



# Strategic Plan 2024–2027

Your voice improving  
health and care

**healthwatch**  
Essex

# About us

---

## Healthwatch Essex is your local health and social care champion.

We were set up under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The legislation was passed with the aim of putting patients and the public first, by strengthening their collective voice. The Act created a national network of Healthwatch organisations and a national umbrella organisation, Healthwatch England. This commitment was updated in the reform of the Health and Social Care Act 2022.



### Our vision

That people's voice and experiences influence all health, wellbeing and care.



### Our mission

Seeking and listening to people's experiences and voices to create opportunities to shape all health and wellbeing services and policy in Essex.



### Our legal requirements

We are required to:

- Obtain the views of people about their needs and experience of local health and social care services.
- Make these views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services.
- Make reports and make recommendations about how those services could or should be improved.
- Escalate concerns about health and social care services with local leaders.





# Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why over the last three years we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feed this back to services to help them improve. This strategy builds on that work and sets out our future direction.



## Our Future Direction

### Building relationships, listening and interpreting

Our previous strategy supported our development as an organisation between 2020 and 2023. We have revised this document to reflect how we have grown as an organisation in that time.

We now carry out a wide variety of different types of work ranging from our core work, through to commissioned work for partners and commercial work for wider agencies.

We pride ourselves on our commitment to innovation – introducing new and inclusive ways for people to connect and be involved with our work. We now run a wide variety of ambassador groups encouraging specific cohorts to work closely alongside us – and co-production remains at the heart of all that we do.

Transparency is also an important part of the way we work and each year we run a showcase event so that there is an opportunity for our partners, stakeholders and volunteers to learn more about our wider work.

# Our Model

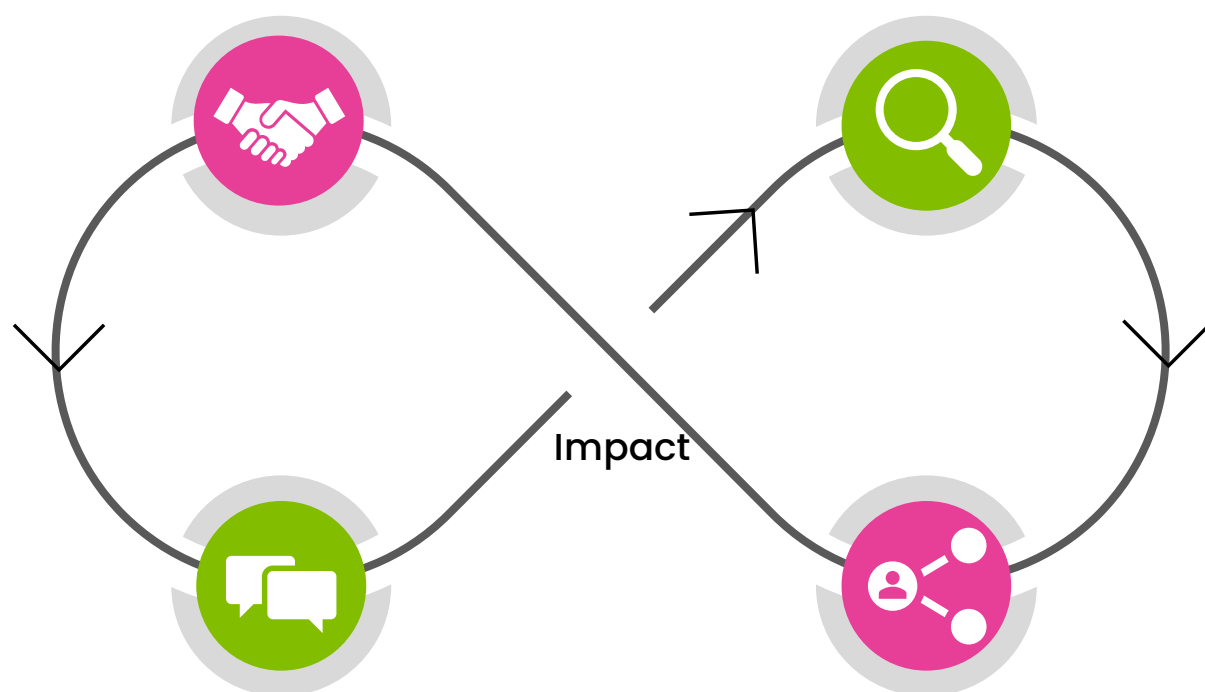
The model below explains how we operate at each stage of the process of capturing lived experience and ensuring that it is placed at the heart of health and social care in Essex.

## 1. Build relationships

With partners,  
stakeholders & the public.

## 3. Analyse & interpret

Using innovative research  
techniques.



## 2. Capture Lived Experience

Using qualitative and  
quantitative methods

## 4. Share our findings

In accessible, inclusive  
ways.



# 1

## Building relationships

We pride ourselves on building good working relationships with partner organisations and developing strong networks of volunteers who work with us over time in our ambassador programmes. Our ambassadors all have lived experience of health and social care services and are passionate about sharing their stories. We are often approached by organisations to support their work in co-producing documents, strategies and policy with a specific demographic. Our networks are forever growing, allowing us to facilitate workshops, working groups, and events across Essex

# 2

## Capturing lived experience

Lived experience is the most valuable asset that exists to inform the planning, construction and delivery of our health, care and wellbeing services. Our priority is to link with the residents of Essex in order to gather feedback, experiences and opinions from the widest demographic possible. We take our responsibility for ensuring that the voices of the people are heard, with particular focus on building relationships with individuals and cohorts who are perhaps less likely to be heard – and enabling them to feel comfortable to share their stories too.

# 3

## Analysis and interpretation

Our high-quality projects are founded on an in-depth analysis of the lived experiences that we record. Our staff use academically rigorous methodologies like thematic analysis to identify key themes and trends that inform the lives of Essex residents. We develop training resources to ensure that these approaches are accessible to staff and volunteers alike. Our analysis is consistently informed by multiple perspectives to enhance the validity and credibility of our findings. This triangulation of views is supported by our lived experience volunteers who provide invaluable perspectives on our research

# 4

## Sharing our findings

It is important to us that we share our findings in ways which are inclusive, accessible and likely to have the greatest impact. We work hard to produce materials in a wide variety of formats, ranging from film and audio to reports and blogs. We are constantly looking for new opportunities and now share our work and the voices of the people we work with across five different social media channels, our website, in print and via our monthly podcast. It is vital that the voice of lived experience is at the heart of health and social care and this is only possible when we share our work effectively in the right places at the right time.



# Impact

Over the past three years we have worked closely with local people to deliver some fantastic impact. The awareness raising of challenging topics has been exponentially improved by the use of TikTok, Instagram and the new podcast channel.

We ensure Healthwatch Essex is regularly represented at the Health and Wellbeing Boards, Integrated Care Boards and local Alliance meetings to ensure lived experience and patient voice is included in all local decision making.

Although fantastic progress has been made, we have great ambition for the future; we hope to continue to grow our social media presence, brand awareness and contact rate within our Information and Guidance service and we want to continue to grow and be a well-respected and supportive organisation empowering local people to be heard.



Healthwatch Essex  
49 High Street  
Earls Colne  
Colchester  
CO6 2PB

[www.healthwatchesessex.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchesessex.org.uk)

t: 01376 572 829

e: [enquiries@healthwatchesessex.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchesessex.org.uk)



@HWEssex



/healthwatchesessex



@HWEssex



/healthwatch-essex