



## Healthwatch South Tyneside Annual Report 2016/17



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# Message from our Chair



***I am pleased to say that since our last annual report Healthwatch South Tyneside has remained in good health and that we have successfully campaigned to retain our funding level.***

There are 148,127 people living in South Tyneside, nearly 29,000 of them are older people (above the national averages and growing) and nearly 10,000 older people live alone (37% of the total).

The number of people in residential or nursing care in South Tyneside is higher than the national and regional averages. The local spend on NHS services is approximately £223m and on social care services for adults, families and children £55m.

In this annual report you will find evidence of the ways in which we have listened to the voice of users of health and social care services in South Tyneside and have responded to their concerns by raising issues with providers of services, whether that is the Council, the Hospital Trust, the Clinical Commissioning Group or Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust.

Our consortium working through HealthNet, South Tyneside Age Concern, Blissability, Sight Service and others has been well-coordinated and productive and has enabled us to deal with our contacts more effectively.

We have increased our volunteer numbers and that has enabled us to carry out more visits to care homes (Enter & View) and to reach out to more local people to seek their views on many of the issues affecting them.

We have taken on board issues raised by members of the public, pursued them with the providers of services, and made a real difference to peoples' lives.

We have commented on important topics at the Council's Health Scrutiny Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

I have been delighted with the way in which Healthwatch board members have committed themselves to a variety of tasks engaging with and monitoring aspects of health and social care in the borough and the larger health providers.

These include equality and diversity groups, Adult Safeguarding Board, Health Scrutiny Board, the wide ranging proposals coming out of the alliance between South Tyneside and Sunderland Hospitals, and the Sustainability and Transformation Plan.

Without dedicated staff, volunteers and partners we would not be able to discover the views of the people of South Tyneside, act on their behalf to seek answers and improvements, and hold the providers of important services to account. I thank them all for their commitment and efforts.

**Sue Taylor**  
Chair, South Tyneside Healthwatch CIC





# ***The statutory activities of local Healthwatch***

***Healthwatch South Tyneside is one of 148 local Healthwatch organisations across England launched in April 2013 to give users of health and social care services a powerful voice.***

As set out in the Health and Social Care Act of 2012, Healthwatch South Tyneside has the following statutory activities:

- + Promoting and supporting the involvement of local people in the commissioning, the provision and scrutiny of local care services.
- + Enabling local people to monitor the standard of provision of local care services and whether and how local care services could and ought to be improved.
- + Obtaining the views of local people regarding their need for, and experiences of, local care services and importantly to make these views known.
- + Making reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved. These should be directed to commissioners and providers of care services and people responsible for managing or scrutinising local care services and shared with Healthwatch England.
- + Providing advice and information about access to local care services so choices can be made about local care services.
- + Formulating views on the standard of provision and whether and how the local care services could and ought to be improved; and sharing these views with Healthwatch England.

- + Making recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission to conduct special reviews or investigations (or, where the circumstances justify doing so, making such recommendations direct to the CQC); and to make recommendations to Healthwatch England to publish reports about particular issues.
- + Providing Healthwatch England with the intelligence and insight it needs to enable it to perform effectively.

An independent community interest company, it is your dedicated consumer champion, working with users of local NHS and social care services to hear about your experiences, identify any issues or problems and help generate improvements.

Healthwatch South Tyneside has the power to enter and view services, can influence how services are set up and commissioned by having a seat on the local health and wellbeing board, and provide information, advice and support about local services.

It also produces reports which influence the way services are designed and delivered and can pass information and recommendations to Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission.

## Our vision

We are passionate about ensuring that we are successful in representing the feelings of our citizens in the way that decisions affecting them are made.

Residents of South Tyneside will be able to have their views of health and social care services heard by those who design, commission, deliver and monitor services locally and nationally, and have direct access to person centred information and advice to help navigate their way through the health and social care landscape.

Achieving this vision will mean that:

- + People shape health and social care delivery.
- + People influence the services they receive personally.
- + People hold services to account.

### **Mission statement:**

“To work collaboratively with everyone in South Tyneside to improve the quality of local health and social care services.”

As consumer champion for health and social care, we achieve this by:

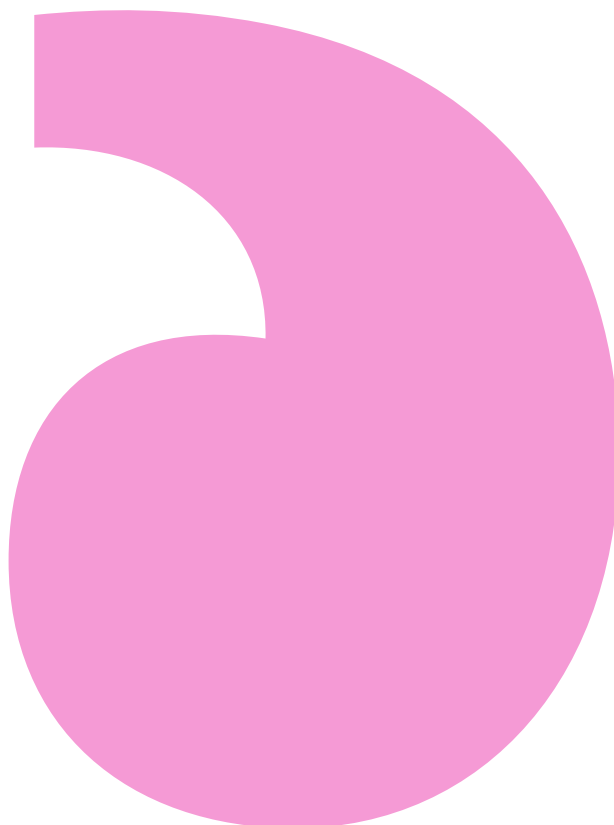
- + Listening hard to people, especially the most vulnerable, to understand their experiences and what matters most to them.
- + Influencing those who have the power to change services so that they better meet people's needs now and into the future.
- + Empowering and informing people to get the most from their health and social care services and encouraging other organisations to do the same.
- + Working with key strategic stakeholders within health and social care to champion service improvement and to empower local people.

## Our priorities

The statutory role and functions of Healthwatch are laid down in the Health and Social Care Act 2012 but local areas have discretion about how their local Healthwatch delivers its services.

Our Strategic Plan 2015-18 has set out seven key outcomes:

- + Be a continuously improving and independent not for profit local organisation.
- + Support the integration of health and social care services.
- + Identify, examine, and report on key areas of local health concern.
- + Respond positively to unexpected public concerns, and work with partners to report findings as required.
- + Establish regular and high quality communications.
- + Encourage close working between private and public services.
- + Ensure that the public and communities are effectively included in the way services are shaped. Each of these outcomes has a series of actions setting out how they will be achieved and reported.





# *Your views on health and care*

## ***Listening to local people's views***

With so much change in the planning and delivery of local health and social care services, 2016/17 saw a great deal of consultation activity.

Healthwatch was asked by the Leader of South Tyneside Council in early 2017 to “talk to the people of Jarrow and Hebburn about their experiences of transport to the hospital” following the relocation of Jarrow Walk-in Centre.

The request followed well publicised concerns by patients from Jarrow and Hebburn about difficulties accessing alternative emergency care facilities at South Tyneside District Hospital (STDH) in South Shields.

Over a three week period in February/March 2017 Healthwatch volunteers, board members and staff met members of the public in community and leisure venues and supermarkets, and published an online survey, to gauge views on the relocation of services to STDH.

There were 220 questionnaires completed – 100 from Jarrow residents and 120 from people from Hebburn, and just under half of the respondents were aged over 65.

