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REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 08399922 (England and Wales)  
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1154627

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND  
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021  
FOR  
HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE**

FKCA Limited  
260 - 270 Butterfield  
Great Marlings  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU2 8DL

# **HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE**

## **CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Reference and Administrative Details</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Report of the Trustees</b>	<b>2 to 11</b>
<b>Independent Examiner's Report</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Statement of Financial Activities</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Balance Sheet</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Notes to the Financial Statements</b>	<b>15 to 19</b>

**HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE**

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS  
for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

<b>TRUSTEES</b>	Mr D P Simpson Mrs L Grant Mrs G Hiscox Mr K Daly (resigned 10.11.20) Mrs L Gazeley (resigned 10.11.20) Mr P Downing Ms K Proctor Mrs C A Carter (appointed 1.3.21)
<b>COMPANY SECRETARY</b>	Ms D Blackmun
<b>REGISTERED OFFICE</b>	Capability House Wrest Park Silsoe Beds MK45 4HR
<b>REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER</b>	08399922 (England and Wales)
<b>REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER</b>	1154627
<b>INDEPENDENT EXAMINER</b>	FKCA Limited 260 - 270 Butterfield Great Marlings Luton Bedfordshire LU2 8DL

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Significant activities**

The charity acts as the local independent consumer champion for the public to promote better outcomes in health and social care for all in Central Bedfordshire. In fulfilling this aim, the charity has:

- Contributed to the Health and Wellbeing Board and Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Central Bedfordshire Council, the Governing Body of the BLMK Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and other key decision making public service committees in health and social care
- Held virtual meetings as part of our 'outreach programme' inviting partner organisations to join us to collectively gather local people's experiences of health and social care.
- Worked with local schools and colleges with Young Healthwatch Members to listen to young people talking about the challenges and issues they face whilst engaging with health professionals.
- Encouraged people via social media, who may live outside of Central Bedfordshire but who use services within our area, to give their feedback about local services using the Feedback Centre on our website.
- Continued to recruit and train Volunteers to act as representatives, champions and in other roles within Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire in a variety of user groups, health and social care consultative bodies, public events, etc.
- Conducted surveys and online events to validate and better understand specific issues raised by service users and members of the public and report on these.
- Developed a programme of virtual 'Enter and View' visits for young volunteers, to hospital services and clinics within Central Bedfordshire.
- Led and participated in numerous virtual meetings for the public across Central Bedfordshire
- Undertaken extensive signposting activities.
- Maintained and developed channels of communication with various service areas of Central Bedfordshire Council, the BLMK Clinical Commissioning Group as the health service commissioner, with other key health providers including the statutory mental health providers, East London Foundation Trust, and with a range of voluntary sector providers of health and social care related services across Bedfordshire.

**Public benefit**

The Trustees have referred to guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities.



**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

**ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE**

**Charitable activities**

During 2020/21 Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire (HWCB) has continued to build on our working relationships with the Local Authority, Central Bedfordshire Council, the BLMK Clinical Commissioning Group and the many providers of health and social care services across Central Bedfordshire to ensure that, by working together, we can influence and improve health and social care services for local residents.

We use all of our resources to fund unique and helpful ways to ensure that service users are heard and supported in sharing their experience and giving their opinions. We are committed to taking the patient and service user voice and satisfaction measures back to the commissioners and seeing the changes local people have asked for being put in place.

It has been a very challenging but rewarding year for Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire as staff, Directors and volunteers have worked tirelessly during the pandemic to ensure that the voice of local people continues to be heard, listened to and acted upon.

Despite limitations of engagement during 2020/21, due to the ongoing pandemic and lockdowns, we have continued to reach out to our community and offered help with signposting, advice and information.

During 2020/21 we recruited one new Board Member and two Board Members stepped down. We also welcomed two new Youth Parliament Members to our Board. The new Board member brings a wealth of experience to complement the strong Board we already had.

The priorities we focussed on in 2020/21 were based on what people told us about health and social care services, as follows:

- Improved and timely access to non-medical interventions for people with mental illnesses.
- A greater voice for young people to have their say on how health and social care is delivered in their local community.
- Appropriate and suitable access to health and social care services available in the local community.
- Services that work better together for the benefit of patients.
- Improved access to primary care and community services.
- More accessible services for those that live in rural areas.

The Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire team consists of five staff, six Directors/Trustees plus two youth parliament members and 54 adult and young volunteers. During 2020/21 we have engaged with a wide cross section of the community via various different mediums including our website, feedback centre, social media and community events, broken down as follows

**Reaching Out**

- We heard from 4,635 people this year about their experiences of health and social care.
- We directly provided advice and information to 2,015 people in 2020/21
- 25,657 people accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support.
- 91,567 people engaged with us through social media

**Responding to the Pandemic**

- We engaged with and supported 2,973 people during the COVID-19 pandemic this year.

**Making a difference to care**

- We published 12 reports about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. From this, we made 72 recommendations for improvement
- 26% of recommendations for improvement we made in 2020/21 have been acted upon, at the point where we reviewed progress.



**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's operational priority actions for 2020/21 have been to continue to gather the experiences and understanding of people's needs through many different techniques including our 'Feedback Centre' on our website, the continued development of our volunteer programme and targeted research and insight studies into defined areas of concern.

Positive and negative comments about specific health and social care services are logged and fed through into reports that help service providers, and the decision makers understand how the experiences of local people can help to influence change and improve the quality of care received. Through our Newsletters, E-bulletins, social media and our website, we have also kept thousands of people up to date on the issues that matter to them.

By growing our online and social media presence we have seen a vast increase in the number of people contacting us to tell us about their health and social care experiences, which is used in our reports or to develop a survey to learn more about the issues affecting local residents.

Our volunteers help us to raise awareness of the work we do and visit services to ensure they are providing people with the right support. They also help with the day to day running of the organisation and listen, and feedback, people's experiences to help us to know which areas we need to focus on.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, during 2020/21 our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home, carrying out surveys over the telephone and online.  
Helped out at the growing number of vaccination centres across Central Bedfordshire and wrote blogs about their experience.
- Carried out website reviews for local services on the information they provide.  
Helped with the local volunteering efforts of shopping and collecting prescriptions, providing befriending services, and walking their neighbours' dog, for those self-isolating or shielding.

Despite limitations of engagement during 2020/21, we have continued to reach out to our community and offered help with signposting, advice and information. We held virtual events and distributed surveys to find out more about people's experience of health and care services during lockdowns, and produced various reports of our findings, with recommendations for actions to improve access and treatment.

We worked with mental health providers and support organisations to help resolve issues and concerns with many positive outcomes, and addressed national issues, for example, access to dentistry services which has resulted in a call for an urgent reform of the provision of dental care. Read our full report here: <https://healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/people-share-their-views-on-dentistry-services-in-central-bedfordshire>

Our Young Healthwatch team continues to represent the voice of young people in Central Bedfordshire and produced reports of their activities including an online review of health and social care service websites, using the methodology of the 15 Steps programme, which allowed them to see how useful a website is and by doing so reaching out to a greater volume of young people, that need the care the organisations provide. Read their full report here: <https://healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/15-steps-online-review-yhw>

Young Healthwatch volunteers have made a difference by amplifying the voices of young people. Some of the projects they worked on in 2020/21 are listed below:

- **Home Becomes School Survey** - results from the survey provided a useful insight into the successes and failures of the education systems response to the pandemic in Central Bedfordshire.
- **Five Minutes with Milly** - One of our Young Healthwatch volunteers interviewed a School Nurse; Teacher and a Midwife in September 2020 to find out about their experience of continuing to work during the pandemic
- **Music for the Mind** - this study showed that, overall, listening to music whilst revising decreases the effectiveness of revision for young people.
- **15 Steps Online Review** - Young Healthwatch volunteers found that, overall, the health and social care websites they reviewed in March 2021 are well suited for young people, although they felt the GP websites needed improvement.
- **Podcast Training** - A Young Healthwatch volunteer's suggestion created an opportunity for other young people to plan, develop, record, edit and release their own Podcast, while increasing their own skillset.



**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

- **Pen Pal Scheme** - Young Healthwatch volunteers have continued to write to care home residents with positive results and during 2020 we expanded the scheme to include Good Neighbour Scheme contacts in Ampthill and Flitwick, and Dom Care agencies.
- **Recruitment Video** - As a result of Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's latest recruitment video, to encourage more young people to become involved in our projects, we have had a wealth of interest in joining the Young Healthwatch team from schools across Central Bedfordshire.
- **Blogs** - Throughout the pandemic Young Healthwatch volunteers have continued to write 'Blogs' detailing how this affects them both emotionally, mentally and physically which have been shared on our website to support other young people who may have similar anxieties

The young volunteers have been very active on social media; creating awareness through their posts which has seen an increase in followers throughout the year.

