

# **Report to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

11<sup>th</sup> June 2026

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## 1. Healthwatch Oxfordshire reports to external bodies

For all external bodies we attend our reports can be found online at:

[www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports-to-committees](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports-to-committees)

We attend and report to Health and Wellbeing Board (2026) and Health Improvement Board (2026). We attend Primary and Community Board, Neighbourhood Health working groups, and Oxfordshire Health Inequalities Forum and Oxfordshire Marmot Place meetings.

We published our priorities and focus for the coming year 2026–27 here:

<https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-priorities>

We have published Healthwatch Oxfordshire responses to Oxford Health draft strategic framework, and to government consultation on proposals for Local Government Reorganisation here:

<https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/correspondence>



We are holding a public event to showcase our work over the last year! This will be held online, **via Zoom, on Wednesday 8th July, from 1–2pm**. Members of the Healthwatch Oxfordshire team will talk about some of our achievements in 2025–26 and how our work has helped to improve local health and social care services. We will also take questions about our work.

All are welcome – just follow this [Zoom link](#) on the day to join.

If you are unable to attend but would like to submit a question to be asked at the event, please [contact us](#).

## 2. Update since the last Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) Meeting April 2026

### Healthwatch Oxfordshire reports

We make sure we hear from people via a mix of methods, including survey online and in paper form, and through ongoing face to face outreach, on the streets, at events and community settings. All this years' reports, along with summaries, and responses from providers and commissioners to date can be seen here:

[www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports-hub](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports-hub)

All reports are available in **easy read**, and word format. We follow up responses to recommendations again after six months.

- **What we heard about GP services in Oxfordshire** (April 2025 - March 2026 summary of themes from feedback from 786 people). We presented to Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) working group on GP services in April.
- **Hearing from older Chinese people in Oxfordshire.**

We supported community researcher Derek Ng to interview 20 older Cantonese-speaking people from Oxfordshire about their experiences of health and care services.

We heard about language barriers and a lack of interpreting and communication support, including when booking and attending GP appointments. People told us that health and care services could use text messages and outreach to community centres to share information and hear their voices.

*"Interpreter! I need help from an interpreter. It is quite troublesome if there was no help from interpreter. My daughter could not do the job right as both her Chinese and English languages were not fluent."*

*"Well, if it is just a simple conversation in the GP surgery then I do not have a problem. However, if I attend a hospital appointment, the medical terms that the specialty consultants use would be too much for me. I do not think I could manage."*

*"I think I did manage to understand up to like 70% of the whole conversation. It was because he sometimes used medical terms which I did not understand. So I guess I covered about 70% only."*

*"It gets a bit more complicated as well in case you want a face-to-face appointment. They rather offer telephone appointment which is not ideal for me. I do have a problem in using phone as I find it difficult to express myself over the phone."*

- **"If we were treated the same as any other race" - Black Women in Maternity (BWIM)** is a community project developed by Black female community workers in Oxford. The project is funded by Well Together and supported by Healthwatch Oxfordshire, bringing together community leadership, lived experience, and local insight to improve maternity experiences for Black women in Oxfordshire.

Together, BWIM and Healthwatch Oxfordshire worked to create a safe and trusted space where Black women could access peer support, share their experiences of maternity care, and contribute to community-led learning aimed at informing and influencing maternity services. The project focused particularly on supporting Black mothers living in priority neighbourhoods.

BWIM provides a maternity peer support and mentoring group rooted in advocacy, trust-building, and continuing to bridge the gap between Black women in the community and local maternity services.

### **Community research and engagement**

Healthwatch Oxfordshire supported BWIM to incorporate a community research approach into the project. With the consent of the women attending the sessions, BWIM captured what women shared through post it notes and written summaries of their conversations. BWIM also heard from a wider section of the community through a short survey. In total, BWIM heard from 52 women.

### **What women told us**

Women told us they valued being listened to, receiving clear and useful information, being offered pain relief when needed, and feeling supported by those providing their care, such as midwives and doctors.

Some women told us their care was poor, particularly after giving birth.

Women also told us they had ideas for improving maternity care and support, including the need for better education and postnatal support for new mothers. They

valued the opportunity to share their experiences in a supportive environment with Black women of different generations.

## Outcomes

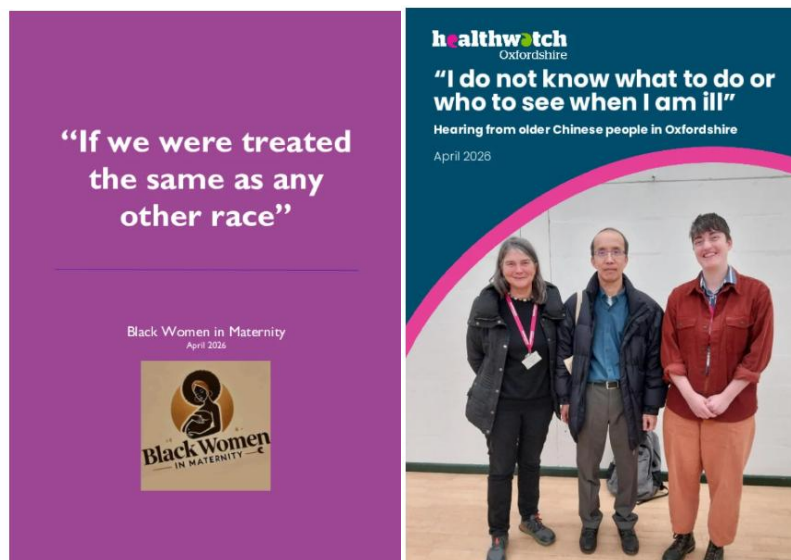
BWIM reduced isolation, built confidence and mutual support among participants, and helped women feel more able to engage positively with maternity services.

## Sharing learning and next steps

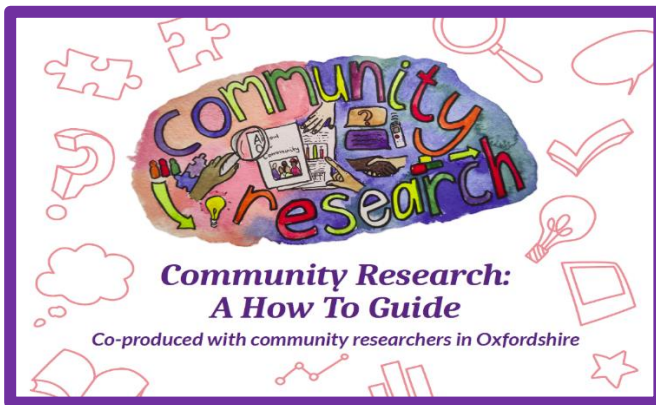
This report enhances and builds on past community research bringing the voice of lived experience into maternity (see for example film Black Women in Maternity by community researcher Omotunde Coker here [Women's views on maternity care | Healthwatch Oxfordshire](#) and subsequent development of Early Lives, Equal Start project and collaborative work with maternity services and grassroots communities [Equal Start – Flo's – The Place in the Park](#))

BWIM has shared its report with the National Maternity and Neonatal Investigation (Amos Review). The findings have also been shared with local maternity services and decision-makers.

BWIM is now working on next steps, including hosting an event and producing a leaflet to support ongoing dialogue with service providers and decision-makers, and to ensure women's experiences continue to inform improvements in care.



- **We launched a 'How to Guide – co-produced with community researchers in Oxfordshire'**



**See here for online version** <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/community-research-how-to-guide> which can be used by anyone in Oxfordshire and is free for others to promote and use.

This is the culmination of work in Sept-Dec 2025 when we held a series of participatory workshops with local grassroots groups, including Oxford Community Action, AFIUK, Transition Lighthouse, Sudanese and Nepali community among others, building on the insights and learning from community members skills and knowledge. (Funding for us to convene and run workshops by Oxford University, via Oxfordshire County Council).

Healthwatch Oxfordshire then resourced it to fruition, editing and designing the guide with local designer, getting it printed, and developing it in an online format. We are developing next steps for supporting groups to use the guide, continue skills development and working with members of Oxfordshire Community Research Network.