Almost two thirds had visited STDH in the previous month and 56 per cent of respondents indicated they had travelled by car and 24 per cent by public transport.

Key issues raised included the lack of car parking spaces at the hospital and cost of parking tickets, as well as the duration and cost of bus journeys and cost of taxis.

Our report recommended that the hospital looked into the cost of car parking and provision of spaces, and that the council took measures to improve direct public transport links.

We held a focus group in June 2016 on behalf of NHS England with patients of the Jarrow GP Practice to look at the options presented by NHSE in terms of the patient list from September 2015. Nine patients attended the group to give their views.

Healthwatch fed back to NHS England concerns raised about the experiences patients had at the alternative practice they had been transferred to on an interim basis and put forward the views of those patients who attended the group in relation to their preferred future option.

We launched our online Feedback Centre on our new website in 2016, enabling service users to post comments about their experiences of health and social care provision.

Healthwatch passes on the comments to relevant providers and gives them the opportunity to respond online.

We have also invested additional resources on social media campaigns, including a new Facebook business page and Facebook advertising, which has enabled us to directly reach thousands of service users across the borough and obtain views.

Feedback is also received via email and in person at events and community venues staff attend regularly. Issues raised and passed on to service providers have included a patient on crutches with a leg in plaster

“Thanks for your very kind words. It has been a pleasure dealing with you, in spite of the circumstances. In the chaos I encountered, you were a voice of reason and common sense.”

refused the patient transport service and difficulties accessing GPs.

Our engagement activity with diverse groups and communities has included a number of meetings with the South Tyneside Youth Parliament where we have discussed key issues around healthcare for young people. We are currently recruiting an Engagement Officer to specifically work with young people and develop a Young Healthwatchers project.

**"I won't give up – it's people like you that inspire me to keep going because I feel like someone is listening at last."**

We also regularly attend drop-in sessions run by South Tyneside Asylum and Refugee Church Help (STARCH) and Apna Ghar, which supports women from different ethnic backgrounds.

This gives us the opportunity to both promote Healthwatch and signpost people to other organisations, such as Churches Together, Mental Health Matters and the Ethnic Minority, Traveller and Refugee Achievement Service (EMTRAS).

Community events give us the opportunity to meet a wide cross section of the general public, and during 2016/17 we attended, among others, the Mela at Hadrian Primary School in South Shields which attracts a large attendance from the Bangladeshi community, as well as Westoe Village Fete and Hedworthfield Fun Day.



Healthwatch Engagement Officer Linda Gibson and Administrator Elaine Richards at Westoe Village Fete.

## ***What we've learned from visiting services***

It has been our busiest ever year for Enter & View activity, with every single care home in the borough visited.

The intelligence gained from the 26 visits has enabled us to produce a report which we will be unveiling at an event in July 2017 about 'meaningful activities' in care homes.

We found a range of approaches in different care homes, and identified a number of examples of good practice to share with those in need of support to provide a more varied and stimulating programme of activities for their residents.

Our recommendations to South Tyneside Council commissioning officers include mandatory training on social inclusion and meaningful activities for at least one member of staff from each home.

In 2017/18 we plan Enter & View visits to all GP practices across the borough to capture people's experiences of these, following concerns raised with us about the difficulties some patients are experiencing accessing their GP.

We also plan to carry out an Enter & View at the Urgent Care Hub at South Tyneside District Hospital, having received intelligence that there is a lack of clarity for staff around the Pathway.

**"Thank you for telephoning me earlier today regarding the concern I have raised and I found our conversation extremely helpful."**





Healthwatch Engagement Officer Linda Gibson with Mayoress Mary French, Mayor Councillor Olive Punchion and Councillor Adam Ellison at Hedworthfield Family Fun Day in May 2017.





# *Helping you find the answers*

## ***How we have helped the community access the care they need***

One of Healthwatch's key roles is to signpost to local health and social care services, and to provide information to service users and their families to enable them to make informed choices.

