



**Healthwatch Bracknell Forest**  
Annual Report 2013/14

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# About Healthwatch Bracknell Forest

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest helps local people say what they think about health and social care services in Bracknell Forest. This helps health and social care services change the way they work for the better and makes sure new services are what people want and need.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest provides information so people can make choices about their health and social care.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest 'signposts' people to other organisations that can help them, including those that will support them to make a complaint about health and social care services.

## Members of the consortium

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is run by a consortium of local community and voluntary sector organisations with a user-led ethos.



Berkshire Autistic Society

### Berkshire Autistic Society

Supporting all people affected by autism. As part of their work they run a daily help line.

### Deaf Positives

A deaf-led organisation providing advocacy, communication & training services.



### EBE<sup>2</sup>

A user-led group providing peer review of social care services for people with learning disabilities and autism.



**Just Advocacy**

A charity that provides independent advocacy for disabled or vulnerable adults.



**Kids**

A charity that provides services to disabled children, young people and their families.

**Rethink** Helping people affected by mental illness by challenging attitudes and changing lives.



**SEAP**

A charity specialising in mental health & NHS complaints advocacy.

**The Ark**

A user-led charity supporting people with disabilities, long-term health conditions and other marginalised groups.

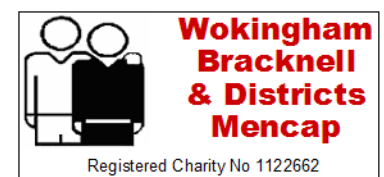


**Triple A**

A local voluntary organisation supporting people with dementia and their carers.

**Wokingham, Bracknell & Districts Mencap**

Providing support to people with learning disabilities, autism, their families and carers



## The Project Management Board and governance

The Project Management Board is made up of representatives from the organisations that make up the consortium. In April 2014 they were joined by two members of the public selected through a democratic election process. There is currently a vacancy for one member of the public.

The Ark Trust Ltd is the charitable company who gathered the consortium and powered the bid to the local authority. They are the organisation who holds the legal contract with Bracknell Forest Council to deliver Healthwatch Bracknell Forest and, ultimately, the legal compliance of that contract lies with the directors of The Ark Trust Ltd.



All activity within the scope and finances of the contract is governed by the Project Management Board. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has its own policies and procedures which can be viewed on the website.

<http://www.healthwatchbracknellforest.co.uk/policies-and-procedures>

Project Management Board meetings are held monthly and all minutes are published on the Healthwatch Bracknell Forest website. One meeting per quarter is open to the public to attend. Staff from Healthwatch Bracknell Forest also attend to report and advise but do not have a vote in decision making. The lay member for Patient and Public Involvement for the Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group is also invited as an observer.

In its first year Healthwatch Bracknell Forest have been a real help to me in my role as Lay Member for Patient & Public Involvement. It's so good to see new faces appearing at health events and I look forward to even greater engagement as the public becomes more aware of their ability to positively influence Health & Social Care commissioning by getting more involved via Local Healthwatch. Great examples of their impact so far are the outcomes from their work with the Patient Experience Team at Heatherwood & Wexham Park Hospital, the invaluable input of patient views into the Urgent Care Centre project and in facilitating the Bracknell & Ascot Patient Assembly so that Surgery Patient Groups can work together. Strong foundations to build on in the coming year.

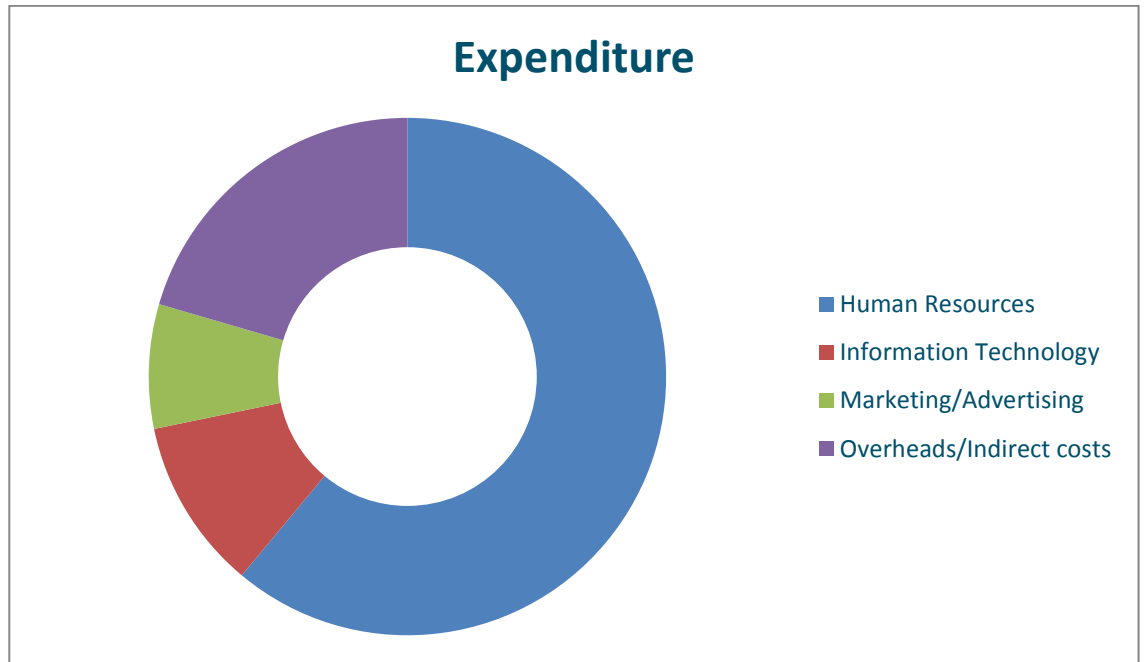
**Karen Maskell** Lay member for Patient and Public Involvement, B&ACCG

In the summer of 2014 we will be working with RAISE, a training and support organisation for the voluntary sector, to develop a Project Management Board Charter and identify training and development requirements for the board.

Financial Information

Contract payment from Bracknell Forest Council  
For provision of Local Healthwatch 2013/2014

£103,022



*Human Resources*

Staff salaries, consortium partner payments, volunteer expenses, training and development

*Information Technology*

Standalone secure cloud based Customer Relationship Management system, website and social media development

*Marketing/Advertising*

Leaflets and other promotional materials

*Overheads/Indirect Costs*

Rent costs, office costs, insurance and other indirect costs

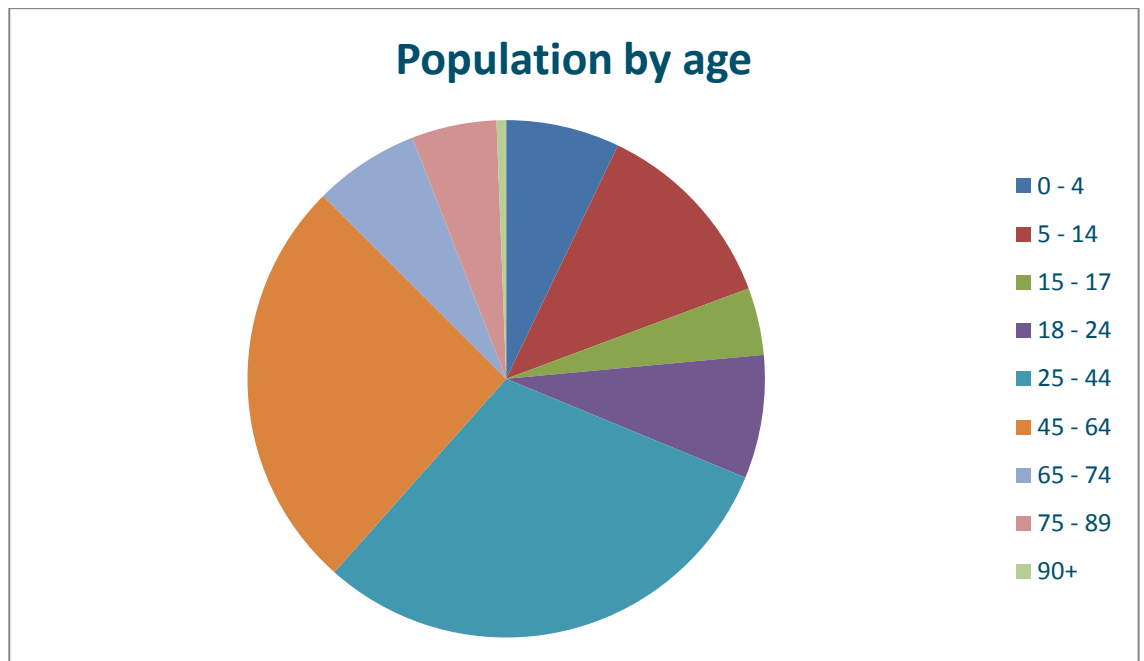
Agreed contract payment from Bracknell Forest Council  
For provision of Local Healthwatch 2014/2015

