



**Healthwatch Sandwell**  
Annual Report 2013/14





© Healthwatch Sandwell 2014

Published June 2014

The text of this document (this excludes, where present, all departmental and agency logos) may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context.

The material must be acknowledged as Healthwatch Sandwell copyright and the document title specified. Where third party material has been identified, permission from the respective copyright holder must be sought.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [info@healthwatchesandwell.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchesandwell.co.uk)

You can download this publication from [www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk)



# Contents

Foreword and Summary .....	2
Background.....	4
<i>Local Healthwatches and     Healthwatch England .....</i>	4
<i>Development of Healthwatch     Sandwell .....</i>	5
Governance .....	6
Aims and Purpose .....	8
<i>What We Do .....</i>	8
<i>How We Work .....</i>	9
Activity .....	11
<i>Establishing the Organisation .....</i>	11
<i>Communications and engagement</i>	11
<i>Research and Intelligence.....</i>	15
Impact .....	16
Financial information.....	17
<i>Company change .....</i>	18
Future Plans .....	19

## Foreword and Summary

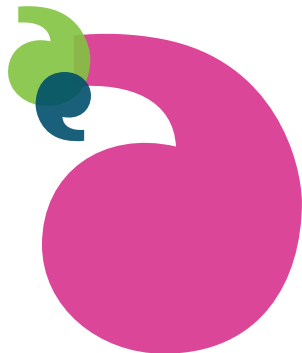
Twelve months after Healthwatch Sandwell was initially established the Board is really pleased to see the organisation set up and our staff team in place. The service is now making real progress in engaging with the community, identifying issues that concern them, and planning how we can make a real difference. This has been the result of a great deal of effort by all of the Board members and the staff, even though at times it has been anything but straightforward!

On April 1st 2013 Healthwatch Sandwell was a Company Limited by Shares with one shareholder who was the Chairman. We also had a Board of nine Directors but no staff. This approach allowed room for the Board to shape Healthwatch as they felt best served the community which, although meant a slower start, has resulted in a completely independent Healthwatch well positioned to meet the needs of the people it serves.



Initially we held an open meeting last summer where we were able to ask the community what they wanted their Healthwatch to look like, and used these comments to establish our organisation. Once this was done, we appointed a Chief Executive followed by leads for research and engagement together with administration support, and were able to start the real work of Healthwatch.

The areas we have identified to work on are promoting consumer rights, addressing concerns, ensuring customer care mechanisms work, overseeing statutory consultations and linking with the community. This is supported by our work



to promote Healthwatch, gather information, and analyse and act on what we're hearing.

With our staff in post, we started our engagement with the community. It has been important for us not only to have focused meetings for the public, but also to develop a network for communication with local voluntary user organisations. This has resulted in our Consultation Network, that is continuing to grow, and has enabled us to hear the voice of many more users of services than we could have achieved alone, or just by contacting individuals.

Other activity has included training volunteers and beginning to plan our Enter and View programme. We have begun meetings of our Health and Social Care Group, held a successful launch event, established an informative website and social media, and set up a system for recording and acting on the issues we hear.

This work is complemented by a diverse group of Board Members who are able to represent the community in many areas including NHS Trusts, the CCG, Young People and Safeguarding. Healthwatch Sandwell has also played an active part in the Health and Wellbeing Board, at which

it has a statutory seat, and has regularly challenged proposals and decisions.

As with other Healthwatches, we are involved with the Regional Healthwatch Network, and we are pleased that the Black Country has been able to establish its own local network for the Healthwatches of Dudley, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Sandwell. This has proved a useful development where we can each support and learn from one another.

As well as all of this activity, we undertook a corporate review during the year, and realised that the organisation would be best served by changing from a CIC limited by shares, to one limited by guarantee. This was successfully achieved and the new company structure took over on 1st April 2014.