During the year we have been contacted by people in a range of ways - via our website, Facebook page, our online Feedback Centre, email, telephone and in person both at our offices and at other venues and events.

Our website also has a comprehensive 'Find a service' facility which has information and contact details for a wide range of health and social care services.

We have highlighted here two cases where we helped people having very different problems with social care provision.

### ***Home care issue resolved after Healthwatch intervention***

Problems with a Boldon Colliery pensioner's home care service were resolved after Healthwatch intervened on her behalf.

The 65-year-old mother-of-one has numerous health problems including osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, COPD and a heart murmur and needs support with personal care including washing, breakfast and taking her medication.

Issues arose when the agency providing her home care service for South Tyneside Council ended the contract and another company took over in October 2016.

The lady's care plan was not handed over and the agreed time for her early morning visit of 7.30am on three days each week, to give sufficient time before she was collected to go to a day centre, was not being met.

This meant that on some occasions she was going to the centre without breakfast or a shower, and other reported problems included not having required medication.

The day centre she attended is based in the same building as Healthwatch, so when her complaints were not addressed she popped in to see us.

She said: "I kept phoning and phoning and nothing was getting done. I was getting fobbed off and nothing was changed. I read about Healthwatch on the noticeboard at the centre and thought I had nothing to lose by enquiring."

We contacted both South Tyneside Council and the company providing her day care and highlighted the issues she had raised with us.

The pensioner said she would recommend Healthwatch to anyone with a problem with health or social care services: "Definitely, without a doubt - they will listen to you, understand and action is then taken."

### ***Healthwatch helps family landed with huge care bill***

Healthwatch were contacted by the daughter of a South Tyneside care home resident after she received a large bill for her mother's care.

Her care package had been reassessed and, despite having received continuing care for 13 years, a decision had been taken that she was no longer eligible to have her care costs met.

This came as a huge shock to the lady's daughter, who lives in Surrey, especially as her mother was 91 and dying. She contacted Healthwatch after encountering problems with the appeals system.

We took a report to the Local Quality Surveillance Group raising the issues with the Continuing Healthcare Costs system, which is now being improved.

Following her complaint, the bill for care costs was written off by South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group.



# Making a difference together

## *How your experiences are helping influence change*

Our biggest single piece of work during 2016/17 was our report on social inclusion and meaningful activities in care homes.

The research behind the report included Enter & View visits to all 26 care homes in the borough.

Our trained authorised representatives spoke to 104 residents and their relatives, managers and staff, including activity co-ordinators.

Overall there was evidence that most were offering and delivering a varied programme of activities with evidence of creativity, passion, innovation and enthusiasm.

However we found some residential care and nursing homes were not involving and listening to their residents. It appeared that some providers were taking the approach that due to the complex conditions and issues some residents had they could not offer any stimulation for those people.

We consider that not offering access to choices based on residents' past history and aspirations is unacceptable.

Our report, being presented at an event in July 2017 which all care home managers are invited to, concludes that there is evidence of a wealth of good practice in terms of meaningful activities offered and initiatives to encompass social inclusion within South Tyneside.

But we were disappointed to find that the quality of provision appears to vary so much. We believe it should be a fundamental right for all residents to have access to quality meaningful activities with the opportunity for social inclusion in any of the residential care and nursing homes in the borough.

We will be sharing best practice with all care home providers with the intention of achieving high quality social inclusion and meaningful activities provision in all homes.



Meaningful activities at Harton Grange Care Home during our Enter & View visit in October 2016.

Other reports we have written during 2016/17 after research conducted with service users include one on behalf of South Tyneside Council examining the travel impact of the relocation of Jarrow Walk-in Centre by South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group.

Following issues raised by the 220 questionnaire respondents about transport to and from South Tyneside District Hospital we have recommended that the hospital trust looks into the cost of car parking and provision of spaces, and that South Tyneside Council takes measures to improve direct public transport links.

We also facilitated a focus group of nine patients of the former Jarrow GP Practice for NHS England to discuss its closure. Our report to NHS England highlighted concerns raised about the experiences patients had at the alternative practice they had been transferred to on an interim basis.

Another piece of research saw us working in collaboration with other Healthwatches across the region to provide evidence for the Care Quality Commission in advance of an inspection of the North East Ambulance Service in April 2016.

We interviewed 60 people at supermarkets, libraries, care homes and community centres, asking a series of questions about the ambulance service. The responses were collated in a report supplied to the CQC.

In 2017/18 we will carry out Enter & View visits and produce reports on all GP practices in the borough. We will also undertake an Enter & View of the Urgent Care Hub at South Tyneside District Hospital, to investigate claims there is a lack of clarity for staff around the Pathway.

## ***Working with other organisations***

Healthwatch South Tyneside attends a number of committees, boards and groups to represent the views and concerns of health and social care service users.

They include:

- + Joint Primary Care Committee
- + Safeguarding Adults Board
- + Communications and Engagement Task and Finish Group
- + Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (South Tyneside and Sunderland)
- + Health and Wellbeing Board
- + HealthNet
- + Local Healthwatch Chairs.

We have regular meetings with the Director of Quality and Transformation and the Chief Operating Officer at South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and the CEO of South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group.

Healthwatch South Tyneside also organises and chairs the South Tyneside Local Quality Surveillance Group, where local problems are worked through collaboratively.

We continue to develop our priorities in consultation with our key partners and working networks:

### ***Strategic***

- + South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group
- + South Tyneside Carers Strategy Group
- + South Tyneside Health and Wellbeing Board
- + South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust
- + North East Ambulance Meeting
- + Regional Quality Surveillance Group

## ***Partnership Meetings/Forums***

- + South Tyneside Community Dementia Forum
- + South Tyneside Regional Equality Forum
- + HealthNet
- + CCG Local Engagement Board
- + North East Ambulance Healthwatch Forum
- + Happiness and Wellbeing Forum
- + Regional Healthwatch Meeting
- + South Tyneside Volunteer Summit
- + Local Quality Surveillance Group.

## ***How we've worked with our community***

The Healthwatch South Tyneside board comprises volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Their experience includes working careers in the NHS, voluntary sector, higher education, human resources, adoption and fostering, utilities and probation service.

Other volunteers have come to Healthwatch with extensive experience in nursing, care and the voluntary sector, which has proved invaluable in roles such as authorised representative conducting Enter & View visits.

We have created a new Engagement Officer position to focus on the recruitment, training and retention of volunteer roles.

The Chair meets with the Operations Manager on a monthly basis, timed to coincide with the Health and Wellbeing Board's bi-monthly meetings. Any intelligence that we have gathered, any active concerns or issues relating to the Health and Wellbeing Board is shared with the Chair at this meeting. The Chair then provides a verbal update for the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Chair provides an update about the Health and Wellbeing Board at the monthly Healthwatch South Tyneside board meeting and papers are circulated to directors as appropriate.





# *Our plans for next year*

## ***What next?***

Just as last year, with more major changes being proposed to the planning and delivery of local health and social care services it promises to be another challenging year ahead for Healthwatch South Tyneside.

We will be closely involved in the process of statutory engagement and consultation with the general public in relation to potential changes to clinical services across the South Tyneside and Sunderland Sustainability and Transformation Plan footprint, working closely with our colleagues at Healthwatch Sunderland.

Healthwatch will keep service users informed about key developments, such as the 14-week 'Path to Excellence' consultation being launched in July 2017 into the planned shake-up of hospital care in South Tyneside and Sunderland. This is set to affect maternity, stroke, women's, and children and young people's services.