£97,880

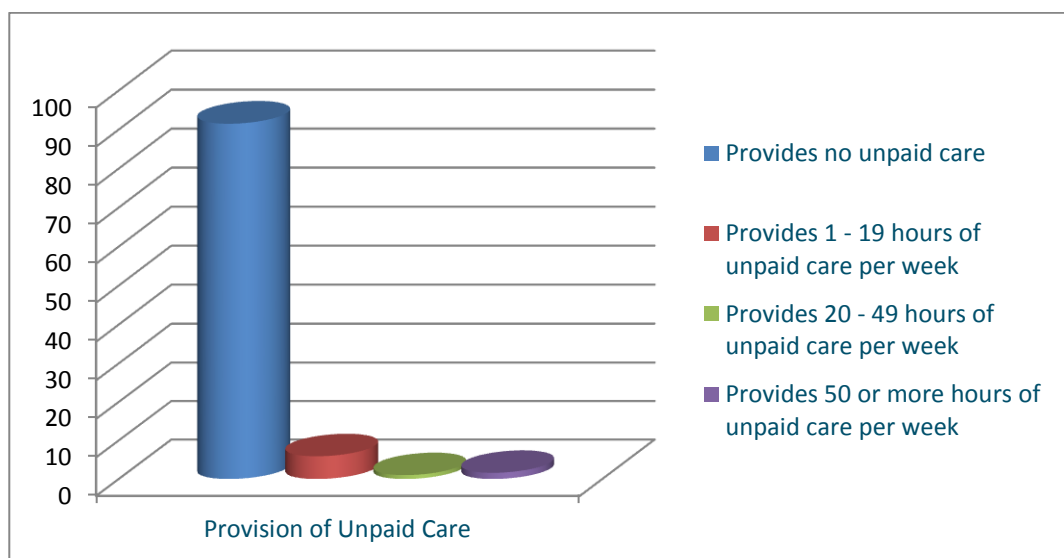


# Our Community

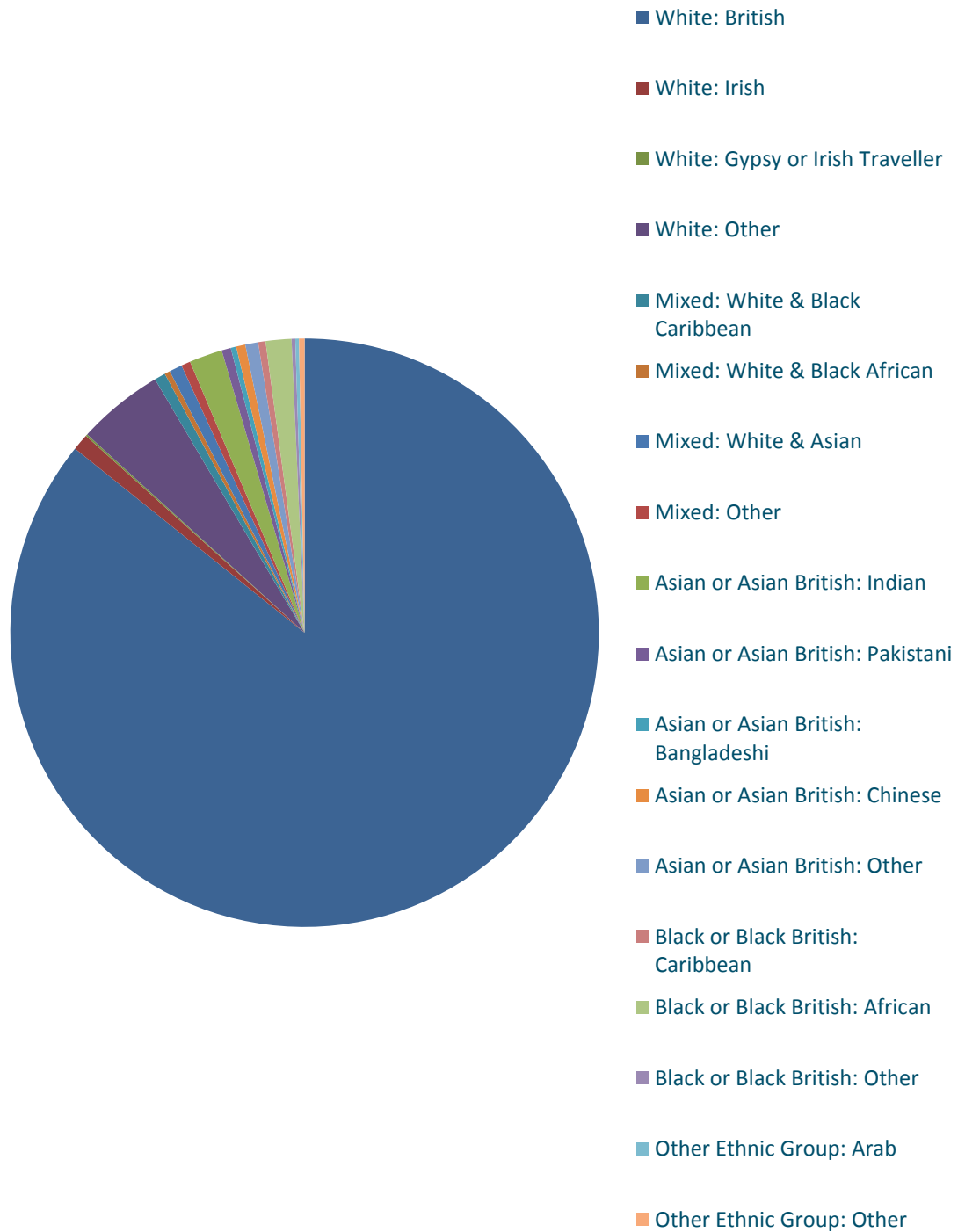
The borough of Bracknell Forest is one of six unitary authorities in the Royal County of Berkshire. Bracknell Forest is made up of 18 wards. From the data available from the 2011 Census it shows a population of 113,205. 49.6% of the population are male and 50.4% are female.



19.8% of households (9075) contain at least one person with a long-term health condition or disability.



## Population by ethnic group



In 93% of households, English is the main language

Over 600 community and voluntary sector groups offer services in the borough.



## Engagement with the local community

During the first six months of the contract, Healthwatch Bracknell Forest focussed on implementation and was not fully operational. However during this time staff attended a number of briefings to inform health and social care professionals of the service and started to establish themselves on relevant committees and boards.

The main reason for delivering Healthwatch Bracknell Forest as a consortium of local user-led organisations was it allowed those members of the community with disabilities to engage directly with Healthwatch Bracknell Forest; a gap in engagement identified in the Bracknell LINK legacy report. The consortium is able to co-opt other organisations, permanently or temporarily, if it identifies a gap in representation.

The Project Management Board also has three places for public members but until there was local awareness of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest, making a democratic selection process viable, a member of LINKs was co-opted onto the board. This member was selected to ensure continuity of representation on a major piece of commissioning by Bracknell & Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group around the new Urgent Care Centre facility.

From the start Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has had a social media presence using the Facebook and Twitter platforms. At the end of the first year Healthwatch Bracknell Forest had 101 likes on Facebook and 587 followers on Twitter. 376 tweets were posted in the year, 121 of these were retweeted and Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has been mentioned 168 times in other people's tweets.

There is limited national awareness of Healthwatch England and therefore little awareness locally. There is also some confusion locally as a local special interest pressure group has named themselves "People's Healthwatch". Initially Healthwatch Bracknell Forest planned to leaflet drop each local ward followed up by an awareness event, however the first event was only attended by three people and the cost in time and resources did not justify this. The Project Management Board agreed a more effective method of engagement, given the limited resources, would be to build on existing networks, participate in existing events and partner with other organisations. A diary of the events is posted on the Healthwatch Bracknell Forest website.

Since January 2014 Browse Aloud software has been integrated into the website meaning it is accessible to people who are unable to read and for who English is not their first language.



Between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 and 31st March 2014 33 community events have been attended. In addition we, along with our partners in the Local Authority and Public Health, planned and delivered “Self-Care Week” which resulted in over 800 interactions with members of the public.

As directed by the Department of Health, Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has sought to engage with the following groups specifically:

- People who are aged under 21  
*Consortium member Kids works with children and families, presentation to the Youth Council, children’s competition within self-care week.*
- People who are aged over 65  
*Consortium member Triple A work with older people, presentation to older people organisations*
- People who work or volunteer in the local health and social care economy  
*Presentations to professionals, launch of ‘Healthwatch Voices’ in March 2014 for community and voluntary sector organisations that are involved with health and social care*
- People of disadvantaged socio-economic status  
*Great Hollands ward is an “area of deprivation” and we have attended community engagement events there and developed a good working relationship with the local councillor who is very active in the community*

The following groups have been identified by Healthwatch Bracknell Forest and/or commissioners as needing specific engagement activities:

- People with disabilities and/or long-term health conditions  
*Members of the consortium represent and work with people with many different types of disabilities and long-term health conditions.*
- Working age males who are fit and well  
*Initial contact has been made with a local sports association and this work will be built on and developed in 2014/2015.*

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest does not have a formal membership. All residents are entitled to take part in democratically selecting public representatives on the Project Management Board. Anyone who lives in or uses services in the borough can provide us with feedback on services through our feedback forms which are given out at engagement events and through the website. The Project Management Board will be reviewing the format of these forms in 2014/2015 as they currently contain no equalities monitoring information.

In March 2014 Healthwatch Bracknell Forest hosted the new Patient Assembly; drawing together the Patient Reference Groups in the area. This will continue, with additional support, in 2014/2015.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest operates from The Ark Trust Ltd.’s offices in central Bracknell so members of the public are able to drop in Monday-Friday.

## Our volunteers

As a consortium of community and voluntary organisations, the value of volunteers and their contribution to delivery of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has been recognised and utilised since before the award of the contract. Initially these volunteers have been drawn from the consortium members' own organisations; assisting with the implementation phase.

Alongside the volunteer public members on the Project Management Board, three of the consortium organisations are represented on the board by volunteers.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest recognises that volunteers vary in their availability due to other responsibilities such as work, caring or their own health needs. There are different volunteer roles within the organisation which reflect this. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is committed to supporting volunteers who have previously found it difficult to become active citizens.

The four main volunteer roles are:

- Project Management Board member
- Community Champion  
*Promoting Healthwatch Bracknell Forest at community events*
- Enter and View representative
- Expert by Experience  
*A user of health or social care services that can represent the patients and public in commissioning and evaluation of services*

To date volunteers have provided over 800 hours of time to Healthwatch Bracknell Forest.

During 2013/2014 the area's community and voluntary sector organisation, Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action, has been undergoing a period of transition. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has established a good working relationship with the new operational team and the two organisations will be working together more closely in 2014/2015. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest volunteer roles will be advertised through their volunteer bureau.

It's good knowing I am changing things in hospitals and other places to make it easier for other people with learning disabilities. It's helped my self-confidence too.

Louisa Jones, Expert by Experience Volunteer

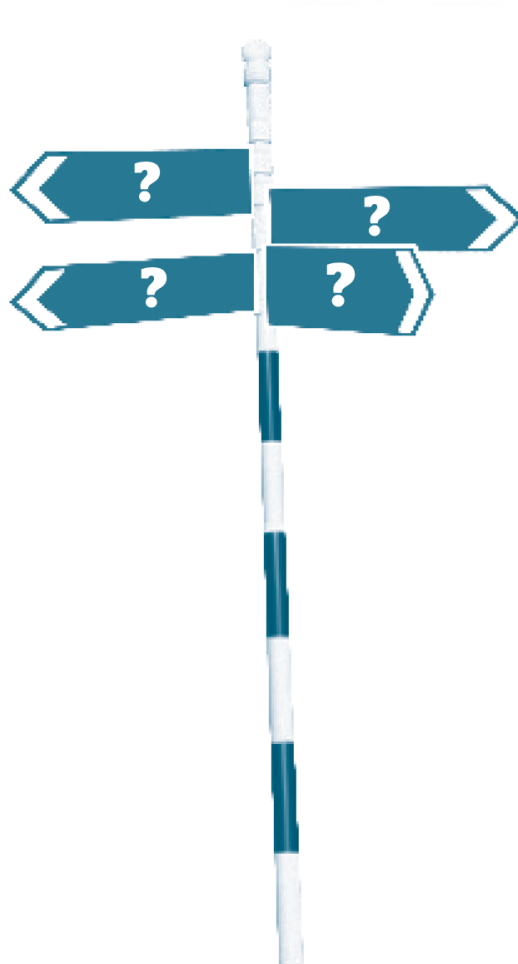


# Our Work

We believe that local people have:

- The right to essential services
- The right of access
- The right to a safe, dignified and quality service
- The right to information and education
- The right to choose
- The right to be listened to
- The right to be involved
- The right to live in a healthy environment

## Providing information and signposting to health and social care services



Healthwatch Bracknell Forest aims to provide people with as much information as possible, in the formats best suited to their needs, to enable them to make an informed choice about the health and social care services they access.

The Healthwatch Bracknell Forest website has links to NHS Choices, Care Quality Commission, Bracknell and Ascot Commissioning Group and information on how to make a complaint and complaints advocacy. The website currently does not have the ability to capture the amount of people who have used these information links however, this is a development we will look at in 2014/2015 to help us monitor our service.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest staff are also able to utilise a database of over 2000 community and voluntary support organisations.

In addition to our online signposting, in our six months of operation we have provided information, advice and signposting to 38 individuals who have contacted us by telephone or email.

We have a large collection of information leaflets available to the public in our office.

An example of the type of questions received from members of the public.

“With the introduction of the new Urgent Care Centre in Bracknell will the process for out of hours change?”

Answer was emailed and the following response was received.....

“Thank you for providing the questions and answers, this is most helpful.”

## Enabling local people to monitor the standard of local services

Quality Accounts are annual reports about the quality of services by an NHS healthcare provider. The quality of services is measured by looking at patient safety, the effectiveness of treatments that patients receive and patient feedback about the care provided. The reports are available to the public. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest contributed to the following 2013/2014 Quality Accounts, incorporating the views and comments about services received from patients and members of the public.

- Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
- South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
- West London Mental Health NHS Trust (In respect of Broadmoor Hospital)

Patient-led assessments of the care environment (PLACE) use information from patient assessors to report how well a hospital is performing in the areas of privacy and dignity, cleanliness, food and general building and grounds maintenance. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has assisted in five assessments over 3 NHS trusts. This was especially important in Broadmoor Hospital (part of West London Mental Health NHS Trust) as patients in this secure in-patient hospital are not able to access all areas; we worked closely with the patient representatives and this will help in 2014/2015 when we start to deliver an outreach service within Broadmoor.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest also contributed to Bracknell Forest Council's Local Account for 2013/2014

94% of the public think NHS and social care services could be improved





## Enter and View

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has the statutory power to Enter and View health and social care services (excluding children's social care services) to observe the care setting and speak to the people receiving care to gather their experiences and their views on the care and treatment they are receiving.