At the end of the first year, we feel we have achieved a great deal, often under difficult circumstances. We now have the ambition to achieve even more, and believe that we are well set up to do this over the coming year.

**Pam Jones, Chair**

# Background

## Local Healthwatches and Healthwatch England

Healthwatch Sandwell is the local consumer voice for health and social care. We are a new independent organisation that has been set up to enable consumers who use health and social care services in Sandwell to influence and improve the way these services are provided and run.



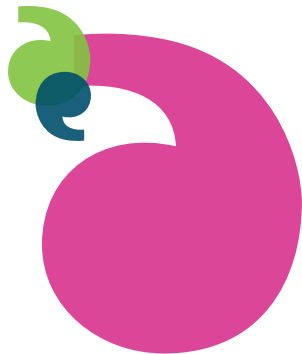
Healthwatch Sandwell replaced Sandwell Local Involvement Network (LINK), and is building on the work done by them. Healthwatch Sandwell has various powers and duties to make sure that services meet local needs and that local people's views have a real impact. The statutory role and function of Healthwatch is laid down in the NHS and Social Care Act of 2012, but local areas have discretion

about how their local Healthwatch delivers its services. This act also gave councils the legal responsibility to set up a local Healthwatch by April 2013.

Healthwatch Sandwell is funded by the Department of Health via Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. However, it is an organisation in its own right and independent of the council. Although a funding allocation is made to councils for the provision of local Healthwatches, it is not ringfenced; it is up to the Local Authority as to how they use this funding to provide the service. There are one hundred and fifty two local Healthwatches in total.

Healthwatch Sandwell has a statutory seat on the Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board which brings together key organisations responsible for providing health and social care e.g. Sandwell Council and the NHS. We represent the consumers' voice on the Board.

Healthwatch operates both locally and nationally. As well as local Healthwatches, Healthwatch England works at the national level. They take the experiences of local Healthwatch and use them to influence national policy. By law, the organisations who plan, run and regulate health and social care services have to



listen to what Healthwatch England has to say.

When Healthwatch England are made aware of failing services, they report them to key national organisations, including the Care Quality Commission, of which they are a sub-committee, and central government. These organisations must submit a public response to Healthwatch England's concerns.

## Development of Healthwatch Sandwell

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council decided on the option of creating a new standalone organisation to deliver its local Healthwatch. The Chair of Sandwell LINK, Pam Jones, was asked to support the development of this process, and subsequently became the Chair of Healthwatch Sandwell.

The approach taken was to recruit a Board of community volunteers for the new organisation. They were responsible for establishing Healthwatch Sandwell and setting the overall direction, as well as being actively involved in health and social care issues. Healthwatch Sandwell was incorporated as a Community Interest Company (CIC) for the start of April 2013, and the Board were in place shortly after.

The Board members have a range of backgrounds, including the NHS, statutory organisations, private companies and voluntary organisations. Our Board members are also users and carers of those using Sandwell health and social care services.



The Board initially worked on developing the organisation's policies and plans and were supported by consultants and an administrator. In September 2013, the Chief Executive was appointed.



## Governance

Healthwatch Sandwell is governed by its community Board of eleven members who are ultimately responsible for all decision making. It is proud to have had this level of community control from the start. Up until the appointment of the full staff compliment at the beginning of 2014, the Board played an active role in developing various policies, structures and plans, based around Business and Finance, Communications and Engagement, and

Research and Intelligence. Executive and non-executive leads from the Board took this work forward, along with other Board members working on various sub groups.

As the organisation has matured, it has moved to a more traditional structure with the Board taking a strategic overview delegated through the CEO to staff. However, the Chair also has an executive function, and works on Healthwatch Sandwell business for at least one day per week, meeting regularly with the CEO and other partners.

