

# Healthwatch Lincolnshire Interim Work Plan Oct 24 – Mar 25



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## Introduction

This annual planning document outlines our goals and priorities for Healthwatch Lincolnshire from October 2024 to March 2025, offering a clear framework to guide our efforts.

### Listening is more important than ever

Both health and social care systems are navigating significant challenges and critical decisions about how to build a sustainable future.

Key questions to shape this future include:

- How can services prioritise prevention, enabling healthier lives and addressing the needs of an ageing population?
- What actions can tackle the health inequalities driven by factors such as location, ethnicity, or gender?
- How can services collaborate to deliver more cohesive, efficient and patient-centred care?
- What strategies can meet the growing demand for mental health support while improving overall wellbeing?
- How can technology and better communication empower patients, carers, and service users to take greater control of their health?

### Highlighting health inequalities

Inequalities in health outcomes remain a significant concern, with unfair and avoidable differences across communities and societal groups.

### Building on 10 years of Healthwatch

Over the past 10 years, Healthwatch Lincolnshire has demonstrated the transformative power of public feedback in shaping health and care services. By capturing real-world experiences, we've helped identify what works, highlight areas for improvement, and encourage services to adopt better practices.

## Looking Ahead

To drive meaningful change, we are committed to:

- Raising our visibility to ensure all communities are aware we're here to support them.
- Focusing on the issues that matter most to the public, particularly those affecting groups that face the greatest health inequalities.
- Working closely with the Integrated Care System, at both local and national levels, to embed the voices of service users into every decision and approach.

## Summary

### How We Set Our Priorities

Our priorities are guided by the Healthwatch Steering Group. This considers a range of important factors to ensure our work remains focused and impactful.

- Patient, carer, and service user feedback: The experiences we gather often highlight gaps, inequalities, or areas where services fall short.
- Unheard voices: We identify topics and services where there is little or no patient feedback, shining a light on overlooked areas.
- National issues with local relevance: Concerns raised by bodies such as NHS England, Healthwatch England, the Department of Health, and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inform our focus, especially when local insights can support broader consultations and national improvements.
- Seldom heard communities: We place a strong emphasis on reaching underrepresented groups that often face barriers to accessing or receiving equitable health and social care services.

Combining these considerations ensures our work not only addresses local needs but also contributes to wider system change.

Under Lincolnshire County Council monitoring we have 5 measured Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)	
<p>Number of people sharing their views and experiences with us on health and social care in Lincolnshire.</p> <p><i>% of people who provided feedback after sharing their views and experiences on health and social care in Lincolnshire.</i></p>	<p>We will report on the number of people engaging with us through outreach, surveys, interviews, focus groups, and our information and signposting service. Additionally, we aim to implement a feedback loop to evaluate the Healthwatch service.</p>
<p>Number of people provided with information and signposting.</p> <p><i>% of people who have given feedback after being provided with information and signposting.</i></p>	<p>We will report the number of people we have supported with information and signposting, whether through our dedicated service, outreach clinics, or website articles. In addition, we will be reporting on the feedback of the service.</p>
<p>% of positive feedback</p>	<p>We will implement a feedback loop to gather and report on people's feedback about the Healthwatch service.</p>
<p>% of people responded to within three working days</p>	<p>It is important for us to respond promptly after people contact us, and we aim to reach at least 95% of individuals within three working days.</p>
<p>Healthwatch Lincolnshire delivery report</p>	<p>A Healthwatch delivery report will be produced quarterly, providing an overview of performance, activities, and plans for the upcoming quarter.</p>

As part of our monitoring and KPIs we also report on the following qualitatively: the opportunities we provide for Lincolnshire residents to share their views and concerns with providers and commissioners demonstrated by:

**Summary of feedback received**

- Analysis of enquires Healthwatch receive through our monthly reports, subject specific reports, and targeted activity reports and escalation papers.

**Influencing and watchdog**

- Share where local views contribute to local, regional, and national work/consultations.
- Demonstrate improved quality assurance through representation and our contributions within the Lincolnshire ICS.

