

# Talking and listening to people in Broadbridge Heath

Listening to and amplifying local voices, with  
recommendations for change

August 2019



“ Another 1000 homes and there is no infrastructure going in. ”

- Resident from new village area



### Why we are engaging with local people?

When planning our engagement events and activities, we want to ensure we visit the places where local people of different ages and demographics are, this includes making sure we find opportunities to talk to people outside normal office hours.

We do this because we need to



proactively engage with, and respond to, the different populations that live in West Sussex



understand and help meet their health and social care needs.

One of the ways we do this is a Listening Tour of a specific area within our county. On this occasion, our focus has been in Broadbridge Heath, so we can better understand the health and social care changes for local people living in a village/town undergoing significant new housing growth.

In 2011, at the time of the last Census, had a population of 3,112. Since then there has been significant property development in the village, increasing the population considerably. The number of households in the village has almost doubled over the last 5 years, with 1,153 households in 2013 and over 2000 households now in 2019.

[Broadbridge Heath Parish Council Annual Report 2018-2019](#)

This tour and report recognise how housing; schools, travel and community assets (the wider determinates) positively or negatively impact on residents' health and wellbeing.

Given the volume of housing development planned across our County, this report is relevant not just to Horsham District but to all levels of our councils, particularly important to those responsible for housing/planning decisions.

### Thank You

Our thanks to all the people who talked to us in March (at our Community Partnership Event) and throughout June 2019. We are also incredibly grateful for the support of the organisations, services and groups who let us come to their facilities to talk to people, which include:



Billingshurst Surgery  
Courtyard Surgery  
Holbrooke Surgery

Horsham Hospital  
Orchard Surgery

Park Surgery  
The Village Surgery

Broadbridge  
Bombshells WI



St John's Church

### Recommendations

There are requirements for local health and care system to respond to our reports<sup>3</sup> and recommendations made with them. This report is being widely circulated and will be presented to:

- West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board (which is responsible for the strategic direction of the county's health and social care service, and scrutiny of commissioning delivery)
- Horsham District Council (which is responsible for housing development) but also to other District and Boroughs within Sussex to consider the insight and challenges presented
- West Sussex County Council (which is responsible for the delivery of Schools and Social Services)
- Horsham and Mid Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group and Coastal West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Groups (as Broadbridge Heath residents register with GP member practices from both of these CCGs, which are responsible for the commissioning of main local health services).
- The Local [Primary Care Networks](#) of GP practices which have boundaries that encompass Broadbridge Heath, i.e.
  - Chanctonbury (for Billingshurst Surgery)
  - Horsham Central (for Park, Holbrook, Orchard and Riverside Surgeries)
  - Horsham Collaborative (for Courtyard, Cowfold, Rudgewick and The Village Surgery)
- Parish Council (who play a vital part in representing the interests of the community and for improving the quality of life and local environment).

Whilst we would normally ask for a formal response to recommendations within 20 days of receiving the report, we acknowledge these require organisations to work together to make changes.



**We will:** expect to see evidence of how these recommendations have been acted upon and will be publishing an impact report in early 2020. In this report we will include a response from each of the organisations/public bodies listed above.

<sup>3</sup> Section 44 of The NHS Bodies and Local Authorities (Partnership Arrangements, Care Trusts, Public Health and Local Healthwatch) Regulations 2012

**We make the following recommendations to support the health and care system to improve services for all residents young and old.**

- As a matter of urgency, councils with accountability to the residents of Broadbridge Heath (e.g. Parishes, District and County), work together to review development planning in light of local concerns and experiences, to identify lessons learnt and what actions are needed to adjust the wider determinants to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes for all residents.
- All levels of council come together to create regular communication, that goes across traditional and digital platforms, to keep residents up to date on the development and progress on changes in and around the village. This should include celebrating successes.
- Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust reviews service pathways and waiting times within the Speech and Language Services, to support families who are waiting for assessments and therapy, so parents have the confidence to support their children during any waiting period.

