

Annual Event 2025



25th March 2025

River Tees Watersports Centre

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees Annual Event



On Tuesday 25th March 2025 we held our annual event to celebrate our communities achievements throughout the year, raise the voices of those with lived experience, provide valuable information about local support services and work together to shape our workplan for 2025-2026.

25 organisations, along with members of the public attended to represent a wide variety of people and services, including community groups, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Public Health, University Hospitals Tees and the VCSE sector, bringing together enthusiasm and passion to improve the wellbeing of our local community.



Guest Speakers

Peter Smith: Chair, Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees



We provided an overview of our work 2024-2025 and the impact we have had on our journey to change.

- Development of the Health & Care Ambassador Programme. Over 40 professionals have committed to bringing health and wellbeing services together, developing relationships, building trust and capacity into the system to make meaningful change based on real time intelligence and need.
- Nationally raising voices of people with lived experience of ADHD & autism to support the development of new pathways of care and raise awareness of the needs of parents, carers and those impacted by neurodiversity to help to improve wellbeing and outcomes.
- Reaching our migrant communities to learn how we can work better together to improve health and access to services, sharing best practice and overcoming barriers to develop positive working relationships.
- Working with young people to listen and understand what challenges they face in supporting and improving health.
- Continuing our work with Public Health to support people impacted by substance misuse as changes are made to drug and alcohol support services, including extended hours for support services, implementation of a freephone

number, improved provider collaboration and raising awareness and understanding of substance misuse via lived experience training.

- Gathering local feedback and providing responses to regional work programmes to inform recovery plans including;
 1. Women's Health
 2. Hospital Group Tees
 3. Dentistry
 4. NHS 10 Year Strategy

Liam Knowles: Family Support Worker, Bridges Family & Carer Service



Liam provided a powerful insight into substance misuse, his knowledge and experiences were shared in a thought-provoking way to help to raise awareness and understanding of the impact of substance misuse. Liam will be delivering free training sessions throughout the Borough, including directly to young people at the planned Health & Care Ambassador Programme event.



"I found it another very enjoyable day and great to get such a variety of speakers. Also to get a chance to speak to people from such a wide range of disciplines."



Liam Knowles, Bridges Family & Carer Service

Contact

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Susan Mansaray: Founder, Purple Rose



Susan's passion for change and supporting migrant communities was evident as she spoke of her personal journey and the challenges faced by migrant, refugee and asylum communities. Susan told us how trust and culture can be a significant barrier to accessing health and care support, along with significant other personal priorities.

Susan works tirelessly to provide a safe and inclusive space for people to attend for comfort and support. Working together with us we have been able to bring health and care services to the community, building trusting relationships. It is vital this approach is harnessed to ensure ongoing effective working, improving health outcomes.



"They say we're hard to reach. But we're not. They (Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees) found us. We're here."

Susan Mansaray, Purple Rose



Lindsay Graham: Advocacy & Healthwatch Director, People First
Philip Kerr: Operations Manager, Carers Federation

Lindsay and Philip spoke about various advocacy support available to residents in Stockton-on-Tees. They shared with us different types of advocacy that can support

people to have their voices heard, helping people to have control over their lives and navigate complex systems and processes, with the right support and information.



Care Act Advocacy

Supporting people through needs assessments, care reviews and safeguarding.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy

Supporting people who have been assessed as lacking capacity to make specific decisions.

Independent Mental Health Advocacy

Supporting people who have been sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

Independent General Advocacy

Supporting people with a health or social care need on general issues.

“Attending the Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees annual event was a privilege. Spending dedicated time to explore local health and social care priorities with members of the public, the voluntary sector, and NHS and Local Authority partners was an invaluable opportunity to collaborate, listen, and understand the community's needs and concerns. It highlighted the importance of collective effort in shaping better services and outcomes for all.”

Lindsay Graham, People First

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North East NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy (ICA): Contact

The graphic features the ICA logo (a green speech bubble with 'ica' in white) and the text 'North East NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy'. Below this, it asks 'Need to raise an issue about your recent NHS experience? Our service offers free and independent advocacy support. Contact us to see if we can support you.' It lists contact methods: a freephone helpline (0808 802 3000), a textphone (07889 088284), an email address (ica@carersfederation.co.uk), video messaging (07889 088284), a website (www.nenhscomplaintsadvocacy.co.uk), and a Facebook search term ('North East NHS ICA'). Logos for the Carers Federation and ICA are at the bottom.

Susan Robinson & Angela Patrick: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Health and Wellbeing Librarians



Susan and Angela have been working closely with us to develop the Health & Care Ambassador Programme. They have extensive experience and knowledge of engaging with the public to promote important wellbeing messages. They spoke of tried and

tested methods of engaging with young people, reinforcing the need to be fun and interactive.

Stockton-on-Tees Public Health Information Library is available to Health Practitioners and people who are interested in promoting health and wellbeing information. The library provides useful marketing materials, supporting both local and national campaigns and general health information and advice. There is the ability to book out larger campaign items, such as smoking 'tar jars', models, stands and promotional outfits.