**Impact**

- Quarterly communications
- Monthly provider and commissioner reporting
- Report on case studies
- Progress against annual plan
- Annual Report and submissions to Healthwatch England for national impact

Additionally, the following management indicators are in place through our contract with LCC:

<b>Performance Indicators (PIs) and Management Indicators (MIs)</b>	
Annual workplan	The annual workplan will be developed in partnership with LCC and the ICB throughout the liaison meetings. The provider will develop a draft template for the annual workplan during the mobilisation period.
Healthwatch Lincolnshire case studies	At least two case studies per quarter. Case studies will share learning or insight from a specific aspect of work delivered within the reporting period.
Number of people engaging with the service about specific concerns	Reporting the number of people contacting Healthwatch Lincolnshire with specific concerns. This will include a breakdown of the themes and topics relating to those concerns.
% of people who were supported to achieve the outcome they were looking for	Reporting on how well the service performs on supporting people to achieve their intended outcomes.

Profile of people contacting the service about specific concerns	Annual demographic and ethnicity profile of all individuals accessing Healthwatch Lincolnshire about specific concerns.
Public events and location	Reporting on organising and facilitating a minimum of four public events per year, to cover a variety of topics throughout the county. Topics to be agreed as part of the annual workplan. Breakdown of location to be reported on as well to ensure service reach.
Online presence and reach	Reporting on numbers of people accessing the service website and social media channels.
Self-assessment against the Healthwatch Quality Framework	Reporting on the completion of the self-assessment against the Healthwatch Quality Framework. This will result in an action plan to be monitored and discussed in contract management meetings.

## Our Priorities

### **Do more to tackle inequalities**

To support more people who face the worst outcomes to speak up about their health and social care, and to access the information and signposting they need.

### **Influence service providers, commissioners, and decisions**

To support care decision-makers to act on public feedback and involve communities in decisions that affect them.

### **Information & signposting**

To provide timely and accurate information and signposting and to the public to enable them to make informed choices for their health and care needs.

### **Increase our reach & impact**

To Improve our awareness and reach across Lincolnshire to ensure people know of us, contact us for signposting and share their experiences with us.



## Understanding people's views and experiences

Listening to people's experiences with health and social care services is at the heart of everything we do. By engaging with local communities across Lincolnshire, we seek to understand what works well, what could be improved, and how services can better meet the needs of those who rely on them.

It's vital to us that we hear from people across all sections of the community, especially those whose voices are often unheard. We are dedicated to going the extra mile to involve these individuals and groups in meaningful ways.

We strive to be as open and accessible as possible, offering a variety of ways for people to share their views and experiences:

- Attending our outreach events.
- Contacting us via phone, email, our website, or social media.
- Engaging through partner organisations or completing our surveys.

By collaborating closely with organisations and services in Lincolnshire, we ensure we reach as many people as possible and gather diverse perspectives.

### Our Commitments

We will:

- Actively seek input from people across all areas of Lincolnshire.
- Partner with community groups and organisations to engage their members about their health and care experiences.
- Attend community events to connect with residents and hear their stories.
- Build strong relationships with health and care service providers to raise awareness of Healthwatch Lincolnshire and its role.
- Enhance our systems for sharing insights with providers and commissioners to drive improvements.
- Explore innovative ways to promote our work and demonstrate how we support residents.

## Enter and View

Under the Enter and View program, trained representatives from Healthwatch Lincolnshire have the legal right to visit and observe health and social care service providers such as hospitals, care homes, and GP surgeries. These visits assess care quality, gather feedback from patients and staff, and advocate for improvements. This empowers service users, promotes transparency, and ensures their experiences shape healthcare improvements.

Each quarter, Healthwatch Lincolnshire conducts two to three Enter and View visits across health and social care settings. The number of visits will be determined by the depth and type of visits undertaken. These visits allow us to observe services, gather insights, and contribute to meaningful improvements in care delivery.

