

Your voice counts

Healthwatch City of London
Annual Report 2023–2024



Contents

Message from our Chair	3
About us	4
Year in review	5
Working for our community	6
Championing your views	9
Our Team	16
Informing and involving you	17
Volunteering	22
Finance and future priorities	25
Statutory statements	27

Message from our Chair

Welcome to Healthwatch City of London's latest annual report which covers the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. This year's annual report, **Your Voice Counts**, demonstrates the increasing influence and the impact we are making in both the City of London and more widely in North East London. Serving a small residential population means that it is important that the City voice is not lost, particularly when there are so many pressures across North East London as a whole. Making sure that the impacts of changes are transparent and relevant to those living here is an important part of our work. Our focus has been to make sure that the needs and concerns of those living in the City are reflected back to key decision makers. We believe this report demonstrates that we have succeeded in this objective, making sure the City voice is heard. Whilst our strategic impact has increased, we have not forgotten that what matters most to people is that local services are of a high quality, delivered in a timely way and that those working with patients, carers or relatives are responsive and compassionate to individual needs.

This year, more people have contacted us about their concerns, and we have been able to bring these to the attention of the NHS and social care, seeking answers and keeping residents informed. Through our patient panels we have been able to make contact with and hear from a larger number of local residents and not just through digital platforms, but also face to face. Keeping it local and relevant is paramount in our work.

Working in partnership with all communities across the City of London is something we will strive to improve on next year and is a key objective for 2024-2025. There is still much more to do to ensure that services remain responsive to need and that those who direct policy and strategy listen and take note, so we will increase our activities in this area.

I would like to thank the staff at Healthwatch City of London for all their hard work and commitment to making our organisation a success, my fellow Trustees and associate board members for their support throughout the last year alongside our band of amazing volunteers and of course the many organisations we work with. Most of all I would like to thank you, the residents of the City of London for supporting our work.

Gail

Gail Beer, Chair, Healthwatch City of London



'what matters most to people is that local services are of a high quality, delivered in a timely way and that those working with patients, carers or relatives are responsive and compassionate to individual needs'



Gail Beer
Chair
Healthwatch City of London

About us

Healthwatch City of London is your local Health and Social Care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. Helping you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice through a locally based team.

Our vision

For Health and Social Care services to be truly responsive to the needs and requirements of the residents, students and workers of the City of London.



Our mission

To be an independent and trusted body, known for its impartiality and integrity, which acts in the best interests of those who live and work in the City of London.



Our values are:

- Respecting and encouraging diversity
- Valuing everyone's contributions
- Maintaining integrity
- Creating inclusiveness



Year in review

Talking and Listening to you:

An important part of our work is keeping you informed and listening to you. Last year we produced nine newsletters, along with multiple information leaflets and reports, including one on deaf awareness and our regular information sheet informing you about health services' opening hours during the Festive period. In addition, we held five Patient Panels, numerous community events, including a Coronation tea party, as well as holding one board meeting in public and our Annual General Meeting.



All the information and insight we gain from these events is used to inform our work.

Over 5,234 visits were made to our website and we have 911 followers on social media to keep us connected. We have regular articles in Barbican Life magazine and City Resident newsletters.

Our resources that work for you:

We're lucky to have **13** outstanding volunteers who gave up their time to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2023 - 24 we received

£99,192 which is 14% more than the previous year.



Our Team:

We currently have **One** Chair, **Five** Trustees

Three Associate Board Members

Three members of staff

All who help us carry out our work.





Working for our community

Health and Social Care services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why, over the last year, we have made listening to feedback from everyone in the community a priority.

This allows us to understand the full picture and feed this back to services to help them improve.

How we work with our community for our community

Over the past year we have continued to work closely with those in our community to ensure that we are able to champion your voices to create change for your Health and Social Care Services.

It is an essential role for us to be able to use our platform within North East London to directly share how you feel to ensure Health and Social Care services listen.

In this report we outline how we work closely with our local GP Practices to ensure they are receiving and listening to your feedback. We explain how we represent you in meetings across the system, share your feedback and the thoughts of the community, and highlight projects we are undertaking on your behalf as well as the issues that you have faced regarding your Health and Social Care.

In the City there are many passionate and dedicated people who are working to improve issues in the community and who are leading or a part of voluntary groups. We work closely with both voluntary and funded groups.

One patient's journey:

This year we may have met many new people from across the community. One resident has let us share her story with you.

We first met our resident at the Cancer Screening Awareness patient panel, held with NHS Cancer Alliance. Shortly after the event our resident got in touch with us. She attends routine screenings but had been misinformed as to where to attend her latest mammogram. She had been told that she had to go to Kentish Town or Stratford for the test, we contacted the NHS Cancer Alliance who clarified that screenings are still available at Mile End Hospital.

Our resident also has partial deafness and uses a hearing aid. Her journey to obtain the correct diagnoses included several visits to hospital with various diagnosis:

- Complaining of a severe headache she attended the Royal London walk-in clinic and was triaged for a sinus infection and received a number of tests.
- The results showed that they had contracted shingles, which had impacted the optic nerve in their head; they were then prescribed an anti-viral medication, which, however, was not effective.
- The resident later got severe head pain, which was the exact same pain as previously felt, along with a hissing sound in her ear with feelings of a lack of stability and balance.
- After a fall in public, she was advised to go to the GP with a suspected benign ear tumour (acoustic neuroma). Her GP, sent them to the London Independent Hospital, for a hearing test appointment. Although this is a private hospital, the initial appointment was NHS funded.
- The result of the test was that high frequency hearing loss was diagnosed.
- They received hearing aid care at the Royal London Hospital, with an initial hearing aid fitting.
- Finally, the patient was diagnosed with partial deafness, they met with a counsellor from the Royal London Hospital who was able to walk the patient through her diagnosis and provide support.

Our resident attended our Deaf Awareness Patient panel and was able to share her experience and knowledge on the subject. Raising awareness of this topic is important to her and she was grateful to be given the opportunity to share her story.

Our work in the Big Conversation

The Big Conversation is an initiative led by North East London NHS working with Health and Social Care across North East London, to help deliver joined up health and care services that are targeted for you. The Big Conversation concentrated on four topics based on your feedback.

These included:

- Babies, children and young people
- Long term health conditions
- Mental health
- Local employment and workforce

Healthwatch City of London supported this programme by holding a focus group with the Older Peoples Reference Group (OPRG) to explore how older people felt about these priorities.

Our group focused on Health and Social Care, Mental Health and Long-Term Conditions.

People were most concerned about waiting times, shortage of follow up appointments and lack of aftercare post discharge from hospital care. Some of which relates to the management of their conditions, but their concerns highlights more general worries about services which we will follow up on.

When discussing mental health, the group highlighted the need for preventative action, including a larger focus on mental health, and suicide prevention at schools, as well as a greater understanding of the role of the City of London Corporation and how they can support better mental health.

Ideas included:

- GPs or the local council keeping a register of everyone living alone in all age ranges and who may need mental health check-ups.
- That health services need to focus on holistic measures when treating Long Term Conditions, such as the importance of one's social health and wellbeing
- Social isolation and loneliness be given more consideration when supporting people to cope with their Long-Term Condition.
- More emphasis on and access to social prescribing
- That wastage of mobility aids, such as wheelchairs and crutches needed to be addressed including recycling as there are long waiting times to receive them.

Lack of community support groups and cuts in groups that used to exist to bring people together have had an impact locally

Healthwatch City of London are waiting for a report to be issued and we will be making sure there is good follow through.



Championing your views

Over the past year, we have worked hard to make sure we champion people's views. We champion what matters to you and work with the providers and planners of your Health and Social Care services to find ideas that work.