The decision on when to utilise these statutory powers is detailed in the organisation's operational escalation guidelines. In 2013/2014 Healthwatch Bracknell Forest did not have enough evidence to support the use of Enter and View but we have received four invitations (from three providers) to access their service and service users, using out Enter and View processes.



Healthwatch Bracknell Forest have proactively engaged with the Trust to ensure that patients are put first in decision making. Representatives have visited both hospital sites and made recommendations for improvements in the Emergency Department, paediatrics and in relation to signage and outpatient letters. I look forward to continuing to work with them in the future.

**Claire Marshall, Associate Director of Patient Experience and Public Involvement, Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**



During the year, one referral was made to the Adult Safeguarding Team at Bracknell Forest Council.



## Making reports and recommendations

Copies of all reports, recommendations and responses from providers are available on our website.

Reports are generated after Enter and View visits (invited or otherwise). Recommendations can be made in these reports or in correspondence with providers after feedback received from members of the public.

Some of the changes made following our recommendations include:

- Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
*Training for Streaming staff in A & E, clearer guidelines and additional ID badges purchased for A & E staff, provision of free drinking water, changes to the cleaning schedule of Children's A & E, proposed re-design of Teenage facilities within the Children's Ward, notices now in place regarding free Wi-Fi for patients and visitors. In addition to these pieces of work, Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has become an official way staff at the Trust can "whistle-blow" anonymously about concerns they may have.*
- Bracknell Forest Council  
*Improved the accessibility of advocacy information available on the council's website.*
- GPs  
*All GP surgeries committed to stop using 0844 numbers and revert to local numbers by June 2014*



Healthwatch Bracknell Forest highlighted an issue finding advocacy information on the Borough Council website. We were impressed with their proportional response: they identified a problem, asked if an improvement could be made and worked with us to co-produce a solution. As a result, links to advocacy support can be found in various areas of the website and we made improvements to the search function to make information easier to find."

"Following a question from a member of the public, HWBF did a piece of work with our commissioning officers to map the different comments and complaints systems across the health and social care economy. HWBF proved they could work well collaboratively and produced a tool that can deliver better outcomes for people to have their voices heard."

"Healthwatch Bracknell Forest was created with the heavy weight of expectation on it from the outset. We were pleased that a local organisation took up this challenge and so far we have been impressed that Healthwatch Bracknell Forest can learn from experience, is connecting with local and regional networks and is able to demonstrate a flexible approach to the ongoing challenge of health and social care reform



**Glyn Jones, Director of Adult Social Care, Health & Housing  
Bracknell Forest Council**

## The involvement of people in the Commissioning and Scrutiny of local services

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has made strong links with the local commissioners of health and social care services. Our regular attendance at meetings gives us the opportunity to raise the issues and comments the people of Bracknell Forest give to us. We attend:

- East Berkshire Quality Committee  
*Meets monthly to review quality and performance data across the NHS Trusts. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is a permanent member alongside representatives from the three East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Groups*
- Health Overview & Scrutiny, Bracknell Forest Council  
*Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is an official observer with the right to speak*
- Community Partnership Forum, Bracknell & Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group (B&ACCG)  
*We also attend B&ACCG Governing Body as an observer and other working groups*
- East Berkshire Out of Hours Committee  
*Overview of the local Out of Hours service*
- Better Care Fund Board  
*Looking at how Bracknell Forest will implement the Better Care Fund. This is a strategic Board including partners from Public Health, B&ACCG and the Local Authority*
- Access Advisory Panel, Bracknell Forest Council  
*Looking at access to universal services and facilities in the Bracknell Forest area*
- Partnership Boards, Bracknell Forest Council  
*E.g. Learning Disability Partnership Board, Autism Partnership Board.*
- Urgent Care Centre Monitoring Board  
*Following Healthwatch Bracknell Forest's contribution to the tendering and selection of provider of this new facility, it now is a permanent member of the ongoing quality and contract monitoring board.*
- Prevention and Supported Self Care Board  
*With all health and local authority partners*

