



Speaking up for better care

Healthwatch Bury Annual Report 2025/26

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Chief Officer
Andrew Griffiths



"I am incredibly proud of everything we have achieved over the past year and of the commitment, energy and compassion our team has shown in serving the people of Bury. In a year that has brought challenge, change and uncertainty, we have remained focused on what matters most: being a strong, independent voice for local people and making sure their experiences help shape better health and social care services."

A message from our Chair

This year, Healthwatch Bury has proven time and again that listening is only the first step, acting on feedback is what drives real change

When people told us about services falling short of their needs, we did not simply note their concerns. We challenged suboptimal podiatry care that left an older resident feeling dismissed and the service was committed and keen to make changes. We took A&E feedback directly to the Northern Care Alliance, leading to a very positive, iterative liaison that improved patient flow and communication. We analysed the experiences of those struggling with prescription delays and ADHD pathways, turning individual stories into evidence that decision makers could not ignore. That is our job: to hold services to account, and to keep doing so until things improve.

Our Board is a real strength. More than half have held director or senior management roles in the NHS – alongside deep expertise in accessibility, independent living, academic research, BME knowledge, and VCSE leadership. Our staff team champions rights-based approaches, combining empathetic listening with skilled project management, led by a dynamic Chief Officer who leads with passion, care and conviction.

And I want to put on record my deep gratitude to that staff team. Through a time of national change and speculation about Healthwatch's future, they have stayed steady and worked even harder for the people of Bury. That is no surprise to me – I believe they are one of the best Healthwatch teams in the country, if not the very best.

“ Every week, people who would never feel confident navigating the complex health systems or online forms drop in for a simple chat. They tell us what is worrying them, ask for help finding a dentist or a care home, or just share their story. Those conversations are the heartbeat of our work. They reach the unheard and ensure that even the least confident voices shape our priorities.

A message from our Chair

I am also proud that we have become a truly accessible presence in Bury. Our centrally located office has seen a significant increase in footfall from those who need our service most and that matters. Every week, people who would never feel confident navigating the complex health systems or online forms drop in for a simple chat. They tell us what is worrying them, ask for help finding a dentist or a care home, or just share their story. Those conversations are the heartbeat of our work. They reach the unheard and ensure that even the least confident voices shape our priorities.

What has become increasingly clear this year is just how much our strategic partners value us. Across the health and care system, from Bury Council to the Northern Care Alliance to our Integrated Care System, we are seen as a trusted, independent resource.

Why? Because the system is under sustained pressure. Constant change, workforce challenges, and financial constraints mean that the system is at risk of developing 'fault lines'.

People can feel overwhelmed, confused, and left behind. That is where we step in. Whether it is a housebound patient waiting for a hip operation, a family navigating complex financial assessments, or a resident simply trying to find an NHS dentist – we help people find their way. We prevent them from falling through the cracks. And we feed those real experiences back to the people who can redesign services around what actually works.



Chair
Ruth Passman

Looking ahead, there has been national speculation about the future of Healthwatch. But let me be clear: the end of Healthwatch Bury's patient voice work is highly unlikely. What is more probable is evolution, a reconfiguration of how patient voice is embedded within the health and care system. And on that point, I am confident. We are already positioning ourselves not as passive observers, but as active shapers of that future. Whatever the exact configuration looks like, whether patient voice sits within the NHS, local authorities, or a new model entirely, Healthwatch Bury will be at the table. We will be a trusted delivery partner, bringing our independence, our community reach, and our track record of impact. The people of Bury will not lose their voice. We will make sure of it.

A message from our Chief Officer

We have strengthened our visibility across the borough, expanded our reach into communities, and continued to listen carefully to people whose voices are too often overlooked. From our growing outreach activity to the renewed momentum of our Enter and View programme, I believe we have built real trust, demonstrated our value and reinforced our role as a constructive, influential partner within the local system.

I am especially encouraged by the way we have combined strategic influence with practical support for individuals, helping residents navigate concerns, raise issues and access the right help when they need it. That balance is central to who we are, and it is something we will continue to build on. As we look ahead to 2026/27, I feel optimistic about the future and excited by the opportunities in front of us.