The Trust may wish to consider how it can passport some speech and language support skills to community service providers that support families with young child, as part of any review.

- Local GP practices introduce questions around travel, transport and parking, into their processes for making appointments, to support patients who may have issues with getting to appointments at particular times of the day.
- West Sussex County Council and NHS commissioners work together to review and ensure there is adequate transport provision from and to the village, so patients who cannot get to health appointments using their own transport, can do so easily, without long travel times and at a cost they cannot afford.
- One Stop Shop and the Parish Council locate a *chat bench* (see page 13) outside this community facility, to enable people to rest and socialise in this area of the village.

This may also be relevant to other community facilities that are being opened in the village.

- All levels of the councils carry-out audits to identify and remedy any environmental factors that may be hazardous for people living with mobility or sensory impairments, to make the village a safe place during the development stage and beyond.

This could be done with the support of local residents, particularly as there is a well-used community Facebook page.

### Following up on our recommendations



We will confirm the actions and outcomes from these recommendations by examining the formal responses to the recommendations made in this report and check actions have been taken. This will be done before Christmas and in early 2020.



We will understand if we have made a difference by:

- Continuing to look at the comments and views of local residents through social media, to see if the sentiment changes.
- Revisit local groups next year to ask people about their experiences.
- We will produce an impact report so residents can see what has happened as a result of them sharing their experiences and concerns.



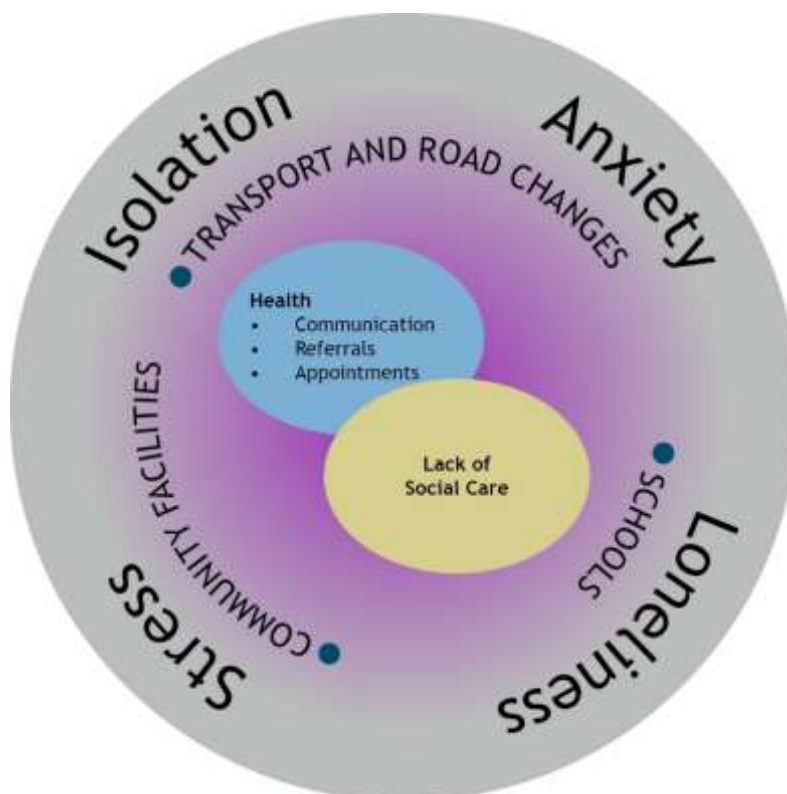
## What local people told us?

### Summary

We met hundreds of residents during our tour and listened to over 350 stories and had many valuable conversations. People were more than happy to share their lived experiences and views with us.

We heard that health and care experiences varied, but that common themes can be identified. Many spoke highly of their NHS experience.