Young Healthwatch volunteers continue to support work on the READY trial; a research study that aims to find out whether exercise is an effective treatment for young people with low mood or depression. The young people have so far supported an educational video and offered guidance on the promotional materials. This project will continue throughout 2021/22.

Future activities will include completing a project focusing on priority seating for disabled young people on public transport, which was delayed due to coronavirus restrictions, and working with students from Central Bedfordshire College to undertake a research project, asking the question, 'How has domestic violence among young people changed as a result of Covid-19?', with the aim of providing advice and information to young people in Central Bedfordshire. Posters will be displayed in the College to help educate and offer guidance to students.

Training in CPR will also be a part of their future activities, with the intention to pass on their learning and train other young people in Central Bedfordshire. The aim is to enable young people to feel more confident, improve their resilience and be educated in key lifesaving skills. Young Healthwatch volunteers, through their work, look forward to encouraging more young people to have a voice and make a difference.

We were delighted to be shortlisted for two Healthwatch Network Awards; 'Celebrating our volunteer team' and 'The impact our team makes', in recognition of the projects and activities undertaken during 2020/21, and equally pleased that two of our volunteers received 'highly commended' in the local Cheering Volunteering Awards for 'Volunteer of the Year' and the 'Sir Captain Tom Award for Outstanding Contribution'.

Our team continue to respond positively to a rapidly changing environment to ensure that the voice of local residents is used to influence change and to inform our work.

Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need, especially through the pandemic. The insight we collect is shared with both Healthwatch England and local partners to ensure services are operating as best as possible during the pandemic. During 2020/21 we helped thousands of people by:

- Providing up to date advice on the COVID-19 response locally
- Linking people to reliable up-to-date information
- Supporting the vaccine roll-out; managing issues and concerns
- Providing information and guidance to local support services
- Helping people to access the health and care services they need

Future projects for both young and older volunteers will include supporting Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire to continue to gather valuable feedback from our local community about how they are accessing and receiving services in this new and constantly evolving landscape

**Engagement Activities:**

Our engagement activities for 2020/21 have included online activities such as virtual 'Just Ask' meetings. This programme of events is designed to provide information, advice and guidance on health, social care and housing to local residents. HWCBC staff and volunteers were able to hold the events virtually during 2020/21 and signpost residents to appropriate health and social care services using local knowledge, with support from the organisations that joined us at each online event. Visitors joining us had the opportunity to view videos and presentations, and to speak directly to health and social care colleagues from local organisations and community groups.



**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

During 2020/21 support services changed how they delivered services, and priorities were reassessed to help form an NHS, and social care service, that could respond to the COVID-19 emergency. We heard from many people about their experiences of accessing health and care services during the pandemic, stories which were highlighted in our first lockdown report 'Listening in Action During Lockdown', published in June 2020; read our full report here: <https://healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/lockdown-report>

As a follow-up, the 'Living through Lockdown 3.0' report, published in March 2021, was developed to include additional feedback from the public, and a further expansion of stories and experiences shared with us, including the support, advice and guidance provided. Read our full report here:

<https://healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/lockdown-3-0-report>

**Surveys:**

From information given to Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire at a Patient Advisory Board, it was clear that there were heightened concerns about an accessible and available service for cancer patients, particularly for those patients who would normally directly consult their GP if they were worried about symptoms relating to cancer. It has been widely reported in national media that the current pandemic is placing cancer patients at an enormous disadvantage with the possibility of delayed or inadequate treatment, which is likely to result in poor, short, and long term outcomes due to the redirection of hospital resources to the management of Covid-19 infected patients. Patients were being advised not to attend GP surgeries due to social distancing and lockdown restrictions, and therefore it is highly likely that there would be an increase in the numbers of patients accessing surgery websites to gather the information they may need.

During 2020/21, one of the surveys we developed was designed to determine how up to date GP websites are in Central Bedfordshire and to investigate the extent of current information and advice. We asked our volunteers to review each website; a total of 34 across Central Bedfordshire.