We have already started shaping plans that will place a stronger focus on young people and veterans, ensuring we better understand their experiences and champion the improvements that matter most to them. We will continue to grow our presence, deepen our partnerships and strengthen the impact of the evidence we gather, so that more people can see that their voices truly lead to change.

I am also pleased that our Prostate Cancer Project has now been successfully completed, with strong collaborative work across the Healthwatch Greater Manchester network resulting in a detailed report shared with providers. This work reflects the quality of our contribution and highlights the value of working together at both local and regional level, providing a strong foundation for potential future phases of activity.

With a dedicated team, committed volunteers, supportive partners and a clear sense of purpose, I am confident that the year ahead holds even greater promise. We are in a strong position to keep evolving, keep influencing and keep delivering for the people of Bury, and I am genuinely excited about what we can achieve next.



**Chief Officer
Andrew Griffiths**

About us

Healthwatch Bury is your local health and social care champion.

We ensure that NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

To bring closer the day when everyone gets the care they need.



Our mission

Our mission is to ensure that the voices and experiences of Bury residents shape the design, delivery, and improvement of local health and social care. We listen to people from every community, amplify unheard voices, and work with partners and decision makers so that care is accessible, inclusive, and responsive to everyone's needs.



Our values are:

Equity: We're compassionate and inclusive. We build strong connections and empower the communities we serve.

Collaboration: We build internal and external relationships. We communicate clearly and work with partners to amplify our influence.

Impact: We're ambitious about creating change for people and communities. We're accountable to those we serve and hold others to account.

Independence: Our agenda is driven by the public. We're a purposeful, critical friend to decision-makers.

Truth: We work with integrity and honesty, and we speak truth to power.

Our year in numbers

In 2025/2026 we supported nearly 400 people to have their say and get information about their care. We employed 4 staff and, our work was supported by 16 volunteers.



Reaching out:

Nearly 400 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

We engaged with over 2,000 people via our drop ins, park bench surgeries and community events.



Championing your voice:

We published 3 reports about the improvements people would like to see in areas like Prescriptions follow up project, Grundy Day Care Centre Enter and View and Fairfield General Hospital's A&E Enter and View highlighted patient experiences of new prescription systems, including both improvements and ongoing challenges, helping shape future service changes. Building on this work, we are planning upcoming NHS App support sessions to help residents better understand digital services and improve access to care.



Statutory funding:

We're funded by Bury Local Authority. In 2025/26 we received £122,000 which is the same as the previous 12 years.

Healthwatch story so far

Since 2012, Healthwatch Bury has helped make sure local people are heard. Born from major changes in health and care, and established locally from 2013, it has become Bury's independent champion for patients, carers, service users and communities. Put simply, Healthwatch Bury listens to what people say, speaks up about what needs to change, and pushes for services that work better for everyone.

2012-13

A new public voice begins. Healthwatch was created through national reform, replacing earlier involvement bodies and giving local people a stronger, clearer route into health and social care decisions in Bury.

2014-19

Listening, learning and building trust. Healthwatch Bury built its local presence by hearing from residents, visiting services, publishing findings and making sure real experiences reached the people in charge.

2020-22

Standing with communities in difficult times. As services changed during and after the pandemic, Healthwatch Bury helped people make sense of what was happening and kept attention on access, communication and inequality.

2023-25

Turning insight into influence. More recently, Healthwatch Bury has strengthened its reach, engaged hundreds of residents, amplified seldom-heard voices and helped shape conversations about women's health, dementia, prescriptions, clearer communication and access to care.

Why independence matters

An independent voice matters because people need somewhere trusted to turn when services are confusing, hard to access or not working as they should. Healthwatch Bury is outside the system, but close enough to challenge it. That means it can hear honest experiences, bring forward concerns that might otherwise be missed, and speak up for people who are too often unheard. Independence gives Healthwatch Bury credibility. Its statutory role gives it influence. Together, those strengths help turn people's stories into action, improvement and accountability. In short, independent voice matters because better services start with listening.

A year of making a difference

Over the year we've been out and about in the community listening to your stories, engaging with partners and working to improve care in Bury. Here are a few highlights.

Spring

Gathered patient feedback on prescription access and worked with primary care and partners to improve understanding, influencing service responses and supporting clearer, patient-led prescribing pathways.



Raised ADHD pathway concerns with decision-makers, improving understanding of barriers around diagnosis and treatment, and supporting more accessible, coordinated and responsive services for neurodivergent people.



Summer

Started a Greater Manchester-wide project about prostate cancer care, engaging diverse communities and partners to gather patient experiences, strengthening collaboration and shaping future improvements in cancer care services.



Collected feedback from veterans highlighting gaps in recognition and access to services, informing work with partners to improve identification, support, and signposting within primary care



Autumn

Conducted independent Enter and View visits to A&E, gathering real patient and staff feedback to inform service improvements, with findings supporting changes to patient flow, capacity, and urgent care provision



Delivered independent visits and published findings from day care services, amplifying lived experiences and influencing quality improvements while strengthening accountability across health and social care providers.

Winter

Delivered an inclusive mental health workshop for neurodivergent women, creating a safe space for shared experiences, improving awareness, and providing practical tools to support wellbeing.



Despite national uncertainty around Healthwatch's future, we have reassured residents and partners of our continued presence, remaining committed to amplifying local voices and improving services.



Working together for change

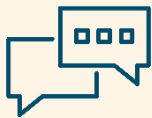
We've worked with neighbouring Healthwatch to ensure people's experiences of care in Greater Manchester are heard at the Integrated Care System (ICS) level, and they influence decisions made about services at Greater Manchester ICS

This year, we've worked with 9 Healthwatch across Greater Manchester to achieve the following:



A collaborative network of local Healthwatch:

We have progressed into the third year of our partnership agreement with the ICS, as part of a network of 10 local Healthwatch to amplify the voices of people across the region. We've contributed to regional strategies, produced GM-wide reporting, and launched shared platforms to strengthen our insight. Our representative ensures lived experience is heard and influences decisions across the ICS.



A big conversation around prostate cancer:

Through the GM Healthwatch prostate cancer project, led by Healthwatch Bury, we worked with eight other local Healthwatch to gather lived experiences from men across Greater Manchester. Insights from surveys, focus groups and interviews shaped GM Integrated Care Board discussions, supporting early steps towards an outcomes-focused approach to measuring success and improving prostate cancer pathways in the areas men said matter most.



Building strong relationships to achieve more:

During 2025/26, GM Healthwatch worked collaboratively across boroughs, sharing insight, coordinating engagement, and amplifying residents' voices to influence regional health and care priorities. This partnership approach strengthened consistency, avoided duplication, and improved impact. Although this phase of joint working has now come to an end, the relationships, learning, and shared commitment developed continue to inform and support local Healthwatch activity across Greater Manchester.

Making a difference in the community

We bring people's experiences to healthcare professionals and decision-makers, using their feedback to shape services and improve care over time. Here are some examples of our work in Bury area this year:



Driving improvement through individual experience

Using patient feedback to influence service quality and care standards

Healthwatch Bury supported a patient who experienced delays and barriers to accessing specialist neurology care, worsened by transport failures and communication challenges. By raising concerns with PALS and Adult Social Care, we ensured decisionmakers understood the real impact on a vulnerable individual. This led to alternative appointment arrangements, recognition of accessibility needs, and a reassessment of care. The case highlighted wider system issues and prompted more coordinated, patient-centred support.



Strengthening communication through A&E engagement

Connecting patient voices with providers to improve urgent care experiences.

We carried out Enter and View visits at Fairfield General Hospital A&E, speaking directly with patients and staff to capture real experiences during a busy winter period. We shared this feedback with the Trust, creating a clear link between public voice and service improvement. As a result, providers recognised key pressures and took action to improve patient flow, capacity, and communication, helping ensure services are more responsive to community needs.



Improving support for veterans

Change takes time. We work behind the scenes with services to consistently raise issues and bring about change.

Healthwatch Bury is steadily working to improve how veterans are recognised and supported across health and care services. Through ongoing engagement with veterans' groups, coffee mornings, and system partners, Healthwatch Bury continues to highlight issues such as poor identification of veteran status and inconsistent signposting. While no single change has solved these challenges yet, sustained dialogue and shared learning are contributing to growing awareness and gradual improvements toward a more veteran informed and coordinated system.

The reality behind delivering impact

Creating lasting change in health and social care is not always immediate. While some improvements happen quickly, others require long-term collaboration, trust-building, and system-wide transformation.



Has our core funding kept pace with rising costs?

No. Like many organisations, our core funding has not kept pace with inflation and the increasing cost of delivering services.

In real terms this means greater needs on staffing and resources.

Increased demand from communities needing support. The need to do more with less without compromising quality.

So how have we adapted?

- Securing additional funding and diversifying income streams
 - Strengthening partnerships across health, social care, and the voluntary sector
 - Prioritising high-impact work and focusing on community need
- Continuing to deliver meaningful outcomes despite financial constraint



Impact takes time: Transforming financial support services

One example of longer-term impact is our work influencing local financial assessment services:

Bury Council's Commissioning Manager commented: Bury's Financial Assessment Service has recently been redesigned following a transformation programme and is now called the Adult Social Care Financial Support Service. This transformation was a collaborative effort, involving both staff and customers, and has resulted in an improved service for all stakeholders. During the discovery phase of the transformation programme, the Healthwatch Financial Assessments Report provided valuable data and customer feedback. This information was instrumental in identifying current challenges, uncovering successful practices, and guiding the design of the new service. Engaging with Healthwatch, an independent organisation, has proven to be an excellent way to capture the perspectives of service users. Through their involvement, we were able to listen to individual stories and gather meaningful data, ensuring that the voices of those using the service were at the heart of our decision-making process. This partnership has been fundamental in shaping a service that truly meets the needs of the stakeholders.

Listening to your experiences

Services can't improve if they don't know what's wrong. Your experiences shine a light on issues that may otherwise go unnoticed.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Attending and contributing to a broad range of local events and engagement activities, including Collabor8, Whitefield Community Day, Carers Rights Day, Armed Forces Covenant Conference, housing events, and health and wellbeing events
- Delivering park bench surgeries and community outreach across local parks and neighbourhoods.
- Hosting regular drop-in sessions both at our office and within community venues and GP practices,
- Engaging directly with community groups and seldom heard populations
- Delivering targeted engagement through focus groups, one-to-one interviews, and surveys



Prescriptions follow up project

The Prescriptions follow up project focused on understanding whether patients were experiencing improvements following earlier work on patient led prescribing.

By returning to communities in Bury North, Healthwatch Bury listened directly to residents about how prescription processes were working in practice and whether previous concerns had been addressed.

What did we do

Healthwatch Bury engaged directly with residents at community groups and local venues, including food pantries and support groups. We gathered lived experience through conversations and feedback, focusing on whether accessing prescriptions had become clearer or easier. Findings were shared with primary care and integrated care teams to provide a grounded picture of patient experience at neighbourhood level.

Key things we heard:



79%

of users reported waiting times had increased across all pharmacies.

68%

reported being very satisfied, experiencing no problems in collecting their prescriptions.

92%

felt confident asking pharmacists' questions about their medication

The follow up project aimed to understand the real-world impact of changes introduced since the Prescriptions Project and the launch of Patient Led Prescribing project.

What difference did this make?

This follow-up work gave decision makers a clear picture: although some progress had been made, confusion and unequal access persisted for certain groups. That evidence strengthened our ongoing conversations with system partners, underlined the need for clearer communication and more consistent processes, and underlined that patient experience must remain firmly at the heart of local prescribing improvement work.

Enter and View – Improving Patient Experience in Urgent Care

Healthwatch Bury listened directly to patients and staff through its Enter and View visit to Fairfield General Hospital A&E during a period of significant system pressure.

By speaking to people in real time, Healthwatch captured honest feedback about waiting times, communication, and overall experience of urgent care. This ensured that the voices of those using the service were heard in a way that surveys or complaints alone may not capture.

Key things we heard:



High satisfaction with clinical care in treatment areas, with patients consistently describing care as professional, kind, and timely, particularly once seen in bays or cubicles.

