**[Your Name]**
[Your Address]
[Your Postcode]
[Your Email Address]
[Date]

**[MP’s Name]**
Member of Parliament
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

**Subject: Please protect our local Healthwatch service**

Dear [MP's Name],

I am writing as a [staff member / volunteer] with Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and as your constituent, to ask for your support in challenging the Government’s decision to incorporate the recommendations of the [Review of patient safety across the health and care landscape](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Freview-of-patient-safety-across-the-health-and-care-landscape%2Freview-of-patient-safety-across-the-health-and-care-landscape%23the-6-organisations-under-review&data=05%7C02%7CVicky.Rushworth%40luminus-cic.uk%7C6173ce9a5d234102b2b708ddc08bb602%7C80dab1ec97604877b0d434d3f00e7800%7C0%7C0%7C638878428490148955%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=hHhhGtCY8h0QMa%2BbC37MeAmzHenKDp3j4ch%2B%2BfUKLiY%3D&reserved=0), led by Dr Penny Dash, into the [NHS 10 Year Health plan](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F6866387fe6557c544c74db7a%2Ffit-for-the-future-10-year-health-plan-for-england.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CVicky.Rushworth%40luminus-cic.uk%7C6173ce9a5d234102b2b708ddc08bb602%7C80dab1ec97604877b0d434d3f00e7800%7C0%7C0%7C638878428490177174%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=UTpot1TNZTLX0eoeHCy%2BswOxM%2BEYc6jx6Lo%2Bse6TnIM%3D&reserved=0) and to give you a copy of an open letter signed by [**131 local Healthwatch**](https://hwnn.co.uk/sites/hwnn.co.uk/files/Open%20Letter%20to%20the%20Secretary%20of%20State%20for%20Health%20and%20Social%20Care_0.pdf) services across England. The letter, addressed to Wes Streeting, raises serious concerns about the government’s proposal to abolish local, independent public voice services in health and social care. We support reform, but not at the cost of losing our statutory independence, scrutiny powers, or public trust.

Specifically, **we are concerned about the impact that transferring the functions of local Healthwatch into NHS Integrated Care Boards and local authorities will have on our local communities.**

For over a decade, **local Healthwatch organisations** have served as the **independent voice of local people, carers, and communities**. This has existed in some form for over 50 years.

We speak up for those who too often go unheard – including those facing barriers to even access the system, and those failed by the system. Under the new plans, this vital service will be lost.

Since 2012, over **42,000 residents across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire** have shared their experiences of health and social care with us — through surveys, conversations, and our **unique Enter and View visits**. These visits allow us to go into hospitals, care homes, and GP practices to observe care firsthand, speak directly with patients and staff, and report independently on what we find.

**Our independence is not a luxury — it is the reason people trust us.** It enables us to speak up without fear or favour, and it’s why our work drives real change.

Our work is often the only safe route for vulnerable people to speak up:
“Abysmal — I was treated poorly, and staff seemed indifferent.”
“My GP appointment is too short to discuss everything. I leave without the help I need.”
“I struggled to book a GP appointment for my neurodivergent child because there were no pre-booking options. I felt dismissed and unheard.”

If local Healthwatch is dismantled, these individuals will lose a trusted, independent advocate, and the system will lose vital scrutiny.

**What are we at risk of losing if local Healthwatch is abolished?**

1. **Our role as an independent critical friend** – We work constructively with local stakeholders, but always with the freedom to raise concerns without fear or favour.
2. **Our role amplifying the voices of people who face the greatest barriers to accessing support, and those at risk of health inequalities –**the new plan relies heavily on people feeding back to the services they use via App, but we speak to people experiencing health inequalities about the barriers to accessing those services.
3. **Our independence, enabling us to share findings which are 100% person focussed**- Our research is based on what people with lived experience tell us, with no other taskmaster or agenda.
4. **Our work acts as a bridge across sectors** – people do not fit neatly into one box, they often experience and need services across multiple providers. We connect VCSE organisations, local authorities, health services, and communities to build a more integrated and inclusive system.
5. **Our trusted, impartial role**–some people come to us because they lack trust, they fear repercussions sharing their feedback directly with those providing their care,  they find provider feedback routes difficult to navigate, or because they have shared in the past and feel that they have not been heard.

To see the range of issues we support people with, see our latest annual report on our website: [Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire​ Annual Report 2024–2025​ | Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire](https://hwnn.co.uk/report/2025-06-27/healthwatch-nottingham-and-nottinghamshire-annual-report-2024-2025)

In light of this, we ask you to support us in urging the government to:

* Revisit its decision to abolish local independent patient champion that speaks up for the public;
* Consult with the public to codesign a service which meets their needs and supports the NHS to realise its ambitions;
* Invest in and strengthen independent statutory patient voice.

If you would like to meet with us to discuss this further, please get in touch.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

**[Your Name]**
**[Constituency / Postcode]**
**Volunteer, Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire**