

The value of listening to you

Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames
Annual Report 2023–2024



healthwatch
Kingston upon Thames

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“This past year, Healthwatch Kingston has listened to local people in hospital wards, care homes and youth clubs. We have engaged at workshops and events, and travelled to meet with community groups wherever they were.

Poverty has a direct impact on health and wellbeing, so we have reached deeper than we have before to ensure our borough’s most vulnerable, who do not always have their views heard, can inform NHS and social care service developments and planning.

Sharing personal experiences of care with people who can drive needs-based change is powerful. This is how we will continue to make a difference, championing local voices to improve services and reduce health and care inequalities in our community. Thank you for helping us deliver your Healthwatch Kingston statutory service. We value your involvement in our work.”



Stephen Bitti,
Chief Executive Officer

Healthwatch Kingston
upon Thames

Message from our Chair



Dr Liz Meerabeau, Chair,
Healthwatch Kingston
upon Thames

This is my last contribution as the Chair of Healthwatch Kingston; I stepped down on 31st March 2024 after five and a half years in the role, to allow a helpful handover period prior to my leaving the Board early in 2025.

During my time as Chair, Healthwatch Kingston has grown enormously in its range of work and in its connections to local services, for example in relation to safeguarding. I would like to thank our staff and volunteer team for their support in this achievement. Recently we have developed a closer working relationship with Your Healthcare, the Community Interest Company providing community care in Kingston, and we are scrutinising how the merger of Kingston Hospital with Richmond Community Health will affect provision for our population. Healthwatch Kingston is regularly briefed on Adult Social Care provision within the borough, and we participated in the peer review of ASC and in the recruitment to two senior posts. Most recently, in the new year of 2024-2025, we have been contracted by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames to undertake a series of Enter and View visits in care homes.

In August 2023 Healthwatch Kingston was awarded a contract by a partnership of mental health trusts for evaluating an integrated community rehabilitation pilot in Kingston; the project was recently completed and is another example of extending our range in a competitive field.

Our new statutory service contract period began in October 2023. Efficient working becomes ever more imperative, as does determining priorities when there are many important issues which could be investigated, several of which are national issues such as dentistry and pharmacy shortages.

Increasingly Healthwatch Kingston works with the other five Healthwatch organisations in south west London. A recent example was the consultation on the move of paediatric cancer services from the Royal Marsden, which has also been scrutinised by the six local authorities through the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, chaired by Councillor Schaper from RBK.

Lastly, within this 2023-2024 reporting period, we have welcomed Vickie Priest to the Healthwatch Kingston Board, who brings invaluable experience from the Care Quality Commission.



"I would like to take this opportunity to say a very big thank you to our Healthwatch Kingston chair, Liz Meerabeau for her decisive leadership, expertise and continued support.

I would also like to thank Stephen and the Healthwatch Kingston team, trustees and volunteers for their hard work and dedication as I look forward to working with you as chair going forward.



Kathryn Yates, Chair,
Healthwatch Kingston upon
Thames (from 1 April 2024)

About us

Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames is your local health and social care champion.

From New Malden to Hook and everywhere in between, we make sure NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

Our vision

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



Our mission

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



Our values are:

- **Listening** to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- **Including** everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- **Analysing** different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- **Acting** on feedback and driving change.
- **Partnering** with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.



Year in review

Reaching out:

1793 people

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

5300 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and the cost-of-living crisis.



Making a difference to care:

We published

14 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Including Communities

which highlighted the struggles disadvantaged people face accessing NHS and social care.



Health and social care that works for you:

We're lucky to have **60** outstanding volunteers who collectively contributed **349 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority.

In 2023 - 24 we received

£122,000 for our core statutory service, which is the same as the previous year.

In 2023-2024 we employed

6 staff (4.2 full time equivalent)

who help us carry out our work.



How we have made a difference this year (2023–2024)

Spring (Apr – Jun)



Our reports and insights, based on local people's views and experiences, helped us steer the refresh of the Kingston public health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.



