

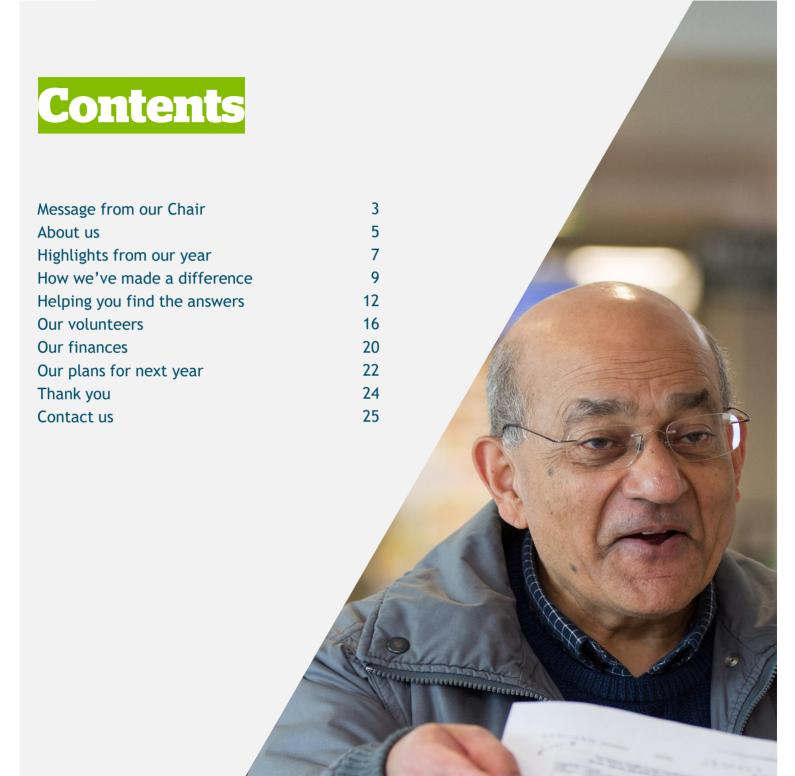




Annual Report 2018-19







# Message from our Chair

It is my pleasure and privilege to present you this annual report for Healthwatch Solihull. I trust that this report evidences the work our staff and volunteers are undertaking to listen to the issues that concern local residents and communities, to take up individual complaints and concerns, to carry out research, and, not least, to take an overview of how services are being planned and delivered through our representation at key strategic forums, such as Solihull Council Health and Wellbeing Board.

We recognise that the health & care sector faces unprecedented change, increased demand and continued budget pressures. I am particularly proud of the work we have recently undertaken with regards to the NHS Long Term Plan. We know the government is investing £20 billion a year in the NHS, and we were asked to gain public views and opinions about how NHS services could be improved and where this money would be best spent in the locality. We also asked you for your ideas around how people can live healthier lives. We made your voice heard.

Utilising our Statutory Power, we have conducted 24 Enter and View visits, all of which have a detailed report which can be found on our website and have been shared with key stakeholders throughout the Borough.

I am also delighted to see that the number of local residents who we have engaged with over the last 12 months has increased from previous years. Please keep getting in touch and sharing your stories. Your voice is what matters and we look forward to hearing much more from you over the coming year.

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to our Healthwatch Solihull staff on the impact they continue to make alongside our growing band of volunteers who give their time, energy and enthusiasm and whose dedication helps to inspire others.



"I have a strong social conscience and believe in the value of volunteering and communities working together. Healthwatch is an important element of the checks and balances that holds Health and Social Care to account and I am privileged to play a small part in that process."

Chris Warne Healthwatch Solihull Chair

#### Changes you want to see

Last year we heard from 1076 people who told us about their experience of a number of different areas of health and social care. Here are some examples of the changes that you want to see.



Make it easier to see your GP



Continuity across primary care services in Solihull so all residents receive the same level of care.



Shorter waiting times for mental health treatment



Healthcare professionals to communicate more effectively with one another.

#### How to have your say

Make your voice heard and tell us the changes you want to see.

Our team are always out and about speaking with residents and gathering feedback. Here are the other ways you can get in touch

w: www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk

t: 0800 470 1518

e: enquiries@healthwatchsolihull.org.uk





### **About us**

#### Healthwatch is here to make care better

We are the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share their views with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

As Chair of Healthwatch England, it's my role to make sure your Healthwatch gets effective support and that national decisions are informed by what people are saying all over England.