“The annual event for 25/26 has once again demonstrated Healthwatch’s commitment to capturing the voices of our community in the bid to make more meaningful improvements to health and care services, the collaborative efforts highlighted across the day were truly commendable. We were especially honoured to be part of the day and to be able to share good practice and valuable insights regarding our work with young people and health professionals.

“It will be a privilege to continue our close collaboration with Healthwatch, to help utilise fully the Public Health Library resources to help enhance support for our communities, children, young people and their care givers. It was a wonderful event and one that inspired us all for the coming year”.

Susan Robinson, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Health and Wellbeing Library

Sarah Jones: Manager, Stockton Wellbeing Hub



Sarah attended the Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees Annual Event 2024 to share with everyone developments of the opening of the newly established Stockton Wellbeing Hub.

This year Sarah came back to update us on progress to date, the impact the service is having for people in our community and plans for the future.

To date over 500 people have accessed the service. A third of those have requested specific mental health support.

Partners working in the Wellbeing Hub:

- Impact on Teesside
- TEWV NHS
- CGL
- Recovery Connections
- Harbour
- Bridges
- Thirteen (due to start in April)
- Catalyst Stockton as the lead organisation for Community Mental Health Transformation
- Co located with CAB
- Stockton Carers and many more coming soon

There are also activities with Shape the Play, DWP, Learning and Skills and more.



“I am excited about collaborating closely with everyone in the future. The event offered a fantastic opportunity for organizations dedicated to making a difference to come together, exchange best practices, and share valuable information.

It was inspiring to take part in discussions about improving service accessibility for everyone and to witness the genuine enthusiasm in the room for driving positive change.”



Sarah Jones, Stockton Wellbeing Hub

Contact

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Rob Papworth: SBC Strategic Development Manager (Adults & Health) & Natalie Shaw: SBC Assurance and Co Production Manager



Rob and Natalie shared information with us about the review of the Adult Social Care Strategy for Stockton-on-Tees.

There is a commitment to embedding the voices of people and partnership working.

Key requirements for a new strategy 2026–2030:

- An accessible co-produced strategy with the Making It Real Board which reflects the voices of our citizens and partners.
- Aligned with the Stockton-on-Tees Plans that “Stockton-on-Tees is home – a warm and friendly place, where we welcome others and come together as a single community. We are a diverse and inspiring Borough, culturally rich and with confidence in a future that we can all share and be proud of. At the economic heart of Tees Valley, we are a dynamic, safe and healthy place, where everyone can grow and succeed. We work together to reduce inequalities and remove barriers to opportunity. We are Team Stockton-on-Tees.”

Priorities include:

- Ensure the person is at the heart of their care and support –strengths–focus
- Increase opportunities for co-production
- Strive to improve the choice of places to live for people with care and support needs to live independently
- Support people to remain safe & independent in their own homes for as long as possible

- Working with communities to support them to help themselves (Community-Led initiatives)
- Publish the new Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Expand drug and alcohol services



“Thank you for the opportunity to attend the annual Healthwatch Event. I look forward to this event as it is great chance to hear about the great work that’s happening



and the opportunities to work together with our citizens and partner organisations to improve services. The table discussions were also really valuable to share thoughts on priorities for the year ahead, and to consider these through a wider lens and from a range of perspectives and others’ lived and living experiences.”

Natalie Shaw, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Adult Social Care

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All presentations can be viewed and downloaded on our website: [HWS Annual Event 2025 Guest Speaker Presentations](#)

Key Findings

The feedback received on the day demonstrated the qualitative, meaningful conversations that took place within the workshops. System leaders, professionals and people with lived experience provided important insight of challenges within the health and care system and the impact that this has on local people.

There was resounding enthusiasm and commitment to work together to overcome difficulties, share best practice and look for robust resolutions to help to improve health and wellbeing in our communities.

Some of the conversations that took place included:

- Better understanding of mental health both with professionals and communities, considering terminology used and correct pathways of care. Identifying alternative approaches to support young people, cultures and men’s health alleviating stigma.

- Improved communication and knowledge of what is available and where, supporting people to understand their rights and limitations. Considering a wide range of audiences.
- Older people, ensuring digital inclusion and understanding what is meant by 'early intervention'.
- Improved bereavement support services, that include provision for those experiencing loss of children through stillbirth, miscarriage or child protection orders.
- Provision to support people to keep active both physically and mentally, reducing social isolation and considering lack of income and the cost of living crisis.
- NHS 10 Year Plan – concerns were raised about the integration between services, including hospital, community and prevention. Although steps and discussions are taking place it is felt that this needs to be improved if ambitions are to be realised. Community Social Care is critical to success.
- University Hospital Group Tees – Concern over patient access and experience.
- The need to build on the 'Health and Care Ambassador Programme' using skills knowledge and intelligence from across the sector to reach our communities and improve access to important health and care services.

