



New chair of Healthwatch Somerset announced

Judith Goodchild - the new chair of the interim board for Healthwatch Somerset - says she is looking forward to representing the views of the public on local health and care services as part of her new role.

Former Ofsted inspector Judith from North Petherton has been appointed Chair of Healthwatch Somerset's interim board and will help to develop the role of the organisation in the county.

Judith said: "I'm very aware of the problems facing the health service at the moment and I'm supportive of the services but equally think the public's voice should be taken into account when making decisions at a higher level. I believe I have an awareness, knowledge and understanding of primary and secondary health services, so I have a holistic view of healthcare in Somerset."

[Read](#) Judith's full story.



Volunteer Bob urges others to join him

Listening to patients and their experiences of health and care is key to improving these services in Somerset - says local volunteer Bob Champion.

Former ambulanceman Bob is a volunteer at the county's independent health and care champion Healthwatch Somerset and he's encouraging others to join him in his role.

80-year-old Bob, from Shepton Mallet, said: "By talking and listening to people who have been ill - you get fantastic knowledge and feedback on health services, which we will all have to use at some stage in our lives.

"Patients are the experts, each and every one of them has a story to share - whether that's good or bad. Volunteering at Healthwatch Somerset allows me to get that feedback from these people and then take it to the decision-making bodies, who have the power to make changes where necessary.

"I would encourage others to volunteer and help make a real difference."

Read Bob's full story [here](#) or to find out how to become a Healthwatch Somerset volunteer contact the office on 01278 264405 or visit [here](#).



Come and meet us next month!

Find out about volunteering opportunities with Healthwatch Somerset at a series of 'Meet and Greets' next month.

Jacquie Franks, (pictured) a Development Officer at Healthwatch Somerset, plans to talk to local people about what it means to be a volunteer and discuss current opportunities. She will be at:

- **Shepton Mallet Library**, 2 Market Place, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5AZ, on Monday 8 January, 11am - 1.30pm.
- **Frome Library**, Justice Lane, Frome, BA11 1BE, on Tuesday 9 January, 10.30am - 2.30pm.
- **Wellbeing Zone, Yeovil Library**, King George Street, Yeovil, BA20 1PY, on Tuesday 23 January, 10.30am-2.30pm.

Jacquie explained: "We are currently organising some meet and greets and we are keen to hear from local people who may be interested in volunteering with Healthwatch Somerset. We're also keen to listen to their views on a wide range of local services such as hospitals, dentists, GP surgeries, care homes, ambulance services and much more.

"We are independent from the NHS, local authority and any other health and social care service - so people can talk to us freely about their experiences. When we spot a pattern of issues or concerns we present these views to the decision-making organisations so together we can make a real difference."

For more details visit the [events diary](#).

Christmas opening hours

The Healthwatch Somerset office will be closed from Monday 18 December and will reopen on Tuesday 2 January.

Feedback can still be left by emailing info@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk



Healthwatch Somerset is the county's independent health and care champion. We exist to ensure that people are at the heart of care.

Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers listen to what people like about local health and care services, and what could be improved.

These views are then shared with the decision-making organisations in the county, so together we can make a real difference.



The Healthwatch Somerset service is run by Evolving Communities CIC, a community interest company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 08464602. The registered office is at Unit 5 Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN126LH.

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01278 264405

Woodlands House, Woodlands Business Park, Bristol Road, Bridgwater TA16 4FJ