If you were one of the 400,000 people who shared their experiences with us last year, I want to say a personal thank you. Without your views, Healthwatch wouldn't be able to make a difference to health and social care services, both in your area and at a national level. One example of this is how we shared 85,000 views with the NHS, to highlight what matters most, and help shape its plans for the next decade.

If you're part of an organisation that's worked with, supported or responded to Healthwatch Solihull, thank you too. You've helped to make an even bigger difference.

None of this could have been possible without our dedicated staff and volunteers, who work in the community every day to understand what is working and what could be better when it comes to people's health and care.

If you've shared your views with us then please keep doing what you're doing. If you haven't, then this is your chance to step forward and help us make care better for your community. We all have a stake in our NHS and social care services: we can all really make a difference in this way.



**Sir Robert Francis QC**Healthwatch England Chair

#### Our vision is simple

Health and care that works for you. People want health and social care support that works - helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.



#### Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.



#### Our approach

People's views come first - especially those that find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.

#### People are at the heart of everything we do

We play an important role bringing communities and services together. Everything we do is shaped by what people tell us. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- + Visiting services to see how they work
- + Running surveys and focus groups
- + Going out in the community and working with other organisations

Our main job is to raise people's concerns with health and care decision-makers so that they can improve support across the country. The evidence we gather also helps us recommend how policy and practice can change for the better.





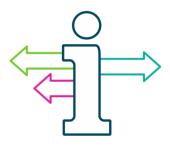
Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2018-19. Our resources:



1076 people shared their health and social care story with us - a 43% increase on last year.



We have 6 volunteers helping to carry out our work.



**54** people accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support.



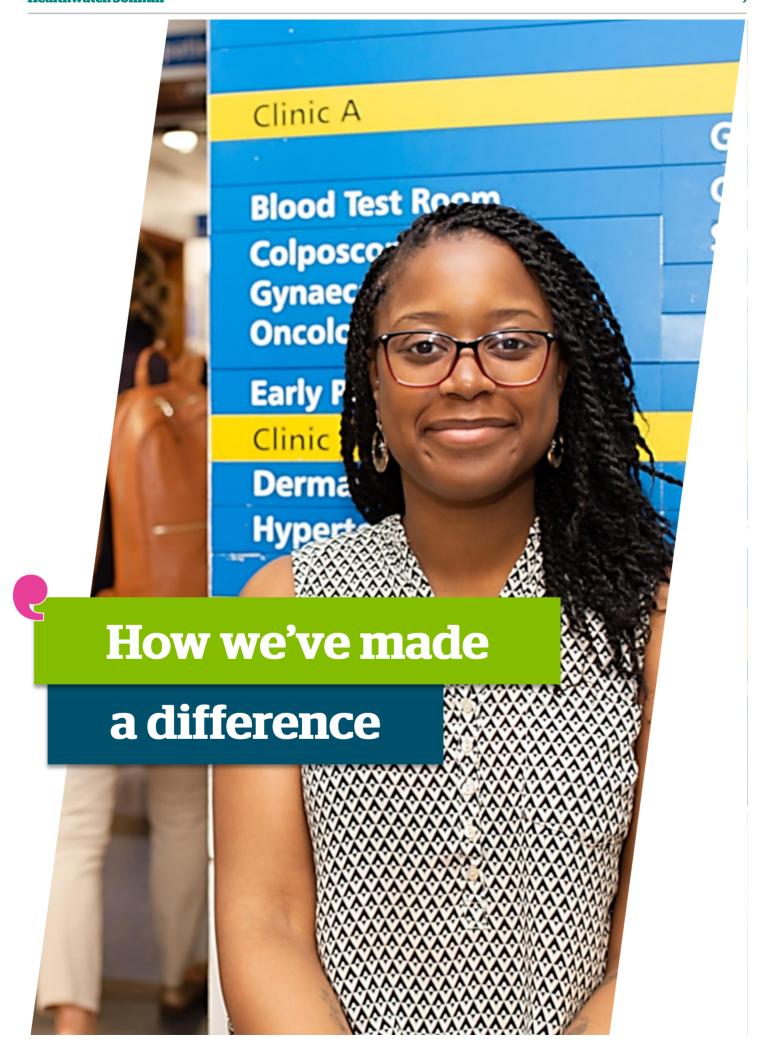
We visited 24 services and many community events to understand people's experiences of care. From these visits, we made 95 recommendations for improvement.



