

# Volunteer Handbook



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## Welcome from the Chair

Welcome to Healthwatch, I am delighted you have chosen our organisation to donate some of your valuable time to. We are extremely appreciative of the difference our volunteers make by supporting us with the work of Healthwatch Worcestershire in helping to shape and improve health and social care services for patients.

I hope you enjoy your volunteer experience and look forward to meeting you.

Peter Pinfield

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Pinfield". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Chair of Healthwatch Worcestershire

## Introduction

Welcome to Healthwatch Worcestershire (HWW). Our volunteers are a valuable part of our team and play a key role in supporting the work of HWW. This handbook contains important policies and guidance you may find useful during your time with us. The principles of our policies will be applied to volunteers where it is practical to do so. Every member of our team is happy to answer any questions you may have, but for specific queries about the Volunteer role please contact Suzy James [suzyjames@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk](mailto:suzyjames@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk) in the first instance.

## Healthwatch

Healthwatch was established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf.

We exist on a national and local level, working towards the same goal of enabling people to have a voice about their health and social care systems.

## Healthwatch England

Are a statutory committee of the independent regulator the [Care Quality Commission \(CQC\)](#).

Their main statutory functions are to:

- Provide leadership, guidance, support and advice to local Healthwatch organisations
- Escalate concerns about health and social care services which have been raised by local Healthwatch to CQC. CQC are required to respond to advice from the Healthwatch England Committee
- Provide advice to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, NHS England and English local authorities, especially where we are of the view that the quality of services provided are not adequate. Bodies to whom advice is given are required to respond in writing. The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care is also required to consult Healthwatch England on the NHS mandate, which sets the objectives for the NHS
- Healthwatch England has a responsibility to provide advice, guidance and support to, but does not control the activities of local Healthwatch organisations

## Local Healthwatch

Every Local Authority that has a responsibility to deliver Social Care has the responsibility to put in place arrangements for a local Healthwatch.

Local Healthwatch are funded by and accountable to local authorities.

Their main statutory functions are to:

- Obtain the views of people about their needs and experience of local health and social care services. Local Healthwatch make these views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services.
- Make reports and make recommendations about how those services could or should be improved.
- Promote and support the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services.
- Provide information and advice to the public about accessing health and social care services and the options available to them.
- Make the views and experiences of people known to Healthwatch England, helping us to carry out our role as national champion.
- Make recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the CQC to carry out special reviews or investigations into areas of concern.

## Membership Scheme

Healthwatch Worcestershire is a company limited by guarantee and its [Articles of Association](#) require the company to establish a Membership Scheme which will entitle Members to vote at company meetings in accordance with the Companies Act. Healthwatch Worcestershire has agreed a scheme which will extend membership of the Company to those organisations or 'Experts by Experience' who belong to the Reference & Engagement Group, and Healthwatch Volunteers as those who play an active part in the business of Healthwatch Worcestershire. Membership is limited to one place per organisation.

## **Volunteer Policy**

This policy provides practical guidance for staff, Board members and other volunteers about how Healthwatch Worcestershire (HWW) involves people in its day to day work. Volunteers are at the very heart of the work of HWW and are always needed in order to implement the aims and goals of the organisation. HWW recognises the dedication, hard work and time which they offer when they often already have busy lives; they are a highly valued resource and we are committed to supporting them in their work.

### **Definition of Volunteers**

For the purposes of this policy, a volunteer will be defined as, **"A person who willingly undertakes work on behalf of others outside the immediate family, or for the wider community, without financial gain"**.

### **Recruitment & Selection**

HWW will use appropriate means to advertise for volunteers locally, taking into account the principles of our Diversity and Inclusion policy. Applicants will need to complete an application form, have an informal interview and if successful two references will be taken up.

### **DBS (Disclosure and Barring) CHECKS**

Some roles will require a DBS check due to the nature of the work. In these cases, only if the check is satisfactory will the Volunteer be offered a role.

### **Induction & Training**

All volunteers will have an induction into the HWW organisation and our work. This will include:

- The role of the volunteer
- A list of staff members and roles
- Copies of all the relevant policies including this Volunteer Policy, Code of Conduct, Health and Safety and Diversity and Inclusion
- Details of any ongoing training
- Other information as appropriate

### **Adult Safeguarding**

Safeguarding means protecting an adult with care and support needs to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

## **Safeguarding Training**

HWW will ensure that: -

- mandatory Adult Safeguarding Basic Awareness training is put in place for staff and volunteers where this is appropriate to their role.
- more advanced training in recognising, responding, enquiring and reporting is available to staff as appropriate to their role

We will liaise with the County Council and other bodies as appropriate to ensure that the training reflects the multi-agency approach in place across Worcestershire.

The training will ensure that staff and volunteers are made aware of and understand their professional boundaries in respect of safeguarding and that their practice reflects this.

In order to ensure that all staff and volunteers have an awareness of Safeguarding we have produced a straightforward version of this policy which will be given to all volunteers. See **Appendix 1**.

## **Expenses**

HWW values its volunteers and wants to ensure there are no barriers to involvement. Travel and other reasonable expenses will be reimbursed. Please provide us with your personal details by completing the form at the end of this document. In order to claim expenses, the appropriate claim form (can be found at the end of the document) must be completed, signed and returned to the following address: [admin@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk](mailto:admin@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk)

## **Support**

HWW recognises volunteers need to feel valued and be seen to be a part of the organisation with which they are involved. We will strive to ensure these needs are met through support and training. Informal meetings will be held with the volunteer to discuss any problems or issues and training requirements.

## **Insurance**

All voluntary activity will be covered by the organisation's Employers Liability Insurance in the event of an accident being due to HWW's negligence.

**NB Professional Indemnity Insurance covers actions by paid employees only.**

## **Health and Safety**

All volunteers will be provided with a copy of the Health and Safety Policy Statement and receive briefings relevant to the situation. Volunteers are expected to follow the health and safety procedures.

### **Equal Opportunities and Diversity**

HWW has a commitment to Equal Opportunities and Diversity. A copy of the organisation's Diversity and Inclusion policy is included in this handbook and will be covered in the induction. We expect volunteers to follow this policy. Training will be provided where appropriate.

### **Resolving Problems**

HWW is indebted to its group of volunteers for helping the organisation to develop. The aim of this procedure is to ensure that any issues that might arise during a volunteer's time with HWW are dealt with in a fair and consistent way.

We have a collaborative approach to problem solving and we aim to work closely with volunteers if issues arise. Most problems are best dealt with informally, in discussion with the responsible Engagement Officer in the first instance. Notes should be kept of the meeting and if the issue is not resolved at this stage then it will need to be addressed through a further meeting with a senior staff member.

### **What to do when issues cannot be resolved**

Although most volunteers are likely to have a positive experience volunteering with HWW there may be occasions when issues cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. If the problem-solving procedure has been followed and every effort has been made to consider a fair outcome, but the parties remain unhappy, then consideration should be given to terminating any ongoing relationship between HWW and the volunteer. In such circumstances HWW will offer an exit interview. HWW reserves the right to cease working with a volunteer when it is considered to be in the best interests of the organisation.



## Volunteer Agreement

Volunteers are an important and valued part of the Healthwatch Worcestershire (HWW) Team. ('Volunteer' is the term we use for our volunteer role).

This agreement tells you what you can expect from us, and what we expect from you.

We, Healthwatch Worcestershire, will do our best to:

- Introduce you to how the organisation works and your role in it and to provide you with any training you need
- Provide a named point of contact (normally the relevant Engagement Officer)
- Regular information and, where appropriate, informal support meetings
- Treat volunteers in line with our Equal Opportunities policy
- Reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses where there are receipts in accordance with the agreed policy
- To provide insurance cover
- To implement good health and safety practice

I, the Volunteer, agree to do my best to:

- Support and promote the ethos and values of Healthwatch Worcestershire
- Volunteer reliably to the best of my ability, and to give as much warning as possible whenever I cannot volunteer when expected
- Have an interest in, and commitment to, supporting HWW work
- Follow the policies and procedures of Healthwatch Worcestershire, including Health and Safety, Diversity and Inclusion and Confidentiality
- Agree to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where appropriate

This agreement is not a legally binding contract and is not intended to be.

# Volunteer Code of Conduct

## **Purpose**

Healthwatch Worcestershire recognises its obligation as a public service provider to meet the highest standards of integrity, conduct and accountability in line with public expectations. This Code is designed to ensure all volunteers and staff understand what is expected.

## **Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct is a set of guidelines that all Volunteers follow to ensure they are representing HWW appropriately and effectively. This Code should complement the other documents relating to the role of Volunteers.

## **The Seven Principles of Public Life**

HWW volunteers are asked to use the Nolan Principles as set by the Committee on Standards in Public Life to guide their actions, these are:

**Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

**Integrity** - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**Objectivity** - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

**Openness** - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

**Honesty** - Holders of public office should be truthful.

**Leadership** - Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

### **Confidentiality**

HWW is committed to maintaining the highest degree of integrity in all business transactions. HWW staff and Volunteers will maintain confidentiality and the protection of all personal information and will not, without consent, disclose information given to us in confidence or information acquired in the course of our duties (except where required to do so by law).

### **Ethics**

We will conduct our services honestly and honourably and expect our clients and suppliers to do the same.

### **Duty of care**

We will be diligent in our duties and our actions and our advice will always conform to relevant law.

### **Conflict of interest**

We will not gain financial or other material benefit for ourselves, our families or our friends or place ourselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence us in the performance of our duties.

### **Conduct**

We will ensure that our conduct both at work and outside work does not bring embarrassment to Healthwatch Worcestershire or its partners. **This includes not identifying ourselves on Social Media as being representative of Healthwatch Worcestershire unless we have explicit HWW authority to do so** or expressing opinion or comment which could bring the organisation or its partners into disrepute.

### **Gifts and Hospitality**

We will not accept any gift or hospitality which could be perceived as a bribe or inducement for preferential treatment or service. (This does not include gifts of minor value such as pens or calendars).

