

3rd March 2025

Press release – for immediate release

Connected Together CIC is pleased to announce that the Community Interest Company has been awarded the grant to provide Healthwatch services for West Northamptonshire Council for a further 2 years until the end of March 2027.

Connected Together CIC, a not-for-profit organisation and social enterprise, has managed Healthwatch across the whole of Northamptonshire since April 2013. With the local councils now split into 2 unitary authorities the requirement is to have 2 new Healthwatch, West and North, representing people across the county with a more local focus from April 2025.

(NB. Connected Together CIC has been awarded the Healthwatch West Northamptonshire grant; the Healthwatch North Northamptonshire contract is still being evaluated by the local authority).

Kate Holt, CEO said 'It's fantastic news for us and a huge relief for staff and our amazing volunteers that we can continue the good work they do listening to people's views about health and care services in West Northamptonshire and (indeed across the county) and feeding that back to NHS health and social care providers to improve services. We will now be looking for more volunteers locally across West Northamptonshire, some to join the Healthwatch West Advisory Board and others to become authorised Healthwatch representatives to attend meetings on our behalf and carry out Enter and View visits to health and social care premises'.

Morcea Walker, MBE DL, Chair of Healthwatch said 'It's great that we can carry on representing all communities in West Northamptonshire and getting their voices heard on all matters related to health and social care. It's a huge remit but one we take seriously, and we urge people, local communities and local voluntary and community organisations to get in touch with us to tell us their personal stories and experiences to help improve services'.

Cllr Matt Golby, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Public Health and Regulatory Services at West Northamptonshire Council, said: "We are delighted that Connected Together CIC has been awarded the grant to continue providing Healthwatch services for West Northamptonshire. This grant ensures that our residents will continue to have a strong, independent voice in health and social care matters. The work done by Healthwatch is invaluable in helping us understand the needs and experiences of our community, and we look forward to seeing the positive impact of their efforts over the next two years. We encourage everyone to get involved and share their stories to help shape the future of our local health and care services."

If you are interested in becoming either a Healthwatch volunteer, Advisory Board member or authorised representative, please visit <https://www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/volunteer> for more information or phone 0300 002 0010.

We have also just been shortlisted for a national Healthwatch England Impact Award for our work and report on families and young people's experiences of Autism and ADHD diagnosis in Northamptonshire: The report can be found here but please do contact us for more information:

<https://www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/report/2024-09-05/young-people-and-their-families-experiences-autism-and-adhd-diagnosis>

NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire:

Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire are the independent champion for health and social care in the county, working to help people get the best out of their local health and social care services, whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow.

We exist to ensure that people are at the heart of care. We listen to what people like about services, and what could be improved, and we share their views with those with the power to make change happen. We also help people find the information they need about local services.

As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them. Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire website:

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire:

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/young-healthwatch-1

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Healthwatchnorthandwestnorthamptonshire/

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61551938533499>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HealthwatchNWN>

<https://twitter.com/YHWNorth1>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/healthwatchnwn/>

<https://www.instagram.com/yhwnorthamptonshire/>

About Young Healthwatch

Young Healthwatch is part of Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire – the body which represents the interests of local people in health and social care. It is a group of 11 to 24 years old who are keen to make a difference in health and social care and are interested in young people's rights and wellbeing. For more information visit

<http://www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/young-healthwatch-1>

About the Connected Together CIC:

Connected Together Community Interest Company (CIC) is the legal entity and governing body for Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire. It is a social enterprise and aims to be first for community engagement across the county of Northamptonshire and beyond. Find out more at www.connectedtogether.co.uk.

For further information on the above please contact Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire. Tel. 0300 002 0010 or email

enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk