



New provider for local Healthwatch services

The Care Forum has been selected to provide Healthwatch services for Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) over the next three years.

The decision follows a public consultation that took place last year where people were asked for their views on commissioning, the current Healthwatch service, and what they wanted to see in the future. Following the responses and the end of the current contract, a robust tender process was started earlier this year to find a provider to run the service until 2027.

Local Healthwatch services across BNSSG are commissioned collaboratively by the three local authorities of Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Healthwatch listens to the views and experiences of people who use health and care services, identifying best practice as well as areas for improvement.

This service will be funded by government's [Local Reform and Community Voices Grant](#) and will start on Tuesday, 1 October 2024.

Kevin Peltonen-Messenger, Chief Executive Officer of The Care Forum said: "To be awarded the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Healthwatch contract is something we are all incredibly proud of here at TCF. Our staff, volunteers and Board of Trustees have created a culture of innovation, compassion and person-centred effective service delivery. Our commitment, through the provision of this contract, is to bring those elements of our work to the people who will access Healthwatch Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Our work at a local level will remain at the core of our service whilst a focus on achieving excellence at a strategic level will drive our thinking over the coming years. We're looking forward to working with you all."

Local commissioners for each area will work with The Care Forum to ensure Healthwatch remains an effective health and social care champion for local people. The Care Forum has a wide knowledge of the local areas and a strong understanding of the health inequalities faced by different communities, especially those currently underserved in different parts of Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. It is hoped a 'Young Healthwatch' will also be established to get the views of young people, about the services that affect them.

We would like to take this opportunity thank the current provider of the service, Healthwatch BNSSG, which has been delivering dedicated and high quality Healthwatch services over the last five years, all of which will continue under the new provider.

Vicky Marriott, Chief Officer at Healthwatch BNSSG said: "Healthwatch BNSSG has been working in a merged contract as three Healthwatch within one integrated care system since 2019. We have led the way in doing this, helping ferment a culture in our systems of listening to user voices.

Our staff team is proud of being part of the Healthwatch movement for health and care equity. Together we have won three impact awards, share data and insights with over 400 local partners and national leaders.

Healthwatch BNSSG looks forward to continuing the work we have started, so that the strength of our evidence, especially when it comes to health inequalities, is acted upon more than ever, to provide better care.”

Work has started to ensure a smooth and seamless transition for the service on 1 October.

More information:

- The contract for Healthwatch was awarded in partnership by the three local authority areas, Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset (BNSSG).
- Each area has its own Healthwatch service, delivered by a single provider using the Integrated Care System BNSSG footprint.
- Following the change in provider, the service will remain exactly the same. The public will still be able to engage with the Healthwatch services via the same websites, phone numbers and social media platforms.
 - <https://www.healthwatchbristol.co.uk/>
 - <https://www.healthwatchnorthsomerset.co.uk/>
 - <https://www.healthwatchesouthglos.co.uk/>

For any further information, please email communities@bristol.gov.uk