

## Our year in review-Annual Report 2018-19

### **Message from our Chair**

“If we want services that better meet people’s needs, we’d better involve the right people”

It is six years since Healthwatch Surrey came into being. In that time, we have been relentlessly creating an organisation that is effective in identifying people’s needs and experiences, prompting and contributing to positive health and social care system change, and continuously improving the ways in which we go about these. It has been an exciting and rewarding journey, which has taken Healthwatch Surrey from a ‘blank sheet’ in 2013 to its present independent, established, effective and increasingly respected position.

Two years ago, in our Annual Report, Kate our CEO and I wrote that, “The issues and problems we now face in health and social care are so complex, that no single body or group can possibly solve them alone – it will take all of us working together.” There is now wide recognition that statutory bodies alone cannot achieve the change that is and will be required, and there has been consequent widening of the strategic discussions regarding health and social care.

The Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board, for example, has been enlarged to include the voluntary sector, many provider organisations and portfolio holders for the wider determinants of health. New leadership at Surrey County Council has also effected a sea-change in the way in which residents, groups and other interests from across the County are engaged in helping to shape the vision for Surrey. And the Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System continues to make strides to ensure citizen engagement is an early and integral part of the way people’s service needs are identified and solutions designed. While it is still relatively early days for many of these and other initiatives, the message and direction of travel is clear: in the widest sense, if we want services that better meet people’s needs, we’d better involve the right people!

Healthwatch Surrey too continues to widen people’s involvement in our work. Not just by listening to more people’s stories, but also through local volunteer groups that are broadening and deepening the spectrum of our work, contacts and understanding. Groups are being established in each CCG footprint, with the aim that they connect with local people, voluntary groups - including GP practice PPGs – and local system partners. They will get to know more about local communities’ service needs and share improvement opportunities. We see this as Healthwatch Surrey’s next contribution, providing enhanced information and feedback to help the system in its continuing journey from a ‘top-down’ culture, to one that is fully ‘bottom-up’ driven, accurately reflecting and meeting service users’ current and evolving needs.

I am delighted that in the past year we have widened our own diversity and reach by welcoming five new non-executive directors to our Board. Between them they bring a wealth of additional skills, expertise and knowledge; extensive contacts from their own local communities; and above all a passion for ensuring all voices are heard in the delivery of local services. With our enhanced Board, strong staff team and committed volunteers, Healthwatch Surrey’s journey will, no doubt, continue, as will those of our partner organisations across the health and social care system and beyond. However, as I step-down from the Healthwatch Surrey Chair role after six, thoroughly enjoyable years, I have to confess to being rather proud of all that has been achieved by our people - past and present - and by our system partners. There is much more to do to promote engagement. But what progress we have made!

Peter Gordon, Healthwatch Surrey Chair

## **What people have told us**

Last year 5,497 health and social care experiences were shared with us. Here are some of the most common themes we heard about:

- Long hospital waiting times
- Good standard of medical care in hospitals
- Good and bad experiences of getting an initial GP appointment
- Positive staff attitudes at hospitals and GP surgeries

## **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

Sir Robert Francis QC- Healthwatch England Chair:

“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 Surrey, 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.”

## **Who we are**

Every county in England has a Healthwatch and each one is independent. Our priorities are determined based on feedback from local people and local issues. Healthwatch Surrey is an independent organisation that gives the people of Surrey a voice to improve, shape and get the best from health and social care services by empowering local people and communities.

## **Getting out and about**

Our community engagement work enables people to share their views and concerns about local health and social care services. This can include using our ‘Enter and View’ powers to visit health and social care services across Surrey.

## **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 main job is to capture people's concerns and raise these with health and care decisionmakers so that they can improve services and support across the county. The evidence we gather also helps us recommend how policy and practice can change for the better. We provide evidence-based feedback to commissioners and providers to influence, inform and, if necessary, challenge decisions and plans. This includes reports and recommendations to influence the way services are designed and delivered. We can also report concerns about the quality of care to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) so they can take action. We provide, or signpost people to information about local services and how to access them, through our telephone Helpdesk (0303 303 0023); local Citizens Advice; our website and social media. In partnership with Surrey Independent Living Council (SILC), our advocates are able to provide free, independent support and assistance to people who might need help to make a complaint about an NHS service. Our

advocates work to ensure people can represent their own interests as far as possible, rather than offer advice on how we think an individual should act. 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.

### **Highlights from our year**

Find out more about our activity and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2018-19 by visiting our website to see our quarterly activity and outcomes reports-  
<https://www.healthwatchesurrey.co.uk/our-work/reports-and-papers/activity-reports/>

- People shared 5,497 health and social care experiences with us, which is 44% more than last year.
- We now have 40 volunteers helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 2,336 hours of their time which is 37% more than last year.
- 3,848 people contacted us for information and advice through our Helpdesk and Advocacy services and Citizens Advice. Overall, the number of people contacting us increased by 23% compared to last year.
- We visited 58 health and care services and 23 community events to understand people's experiences of care.
- We shared 489 specific issues and concerns with commissioners, providers and regulators, to help make health and care better in our community.
- We had 10,614 new visitors to our website and 20% more people engaged with us through social media than last year. We also advertised on Eagle Radio and buses across Surrey.

### How we've made a difference:

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

We record feedback and suggestions that local people share with us (via meetings and events; our website; Helpdesk; e-mail; social media; and people contacting their local Citizens Advice). We use this feedback in a range of ways including, sharing with the people who plan, deliver and regulate services; at decision making meetings; and escalating issues of concern to the Multi Agency

Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This year we shared 489 experiences and worked closely with our Escalations Panel who decide the best course of action for individual cases of concern. Below are some examples of how we have made a difference in our community. Alongside these we have also been working on our thematic priorities (Care at Home, Care Homes, Mental Health and Hospital Discharge), which we published reports on- <https://www.healthwatchsurrey.co.uk/our-work/reports-and-papers/project-reports/>

### **Making it safer for mental health inpatients**

We heard concerning experiences from a small number of people regarding a specialist Mental Health Hospital called the Abraham Cowley Unit. Some concerns resulted in us raising issues about safeguarding with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The Healthwatch Surrey Escalations Panel, which meets 6-weekly to review our evidence, recommended an Enter and View visit\* in order to hear more about people's experiences directly and to observe the environment. We arranged two visits (in June and July 2018), where we had in-depth conversations with 13 inpatients, three staff members and one visitor. An anonymous feedback form was also sent to us after the visits. From these visits we established concerns about:

- The safety of inpatients, staff and visitors (e.g. ward entry and exit processes)
- Inconsistent staffing levels and visibility
- Inpatients' wellbeing being compromised (e.g. dormitory sleeping arrangements)

\*One of our powers, where authorised representatives of Healthwatch carry out these visits to health and social care services to talk directly to service users

Members of our team provided initial verbal debriefs on the day of the visits. A full report was then shared at a meeting with Surrey & Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SABP) to discuss the findings. We made five recommendations which were all adopted by SABP. SABP told us they were already sighted on many of the areas and in their response to the report, they told us about a new Inpatient Improvement Board that had been established and had:

- Worked with a specific ward to increase inpatient participation in activities and purchased display boards for all wards to improve the communication of group activities on offer
- Reviewed and changed access protocols and provided feedback to leaders of specific wards to assist in improving the safety of the wards
- Ordered ice machines for cold drinks, reintroduced water coolers in wards and introduced new fans to alleviate discomfort with heat during summer months
- Matron took increased oversight of the weekly 'walk the wards' to identify maintenance and hygiene issues
- Redecorated dormitory bedrooms to try to increase the amount of natural light

CQC subsequently acknowledged improvements when it inspected the service in December 2018. They found "outstanding improvements were made in a short period" in their published report in April 2019. Whilst welcoming improvements, our Escalations Panel recommended further activity be undertaken on the timeliness of replacing dormitory accommodation. One patient had described the accommodation as "a living nightmare".

Our report was then presented to the lead commissioner for the service and the NHS England Quality Surveillance Group for Surrey & Sussex. From these discussions, we concluded that political engagement might help to increase the speed of these changes. Deputy CEO Matthew Parris worked with Surrey County Council's Scrutiny Committee to support a dedicated agenda item for mental

health. The Enter & View report was a key input to the meeting. One of the councillors called it “an outstanding piece of work.”