This year we have made your voices heard by:

- Working closely with the Neaman Practice to implement improvements
- Campaigning for the continuation of services that are important to you
- Ensuring that health services in the City of London know what matters to you
- Making your voice heard across North East London

Continued access to Foot Care

Toenail cutting is so much more important than people realise. It is an essential part of our physical health and wellbeing; it impacts the ways we walk and wear shoes, poor foot health increases the likelihood of developing infections. Difficulty in cutting toenails can affect all ages and be caused by any number of illnesses or disabilities. We have maintained a long campaign to ensure fair access to foot care and toenail cutting services. This year we campaigned again for the funding for toenail cutting services to be extended and remain free and accessible: we are proud to say we have been successful.

As a result of our campaigning and the continued support of the City of London Corporation, toenail cutting services provided by Hoxton Health have resumed at the Neaman Practice. Discussions are ongoing to develop a long-term solution and contract, enabling Hoxton Health to be less dependent on grants, so resulting in a continuous service without gaps.

Our work with the Neaman Practice

The Neaman Practice, provides care for 80 percent of the City residents. Over the past year we have strengthened our relationship with the Neaman Practice, becoming a critical friend. Our feedback based on your comments to us have been vital in this conversation and have been well received by the Practice.

We have continued our quarterly meetings with them which gives us the opportunity to hold honest conversations about issues that you may be facing. Dr Chor, GP and Partner at the Practice attended our February Public Board meeting and was able to highlight the numerous services that the Neaman Practice provides as well as taking questions from the public on issues you care about. This has enabled patients to gain a better understanding of the services they can ask for and expect to receive.

As a result of our feedback the Neaman Practice have widened the advertising of their Patient Participation Group (PPG) meetings which gives a greater voice to patients. The staff have undergone customer service training and we have created a better understanding of the role that confidentiality plays and the importance that it has when discussing patients' details.

The Neaman Practice have also increased the range of services they provide, developing their health and wellbeing offering called, The Together Better programme, which includes, a walking group, arts and craft sessions and a coffee morning. Working in partnership we advertise each others' events and activities.

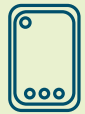
Responding to your concerns

Digital apps project

This year we have started our Digital Apps Project that is exploring the current ways in which you can access your care and information using your digital devices.

Our preliminary work identified that it is possible to have nine NHS apps on your phone, including the NHS App, Patient Knows Best portal, MY chart and the Dr IQ app. We will be seeking to understand how each app and platform communicates with each other, how accessible and easy they are to use and how you are able to access your services and very importantly, what happens if you are unable to use these apps and portals.

What we are doing to address the issue:



In the coming year we will be handing out surveys and holding focus groups to hear directly from you and how your experience with these apps have shaped your care from your health services.

Over-dispensing at a local pharmacy

We were made aware of an issue regarding over-dispensing of repeat prescriptions at a local pharmacy. A resident reached out to us after they were given their old prescription and new prescription by a local pharmacist.

We raised this concern with the NHS North East London and the Health and Wellbeing Board. The medicines optimisation team investigated, and their findings led to measures being put in place to ensure that the issue will not happen again.

As a result of our intervention



- The Pharmacy now have one specific member of staff managing the repeat prescribing requests. Additional processes were also put in place by both the Pharmacy and the Neaman Practice to ensure that there is a vigorous process to manage repeat prescriptions. Senior pharmacists from the Pharmacy also attended the GP practice to ensure that better communication is established in order to prevent this from happening again.
- As a follow up we held a Patient Panel focusing on the importance of medicine management with Lead Pharmacist, Deborah Osowa from the Neaman Practice. This was to ensure patients are aware of how their medications should be managed and the importance of the annual checks they should be receiving from their pharmacy and GP.
- We will also be talking to other local pharmacies, to check this isn't happening elsewhere.

Our Enter and Views

What is an Enter and View?

Healthwatch have a legal power to visit health and social care services and see them in action. The purpose of an Enter and View visit is to collect evidence of what works well and what could be improved to make people's experiences better. Healthwatch can use this evidence to make recommendations and inform changes both for individual services as well as system-wide.

Goodman's Field Medical Practice with Healthwatch Tower Hamlets

This year, we made one Enter and View visit. In September HWCOL, along with colleagues at Healthwatch Tower Hamlets carried out an Enter and View at the Goodman's Field Medical Practice.

Although Goodman's Field Medical Practice is located in Tower Hamlets, many of our residents in the Portsoken area are their patients. Therefore, it was important to us to directly understand how the Practice was performing and how patients felt about their experiences.

The rationale for conducting the Enter and View Visit to Goodman's Field Medical Practice was based on data collected from various sources – NHS, Care Opinion, Social Media and App stores.

The feedback indicated that the GP practice performed exceptionally across areas such as treatment, communication and staff attitude. The main area of concern was related to service access, telephone service, referral process and the functionality of the Dr IQ app.

Outcome:

Overall, the visit to Goodman's Field Medical Practice was very positive with some areas of minor improvement identified. Recommendations for improvement were suggested and the practice has taken them on board.

The report has now been published and is available on the HWCOL website, <https://www.healthwatchcityoflondon.org.uk/report/2024-04-12/enter-view-report-goodmans-field-medical-practice>

St Bartholomew's Hospital Cardiology Department

In the next year we will be undertaking an Enter and View at St Bartholomew's Hospital. We have had feedback from patients about poor communication at St Bartholomew's Hospital, particularly in their cardiology department, ranging from lack of details on appointment letters, including crucial information such as dates, times, or the location of where the appointment is being held. Patients have also received both a text message and a letter with contradictory details with no information on whom to call to confirm their appointment.

In June, we will be holding an Enter and View at St Bartholomew's to speak directly to staff and patients and see firsthand how we can work together to tackle these issues.

Representing you at a wider level

We attend many meetings on your behalf which give us the opportunity to represent you and your thoughts at a wider level. Here are the meetings we attended in 2023 to 2024.

Neaman Practice Patient Participation Group and quarterly meeting



The Neaman Practice now hold their Patient Participation Group (PPG) every three months. Following our recommendations, the Practice have now widened the membership of the group and advertise the dates on their website and via text messages. The group discuss the services delivered by the Practice, and how improvements can be made for the benefit of patients.

HWCoL also hold private quarterly meetings with the Practice to raise any concerns you may have.

North East London Integrated Care Board



NHS North East London is responsible for planning and commissioning health services across North East London to meet the population's needs, making sure all providers of care across the region work effectively together. We attend meetings of the board to ensure that the needs of City residents are recognised and to feedback your views.

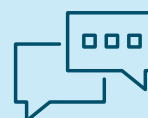
This year a lot of the focus of the Board has been on the Big Conversation, which you can read about earlier in this report.

North East London Integrated Care Board Healthwatch Meeting

A meeting with the Chair of the Integrated Care Board and all NEL Healthwatch to share resident involvement and insight gathered by NEL Healthwatch. This gives us direct access to the Board of the Integrated Care system which allows us to raise any issues directly. It also gives us the opportunity to have open discussions on areas that need improvement, project work, and on any concerns we have.



Integrated Care Communications and Engagement Enabler Group

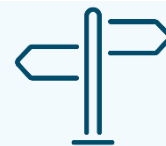


This group supports and facilitates effective engagement with key stakeholders in the Integrated Care System (ICS) and voluntary sector in the City of London and Hackney. Working on co-produced projects and increased engagement with residents across the City and Hackney.

We make sure the City's population has a big voice.