Emerging strongly from local people, as having a negative influence on their health and wellbeing, for both young families and older Broadbridge Heath residents, is the environment and lack of infrastructure.



“The original plans for Broadbridge Heath were great and it has turned out so *shitty*. This is all due to West Sussex County Council, as they have not put in the infrastructure. I’m a builder and I hope I will never be involved in a project like this, as it’s not been managed.

“The real issue is that Broadbridge Heath has no infrastructure. We desperately need some joined-up thinking.

“There needs to be an urgent review of the plans and infrastructure provision.

- Concerned residents  
(Met at different parts of the village/at different times)



## Starting Well

Starting Well: is one of three strategic priorities for the health and wellbeing of the West Sussex population.

### Starting Well



Improved mother and baby health and wellbeing, especially for those in most need



Good mental health for all children



Children growing in a safe & healthy home environment with supporting and nurturing parents and carers



Children and young people leaving care are healthy and independent

## Mother and Baby Health

On tour, we heard largely positive stories about maternity experiences including a long labour (for a mother who was not expecting her first child) and services under pressure.

However, some of the pathways presented difficulties for expectant mothers.

“Juliette chose to have her baby at St. Richards Hospital and spoke highly of the hospital and the care she received. However, she also had to have all her antenatal appointments at Chichester, as well. She wished there could be some flexibility around the antenatal care, as it is quite a journey from Broadbridge Heath.

Another mother of two (whose baby was under 6 months) had her second baby at Princess Royal Hospital, whereas previously, she had given birth at East Surrey Hospital (Redhill). She described both as good experiences.

The difference being that under Princess Royal she had to have all her scans/blood taken at the hospital, whereas East Surrey's pathway meant she could have these done at Horsham Hospital, which was easier to get to.

A young first-time mum, whose son was under 12 months, said that her experience at East Surrey Hospital was a good one but felt it would have been good to know what happens after the actual birth (as she was surprised, by having to deliver the placenta). She feels it would also have helped her to have been shown around beforehand, as she was confused, for example, she did not know where to go when they said it was lunchtime.

There was a suggestion that new mothers were not being told about possible benefits through health services and only found out about things like the *healthy start vouchers* by coming to mother and toddler groups. **This may be something that midwives and health visitors could be mindful of, so they can support families better in this area.**



### Isolation

We could not see where families, living in the new part of the village, could easily socialise, there were no obvious play facilities or café in which to come together.

A family who rented a home at the top of the bypass described feeling disconnected and isolated but were able to move as they only had a short lease.



**Technology to overcome isolation:** A mum with two very young children shared with us, an [app](#) she uses to stop her feeling isolated, describing it as being like “*online dating for mums. You put up a profile and can chat to other mums and if there isn’t a group in the area, you can create a ‘drop in’ at home*”. This may be a useful tool for mums who feel isolated, shy or struggle in large groups.

### Access to schools

Residents are experiencing huge challenges to get children to school, both in terms of school placements and physically getting their children to the local school.

“We moved to Broadbridge Heath from (Surrey) because of the new school being built and now we have been told it will not be built. I have one child at the local school, and the other will be, I hope able to join in a couple of years. I’m having to keep my fingers and toes crossed.

(This concern was shared by others whose sense was, the promised infrastructure was simply not going to be delivered - with local people suggesting the blame lies with the County Council; either through not managing the developers or for cancelling the provision.)

“I have to take both my kids to school. One is in Broadbridge Heath and the other in Horsham. Due to the road layout, we are always late for one or the other. It has also meant that the kids are having to get up earlier, as we need to leave earlier. Things have not been thought out.

“My daughter is now having to leave her home an hour earlier to get through the traffic to drop off her son at school. Also, because there is only one way in and out of Broadbridge Heath this has also becomes congested. It is going to be a long year!

We heard of children having to travel to Crawley, as well as Horsham, because the village school does not exist. Whilst we acknowledge the cost of travelling to school is met by West Sussex County Council, **young people may feel disconnected to both their community, and their friendship groups, because the distance is too great for them to socialise with their friends outside of school.**

### Speech and language provision


People are experiencing long waits for speech and language support for their children.