71%

of patients were satisfied with their initial contact with healthcare professionals when attending A&E, indicating generally positive first interactions despite wider pressures.

“Had a scan as soon as arrived... staff were all amazing.”

“Not spoke to anyone whilst waiting... better explanation about the process required.”

Healthwatch Bury engaged with 28 patients and 3 staff members across two Enter and View visits to Fairfield General Hospital A&E, gathering real-time feedback on urgent care experiences. This direct engagement ensured both patient and frontline staff perspectives were captured, providing a balanced and evidence-based picture of how the service was operating during periods of high demand.

What difference did this make?

The feedback was shared with the Northern Care Alliance, who confirmed the report provided a fair and accurate reflection of the service. This supported ongoing improvement work already underway, including service expansion and estate development. By presenting lived experience clearly and independently, Healthwatch Bury helped strengthen dialogue between patients and providers, ensuring that service changes remain grounded in what matters most to people using urgent care services.

Hearing from all communities

We're here for all residents of Bury. That's why, over the past year, we've worked hard to reach out to those communities whose voices may go unheard.

Every member of the community should have the chance to share their story and play a part in shaping services to meet their needs.

This year, we have reached different communities by:

- Reaching communities whose voices may go unheard: Engaging with veterans and neurodivergent groups through targeted workshops, surveys, and community partnerships, ensuring their experiences of health and care services are captured and represented.
- Reaching people experiencing socio-economic deprivation: Attending housing events, food pantries, and community drop-ins, supporting residents with advice on housing, benefits, and access to care, while gathering feedback from those facing financial hardship.
- Ensuring community voices are heard by system leaders: Sharing patient feedback through Enter and View visits and engagement projects (such as A&E and cancer work), influencing providers and Integrated Care System partners to review services and improve access, communication, and patient experience.



Creating safe spaces for neurodivergent women

Healthwatch Bury delivered a mental health workshop specifically designed for neurodivergent women, a group that often faces barriers to accessing appropriate support. Participants shared experiences of isolation, late diagnosis, and difficulties navigating services. The workshop created a safe, inclusive environment where women could openly discuss their needs, learn emotional regulation techniques, and connect with others with similar experiences. Feedback highlighted how rarely opportunities like this exist and how valuable it was to feel heard and understood within a supportive space.

What difference did this make?

The workshop gave a voice to a seldom-heard group whose experiences are often overlooked in mainstream service design. Insights gathered highlighted gaps in accessible mental health support and the need for more tailored, inclusive provision. Participants left feeling less isolated, more informed, and better equipped to manage their wellbeing. This feedback is now being used to inform system partners about the importance of neurodiversity awareness, helping drive more inclusive approaches to service delivery and improving accessibility for others facing similar challenges.

Highlighting ADHD barriers through lived experience

Through engagement and casework, Healthwatch Bury heard from individuals struggling with ADHD pathways, including delays in diagnosis, challenges accessing medication, and barriers within shared care arrangements. Many reported confusion, inconsistent communication, and difficulties meeting clinical requirements, such as blood pressure checks, preventing timely treatment. These experiences were gathered directly from residents and reflected broader issues within local mental health services, particularly for neurodivergent individuals trying to navigate complex systems.

What difference did this make?

By sharing these lived experiences with decision-makers, Healthwatch Bury helped highlight systemic barriers affecting people with ADHD. This feedback has contributed to greater awareness among providers of the challenges within current pathways, including the need for clearer communication, better coordination, and more flexible approaches to care. Elevating these voices supports ongoing discussions around service improvement, ensuring that future pathways are more accessible, consistent, and responsive to the needs of neurodivergent people in the community.

Hearing from all communities

We're here for all residents of Bury. That's why, over the past year, we've worked hard to reach out to those communities whose voices may go unheard. The photos below demonstrate the reach we have had into the communities in 2025/26



Restart the Heart collaboration event with BSV Fitness and Healthwatch Bury

Greater Manchester Healthwatch Prostate Cancer project focus group



GM Veterans Conference in March 2026

Spring Wellbeing Event – Listening to the community

Creating space for connection, feedback and shared experiences

At the GM Live Well Spring Festival event in March, we engaged directly with local residents to understand their health and wellbeing needs. Through informal conversations, activities, and our wellbeing information stand, we gathered valuable insight on access to services, lifestyle support, and community priorities.