We will represent the interests of the borough's health and social care service users at the Sunderland and South Tyneside Joint Health Scrutiny Committee and Local Healthwatch Chair and Lead Officer's meetings for the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear and North Durham STP footprint.

## ***Enter & View***

Having visited every South Tyneside care home in 2016/17 for our research study on meaningful activities 'It's My Home', we intend to use our Enter & View statutory powers once again in 2017/18 to visit all GP practices across the borough to capture people's experiences of these.

We will produce an overarching report, sharing good practice with a view to influence the delivery of GP services across the borough, following complaints we have received about the difficulties some patients are experiencing obtaining a timely appointment with their GP.

We also plan to carry out an Enter & View at the Urgent Care Hub based at South Tyneside District Hospital, having received intelligence that there is a lack of clarity for staff around the Pathway. We intend to visit the Hub at different times during a seven day period to capture people's experiences of this service.

Unannounced follow-up Enter & View visits will be carried out at care homes we identified during 2016/17 needed to improve their provision of meaningful activities.

## ***Volunteers***

We will continue to increase our adult volunteer base across the volunteer roles - enter and view and community champion - to increase our reach into the community and capacity to gather experiences of using health and social care services.

We have created a new Engagement Officer role with a focus on young volunteers; we intend to develop a Young Healthwatcher programme to engage with and capture young people's views and experiences of health services.

## ***Raising awareness***

Healthwatch South Tyneside has over the past year made a significant investment in IT and marketing, with the launch of our new website and online Feedback Centre, and the launch of a new Facebook business page.

During 2017/18 we will intensify efforts to raise awareness and engage service users from all sections of the community with continued attendance at major events and via regular survey work, supported by the ongoing social media campaign.

We will maintain the flexibility to be able to respond to intelligence received from the general public about local health and social care services.

## Strategic Plan

Other ongoing key priorities identified in our Strategic Plan 2015-18 include:

- + Further develop our commissioner and provider relationships
- + Develop a Quality Assurance Framework
- + Raise public awareness of our new digital approach
- + Further develop a Communication Strategy to reflect our digital approach
- + Develop a Young Volunteering strategy to recruit and retain our young volunteers
- + Develop a Priority Strategy to address methods to respond to issues from the public
- + Grow volunteer database.





# Our people

## ***Decision making***

Our board of directors has a diversity of skills, perspectives and experiences and its role is to direct and control the work of the organisation.

A terms of reference document sets out the governance structures and principles. Monthly board meetings are held in public and minutes are published on our website.

We also publicise our plans and decisions widely via the website, social media, e-newsletters and via the press.

## Key responsibilities:

- + To determine strategic direction and policies.
- + To ensure the activities of Healthwatch South Tyneside reflect the diverse communities of South Tyneside, not just the views of majority groups or the most high profile issues.
- + To establish and oversee control and risk management arrangements.
- + To ensure that Healthwatch South Tyneside achieves its aims and objectives.
- + To oversee 'operational management' and ensure the implementation of board policies.



## Board members

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**Sue Taylor, Chair**

Sue is also CEO of Gateshead and South Tyneside Sight Service, where she wants to ensure the best possible level of services and support for the visually impaired. She has worked in the voluntary sector for 25 years, mainly for and with people with sight loss, and represents sight loss at a national and regional level. Sue represents the voluntary sector on the Local Eye Health Network for the North East, leads on the South of Tyne Eye Care Planning Group, and is part of a national Department for Health pilot looking at models of Commissioning for Effectiveness and Efficiency around eye care services.



**Dr Shobha Srivastava MBE, Board Member**

A founding board member, Dr Srivastava MBE retired as a hospital consultant in 1998 and has used her knowledge and expertise since working with the Community Health Council, Public Involvement Forum, LINK and now Healthwatch. Dr Srivastava also sits on the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Domestic Violence Forum, and is a North East Ambulance Foundation Trust governor. In June 2017 she was awarded the MBE for voluntary service work in the field of community cohesion. Passionate about patient care, she said: "South Tyneside has one of the worst health inequalities, and also our longevity is lower than other areas in the UK. My aspiration is for our area to have the best health and social care for our residents."