The Scrutiny Committee wrote to the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care to raise the issue of mental health funding in Surrey on the back of our report. The findings were also featured on BBC Radio Surrey. SABP are committed to modernising the wards, improving their layout of the wards and removing all dormitory bedrooms as part of a new multimillion redevelopment programme. A business case for the largescale redevelopment of the ACU, which will eradicate dormitory accommodation, has been approved. We will continue to follow the progress of these developments and monitor feedback related to the unit.

The full report is available on our website: [https:// www.healthwatchesurrey.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/ACU-Report-Oct-18-Final.pdf](https://www.healthwatchesurrey.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/ACU-Report-Oct-18-Final.pdf)

### **Driving improvements to access in sexual health services**

Last year our volunteer Liz Sawyer was instrumental in helping us to produce a report on the experiences of local people accessing sexual health services. The report was shared on our website and with commissioners, NHS England, Public Health Surrey County Council and the Council’s Scrutiny Committee. We also shared our findings with the new service provider Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL).

Following on from our work to ensure commissioners involved local people in changes to sexual health services in Surrey, Healthwatch Surrey was invited to attend contract review meetings with the provider and commissioner, which Liz attended on our behalf. This year Liz continued to help us raise concerns with CNWL and commissioners about the following:

- Patients and staff reporting that patients have been turned away because of insufficient staffing levels and a lack of appropriately skilled staff.
- Patients reporting that they struggle to get support through the central booking office, and the phone lines to local clinics and the booking office are expensive.
- Healthwatch Surrey has continued to hear a concerning number of negative patient experiences about the sexual health services.

The provider responded to all our concerns. Examples of what they’ve put in place to address the issues raised include: recruitment; further training; introduction of booked appointments; more appointments available for booking online and monitoring call costs. Liz also submitted written evidence to the National Health and Social Care Committee’s sexual health inquiry and was invited by the Committee to participate in a workshop, which was attended by MPs, commissioners, GPs and providers. During the meeting, Liz was able to champion the voices of Surrey residents. With Liz’s help, we continue to monitor feedback from the public and work closely with commissioners to hear more from local people and drive improvements to access to services. Further details of our work on Sexual Health Services is available on our website: <https://www.healthwatchesurrey.co.uk/sexual-healthservices/>

### **Supporting local communities to promote wellbeing**

In January 2019 we launched our 4th Community Cash Fund and received 97 applications. The aim of the fund is to help small groups start projects which improve health and wellbeing in their local community. It also enables us to raise awareness, build trust and facilitate engagement with seldom heard communities.

This year we followed up on projects from previous years and found that grants awarded from our Community Cash Fund make a lasting difference. Two projects set up from previous funding which are still ongoing and self-sustaining are: the cancer and diet awareness project and Saturdads.

Three years ago, we awarded a £500 grant to Liaise Women's Centre - a safe and supportive environment for women to network, learn new skills or to get advice and information on a range of issues. Liaise also provides workshops for vulnerable women including those who are socially isolated, refugees or immigrants. The funding helped them to start up a cancer and diet awareness project. South Asian diet training was provided for cancer patients, with a talk from a specialist cancer consultant and a specialist cook who provided cooking demos and advice. Both activities helped attendees talk openly about health concerns and conditions which otherwise they may not have spoken about.

A volunteer also offered to take a group out on regular walks to promote exercise to stay healthy. These walks have continued and run alongside a weekly English language class. The awareness raising project also led to the group writing and publishing a recipe book, taking ideas from what they'd learnt.

Another project, Saturdads, works with vulnerable families and children on the edge of the safeguarding threshold. They used their grant from Healthwatch Surrey to set up a monthly Dads' group, which has been running for 18 months and is still thriving. Dads come along with their children, who are mostly under 3 years of age and there's a minimum of three facilitators so that there's always someone available to listen to the dads whilst the children are playing.

"The group meets up every month, some examples of things talked about are, toddlers sleeping/eating patterns; relationship breakdowns; how it felt to be in the labour ward (helpless, gets mentioned a lot!); children with diagnosed or suspected ASD/Autism; a family who felt rejected by their own parents when their child was diagnosed with additional needs; a father whose wife has a terminal illness and a family who have experienced a cot death." - Linda, Programme Leader

It's great to hear the big differences that can be made from small grants and we look forward to seeing the new projects develop from the nine new winners this year. Visit our website to find out more about our Community Cash Fund: <https://www.healthwatchsurrey.co.uk/our-work/communitycash-fund/>

### Helping you to find answers

#### **The services people want information about**

People don't always know how to get the information they need to make decisions about their own health and care. We play an important role in providing advice and pointing people in the right direction for the support they need. We have a Helpdesk and Healthwatch Champions in five Citizens Advice to help provide information and advice.