Recommendations

- As health and care services continue to go through a period of transformation, it is vital that we continue to **strengthen collaborative** working to improve outcomes for our population. We need to ensure we are open and transparent about the challenges we face, to enable us to work with communities to find alternative solutions to strengthen resilience, raise aspirations and improve health and wellbeing.
- **Terminology** used by some professionals can be confusing, as services implement change we need to ensure we are clear about how and what we communicate to be effective.
- Highlighting areas of **best practice** provides a valuable opportunity to learn. If something is working well, we need to focus on that area to help to build capacity in the system.
- **Commissioning of services** should encourage partnership working to ensure we utilise skills experience and knowledge across the sector.

Next Steps

All the information provided on the day, along with valuable feedback gathered throughout the year will be presented to the Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees Board to determine our workplan for 2025-2026.

The intelligence contained within this report will be shared widely with our partners, including the Making it Real Board, Powering Our Community initiatives, the ICB and VCSE to provide added value and intelligence to priority areas.

Ongoing positive feedback received about the Health & Care Ambassador Programme, highlights the impact this work has had throughout the year, not only in improving access to health and care services, but in strengthening professional relationships across the sector building capacity, learning and resilience.

We are committed to continuing this work, building networks and strengthening our collective response to real time intelligence. We will provide an update in the coming weeks of our work focus for 2025-2026.

We would like to thank everyone for their ongoing support and the very obvious commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of our local area.

‘Together we will make a difference’

“It was a pleasure to see so many people interested in improving our local health and social care services attend our recent Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees Annual Event. With a wide variety of topics covered and eloquently presented by knowledgeable representatives of their chosen subjects, we were reminded that true progress in health and social care is not just about research and innovation but about listening, learning, and acting on the voices that matter most – the people we serve.



“This event has given us valuable information to help progress our work plans for the next 12 months and will surely enable service improvements for our local people.”

Peter Smith, Chair, Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees



Feedback from attendees:



"Very interesting day. It will be interesting to see how Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees move forward."

"Very informative and enjoyable event. Lots of information available. Good for networking."

"This was a well-planned event which enabled me to network with other services and find out about some opportunities in Stockton. A great event – thanks for the invite!"



"Really enjoyed the event, Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees is amazing. Stockton-on-Tees is so connected and supportive. We are so lucky to be able to work in such effective collaboration."

"Yesterday we attended the Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees annual event. We raised awareness of independent advocacy available in Stockton in partnership with Carers Federation and helped to think about important topics for Healthwatch's work plan next year."

"It was a brilliant opportunity to hear about brilliant engagement, impactful outcomes and great services on offer. Thank you to the Healthwatch Stockton team!"



HEALTHWATCH STOCKTON-ON-TEES

ANNUAL EVENT – 25th MARCH 2025

AGENDA

Time	Agenda Item	Who	Additional information
9.30am	Registration & Refreshments	All	
9.45am	Welcome, Housekeeping & Plans for the Day	Natasha Douglas, HWS Manager	
9.50am	Overview of the Year	Peter Smith, HWS Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievements • Annual Report 2024-2025 • Overview of work so far this year
10.05am	Drug & Alcohol Awareness	Liam Knowles, Family Support Worker, Bridges Family & Carer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing insight and intelligence to support awareness of substance misuse • Training available for delivery throughout the Borough
10.45am	Comfort Break	All	
11.00am	Migrant Health & Community Needs/Health & Care Ambassador Programme	Susan Mansaray, Founder, Purple Rose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strength of working together • The impact the Health & Care Ambassador Programme has had to the community and an insight into the needs of migrant communities
11.15am	Advocacy Support	People First, Lindsay Graham ICA – Philip Kerr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An insight into advocacy support available.
11.35am	ADHD Awareness	Natasha Douglas, HWS Manager and Larissa Bennett, ADHD Champion	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following on from our workplan, we have continued

			<p>to champion the needs of service users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthwatch England are working nationally to support the development of new referral pathways. • 'A day in the life of Larissa'
11.45am	Engaging with Young People/Health & Care Ambassador Programme	Susan Robinson, & Angie Patrick, SBC Health and Wellbeing Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with young people – successes and challenges to engagement
12.00pm	Wellbeing Hub	Sarah Jones -Wellbeing Hub Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on progress to date and next steps.
12.10pm	SBC Adult Strategy	Rob Papworth, SBC Strategic Development Manager (Adult & Health) and Natalie Shaw, SBC Assurance and Co Production Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for reviewing the Adult Strategy – priority areas and partnership working. • Embedding the voices of people
12.30pm	Lunch	All	
1.15pm	HWS Workshops - Priorities 2025/2026 - 'Have your say'	Natasha Douglas, HWS Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop to help us to shape our workplan 2025-2026
2.15pm	Feedback	All	
2.30pm	Questions, Next Steps & Close	Natasha Douglas, HWS Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q&A • Plans & next steps • Feedback forms • Thank you

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