**Peter Bower, Board Member**

After a 30-year career in the NHS including several years as a CEO in primary care, Peter retrained as a secondary school maths teacher before retiring after a third career in the probation service. He has undertaken voluntary work with a social housing provider and also gained an Open University degree. The married father-of-two, from Jarrow, joined the Healthwatch board to help improve services across health and social care as the two work ever closer together.



**Phil O'Malley, Board Member**

A Jarrovian all her life, Phil worked in the voluntary sector for nearly 25 years as a social worker and department head within a church-based social work and adoption and fostering agency. After the agency closed Phil became a self-employed adoption and fostering consultant and then qualified as a counsellor/therapist. Aged 60 she attained an MA in Counselling at Durham University before becoming a magistrate. Since retiring Phil has volunteered in organisations supporting people with dementia and older people receiving care support either at home or in residential care. A widow, Phil has three children and six grandchildren.



**Ged Dixon, Board Member**

Ged is a retired Human Resources professional who graduated from Northumbria University. Following a career in senior management positions in the utilities and retail sectors he established his own consultancy to advise and assist smaller businesses in all aspects of the employment relationship. During this time he supported a number of care home service providers and developed a strong desire to ensure that the best possible levels of care and services are provided to the most vulnerable people in our society.



**Mary Butler, Board Member**

After leaving school Mary studied to become a librarian and got her first job in Newcastle libraries working in the busy Central Lending Library. Later she joined a small team of colleagues who delivered a library service to older/disabled residents throughout the city which included organising visits to cultural events throughout the city such as meeting authors, and going to the theatre and concerts. Mary later managed libraries in the west of Newcastle. She was also a JP, working in the Family Courts and trained to become a counsellor - working with adult survivors of childhood abuse. Mary has been a governor of many schools in Hebburn and recently served as an elected councillor for Hebburn North. As a member of the Cabinet she was Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Support Services.

## ***How we involve the public and volunteers***

During 2016/17 we recruited two new board members and seven new volunteers with a wide range of experience in the social care, voluntary and financial services sectors.

They joined three existing board members, including two who have been with us since our launch in 2013 and who have extensive experience in the NHS and voluntary sector - Chair Sue Taylor and Dr Shobha Srivastava, who received her MBE for voluntary service work in the field of community cohesion in June 2017.

The board of directors and staff would like to pay tribute to former board member Terry Haram, who had to resign after a serious road traffic accident in October 2016 left him with significant injuries. The drink driver responsible was later jailed for three years. Terry's hard work and dedication were very much valued and we wish him well in his recovery.

We have also engaged a team of volunteers with significant experience in nursing, care and the voluntary sector to assist with a wide range of work including a large programme of Enter & View visits.

In 2017/18 we hope to recruit to a new volunteer role, Engagement Officer, with a focus on young volunteers. We also intend to develop a Young Healthwatcher programme to engage with and capture young people's views and experiences of health services.

Decisions about our work programme are made by the board of directors but largely driven by external factors including changes to health and social care service delivery, consultation activity and the demands of service users and patient groups.

## ***Volunteer spotlight: Graeme Weatherall***



A retired bank manager joined Healthwatch as a volunteer because he wanted to 'give a little bit back' to the NHS after years of treatment for MS.

Graeme Weatherall joined our growing band of volunteers in 2016 after meeting Engagement Officer Linda Gibson at a Blissability forum.

The father-of-three had managed the Low Fell branch for the Lloyds Banking Group before his condition forced him to take on lighter duties until his early retirement in 2009.

Graeme, 58, of South Shields, said: "I was attending a Blissability forum and looking for other things to do and got talking to Linda about Healthwatch. I thought 'yes, I could give my time to that'.