### Board Members

Pam Jones - Chair  
Wasim Ali  
Simon Burchell  
John Clothier  
Teresa Culverwell  
Parminder Dhani  
Bill Hodgetts  
Kwadwo Owusu-Darko  
Graham Price  
Doug Round  
Geoff Tranter

### Business & Finance Sub Group

Simon Burchell - Chair  
Parminder Dhani  
Pam Jones  
Kwadwo Owusu-Darko  
Doug Round

### Staff

Mark Guest - CEO  
Lavida Fletcher - Administrator  
Ian McGarry - Communications & Engagement  
Kuldip Kaur Kang - Research & Intelligence



# Aims and Purpose

## What We Do

Healthwatch Sandwell works with consumers and partners in the following ways:

### CONSUMER RIGHTS

Identifying and clarifying the rights of consumers of health and social care services. Promoting and providing information on these rights, and advice on enforcing them.

### CUSTOMER CARE AND COMPLAINTS

Identifying and signposting to customer care mechanisms and advocacy. Following up if this hasn't worked e.g. 'Why has my complaint been ignored?' Testing and checking customer care mechanism.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Healthwatch Sandwell works with the community and volunteers to deliver our aims. We are also a channel for voluntary and community groups working with consumers e.g. carers group, to raise their issues and hear their concerns.

### CONSULTATIONS

Maintaining an overview of consultations by health and social care organisations and promoting to consumers. Ensuring consultation is done properly, raising issues around potential service issues, and acting as a critical friend to those delivering the consultation process.

### CONCERNS\*

Picking up on and listening to consumer concerns in a timely manner, including being responsive to the 'early or lone' voice. Raising concerns with those responsible, and following up. Concerns may also come through whistleblowing, and we will promote and act as a channel for this.

\*A concern is something causing repeated consumer issues, but individuals are unlikely to take (early) action on, or a 'low level' complaint that is just put up with e.g. unfriendly waiting rooms

Healthwatch Sandwell  
covers publicly  
funded health and  
social care services  
including:

Hospitals  
Dentists  
Doctors/ GPs  
Care Homes (excl private  
with no public funded  
residents)  
Hospitals Transport/  
Ambulance Services  
Mental Health Services  
Opticians  
Pharmacies  
Community Health  
Services  
Day Care Centres  
Home Care  
Public Health

## How We Work

Healthwatch Sandwell has adopted a four tier approach to its work:

### Promote

Promotion is part of our communication and engagement activities. We recognise Sandwell is a diverse borough with a range of communication needs. To meet these diverse needs, we utilise traditional methods of outreach, like leaflets and engaging in local meetings, alongside using our website and social media. We also promote and provide information on consumers' health and social care rights and signpost consumers to existing health and social care customer care mechanisms, advocacy and other support.

Not everybody needs, or wants, to know about Healthwatch Sandwell all of the time, but when they do need us, they need to be able to find us. Therefore, our approach is to work through existing community infrastructure, to reach the people they work with, and to be a resource for them to address the needs and concerns of the people that they work with.

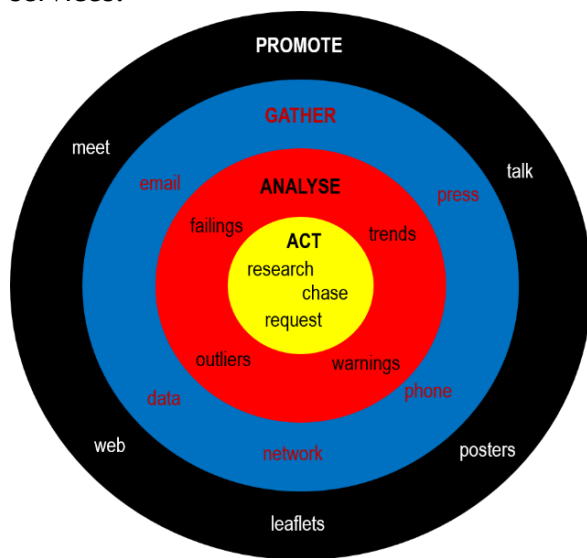
### Gather

We look to identify health and social care issues from a whole range of sources. This



includes members of the public contacting us directly, going out and talking to the community, social media, website, attending community meetings, and data from providers and commissioners of services.

developed to reflect how we work, and make it a real tool for supporting our work. The actions we can take range from advising on rights, signposting to complaints mechanisms, sharing concerns with providers, 'enter and viewing' premises and raising with Healthwatch England.