Here are the most common things that people contacted us about last year (displayed as Pie Chart):

- 32%- Hospitals
- 23%- GPs
- 17%- Mental Health (Community and Hospital)
- 10%- Community Care
- 4%- Residential Care

- 4%- Dentists
- 4%- Adult Social Care
- 7%- Other

### **Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service**

Our independent health complaints advocacy service supports people to make complaints about an NHS service. We provide free, confidential, independent support and assistance to anyone living in Surrey who needs to make a complaint. During this year our advocacy service received 263 enquiries from people wanting information advice and support regarding making a complaint about an NHS healthcare service they had received. We went on to provide advocacy support to 88 people who needed help taking their complaints further. The most common services people contacted us about were hospitals, GPs and mental health providers.

If you need help with a complaint, you can contact: w: [www.surreyilc.org.uk](http://www.surreyilc.org.uk) t: 01483 310500 e: [nhsadvocacy@surreyilc.org.uk](mailto:nhsadvocacy@surreyilc.org.uk) SMS: 07704 265377

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

‘It would have been difficult and upsetting to persevere on my own, so I am very grateful that your service was available. Many thanks for all your help, we so need your type of support’ – Advocacy service user

Last year we helped 3,848 people access the advice and information they need through our Helpdesk, Citizen Advice and Advocacy service. You can come to us for advice and information in a number of ways including:

- Specific advice and information online
- Requesting help via our website
- At community engagement events
- Our social media channels and website for helpful services
- Calling our Helpdesk or text/SMS
- Visiting Citizens Advice in Woking, Surrey Heath, Runnymede & Spelthorne, Reigate and Banstead and Waverley

Here are a few examples of how we’ve helped people with advice and information:

### **Signposting and connecting people to local charities**

Ann\* has spina bifida and wanted information for help with her disability, but was unable to access the internet. Through Healthwatch Surrey’s Helpdesk, she was signposted to Shine, the national spina bifida charity, and the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People. Ann was very pleased at being able to speak to an “actual person” and being put in touch with the charities to get the help she needed.

### **Help escalating concerns to ensure the right care is received**

Rebecca’s\* mother, Kathryn\*, lives in a care home and has Alzheimer’s and dementia. Her condition had been deteriorating for some time, so Rebecca sought advice and asked that a Continuing Health Care checklist and a full nursing assessment be carried out. It took approximately five weeks for the district nurses to agree to do this. Kathryn scored highly on the checklist and so was deemed as an urgent case. Rebecca was assured the report would be completed and sent the next day. Three months later this had still not been processed and in the meantime Kathryn’s health had deteriorated even further, so Rebecca contacted Healthwatch Surrey’s Helpdesk for advice on what

to do next. She was given options on where to escalate her concerns and links to the information she needed. Rebecca followed this advice and reported that Kathryn is now on a fast track and her assessment booked. Rebecca was very appreciative of the help given by our Helpdesk.

### **Providing support with a GP complaint**

Jim\* had several complaints about his GP surgery including issues in getting an appointment, problems with prescriptions, and concerns with treatment he had received. He wrote a letter of complaint to the surgery but was unhappy with the response and generally felt that his complaints were “not being taken seriously”. Jim and his partner requested a meeting with the surgery, but they were offered an inconvenient time and heard nothing further from the surgery when they requested an alternative date, so they decided to contact our Helpdesk for support.

Our Helpdesk signposted them to our advocacy service who discussed outstanding issues and desired outcomes, and a letter was drafted and sent to the surgery with the approval of Jim and his partner. A Local Resolution Meeting was arranged, where the Doctor addressed all of Jim’s issues satisfactorily. Jim felt the surgery had learned lessons and no further action was necessary. Jim and his partner were satisfied with the support they received throughout the process.

‘The service provided [by Healthwatch Surrey] was very efficient and professional.’

