

**healthwatch**  
Bexley

**healthwatch**  
Bromley

**healthwatch**  
Greenwich

**healthwatch**  
Lambeth

**healthwatch**  
Lewisham

**healthwatch**  
Southwark

# Our Year In Review 2020-21



South East London Healthwatch  
Annual Summary

Folake Segun,  
Director, South East London Healthwatch

# About us

## Here to make health and care better

Healthwatch are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in the south east London boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure your views shape the support you need, by sharing these views with those who have the power to make change happen.

## Helping you to find the information you need

We help people find the information they need about services in their area. This has been vital during the pandemic with the ever-changing environment and restrictions limiting people's access to health and social care services.

### Our goals



#### 1 Supporting you to have your say

We want more people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care, make informed decisions and shape the services that support them.



#### 2 Providing a high quality service

We want everyone who shares can experience or seeks advice from us to get a high quality service and to understand the difference their views make.



#### 3 Ensuring your views help improve health & care

We want more services to use your views to shape the health and care support you need today and in the future.



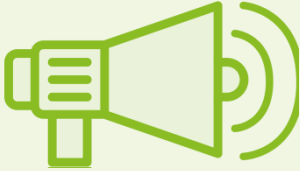
**“Local Healthwatch have done fantastic work throughout the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is more work ahead to ensure that everyone’s views are heard. COVID-19 has highlighted inequalities and to tackle these unfair health differences we will need those in power to listen, to hear the experiences of those facing inequality and understand the steps that could improve people’s lives.”**

**Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England**

# Highlights from our year

## How we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.

### Reaching out



We heard from

**8,860 people**

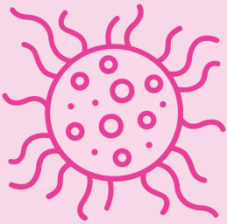
this year about their experiences of health and social care.

We provided advice and information to

**22,191 people**

this year.

### Responding to the pandemic



We engaged with and supported

**21,429 figure**

people during the COVID-19 pandemic this year.

### Making a difference to care



We published

**60 reports**

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. From this, we made X recommendations for improvement.

**Between 40-75% of recommendations**

we made last year have been acted upon, at the point where we reviewed progress.

### Health and care that works for you



**209 volunteers**

helped us to carry out our work. In total, they contributed X number of hours/days.

## Top areas that people have contacted us about:



GP services



Hospital care



Social care



Dentist services



Mental health support



16% on COVID-19



18% on Blood Tests

## Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience.

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of health and care services. During 2020/21 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, provided a feedback centre/rate and review system, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media.

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers.

## 2020-21 priorities

Project / activity area	Changes made to services
<b>Healthwatch Bromley</b>	
Virtual Enter and View Visits	We pioneered a virtual model of visits to Care Homes, making observations using video on digital devices supported by the care home staff. We gathered views and feedback from residents, families, friends and staff. Baycroft Grays Farm Road Care Home responded to all eight of our recommendations, using four directly to improve services and providing reassurance on the other four.
Diabetes	Our intelligence pointed to gaps in awareness and understanding of the diabetes care pathway in Bromley. We reviewed all available information, to summarise key information and where it could be found, and produced two simple, concise leaflets to support people in their health care journey with diabetes, whether newly diagnosed or already receiving care and support.
<b>Healthwatch Bexley</b>	
Mental Health and wellbeing	A review of children and young people's services is being carried out and action plan expected in September 2021. Children and young people's services have been promoted via the local school's forum. The Mind in Bexley Wellbeing Line received funding to continue provision of the service.
Impact of Covid-19	Resident's feedback helped shape local communication and engagement, addressing frequently asked questions and concerns particularly around vaccination. We have been commissioned by Public Health Bexley to conduct deep dives into the views of residents who are less confident in the Covid-19 vaccination.
Digital inclusion	Based on resident's comments, a digital champions scheme was commissioned to train peer mentors to support residents get online or build confidence in using digital platforms