### **Intellectual property and moral rights**

We retain the moral rights in, and ownership of, all intellectual property that we create unless agreed otherwise in advance with our clients. In return we respect the moral and intellectual copyright vested in our clients' intellectual property.

### **Quality assurance**

We maintain the quality of what we do through constant ongoing review with our clients, of all aims, activities, outcomes and the cost-effectiveness of every

activity. We will encourage regular review meetings and provide regular progress reports.

### **Professional conduct**

We will conduct all of our activities professionally and with integrity. We will take great care to be completely objective in our judgement and any recommendations that we give, so that issues are never influenced by anything other than the best and proper interests of our clients.

### **Equality and discrimination**

We will always strive to be fair, objective and inclusive and to treat others with respect and without discrimination or prejudice. Our advice, actions, decisions and recommendations will comply with the Equality Act 2010, Healthwatch Worcestershire's Diversity and Inclusion policy and equal opportunity principles. Discrimination can take several forms:

- Direct discrimination is when someone is treated worse than someone else just because of a protected characteristic. For example, it would be direct discrimination if a volunteer were excluded from a training course on the basis of being pregnant
- It is also direct discrimination when someone is treated worse than someone else because they associate with a person with a protected characteristic, or because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic. For example, it would be direct discrimination if an employee ostracised a colleague because he thinks the colleague is gay
- Indirect discrimination is when an apparently neutral practice or requirement disproportionately disadvantages one group and cannot be justified by the needs of the business. For example, imposing a requirement that job applicants or potential Volunteers must speak fluent English disproportionately disadvantages non-English persons and would be unlawful unless it could be justified on genuine business grounds
- It is also discrimination when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected to their disability, and this cannot be justified by the needs of the business or when the business fails to make reasonable adjustments for a disabled person.

## **Recruitment and selection**

We aim to ensure that role requirements and selection criteria are clear and based only on what is required to get the job done effectively. We will avoid making stereotypical assumptions based on protected characteristics about who is able to do a particular role.

We aim to ensure that no applicant is placed at a disadvantage by practices or requirements which disproportionately disadvantage protected groups and which are not justified by the demands of the job.

For all roles we will draw up a clear and accurate role description and person specification to ensure that we remain focused on what the job involves and the skills, experience and qualifications which are relevant and necessary to do the role.

When we hold interviews, we will try to ensure that more than one person conducts them to ensure that we avoid unintentional bias.

We will not ask for irrelevant information on application forms or in interviews. We will focus instead on whether someone has the relevant skills, qualities and experience to undertake effectively the role of Volunteer.

**Signed by:**

**Date:**

**Healthwatch Worcestershire Volunteer**

**Signed by:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of Healthwatch Worcestershire Board of Directors**

## Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 Healthwatch Worcestershire recognises that our staff, volunteers, partners, clients and others we meet, and support will come from diverse backgrounds and have the right to be treated with equal respect in an environment that is fair, inclusive and free from discrimination and prejudice.
- 1.2 Diversity and Inclusion is therefore at the heart of Healthwatch Worcestershire's operations and the organisation is committed to being a responsible employer and service provider, actively working to break down stereotypes, to remove artificial barriers and to ensure equality of opportunity for all.
- 1.3 This policy is underpinned by The Equality Act 2010. The Act lists 9 "protected characteristics" as below:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender reassignment
  - pregnancy and maternity
  - race
  - religion
  - sex
  - sexual orientation
  - marriage and civil partnership status
- 1.4 Healthwatch Worcestershire aims to meet and exceed the requirements of the Act and will ensure the organisation and its staff embrace other differences, for example, but not limited to: social status in society, employment status, political beliefs, those with carer responsibilities.
- 1.5 This policy applies to all staff, including Volunteers/volunteers, interns, agency staff and temporary staff. Clients and visitors to Healthwatch Worcestershire are covered by this policy as well as sub-contractors, partners and suppliers.
- 1.6 This policy is not contractual but is a current statement of Healthwatch Worcestershire's over-arching commitment to Diversity and Inclusion in all policies and procedures affecting relationships and activities with staff and other stakeholders. Healthwatch Worcestershire reserves the right to amend this policy as necessary.

## **2. Definitions**

### **2.1 Diversity**

Diversity is recognising that people are different, both in visible and non-visible ways with individual personal needs, values and beliefs. Working with diversity means valuing everyone as an individual and understanding that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach does not achieve fairness and equality of opportunity for everyone and therefore processes and approach need to be flexible and inclusive.

### **2.2 Inclusion**

Inclusion is about creating a workplace culture where everyone has a sense of belonging, feels respected for who they are and valued for their individual contribution.

### **2.3 Direct Discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. An example might be rejecting an applicant because they are perceived to be close to retirement (age discrimination).

### **2.4 Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination occurs when an unjustifiable job requirement, rule, policy or condition is stipulated and applied equally to all staff members but has a disproportionately adverse effect on one particular group with a protected characteristic. Such a requirement would need to be objectively justified. An example might be requiring a minimum 10 years' experience which would disproportionately impact on applicants younger than 28 years old (age discrimination).

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **3.1 Healthwatch Worcestershire as a Service Provider**

Healthwatch Worcestershire recognises that its operations impact on people's lives and communities. Healthwatch Worcestershire, working with its partner agencies, will ensure that the services it delivers will be relevant to local needs and local people and ensure that these services are accessible and appropriate for all sections of those communities.

### **3.2 Healthwatch Worcestershire as an Employer**

Healthwatch Worcestershire is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and volunteers. Healthwatch Worcestershire will strive to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to

make best use of their skills and abilities, free from discrimination or prejudice and in which all decisions are based on merit.

Managers will take a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and will proactively and robustly challenge any breach of this policy, where appropriate referring to the Dignity at Work or Disciplinary procedures.

### **3.3 Responsibilities of staff and volunteers**

All staff and volunteers are expected to follow the examples set by management in terms of appropriate behaviour and to treat all people they come into contact with through their work with equal respect and without discrimination or prejudice. Staff and volunteers are expected to undertake diversity training as required and to actively challenge any discriminatory behaviour shown by their peers and to raise any concerns with management.



# Healthwatch Worcestershire Data Protection Policy

## 1. Introduction

In order to carry out its activities, Healthwatch Worcestershire needs to gather and use information about individuals including customers, suppliers, business contacts, employees and other people the organisation has a relationship with or may need to contact. This information may include personal data.

This policy sets out our commitment to protecting personal data and describes how we shall use and handle personal data.

We are committed to:

- Complying with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Ensuring all data is held for a lawful purpose
- Protecting the rights of staff, customers and partners in relation to their personal data
- Being open about how we store and process individual's data
- Ensuring that personal data is stored securely

## 2. Data Protection Law

The Data Protection Act 2018 describes how organisations - including Healthwatch Worcestershire - must collect, handle and store personal information. This law implements the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679

These rules apply regardless of whether data is stored electronically, on paper or on other materials.

To comply with the law, personal information must be collected and used fairly for defined purposes, stored securely and not disclosed unlawfully.

The Data Protection Act is underpinned by eight important principles. These state that personal data must

- Be processed fairly and lawfully and in a transparent manner
- Collected for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary
- Accurate and where necessary kept up to date
- Retained only for as long as necessary
- Processed in an appropriate manner to maintain security

Healthwatch Worcestershire is committed ensuring we comply with these principles in our day-to-day activities.

In line with GDPR Healthwatch Worcestershire have moved to a risk-based approach with a regular assessment of data and the risks to Data Subjects associated with holding that data. Healthwatch Worcestershire will design processes and procedures which ensure that risk mitigations and privacy are achieved through standard work processes in line with the ISO 9001 (2015) standard.

### **3. Policy Scope**

This policy applies to the whole company of Healthwatch Worcestershire. It applies to all data that the company holds relating to identifiable individuals. This can include:

- Names
- Postal addresses
- Email addresses
- Phone numbers
- IP addresses
- Descriptive information covering Healthwatch Worcestershire intentions regarding identifiable individuals

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR classifies this information as personal data and requires that it is treated in accordance with the six data protection principles.

Healthwatch Worcestershire will at least annually or when there is a significant change in business, review the data to check for increases or decreases in scope.

The risk assessment will dictate the exact practices that Healthwatch Worcestershire will put into place and these will be documented in the Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA).

### **4. Responsibilities**

Everyone who works for or with Healthwatch Worcestershire has responsibility for ensuring data is collected, stored and handled appropriately.

- The Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for ensuring that Healthwatch Worcestershire meets its obligations regarding privacy. Healthwatch Worcestershire is registered with the Information Commissioners Office. The Directors have appointed the Chief Operating Officer as the registered Information Controller.
- The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for privacy on a day to day basis; responsible for:
  - Keeping the board up to date about data protection responsibilities, risks and issues, this will be a standing board agenda.
  - Ensuring that risks are reviewed at least annually or when there is a significant change in business.

- Reviewing all data protection procedures and related policies, in line with an agreed schedule.
- Arranging data protection training and advice for the people covered by this policy.
- Handling data protection questions from staff or partners
- Dealing with requests from individuals to see the data Healthwatch Worcestershire holds about them (Subject Access Requests).
- Checking and approving any contracts or agreements with third parties that may handle the company's sensitive data.
- The Information Security Officer is responsible for:
  - Ensuring all systems, services and equipment used for storing data meet security standards relevant to the identified risks.
  - Performing regular checks and scans to ensure security hardware and software is functioning properly
  - Evaluating any third-party services, the company is considering using to store or process data. For instance, cloud computing services.
- The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for:
  - Approving any data protection statements attached to communications such as emails and letters.
  - Addressing any data protection queries from journalists or media outlets.
  - Ensuring consent is obtained and recorded of any marketing activity conducted by the company in pursuit of its normal business.

## 5. Staff Responsibilities

Access to personal data shall only be granted to staff and contractors who require such access in order to fulfil their role or a necessary business function.