\*Names changed to protect identities

### Are you looking for help?

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch.

w: [www.healthwatchesurrey.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchesurrey.co.uk)

t: 0303 303 0023

e: [enquiries@healthwatchesurrey.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchesurrey.co.uk)

SMS: 07592 787533

Text Relay: 18001 0303 303 0023

### Our volunteers

#### **How do our volunteers help us?**

Each of our 40 volunteers, a number that is continually growing, plays a key role in raising awareness of our work, hearing people’s views and experiences and sharing what we’ve heard with decision makers in the county. This year, we identified three distinct ways our volunteers can support us. We worked with Surrey’s Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) to create three new and appealing volunteer roles. During our recruitment drive in February we used these role descriptions to recruit 10 new volunteers with the specific skills, knowledge and expertise required to undertake their preferred role.

Our Community Promoters raise awareness of what we do in their local area. They support our team in delivering presentations to community groups, charities and other organisations who would benefit from knowing more about us.



Our Community Listeners talk to people in hospitals, GP surgeries, community centres and on the high street. They listen to what local people have to say about the health and care services and accurately record their personal experiences.

Our Community Influencers take what people have told us about issues in health and social care and champion the public and service user voice at public meetings. They ensure good public engagement happens where changes to local services are proposed.

### **Volunteers increase our capacity to hear more from local people right across the county**

We are forging ahead with our volunteer strategy and have established volunteer groups in four of our Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) areas: Surrey Heath, Guildford and Waverley, East Surrey and North West Surrey. Our fifth and final group, in Surrey Downs, is due to meet for the first time this Summer. The groups are taking the lead in raising awareness of Healthwatch Surrey in their local community, specifically with people who face barriers to their voices being heard; such as carers, homeless people and the LGBTQ+ community. They are also supporting us with entirely volunteer-led research projects and have found innovative ways of reaching out to people in their community both in person and through social media.

This year, the Surrey Heath volunteer group have visited mother and toddler groups; carers support groups; dementia cafes; groups for people with visual impairments and a Parkinson's group to raise awareness of Healthwatch Surrey in their local community. They heard and collected experiences from local people which we fed back to health and social care providers and decision makers. Altogether, our volunteers worked a total of 2,336 hours this year. These hours have helped us to visit more places, allowing us to reach more people and to increase what we have heard.

### **Meet our volunteers**

#### Meet Kate-

Before joining us as a new volunteer in November 2018, Kate worked in the NHS, pharmaceutical sector and local government for more than 15 years; most recently, 10 years working at Pfizer UK on corporate responsibility in healthcare partnerships with charities including awareness, health policy and patient advocacy. Kate has become an active member of our East Surrey volunteer group, supporting us at listening events and raising awareness of Healthwatch Surrey with hard to reach groups. Kate played a pivotal role in gathering evidence for our volunteer-led GP Charges project; investigating the barriers vulnerable people face when accessing medical evidence to support their disability benefits claims. She will be producing a report outlining our findings and recommendations for GP practices and commissioners, which will be available in early Autumn 2019.

#### Meet Gareth-

Gareth supports us in hearing from Surrey residents at our listening events and with feeding back what we've heard to Surrey Heath CCG alongside the staff team. Gareth has been very proactive and has provided a valuable contribution to our project work and at public meetings, such as local Patient Participation Engagement groups and the Frimley Park Hospital Disability and Carers Forum. He even starred in our recent volunteer recruitment video! He has a strong interest in the services provided to the public in his local area and is always prepared to get stuck into whatever is of most concern.

#### Meet Maria-

Maria supports us as the chair of our Surrey Heath volunteer group, and as a Non-Executive Director on our Board. She sits on our Escalations Panel, to examine the experiences we receive from the general public and recommend a course of action based on this evidence. Maria also supports us with our volunteer-led awareness and engagement work as a member of the Surrey Heath volunteer group and played a key role in our recent Enter and View visit to inpatient mental health facility, Abraham Cowley Unit.

‘We all want local health and social care services to work well and effectively for us when we need them and Healthwatch Surrey is helping to make your views count in making a difference’ - Murray, Healthwatch Surrey Volunteer

### **Volunteer with us**

**If you are interested in volunteering get in touch with our Volunteer Officer, Zoe Harris or visit our website for more details.**

**w: [www.healthwatchesurrey.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchesurrey.co.uk)**

**t: 0303 303 0023**

**e: [zoe.harris@healthwatchesurrey.co.uk](mailto:zoe.harris@healthwatchesurrey.co.uk)**

**SMS: 07592 787533**

### Our finances

#### **How we use our money**

We are funded by our local authority, Surrey County Council, to provide the Healthwatch Surrey contract service. We received £601,282 to do this. We also received £64,680 of additional income from a variety of sources for projects that fell outside of the Healthwatch contract.