### Healthwatch's Powers

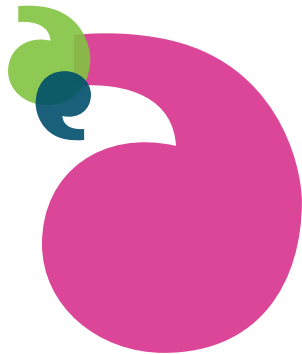
- Statutory seat on Health and Wellbeing Board
- Representation on NHS England Quality Surveillance Group
- Enter and View\*
- Escalating Concerns to Healthwatch England and Care Quality Commission
- Right to request information

### Analyse and Act

We review and analyse all of the issues data that we collect to see if there are concerns that may need to be looked into further, or if the information we have supports us taking immediate action. This can range from a staff member providing advice to someone who has phoned, to identifying an underlying trend in data that is reported to the Board.

We have put in place an in-house system to support this that has been dynamically

\*There are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch Sandwell to see and hear for ourselves how services are provided. These visits are called **Enter & View**. A team of specially trained volunteers visit a service, make observations, collect people's opinions and produce a report. Visits can be announced or unannounced.



## Activity

### Establishing the Organisation

The majority of the last year has been spent on setting up the new Healthwatch Sandwell organisation and establishing its partnerships and presence. This setting up activity has included:

- Recruiting and bringing together the Board
- Setting up the company
- Recruiting staff
- Setting up offices
- Meeting with key partners and building relationships e.g. key health and social care providers, Health and Wellbeing Board, Adult Services, NHS England, Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group, other local Healthwatches and Healthwatch England
- Developing strategy, plans and ways of working to deliver Healthwatch's aims
- Changing the company type

Other delivery activity began to get underway from January 2014. The following was carried out:

### Communications and engagement

We have used traditional methods of outreach along with new media to market ourselves, enabling a range of diverse consumers to engage with us and contact us according to the method that suits them best.