Data shall only be shared in accordance with Healthwatch Worcestershire's Information Security Policy

Staff and contractors are responsible for ensuring that they protect personal data by acting in accordance with Healthwatch Worcestershire's Information Security Policy and Acceptable Usage Policy and their working procedures.

The COO is the first point of contact for any queries relating to personal data and data security. If staff or contractors are in any doubt about their responsibilities, they must contact the COO for advice.

Where staff feel there may have been a breach in data handling process or are informed by any partner company that there has been a breach of data they are required to inform the COO without delay

## 6. Data Use

Personal data shall only be processed in relation to the specific purposes listed in Healthwatch Worcestershire's registration with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) (which can be found in Healthwatch Worcestershire's Privacy Statement (which can be found at <https://www.healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk/privacy-statement/> )

Personal data shall not be transferred outside the EEA unless the organisation storing the data is subject to an adequacy agreement that is supported by the Information Commissioner's Office.

## 7. Data Accuracy

The law requires Healthwatch Worcestershire to take reasonable steps to ensure data is kept accurate and up to date.

The COO shall regularly review Healthwatch Worcestershire's approach to storing and handling personal data and ensure that processes are in place to maintain the accuracy of all personal data.

Staff and contractors shall alert the COO to any inaccurate information, in order that it can be corrected. The COO is responsible for correcting such inaccuracies.

In order to assist with maintaining accuracy, data must be held in as few places as necessary. Staff must not create unnecessary duplicates of data sets.

## 8. Disclosing Data

In certain circumstances, the Data Protection Act allows personal data to be disclosed to law enforcing agencies without the consent of the data subject.

If a request is received to disclose data in this manner, the Data Protection Manager and the board will review the request for disclosure and shall confirm that the request is genuine, taking legal advice as necessary.

Data subjects have a right to access the data held by Healthwatch Worcestershire about them. This is called a subject access request. Requests would usually be received by post from data subjects but may be received by email. All staff shall forward such requests to the COO immediately.

Healthwatch Worcestershire will fulfil all data access requests without delay. It is the COO's responsibility to lead this process.

## **IT and Information Security Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Healthwatch Worcestershire has invested money in technology to support staff and Directors undertaking their roles and it believes in the importance of responsible use of IT and handling of information.
- 1.2 Limited private use of Healthwatch Worcestershire IT is permissible, but such use must not detract or impact on an individual's duties or work.
- 1.3 The aim of this policy is to establish and maintain the security and confidentiality of IT and information by ensuring that staff are aware of and fully comply with security requirements.

### **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Healthwatch Worcestershire IT and information including:
  - IT used by staff, volunteers and directors when undertaking Healthwatch Worcestershire business
  - Information collected, processed, stored and communicated on behalf of Healthwatch Worcestershire
  - Any device that is connected to Healthwatch Worcestershire IT including PCs, laptops, USB/memory sticks
- 2.2 This policy also applies to any personal or privately-owned IT when it is used for Healthwatch Worcestershire business
- 2.3 This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and directors of Healthwatch Worcestershire
- 2.4 Failure to comply with this policy is likely to be a disciplinary offence and may constitute gross misconduct

### **3. Responsibilities for IT and Information Security**

- 3.1 Ultimate responsibility for IT and information security rests with the Chief Operating Officer however, all staff, volunteers and directors are required to comply with the IT and information security policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- 3.2 Each member of staff is responsible for the security of the IT and information systems they use.

## **4. Security principles**

### **4.1 Management of Security**

Responsibility for IT and Information Security resides with the Chief Operating Officer

### **4.2 General Security**

All members of staff are responsible for IT equipment allocated to them and must not allow them to be used by another member of staff unless permitted by this policy.

### **4.3 User Access Controls**

Access to information will be restricted to authorised users who have a legitimate business need to access the information.

### **4.4 Computer Access Control**

Access to computer facilities will be restricted to authorised users who have a business need to use the facilities.

### **4.5 Passwords**

Passwords are the entry point to our IT resources. They are unique to each user and must not be made available to another member of staff. Protecting access to our resources is pivotal in ensuring that our systems remain secure.

Passwords should not be written, e-mailed, shared with others and must not be displayed or written down and hidden by your workstation.

### **4.5 Protection from Malicious Software**

Healthwatch Worcestershire will use software countermeasures and management procedures to protect itself against the threat of malicious software. All staff are expected to co-operate fully with this policy. Users must not install software on Healthwatch Worcestershire's IT without the agreement of the Chief Operating Officer.

### **4.6 User Media**

Removable media of all types that contain software or data from external sources, or that have been used on external equipment, must be fully virus checked before being used on the Organisation's equipment.

### **4.7 Monitoring System Access and Use**

When necessary and as directed by the Chief Operating Officer, an audit trail of system access and data use by staff shall be maintained and reviewed on a regular basis.

#### **4.8 Security at home**

Security issues apply to all equipment used for the Organisation's business including home computers.