Representing you at wider level continued

City of London Health and Wellbeing Board



This board aims to align the City's approach to the NHS Outcomes Framework, the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework and the Public Health Outcomes Framework through improving the integration of services – positively influencing the health of everyone who lives and works in the City, enabling them to live healthily, preventing ill health developing, and promoting strong and empowered groups of individuals who are motivated to drive positive change within their communities and businesses. We raise the issues that are of concern to you, such as access to equitable healthcare, where and when you are cared for, and other such matters that you have told us about. This year we have raised the need for improved and accessible premises for the Neaman Practice, and for an additional GP Practice in the City.

Our reports have encouraged more support from the City of London Corporation at Health, Social Care and wellbeing meetings. The Corporation is now a very active participant in important meetings at the local and North East London level.

The redevelopment of St Leonard's Hospital project made no progress during this year. This was put on hold last year, and there is yet to be an update on its status. The services offered at St Leonard's play an important part in the delivery of care to City residents. Without a clear strategy, there is some uncertainty about the future of the site, the services provided there, and the likely impact on residents.

Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee

This committee fulfils the City's Health and Social Care scrutiny role in proactively seeking information about the performance of local health and care services and institutions, challenging the information provided to it by commissioners and providers of services for the health service and testing this information by drawing on different sources of intelligence. Healthwatch City of London have a seat on this committee.



Representing you at a wider level continued

City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board



This committee oversees the discharge of the City of London's and Hackney's responsibilities for safeguarding those adults who have been identified as requiring support and protection. We raise any safeguarding issues that we have been alerted to and monitor historical concerns to ensure they are properly addressed, and statutory requirements are met. This year we were involved in shaping the priorities and objectives for the committee.

City of London Adult Safeguarding Sub-Committee



This committee is an important sub group of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Committee. It specifically oversees the discharge of the City of London's responsibilities for safeguarding those adults who have been identified as requiring support and protection. We scrutinise the work of the Adult Social care team and its interaction with other City services such as the City of London Police and Fire Departments.

Shoreditch Park and City Neighbourhood Forum



The Neighbourhoods forums are designed to bring residents, voluntary sector, health, education and care services together in the Shoreditch Park and City Neighbourhood, to work together on what matters to local people and address health inequalities.

This year we have ensured that at least three of the forums were held in the City, to allow City residents to easily attend, rather than having to travel to Hackney. We have raised the issue of services being accessible in Hackney only and not in the City. There is currently a project underway looking at physical activity in the City and improving choices of this to City residents.



'Healthwatch City of London has great reach and impact for a small organisation'.

Stakeholder feedback

Our Team

Our Board

Gail Beer – Chair

Lynn Strother – Trustee

Malcolm Waters – Trustee

Steve Stevenson – Trustee

Judy Guy-Briscoe – Trustee

Janet Porter – Board Associate

Stuart MacKenzie – Board Associate

Dr Cynthia White – Board Associate



Our staff team

Rachel Cleave – General Manager

Liesa Sandt – Communications and Engagement Officer

Caitlan Barrow – Volunteer and Projects Officer



Following the expiry of their original terms of office, the majority of our Trustees were reappointed for four years. Gail Beer, Steve Stevenson and Lynn Strother were reappointed in August 2023 and Malcolm Waters was reappointed in November 2023.

Welcome to...

Judy Guy-Briscoe who has joined us as a trustee.

Caitlan Barrow joined us as a Volunteers and Project officer.

Our thanks to...

Habiba Shaikh left Healthwatch City of London in September 2023, Habiba was the Volunteers and Project Officer, who was instrumental in organising and setting up our volunteer network.



Informing and involving you

Our role is to keep you informed and involved in local developments and issues.

This year we've helped people by:

- Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Informing people on essential NHS health programmes

We do this through

- Sharing a newsletter full of essential information regarding your Health and Social Care
- Keeping you updated through our social media platforms
- Attending and holding community events to directly hear from you

Patient Panels

This year we continued our Patient Panels series. These sessions provide the opportunity for you to hear about topics you are interested in. We bring you together with an expert in the field to explore and create greater understanding of the subject enabling feedback to service providers that they can take away. At the end of the sessions we produce a report with the information on our website and in our newsletters ensuring that we spread the knowledge.