## 2020-21 priorities continued

Project / activity area	Changes made to services
<b>Healthwatch Greenwich</b>	
Prevention; build resilience within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signposting and information sharing online, on the phone, and text and email.</li> <li>• Regular formal and informal meetings with local decision makers</li> <li>• Contribution to the borough-wide COVID-19 Recovery Plan</li> <li>• Public events to support the vaccination rollout, working closely with public health and the CCG</li> </ul>
Mental health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified and flagged a gap in support for MH carers (often unrecognised and unpaid)</li> <li>• Worked with key stakeholders to improve services for users</li> </ul>
Cancer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship building with MacMillan</li> <li>• Black History Month awareness raising with a focus on cancer screening</li> </ul>
Quality of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit of GP website content and privacy notices</li> <li>• Black Lives Matter listening event in July 2020</li> <li>• Creation of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority advisory group and south east London Healthwatch Patient Group.</li> </ul>
<b>Healthwatch Lambeth</b>	
Mental health and wellbeing: Children and Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and communication– Children Social Care has reviewed the induction pack and as of 21st August 2020, all new staff were inducted using the new pack. It also provides links to Practice Hub and guidance on where relevant forms can be accessed.</li> <li>• Monitoring - Referrals of children is being monitored by team managers and IHA referrals has also been added as a Key Performance Indicator and different layers of monitoring</li> <li>• Roles and clarity of accountability – One Assistant Director takes the lead for improving performance on IHAs, and The designated doctor at Mary Sheridan Centre also takes time to write/talk to young people to encourage take up of the IHA referral.</li> </ul>
Mental health and wellbeing: Maternity care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At King’s College Hospital restrictions surrounding partner presence throughout the maternity care journey have been lifted. Healthwatch Lambeth is now working closely with Kings College Hospital Midwifery to conduct a review of a new outpatient clinic to support women with mild to moderate mental health concerns during pregnancy , and to look more broadly at the Midwifery Strategy the next 12 months post pandemic.</li> </ul>

## 2020-21 priorities continued

Project / activity area	Changes made to services
<b>Healthwatch Lewisham</b>	
Impact of COVID-19 on Lewisham residents report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings were included within the Lewisham COVID-19 Recovery Plan and have informed future engagement and communication activity around recovery planning.</li> <li>• Experiences of residents from our Black and Asian communities informed the workplan of the BAME Health Inequalities Working Group</li> </ul>
Mental health and wellbeing: Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Youth Board delivered a series of Instagram Live sessions called "Quaran-Teen" where they have 20-minute discussions about topics that matter to them.</li> <li>• The shows focused on:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Transitioning out of lockdown</li> <li>2. Black Lives Matter Movement</li> <li>3. School exam results and online studying</li> </ol> </li> <li>• The <i>Quaran-Teen</i> series can be found at: <a href="https://www.instagram.com/hwl_youthboard">www.instagram.com/hwl_youthboard</a></li> </ul>
<b>Healthwatch Southwark</b>	
Waiting for hospital treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• greater focus on improving communication with patients that are waiting for hospital appointment and with patients after they have been discharged</li> </ul>
Support for unpaid Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southwark Council are actively taking our recommendations on board and have implemented the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changes to the assessment process</li> <li>• planned training for practitioners around empathy and communication</li> <li>• ensuring practitioners are aware of the local offer for carers</li> <li>• a Carers Forum to continue the dialogue between the Council, carers and other organisations;</li> <li>• more flexible and holistic approach to offering support</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



## Volunteers

We are supported by 209 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what improvements people would like to make to services.

### This year our volunteers:

Helped people have their say from home by carrying out interviews and focus group discussions over the telephone or through digital platforms.

Gave their input on the design and development of services

Participated in contract and procurement exercises for local health and care services

Represented the experience and views from their communities

Created digital content on our websites and social media

Carried out website and patient information reviews

Distributed flyers to support digitally excluded residents and distributed 40,000 Healthwatch Bexley leaflets

Carried out website reviews for local services on the information and support they provide to young people and older adults including those affected by dementia

Supported us with research looking at the impact of COVID-19 on mental wellbeing and carried out data analysis for our COVID-19 projects

Co-produced a research project focusing on the mental health and emotional wellbeing needs of young people

Represented us at a variety of different operational and stakeholder meetings

Supported us by reviewing our policies and terms of references for governance

Supported us with recruiting and interviewing for volunteering roles

Supported us with updating information on our stakeholder and information database

Cascaded important health information to communities and networks to help keep people safe, resilient and informed during the pandemic

Provided feedback about the situation on the ground regarding what communities had questions about, where further support was needed, and what could be improved with regards to keeping safe during the pandemic

Participated in intelligence surveys, online community meetings and online training sessions





## Our influence at the regional level

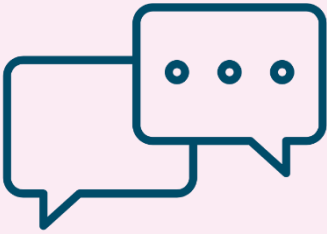
The post of Director, south east London Healthwatch, was jointly created by the six local Healthwatch (Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark) in south east London and NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to be operational from April 2020 when the new merged CCG came online. The CCG is funding the position to ensure that patient and public voices are fed into governance structures and operational strategies.

