

Autumn 2022

**healthwatch**  
Stockport

# Inform Newsletter



**Welcome to all our new members  
Please share this edition with  
family, friends and colleagues**





# David Atkinson 1940 - 2022

# David Atkinson

## 1940 – 2022

"It is with deep regret that we inform you one of our beloved members, David Atkinson passed away during the summer, aged just 81. David was instrumental in setting up Healthwatch Stockport when we formed in 2013, being part of the transition board from the Local Involvement Network (LINK) to Healthwatch. David came to us way before then in 2008, when the LINK was created, and has been our Financial Director up until his death.

Having had a successful career in business and just having retired David was looking to get his teeth into something that he could become part of and something which would help him put something back to the community and became part of our Healthwatch family.

He gave all his time freely and was always available to help out in the office and in the community supporting our events, whether it be signing people in, lugging information boards or stuffing envelopes with newsletters, nothing was too much trouble for David.

Our love and best wishes to goes to Lynn, the boys and all their grandchildren.

The team, the board and members will miss David dearly, for not only being such a Healthwatch Stockport fan but for his loyalty, his dedication, his support, his love of music and his fabulous sense of humour." **Maria Kildunne**

"David made it very easy for me when I first joined Healthwatch, straight away with the jokes. David used to come in every Friday and help with updating our members to our database after a few weeks David had me playing Booker T, Rolling Stones and Chris Rea on Spotify! What a lovely man and he will be deeply missed!" **Liam Kildunne**

"My memories of David are that he was always happy and smiled all the time, he was also one of the first offering to help me carrying my event equipment. Lovely, lovely man." **Shirley Hamlett**



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take you to the relevant page.



# A word from our Chief Officer

Welcome all, to our first newsletter in quite a while! We dedicate this Autumn issue in memory of David Atkinson, our Finance Director who passed away in June this year.

We have listened to our members and have brought back printed copies to ensure we reach all our members and especially for those who do not find using the online versions easy. This was also an issue close to David Atkinson's heart that people who could not easily use the internet didn't miss out on our news.

Do let us know what you think of our new look newsletter.

Our board of directors and staff team are pleased to announce we have secured the Healthwatch contract for another 3 years with the possibility to add a further 2 years. This has given us the opportunity develop a longer-term focus to help shape the work we do with more security than we have had in the past.

If you would like to see our draft strategy which is currently out for comment it and put forward your comments and suggestions, please visit our website or contact the office.

We are pleased to say our networking events are back on and the next one will take place in December, see events page for more information.

More events are being planned such as member forum events and question and answer sessions with key people from different services and organisations.

It is also with great fondness we say good bye to 2 fantastic members from Healthwatch. David Moore and Janet Ratcliffe who stepped down from the board this year. David who was Managing Director with Home Instead has taken time out to pursue new ventures and Janet, a retired NHS Manager is stepping down but is still a keen Healthwatch member.

We also said goodbye to Francine Harrop, Engagement Officer, supporting the lived experience panel, a treasured member of the Healthwatch team. We welcome Francesca Whelan, our newest member of the team. You can find out more about the Healthwatch team at the end of the newsletter.



*Maria Kildunne*

# Spotlight on Mental Health

Mental health is always a hot topic but no more so than now, following the global pandemic which has left many of us bereaved, waiting longer for routine treatments and with feelings that leave us overwhelmed. Services are stretched beyond anything we've ever experienced before and serious mental illness is still very much misunderstood.

We have been working with Mental Health Carers Group Stockport for number of years and it saddens and disappoints us that the experiences of those with serious mental illness do not appear to have changed/improved over the years but in fact deteriorated. Despite the best efforts of the Mental Health Carers Group Stockport along with other community and voluntary organisations to raise awareness, they feel they have been banging their heads against a brick wall.

This year Healthwatch Stockport have supported Mental Health Carers Group Stockport to act on behalf of local people and their carers to ensure their voices and experiences are listened to. We have collated the experiences of people with severe mental illness and are in the process of compiling a Mental Health Lived Experience Report.

We will summarise the results in our next Newsletter [winter edition]





# How good is your GP?

So far we have had over 500 responses to our survey around accessing GP's in Stockport. We opened up the survey back in January this year. and will continue to run it until February 2023. So far people have said they are generally happy with their GP but access and communication could be better. There has been lots of suggestions for improvement. So if you haven't

already taken part in our GP survey. please let us know your experience of accessing your GP practice. To take the survey and get your voice heard please contact the office [details on back page] visit our website or scan the QR code.



## Feedback

Feedback is important to us. Every piece of feedback about local care services is recorded in our database. This is so we can identify themes and trends and inform the SMG to take decisions on how to address concerns.

We are interested in all feedback no matter how small good and not so good.

We are particularly interested in social care, maternity services and dementia care services.

If you use GPs and hospitals, dentists, pharmacies, care homes or other support services, we want to hear about your experiences. Whether good or bad, speak up and let us help NHS and social care services spot issues that are affecting care for you and your loved ones.