£665,962 Total Income: 90% Funding received from local authority, 10% Income from additional projects

£671,077 Total expenditure: 50.5% Staff costs, 43% Operational costs, 6.5% Healthwatch Surrey CIC costs

As outlined in our last Annual Report the Healthwatch Surrey CIC Board carried forward the £29,704 2017/18 end of year balance to meet its commitments to move to new office accommodation, pay outstanding Community Cash Fund invoices, and provide additional staff resource on increased activity in delivery of our work plan.

During 2018/19 we spent £24,598 of this, giving us a reserves balance as of March 2019 of £44,483 (subject to audit review adjustments). The Board keeps the Company’s Reserves Policy under review and considers that this is level of reserves ensures we can provide financial stability and fulfil our continuing obligations.

## Our plans for next year

### **Message from our CEO**

I am delighted that we have had such an increase this year in the number of Surrey residents we have heard from and helped. We are planning to do even more in the year ahead, with a particular focus on those who are less well heard and at risk of poor health outcomes. In addition to sharing this insight with our system partners to bring about change, we continue to work on new business, building on our expertise in having meaningful conversations with the public and service users, to build our sustainability.

We are really pleased with some of the impact that we've been able to achieve over the past year, based on the work of our staff team and volunteers. They have visited services such as the Abraham Cowley Unit, care homes and GP practices around the county to ensure service users, carers, families and the public have an opportunity to share their views, and encouraging people to share their experiences with us across the whole of the NHS and social care. We have worked hard this year with our partners in the NHS and social care to review how the insight that Healthwatch gathers can be heard most effectively as the architecture of the Surrey system evolves. We will continue to keep this under review and build on our learnings about how we can have most impact on behalf of local people.

In the year ahead we will be reporting again on care homes and on the care that people receive in their own home - both areas where it's important that service users, families and carers feel confident in speaking up. We will continue to support and develop our Citizen Ambassadors across the Surrey Heartlands workstreams to feed patient and public voices directly into programme boards. We will also continue to provide routes (face to face; via our website; Helpdesk and voluntary sector partners) to ensure that as many people in Surrey as possible get a chance to share their experiences with us as their independent champion. As we do this, we will be paying particular attention to those at risk of health inequalities, in line with Surrey's overall health and wellbeing strategy. We play an important role in capturing the views and experiences of those who are not so well heard in our county and ensuring this insight is shared to shape the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment as well as informing the way the success of the Surrey strategy is measured.

We can only increase our activity in this way by empowering local people to have their voices heard through the establishment and growth of our local volunteer groups. Our volunteers across all areas of Surrey will be raising awareness of our existence in the year ahead - building and deepening relationships with groups in their local areas, talking to the public to gather experiences, and getting involved with us in sharing what we've heard with our system partners. Thank you to all our volunteers, to the Healthwatch staff and Citizen Ambassadors, and to all our system partners. We are all looking forward to another exciting year ahead.

Kate Scribbins- Healthwatch Surrey CEO

### **Thank you**

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

- Members of the public who shared their views and experiences with us
- All of our Staff, Board and Volunteers
- The voluntary organisations and community groups that have contributed to our work
- All health and social care commissioner, provider and regulator colleagues who have met with us and responded to feedback we have shared

- Our partners in the NHS and social care, particularly those on the Health and Wellbeing Board; Adults and Health Select Committee; and the wider system, who have welcomed our presence and valued our feedback.
- Citizen Ambassadors, who provide a key input into discussions and decisions about service transformations, adding to our understanding of the health and social care needs, views and experiences of citizens.

“In the past year Healthwatch Surrey has consistently shared insight from patients and the public with commissioners across Surrey. We find this a very valuable source of information to help us improve local services, and we welcome the challenge that Healthwatch brings around engaging with those who are less well heard in our county.” - Liz Patroe, Head of Engagement, Diversity & Inclusion, NHS Guildford and Waverley, South West Surrey and Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Groups