The Director sits on the CCG Governing Body, the Primary Care Commissioning Committee, the Engagement Assurance Committee, the Equalities Committee, the Quality and Safety Sub Group and the ICS Vaccine Programme equalities, communications and engagement workstreams. After the first six months, the role was extended to include the ICS Information Governance Steering Group, the Digital First Programme Board, and the Data Usage Committee.

This approach allows the input of intelligence from across the diverse communities Healthwatch work with into CCG and ICS programme, thus ensuring a broad set of views contribute to decision making processes and inform a range of work programmes. The post gives high-level visibility to the views of residents and citizens on the Governing Body and through the engagement, equalities, quality, vaccine and primary care workstreams.

The SEL Director participated in over **192** governance, strategy or operational meetings during the year

SEL Healthwatch work closely with the SEL Director to ensure that the needs and experiences of residents is heard at the regional level and contributes to service development.



Some of our achievements include:

- Our intelligence was included in a presentation on the experiences of Black communities during COVID-19 which highlighted the challenges faced by residents
- Sharing Healthwatch insights on myths and beliefs circulating among African and Caribbean communities to help the ICS counter inaccurate views on vaccination. Healthwatch pushed for urgent engagement with faith leaders to support informed faith communities
- We were able to shape the development of the 2-year action plan for the South London Mental Health Partnership through membership of the COVID-19 Mental Ill-Health Prevention Taskforce
- Our reports were used to inform the content of the ICS COVID-19 vaccination website as part of the SEL Vaccine Hesitancy Campaign
- The Healthwatch Lewisham Accessible Information Standard report was shared with the Equality Committee to support understanding of the current picture across SEL
- Intelligence from Healthwatch Southwark, Healthwatch Greenwich and Healthwatch Bexley is part of the data set for the SEL Commissioning review of ADHD and ASD services
- Intelligence from Healthwatch Bexley and Healthwatch Lambeth insight into the provision for people with Learning Disabilities fed into the CQC Provider Collaborative Review.
- Creating the South East London Healthwatch Patient Group to champion the diverse voices of patients, carers and the general public within the ICS. Members are drawn from each borough and were recruited through an independent process.



# Top Priorities & Next steps 2021-22

## Healthwatch Bromley

1. Working with partners to monitor different GP appointment types/platforms and enabling patient choice of these, ensuring access for all remains the overriding priority.
2. Strengthening engagement with BAME and seldom heard communities.
3. Increasing community intelligence and feedback on social care services through stronger engagement with Bromley's active community and voluntary sector.

In line with guidelines and the recovery roadmap Healthwatch Bromley is taking a stepped approach to resuming all activity during 2021/22. This remains at the core of our plans to meet our priorities for the year.

Workplan and priorities are informed by feedback we receive from Bromley residents, the Healthwatch Bromley Committee and our local partners. The pandemic has impacted on many areas of our life including health and social care services and the way they are delivered. During the year we will be monitoring the experiences of local residents, informed by national and local recovery plans. Items considered include:

- Following up the recommendations we provided to services before and during the pandemic and supporting these services in their implementation.
- Working with key partners to support and deliver plans that address BAME inequalities and feed into longer term COVID recovery.
- Monitoring and improving access to services for people who are digitally excluded.
- Visiting care homes to gather and promote good practice, learning from using IT to support communication between relatives and residents.
- Transitioning back to face-to-face community outreach and engagement.
- Ensuring a strong Bromley voice at the regional South East London Clinical Commissioning Group and Integrated Care System.

# Top Priorities & Next steps 2021-22

## Healthwatch Bexley

1. Increasing awareness of Healthwatch Bexley
2. The impact of Covid-19 on the wider determinants of health/inequalities
3. Mental health

In the coming year we will continue to work closely with residents, community groups, the local authority and commissioners as we move away from national restrictions and return to the 'new normal.'