In December, we will collaborate with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to undertake hospital visits focusing on corridor care. These visits will offer real-time insights into the experiences of patients receiving care in corridors, as well as the challenges faced by staff in providing care under these conditions. They will explore the impact of corridor care on patient dignity, safety, and overall experience while identifying the underlying factors contributing to its use. The feedback gathered will help shape future strategies, with a detailed report shared with providers and commissioners to drive improvements within the healthcare system.

Additionally, we will collaborate with Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) to conduct Enter and View visits to care homes. These visits will focus on themed activities and care homes identified by LCC as those that would benefit from a Healthwatch visit. This targeted approach ensures that the visits provide meaningful insights and support improvements in care delivery.



## Events

Our YourVoice@Healthwatch events provide a platform for the public to engage directly with key decision-makers through panel question and answer sessions. These panels are selected to align with the event's theme, ensuring that attendees' questions are addressed by experts. The events also offer opportunities for attendees to network with service providers, charity organisations, and community groups.

Over time, we've seen an exciting shift in participation. Community groups, third-sector organisations, patient representatives, and members of the public now take a more active role, with less reliance on professionals to lead proceedings. This shift has contributed to an average attendance increase from 40-50 to 80-100 participants per event. Importantly, we've seen greater representation from seldom heard groups and wider community engagement.

### Themes and priorities

Themes for YourVoice@Healthwatch events are guided by the priorities of the Healthwatch Lincolnshire service and insights gathered from our engagement activities.

### October event

Healthwatch Lincolnshire October YourVoice@Healthwatch event will be an opportunity to reflect on our impact and help shape our future priorities.

#### Event Details:

**Date:** Wednesday, October 23, 2024

**Time:** 10am-1pm

**Location:** Boston United Football Club, Jakeman's Community Stadium, PE21 7NE

#### What to Expect:

This event will feature a presentation of our annual report, showcasing key achievements and insights from the past year. Attendees will also have a chance to shape Healthwatch Lincolnshire's future by sharing their perspectives and influencing our priorities.

### February Event

Healthwatch Lincolnshire will actively support the HWLincs VOICE Conference in February 2025. This conference will offer a valuable opportunity for Healthwatch to showcase the key work and impact we have had over the past year, highlighting our achievements and the difference we've made to health and social care in Lincolnshire.

The event will also facilitate engagement with key stakeholders and partners, providing a platform to discuss collaboration opportunities and strengthen relationships. Attendees will be invited to pledge their support for working together more effectively, with a focus on expanding the reach of Healthwatch and ensuring our services continue to represent the diverse needs of the community.

This event will play a crucial role in building partnerships and shaping future strategies for Healthwatch Lincolnshire, ensuring we remain connected to the communities we serve.

### **Healthwatch Steering Group (HSG) meetings in public**

The Healthwatch Steering Group meets in public once a quarter. These sessions offer an opportunity for the public to observe our plans and updates on recent activities. They also provide a platform for the public to ask questions, engage with us about our current projects, and suggest areas for future focus.

### **Research webinars**

As part of our research activities, we host webinars to share the findings from our surveys and engagement work. These sessions bring together professionals, patients, and service users to present the key results, invite feedback, and shape our recommendations. The webinars also provide an opportunity to explore related initiatives that align with our findings and support efforts to improve the health and social care experiences of people in Lincolnshire.



## Research Projects

Between October and December 2024, we will carry out a research project focused on mental health.



The poster features the Healthwatch Lincolnshire logo in the top right corner. The main text reads "Have Your Say on MENTAL HEALTH" in large, bold letters. Below this, it says "Share your experiences..." and lists the target groups: "New fathers", "Farmers", and "Military families and veterans". The background includes a stylized illustration of a person standing on a ladder inside a large blue head silhouette, with a red target and a heartbeat line overlaid on the brain area.

**healthwatch**  
Lincolnshire

Have Your Say on  
**MENTAL  
HEALTH**

Share your experiences...

We want to hear from:

- New fathers
- Farmers
- Military families and veterans

**Focus groups:** New fathers, military families, veterans and farmers.

### Why focus on mental health for these groups?

#### New fathers

Maternal mental health is a focus of many national and local strategies including the NHS Lincolnshire Joint Forward Plan, Better Lives Lincolnshire and the JSNA for the county. However, new fathers are not often included.