#### **Social media**

**Twitter - 299 followers**

**Facebook - 96 friends**

#### **Website**

##### **News**

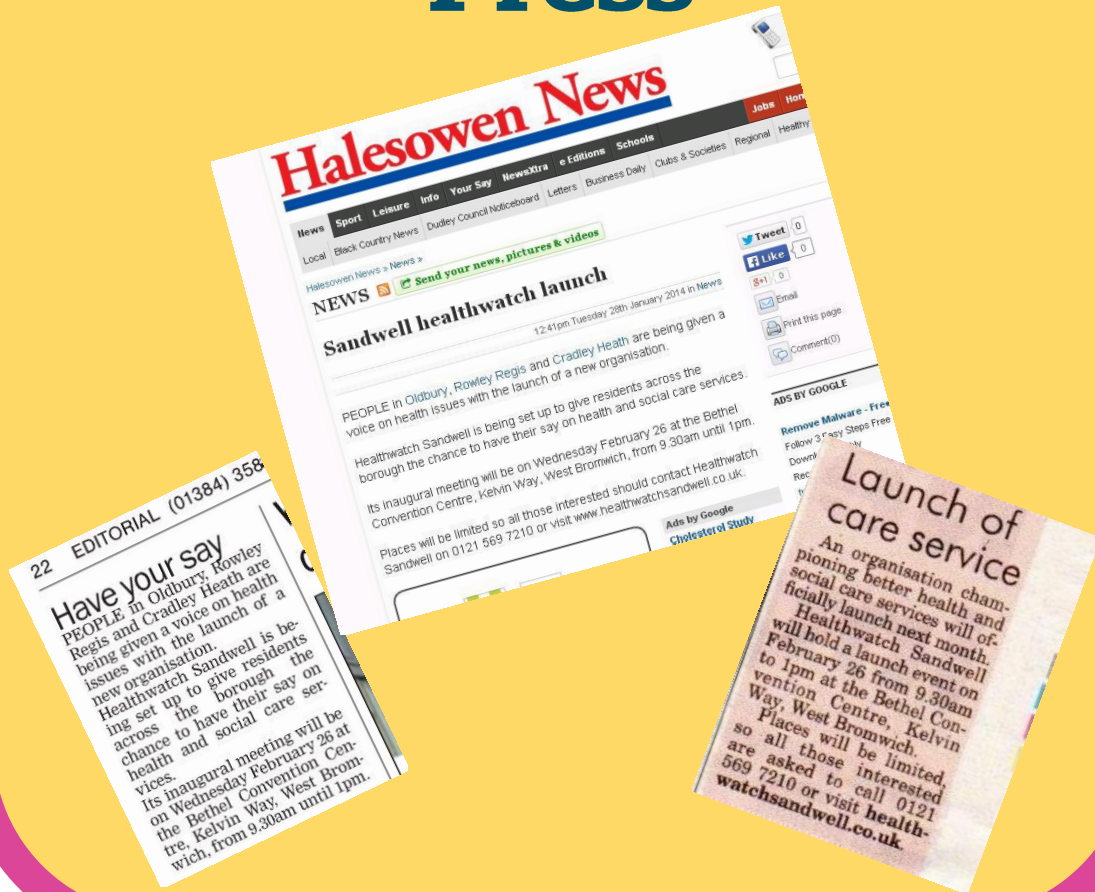
**Advice on complaining**

**Clarifying rights**

**Key health and social care organisations directory**

**Signposting consumers to service ratings websites**

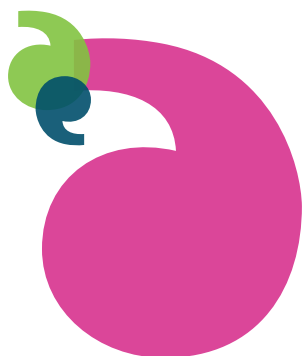
# Press



## Health and Social Care Group

The Health and Social Care Group held its first meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March at the Yemeni Centre, West Bromwich. The chosen topic was Patient Records and we were pleased to welcome Dr Damian Williams, a Digital Clinical Champion with NHS England to give an update on Care.Data. Over thirty people attended and were able to ask questions and contribute to the debate about the sharing of their information with other organisations. More public meetings

by this group will be held at locations across the borough to give local people a chance to find out more about a specific health or social care issue and to give their views. The chair of the group, Mr William Hodgetts said 'It is very important for Healthwatch Sandwell to bring local people together to give them a chance to find out, and have their say, about the local services they use'.



### Consultation Network

Our Consultation Network consists of voluntary and community organisations who want Healthwatch Sandwell to contact them regularly as agreed, specifically to share the issues they are hearing from the people that they work with. This enables Healthwatch Sandwell to gather valuable intelligence, and to support these organisations to provide a service to their clients.

Working through our Consultation Network enables us to reach far more communities and hard to reach groups than would be possible with limited resources and expertise, and is a demonstrable way of how we work within existing community infra-structure, add value and avoid duplication. Working with specialist groups enables us to engage with harder to reach communities, such as young people through Young Carers, or older people through Agewell.