# **Email and Internet Policy**

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Healthwatch Worcestershire has invested money in technology to support staff and Directors undertaking their roles and it believes in the importance of responsible use of email and the internet.
- 1.2 Limited private use of Healthwatch Worcestershire IT for access to the internet is permissible but such use must not detract or impact on an individual's duties or work.
- 1.3 Private use of Healthwatch IT email for personal purposes is not permitted
- 1.4 The aim of this policy is to set expectations in the use of email and internet by ensuring that staff are aware of and fully comply with policy requirements.

## **2 Scope**

- 2.1 All members of staff and Directors of Healthwatch Worcestershire are covered by this policy.

## **3 Email Principles**

- 3.1 Care must be taken in what is said in all email messages. Emails carry the same authority as any other form of communication to or from the Organisation and improper or inappropriate statements can cause embarrassment and give rise to liability on individuals and the Organisation.
- 3.2 Under no circumstances should emails include anything which would offend or embarrass the recipient, or the Organisation should such communication be released in the public domain.

Examples include:

- Abusive
  - obscene
  - sexist
  - racist
  - harassing or defamatory messages
- 3.3 Receipt of an inappropriate email should be reported to the Chief Operating Officer immediately; such emails must not be forwarded.
  - 3.4 Members of staff, volunteers and directors are not permitted to send emails from another member of staff's computer or under any name other than their own.
  - 3.5 Email attachment from untrustworthy sources should never be opened.



#### **4 Internet Principles**

- 4.1 Web pages and files which could be regarded as illegal, offensive or inappropriate must not be accessed or downloaded from the organisation's computers
- 4.2 Care must be taken in what is said when accessing social networking sites (e.g. blogs, online forums or collaborative spaces) in the name of Healthwatch Worcestershire as these carry the same authority as any other form of communication to or from the Organisation and improper or inappropriate statements can cause embarrassment and give rise to liability on individuals and the Organisation
- 4.3 When using social networking sites (e.g. blogs, online forums or collaborative spaces) for personal use, staff, volunteers and directors must recognise that they represent Healthwatch Worcestershire and there is an expectation that judgement is exercised such that the Organisation's name is not brought into disrepute.

#### **5 Monitoring email and internet**

- 5.1 It should be considered that for business reasons, all use of all office systems including, but not limited to; telephone and IT systems will be monitored.
- 5.2 The Organisation reserves the right to monitor email, voice mail and other data held on the IT systems including any PC's and laptops owned by the Organisation.

# Social Media Guidance

## 1 Introduction

Healthwatch Worcestershire recognises that social media can be a fun, rewarding and instant way for individuals and organisations to share information and opinions with family, friends, colleagues and the wider public. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist employees in making responsible decisions about their use of social media, Healthwatch Worcestershire have established this guidance which applies to all employees.

## 2 What is social media?

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, 'social media' can mean many things. Essentially, social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the internet, whether at work or at home, using interactive websites and applications. Some of the most popular ones currently are social networks such as Facebook and LinkedIn, media sharing such as YouTube and Flickr and micro-blogging sites such as Twitter - but there are many more and new applications are emerging all the time.

## 3 Business use

Healthwatch Worcestershire uses social media as a cost-effective means of increasing visibility and connecting/engaging with a wider audience than we could reach by more traditional means. Employees in some roles will have a remit which includes use of social media to provide business benefits and Healthwatch Worcestershire will ensure these employees are trained to do so professionally and responsibly.

## 4 Personal use

Whilst at work, personal use of social media is necessarily restricted, whether on Healthwatch Worcestershire equipment or employees using their own interactive devices (smart phones, tablets, etc.). Too many hours a day spent on any personal activity at work will necessarily be managed as a performance issue and could result in disciplinary action. Work e-mail addresses should never be used to register on a social media site unless it is a business account used to promote Healthwatch Worcestershire activity.

## 5 Guidance

The basic rules for employees and volunteers are:

- You are solely responsible for what you post online. Consider how the content could be perceived by other people from a diversity of backgrounds

(not just your friends). Consider your own personal reputation and the public perception of the organisation

- Content, whether posted at work or from home, should never be inappropriate, offensive or illegal. Before posting, consider whether you might be in breach of the Healthwatch Worcestershire Diversity and Inclusion policy or Dignity at work policy
- Ensure that any comment you make would not show the organisation in a negative light or potentially damage organisational reputation
- Never reveal confidential information; if in doubt check with senior management if something should be in the public domain
- Never breach data protection or give information which could identify someone else without their permission. Never post photographs without the subject's permission
- Never post derogatory comments about colleagues, managers, the organisation, its business associates or clients
- Never bad-mouth, defame, slander or libel individuals or organisations
- Remember that once information is posted, you can never get it back, even if you later delete it

## **6 Further information**

If you have questions or require further guidance, please contact the Chief Operating Officer or one of the Directors.

## Healthwatch Worcestershire Staff

**Telephone:** 01386 550264

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**General office email:** [info@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk)

**Website:** [www.healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk)

**Twitter:** @hwworcs

**Address:** Healthwatch Worcestershire, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive,  
Persore, Worcestershire, WR10 1TP.