An evidence review by Bringing Baby Home, revealed a "dad-shaped hole" in perinatal NHS Services. 1 in 10 men experience anxiety and depression in the first six months after birth. Studies have also shown that fathers with mental health problems during the perinatal period are up to 47 times more likely to be classed as a suicide risk than at any other time in their lives.

## **Military families and veterans**

The 2021 census highlighted there were 44,811 veterans living in Lincolnshire with 22% living in North Kesteven. 38% of veterans nationally have/had a code on their medical record for a common mental health disorder. The conditions were in order of prevalence depression (18%), alcohol misuse (17%), anxiety (15%), PTSD (3%) and dementia (2%). In 2021-22, one in eight UK Armed Forces personnel were seen in military healthcare for a mental health-related reason.

## **Farmers**

The Lincolnshire farming industry produces one eighth of the UK's food, generating more than £2bn in crops and livestock. 30% of the UK's food passes through south Lincolnshire which dispatches over 1,000 of lorry loads of food daily. The industry supports 56,000 people in agriculture, processing, marketing and logistics.

The Farm Safety Foundation revealed "92% of UK farmers under the age of 40 rank poor mental health as the biggest hidden problem facing farmers today". 44 suicides were registered in England and Wales in 2020 for those working in farming. Farming is associated with poor sleep, work-life balance, physical and mental health. It is also affected by traumatic events: extreme weather, epidemics, crime and subsequent financial damages. Furthermore, mental health is often still a topic surrounded by stigma in this community.

## **What will we do with the experiences shared?**

We act as a critical partner to health and care service providers and commissioners across Lincolnshire, using what people have told us as the basis for this relationship.

We want the views and experiences of local people to shape the services they provide and influence the decisions they make. To do this, we analyse what local people are telling us to identify trends and issues. We then talk to commissioners and service providers about what is working well and what could be improved.

Our powers under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 mean we are involved in decision-making, and commissioners and service providers should listen to what we say. We have a seat on the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board and are involved in various other local health and care boards and working groups so that people's views can influence the work of these groups.

We will continue to champion the meaningful involvement of users and carers in the design, delivery and decision-making of health and care services and will encourage providers to use co-production approaches to design and develop their services. The introduction of the Lincolnshire Integrated Care System will result in significant changes to

how the NHS is managed. We will continue to play an active role in this to ensure service users' voices are heard at all levels of NHS decision-making.

### Research webinar

To complement our research activities, we will host a webinar in December to share the findings from our neurological survey. This session will allow us to present the key results, invite feedback, and shape our recommendations. The webinars also provide an opportunity to explore related initiatives that align with our findings and support efforts to improve the health and social care experiences of people in Lincolnshire.

### Workshop at conference

As part of the HWLincs conference, there will be a dedicated session focusing on Healthwatch research projects. This workshop will provide insights into our research activities and their impact, offering an opportunity for attendees to engage with our findings and contribute to discussions about improving health and social care.

Theme	Activity	Outcomes	Date
Focused engagement	Targeted engagement to focus on reaching people effected by health inequalities.	Support more people who face the worst outcomes to speak up about their health and social care, and to access the signposting they need.	Ongoing
Mental health research project	We will undertake mental health research project between October and December 2024, to engage with first time fathers, military families, veterans and the farm workers.	Findings will be shared with stakeholders, service providers and commissioners – who will be able to make improvements to policies, pathways and service delivery as a consequence of our engagement.	October 24 – December 24
Events	October YourVoice@Healthwatch  February HWLincs VOICE Conference	Opportunities for the public to influence our future work and to ask questions around our annual reports.  The VOICE Conference we will share and engage with stakeholders as well as form collaborations for future work.	2 events to take place during Oct 2024 – March 2025

Enter & View	<p>In December we will be supporting the ICB with hospital visits focusing on corridor care.</p> <p>Between January and March we will look to undertake care home visits.</p>	<p>This allows us to provide valuable insight into hospital care and care homes. As well as an opportunity to provide ways to improve as well as sharing best practice.</p>	December 2024 – March 2025
Patient and Service User experience	<p>To increase the number of people who share their experiences with us.</p>		Ongoing

## Influencing service providers, commissioners and decisions

Care decision-makers increasingly know who we are and use the evidence we produce. Our impact and influence are growing. We need people to be listened to at every level of the health and social care system, but some professionals still question the value of our insight.