- **Agewell**
- **Better understanding of Dementia for Sandwell (BUDS)**
- **Brook Sandwell and Dudley**
- **Carers Advice Resource Establishment Sandwell (CARES)**
- **Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations**
- **Home Instead**
- **IRiS Sandwell**
- **Kaleidoscope Plus Group**
- **Macmillan Cancer Support**
- **Murray Hall Community Trust**
- **Options for Life**
- **POhWER Community Advocacy**
- **Sandwell Advocacy**
- **Sandwell African Caribbean Mental Health Foundation (KUUMBA)**
- **Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)**
- **Sandwell Deaf Community Association**
- **Sandwell Diabetes Support Group**
- **Sandwell Dignity Network**
- **Sandwell Young Carers**
- **Smethwick ASRA**
- **Soho/Victoria Friends and Neighbours CIC**
- **Voiceability**
- **Volunteer Centre Sandwell**
- **West Bromwich African Caribbean Resource Centre**
- **Yemeni Community Association**





### Launch Event

Our official launch event was held on 26th February 2014. Over 100 patients, carers, voluntary organisations, and health and social care professionals attended.

### **‘The speaker gave such useful information’**

The keynote speaker at the event was Trevor Fossey (below), who provided a fascinating and well-received talk on Electronic Patient Records.



The audience viewed a video introducing members of the Healthwatch Sandwell Board followed by a video with messages of support from local partner health and social care organisations including NHS England, Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, Councillor Yvonne

Davies (Cabinet member for Adult Social Care) and Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (Links to these videos are on our website).



Delegates were consulted about their views and experiences of using health and social care services in Sandwell.

### **‘I have enjoyed the day very much, very well organised’**

The discussion provided us with rich intelligence which was incorporated into our plan of activities. The evaluation of the event showed delegates overwhelmingly rated the event as very good.

## Research and Intelligence

### Gathering, collating and reporting on our research and data

At Healthwatch Sandwell, we are building a strong evidence base by gathering intelligence directly, together with research and data from key health and social care organisations. We have been developing our own in-house dynamic client relationship management system (CRM) which enables us to identify trends and highlights issues of concern in the delivery of local health and social services.

Whenever issues come in, we first look to act immediately if necessary e.g. signposting to a complaints service. These issues are then recorded, to be reviewed and further analysed for deeper trends or issues. The data and intelligence we record is regularly monitored and followed-up enabling us to act in a timely manner whilst providing good customer service.

### Complaints data

We collect data from key health and social care stakeholders. This data is cross-referenced with concerns we have recorded in our system. Healthwatch Sandwell has a unique position in reviewing complaints data from several

organisations which allows us to identify trends across them.

Complaints data we currently collect includes:

- POhWER (Independent Complaints Advocacy Service)
- West Midlands Ambulance Service
- Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group
- Quality Surveillance Group (NHS England)

We are talking to several other organisations about their data.

### Partnership working

We communicate, engage and share our intelligence with the following key stakeholders at a national and local level:

- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS England
- Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Sandwell Council Adult Services
- Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board
- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

## Impact

### Case study

In March we organised the first of our regular Health and Social Care Groups. We worked in partnership with NHS England to deliver an awareness raising session on care.data and patients' rights. The meeting was attended by Sandwell health and social care consumers, Patient Participation Groups and local voluntary sector organisations.

At the end of March 2014, we'd recorded 18 specific consumer issues. Some of the concerns we have supported local consumers with include:

- Clarified with consumers how their rights have potentially been violated and signposted them to advocacy support services.
- We identified that inaccurate healthcare leaflets were being displayed in healthcare settings. The healthcare organisations are removing these leaflets from display.
- Consumers were not aware that they could follow-up

unsatisfactory responses to complaints. One complaint resulted in the complainant having a meeting with senior staff at the organisation they complained about. This has been recognised as a trend within our CRM system and we are investigating the issue.