We marked the 75th anniversaries of Windrush and the NHS, noting ethnically diverse people make up 42% of our NHS medical staff today.

Summer (Jul – Sep)



We worked with our local dental committee to elevate concerns about access to an NHS dentist to a national level, which highlighted need for dental recovery plans.



We published a '[Care Workforce Wellbeing](#)' [report](#), that made recommendations to address frontline care staff concerns, such as access to mental health support at work.

Autumn (Oct – Dec)



Our [Pulse Check](#) report about [diabetes services](#), ensured people with diabetes informed an NHS programme of work to develop service delivery across Kingston.



Our 'Virtual Wards – One year on' event, provided people a chance to listen to progress made by Kingston Hospital and ask questions about benefits to patients.

Winter (Jan – Mar)



We completed two independent evaluations of community mental health transformation projects, to support service development and improved quality of care.



Our [Chronic fatigue syndrome \(ME\) services](#) [report](#), highlighted the need for joined up care for people living with intermittent symptoms from long-term conditions.

Your voice heard at a wider level

We collaborate with other Healthwatch to ensure the experiences of people in Kingston influence decisions made about services at South West London Integrated Care System (ICS) level.

This year we've worked with Healthwatch organisations across south west London to achieve:



We helped ensure continued availability of virtual wards to south west London residents. Healthwatch Croydon, Merton, and Wandsworth spoke with 29 people to understand their views on virtual wards. The report of this consultation was referenced in a south west London-wide business case at the beginning of 2024, that successfully extended the virtual wards programme, which helps people stay out of hospitals and receive treatment at home where possible. Healthwatch Kingston also ran a [Virtual Wards-One Year On event](#) to provide an update from Kingston Hospital for our residents.

We worked with partners to advocate for more accessible dentistry services. We have been working alongside dentists, NHS management, and public health colleagues as part of a new initiative that aims to bring dental services to the people that struggle the most with access, and to help support preventative care.



We hired a South West London Engagement Coordinator. We welcomed Iyinoluwa Oshinowo, who formerly worked in academic mental health research, to our team to help strengthen our capacity to undertake collaborative community engagement across south west London boroughs, including work on virtual wards and the Accessible Information Standard.

We strengthened the South West London Integrated Care System's digital inclusion strategy. The Integrated Care System is rolling out new digital platforms and Apps across south west London to help streamline access to care and to support people in self-managing their conditions. Healthwatch Kingston's Including Digitally Excluded report and recommendations will further support improvements, particularly engagement..



Accessible Information Standard

South west London Healthwatch organisations won a grant from the South West London Integrated Care System (ICS) to collaboratively engage with people living with disabilities and their carers, to improve how GP practices meet their communication and health information needs.

In this ongoing work, we aim to improve adherence to the Accessible Information Standard legal guidance that describes how practices should meet the communication and health information needs of people with certain disabilities that affect communication.

To progress this work, we have already:

- Built relationships with voluntary sector organisations that support people with disabilities that affect communication, including Deaf/deafness, blindness, neurodiverse conditions, learning disability, and neurological conditions
- Collaborated with GP practices to understand the enablers and barriers to implementing the Accessible Information Standard.

Empowering the Integrated Care System to take a patient-centred approach

We provide representation on 12 different south west London ICS committees and working groups focussed on issues ranging from maternity to end of life care.

These ICS committees:

- Draw together representatives from the NHS, local Healthwatch, the voluntary sector, and local authorities.
- Include those dedicated to maternity, children and young people's health, mental health, older people's health, disease prevention, and inequalities.
- Initiate and co-facilitate working groups comprised of other Healthwatch organisations nationally, to discuss how to maximise our impact and influence.

In 2023, south west London Healthwatch organisations collaborated closely with the ICS Patient and Public Engagement Team to ensure that our borough residents influence decisions about their health and care. With the support of this team, the six local Healthwatch organisations helped embed learnings from over 1000 residents into the ICS' five-year strategy documents, which contain a list of initiatives that directly address residents' concerns.