The event created an open, welcoming space where people felt comfortable sharing their experiences, allowing us to strengthen our understanding of local needs and ensure that community voices continue to shape our work and future engagement.



Information and signposting

When you're struggling to find an NHS dentist, looking for help about how to make a complaint, or need advice about a good care home for a loved one, we're your first port of call.

This year nearly 400 people have reached out to us for advice, support or help finding services. These conversations also help us to understand where, and how, your care can be made better.

We're based in the town centre, offering weekly drop-in sessions that make it easy for people to access our support. Over the past year, we've supported individuals by:

- Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Supporting people to look after their health
- Signposting people to additional support services like housing, food banks and mental health support.
- access the services they need
- Supporting people to look after their health
- Signposting people to additional support services

A young man with long dark hair and a goatee, wearing a black leather jacket and a blue lanyard with a Healthwatch Bury ID badge, stands on the left. A woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark blue zip-up jacket and a blue lanyard with a Healthwatch Bury ID badge, stands on the right. Between them is a large white banner with a yellow curved top. The banner features the Healthwatch Bury logo at the top, followed by the text 'Your Voice Counts...' in green. Below this, contact information is listed: Email: info@healthwatchbury.co.uk, Phone: 01612536300, Address: 56-58 Bolton Street, Bury, BL9 0LL, Website: www.healthwatchbury.co.uk, Facebook: HealthwatchBury1, and Twitter: @healthwatchbury. At the bottom of the banner, it says 'Talk To Us... We are listening' in pink and black, followed by 'Tell us about and social care services in Bury'. Three circular icons are at the very bottom: a blue circle with a white head profile, a purple circle with a white stethoscope, and a blue circle with a white 'H' inside a square.

healthwatch
Bury

Your Voice Counts...

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Talk To Us... We are listening
Tell us about and social care services in Bury

Improved Empathy Access And Confidence In Podiatry

After an older resident's concerns, Healthwatch Bury challenged poor podiatry experiences, securing rapid follow-up, system reviews, clearer information, compassionate care and patient involvement across services.

An older resident with diabetes and mobility issues reported dismissive communication, limited treatment, and discharge without advice or support from NHS podiatry. Healthwatch Bury raised these concerns with PALS and the service, seeking clarity on eligibility, pathways and improvements. The Northern Care Alliance responded promptly, reviewing criteria, redesigning pathways, updating information and addressing empathy concerns. The patient received a new appointment, experienced respectful, informative care, felt reassured, and accepted discharge with understanding and renewed confidence.



'I felt listened to and respected. The clinician explained everything clearly, treated me kindly, and reassured me about my care, restoring my confidence without needing to complain formally this time.'

Supporting a housebound patient to get their hip operation

Housebound member of the community waiting for a hip operation and had fallen on several occasions. Adult Care could not support as not a permanent disability.

Healthwatch Bury made a referral to the Staying Well team. They said they could assess the patients need for small adaptations, equipment and see what other support they could offer. The patient received a call from the Staying Well team to say they had a cancellation and would attend the patient's home to assess.

The Staying Well team arranged some help, small adaptations (perching stool, wheeled trolley, a second grab rail, raised toilet seat and a bath board). They also agreed to make enquiries regarding a temporary blue badge and attendance allowance.



'Thank you so very much for all you've done I can't thank you enough, someone who listened and took on board I'm so very grateful'

Showcasing volunteer impact

Our fantastic volunteers have given **around 25 volunteer days** to support our work. Thanks to their dedication to improving care, we can better understand what is working and what needs improving in our community.

This year, our volunteers:

- supported community engagement events and drop-ins
- gathered feedback from residents
- contributed to research and data analysis
- created accessible resources and communications
- acted as Authorised Representatives on Enter and View visits, helping capture patient experiences and strengthen the local voice in shaping health and care services.



