

## **Healthwatch Oxfordshire Report to Health and Wellbeing Board – March 2026**

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## Since the last Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) meeting in December 2025

### Healthwatch Oxfordshire reports to external bodies

Since the last Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) September meeting we attended:

- Health Improvement Board (lay ambassador)
- HWBB working group - presentation on future of independent voice (Jan 2026)
- Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Board (Jan 2026)
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board and Oxfordshire Children's Trust Board
- Oxfordshire Military and Civilian Partnership.

Any reports to external bodies we attend can be found online at <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports-to-committees>

We attend Oxfordshire Place Based Partnership monthly (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board - BOB ICB) among additional BOB ICB committees, including the Quality Committee.

We attend Primary and Community Board and **Neighbourhood Health working groups**, and Oxfordshire Health Inequalities Forum and Oxfordshire Marmot Place meetings.

### Hearing from residents – Healthwatch Oxfordshire research and insight reports

Our research reports focus on making sure the voice of people who use services is directly linked to recommendation of improvement or change. Hearing from people on the topics is carried out using a variety of methods, including online, face to face, and targeted work, linking to community groups, and on the streets. All our reports and written responses to our recommendations from commissioners and providers can be seen here: <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports> All reports are available in summary and Easy Read.

- Current survey to hear from the public about **Living in a rural area, with particular focus on fourteen rural communities, as part of additional engagement commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council focus on health inequalities as part of Oxfordshire Marmot place. The survey is open until March 31st** at <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/have-your-say/complete-a-survey/> We are working in partnership with Community First Oxfordshire to reach across the county, with targeted focus on 14 communities. We will be running additional outreach and focus groups in each area. A final report will be produced in Quarter 2.

**What is it like living in these rural areas in Oxfordshire?**

We want to hear your views on what helps you to stay healthy and well. What makes it difficult?

Have your say in our anonymous survey

healthwatch Oxfordshire  
Community First Oxfordshire  
#YourVoiceCounts

- We presented on our rural engagement focus to the webinar on Oxfordshire as a Marmot place, convened by OCC with over 200 attendees.
- We closed our survey on end of life care and will be producing a report on what people have told us in April.
- We supported Oxfordshire Men’s Health Partnership #30 Chats by face-to-face street outreach to speak to men in Faringdon about their health and care (See report below).

To see more about the **impact** of our reports and how we ensure people’s voice makes a difference see here: <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/impact/impact-of-our-research/> We follow up on recommendations and action with providers or commissioners at six months.

# HEARING FROM MEN IN FARINGDON

**healthwatch**  
Oxfordshire

In November 2025, we held short, meaningful conversations with men in support of the Oxfordshire Men's Health Partnership's annual 30 Chats in 30 Days Initiative.

Men's health is a growing area of focus for health and care services, recognising that men have a shorter life expectancy than women, and are more likely to die prematurely from coronary heart disease or by suicide. Men, especially those of working age, are less likely than women to seek help with their physical and mental health, and are often 'seldom heard' by services.

This year, we visited Faringdon, where we had conversations on the street with 30 men, including local residents, those who work in Faringdon or were visiting to use local services. We asked:

- What helps them to be healthy and well and what makes this hard
- What their experiences of using health and care services is like
- What would make a difference to support men to be healthy

*"It's really important that men talk more about mental health and wellbeing"*

## What men told us

### What helps you stay healthy and well?

- ✓ Keeping active and spending time outdoors – including gardening or walks in the countryside with a dog or a walking group
- ✓ Trying to eat well – with support from initiatives like Slimming World
- ✓ Spending time with family and friends and trying to reduce 'screen time'
- ✓ Helpful and kind health and care professionals, and effective services



Faringdon's a nice place to live and there are nice areas around.

I do a lot of keep fit and do this with other people – sometimes I help to signpost people who haven't got computers to activities they would like to do but don't know about. I find the information for them.