We now represent the patient voice on new ICS committees and working groups dedicated to providing oversight of the delivery of the ICS strategy. We have also shaped the implementation of projects using insights about NHS dental care, young people's mental health and bereavement services, we have heard from patients, carers, and the public. We also championed best practices in engagement, and encourage our ICS colleagues to use these in developing new health and care initiatives.



Listening to your experiences

Services cannot make improvements without hearing your views. That is why we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture and feed this back to services to help them improve...even if it sometimes takes a while for what you have said, to have an impact. The next three case studies illustrate the difference you have made.

Social care reviews make safeguarding personal

In 2018, Healthwatch Kingston established our Adult Safeguarding Community Reference Group to listen to and translate personal stories into evidence to help improve services. Over the past six years, we have expanded our reach to work collaboratively with people with lived experience of safeguarding from Kingston and across London; putting voices at the heart of safeguarding scrutiny and governance.

Our collective London Safeguarding Voices (LSV) group activities have not gone unnoticed. This year, empowered LSV members have been an integral part of seven successful peer reviews of Local Authorities, organised by the London Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS).

650

professionals and service users from 32 London boroughs learned about our 'Making Safeguarding Personal' work at the London Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) conference 2023.

What did you tell us about your participation in the peer reviews?

- "I was truly adopted into the team as the non-professional, person-representative voice in the peer review process."
- "The person's voice, represented by London Safeguarding Voices, with all our lived experiences, was absolutely an integral part of this team and this review."
- "The whole team was looking out for me and my welfare with my disabilities, so I could be involved and engage as fully as possible, at all times."

What difference did this make?

- Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) has put the person who is the focus of a concern at the centre during a safeguarding enquiry; from the beginning to the end.
- Originally our MSP work focused on adults at risk with learning disabilities. Kingston Council expanded our contract to include people being supported by the Mental Health Team and then was extended further to cover all Adult Social Care Teams.
- An annual [Healthwatch Kingston MSP report](#), about people's experiences of the services was reviewed along with recommendations for service improvement as part of the KSAB programme of work, including KSAB development days.
- Our Kingston Safeguarding Voices group has been formally adopted as a KSAB committee to lead on the board's community engagement ambitions.
- Quarterly updates about LSV project work and emergent key themes experienced by people with lived experience are provided by Healthwatch Kingston to the LSAB.
- The London ADASS peer reviews are part of a sector-led improvement programme to support London local authorities to evaluate their strengths and areas for development within Adult Social Care, before formal Care Quality Commission's visits.

What matters most when grieving?

In 2021, collaborating with Kingston Voluntary Action, we engaged 348 people and 59 NHS and other health and social care professionals, to explore the lived experience of people accessing bereavement services and support in Kingston, particularly the intersection with culture, faith, and life philosophies.

You highlighted anyone experiencing a terminal illness (including their families, friends, and other carers), need practical and emotional bereavement support and diverse and culturally appropriate, accessible information to assist in making pre-death funeral arrangements.

40%

of respondents to the public online survey stated that they were carers. The support that carers need is not always recognised. They not only lose the person they cared for, but a significant role in their own life.

What did you tell us about bereavement services and support?

- Bereavement services should be offered through a range of individuals and providers, including those in the NHS, charity and voluntary organisations, through communities and other peer-led organisations, and in some circumstances, legal and corporate services.
- There was much to be done to improve bereavement services and support to meet cultural needs, and that improving access to relevant, helpful information is crucial.
- GPs and hospital services need to know what is available locally and have up-to-date information to support their communities.

What difference did this make?

- In response to our [Bereavement report](#) recommendations, Kingston Hospital have recruited a Bereavement Support Practitioner. The role is funded for an 18-month period and will include provision of pre-bereavement support to families and staff.
- Our collaborative community engagement work was recognised as a quality exemplar by NHS England and NHS Improvement at the 2022 'Getting to Outstanding' event.
- Partners have created an information hub on [Connected Kingston](#) where information about bereavement services and support in Kingston can be found and maintained. We have also established our [All about: Bereavement, faith and spirituality](#) website page.
- We were invited to submit our Kingston work as a case study to the 'Equitable bereavement care for all' research teams at Kings College London and the University of Bristol who were commissioned by the Government to inform national policy.
- Healthwatch Kingston and Kingston Voluntary Action have secured additional South West London Integrated Care Board funding to coordinate and report on the south west London engagement roll-out to address the gaps we identified from our Kingston work.
- Healthwatch Kingston secured funding from Kingston Council to create a bereavement film by and for young people that provides signposting to services and support.

