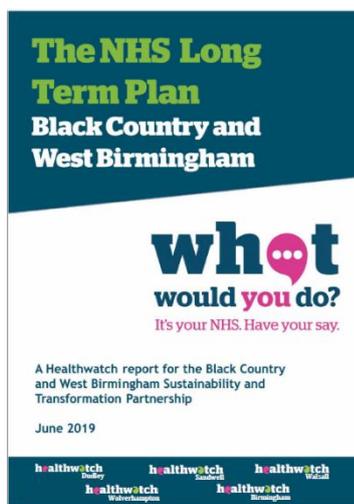


**Local news from your local Healthwatch****Support for Carers in Sandwell**

Healthwatch Sandwell has just completed a project to find out what carers need to support them and what experiences they have had with current support services in Sandwell.

Over 200 people responded to a survey and others took part in several focus groups across the borough to share their experiences. Work is now underway to produce a report which will be produced later in the Autumn for inclusion into the Sandwell MBC's Carers Strategy. This will also be available on the Healthwatch Sandwell website.

**NHS Long Term Plan**

Healthwatch Sandwell, together with Healthwatch colleagues from the Black Country and West Birmingham carried out a large community engagement project relating to Healthwatch England's request to local Healthwatch organisations to gain insight into how people view local healthcare services, and use the findings to shape local action to support delivery of the overarching NHS England Long Term Plan.

This plan sets out the NHS ambitions to get healthcare services to work better for people to help them stay well and get the best care when they need it. The implementation of the LTP will occur over at least a ten-year period. In Sandwell over 230 people contributed this project completing surveys with more taking part in focus groups.

The report has now been published and can be read on our website <https://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk/nhs-long-term-plan/>

**General Practice Nursing Report**

The Black Country and West Birmingham Sustainable Transformation Partnership (STP) asked the Healthwatch organisations in the black country to carry out work collecting feedback from patients about their knowledge and experiences of using General Practice Nurses. The feedback collected is intended to help inform the decision making of several projects linked into the STP Primary Care Strategy. The report can be read on our website <https://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk/reports/>

**Healthwatch Sandwell**

Walker Grange, Central Avenue, Tipton. DY4 9RY

Tel 0121 569 7210

info@healthwatchesandwell.co.uk

www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk



## Our New Website

We now have a brand-new website to provide Sandwell people with more information. As well as giving you news information about our work and events etc, this includes a 'feedback centre' where comments on local services can be shared. Our website also has the facility to read back content to you and translate into a variety of languages. Visit our website at [www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk).

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## Respiratory Services - Listening Exercise

Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG is carrying out a listening exercise regarding plans to relocate inpatient respiratory medicine at City Hospital until the Midland Met hospital opens in 2022. The CCG is planning several events in Sandwell in West Birmingham until 16<sup>th</sup> October. Further information is available from the CCG or visit our website for more details.

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## Welcome Aboard!

We are pleased to welcome Sophie Shuttlewood to the Healthwatch Sandwell Team. Sophie joins us as Community Outreach Lead and will be joining Melissa Elders in meeting people and listening to their experiences on local services as well as recruiting volunteers and our supporting our project work.

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## Volunteer with us!

If you are passionate about health and social care services in Sandwell, why not consider becoming a Healthwatch Sandwell volunteer? We have varied roles available. Interested? Give us a ring on 0121 569 7210 or visit our website <https://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk/get-involved/>

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## Advisory Board Recruitment

We are looking to recruit Advisory Board Members who share our passion for developing Healthwatch Sandwell as the 'consumer champion' for NHS, public health and adult and children's social care services across the Borough. You will need drive, energy and enthusiasm and the ability to play a leading role in maintaining our vision.

So, if you want to play a leading part in shaping the future of a vital organisation, then we would be delighted to hear from you. Contact us for the recruitment pack and application form.

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## Visions of a Volunteer



Geoff Tranter has been a volunteer with Healthwatch Sandwell for 6 years

1. Geoff, how did you hear about Healthwatch Sandwell?

I was a member of the Local Involvement Network before Healthwatch

2. How long have you been volunteering with us?

6 years.