### Feedback

*'The client's complaint has now been resolved and the service provider responded in writing, apologised and gave a brief explanation of a way forward during this financial year which is partly what she wanted. Some of the client's concerns were not addressed but the more salient issues were. For now things are a little better and more settled.'*

*May I take this opportunity to thank you for helping to speed up the somewhat rudimentary engagement process.'*

**Pat Clarke, Kuumba Centre**

# Financial information

## Healthwatch Six Towns CIC

Interest Received	£
Income from Local Authority <sup>1</sup>	218,750

### Total Income

### Expenditure

Recharge to Healthwatch Sandwell CIC <sup>2</sup>	144,063
Events	3,247
Travel	1,078
Training	408
Telephone	244
Insurance	1,159
Salary Expenses	52,663
Pension	1,020
Recruitment Fees	2,418
Accountancy/Payroll Fees	538
Professional Fees	5,000
Office Stationery	2,323
Advertising / Marketing	2,394
Cleaning	575
Repairs and Maintenance	1
DBS	232
Depreciation	1,221
Postage	166

### Total Income over Expenditure (Loss)

-

1 Funding from Local Authority to cover 2013-14 was £175000. Income from Local Authority includes quarter 1 2014-15 payment of £43 750

2 This figure includes an underspend. This is due to Healthwatch Sandwell's initial development period, during which no staff or other significant expenditure was incurred. The Local Authority have agreed with Healthwatch Sandwell that this funding can be carried over. Healthwatch Sandwell has profiled it to be expended in its 2014-2016 budgets.

## Represented by

### Balance at Bank as at 1st May 2013

Current account	NIL
Petty Cash	NIL

### Balance at Bank as at 30th April 2014

Current account	141,098
Petty Cash	265
Owed to Healthwatch Sandwell CIC	(144,063)
Owed by Healthwatch Sandwell CIC	3,663
Owed to HMRC (PAYE)	(503)
Accrued Accountancy Fees	(360)

**Total Balance** 100

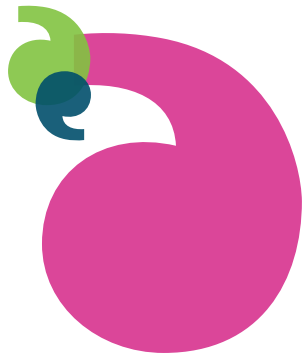
**Share Capital** 100

Healthwatch Sandwell has four full time members of staff, and is based in offices provided by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council at Walker Grange.

## Company change

Healthwatch Sandwell CIC was initially incorporated as a CIC Limited by Shares. This was reviewed towards the end of 2013, and it was unanimously agreed that a CIC Limited by Guarantee would be a more appropriate organisation type. As a result, a new company limited by guarantee, still with the name Healthwatch Sandwell CIC, was established and the business was transferred in its entirety on 1st April 2014 from the old company to the new company.

To enable this to happen, the name of the original company was changed to Healthwatch Six Towns CIC. It ceased trading on 1<sup>st</sup> April and will be closed down 3 months after this date. This report is being published by Healthwatch Sandwell CIC (limited by guarantee) to report on the work undertaken by the previous company and to meet the reporting requirements of local Healthwatch.



## Future Plans

### **Using our Enter and View powers**

We have been designing our Enter and View process and volunteer support programme. We will be piloting this in early 2014, and then intend to begin a full programme of Enter and View visits delivered by volunteers.

### **Increase the number of partners on our consultation network**

We will continue to increase the reach of our network, and undertake review to help target underrepresented communities.

### **Information in Health and Social Care Settings**

We will continue to increase awareness of Healthwatch Sandwell amongst consumers of Sandwell health and social care services, aiming to put posters and leaflets into the public entrances and receptions of all the main health and social care settings.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

We want to increase the number of active volunteers by developing a range of activities in which they can take part, and recruitment is ongoing.







**Healthwatch Sandwell**

Walker Grange, Central Avenue, Tipton, DY4 9RY.

**Tel:** 0121 569 7210

**Email:** [info@healthwatchsandwell.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchsandwell.co.uk)

**Website:** [www.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk)

Healthwatch Sandwell Community Interest Company (C.I.C) No 08956077