100 Kingston residents help London Assembly shape new ambulance plans for millions of Londoners

In 2023, to ensure the views of people we engaged with helped inform change, we shared findings from our 'London Ambulance Service Strategy 2023–2028: Healthwatch Kingston Community Engagement Report and Recommendations' with the London Assembly Health Committee. Our research findings were included in the [Committee's formal letter to the London Ambulance Service \(LAS\)](#) following their call for written evidence from patient groups and members of the public.

Kingston experiences supported learning that included:

- 111 was often unable to support someone who was trying to avoid using 999 or A&E departments at hospital.
- Emergency support should be readily available, and that wait times were too long.



"I have only used LAS for emergencies. However, I find the wait times to talk to someone on 111 too long, and the triage questions too long and then the advice is not always that helpful. Often, because we are most likely to ring about the children, it is 'take them to hospital, but that is what we are trying to avoid doing. I am not sure why I would ring 111 in the future to be honest."

Kingston parent.

Our community engagement report recommendations included:

- Improve the accessibility of public messaging about when to call 111 and 999 through different media, including but not limited to, Plain English, Easy Read, short information films and translations into languages other than English.
- Provide a plan and timescale on when the London Ambulance Service will become carbon neutral.

What difference did this make?

- LAS business plan commitments for year one of the new strategy include rapid and seamless care call answering within a 10 second average.
- 90% of patients requiring urgent clinical assessment will receive a call back within 1 hour.
- LAS will review their communications to the public on using 999 and 111 services and devise a new public messaging campaign.
- LAS created a short information [film](#) about the new 'We are the capital's emergency and urgent care responders' strategy 2023–2028 and provided it in a summary poster and in easy read.
- LAS has committed to decreasing their carbon footprint and make 50 percent of their vehicles fully electric or hybrid by 2028.



Hearing from all communities

Over the past year, we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard, and services meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- We have continued to work with the NHS, Kingston Council and VCSE organisations and groups, to engage with people experiencing homelessness at community health and wellbeing events.
- We have reached out to digitally excluded people struggling with socio-economic deprivation, to find out how we can better engage them in our work and learn about challenges they face accessing care.
- We have continued to support the 'Kingston All Age Learning Disability' and joined the recently established 'Kingston Autism and ADHD' Partnership Boards to make sure that voices from our local community have been heard by local NHS leaders and the Integrated Care System.

Including Communities

Over a 20-month period, ending in October 2023, Healthwatch Kingston attended 28 health and wellbeing events and local community groups to engage with 334 people from seldom heard from communities and the most vulnerable in our society. Participants included refugees, asylum seekers and people from other migrant communities, people experiencing homelessness and areas of high deprivation.

Our aim was to ensure system leaders responded appropriately to local population health and care needs, provided accessible information, and supported pathways to care.

What we heard from local people has informed:

- Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2023, cost of living workshops, and exploratory research opportunities with Kingston University.
- Our Health Inequalities themed Healthwatch Kingston Open Meeting (on 23 January 2024), and other ongoing engagement with health and social care influencers and decision makers (including the Care Quality Commission).
- A meeting with the Kingston Clinical Director to explore a future review of Safer Surgeries.

Including Digitally Excluded Communities

People we engaged with during our 'Including Communities' work told us they felt at a disadvantage when trying to access NHS and social care services because they did not have a computer or were not computer literate.

To build upon our including communities work, Healthwatch Kingston ran a further, more focused community engagement exercise with digitally excluded residents, to find out how we could better involve this group of people in our, and in the Care Quality Commission's work.

