

September 2018 e-bulletin

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Burnham have their say on 111 service

More than 100 people shared their views on the county's 111 non-emergency phone line at a fun day at Apex park, Burnham-on-Sea.

Healthwatch Somerset had a stand at the summer event and asked people for their views on the 111 service as part of a county-wide survey.

Healthwatch Somerset volunteer Hilary Bartrum from Burnham-on-Sea, said: "Apex Park was an excellent event, and the weather was perfect, although there was a bit of wind and we nearly did a Mary Poppins impression whilst trying to hang onto the gazebo!"

"My feeling was that our stall was an unqualified success, not only for the volume of completed surveys, but also for raising awareness about Healthwatch Somerset." The results of the survey will be published 1 October and presented to the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group.



Somerset's health and care strategy

A long-term strategy to improve health and care in Somerset will have public input - thanks to a seat at the table for Healthwatch Somerset.

Healthwatch Somerset has been invited to take a place on the 'Fit for my Future' strategy programme board and will ensure the public are given the opportunity to have their say.

Manager Emily Taylor said: "This is a long-term strategy spanning 10 years so it is important to all Somerset residents that it sufficiently meets our local needs. Whilst Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group and Somerset County Council do hold a lot of data on local needs, this is nothing without local stories and experiences adding context. We hope to bring that local voice to the table."

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 5 September.

"Join us and give everybody a better future!"

New Healthwatch Somerset volunteer Stephen Sharples (pictured) is urging people in the county to be more actively involved in the decisions around their health and wellbeing.



Stephen, from Langport, moved to the area last year and previously chaired a successful Patient Participation Group (PPG) in the West Midlands, as well as helping to set up a multi-practice PPG which promoted health and wellbeing in the community and put forward ideas to the local decision-making groups.

He said: "Healthwatch is a brilliant idea, it's there to help you share your experiences with those who make the decisions. I would urge people to share their views and also volunteer, it's not just about your own health matters – it's for the people of Somerset!" [How to get involved...](#)

Healthwatch monitor winter planning



Plans to combat potential winter pressures at Yeovil District Hospital are well underway and staff from Healthwatch Somerset will be keeping a close eye on the process.

Last winter, Yeovil District Hospital (YDH) saw emergency admissions rise which led to beds being unavailable and operations cancelled. Healthwatch Somerset will meet with YDH to talk about their winter plans, and will join forces with the Patient Voice at the hospital to increase patient engagement to ensure more views are heard about services delivered.

Emily Taylor, Healthwatch Somerset Manager, said: "We understand the hospitals in Somerset are busy planning for any winter bed pressures and we have seen first-hand the planning and discussions involved. We have a seat on the Community Hospital Bed Resilience meetings. When we move into the winter season, we will be keeping a close eye on the situation and would urge patients and their families to let us know about their experiences." [Share your views...](#)

Join us this month

Have your say on local health and care services or find out how you can help through volunteering. We will be at:



- Talking Café at The Methodist Hall, College Street, Burnham-on-Sea from 10am-4pm on Tuesday, 4 September.
- Talking Café at the Bridgwater Arts Centre, Bridgwater from 10am-12.30pm on Thursday, 13 September.

[Find out about more events...](#)

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.

healthwatch
Somerset

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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 4 Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH.

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