Your feedback is important to us it helps us identify themes and trends which can stop other people receiving poor care.

We have recently re-introduced our text service so you can send us your feedback by text about health & social care services quickly & easily no matter where you are. You can text us your feedback today on **078710 89100**.

# Feedback



## Don't Forget about me

Recently we have been receiving feedback from Deaf people about the lack of awareness health and care organisations have about their needs. This appears especially so when a Deaf person needs a British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreter.

Sometimes a BSL interpreter is not booked for medical appointments even when one has been requested. Patient care and experience can be highly effected when one is not booked, and miscommunication is common place.

Some of the examples of poor care experienced by some Deaf people is heart breaking. We have teamed up with Walthew House to request that these issues are addressed. We have written to the hospital to ask for a task group to be created to ensure Deaf people receive better care when attending hospital for appointments and in-patient care.

We will keep you updated. If you have experience of hospital care you would like to share with us, please do get in touch.

### What can we do to help?

Awareness. We acknowledge that you don't know what you don't know. Quite often there are small fixes that can make a big difference to someone who is more vulnerable. We are hopeful that our work with Walthew House and NHS Stockport Foundation Trust will bring about these small but important changes that can make that difference.



### Meet James

James is a great advocate for people living in Stockport with learning disabilities. He helped us release a video from his time at Stepping Hill and how little changes can make a big difference.

### Why is this page in yellow?

As humans we are always learning. Our friends at Walthew House advised us that printing materials yellow on black help people with poor eye sight see better! If you need this newsletter in this format. Please contact the office.



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## The Big Conversation

The Big Conversation started by NHS Greater Manchester earlier this year to ask people what matters to them when they need health and care services. They received over 1,300 replies from across Greater Manchester.

To develop the conversation further, we were asked to do some engagement work along with the other local Healthwatch across Greater Manchester.

We are collecting feedback during October and when we complete this work, and we will submit our findings to Greater Manchester and wait to hear back how your feedback has informed the strategy.



We worked together with NHS colleagues.

## Where have we been?

The Team at Healthwatch like to get out and about across Stockport and talk to as many people as possible. Recently we have been to

Stockport Women's and Girls Network  
Stockport Refugee Support Network  
GM BME Network  
GM Big Collaborative Event  
New Women's Institute Group set up by Stockport Advocacy  
Health Information Fair at Stockport Library  
Sector3 Cross Sector Forums



# Information and Advice

## How we can help you

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

You can contact us in the following ways;

**On the phone**



**Through our website**

http://



**By email**



**Make a 1-1 appointment**

We also have a dedicated Information and Advice section on our website where you can find a range of resources.

Whether you are looking for information regarding a long-term illness, counselling, or sensory loss and more you will be able to find it here.

## Information and Signposting Database

Are you looking for a local community support group? Whether it be a regular social group, a crafting session or help with digital skills we have our own database which is made up of smaller local groups and organisations this is useful when you want to find something in your local community.

Examples of how the database can help you

Joan contacted us as she was concerned that her 90-year-old mum was becoming isolated and she wanted to find some local groups that would be suitable for her mum to attend. With the use of our database we were able to give Joan a number of groups that were suitable for her mum and she has now joined a monthly afternoon tea group.

### Information and Signposting Directory

#### Community Groups

[Read more](#)

#### LGBTQ+ Groups

[Read more](#)



# Information and Advice



## How have we informed people?

During July, August and September we have had a further 41 enquiries via our information and advice service. Dentists, hospitals, GPs and Adult Social care being the most common things people have contacted us about.

We can help you by providing information specific to your request for example, we receive many calls about the Dermatology service as it moved to Salford Royal from Stepping Hill Hospital last year.

We are aware that dental access is a big issue in Stockport as well as nationally. We have been building up relationships with the dental practices in Stockport by contacting them on a regular basis which enables us to keep up to date information about their availability to accept NHS patients.

Although the majority of the time we are able to give people the information they need or signpost them to an organisation that can help, on occasion some people need a little more support with making enquiries in these cases we help to start the initial contact with the relevant organisation.

## Help making a complaint



Making a complaint about NHS or social care services can be daunting. You might be wondering if it is worth the time and effort. But we're here to help you so you and others get the right care. We often signpost people and help them find the complaints procedures for various organisations such as GP practices and hospitals.

We work closely with the patient and customer service team at Stepping Hill, Stockport Advocacy who supports people with NHS complaints and With Stockport Council to deal with social care complaints.

If you would like to talk to the team contact our information and advice line.



Don't forget to keep our 'what to know this winter' pull out handy over the winter period.

Did you know  
We now have a dedicated text line for people with sensory loss.



# Volunteering

We are so grateful for the volunteers who help Healthwatch Stockport on a regular basis. From helping in the office to providing feedback about their experiences, we couldn't do what we do without them, they really are our champions.