3. What sort of things have you done?

Enter and views, surveys in Sandwell Hospital and Rowley Regis Hospital and helping to raise the profile of Healthwatch Sandwell in the community. I believe that Healthwatch is very important in the community and we should do all we can do to enhance and improve services for them.

4. What do you like about volunteering with us?

Community involvement and being able to bring forward peoples' issues about the services.

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## What's Healthwatch up to next?

- We are planning a project to look at access to primary care services, in particular GPs by homeless people in Sandwell. Primary care services can act as the gatekeepers to other specialist services including mental health services.
- We will also have a project that seeks to understand young people's knowledge of health services and experiences of using them, with a particular emphasis on mental health services.
- We will hold another 'insight' public meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020
- We will continue with our enter and view program, visiting local health and social care services.



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# Your Voice Counts

## We want to hear your experience of using health and social care services:

- » Care at home
- » Care Homes
- » Community Health Services
- » Dentists
- » GP Surgeries
- » Hospitals
- » Mental Health Services
- » Nursing Homes
- » Opticians
- » Pharmacies



## What we do:

- » Listen to your views and experiences on the way that health and social care services are delivered.
- » Provide you with information about local health and social care services.
- » Use your views to influence how services can be improved.
- » Make your views known, in order to influence the way your services are designed for the future.

## We achieve this by:

- » Providing information and advice.
- » Attending events and meeting with groups to listen to what people are saying.
- » Representing your views to the people who make the decisions.
- » Working with local groups and organisations to research issues and needs in local health and social care.



### Why volunteer with Healthwatch Sandwell?

Thank you for thinking about offering your time to volunteer with Healthwatch Sandwell. Volunteers are an integral part of our organisation and are vital to the work that we do. Volunteers play a crucial role in helping to ensure that we can raise the profile of issues that matter when it comes to improving our health and social care services.

We offer a range of different volunteering roles and the work we do can be very rewarding. Volunteers help us to spread the word about Healthwatch and help people find the information that they need about health and social care. We are a small organisation with a big job to do so every volunteer that invests their time with us is greatly valued.

**What we do:** Healthwatch Sandwell is the independent consumer champion for health and social care in your local area, delivered by Engaging Communities (ECs). The Healthwatch network is made up of local Healthwatch across each of the 152 local authority areas and Healthwatch England, the national body. Our job is to champion views of patients and social care users across Sandwell. We work to help local people get the best out of their local health and social care services and provide information and signposting so they understand what services are available and so they can access the right services. Whether it's improving services today or helping to shape them for tomorrow, our role is to engage with local people and give them an opportunity to speak out about health and social care services in Sandwell.

### Do I need experience to volunteer?

No. We are keen to involve people who are both experienced and new to volunteering in the health and social care landscape. We have roles to suit everyone! We will provide you with all the training you need. We are looking for enthusiastic people with a keen interest in improving health and social care services in Sandwell.



### Benefits of volunteering with us

We can be flexible to accommodate your interests and time commitment and can offer you benefits in return for your time with us. These include:

- Induction and training relevant to your role
- Out of pocket expenses (including parking)
- The opportunity to meet new people
- The opportunity to develop new and existing skills
- Regular volunteer updates
- Support and advice from the Healthwatch staff team

### What opportunities do you have for volunteers?

We have a whole range of opportunities for volunteers. From helping us to spread the word about our work, to representing us at meetings, reading and reviewing information and visiting health and social care services on our behalf. This booklet sets out the roles available to Healthwatch volunteers and the skills and experience desirable to carry out each role. The people that we help and support come from a variety of different backgrounds, different cultures and have a wide range of needs. That is why we seek volunteers with different experiences and skills.

### The roles available are:

- Enter and View Authorised Representative
- Events and Engagement
- Admin support
- Researcher
- Reading panel member

For more information or if you are interested in becoming a Healthwatch Sandwell volunteer, please get in touch with us.

Contact **Healthwatch Sandwell** on **0121 569 7210** and join us in giving local people a voice in health and social care services across Sandwell.