“ The initial referral took 10 months, and I’m now waiting for therapy sometime in the summer.

(When we spoke to the family, they had been waiting over a year and were hoping to have the therapy about 6 months after, the assessment.)

Another family had waited 18 months for an initial appointment to see this service and due to the wait went privately, as they wanted their child to get the best possible start. They did eventually get 8 sessions of NHS treatment, but this has left them feeling very let down by the system.

A solution put forward by a family is that there needs to be basic skills training for parents on speech and language so that children do not miss out.

A green circular icon containing a white checkmark, with the word 'GOOD' in green capital letters below it.

Online parent forums suggest using [Talking Point](#) which has a progress checker; database of resources and information on local services.

### Young peoples’ mental health

Local people were unsure where the Youth Emotional Service (YES) is moving to. This is currently at Arun House, which is convenient for students of Collyers College, Tandridge, Forest and Millais Schools (Horsham).

We have since found out that from September 2019, the YES service will be temporarily based at [Bohunt Trust Free School](#). With the plan to move to a new site North of Horsham in 2020, as part of the new housing development in that area.

“ Sophie’s daughter (primary age) was experiencing anxiety and she was told by her school that they would *not be putting anything in place for her as they had too many other cases to deal with*. So, she paid for a private assessment and her daughter was diagnosed with both anxiety and severe dyslexia. Despite this, she was still unable to get support through the school and so the family made the decision to move schools. Since then, and through accessing support from the new school and becoming involved with the YES service, she has started to make progress.

*Sophie said, the service is good and is doing the best it can with such limited resources.*

We heard from others about the challenges they have faced, trying to get support for teenagers and we will include this insight in our reporting to the Independent Review looking into the Emotional and Mental Health Services for Children and Young People.



## Living and Working Well

Living and Working Well: is one of three strategic priorities for the health and wellbeing of the West Sussex population.



### Road changes

We heard from people how the building development and arising roadworks are having a negative and frustrating impact on peoples' daily lives and that many local people are confused.

- “ Many locals young and old are not going out since the new road system began. They feel confused by the layout and generally stuck.
- “ The road works are causing extra mileage and you have to go around the houses as you really cannot get around this. This has now added an extra 20 minutes to my time.
- “ I met someone who has not been out since the new roadworks began as they do not know how or where to go now. This has increased her feelings of isolation and loneliness. Fortunately, the Village Agent (a part-time role, funded by the Parish Council for the coming year) was able to offer practical support and encouragement to this resident.
- “ The big roundabout is a nightmare for me and a real issue for elderly people. The traffic is fast, and you need to have your wits about you!
- “ Another resident told us: The speed on the slip road, towards Worthing, is 40mph but you then have traffic from the A24 travelling at 60mph and you have to try to get into the right-hand lane for the roundabout!
- “ The closure of the old road has had a real negative impact on the new build area. The whole area is gridlocked in the morning and again in the evening.
- “ CCTV is needed on the link road and the traffic lights seem to be out of sync.



- “ The re-working of the road system is a disaster. I walked to Tesco last week and the traffic was backed up out of the main car park and many people were turning around. We cannot afford to ‘hack off’ Tesco’s or we will have nowhere to shop in the local area.
- “ Posted on Facebook at the end of last month, generated 85 comments (lots of other posts on the subject as well): Just spent some time trying to cross the road at the Highwood interchange and witnessed the mayhem of people in vehicles not having a clue as to which lane to be in and also witnessed one collision between two vehicles that were both in the wrong lanes... Why oh why, is there no one from WSCC monitoring this ongoing situation which will never change now that the A281 is permanently closed? Sadly, it will probably take a fatality before anything is changed.
- “ Some of the comments demonstrated the confusion, amongst the village residents, around how to use the roads: So, is it right that both lanes can go right? If so, can both lanes go straight on (onto Wickhurst dual carriageway)? ... With someone else commenting: both lanes go right but then over the bridge, it’s marked that one land goes straight and one goes right. They really need to have both lanes go straight there too. Many people use it that way anyway.