In addition to this regular patient and public representation, when specific services are to be designed and/or commissioned Healthwatch Bracknell Forest not only ensures the public's views are represented but, where possible, it will provide an Expert by Experience to take part in the whole process. Examples over the last year include: Sexual Health Services, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services and the Urgent Care Centre.

## The Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is a full voting member of the Bracknell Forest Health and Wellbeing Board. It took its place on the board in April 2013. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest asks questions of the other members of the board based on the feedback from members of the public. It can also ask for items to be added to the agenda.

Healthwatch is an active member of the Health and Wellbeing Board and I look forward to working with them as they develop their identity and work plans.

Cllr Dale Birch, Executive member for Adult Services, Health & Housing, Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board, Bracknell Forest

## Sharing views and working with the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England and other local Healthwatch organisations

### Care Quality Commission

If we identify or are informed of significant concerns about a service we share this information with the Care Quality Commission. They have the power to enforce change and in some cases closure of services which do not meet the standards. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest did not escalate any concerns in 2013/2014.

After the restructure within the Care Quality Commission in 2014 we will be establishing good working relationships with all relevant inspectors.

Care Quality Commission reports of all local health and social care providers (including independent and private providers) are published on our website.

### Healthwatch England

Healthwatch England is our national body. We have attended national and regional Healthwatch England events and receive regular information from them including those about national issues that we may want to explore further on a local level. We also submit anonymised data to help Healthwatch England identify national trends along with the other 151 Local Healthwatch.

When we met with our regional development officer, we expressed our concerns about the low profile of Healthwatch England and the impact this has on the profile of Local Healthwatch and the fact that all of our regional meetings are held in Oxford which, due to travel time, means we are not always able to attend.

### Local Healthwatch

As well as the Thames Valley regional meetings co-ordinated by Healthwatch England, during the year the six Berkshire Healthwatch organisations have begun to work together in a more collaborative way to ensure there is minimal duplication of work and to apply economies of scale in marketing and promotion.

### Evaluation and looking forward to 2014/2015

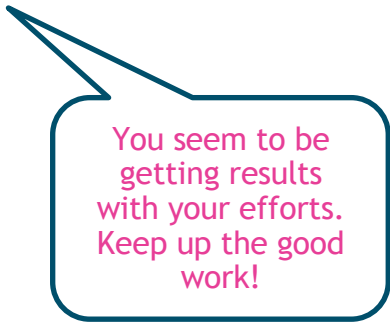


Fantastic...good at listening to people's opinion.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is constantly evaluating its service delivery. Over the last year we have listened to the feedback from members of the public and other stakeholders and have made changes including development of a service standard charter and an increase in senior staff to ensure continuity in strategic representation. After discussion with the commissioner of the service we will not be undergoing a formal 360 degree evaluation until October 2014, when the service will have been fully operational for a year.

Looking forward to 2014/2015 our work plan will continue to evolve around local commissioning work streams and feedback from the local community. We have identified these areas as a priority as we enter year two of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest:

- Establishing an outreach service at Broadmoor Hospital
- Supporting the Patient Assembly
- Volunteer recruitment
- Income generation



You seem to be getting results with your efforts. Keep up the good work!

### About this report

This report will be made available to people on the Healthwatch Bracknell Forest website and distributed to all contacts and via social media.

Hard copies will be available at our offices and on request.

Should you require the report in a different format please contact:

[enquiries@healthwatchbracknellforest.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchbracknellforest.co.uk)

## The Healthwatch brand

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest are licenced to use the Healthwatch trademark (which covers the logo and the Healthwatch brand) as per our licence agreement with Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission





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