any follow-through and the lack of information about the next steps. Healthwatch would therefore recommend involved and informed conversations with consistent follow-up.

Improving care over time

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



Over the year we have been consistently raising the issue of access to dentistry and continued to provide up-to-date information and signposting in order to provide clear advice to patients. Access to dentistry continues to be a main theme people contact us about which informed our priorities for this year, meaning we are continuing to focus our attention on access to NHS dentistry in 2023/24. This will ensure there is clear and consistent advice for patients on how to find a dentist, especially for those who need urgent treatment.



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:

- Giving a voice to residents from minority or disadvantaged communities in Bedford, Healthwatch Bedford Borough was commissioned by the BLMK ICB to lead on a piece for the *Denny Review to engage with:
- Bangladeshi Women
- Gypsy and Traveller Community
- Migrant Women from West Africa
- Bulgarian Women

*The Denny Review was set up to improve its understanding of the impact of health inequalities on its local communities. It proposed a listening exercise to hear and understand the lived experiences of residents in seldom-heard communities.

Local Gypsies and Travellers

Despite growing evidence that Gypsies and Travellers are particularly disadvantaged in access to health care, there are very few studies to explore the reasons for this.

Healthwatch Bedford Borough wished to investigate the nature of the social disadvantage that the group experience. For this reason, Healthwatch interviewed

19 members of this community to explore both attitudes and structural reasons behind this health inequality. The staff member visited the sites on four occasions. She is aware of the physical layout of both sites and the complex relationships between extended families and networks on the site. Particular to this group were concerns about the distinct lack of facilities on site and health and safety concerns, but participants were able to suggest a number of practical ways by which their care could be improved.



“Female doctors for pregnancy, smear tests. It’s against traveller ways for men to be involved.”

Local Traveller Woman

Migrant Women- DENNY Report

Ethnic groups were selected on the basis of knowledge attained and advice given by supporting Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and areas of deprivation identified from the Bedford Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019. From this we focused on West African Women, Bangladeshi Women and Bulgarian Women.



Recruitment of the Bangladeshi, Bulgarian and Black African women included in this study was co-ordinated by the project lead at Healthwatch Bedford Borough and managed by each of the participating charities. Their advice was used to select the ethnic groups above based on their knowledge of these communities.

The women were asked to share their lived experiences of healthcare needs and what matters most to them, either in one to-one interviews or within a focus group. By working with and through these grass-roots organisations, Healthwatch were able to engage with women in settings that were already familiar to them. Conversations were carried out in their first language using Interpreters if/where necessary.



“I hate how non-inclusive some services are. They will tell you what works for the average white female without even taking into consideration who you are (African).” **West African women**



“I am worried that I will not be able to explain properly my symptoms due to language barrier and I am worried that something will be missed.” **Bangladeshi women**



On cultural etiquette when talking to their child “It can be interpreted wrongly, and you can have your child taken away. It is a difference in culture.” **Bulgarian women**



Advice and information

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

This year we've helped people by:

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

Helping the traveller community access referral and diagnosis

Healthwatch Bedford Borough's close relationship with the Gypsy and Traveller community here mean that they come to us for support and advice regularly.

We were contacted by parents in relation to a young person struggling with poor mental health and perceived undiagnosed ADHD, at threat of being expelled from school.

Despite ongoing issues in an educational setting for several months, no referral for SEND assessment/EARLY HELP had gone in.

Our member of staff supported the family, having visited them on-site, and referrals were made to the relevant organisations and divisions.

“Thank God you've helped, she said that she thinks she should be tested for Autism and ADHD.”
Young person's parent

Helping residents access non-emergency patient transport for hospital appointments.

Healthwatch Bedford Borough received a call from an elderly patient's daughter in regard to access to non-urgent patient transport.

The patient had exercised their right to use NHS Choose & Book to have a hip replacement at a cross-border private hospital, which was due to be funded by the NHS.

The family were unable to book patient transport as the hospital was out of the county.

Healthwatch Bedford Borough made contact with the Patient Transport Service at East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, who in turn advised on next steps.

Our member of staff then made contact with the Integrated Care Board for the county concerned and set about securing transport for the patient in question.