We have Michelle McManus our Social Media Guru, who works alongside Liam, Communications Officer to share Healthwatch posts, encourage engagement, signpost to our feedback service, and raise awareness of our organisation.

Our Strategic Monitoring Group (SMG) continue to meet monthly in person and take part in great discussions, look at feedback trends and progress our work programme.

You can find our SMG Members on page 14

## Volunteering Opportunities

### Reading Group

A volunteer group who reviews and comments on Health and social care literature, including information we produce at Healthwatch Stockport.

### Enter and View Champion

Trained volunteer authorised representatives, who visit places of care, to observe the quality of care and engage with people using the service and staff who work within the service

### Meet Michelle

Meet Michelle Sheridan, one of our volunteers who has been involved with Healthwatch for over 4 years. Michelle supports with our admin tasks and is always a joy to have in the office.



## Goodbyes

We say goodbye to some of our valued members David Moore and Janet Ratcliffe, who have been a part of Healthwatch Stockport for many years. Although we'll still see Janet as a Healthwatch member

We wish you all the best in the future!





# Training and Events



Coffee mornings/afternoon Teas are a chance for you to meet the team and come and chat about anything you like. If you have a health or care query, want to talk confidentially or play your chance on health pong come along and speak to the Healthwatch team.

## Coffee Morning with re:dish

When: Wednesday 30th November 2022 - 10:30am - 12:00pm

Where: re:dish, 2 Gorton Rd, Reddish, Stockport SK5 6AE

re:dish

## Christmas Coffee Morning with Stockport Advocacy

When: Wednesday 14th December 2022 - 10:30am - 12:00pm

Where: Land O' Cakes, 48 Middle Hillgate, Stockport SK1 3DL



## Coffee Morning

When: Wednesday 25th January 2023 - 10:30am - 12:00pm

Where: Venue to be confirmed



## Information Session

Learn more about Healthwatch Stockport. New to Healthwatch Stockport? If you would like to find out more about who we are and we do, please come along and find out more.

When: Tuesday 7th December 2022 - 12:30pm - 15:00pm

Where: Healthwatch Stockport, Land O' Cakes, 48 Middle Hillgate, SK1 3DL

**Please call the office to book your place.**

## Network Event

Our network event are an opportunity for members and members of the public to come and find out about what programmes Healthwatch is working on and other health and care related topics. Our next event will host guest speaker Caroline Simpson, Chief Executive of Stockport Council.

When: Tuesday 7th December 2022 - 12:30pm - 15:00pm

Where: To be confirmed

## Enter and View Training

Enter + View (E+V) allows us to the view the care that takes place in hospitals and care homes and our representatives can talk to patients and staff and families about their care. If you would like to become an authorised E+V representative for Healthwatch we are running a training course in January. You do not need any formal qualifications. Just an interest health and care and enjoy interacting with other people for an informal chat contact the office.

When: Wednesday 18th January 2022

Where: Healthwatch Stockport, Land O' Cakes, 48 Middle Hillgate, SK1 3DL

# Meet the Team



**MARIA KILDUNNE**

Chief Officer

**SHIRLEY HAMLETT**  
Information Research Officer



**CLAIRE ROBERTS**  
Information and Advice Officer

**LIAM KILDUNNE**  
Communications Officer



**FRANCESCA WHELAN**  
Engagement Officer

## SMG Members

Mike Lappin (Chair), Sue Carroll, Dr Simon Innes-Chadwick, Jan Kitching, Neisha Fielder, Ruth Turner, David Kirk, Paul McCrory, Mary Foden, Anand Dutta, Mary Edwards, June Westley and Mike Bailey

**SMG next date: Wednesday 30th November**

If you would like a question raised at the next SMG meeting please contact the office.

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# Christmas Opening Times

The office will close over Christmas this year from 3pm on Thursday 22nd December 2022 and re-open on Wednesday 4th January 2023. We will be monitoring the phones over the Christmas and New Year period.

If you do have an urgent enquiry please ring the office and leave a message on the answer machine and one of the team will contact you back as soon as possible.

## Happy Christmas

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from everyone at Healthwatch Stockport.

We can't wait to see you in the New Year!





# How do I become a member of Healthwatch Stockport?

Becoming a member of Healthwatch is easy! Once you become a member you will start receiving the weekly Information Round-up (IRU) as well as invites to the latest training and events. We will ask you for feedback on all aspects of Health and Care and ask if you want to join and help with our work programme.

To become a member you can call the office, speak to one of the team, email us or scan the QR Code which will take you straight to our website where you can sign up from there.

## Help us

As this is our first newsletter in well over 4 years, we want to hear your thoughts! What works well and what would you like to see more of! What doesn't work so well - we are all ears. Please leave us an email.



## Contact us

[info@healthwatchstockport.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchstockport.co.uk)

0161 974 0753

078710 89100

[healthwatchstockport.co.uk](http://healthwatchstockport.co.uk)



Inform. Involve. Influence.  
Independent.