It was clear from our research that many GP Practice websites in Central Bedfordshire are lacking vital up to date information and advice for their patients and visitors to the website, with many specifically lacking information relating to what to do about cancer treatment during the pandemic, and signposting to cancer support groups. The Patient Advisory Board (PAB) was supportive of the results of our survey and agreed, as per our recommendations, that Primary Care Networks should play a role in improving the content and design of GP Practice websites. The PAB agreed that this would provide an opportunity to commission IT provider(s) to improve the frequency of updates and to provide better access to a range of advice to cancer patients from key partners.

The Patient Advisory Board also made further recommendations to the Primary Care Group, based on our report, which included asking that individual practices focus on providing local information to cancer patients about consultations, referrals, and the availability of diagnostic tests. At a subsequent virtual East of England Regional Healthwatch meeting in mid-May, colleagues were advised of the survey and asked to join the project and progress the survey in their local areas. Several Healthwatch colleagues agreed to do so or to incorporate our survey questions in their current survey regarding access to GP services.

**Festival for Older People 2020**

Our annual event, the Festival for Older People, is usually planned well in advance of delivery, with work beginning in early August. Previous events have been a huge success, with over 300 people attending to talk directly to service providers and exhibitors, to hear more about the support services they offer to older people, and are available to them in the local community, which they may have been unaware of.

As lockdown eased the government continued to revise guidance, which had a wide ranging impact on the work of Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire including activities such as large scale engagement and events. The venue we had booked for the Festival 2020 was not confirming bookings and national guidance was still limiting the number of people gathering indoors.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire had to take the difficult decision to cancel the Festival for Older People 2020, however, we felt strongly that the date should not pass without some activity to support older people, given that it is part of our annual programme and always keenly anticipated by the public and support organisations. However, the key question was what could be done in the timeframe, within government restrictions and resources available?



**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

Staff, volunteers and stakeholders met online to consider alternative ideas for delivering the Festival in October 2020, and the unanimous decision was taken to host the Festival virtually, utilising all of our resources and help from our volunteers. The theme for the Festival 2020, linked with International Older Peoples Day, was 'Pandemics: do they change how we address age and ageing?'

2020/21 has presented significant challenges to everyone, not least the most vulnerable in our society and those in the older age range, who have had their activities curtailed significantly by lockdown and the continuing restrictions on daily life. To provide an event that encompassed information, advice, entertainment and activities, it was decided to expand the Festival across a full week. The idea being to encourage more people to attend and prevent cramming content into a limited timeframe. Organisation of the programme was deliberately arranged to allow people to dip in and out, which would help to reduce screen time fatigue.

We invited many key stakeholders and support organisations to join us and developed a weekly planner that was heavily promoted across our network. The Festival's main aim was to ensure that a wide range of organisations who provide information, advice and support for older people can come together. Each day of the week had a theme with a question for all those participating, linked to general and emotional wellbeing, active living and healthy lifestyles. The programme also included guided exercise classes, poetry, gardening tips and lively entertainment. Some residents would ordinarily be unable to join a physical event, due to frailness or staffing ratios, however the virtual offer was open to all, and participants included six care homes from across Central Bedfordshire.

The videos shown during Festival week received over 150 views a day, with total views across the week totalling 874. Attendees gave valuable feedback about their experience of health and care services during lockdown and beyond. Many people told us about some positive experiences with services and people embracing helpful technology. Strong feelings were also expressed that, in the future, wherever possible, patient choice should be at the forefront of all service delivery and design. Concerns were raised that the pandemic had put some lives on hold, summed up as, "The issue of storing up problems for the future is a massive concern right now."

Read our full report of the virtual event held in October 2020 here:

<https://healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/VFOP-2020.pdf>

**Enter & View Visits:**

Part of HWCBS's programme of work is to carry out 'Enter & View' visits to health and social care services to find out how they are managed and to make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families, patients and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP Practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. Consequently, no recommendations or other actions resulted from this area of activity. However, we continue to work with the Care Quality Commission as we share a national organisational structure. We hope to continue to be at the forefront of improvements in service provision.

Many more examples of our work throughout 2020/21 can be found on our website at [www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk](http://www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk), and in HWCBS's Annual Report 2020/21. The Annual Report 2020/21 also lists examples of three cases studies which highlight how speaking up about health and care services is the first step to change and how people's views can help make a difference to the care and support people receive in Central Bedfordshire, as follows:

- **Access to NHS Dental Services:** Healthwatch England supported the British Dental Association to campaign for better access to dental care, and as Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire regularly receive feedback from local residents relating to accessing dental care in Central Bedfordshire, we wanted to explore this further. Our report found that over the past year Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the availability of dental care. Prior to the pandemic, 75% of people who completed the survey, visited their dentist regularly and the results from our survey showed that a larger proportion of people (89%) had attempted to secure an appointment since the pandemic, in many cases, without success.



