

## Getting together in Yeovil

We will be attending the Yeovil Together event on **Saturday 28 August**, 12.30pm to 5pm, at Yeovil Recreation Centre. Come and say hello and tell us about your health and social care experiences and the issues that really matter to you. [Find out more](#)



## Talk to our Young Listeners in Taunton



Our Young Listeners and our Youth Engagement Officer, Max, will be at Lyngford Park, Taunton, on **Tuesday 31 August** from 11am-3pm. They are hoping to meet up with other young people to hear about their experiences and views of the health and social care services that they use.

If you can't come along, you can share your views by [completing our online survey](#) by 6 September. [Find out more](#)

## Tell us how waiting for surgery has affected you

Your local health and social care champion

**healthwatch**  
Somerset



**Has waiting for surgery affected your health and wellbeing?**

Tell us and help the NHS in Somerset understand your care and support needs while you wait for treatment

Feedback by  
6 September 2021

[www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/RFT-HWS/](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/RFT-HWS/)  
0800 999 1286 (freephone)

We want to know how waiting for surgery is affecting people, so that we can help Somerset's NHS understand how to improve support for patients waiting for treatment. Our online survey closes on **6 September**:

[www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/RFT-HWS/](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/RFT-HWS/) or people can get in touch to arrange a convenient time to feedback over the phone – call Freephone 0800 999 1286 or email: [info@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk).

Visit our website to [find out more about this project and NHS waiting times](#)

## New Healthwatch Somerset Board members

We're delighted to welcome Tony Robinson and Gill Waldron to the Healthwatch Somerset Board.

Tony had a long career as a Naval Officer and then worked globally in systems engineering. For the past five years he has been a Public Governor of Yeovil District Hospital, where he developed a good understanding of the delivery of acute NHS services in the county.



Gill has been involved with the health service in Somerset for 30 years, initially with the Somerset Community Health Council, and then as a Board Member of Yeovil District Foundation Trust, where she became interested in Clinical Governance. She is also a member of her local GP Patient Participation Group and on the Board for End-of-Life care in Somerset.



[Find out more about the Healthwatch Somerset Board](#)

## Public feedback helps improve patient transport



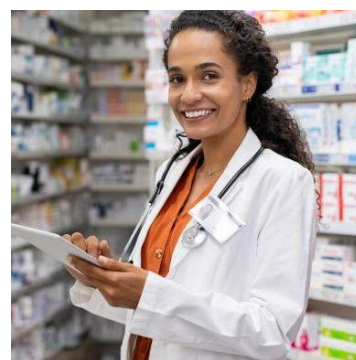
New rules for NHS transport support were announced this month informed by patient and public feedback. Every patient who needs kidney dialysis will now get free transport to and from vital hospital appointments, and other patients

should find it simpler to get free transport, including those with long term conditions and mobility problems.

In 2019, Healthwatch England, in partnership with Age UK and Kidney Care UK, published a report called [There and back](#), which looked at the experiences of over 3,000 people who shared the challenges they faced when travelling to and from NHS services. NHS England then reviewed Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services (NEPTS), working with Healthwatch to make sure the needs of patients were at the forefront of new proposals. [Read more about the changes](#) being introduced to NEPTS and broader NHS transport support.

## Pharmacies in England to offer free blood pressure tests

From October, every NHS pharmacy in England will be able to provide free blood pressure checks to people aged 40 and over. NHS England says the new service, which follows a 2019 pilot scheme, will help find thousands more people living with cardiovascular disease earlier and prevent over 150,000 heart attacks, strokes, and dementia cases – a key part of the NHS Long Term Plan. [Read more](#).



### Share our news

If you know someone who would be interested in keeping up to date with our news or getting involved with our work, please share this bulletin and the [sign-up link](#).

Speak up and help make health and social care better  
for you and your community

**Healthwatch Somerset** is the county's independent health and social 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. We serve the geographical area of Somerset County Council, which includes the districts of Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Somerset West and Taunton.



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 2 Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH.



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