**60** Improvements we suggested were adopted by services to make health and care better in our community.



People continued to engage with us through our website and social media. We have had a total of **338** new followers across our social media sites since our last report! Thank you to all of our followers for getting involved online!



#### **Changes made to your community**

Sharing your views with Healthwatch Solihull has led to positive changes to health and social care services in the Borough. When people speak up about what's important, and services listen, care is improved for all.

Take a look at an example of Healthwatch Solihull demonstrating how we have made a difference in our community.



#### Accessing Primary Care Services

Through our Engagement and Outreach work, many people have told us that they find it very difficult to access appointments at their GP Surgeries and experience difficulties getting through on the telephone to their GP surgery.

In response to this, Healthwatch Solihull have undertaken a series of Enter and View visits to GP Surgeries in the local area to explore firsthand with patients their experiences of accessing Primary Care Services.

Through this work, we have made a range of recommendations for GP Surgeries regarding access to Primary Care Services including:

- + Reviewing patients' experiences of accessing appointments to identify key concerns and to consider new ways of booking appointments;
- Promoting on-line booking facilities and exploring patients' experiences of the service and any barriers to booking appointments on-line;
- + Actively promoting the availability of extended hours appointments to improve patients' awareness;

+ Reviewing patients' experiences of getting through to the Surgery by telephone to identify key concerns and to consider new ways of increasing accessibility for booking appointments over the telephone.

In response to these recommendations GP Surgeries have told us that they:

- + Have been working closely with their Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) who in turn have been working with patients to understand their experiences of accessing appointments;
- Have installed new phone systems that inform patients of where they are in the queue and extra phone lines that for some Surgeries have led to a reduction in complaints about getting through to the Surgery by phone;
- + Promoting both on-line booking facilities and the availability of 'Extended Opening Hours' appointments with patients in a variety of ways including on notice boards and bespoke promotional events, through PPGs, on notice Boards and websites and in news letters.

We look forward to continuing to work with GP Surgeries in the local area to improve access to services and patients' experiences.

### Using peoples feedback to make changes



Thanks to people speaking up, we visited the newly built Chelmunds Court Care Home in October, 2018.

Following intelligence gathered from local people, and stories in the local press regarding Chelmunds Court, our team decided to undertake an Enter and View visit on the service.

In June 2018, the CQC carried out an unannounced inspection, rating the home as 'Inadequate' overall and 'Inadequate' in the areas of safety, effectiveness, caring, being responsive and being well-led.

At the time of our visit in October, 2018, the home had already started to make improvements and had a plan in place to improve service provision.

#### Where have changes been made?

Following a revisit by the CQC in March, 2018, Chelmunds Court received an overall 'Requires Improvement' rating and 'Good' for being caring and responsive.

Through our Enter and View recommendations, we addressed staffing levels. The latest CQC visit found that improvements had been made as use of agency staff had been reduced to a minimum with a more consistent staff team in place.

Through feedback given to the CQC, patient/staff ratios had improved. One person said, "There's hardly any agency staff now. It's better, I feel safer, I know them (staff)." A relative commented, "There was a lot of agency. It wasn't good for mum, she didn't know them. It's been better lately."