The development of this resource took has relevance and potential to wider community development, resident voice and asset-based capacity building approaches, including Neighbourhood Health and Marmot Place, and wider health inequalities work in Oxfordshire and Thames Valley ICB.

**To read more about the impact** of all our work and reports, and how we make a difference along with commissioner and provider responses and agreed actions, see

here: [www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-impact](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-impact) See also snapshot summaries of our month-by-month work.

## **Enter and View Visits**

We have statutory powers under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to make **Enter and View** visits to publicly funded local health and social care services. The aim of these visits is to identify what works well and what could be improved to make people's experiences better.

We published **Enter and View reports** based on our observations from visits to the following services:

- Katharine House Hospice
- Ashurst Ward at Littlemore Mental health Centre

All published Enter and View reports with recommendations to, and responses and actions from providers are available here:

[www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports)

## **Healthwatch Oxfordshire Webinars**

Since the last meeting we held one public webinar: To see our webinar programme, zoom links and **recordings of all past webinars:**

[www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-webinars](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-webinars)

- Tuesday April 14<sup>th</sup> 1-2 p.m. giving people a chance to feed into Oxford Health strategy 2026-31.

## **Community Marmot Event Monday 8 June at Rose Hill Community Centre.**

We supported a community led event to hear from grassroots communities about the activity they are doing to support Marmot objectives, and to hear from decision makers about the collaborative efforts' county wide. This was led in conjunction with Oxford Community Action, Melissa Latchman, and Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA) and Community First Oxfordshire (CFO). A report and details of the day will be on our website shortly.

## **Forthcoming reports include:**

- A focus on hearing from people about views on **end of life care**, [www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/have-your-say/complete-a-survey](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/have-your-say/complete-a-survey) with

an online survey supplemented by focused outreach. Working alongside Oxfordshire Palliative Care network and others

- Rural insights from 14 **rural areas** (Deddington, Cropredy, Heyford, Yarnton, Chipping Norton, Charlbury, Long Hanborough, Freeland, Chalgrove, Sonning Common, Faringdon, Stanford in the Vale, Shrivenham and Watchfield) for Oxfordshire County Council as part of the Marmot focus on health inequalities. We worked in partnership with Community First Oxfordshire and ran a survey outreach and focus groups. A final draft report will be presented to public health in June.



### 3. What we are hearing from the public

Along with our themed research above, we hear from members of the public via phone, email, our advice and signposting, and online feedback on services (for reviews and to leave a review. see [www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/services](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/services)).

We also hold conversations when out and about on the street, in community settings, at hospital stands, with patient and VCS groups and services, and community events. This enables us to raise what we are hearing, including emerging themes, with health and care providers and commissioners.

#### Ongoing themes

We continue to pick up on more general themes including GP access and waiting times, communication and admin challenges. We continue to support people in understanding the changing landscape of the Integrated Care Board and health service planning <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/understanding-health-and-care>

We hear from people who are **navigating complaints and feedback** to ICB and other health providers – often facing delayed responses, and with all the changes taking place, remain concerned that issues and complaints are being managed in a timely way, and lessons learned.

*“in pain and treated in a dismissive manner, other women deal with this you need to, made a formal complaint and met with a senior member of the [hospital team] and still felt dismissed. I am now worried about my ongoing treatment”*

*“made a complaint early in the year; and no timelines followed. Resolution meetings cancelled at a days’ notice spoke repeatedly to PALS and their manger “we have no staff” I’m told. That’s not good enough”.*

*“Please see below a complaint that has been raised with the [hospital name]. We have raised this complaint twice and we have raised another two incidents following the same issues today. I have raised this with the manager of the ward, main complaints department of the hospital and PALS. I have only had correspondence from the ward manager and none from PALS or complaints”.*

## **Future of Healthwatch**

Healthwatch Oxfordshire continues an independent charity to be here to listen to people using health and care services and ensuring their voices are heard by decision makers.

The recent publication of the Health Bill <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/4124> includes removal of statutory function of Healthwatch as an independent voice. We are working closely with health and social care system to explore future iterations for our charity.