This is being reflected in the media.

5 July 2019

Supermarket giant Tesco has apologised after customers were left fearing six hour delays earlier today.

The queues, due to roadworks and a large sporting event at The Bridge leisure centre, saw staff handing out water while drivers sweltered in the heat.



SUS-180108-085155001

A Tesco spokesman said: “We would like to apologise to customers for the long delays this afternoon in exiting our Horsham Extra car park.

8 July 2019

Verbal abuse towards workers during the Broadbridge Heath bypass works has prompted county road chiefs to consider installing CCTV.

Incidents of threats and verbal abuse are taken ‘extremely seriously’ West Sussex County Council said.



For details of how the road develop should improve and unite old and new Broadbridge Heath see [here](#).





### An environment promoting health and wellbeing?

#### Cycling around

“ Jane said, it is great that there are cycle lanes for cyclists and for people to keep up regular exercise and there are routes for country walks too.

“ Others do not view this so positively: They have spent £1,000s on the new cycle lane through the old part of the village, for whom? We have huge potholes in our roads. I have lived in the village for over 33 years and this is a shambles.

We heard numerous concerns that in certain places the introduction of cycle lanes, has not and will not make cyclists safer, as the roads are simply not wide enough to accommodate them.

“ A resident on Facebook posted: Every time I go home on the bike, I think to myself ‘Oh God, here we go again.

Furthermore, social media comments are suggesting that the tarmac on some of these lanes is damaged.

It has been suggested that *best practice* for this type of cycle lane (as used in Holland) is to have a maximum driving speed of 20mph and no cars should be in the cycle lanes. Highways have not made this change and left the speed at 30mph. The speed of the traffic, within the local area would also need to be slowed down and motorists/residents would need to be fully informed about what they can and cannot do, as this system is not part of the Highway Code.

Several residents told us that the newly introduced *Bridle Way* in the village is not accessible for anyone in a wheelchair, as it has not been tarmacked, and as such, Highways have fallen foul of the *Rights of Way* and *Equalities* legislation.

#### Sports and leisure facilities

Local people do not feel they have been listened to and do not understand how and why certain things have been developed, over others.

“ Are there any plans for a swimming pool at the Bridge Leisure centre, so people can continue their swimming exercise to keep fit? The Pavillions gets very busy plus they have regular swimathons and galas, which means they have to close the pool on that day. Christs Hospital pool people tend to have to be members and some people just like to go when they are free to do so and not feel committed to a few days each week, to make use of their membership. Billingshurst pool is too small and again busy, so with the increase in population,



I feel that the Bridge Leisure centre needs a swimming pool.

From our community event day, in partnership with Places Leisure at Bridges Leisure Centre in May we saw that the centre was being well used, particularly those over 50.

### Local health services

As part of our tour, we visited all surrounding surgeries and spoke to some patients, but a lot of our stories are from listening to residents whilst visiting community venues.

#### Getting to appointments

Residents are disheartened that there is not a GP practice in the village, meaning most are registered at central Horsham and Southwater based practices, as their catchment boundaries come out to both the old and new parts of the village.

This creates travel, transport and parking issues for these patients. We heard how the additional difficulty in getting to appointments is causing vulnerable/ older patients' considerable distress.

Some people expressed their frustration at the lack of understanding, when making appointments for times in the day when people cannot use their bus passes, leaving them having to pay full fare '*they do not notice peoples' ages*'.

These issues can be reduced, if surgery staff understand bus timetables, and ask patients if there are specific time of the day that are easier for them to have an appointment.