This year we held five Patient Panels; each session attracted new members of the community.

Cancer Screening awareness

In September, our Patient Panel was on the Cancer Screening Programmes and the effects they have on patients in the City and North East London. We were joined by Caroline Cook, the Early Diagnosis Programme Lead at the North East London Cancer Alliance. Those who attended were able to learn about the three NHS Cancer Screening programmes, for Bowel, Breast and Cervical cancers. It was a great opportunity to understand how important preventative cancer screenings are, and how and where to access them.

Discussions also came up when talking about the difference between screening programmes and diagnostic testing and the barriers that prevented access to screening.

Following this session, we published information on where to get prostate-specific antigen (PSA) tests and what hospitals you would need to go to for certain cancer screenings.



New Cancer Wait Times Standard and the effect on patients in North East London

In November, we discussed the New Cancer Wait Times Standard and the effects it will have on patients in the City and North East London.

We were joined by Wayne Douglas, who is the lead for diagnosis and treatment at the NHS North East London Cancer Alliance, who explained these changes and answered questions and addressed concerns about the new changes.

Following this session, we published information on the new cancer wait times standard and how they will directly impact the timeline of your cancer journey.



Patient Panels

Increase your understanding of deaf awareness

In January, our Patient Panel explored deaf awareness. We were joined by Jane Richardson, a qualified speech and language therapist. Jane, who is deaf herself is passionate about raising awareness of how to communicate with those who are deaf or hard of hearing and the difficulties they face on a daily basis. Those who attended the session were able to take away ten tips on communicating with those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

This advice was published on our website and sent out in our newsletter. Along with these important tips, we also included information on where you can access help and resources if you, or someone you know, is deaf or hard of hearing.

Learn about safeguarding and how to identify and report concerns

In February, we held a Patient Panel on safeguarding and how to identify and report concerns. We were joined by Dr Adi Cooper, Chair of City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board who explained what safeguarding is, how you can report issues and what the responsibilities are of the Safeguarding Board and the City of London Corporation.

During the session, residents asked about the safeguarding training received by staff working for the City of London Corporation, emphasising the importance that the training of estate managers would be valuable as they are the eyes and ears of the City. We were later able to clarify that all Estate Managers do receive this training.

The session enabled a wider understanding of the importance of safeguarding in our community and some of those present were able to share this with other groups they are involved with.

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) Training with the London Ambulance Service

In March, we focused on CPR training with the London Ambulance Service who were able to train our attendees on CPR and lifesaving skills.

During the session attendees were taught how to recognise symptoms of cardiac arrest, put an unconscious patient in the recovery position, perform Basic Life Support (BLS), and use a defibrillator..

This has since provoked discussion on CPR training and the location of defibrillators at the City of London Health and Wellbeing Board. It has also encouraged debate on CPR and first aid training for City residents.

Our Public Meetings

Public meetings are an important part of what we do and give you the opportunity to hold us to account as well as hear about our work. At each meeting we are also joined by a speaker on the subject of interest in Health and Social Care.

This year we held two formal public meetings, including our Annual General Meeting and our Board meeting in Public. At our AGM we were joined by Ian Thomas, the Town Clerk of the City of London Corporation and at our public Board meeting we were joined by Dr Chor, GP and Partner at the Neaman Practice.

Annual General Meeting

In October, we held our Annual General Meeting with Ian Thomas, the Town Clerk of the City of London Corporation. It was a great opportunity to hear directly from the City of London about their work and their 5 year plan for Health and Social Care, giving you the opportunity to directly pose any questions to Ian Thomas.

Ian highlighted how committed he and the City of London Corporation (COL) are to improving health and wellbeing. He stressed the need to make sure these new organisations' achievements and impacts were relevant to local residents. He also spoke about the Col's support for another GP practice, while acknowledging the difficulties of justifying a second surgery. The importance of charities and the public sector working together more effectively for the benefit of residents was acknowledged.

Attendees raised questions about the suitability of the standard of the premises at the Neaman Practice and the opportunity for a more modern site. Utilisation of the City's empty space for volunteer groups to use was also brought up as well as the lack of access to affordable healthy food in the City.

It was pleasing to have the support of members of the policy team from the City of London Corporation, colleagues from City Connections and Dr Anu Kumar from Shoreditch Park and City PCN at the AGM. A discussion was held on resident engagement and feedback to the Integrated Care Board and decision-making bodies. Work is already underway to ensure that the patient voice is heard and acted on with an increased involvement of the Col policy team.



Well-run event, I learned a lot from the Q&A session and the AGM report. Thank you

Resident feedback

Board Meeting in Public

In February, Dr Chor, GP and Partner at the Neaman Practice joined us and provided an update on the enhanced range of services offered by the practice. He was also able to provide an update on returning GPs and answer any questions.

Dr Chor highlighted that the range and breadth of services at the Practice has expanded, these include footcare, physiotherapy, diabetes care, medicine management, vaccinations and immunisations and dermatology. Of particular interest was the increase in the number of GPs, including the return of those on maternity leave.



“They have often had decision makers and people with power attending their meetings and events enabling local people to hold them to account”

Resident feedback

Our community events

Enabling us to bring you together to get to know your neighbours and the people in your community. Two of our events are described below:

Coronation tea parties

In May last year, we invited you all to join us for a tea party to celebrate King Charles III coronation and to showcase our volunteering opportunities. For The Coronation, King Charles encouraged communities to come together and volunteer to help others, making volunteering a cornerstone of The Coronation celebrations.

We held Coronation Tea parties at the Golden Lane Community Centre and the Portsoken Community Centre. It was great to see everyone who attended the events. There were new faces who joined us as volunteers which was very encouraging.

Festive tea party

We held a festive afternoon tea party in December last year and it was lovely to see familiar and new faces, enjoying a mince pie over a cup of tea. We know that the holiday season can be a lonely time for many of those in our community and many of your neighbours may have struggled during the holiday time. Our afternoon tea provided an opportunity to get together with those across the City, with residents from Golden Lane, Barbican and in Portsoken.





Volunteering

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of what we do. Thanks to their work in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving.

This year our volunteers:

- Were involved in project briefs and the mapping of our projects
- Attended community meetings on Healthwatch City of London's behalf
- Carried out enter and view visits to local services to help them improve

Your voice in the community

Our volunteers

We have a fantastic group of volunteers who help us with events, research, projects and community engagement. This year we have held a full training session for our volunteer team, and two specialised training days on Enter and View, allowing us to have 13 authorised representatives.

Our Public Representatives

Public representatives (reps) are the voice of local residents within the Health and Care system. They are residents of City and Hackney who generously volunteer their time to influence decision-making and contribute to the development of local services.

In the City, we have four reps who represent the City's voice at focus groups, public consultations and local meetings.

Patient-led assessments of the care environment (PLACE)

Our volunteers and a member of staff were involved in this **Barts Health NHS Trust PLACE Assessments**. These assessments take place to understand the current state of hospitals based on their environmental cleanliness with volunteers going through the hospital with a member of staff and rating each space based on specific areas. The areas looked at in the assessments include ward food, privacy, dignity and wellbeing, disability, dementia, condition, appearance and maintenance and cleanliness.

The Trust has overall scored 93.29% which is 3.13% above the national average of 90.16%. St Bartholomew's Hospital was the highest scoring hospital across the Trust with a score of 96.49%.

The reports from those assessments have now been published.