Enter and View authorised representatives

These are our Healthwatch Bury volunteers that have gone through our thorough Enter & View training processes and have passed the relevant Disclosure and Barring checks, enabling them to conduct visits on behalf of Healthwatch Bury.

- Caroline Sutcliffe
- Florence Sokol
- Alison Slater
- Alan Norton
- Paulina Nehrebecka
- Jordan Santana-Vega

In addition to the above, our staff team have also undergone the training and checks and are authorised to conduct Enter & View visits.



At the heart of what we do

From finding out what residents think to helping raise awareness, our volunteers have championed community concerns to improve care.



Jordan

'When I first joined Healthwatch, I wasn't very confident and found it difficult to step outside my comfort zone. However, attending engagement events gradually helped me build confidence and connect with new people. Each experience pushed me a little further, and over time, I've grown into a much more outgoing and self-assured person. Volunteering has not only allowed me to contribute to my community but has also had a positive impact on my personal development.'

Jordan joined Healthwatch Bury as a volunteer in July 2025, supporting the Youthwatch project. Since then, Jordan has developed the Youthwatch Bury website and helped deliver engagement activities across the borough.

'Volunteering with Healthwatch Bury has been a very positive experience for me. I've had the opportunity to connect with people in the community, listen to their experiences, and support improvements in local health and care services. I've really enjoyed meeting different people and learning new skills. This experience has helped me become more confident and feel more involved in the community.'

Neda joined Healthwatch Bury in October 2025 and has supported our regular drop-in sessions, as well as a range of events and workshops. They bring great enthusiasm to the volunteer team.



Neda

Be part of the change.

If you've felt inspired by these stories, contact us today and find out how you can be part of the change.



www.healthwatchbury.co.uk



0161 253 6300



info@healthwatchbury.co.uk

Finance and future priorities

We receive funding from Bury Local Authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to help us do our work.

Our income and expenditure:

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£122,000	Expenditure on pay	£119,094
Additional income	£21,000	Office and management fee	£26,077
Total income	£143,000	Total Expenditure	£145,171

Additional income is broken down into:

- Hosting HW in GM: £7000
- Being a part of the GM Healthwatch network: £2000
- NHS Engagement Project: £12,000

Integrated Care System (ICS) funding:

Healthwatch across Greater Manchester also receive funding from our Integrated Care System (ICS) to support new areas of collaborative work at this level, including:

Purpose of ICS funding	Amount
Greater Manchester Network funding for single point of contact and administrative hub.	£99,000

Finance and future priorities

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.

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 three priorities for the next year are:

1. Continue to drive our Youthwatch and Veterans projects across the Bury community, reaching out to seldom-heard groups, ensuring their feedback reaches decision-makers, and pushing for meaningful change.
2. Deepen our presence in local communities to tackle inequalities, uncover unmet needs, and help residents navigate the complex world of health and social care – so people get the support they need to stay safe and well.
3. Position Healthwatch Bury for a changing environment, strengthening our role as a trusted, independent voice and working with partners across Greater Manchester to ensure that patient voice is not lost, but evolves and grows.

Looking ahead: the future of patient voice

As the system evolves, Healthwatch Bury will continue to champion residents' voices and work with partners to shape a stronger, more inclusive future for health and care in our borough.

Recent national developments will shape the future of Healthwatch. In June 2025, the Government announced plans to close Healthwatch nationally and locally, with patient voice functions expected to transfer to NHS organisations, councils, and the Department of Health and Social Care. Healthwatch Bury will continue to operate until at least April 2027, and during this time we remain fully committed to supporting our communities.

Future arrangements are likely to embed patient voice more directly within the health and care system. While this may strengthen links to decision-making, evidence highlights that independence has been key to building trust, reaching underserved communities, and providing honest challenge.

This period offers an opportunity to build on our strengths. Healthwatch Bury has a strong track record of listening to residents, influencing services, and supporting people to navigate care.



Statutory statements

Healthwatch Bury CIC, 56-58 Bolton Street, Bury, BL9 0LL

Healthwatch Bury 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 6 Board members who work voluntarily to provide direction, oversight, and scrutiny of our activities.

Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2025/26, the Board met 5 times and made decisions on matters such as our future public engagement plans and strengthening governance and oversight during uncertainty. In addition, the Board hosted four drop-in sessions, including a public event that welcomed local councillors and the MP's case worker, an opportunity to strengthen relationships and explore collaborative ways of working. We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities by using public feedback, consulting with representatives and patient groups, involving volunteers and lay people in our Enter & View panel and inviting participation in our AGM.

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 2025/26, we have been available by phone and email, provided a web form on our website and through social media, and attended 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 will also have copies available at our engagement events as well as our AGM.

Responses to recommendations

We had no providers who did not 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.

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Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

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

In our local authority area, for example, we take information to Health Scrutiny Committee, Social Care Risk Escalation Group, the System Assurance Committee, Public Health Delivery Partnership, Elective Care and Cancer Recovery Board and several more.

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers for learning in the Greater Manchester Integrated Care System. For example, we have a representative on the GM System Quality group. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Bury is represented on the Bury Health and Wellbeing Board by Chair, Ruth Passman.

During 2025/26, our representative has effectively carried out this role by providing strategic input, constructive challenge and using influencing skills to ensure that the voice of services users, carers, patients and the public is heard. Working in collaboration with leaders from the healthcare system, the public, voluntary and community sector and a range of local stakeholders, this has enhanced our strategic impact last year, in close alignment with our input into the broader Greater Manchester (GM) programme of work to secure Healthwatch representation at all levels as we moved to an Integrated Health System.

Healthwatch Bury was represented on Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnerships in 2025/26 by Danielle Ruane –Chief Coordinating Officer of the Healthwatch in Greater Manchester Network, and Greater Manchester Integrated Care Boards by Heather Etheridge –Independent Chair of the Healthwatch in Greater Manchester Network. Ruth Passman represents Healthwatch in Greater Manchester on the Population Health Committee; a committee of the NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board. In addition to being responsible for discharging the statutory organisational responsibilities of NHS GM, the Committee provides wider system leadership in relation to population health in Greater Manchester, with a primary focus on improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities.

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Enter and view

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Grundy Day Care Centre – Persona	Persona invited Healthwatch Bury to provide an independent assessment of care quality and user experience within the day service, recognising its role in supporting independent living and helping to raise awareness of the service locally.	We shared our findings with the provider to support service improvements. The provider developed an action plan which included enhancing the range of activities available to attendees, improving opportunities for choice in daily routines, and strengthening communication with service users and carers.
Fairfield General Hospital – A&E department	Northern Care Alliance invited Healthwatch Bury to provide independent insight into care quality, patient experience, accessibility and areas for improvement.	We produced a report highlighting patient and staff experiences and shared this with the Trust. As a result, the Trust identified and progressed improvements.


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2025 – 2026 Outcomes

Project/activity	Outcomes achieved
Veterans Engagement	Strengthened relationships with veteran communities, improving awareness of support services and influencing discussions on veteran-friendly GP practices and clearer access pathways.
District Nursing Project	Gathered patient feedback to identify required improvements in communication, access, and patient experience within home-based care services, supporting service development.
Enter and View (A&E Fairfield)	Provided independent insight into urgent care delivery, highlighting good practice and areas for improvement; findings contributed to ongoing service developments including improved patient flow and capacity.
Mental Health Engagement	Delivered targeted, inclusive engagement (e.g. neurodivergent women), improving awareness of support and highlighting the need for accessible, person-centred mental health provision.
NHS Engagement (VCSE sector)	Enabled voluntary organisations to capture and share lived experience, strengthening community voice and informing future service planning for people with neurological conditions.
Prostate Cancer Research (GM)	Developed a large-scale evidence base through surveys and qualitative insight, supporting improvements to cancer pathways and raising the profile of men's health.
System Insight & Feedback	Identified key issues including waiting times, communication gaps, and patient experience, influencing system partners and highlighting the need for better coordination between services.
Prescriptions Follow-Up Work	Gathered feedback on prescription access and repeat medication processes, highlighting delays, communication issues, and coordination gaps between GP practices and pharmacies, supporting improvements in access and patient experience.

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