**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

- **Accessing Information on GP websites:** From information given to Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire at a Patient Advisory Board, it was clear that there were heightened concerns about an accessible and available service for cancer patients, particularly for those patients who would normally directly consult their GP if they were worried about symptoms relating to cancer. Our research showed that many GP Practice websites in Central Bedfordshire are lacking vital up to date information and advice for their patients and visitors to the website, with many specifically lacking information relating to what to do about cancer treatment during the pandemic, and signposting to cancer support groups. The Patient Advisory Board (PAB) was supportive of the results of our survey and agreed, as per our recommendations, that Primary Care Networks should play a role in improving the content and design of GP Practice websites. The PAB agreed that this would provide an opportunity to commission IT provider(s) to improve the frequency of updates and to provide better access to a range of advice to cancer patients from key partners. The Patient Advisory Board also made further recommendations to the Primary Care Group, based on our report, which included asking that individual practices focus on providing local information to cancer patients about consultations, referrals, and the availability of diagnostic tests.
- **Visiting Health and Care Services:** Prior to the first national lockdown, Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire staff and volunteers undertook 'Enter & View' visits to many local health and social care services. Due to the pandemic, we have been unable to continue with the visits however, in March 2021, our Young Healthwatch team of volunteers reviewed a website, and a PowerPoint presentation (Storyboard), of a Sexual Assault Referral Centre called 'The Emerald Centre', using their '15 Steps Training' to see how useful the website is as a source of information and advice for young people. The nurse explained that as a result of the review by Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire 'We have modified our storyboard and created new ones for males, females and teenagers. We are also in discussion with our IT department about having a Live Chat Function on our website.'

Other ways that we helped people in the community are listed in the 'You said, We did' section of the Annual report which cover a variety of different healthcare services and the ways in which people were supported.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire has used our reports and recommendations to suggest how people's health and care services might be improved, in the following ways:

- Publishing reports on our website about our engagement activities.
- Sharing the results of various surveys about local services on our website and with the Providers and Commissioners of those services.
- Supporting local people to report their complaint to the Commissioners of health and care services and the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman.

Everything we do is based on discussion and feedback from Central Bedfordshire residents who present us with the evidence to challenge providers and commissioners to improve their quality of care.



**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

**ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE**

**Future Plans**

Central Bedfordshire's population is 289,000, according to the 2019 mid-year estimate. This was published by the Office for National Statistics in June 2020.

The total population of Central Bedfordshire is set to increase by 22.6% between 2014 and 2031. In line with national trends the biggest rate of increase is expected in older people, with the greatest proportional growth projected for older people. While the actual number of older people will remain relatively small, the increased proportion will have implications for the provision of health and care services. In addition, there are sizeable health inequalities in the area. For example, men in the richest parts of Central Bedfordshire can expect to live more than seven years longer than their poorer peers.

NHS England wants all Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) to merge across their integrated care system (ICS) boundaries by April 2022, as part of proposed changes to legislation designed to hand ICSs the direct commissioning power. NHS England will also create a 'single pot' of funding, bringing together CCG commissioning and primary care budgets along with other funding allocated to systems. The NHS Long Term Plan said that ICSs will cover the country by 2021 - with 'typically' one CCG per ICS area - meaning there will be fewer commissioners who will become responsible for larger geographical areas.

The local authority, Central Bedfordshire Council, and the BLMK Clinical Commissioning Group may be required to make unprecedented financial savings as part of this transformation, which places pressure on their budget to effectively deliver health and social care services that people want and need. Health and social care is going through a huge period of change and throughout 2021/22 we will continue to focus on improving the quality of services in Central Bedfordshire and influence the decision makers to ensure services are delivered that meet the needs of diverse communities.

Following the first Lockdown announcement in March 2020 we have all had to adapt and change to a new way of working. However, the Coronavirus pandemic has also opened up new opportunities and possibilities, and encouraged people to connect in ways they would not otherwise have done.