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We will continue to champion the meaningful involvement of users and carers in the design, delivery and decision making of health and care services, and will encourage providers to use co-production approaches to design and develop their services.

The introduction of the Lincolnshire Integrated Care System will result in significant changes to how the NHS is managed. We will continue to play an active role in this to ensure service users’ voices are heard at all levels of NHS decision making.



## We will:

- Continue to build strong relationships with service providers and commissioners and encourage them to listen and involve their users.
- Provide briefings to decision makers about people’s views and experiences of key services.
- Work with the Integrated Care System to ensure the voices of Lincolnshire residents are heard in decision making.
- Identify opportunities for co-production in service design, development and evaluation.
- Share what people tell us whilst maintaining their anonymity.

Theme	Activity	Outcomes	Date
Watchdog	Under our watchdog role we will look back at some of our previous work and common themes that we hear from Lincolnshire people	We will be able to evaluate how providers have responded to our recommendations and to see how well services have or have not improved for patients.	Ongoing
Healthwatch Steering Group	Once a quarter our steering group takes place as a public meeting.	This provides the public with further openness around the way we work and our priorities as well as a Q&A element for them to ask our steering group questions.	One meeting per quarter in public
Acting on public experience insight	We will ensure the views of the public, which we receive through their feedback, is shared with stakeholders including the Integrated Care System in line with our statutory remit. We will triangulate our feedback with equivalent provider and stakeholder.	Providers and other stakeholders receive our data and act upon it to improve services.	Ongoing
Healthwatch England	Continue to share our local data with Healthwatch England to influence national change as well as supporting national campaigns.	This will raise local issues nationally and will lead to special reviews or investigations to conduct or where necessary, make recommendations direct to the Care Quality Commission.	Ongoing

## Information & Signposting

Helping people access the health and social care services they need remains at the heart of our work. Through our information and signposting service, we support residents by guiding them to appropriate resources, services, and organisations. Common queries include how to access specific services, make a complaint, provide positive feedback, or find additional support.

Feedback from residents highlights that having timely, accurate, and clear information can significantly improve their overall experience with health and care services. Often, individuals require information spanning multiple services, underscoring the need for a more holistic approach to providing guidance and support.

We continue to offer our information line (01205 820 892) or email ([info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)) and are expanding our presence through outreach sessions across Lincolnshire, enabling more residents to seek personalised support and advice.

To ensure information is accessible to all, we provide a mix of online resources, printed materials, and face-to-face guidance.

## Our Commitments

**Collaborate with partners:** We will work with health and social care providers and commissioners to improve access to information, ensuring it is relevant, accurate, and accessible across both digital and non-digital formats.

**Create tailored resources:** Using our understanding of local feedback, we will produce and share resources that reflect the topics people most want information about, presented in the formats that work best for them.

**Promote our services:** We will continue raising awareness of our information line and outreach programme, ensuring that more people know where to turn for help when they need it.

**Champion inclusivity:** We'll work to ensure that our resources and support are inclusive, breaking down barriers so everyone can find the information they need, regardless of their circumstances.

Through these efforts, we aim to empower residents with the knowledge and support they need to navigate the complexities of health and social care services confidently and effectively.

**Offering information and advice is a core part of our work.**

### We will:

- Provide a timely and appropriate response to anyone who contacts us with a health or social care query, whether by phone, email, post, social media, or engagement event.
- Give individuals independent and impartial information and support about choices available to them.
- Promote the information and signposting service to make sure people and service providers are aware of how we can help them.
- Developing helpful guidance and advice articles that we will be sharing on our website.

