



Coronavirus: We're here to provide information and to listen

As health and care services come under increasing pressure due to the coronavirus, and access to services becomes more challenging, remember that we're here to help. If you have questions or experiences about how coronavirus is affecting health and care in Somerset, please get in touch.

Healthwatch Somerset Manager, Hannah Gray, said: "We are in regular contact with health and social care providers in Somerset, so we have the most up-to-date information about how to access the services and support you need. Sometimes, just talking to someone about what to do and where to go can be reassuring, so do please get in touch if you need our help. Also, as part

of our ongoing work promoting public feedback to influence positive change in local health and social care, we are interested in hearing how the coronavirus has affected your access to care."

- Read the latest advice about coronavirus from [NHS England](#)
 - Check if you have coronavirus symptoms online with [NHS 111](#)
 - Get in touch with us:
[Information about local services and support](#)
[Share your views](#)
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Meet our new Board Members - they are passionate about making health and social care better for local people

We're delighted to announce the appointment of two new Local Board members, Rena Randle and Anne Clarke. They are both former teachers who believe passionately that health and social care services can be improved if they reflect and respond to the views and needs of local people.

Rena is particularly interested in giving young people the chance to share their views to help shape the future of health and care services in Somerset. Her many years' experience working in education, and as a mother of three and grandmother of five, will enable her to develop and enhance our work with young people.





Anne has a wealth of experience and skills to draw on in her new role as Local Board member. She had a long career in teaching, specialising in early years development and curriculum, she was a school governor for 25 years, has volunteered in a range of health and care settings and she is a member of her Parish Council.

[Read more about Rena and Anne ...](#)

[Find out about volunteering opportunities with Healthwatch Somerset](#)

Future focus: forthcoming work to look out for



At Healthwatch Somerset, March is a time for completing outstanding projects, and for reviewing public feedback received during the year to inform our future priorities.

We have been working with our Healthwatch Somerset Board and consulting with local partners and stakeholders, to ensure our future work focuses on the needs of local people while reflecting national and local priorities in health and social care. We look forward to April when we will announce our priorities for the year ahead.

Also, in April, we will be telling you more about our recent research into peoples' experiences of accessing care through GP surgeries in Somerset (prior to the coronavirus pandemic).



We are doing things differently for a while

Healthwatch Somerset is here to find out what matters to local people about health and social care services – what works and what needs to be improved. One of the ways we usually do this, is to talk to people in the community and in health and social care settings. Due to coronavirus, it's no longer safe for you or for us to be out and about. There are plenty of other ways to get in touch however, and we will let you know about new surveys and feedback opportunities as they arise.

Let people know we're here to help; stay in touch
and stay safe

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.



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01278 264405

Healthwatch Somerset · Woodlands House · Woodlands Business Park, Bristol Road · Bridgwater,
TA6 4FJ · United Kingdom

<https://www.healthwatchsomerset.co.uk>