The NHS have done me a lot of favours lately - I'd had joint pain for several months, but an injection put me back on the straight. I'm glad it worked because they don't work for everyone. My lovely boss said, "You need to sort it out," and signed me off for a few weeks. Then the GP practice did all the health checks on me – they sorted me out, blood pressure and cholesterol.

### What makes it hard to stay healthy and well?

- ✗ Work and family pressures
- ✗ Struggles with digital technology
- ✗ Cost of living – such as rent, exercise classes and healthy food
- ✗ Decline of local amenities and services, reducing opportunities to socialise and access to health and care services such as podiatry
- ✗ Lack of transport to bigger towns and cities, including to attend healthcare appointments
- ✗ Difficulty making a GP appointment
- ✗ Long waits at local pharmacies
- ✗ A lack of NHS dentists in the area
- ✗ Stigma and stereotypes around seeking help

A lot of people in Faringdon are struggling, you can judge by the size of the food bank (at council office), and Faringdon (arder as well...

Men have a large element of stiff upper lip, and you don't want to show weakness...

Getting to the JR is a nightmare, it's two buses and takes about two hours... not great if you are not feeling well.

It is very difficult to see the doctors at White Horse Medical Practice. They should have more appointments.

I have to have a significant thing wrong with me before I go, as I think am I wasting the doctor's time?

There were 15 pubs, but now only three that work really, you don't have to drink to use them, but it's a good place to meet friends and positive for mental health.

### What would support you to stay healthy and well?

- ✓ An environmental and gardening space for people of all ages
- ✓ Keep fit sessions in community spaces
- ✓ More activities for young people
- ✓ Better information about help, support and activities – including for those who are not online
- ✓ PSA tests or better screening for cancer in men

They do need to make more people aware of what is out there... the social prescriber goes to the community café every six weeks, but you often only hear about things if you are proactive...

Before COVID I used to play walking football, but when COVID came it all stopped and hasn't ever got going again. Would be good if there were more activities like that for people to do. People tell you to go to the gym but the weight I am I could hurt myself, I might go if there if there was someone there to talk me through what I could do and how to things without hurting myself.

My advice is to try and connect with others and if not try doing something up yourself...

Perhaps the council could organise some sessions in a village hall for keep fit, nothing involving heavy weights just some circuits or similar - would be an opportunity to get out and to meet people. Would have to be at a minimal cost or even free to be able to afford it.

**We will share what we heard with key health service providers, commissioners and decision-makers in Oxfordshire.**

**Many thanks to the men in Faringdon who shared their experiences with us**

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## Community research

We continue to bring our expertise in supporting **community and participatory research**, and working with communities to explore issues and voice issues of importance to them. We have been working with Sunrise Multicultural Centre, looking at barriers to cancer care, working with a member of the Chinese Community to hear from this group, and with OX4 Food Crew to hear from families in temporary accommodation.

In December we completed work on an additional funded project (funded by and in support of next steps in Oxfordshire Community Research Network) to develop a practical **'how to' resource for community members to take part in community research**. The development of this resource took place through a series of participatory workshops (Sept–Dec) with local grassroots groups, including with Oxford Community Action, AFIUK, Transition Lighthouse, Sudanese and Nepali community among others, building on the insights and learning from community members skills and knowledge. It 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 BOB ICB. The final 'how to guide' is being designed currently and will be complete in March, and we hope to identify next steps to supporting hands on training using the guide in the coming year.

### Enter and View visits and reports:

Staff and lay volunteer representatives make Enter and View visits to healthcare settings to collect evidence of what works well and what could be improved to make people's experiences better. Based on the feedback of patients and members of staff, we highlight areas of good practice and suggest improvements. See <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports>

Since the last meeting we have published the following Enter and View reports:

- Wintle Ward, Warneford (Jan 2026)
- Oxford Breast Imaging Centre, Churchill (Dec 2025)
- Children's Ward – Horton Hospital (Dec 2025)
- Blue Outpatients – John Radcliffe (Dec 2025)

## Other activity summary

- Our **Q3 Oct-Dec (2025-6)** activity summary is now available (**see below**)
- See here: <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-impact/> with examples of how our work has had an impact.
- Recordings and slides, and joining details for our **public webinars** can be seen here <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-webinars> Since the last meeting we held a webinar on **Neighbourhood Health** with speakers Ansaf Azhar (Director of Public Health) and Dr Michelle Brennan (GP Leadership).
- **Our next webinar will be Tuesday 17th March 2026 1-2 p.m. on the topic of Putting Marmot Principles into Practice in Oxfordshire. All welcome.**
- **We publish bi-weekly news bulletins** to bring up to date health and care information to the public (to read previous issues and to sign up to receive a copy see <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-newsletter>), as well as active social media platforms, website and sharing communications via local news and community networks.
- We carry out active listening, engagement and **ongoing outreach** to community groups, at events and on the street and other settings across the county, and gain insights into experiences and views on health and care along with via phone and our online feedback centre. We have a rolling programme of hospital visits to speak to the public. See below (Q3 summary) for some of the places we have been in Oct-Dec.
- We continue actively working with **Patient Participation Groups** (PPGs) across the county, attended PPG meetings and sending news updates, and supporting involvement in development of Neighbourhood Health.

October to December 2025

# Activity and achievements

## The impact of our research

We published our report setting out what we'd heard from 45 trans and non-binary people about using GP services in the county.

### IMPACT SO FAR:

- Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) is looking into providing training for GP staff on understanding and competency in trans healthcare, and setting up an LGBT+ page on their engagement platform, Your Voices.
- Primary Care Support England have updated their guidance on how to change your NHS gender marker on patient records.

We also published a report capturing what 823 people told us about using the NHS App.

### IMPACT SO FAR:

- BOB ICB is developing a new page on their website to give people up-to-date, plain-language information about the app.
- Oxfordshire County Council is implementing a Digital Inclusion Strategy, including GigaHubs to provide fast broadband in rural areas, and a 'Digital Helpers' programme in libraries.

Find out more at [www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports-hub](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports-hub) and [www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-impact](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-impact)



## New community research how-to guide

We ran a series of four workshops, funded by the Oxfordshire Community Research Network, bringing together people from grassroots groups across the county to co-create a practical 'how-to' guide for community researchers. The guide is now being designed and will be published by the end of March.

## We also:

- ✓ Launched a new survey asking people for their views on end of life care.
- ✓ Held a webinar highlighting local cancer care and support - you can watch this at [www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-webinars](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-webinars)
- ✓ Attended six Patient Participation Group meetings to help support PPGs and share good practice.
- ✓ Launched a new website with updated content, design and structure.



Read more about our work at [www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk)

October to December 2025

# Activity and achievements

## Hearing from you

- 62 people contacted us for help or information about local health and social care services. The top two services we heard about were GP services and hospital services.
- We received 135 reviews of 63 health and care services via our Feedback Centre. We received 31 responses to reviews from service providers.



## Our Enter and View visits

We made 2 Enter and View visits - to the Wintle Ward at the Warneford Hospital and St Leonards Ward at Wallingford Community Hospital. In total we heard from 34 patients and members of staff during these visits.

All our Enter and View reports, which set out our recommendations, together with a response from the service provider about the changes they will make, can be read at [www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports)



## Out and about

We continued our programme of general and targeted outreach visits to speak to people about their experiences of using health and social care services. We visited a range of places, from libraries to community ladders, as well as attending bigger events such as Oxford Older People's Day. We also spent a morning having conversations about health and care with men in Faringdon. Over these three months we spoke to 389 people in total.

We also visited Townlands Memorial Hospital in Henley-on-Thames, Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital and Witney Community Hospital as part of our regular programme of hospital visits, hearing from 118 people. We reported back what we heard to Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, which runs these three hospitals, so they can use this feedback to make improvements.



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