#### Following our visit we made the following recommendations:



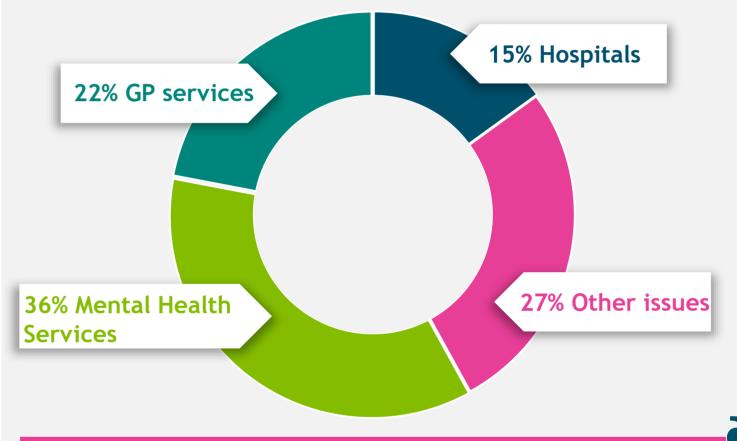
- While we support the care home inviting carers and family members to review individual care plans, we encourage that this partnership is continued moving forward and that care plans continue to be reviewed and have regular input from carers, residents and family members alike.
- In terms of addressing staff shortage, we feel it is important that the care home sets clear timeframes for recruiting staff so that there are consistent and regular staff members providing care for residents. For transparency, it is also important that the care home informs relevant parties i.e. local authorities, in advance should there be any problems in meeting or maintaining staff retention.
- As highlighted in the report, staff felt valued and supported and it is clear that this level of support is needed to continue to increase staff morale. We would hope that, on a follow up visit, we would see a change in staff morale and a happier, consistent team working in the home.
- After speaking to a member of staff, we feel that it is important that an effective engagement strategy is developed to help re-engage with local communities to help with its development of community activities.
- For improved communication, for example around choices, that visual aids/easy read documents are used to help residents make informed decisions.



#### What services do people want to know about?

People don't always know how to get the information they need to make decisions about their own health and care. Healthwatch plays an important role in providing advice and pointing people in the right direction for the support they need.

Here are the most common things that people ask us:





#### How we provide people with advice and information

Finding the right care or support can be worrying and stressful. There a number of organisations that can provide help, but people don't know where to look. Last year we helped 16 people access the advice and information they need.

You can come to us for advice and information in a number of ways including:

- + Specific advice and information blogs online
- + Our contact us form
- + At community events
- + Promoting helpful services across our social media channels
- + Over the phone



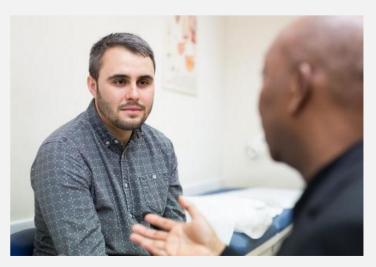
#### Accessing my GP easily

Mr. B: As a full time carer for my wife, I never accessed my GP for my own health needs. Healthwatch Solihull spoke with my surgery and arranged me monthly appointments to keep an eye on my own physical health.

'Thanks to their help, I feel I can keep myself well, as well as my wife.'

#### Out of hours

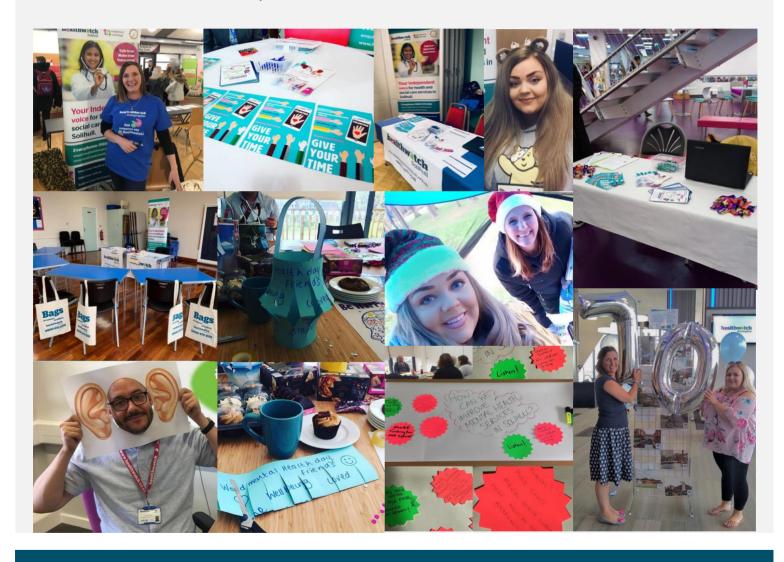
"I rang Healthwatch Solihull as I was having so much difficulty getting an appointment at my GP because I work and my GP does not offer telephone consultation - they suggested that I could access out of hours appointments which I did not know were available to me! I was then able to get an appointment that evening after work. It turned out I have a long term condition which will need to be managed and now I know about extended opening hours I am able to access my GP more easily."



#### **Engaging with Solihull communities**

Throughout the year, we have attended and organised community events - see our year in pictures below.