"Before I retired I was used to working 7am until 7pm and for the last five or six years I haven't been able to and I am looking to re-enable myself.

"Because of MS I have been heavily involved at different times with Sunderland District Hospital, my GP, MS nurse and various services offered by the hospital. I have taken a lot out of the health service and enjoy giving a little bit back."

Graeme has been assisting with a comprehensive programme of Enter and View visits at care homes across the borough following a period of training - something he said he had a vested interest in.

He said: "I'm learning all the time. With my progressive illness it is quite probable I will end up in a care home myself within the next five to ten years. But I am looking forward to being involved in whatever is required of me by Healthwatch in the year ahead."







***Our  
finances***

## Income

Contract income 2016-17	£103,409
Carers Federation	£24,419
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£127,828</b>

## Expenditure

### Staffing

Salary costs	£47,670
Healthwatch Chair	£5,500
Staffing expenses	£996
	<b>£54,166</b>

### Accommodation

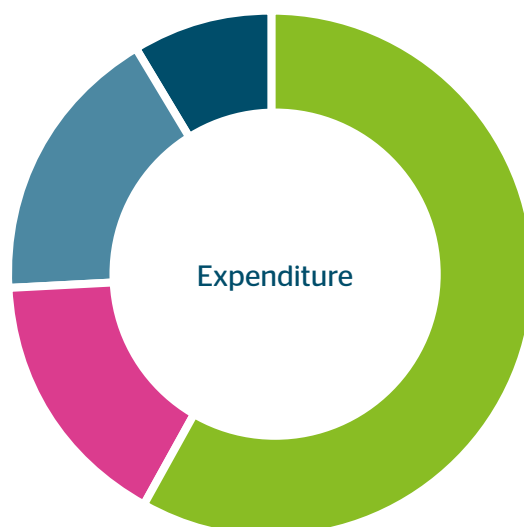
Rent, rates and service charges	£7,200
IT costs	£5,616
Telephones	£1,581
Office furniture and equipment repairs	£632
	<b>£15,029</b>

### Running costs

Postage, printing and stationery	£1,399
Publicity and marketing	£4,729
Volunteer expenses	£462
Venue hire and associated costs	£290
Legal and professional costs	£5,149
Annual reports	£4,068
	<b>£16,097</b>

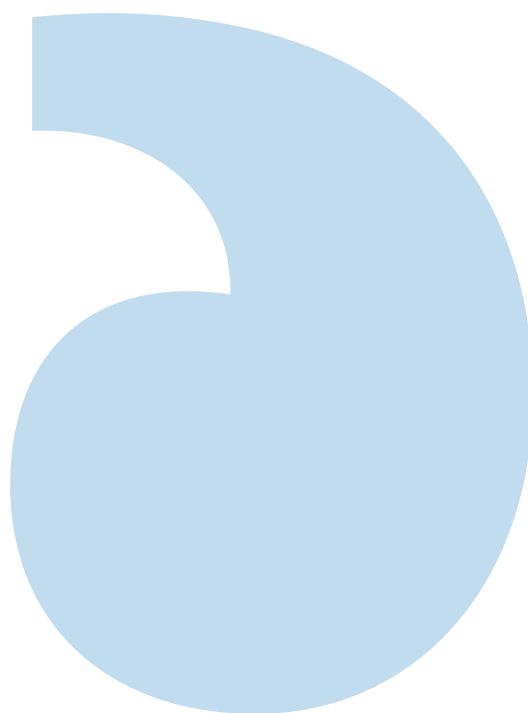
<b>Healthwatch Work Plan Activities</b>	<b>£8,000</b>
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<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£93,292</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>£127,828</b>
<b>Funds carried forward at 31st March 2017</b>	<b>£34,536</b>



## Expenditure

- Staffing
- Accommodation
- Running Costs
- Healthwatch Work Plan Activities





Heathwatch South Tyneside  
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NE32 3QN

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