Peter Pinfield  
Chair



Jo Ringshall  
Vice Chair

John Taylor  
Director

Martin Gallagher  
Director

Jane Stanley  
Director

Co-opted Board  
Members  
David Saunders  
Anne Duddington  
Barbara Pugh



Simon Adams  
Managing Director

Jo Ringshall  
DPO



Louise Handy  
Business Support  
Officer

Helen Wood  
Administration  
Officer

Felicity Jones  
Engagement  
Officer

Margaret Reilly  
Engagement  
Officer

Morag Edmondson  
Engagement  
Officer

Suzy James  
Engagement  
Officer

Members of Healthwatch Worcestershire Ltd

Volunteers

Reference and Engagement Group

Registered for Information



## Volunteer Expenses Claim Form

Please provide receipts/tickets for parking, public transport and any Out of Pocket expenses and sign in the box below:  
Note: All expense claims will be made using BACS

### Claimant

I confirm that I have incurred the above expenses, and that the expenses and claim for payment meet the rules set out in the Expenses Guidance for Healthwatch Worcestershire. I also confirm that by claiming car mileage I hold a valid driving license, that the car is taxed, has a current MOT certificate (if required) and is insured for Healthwatch activity.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Name in Capitals:**

1. This section is for office use only
- 2.

Logged

Summary Sheet Updated

**Authorisation:** I confirm that the Claimant has provided the necessary receipts to evidence this claim

**Signature:**

**Name in Capitals:**

**Date:**

**Received and actioned by office:**

**Signature:**

**Name in Capitals:**

**Date:**

**AUTHORISATION TO PAY EXPENSES INTO BANK ACCOUNT**

Healthwatch Worcestershire pay Volunteer expenses by BACS transfer to your bank/building society, please complete this form and return it to:

**Louise Handy  
 Freepost RTEE-GKAT-SRLR  
 Healthwatch Worcestershire  
 Civic Centre  
 Queen Elizabeth Drive  
 Pershore WR10 1PT**

<b>Your Name:</b>	<b>Your Address:</b>
<b>Bank/Building Society Name:</b>	<b>Post Code:</b> _____
_____	<b>Telephone No:</b>
<b>Branch Name:</b>	<b>Actual Name on Account:</b>
_____	_____
<b>Bank Address:</b>	<b>Address of Account (if different from above:</b>
_____	_____
<b>Post Code:</b> _____	<b>Post Code:</b> _____
<b>Sort Code</b> ____-____-____ <b>Account No:</b> _____	
<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<p>By completing and returning this form you are confirming that the details are correct and authorising the payment of any expenses due to you to be paid into the named account.</p> <p>The information supplied on this form will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act and only used for the purpose of making payments to you.</p>	



## Appendix 1

### SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS - INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

#### 1. WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding means protecting children and young people and adults with care and support needs right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

##### **Safeguarding Children**

Safeguarding applies to children and young people up to 18 years of age or up to 25 years of age for young people with disabilities and complex needs, or who are Looked After by the Local Authority

##### **Safeguarding Adults with Care and Support Needs**

Adult safeguarding applies when an:

1. Adult has need for care and support (this may be because they are disabled or ill or older, and may need extra help to manage their lives and be independent)
2. Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
3. As a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

Sometimes an adult may choose to live in a situation that we think is dangerous or unsuitable. For adults safeguarding means balancing people's rights to freedom of choice with the risk they are facing.

Whilst Healthwatch Worcestershire does not provide direct services to vulnerable adults and children we may, through the course of our work, see situations which raise concerns that a child or adult is at risk of, or is being abused. It is also possible that a child or adult may tell you (disclose) that they are being abused.

This leaflet sets out what you, as a Healthwatch Worcestershire Volunteer, should do in these situations

#### 2. WHAT IS ABUSE?

**Abuse can take many forms but is any mistreatment which results in harm. It includes neglect, where a person fails to take action needed to keep another person safe and well.**

Abuse may be a **single act or repeated acts**. It may be:

- **Physical** - e.g. hitting, shaking, kicking or pinching, misuse of medication or inappropriate physical sanctions
- **Emotional or psychological** - e.g. threatening, humiliating, bullying, swearing, frightening, constantly criticising or blaming - resulting in mental or physical distress
- **Sexual** - direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent. You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong
- **Child sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults.

- **Neglect and failing to act** - a person's physical, psychological and emotional needs are ignored or so poorly met that it is likely to cause damage to their health and/or development. In the case of adults with care and support needs this includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Abuse may also include:

- **Domestic violence** - including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.
- **Financial or material abuse** - including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery** - encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- **Discriminatory abuse** - including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Organisational abuse** - including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **Self-neglect** - this covers a wide range of behaviour. Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

This list is not exhaustive.

**ABUSE CAN TAKE PLACE ANYWHERE, AND BY ANYONE. IT IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE.**

### 3. HOW CAN YOU FIND OUT MORE ABOUT SAFEGUARDING?

Healthwatch Worcestershire will provide training to volunteers on Safeguarding as part of the Volunteer Induction training.