Theme	Activity	Outcomes	Date
Outreach clinics	We will aim to Increase the volume of people who approach us for signposting	We see an increase in people access information and advice and we continue to respond to all quires received.	Ongoing
Information & advice review	We will review with those who contact us what the effects are of the information and signposting we give to them.	This will not only help with improving the information and advice we give out to people but also valuable feedback to other services and providers.	Begin January 2025
Online articles	Further create online resources and articles for Lincolnshire people to use to help them navigate health and social care services.	Creating a useful collection of helpful guides, information and advice for the public to access.	Ongoing
Attend events	Engage with people at community events across Lincolnshire..	As well as collecting feedback from the public and network with others, this will also allow us to provide useful information and advice to the public.	Ongoing



# Increasing our reach and Impact

## The steps we will take:

**Raise our profile:** We will actively increase awareness of Healthwatch Lincolnshire across the county, with a focus on reaching communities experiencing health inequalities. By prioritising engagement with underrepresented groups, we aim to ensure every voice is heard.

**Develop a communication plan:** A communication plan will guide our work throughout 2025–26. This plan will underpin our efforts to engage with residents, stakeholders, and partners effectively, using targeted approaches to reach diverse audiences.

**Showcase public voice impact:** Sharing the impact of public feedback on health and care services is critical. We will prioritise highlighting the positive changes made as a direct result of the community's input, ensuring people see the value of sharing their experiences.

## Communication

Effective communication and marketing are essential to achieving the goals outlined in our annual plan. We will build on our successful digital communications from 2023–24 and continue to explore new and innovative ways to connect with the people of Lincolnshire.

## Key communication priorities

**Promotion** - Continue to develop, strengthen, and promote the Healthwatch Lincolnshire brand as an independent voice for health and social care.

Ensure all residents and communities in Lincolnshire are aware of our role, services, and how to engage with us.

**Impact** - Regularly communicate the outcomes and achievements of our work, demonstrating how public feedback is driving meaningful improvements in local health and care services.

Leverage media and communication channels to keep stakeholders informed and engaged.

**Support** - Provide accessible, up-to-date information to help residents navigate health and care services, working closely with provider and commissioner stakeholders to ensure accurate and timely content.

By implementing these steps, we aim to strengthen our presence, amplify the voices of Lincolnshire residents, and build greater trust and collaboration with our stakeholders.

Theme	Activity	Outcomes	Date
Communications plan	Develop and implement a communications plan that complements the annual work plan for 2025.	Enhanced awareness of Healthwatch Lincolnshire, better engagement with the public, and improved stakeholder communication.	January – March 2025
Representation	Ensure participation in key meetings, boards, and forums across Lincolnshire.	Maintain visibility, advocate for public and patient concerns, and strengthen collaboration with partners.	Ongoing
Digital engagement	There will be a continued timely sharing of press releases and other communications material with media, key contacts, system leaders and other stakeholders.	We will secure ongoing coverage for Healthwatch Lincolnshire. Key stakeholders and the public will be aware of our public voice. We will remain a “go to” for public comment.	Ongoing
Profile raising	We will increase awareness about Healthwatch Lincolnshire and the work we do.	There will be a brand awareness campaign for the organisation, general profile raising and increasing awareness of Healthwatch Lincolnshire outside of our specific projects focus.	Ongoing



## Service evaluation

As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance the Healthwatch Lincolnshire service, we will carry out several key service evaluation activities between January and March 2025. These activities are designed to ensure that we maintain high standards, remain responsive to the needs of our stakeholders, and continuously improve our impact within the community.

### Healthwatch England Quality Framework

Firstly, we will prepare to conduct a thorough review using the Healthwatch Quality Framework. This framework provides a structured approach to assessing our performance across six key areas:

- Leadership and decision making.
- People: staff and volunteers.
- Sustainability and resilience.
- Collaboration.
- Engagement, involvement, and reach.
- Influence and impact.

By identifying our strengths and areas for improvement, we aim to refine our practices and ensure the highest quality service delivery.