In response to what people told Healthwatch Kingston

We have re-committed to improve our engagement with digitally excluded communities, and to feedback the findings from our community engagement to participants in the ways we have been asked, including:

- Working with the RBK Involve team of learning disability advocates to produce an easy read version of this report
- Working with Kingston Association for the Blind to create an audio recording for people who are blind or have sight impairment
- Re-visit each group we engaged with to deliver 'you said, we did' presentations and share information in accessible formats.



Advice and information

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

This year we've helped people by:

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

Struggling to manage medication shortages

We escalated people's concerns about limited access to ADHD and other important medications to NHS England through Healthwatch England.

Thanks to the efforts of Healthwatch Kingston, your requests for our help contributed to Healthwatch England raising the alarm with MPs in the Health Select Committee in January 2024, that patients were playing "pharmacy bingo" trying to find out where their medications were in stock, and calling for a system to be introduced that would allow people to search pharmacies for availability of their prescription drugs.

"I wanted to let Healthwatch Kingston know I have had my first full dose of ADHD medication for the first time in a while, due to the ADHD medication shortage."

Kingston resident.

Healthwatch England network research reported similar experiences to what we have heard locally. For example, one diabetes patient had halved their medication due to ongoing shortages, while "around 70 per cent of ADHD patients have had to ration their medication as a result of shortages".

GP choice and correcting medical records

People who asked for our help learned what was possible within health and care.

One local resident was told by their GP practice that they have no right to choose who their healthcare professional would be. The patient had asked to see a specific GP and was told it was the General Practice policy that patients do not get a choice.

A female student told us that she prefers to speak to female GPs, but when she calls, they are all booked, and she is offered appointments far into the future.

Another Kingston resident contacted us to find out how they might go about correcting an error in their medical records.

Healthwatch Kingston provided signposting to NHS guidance that helped people learn about their rights

- We referred people who contacted us for help about choosing who they see, to the advice and information in the '[NHS Choice Framework](#)' which explains you can ask to see a GP or nurse of your choice, and they must try to make sure you can.
- We signposted the person wishing to make a change to their medical record, to the NHS England '[Amending patient and service user records](#)' guidance which provides advice for patients and service users requesting changes to their health and care records. It also covers how staff should amend records.



Volunteering

We are supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of what we do. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we can understand what is working and what needs improving. We have also been supported by young people from Chessington School (part of the, [Every Child, Every Day Academy Trust](#)).

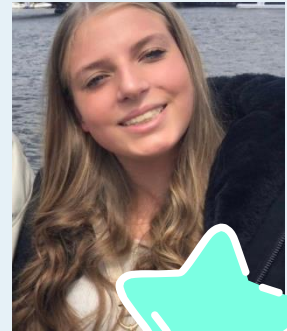
This year our volunteers:

- Supported staff at community engagement events and to present findings to local stakeholders
- Interviewed a Kingston cycling paramedic for a Youth Out Loud! 'YOL! meets' vox pop
- Carried out Enter and View visits to a local residential care home and to Kingston Hospital to help them improve
- Informed, planned and helped deliver a bereavement film and disability access podcast by young for young people.



Celebrating Heroes from our local community: Mia

"I like volunteering with Healthwatch Kingston as I generally believe that I have given a voice to young people about health and social care issues that matter to us. It has been nice to give something back, and it has enabled me to take on more responsibility. Volunteering and being part of a team has improved my self-esteem and has given me a real perspective of what life can be like for other young people. The ongoing support and encouragement from Healthwatch Kingston has made me confident to step out of my comfort zone and learn new skills. I have met some great people, but most importantly I feel I have helped other young people access support and information when they have needed it."



Mia,
Healthwatch Kingston
Hero 2023-24



Celebrating Heroes from our local community: Graham

"Volunteer work for Healthwatch Kingston gave me a purpose and focus after I had retired. I brought in my experience in data evaluation and scientific method from my career as a science teacher. I have always felt valued in everything I have contributed over the years since I joined Healthwatch about 15 years ago when it was another name. I was proud to be one of the volunteers who were asked to represent Healthwatch Kingston at the 70th birthday service for the NHS at Westminster Abbey in 2018. It has been so rewarding that I was part of a team working towards improving patient experience and particularly for those living with dementia."