These pictures include our stalls at various events and venues, such as Solihull College, Solihull libraries and Hospitals. We also spoke at AGM's for SSAFA and the Solihull Heart Support Group. We have supported awareness campaigns, such as World Mental Health Day and had some fun at local carnivals.





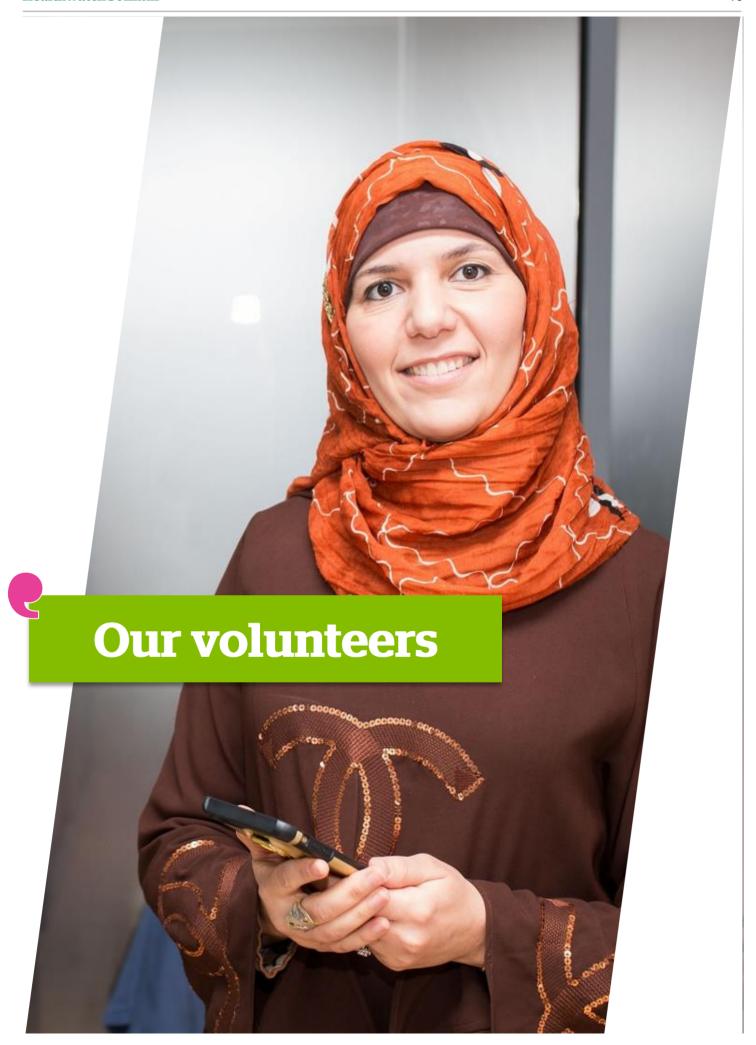
### Want to get involved in our events and engagement?

Some of our volunteers support us at local events and engagements. For more information contact Natalie or Nicola.

w: www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk

t: 0800 470 1518

e: enquiries@healthwatchsolihull.org.uk



#### How do our volunteers help us?

At Healthwatch Solihull, we couldn't make all of these service improvements without the support of our volunteers who work with us to help make care better for their local communities.

- + Raise awareness of the work we do in the community
- Visit services to make sure they're meeting people's needs
- + Support our day to day running e.g. governance
- + Collect people's views and experiences which we use in our reports



Left to right: Volunteers Jenny, Daniel, Surj, Janice and our Engagement and Information Lead Natalie.

## Volunteers improve experiences of services through Enter and View

Thanks to our volunteers undertaking Enter and View visits to local services, they have been actively involved in making positive changes to local provision.

'I enjoy speaking with service users about their experiences and I especially love to see services responding to our recommendations and actioning them.'





Our volunteers have visited health and social care services to see how they are performing and find out what service users and patients really think, making recommendations for improvements.

Thanks to their feedback, local services have taken action from our recommendations and made positive improvements to services.

You can get involved and volunteer with Healthwatch Solihull. We have a range of roles and we are always looking to recruit new people.

For more information, visit our website www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk or freephone 0800 470 1518

#### Meet our volunteers

We caught up with some of our fantastic volunteers to show you how their work truly makes a difference to the lives of people in our area.

#### Jenny

"After retirement and the novelty of not having to work, I realised that volunteering could give me the opportunity to use my skills gained working in social care to engage with the local community.

I was offered the opportunity of working with Healthwatch Solihull - this role as a volunteer has met my expectations."





#### Charan

"Healthwatch Solihull is a really friendly office and I have enjoyed coming in over the past 2 years and being part of the team. I wanted to improve my IT skills and the staff worked with me to use Excel and Word. I helped the team do online research and look at how services are performing. I didn't have a specific role in mind, but Healthwatch Solihull have allowed me to do bits and bobs and get involved doing general administrative tasks."



#### Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for more volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering get in touch with Natalie or Nicola.

w: www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk

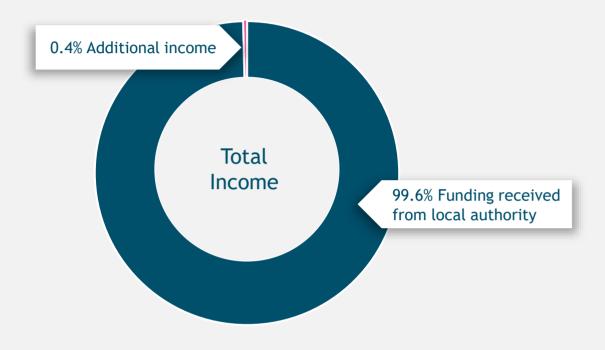
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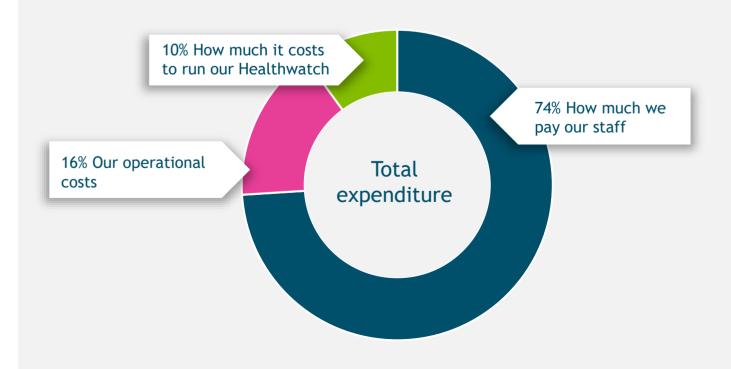
e: enquiries@healthwatchsolihull.org.uk





#### How we use our money







### Message from our Healthwatch Manager

#### Message from our Manager



I am honoured to be in a position to reflect on the great work undertaken by the fantastic team at Healthwatch Solihull over the past 12 months. Throughout this report, you will see examples of our achievements over the last 12 months, all of which had a positive impact in putting forward service users experiences and recommendations for service improvement.

These include specific focus on access to services for those requiring BSL interpretation and experiences of people who have complex needs in their receipt of home care services.

#### Looking ahead

+ We plan to build upon our Enter and View programme and have a structured engagement plan in place to ensure we capture high volumes of meaningful intelligence, not only through our outreach work but utilising social media to stretch our reach further still.

Additionally, we have analysed feedback we have been given throughout the last 12 months and plan to undertake more focused work on:

- self-harm in young people
- support for carers (particularly those caring for someone aged 75 and over)
- access and quality of primary care services for patients with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities.



Finally, I would like to say a huge thank you to the great team I have inherited for their dedication and commitment to engaging communities and improving local service provision, to the members of the public in Solihull for sharing their stories with us and allowing us to engage with key local services, to our volunteers for giving their time and passion to Healthwatch Solihull and to our Healthwatch Advisory Board for their continued support and guidance in shaping the service and our activity.

We look forward to working with all of you over the coming 12 months. Healthwatch Solihull remains wholly committed to ensuring that the residents and communities of Solihull have their voices heard and shape the improvement and development of local service provision.



### Thank you

Thank you to everyone that is helping us put people at the heart of health and social care, including:

- + Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- + All of our amazing staff and volunteers
- + The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work





### **Contact us**

Healthwatch Solihull Enterprise Centre 1 Hedingham Grove Chelmunds Cross Chelmsley Wood, Solihull B37 7TP

- + 0800 470 1518
- + enquiries@healthwatchsolihull.org.uk
- + Find us on Twitter, Facebook & Instagram
- + www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk



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We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you need this in an alternative format please contact us.



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