### Stakeholder analysis

We will undertake our annual stakeholder analysis, gathering insights from key partners, organisations, and community groups. This process will help us evaluate how effectively we are meeting the needs and expectations of our stakeholders, identify opportunities for collaboration, and strengthen our relationships with those who share our vision of improving health and care services.

### Staff and volunteer feedback

We will carry out a staff and volunteer feedback session to gather input from the dedicated individuals who drive our work forward. This will help us understand their experiences, identify areas where we can enhance support and development opportunities, and ensure we foster a positive, inclusive, and productive working environment.

## Service feedback

To complement these efforts, we will also utilise feedback collected from the public and participants through surveys, event evaluation forms, and other engagement activities. This will allow us to directly incorporate the views of those who interact with our service into our evaluation process. By analysing this feedback, we can gain valuable insights into how our service is perceived, identify any gaps, and prioritise areas for improvement.

## Annual plan

The 2025/26 Annual Plan will be developed by Healthwatch Lincolnshire and in collaboration with members of the Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) Liaison Meeting. This approach ensures the plan reflects both local concerns and strategic priorities of all organisations, aligning efforts to deliver the best outcomes for Lincolnshire residents.

The plan will outline key activities to address the health and social care needs identified through our engagement and feedback processes. By taking this approach, we can amplify our impact within organisations by using the intelligence gathered from local residents across the county. This ensures that the voices of the community reach the right people to drive positive change. A national review underlines the importance of ensuring that people's voices remain at the heart of shaping and improving services.

Together, these activities will provide valuable insights to guide our strategic planning and service development, ensuring that Healthwatch Lincolnshire remains a trusted voice for the community and a catalyst for meaningful change.

Theme	Activity	Outcomes	Date
Healthwatch England Quality Framework	Prepare for a structured review using the Healthwatch England Quality Framework.	Identify strengths and areas for improvement across six key performance areas, guiding service enhancement.	January – March 2025
Stakeholder analysis	Engage with key partners, organisations, and community groups to gather insights.	Stronger relationships, identification of collaboration opportunities, and better alignment with stakeholder needs.	January – March 2025
Staff and volunteer feedback session	Collect input from staff and volunteers through an interactive session.	Improved understanding of team experiences, enhanced support and development opportunities, and a more inclusive environment.	January – March 2025



Service feedback	Analyse feedback from surveys, event evaluations, and public engagement.	Clearer insights into service perceptions, identification of gaps, and prioritisation of improvements.	January – March 2025
Annual Work Plan	The 2025/26 Annual Plan will be developed by Healthwatch Lincolnshire and in collaboration with members of the Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) Liaison Meeting.	Clear strategic direction for the year, aligning resources and activities to achieve key objectives and priorities.	January – March 2025

## Volunteering

*‘Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside (or in addition to) one’s immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice’*

*Join in, Get Involved: Build a Better Future Volunteering Strategy for NI, 2012*

Volunteers play a key role in helping us deliver the Healthwatch service and Annual Plan. Their contributions are also integral to supporting our statutory obligation to engage with the public and ensure their voices shape health and social care services.

We are dedicated to expanding and supporting our volunteer community to enhance public and patient involvement across Lincolnshire’s health and social care services.

**Volunteers bring invaluable skills, perspectives, and energy, which allow us to:**

- Utilise their capabilities effectively to support our work and maximise impact.
- Celebrate their contributions and strengthen patient participation in local services.
- Promote the benefits of volunteering to build community connections, foster inclusion, and ensure ongoing representation across diverse groups.
- Enrich their experience, ensuring that volunteering with Healthwatch Lincolnshire is both meaningful and rewarding.

We embrace diversity and actively encourage volunteers from all backgrounds to join us. We aim to provide varied opportunities that suit a range of skills and interests, ensuring a supportive and inclusive environment.

The overarching aim of volunteers within the annual plan is to develop and promote good practice in the involvement and support of volunteers within Healthwatch Lincolnshire that will in turn contribute to effective delivery of our Annual Plan.

Our focus is not only on recruiting new volunteers but also on retaining our existing ones through engagement, training, and development. By doing so, we can strengthen their involvement and sustain their valuable contributions.