Graham,
Healthwatch Kingston
Hero 2023-24

Do you feel inspired?



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



www.healthwatchkingston.org.uk



020 3326 1255



info@healthwatchkingston.org.uk

Our extended family album,
past and present, keeps
growing.

We
are



healthwatch
Kingston upon Thames





Our team of volunteers raising funds for the 'Night to Remember', Kingston Hospital Charity that has funded the 'Bereavement Support Practitioner' (see page 11).

Finance and future priorities

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames	£122,000	Expenditure on pay	£156,610
Additional income	£88,024	Non-pay expenditure	£28,489
		Office fees (rental and utilities)	£10,188
Total income	£210,024	Total expenditure	£195,287

Additional income is broken down by:

- £7,000 funding received from the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK) to support increased engagement of people living with a learning disability in our statutory service work
- £7,000 funding received from RBK to deliver Kingston Making Safeguarding Personal and the Kingston Safeguarding Voices Group
- £2,500 funding received from South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) to deliver the secretariat for the Kingston Mental Health and Wellbeing Group
- £25,525 funding received via Healthwatch England on behalf of London ADASS to support to the London Safeguarding Adults Board, London Safeguarding Voices (LSV) and Conference Planning
- £5000 funding from the RBK Resilience Fund for YOL! Digital Youth for a film and podcast by and for young people (13-17 years)
- £5,000 funding received from South West London & St. George’s Mental Health NHS Trust for the independent evaluation of the Kingston Community Mental Health Transformation Programme
- £24,999 funding received from South London and Maudsley NHS Trust for the independent evaluation of the Integrated Community Rehabilitation Service/Bridge24 Pilot
- £7,000 funding received from Kingston Voluntary Action on behalf of SWL ICB to support Phase 2 of the Bereavement Community Engagement across SWL (project work to be done in 2024-2025).

ICS funding

Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames also receives funding from our South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) to support new areas of collaborative work at this level, including:

Purpose of SWL ICB funding	Amount
Our support of Executive Officer for six Healthwatch organisations across south west London and participation in joint work.	£4,000 (from £110,000 SWL ICB collaboration funding contract held by Healthwatch Sutton, on behalf of the six Healthwatch organisations in SWL).

Next steps

Over the next year, we will keep reaching out to every part of society, especially people in the most deprived areas, so that those in power hear their views and experiences.

We will also work together with partners and our local Integrated Care System to help develop an NHS culture where, at every level, staff strive to listen and learn from patients to make care better.

You can check out our seven 2024-2025 work areas on the next page, but our top three priorities are:

1. Continue to monitor the commissioning, provision, and transformation of NHS and social care in Kingston and the South West London Integrated Care System
2. Promote positive health and continue to monitor health and care inequalities, particularly the needs of children (up to 4 years), women, and people living with short, intermediate and long-term conditions
3. Continue to support meaningful engagement with local people with a learning disability, autism, and neurodiversity in the work of Healthwatch Kingston, including Enter and View training and visits.

Healthwatch Kingston work areas 2024–25

1. NHS and social care transformation

Continue to monitor the commissioning, provision and transformation of NHS and social care in Kingston and the 'South West London Integrated Care System'.

2. Promoting positive health and reducing health and care inequalities

Continue to monitor inequalities, in particular, the health and care needs of children (0–5 years), women, and people living with short, intermediate and long-term conditions.

3. Learning disability, autism, and neurodiversity

- a) Continue to support meaningful engagement with local people with a learning disability, autism, and neurodiversity in the work of Healthwatch Kingston, including Enter and View training and visits.
- b) Continue to provide independent chair and administrative support for the 'Kingston All Age Learning Disability Partnership Board'.
- c) Continue membership of the 'Kingston Autism and ADHD Partnership Board'.