We recently worked with GPs in Midhurst (as part of their Community Health Hub development), by involving and having discussions with local people, GPs realised that some people were struggling to get to appointments. Riverbank Surgery staff now understand the bus times and are adjusting appointment times, to support their patient who need to use buses to get the surgery.

Surgeries located in areas where patients need to purchase parking tickets, we would suggest need to be more mindful of appointments running late and make sure that patients are aware of possible delays with appointments.

“I drove to the surgery and paid for on-the-street parking, but my appointment ran late, so I got a parking fine!

Working age patient of Courtyard Surgery, Horsham



Local people have suggested there are, however, wider issues with the local bus services, that need to be reviewed by the County Council.



“Local bus services are awful. We have 4 buses and they all come at the same time but there are no connections and they shut down early or leave at the same time.

“Other residents said, what happens if you are really ill, we do need a better bus service at least as good as the one in Southwater/Roffey area. We deserve it!

“Southwater has a very good bus service - every 15 minutes and runs to 11.30pm at night. However, buses around Broadbridge Heath are poorer. Slinfold buses finish at 4.30pm and this means local people can't take advantage of activities in Horsham unless they can afford taxis, which would be £12 each way. How do people access these services if the buses don't?

### Access to appointments

Access was a common themes people spoke about, which mirrors a lot of what we hear across the County. We heard from some that getting an appointment is not an issue.

“It's much better than it used to be to get an appointment. I have been a patient (for nearly three decades) and things have actually got better, I would say. The last couple of years it has been a case of just phone up and ask....

Older patient of Riverside Surgery, Horsham

“Today, I booked my appointment online, which was really easy and straightforward. The team here are lovely - doctors and nurses. I have always had a good service here. No complaints!

Patient of Courtyard Surgery, Horsham

However, other Courtyard Surgery patients have suggested there may be some issue with the telephone system.

“I called this morning, and when I got through the message told me I was 19<sup>th</sup> in the queue. The thing is, I was in the queue for more than 10 minutes and it didn't update, so it's not accurate. Then I got cut off and had to call back.... Overall the doctors are good but getting through is frustrating.

*Patient of Courtyard Surgery, Horsham.*

“I do find myself worrying the night before if I can get an appointment. I also worry about how sustainable the health services will be here in Broadbridge Heath. There is a real need in this area for a GP practice.

Courtyard Surgery Patient

Online booking did not seem to be as successful for at least a few patients.

“ They are always trying to direct you to book online but every time I try there are no appointments on the system. So defeats the objective.

Orchard Surgery Patient (Female, aged 19-60)



Amongst the stories were concerns over the length of time patients needed to stay on a telephone call to get through to a surgery to make an appointment. We have shared with Practice Managers where this appears to be a stronger issue, and some good examples of how other local surgeries have addressed this issue.

“ Bob, who is 70, told us: I’m not registered with a GP as I have not needed any support for the past 25 years. Recently, I went to try to register at one of the GP surgeries and was unable to as they are not taking new people on. Not sure what to do now.

If like Bob, you are unsure where to register you can look at information from NHS.gov via our [Information and Advice webpage](#). From our conversations with Practice Managers, we know [The Village Surgery, Southwater](#) is keen to register new patients.

People also spoke of long waiting times to be seen...

“ When I do get an appointment, I can sit waiting for 1.5 hours over the allocated time.

Orchard Surgery Patient (Female, aged 19-60)

### Communication

Whilst at the garden centre we took the opportunity to speak to a group of cyclists, who stopped to repair a puncture. Our conversation with this group of five showed how peoples’ knowledge of available services differs, demonstrating a need for a fresh approach to communicating with patients.

“ Liz, a cyclist and veterinary nurse, needs to get antibiotics from time to time, when she has been bitten by a cat. She is unable to get an appointment at her surgery (in the next village) and therefore can’t get a prescription. This has happened on too many occasions and as she knows she can get the treatment she needs, to avoid a major infection, she goes to East Surrey Hospital’s (Redhill) Accident and Emergency.

Liz knew this is not a good use of A&E but also that she must get the medication promptly. We spoke to the group about alternatives, giving information about the [Minor Injuries Unit](#) at Horsham Hospital and [Urgent Treatment Centre](#) at Crawley Hospital.



## Ageing Well

Ageing Well: is one of three strategic priorities for the health and wellbeing of the West Sussex population.



We have given examples of some of the concerns raised by older residents and others.

## Working to find solutions

There are organisations working to address some of these. [St. Johns Church](#) has well-established and regular community events that are open to all.

For example: they offer a vibrant and well-attended lunch club that meet once a month, and other activities to support residents of all ages.

The Parish Council has recognised the need to invest in support to help overcome some of the issues around loneliness.



## Resting space

We heard, and saw on Facebook, the One Stop Shop experiences difficulties in staffing so can be closed outside of the advertised opening hours. For older people walking to this shop, there is nowhere for them to rest/sit whilst waiting for the shop to open or before entering or leaving it.

**We suggest there's an opportunity to install a [chat bench](#) at this location - so people can rest and enjoy social interaction. This is something the Parish Council (who have responsibility for seating) could ask this retailer to sponsor.**

“Betty told us, I find it very difficult to get on and off buses now, so it is good that the (pharmacy) delivers a prescription. Another resident told us that they get their medication delivered with their shopping.”

We learnt Age UK Horsham has developed projects for volunteers supporting older people on buses (in other villages), recognising that drivers can pull away too quickly, making journeys feel too unsafe for some passengers.

In some part of the country, Councils where new developments are occurring, have held *welcoming parties*, to share information about the local services and to help bond groups and people. This may be something that the Parish and District Council could consider going forward. [Here](#) is an example in Cambridge.



### Creating safe environments

“The pavements are all uneven and broken and the grass verges and the grass next to the main roads is left to grow so high, it can be dangerous to cross the roads because you can't see what is coming.

One older resident told us

We noticed overhanging and narrow pathways and suggest these are hazardous for people living with a visual-impairment.

**Making sure areas are well-maintained, particularly during a period of environmental change, is fundamental to keeping local residents safe.**

We have been told that the [neighbour warden](#) service does not cover this village. Wardens are an integral part of the community safety unit (through joint funding from parish and district council), and “work alongside partner agencies to improve the quality of life for everyone, by undertaking a number of activities from enforcement to community development”. Part of their role is to promote community cohesion and resilience.

From the tone of social media and through our direct conversations with local people this is an area that has issues within the community through the road changes. There are conflicting views being aired and a rising level of frustration.

**For this reason, we would suggest that there is a need for this type of service to help local people to find solutions to the challenges of a changing environment that may not make sense to them.**



### Next steps

#### Continuing our engagement

We will be visiting the luncheon Club at St Johns Church and the youth group in September 2019.

We will be following up this work by seeking to present these issues to the:

- Parish Council and ask members to endorse and take forward the local recommendations.
- Health and Wellbeing Board and asking members to endorse and take forward the multi-agency recommendations.



## About Us

Healthwatch is here to make care better.

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure their views shape the support they need.

We also help people find the information they need about services in West Sussex.



We here to help you on the next step of your health and social care journey - wherever it is taking you.

We have the power to make sure that the government and those in charge of services hear people's voices. As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them.

You can review how we performed and how we report on what we have done by visiting our website [www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk)

## Contact us

**Healthwatch West Sussex CIC** is a Community Interest Company limited by guarantee and registered in England & Wales (No. 08557470) at Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road, Pokesdown. BH7 6DL.



Healthwatch West Sussex works with Help & Care to provide its statutory activities.



0300 012 0122



@healthwatchws  
@NHSadvocacy



@healthwatchwestsussex

Healthwatch West Sussex  
Billingshurst Community Centre  
Roman Way  
Billingshurst