Get involved

Volunteer with Healthwatch Bedford Borough

Opportunities for everyone

There are lots of different ways you can get involved as a Healthwatch volunteer, from speaking to people about their experiences of health and social care to using your skills to support Healthwatch Bedford Borough.



Health Advisory Board

Play a key role in advising on our strategy and priorities. This ensures the involvement of local people in our work and decision-making, and helps us to make key decisions about how to use our statutory powers effectively whilst upholding our independence. We support multi disciplinary partnership working, and Healthwatch Advisory Board members represent us in wider stakeholder engagement and decision-making structures, i.e., BLMK Integrated Care Board (ICB), Local Authority Boards and committees, and NHS Trust committees and working groups.



Enter & View Authorised Representative

Listen and observe people's experiences of Health and Social Care services to understand what is working well and what can be improved.

Young Healthwatch

Ensure that young peoples' voices are heard and help to influence change to make Health and Social Care services better for children and young people.

Scan more information



Do you feel inspired?

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

 www.healthwatch.org/localname

 0123 456 78

 Email@email.com

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

Previous provider: Healthwatch Bedford Borough CIC

Income		Expenditure	
Funding received from Local Authority	£71,070	Staff costs	£72,091
Additional income	£224	Operational costs	£13,846
Bank Interest	£16	Management fee	£0
Total income	£71,310	Total expenditure	£85,937

Current provider: Engaging Community Solutions (ECS)

Income		Expenditure	
Funding received from Local Authority	£23,615	Staff costs	£22,469
Additional income	£5,000	Operational costs	£5,424
Bank Interest	£0	Management fee	£2,900
Total income	£28,615	Total expenditure	£30,793

(Engaging Communities Solutions CIC (ECS) started to deliver the contract from 9th January 2023

Additional funding is broken down by:

- **£5,000 funding** received from BLMK ICB for the Denny Project

Next steps

In the ten years since Healthwatch was launched, we've demonstrated the power of public feedback in helping the health and care system understand what is working, spotting issues and think about how things can be better in the future.

Services are currently facing unprecedented challenges and tackling the backlog needs to be a key priority for the NHS to ensure everyone gets the care they need. Over the next year we will continue our role in collecting feedback from everyone in our local community and giving them a voice to help shape improvements to services.

Top three priorities for 2023–24

1. **Access to GP services**
2. **Access to NHS Dentistry**
3. **Young People's Mental Health.**

We will also continue our work into tackling inequalities that exist within our services and work to reduce the barriers you face when accessing care, regardless of whether that is because of where you live, your income, your gender, your sexuality or your ethnic origin.



Statutory statements

Healthwatch Bedford Borough
21-23 Gadsby Street
Bedford, MK40 3HP.

Contract with:

Engaging Communities Solutions CIC (ECS)
Blakenall Village Centre
79 Thames Rd,
Walsall, WS3 1LZ.

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

The way we work

Our Healthwatch Bedford Borough Board consists of 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 2022/23 the Board met quarterly and made decisions on matters such as work programme priorities and which premises to conduct Enter & View visits.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. We do this by conducting our annual listening survey which determines our future work priorities for the year ahead.

Methods and systems used across the year to obtain peoples experiences

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight into their experience of using services.

During 2022/23 we have been available by phone, email, provided a feedback form on our website and through social media platforms, as well as having attended meetings of community groups and forums.

We will 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 social media platforms, and present it at an Annual Public Meeting as well as providing hard copy reports as requested.

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often marginalised. This year we have done this by giving a powerful voice to residents from minority or disadvantaged communities in Bedford.

Responses to recommendations

We had **100%** of providers 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.

Enter and view

This year, we made 9 Enter and View visits. We made 32 recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Healthwatch Bedford Borough and Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire worked jointly and in consultation with Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to organise the visits	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient safety improved.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Bedford Borough is currently represented on the Bedford Borough Health and Wellbeing Board by our Chief Executive, Elizabeth Learoyd.

2021–2022 Outcomes

Project/ activity	Changes made to services
Healthwatch Bedford Borough Denny Report	Presented to partners to form part of the wider BLMK Denny Report for publication in July 2023.
Community Nursing Report	Presented to partners and published.



healthwatch
Bedford Borough

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