4. Mental health and wellbeing

- a) Continue to provide independent chair and administrative support for the 'Kingston Mental Health and Wellbeing Group'.
- b) Continue to collaborate with Kingston Voluntary Action to support community engagement about Bereavement services.

5. Young People (13–17 years)

- a) Continue to support Youth Out Loud! (YOL!) to review health and care services.
- b) Continue to support delivery of the Digital Youth Project to add to the library of short health and care films and podcasts by young people for young people.
- c) Continue to support YOL! to develop its online and social media.

6. Residential care, nursing home and supportive living

- a) Continue membership of the 'Kingston Care Governance Board'.
- b) Enter and View a series of Kingston based care and nursing homes, focusing on living environment, mealtime experiences, and meaningful activities for residents.

7. Safeguarding and prevention of harm

- a) Continue membership of the 'Kingston Safeguarding Adults Board'.
- b) Continue to deliver the Kingston Making Safeguarding Personal project, including Kingston Safeguarding Voices.
- c) Continue support for the London Safeguarding Adults Board, London Safeguarding Voice, and Conference Planning Groups to ensure people with lived experience of safeguarding are integral to safeguarding systems and processes across London.



Statutory statements

Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames, Suite 3, 2nd Floor, Siddeley House, 50, Canbury Park Road, Kingston upon Thames KT2 6LX.

Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making

During 2023/24, our Healthwatch Kingston Board consisted of eight members who worked on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight, and scrutiny of our activities. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2023/24, the Board met four times and made decisions on matters such as reviewing and approving the budget to make optimum and imaginative use of our limited resources. This also includes approving bids for additional project funding. The Board also plays an active role governing the management of risk and mitigation. Nominated trustees review and sign-off reports and recommendations on behalf of the Board.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible can provide us with insight into their experience of using services. During 2023/24, we have been available by phone, and email, provided a web form on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website, promote it via social media, and send it to our many stakeholders.

Responses to recommendations

We had zero providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so, no resulting reviews or investigations.

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insights and experiences that have been shared with us. In our local authority area, for example, we take information to the Kingston Place Based Committee and the Kingston Partnership Board (which incorporates the Kingston Health and Wellbeing Board). We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers in the South West Integrated Care System (see pages 7 and 8), and to help address health and care issues at a national level, we share our data with Healthwatch England.

Healthwatch Kingston Board members during 2023–2024:

Dr Liz Meerabeau, Chair and Lead for Primary Care; Eeva Crawley, Treasurer; James Waugh, Lead for Risk Management; Scotty McLeod, Lead for Business Continuity; Richard Allen, Lead for Hospital Services; Justina Jang, Lead for Women's Health; Kathryn Yates, Lead for Learning Disability and Autism; Vickie Priest, Lead for Community Care; (and Grahame Snelling, volunteer Independent Safeguarding Advisor).

Enter and view

This year, we made two Enter and View visits which collectively made 37 recommendations as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Rosclare Residential Care Home	Pilot for a planned series of Enter and View visits of care and nursing homes during 2024-2025	Wrote report with 24 recommendations – the service followed up on these and addressed all actions requested.
Kingston Hospital	To observe patients' food and hydration on adult inpatient wards	Drafted report with 17 recommendations being reviewed.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Kingston was represented on the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Health and Wellbeing Board by Dr Liz Meerabeau, Chair, Healthwatch Kingston. During 2023/24 she has effectively carried out this role by attending and contributing regularly to support RBK's strategic ambition to be a Marmot borough.

Healthwatch Kingston is represented on South West London Integrated Care System and South West London Integrated Care Board by Alyssa Chase-Vilchez, Executive Officer, for all six Healthwatch organisations in south west London.

2023 – 2024 Outcomes


Project/activity	Outcomes achieved
NHS and social care transformation	See our end of year activity reports
Health Inequalities	See our end of year activity reports
Learning Disability and Autism	See our end of year activity reports
Mental Health	See our end of year activity reports
Young People	See our end of year activity reports
Safeguarding	See our end of year activity reports



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