**We will:**

- Continue to utilise volunteers' skills through our readers panel, quality assuring the written work.
- Ask volunteers to encourage their own networks, friends and family to give feedback about health and social care services.
- Support online research, including gathering feedback from social media groups and auditing GP websites to assess the accessibility and quality of information.
- Further develop digital volunteer roles, adapting to the increasing need for remote and flexible engagement opportunities.
- Engage in co-production work, ensuring volunteers are at the heart of shaping service improvements.
- Expand community outreach, increasing face-to-face interactions with the public to gather insights and raise awareness of our work.
- Continue Enter and View visits, enabling volunteers to observe and report on the quality of care in care homes and other settings.

Our overarching aim is to foster good practice in volunteer involvement, enabling us to deliver the Annual Plan effectively. By prioritising diversity, inclusion, and meaningful engagement, we will ensure that volunteers remain a cornerstone of Healthwatch Lincolnshire's success.

Together, we will amplify the voices of Lincolnshire residents and drive improvements in health and social care services.

## What does the legislation say local Healthwatch do?

1. Promote and support the involvement of local people in the commissioning, the provision and scrutiny of local care services.
2. Enable local people to monitor the standard of provision of local care services and whether and how local care services could and ought to be improved.
3. Obtain the views of local people regarding their needs for, and experiences of, local care services and importantly to make these views known.
4. Make reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved. These should be directed to commissioners and providers of care services, and people responsible for managing or scrutinising local care services and shared with Healthwatch England.
5. Provide advice and information about access to local care services so choices can be made about local care services.
6. Formulate views on the standard of provision and whether and how the local care services could and ought to be improved; and sharing these views with Healthwatch England.
7. Make recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to conduct special reviews or investigations (or, where the circumstances justify doing so, making such recommendations direct to the CQC); and to make recommendations to Healthwatch England to publish reports about particular issues.
8. Provide Healthwatch England with the intelligence and insight it needs to enable it to perform effectively.

### **Delivering for the people of Lincolnshire**

Delivering on our obligations means we are delivering for the people of Lincolnshire. We are contractually required to undertake a range of activities that support the health and social care needs of the county. We must deliver these to the highest standard.

### **Organisational governance**

Strong organisational governance is fundamental to the success of Healthwatch Lincolnshire. The Healthwatch Steering Group actively contributes to governance arrangements, supported by the HWLincs Board of Trustees, which is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of accountability. This ensures that we consistently meet all aspects of governance, with financial and legal obligations maintained, and decision-making processes reflecting best practices.

To further strengthen our operations, we will implement the Healthwatch Quality Framework, enabling us to operate to the highest standards across all activities.

Additionally, regular policy reviews ensure our practices remain current, compliant, and aligned with evolving legislation and organisational needs, fostering transparency and accountability throughout. Together, these measures create a robust framework that underpins the sustainability and effectiveness of our organisation.

Issue	Activity	Success
Effective governance	The Healthwatch Steering Group plays a vital and active role in the governance arrangements of Healthwatch Lincolnshire. It is overseen by the HWLincs Board of Trustees which is committed to upholding the highest standards. This ensures that Healthwatch Lincolnshire consistently meets all aspects of excellence in governance.	All financial and legal obligations are maintained Board decision making and appraisals reflect the highest standards of governance.
Financial stability	We will ensure that expenditure is within income.	Success will mean maintaining a balanced budget where expenditure consistently aligns with income.
Healthwatch Quality Framework	We will implement the Healthwatch Quality Framework to ensure that all aspects of our organisation consistently operate to the highest standards.	Success will be demonstrated by the consistent application of the Healthwatch Quality Framework across all areas of the organisation.
Policy review	We will conduct policy reviews to ensure our organisational practices remain up-to-date, compliant with current legislation, and aligned with best practices. This ongoing process supports transparency, accountability, and operational excellence.	Success will mean policies are regularly updated to remain compliant with legislation and best practices, ensuring transparency, accountability, and operational effectiveness across the organisation.




**healthwatch**  
Lincolnshire


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