Delivery of health and social care services will need to change as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and our focus for the future will be to continue to gather valuable feedback from our local community about how they are accessing and receiving services in this new and constantly evolving landscape.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire staff and volunteers may not be able to engage with people in the way that we have done in the past so will be looking for new ways to hear people's views, to feed back to the decision makers, and to work with them to ensure that the consumer voice is used to inform a different type of service delivery and design.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire recognises its role and responsibility over the next 12 months to support and engage with the population of Central Bedfordshire and to empower people to take more control of their own health and care as well as the decisions that affect them. It is our job to work towards a better fit between people's aspirations and their current experience. Engaging to ensure a compassionate, patient centered approach across services will be a key role for HWCB, from using patient experiences to influencing transformation and remodeling, to more specific monitoring of current activities being delivered day to day.

The comments and stories shared are vitally important to us which are used to influence service improvement, to collaborate with key decision makers, and to report on the changes people would like to see. The commitment and work of the NHS, social care and the voluntary sector in dealing with the pandemic has been amazing as we have all adapted to a rapidly changing environment. However, we will be facing new challenges as restrictions are gradually eased and all services will be faced with a large backlog of non-Covid-19 care, storing up greater problems for the future, which will mean added pressure on front line services as well as support services.

Patient views can enhance learning from the pandemic and therefore our focus for the future will be, in addition to our planned activities and projects, to continue to gather valuable public feedback to help inform future commissioning decisions, as well as communicating system changes to the public and providing clarity to interpret future guidance.



**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

**ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE**

Our top priorities for 2021/22 will include the following:

- Joint project with BLMK Healthwatch working with the D/deaf and Homeless communities to help improve systematic behaviours by highlighting health and social care challenges, issues and concerns, specifically raised by local residents who are seldom heard.
- Reporting on feedback from our recent survey sent to patients and the public living in Central Bedfordshire who were discharged from hospital under the 'discharge to assess' (D2A) arrangements, which focused on getting people out of hospital quickly to cope with a surge in demand from Covid-19 patients. We will report on how the D2A arrangements are working for residents living in Central Bedfordshire who were recently discharged from hospitals across Bedfordshire and surrounding counties.
- Researching local residents experience of accessing health and care services now and in the future, who may have had treatments postponed, delayed or cancelled due to the pandemic, e.g., cancer treatment and after care. We will look at trends and themes and consider how well the pandemic was managed and its effect on other services, which will provide vital sources of evidence for the decision makers, as new and existing services are developed and commissioned to reflect the rise in demand.
- Young Healthwatch - increase our activity with young people in the community and develop projects and activities proposed by the young Healthwatch group.

**Next steps**

- As restrictions ease we will be looking to engage face to face with local residents, in a socially distanced way, in particular with regard to our 'Just Ask' programme of events, and focus groups researching people's experience of health and care services. Internally we will be looking at an effective mix of virtual and physical engagement events, and meetings, to maximise productivity and work/life balance.
- We will be following up on projects that were postponed as a result of the pandemic, such as the Young Healthwatch volunteers 'On the buses' project, and reviewing the recommendations previously made to commissioners and providers in our recent reports to determine actions implemented to improve service pathways and delivery.
- Our work will include helping to address and highlight inequalities across health and care services to ensure the most vulnerable people in our local community, and seldom heard communities, are able to access the services and support they need.
- With the help and support of our Board of Trustees we will continue with a review of our governance arrangements to ensure they are robust and fit for the future of the organisation; this will include changes to our Articles of Association.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire would like to thank all our Directors and Trustees for their continued support during 2020/21

**FINANCIAL REVIEW**

**Reserves policy**

The Trustees have agreed a level of reserves that is sufficient to manage end of contract closure and transition costs whilst also providing adequate funding to develop new income streams to help build the longer-term sustainability of the charity.

The Trustees aim to transfer 5% of income to reserves annually and in addition every opportunity will be taken to increase reserves at the earliest possible time to a minimum of £20,000, approximately equivalent to two months' expenditure.

**Grant Funder**

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire acknowledges Central Bedfordshire Council for provision of the grant to provide a local Healthwatch service.

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Governing document**

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.



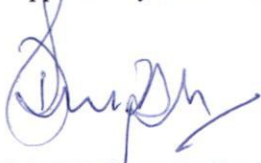
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Recruitment and appointment of new trustees**

The recruitment and appointment of new Trustees is considered by the existing Trustees to ensure that the board of Trustees has the appropriate skill sets to carry out its responsibilities.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 4 November 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D P Simpson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr D P Simpson - Trustee

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF  
HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE**

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire ('the Company')**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

**Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Mr Stephen Mason BSc FCA  
FKCA Limited  
260 - 270 Butterfield  
Great Marlings  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU2 8DL

Date: 03/11/2021



**HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	2021 Unrestricted fund £	2020 Total funds £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>			
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Charitable Activities		151,410	144,200
Other trading activities	2	2,262	11,907
<b>Total</b>		<u>153,672</u>	<u>156,107</u>
 <b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>			
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Charitable Activities		141,182	161,083
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>		<u>12,490</u>	<u>(4,976)</u>
 <b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>			
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>		35,107	40,083
 <b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<u><u>47,597</u></u>	<u><u>35,107</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

BALANCE SHEET  
31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 Unrestricted fund £	2020 Total funds £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible assets	6	2,064	1,114
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors	7	1,700	-
Cash at bank		49,432	37,788
		<u>51,132</u>	<u>37,788</u>
<b>CREDITORS</b>			
Amounts falling due within one year	8	(5,599)	(3,795)
		<u>45,533</u>	<u>33,993</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
		<u>47,597</u>	<u>35,107</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
		<u>47,597</u>	<u>35,107</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			
		<u>47,597</u>	<u>35,107</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>	9		
Unrestricted funds		47,597	35,107
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<u>47,597</u>	<u>35,107</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2021.

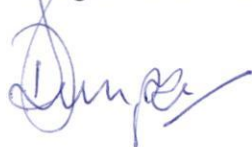
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 4 November 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:



Mr D P Simpson - Trustee



## HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021

#### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

##### **Basis of preparing the financial statements and assessment of going concern**

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The presentational and functional currency is GBP.

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The Trustees have considered the affects of the Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) as mentioned in the Trustees report, they believe there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

##### **Income**

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

The following policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Income received by way of grants and donations is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable.

Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance.

Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

Incoming resources from charitable trading activity are accounted for when earned.

##### **Expenditure**

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

##### **Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets held for the company's own use are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Computer equipment                      - 2 years straight line

##### **Taxation**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

##### **Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

# HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021

### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

#### Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

#### Donated services

In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time is not recognised in the financial statements.

### 2. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	2021	2020
	£	£
Event income	<u>2,262</u>	<u>11,907</u>

### 3. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2021	2020
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	2,872	2,058
Independent examiners fee	613	736
Independent examiners fee for non-assurance services	<u>600</u>	<u>650</u>

### 4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for the year ended 31 March 2020.

#### Trustees' expenses

There were two trustees' travel expenses paid totalling £45 for the year ended 31 March 2021 (2020 : £1,610). Two trustees' received travel expenses for the year ended 31 March 2020.

### 5. KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2021	2020
Senior Management	1	1
Support Staff	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

Total employee benefits paid to key management personnel for the year was £47,225 (2020: £46,140)



**HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

**6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	Computer equipment £
<b>COST</b>	
At 1 April 2020	4,848
Additions	3,822
	<hr/>
At 31 March 2021	8,670
	<hr/>
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>	
At 1 April 2020	3,734
Charge for year	2,872
	<hr/>
At 31 March 2021	6,606
	<hr/>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>	
At 31 March 2021	2,064
	<hr/>
At 31 March 2020	1,114
	<hr/>

**7. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	1,700	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	2,349	2,495
Accruals and deferred income	3,250	1,300
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	5,599	3,795
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS**

	At 1.4.20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.21 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	35,107	12,490	47,597
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	35,107	12,490	47,597
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

# HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021

### 9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	153,672	(141,182)	12,490
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>153,672</u>	<u>(141,182)</u>	<u>12,490</u>

#### Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.20 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	40,083	(4,976)	35,107
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>40,083</u>	<u>(4,976)</u>	<u>35,107</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	156,107	(161,083)	(4,976)
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>156,107</u>	<u>(161,083)</u>	<u>(4,976)</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.21 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	40,083	7,514	47,597
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>40,083</u>	<u>7,514</u>	<u>47,597</u>



# HEALTHWATCH CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued for the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021

### 9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	309,779	(302,265)	7,514
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>309,779</u>	<u>(302,265)</u>	<u>7,514</u>

### 10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

During the year, Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire made purchases from Highland Interiors Limited, a company who Diana Blackmun is director, for £600 (2020: Nil). There is no balance outstanding at the year. There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2020.