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Emily brings new focus

The new manager of Healthwatch Somerset plans to use her previous experience of managing over 2000 volunteers across the South West to build a stronger voice for the people in the county.

Former Swim England team leader Emily Taylor (pictured) previously recruited and supported thousands of volunteers to govern 150 swimming clubs.

Emily said: "I would like us to increase the number of people we engage with and increase our presence across the county. Initially I hope to do this by building a strong team of employees and volunteers who have a clear vision and sense of purpose.

"My priority is to ensure that more people know about Healthwatch Somerset and what it is we do. I hope we can listen to more views on local health and care than ever before." [Read more...](#)



Have your say on local health services

The chair of Healthwatch Somerset is encouraging local people to give their views and experiences of local health and care services following a recently published report on Mendip House in the county.

The Safeguarding Adults Review, commissioned by Somerset's Safeguarding Adults Board, found that autistic residents at the Highbridge care home were subjected to "cruel behaviour", bullying and humiliation.

Judith Goodchild, chair of Healthwatch Somerset, said: "We are sad to note the recently published report on Mendip House in Somerset run by the National Autistic Society. It was particularly traumatic for those who had loved ones in care they thought was of a high standard and trusted.

"Healthwatch Somerset is always open to listening to the concerns from the general public about any issues they have with the healthcare they, or friends and relatives, are receiving."

[Read more....](#)

We are a Disability Confident Employer!

Healthwatch Somerset is making the most of the talents disabled people can bring to the workplace.



It's been recognised as a 'Disability Confident Employer' by a government scheme which helps organisations think differently about disability. The scheme also provides support to recruit, employ and retain both disabled people and those with health conditions. For more details about the scheme visit: <https://disabilityconfident.campaign.gov.uk/>



People in Cheddar encouraged to leave feedback on chemist closure

Feedback is wanted on a planned closure of a Lloyds Chemist in Cheddar (pictured).

Dr Sara Nelson for Healthwatch Somerset said: "We are sorry to hear that Lloyds Pharmacy is closing in Cheddar and are concerned about any effects that this may have on the local community.

"Healthwatch Somerset is here to listen to the voices of local people on health and social care, therefore, we would welcome feedback from local people about this issue. We will then share this anonymised information with commissioners."

People can leave their feedback with Healthwatch Somerset by calling 01278 264405 or emailing info@healthwatchesomerset.co.uk.

Seeing first hand regional ambulance service at work

Staff from Healthwatch Somerset visited the area's ambulance service to learn how it operates on a day-to-day basis.



The South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT), the main provider of emergency services in the South West, invited Healthwatch Somerset to its Bristol call centre to listen to calls, learn about ambulance waiting times and see first hand how it responds to calls from the public.

Dr Sara Nelson, for Healthwatch Somerset, said: "It was a good opportunity to learn how the 999 service works. We can now pass on this information to members of the public when we talk about ambulance services. The visit also meant we could share with SWASFT more about our role as a Healthwatch."

Job opportunity

Do you know anyone who might be interested in a data protection role for Healthwatch Somerset's parent company?

Evolving Communities is looking for a Data Protection Administrator for a temporary role. Applications close 11 March 2018. [More details.](#)



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, SN12 6LH.

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