You can read the report on our website:

<https://www.healthwatchcityoflondon.org.uk/news-and-reports>



'carrying out the PLACE assessment gave me a fascinating insight into the hospital from the viewpoint of the patients. I would recommend, if you get a chance to take part, to take the opportunity'

Liesa Sandt, Communications and Engagement Officer, Healthwatch City of London





'I have been volunteering at the City of London Healthwatch for about a year now.

I've particularly enjoyed working on the Digital Inequalities project, where we are researching how digital apps offered by GPs serve the public.

Working with the Healthwatch team has been a rewarding experience, and I hope this project will contribute to a better understanding of how people use these healthcare apps daily and how they can be improved to be accessible to everyone'.



Saorise –
Healthwatch City
of London
volunteer



'I've only recently joined the Board as a Trustee at Healthwatch City of London, but I can immediately see the passion and dedication of both the staff team and our volunteer team.

I am really impressed with the amount of work they all undertake to make a difference for the residents of the City'



Judy Guy-Briscoe
Healthwatch City of
London Trustee

Do you feel inspired?



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

 www.healthwatchcityoflondon.org.uk

 00203 745 9563

 info@healthwatchcityoflondon.org.uk



Finance and future priorities

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

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from the City of London Corporation	£92,722	Expenditure on pay	£54,831
Additional income	£6,470	Office and other expenditure	£7,722
		Consultancy	£3,593
		Rent	£9,016
Total income	£99,192	Total expenditure	£75,162

ICS funding

Healthwatch across North East London also receives funding from our Integrated Care System (ICS) to support new areas of collaborative work at this level. We received £5000 for an additional project.

Next steps

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

Our current contract from the City of London expires in September 2024. Our plans for continuing our work beyond that date therefore depend on being granted a new contract by the City.

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

Our top local priorities for the next year are:

- 1) Deliver 10 patient panels to inform residents about Health and Social Care topics relevant to them.
- 2) Hold a summer information event in June and our AGM in October.
- 3) Undertake two research projects – the use of digital applications in Health and Social Care; the extent of Social Isolation in the City.
- 4) Carry out two Enter and Views – Barts Cardiology Department and the Neaman Practice.
- 5) Maintain, train and utilise a dedicated team of volunteers.
- 6) Scrutinise how the City of London Corporation awards and monitors its contracts for Social Care provision.
- 7) Making sure City residents voices are heard at regional level



Statutory statements

Healthwatch City of London

Portsoken Community Centre

20 Little Somerset Street

London E1 8AH

Healthwatch City of London uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch Board consists of eight members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities.

The Board members consist of five Trustees, who are the sole voting members, and three non-voting Associate Board Members who participate fully in Board meetings but act in a consultative and advisory capacity. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2023/24 the Board met 10 times and made decisions on matters such as organisational design, budget setting, objectives and priorities as part of the business plan and using insight from public forums. We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

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

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

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website and a physical copy will be available.

Responses to recommendations

We had no providers who failed to respond to requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations.

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area for example we take information to the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Health Scrutiny and Insight Committee and the City and Hackney Adults Safeguarding Board. We also take insight and experiences to decision makers in NHS North East London For example, we attend the Integrated Care System Board and the Integrated Care Partnership Board alongside the other seven Healthwatch in North East London. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

The way we work

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch City of London is represented on the City of London Corporation Health and Wellbeing Board by Gail Beer, Chair of Healthwatch City of London. During 2023/24 our representative has effectively carried out this role by producing and presenting a quarterly report to the Board and by raising issues on Health and Social Care at the Board meetings.

Healthwatch City of London is represented on North East London Integrated Care Partnership and on North East London Integrated Care Board by Rachel Cleave, General Manager of Healthwatch City of London.


Our thanks

We would like to extend our thanks to the City of London Corporation for their continued support, and funding, of Healthwatch City of London, especially to our Commissioning Manager, the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services and the Head of Strategy and Performance, Department of Community and Children's Services.

Our thanks also to the Chair and members of the City of London Health and Wellbeing Board, who ensure that issues and concerns raised by us are addressed.

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