This document is a part of Healthwatch Worcestershire's:

- Safeguarding children policy and procedure
- Safeguarding adult's policy and procedure

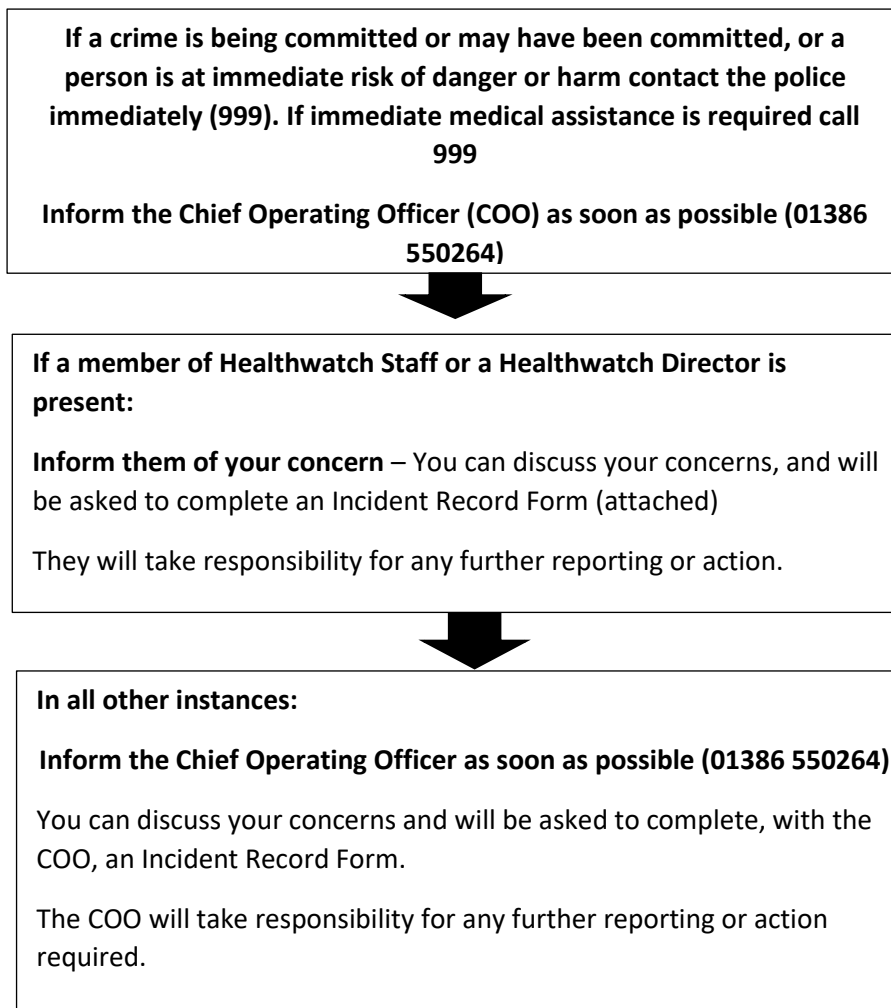
These policies provide a lot more detail about Healthwatch Worcestershire's approach to Safeguarding.

The documents can be found on our website, or as hard copy at our Office, Pershore Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, WR10 1PT

### 4. WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK THAT A CHILD OR VULNERABLE ADULT IS AT RISK OF, OR IS BEING, ABUSED?

It **IS NOT** your responsibility to personally investigate suspected or actual abuse.

**IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to report suspected or actual abuse following the procedure below:



## **5. WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU (DISCLOSES) THAT THEY ARE BEING ABUSED?**

If someone tells you that they are being abused, you should:

- Reassure them, tell them that they are right to tell you [do not promise to keep it a secret as it is your responsibility to inform others].
- Accept what you have been told - ask open questions to obtain basic facts but don't "interview" the person. Record as much information as possible in the persons own words
- Tell the person that you will have to pass the information on, but you will only tell people who need to know so that they can help.
- In the case of an adult, consent to passing information on should be sought. Any decision made to report a safeguarding concern without consent must be made in the person's best interest and be a proportionate response. The COO will be responsible for further discussion with the adult involved and about any other action that may be taken.
- Ensure the person is safe - dial 999 if necessary, otherwise contact the COO
- Do not approach or contact the alleged abuser[s].
- Follow the reporting process above

- Complete the Incident Record Form as soon as possible after the event detailing what you and the person discussed.

#### **6. WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK THAT A HEALTHWATCH WORCESTERSHIRE DIRECTOR, CO-OPTEE, MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER MAY BE ABUSING OTHERS?**

All staff and volunteers have a duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues. Concerns about the behaviour of a Director /staff/volunteer must be referred without delay to the **Chief Operating Officer (01386 550264)**, who will investigate and take appropriate action.

If your concern is about the Chief Operating Officer, it should be reported to the Vice Chair of the Healthwatch Board Jo Ringshall 01386 550264

#### **7. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Please remember to maintain confidentiality on a “need to know” basis. This means that you do not discuss this incident with anyone other than as described in the reporting procedure above, or those who need to know (e.g. if the matter is referred to a child protection social worker).

Please take advice on this point from the Chief Operating Officer if you are uncertain.