Many of the recommendations we made last year have been actioned. We will continue to ensure that residents voices are heard and continue to shape local Covid-19 recovery plans by working with those who make decisions and commission services locally.

We are committed to equality and diversity and will continue to work with less heard residents and local minority groups whilst actively seeking to identify new groups to engage with. Exploring the wider determinants of health and inequalities, and how these may have been impacted by Covid-19 is one of our priorities for the year.

## Healthwatch Greenwich

1. Access to services
2. COVID-19
3. Quality of services
4. Health inequalities

As we move away from COVID-19 restrictions, we will widen our public engagement in Greenwich. We will resume Enter and View visits to local services, and return to public spaces across the borough.

We will partner with organisations supporting people from marginalised and seldom heard groups, focusing on health inequality, working with commissioners and providers to improve access and equity, leading to better health and wellbeing for all.

We will publish our regular insight briefings, and follow up with providers and commissioners to create solutions and positive long-term outcomes.

# Top Priorities & Next steps 2021-22

## Healthwatch Lambeth

1. Understand how the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic has shaped people's different experiences of care, both positive and negative, through high quality, tailored community engagement and research
2. Use our Public Participation model to support purposeful public involvement in the way local and regional health and social care services
3. Collaborate with partners to end the inequalities in outcomes and experiences of people with care needs in Lambeth and across SE London.

Build evaluation and impact measurement into all our projects and partnerships

Relaunch our volunteer offer to create new opportunities for Lambeth residents to participate in all our projects and partnerships

Raise awareness of our Information & Signposting service for Lambeth residents

## Healthwatch Lewisham

1. Access to services for digitally excluded residents
2. Experiences of the COVID-19 vaccination programme
3. We will engage with residents upon the lifting of the lockdown to understand the issues that matter to them to help shape our long-term priorities and activities.

- Take a stepped approach to resuming face-to-face engagement in our community
- A hybrid approach of digital and non-digital engagement will be at the heart of our delivery to ensure our reach is as wide as possible
- Delivery of a Feedback Centre pilot which will see us work closely with Primary Care Networks and individual GP practices to increase patient feedback. Our pilot was included in the borough's GP Practice Resilience Programme 2021/22
- Carry out recruitment to widen the membership of our local committee
- Continue to identify opportunities to engage and understand the experiences of seldom heard groups
- Following up on the recommendations that we provided during the pandemic to understand their impact and support health and care partners in their implementation
- Work with SEL Healthwatch and other local partners to ensure that the patient voice is central to all new structures developed as part of the Integrated Care System

# Top Priorities & Next steps 2021-22

## Healthwatch Southwark

1. Mental Health (Adult and Young People)
2. GP Access in post Covid-19 environment
3. Developing an active Enter and View Programme
4. Developing a active 'Community Engagement Strategy' that enables us to reach the different communities of Southwark and allows Healthwatch Southwark to have a effective community presence

Our plans as we move away from national restrictions:

- Increasing our community presence in the different parts of the borough.
- Proactive outreach and engagement in the community to gather people's health and social care experiences i.e. gathering feedback at GP practice, holding local events, signposting at community centres.
- Developing our signposting function to provide more local people to access our signposting function i.e. signposting clinic in different parts of the borough, more interactive web access and more proactive support function from staff.
- Developing better partnerships with the local community and local stakeholders.
- Increase our volunteering capacity by recruiting diverse community members to volunteer and training them to support our core volunteer roles i.e. community engagement and signposting, Enter and View Representatives.
- Work with the local community and stakeholders to agree priorities.

We will actively continue to follow up on the recommendations we made last year. In relation to the 'Waiting Time' project recommendations, we are currently actively engaged with the two local NHS Trust providers (GSTT & KCH) and meeting with them to review recommendations and to discuss a way forward. We are also promoting the project findings to wider providers (i.e. South East London CCG) to increase our influence in ensuring all providers are aware of the project and its finding.

We are committed to involve and hear the experiences of all groups in Southwark and as a result in 2021/22 year we are planning to engage with the following seldom heard groups:

- Gypsies, Roma and Travellers
- Refugees
- Latin American Community
- Black Caribbean and African communities
- Young people



Contact us to get the information you need.

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. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

[www.healthwatchbromley.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbromley.co.uk)

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