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## July 2025 Newsletter

Welcome to our July Newsletter!

We apologise for the delay in sending this edition however due to some technical difficulties with our communications platform we found we were locked out for several days - all fixed now and we hope that the information is below is of interest to all our readers.

As summer hits its stride, we're feeling the warmth not just in the weather but across our vibrant local voluntary sector. We've got highlights from our recent events, details of upcoming sessions, and lots of news from our members and partners.

If you know anyone who would find this newsletter of interest please do forward on. Contact us at [communities@pcvs.co.uk](mailto:communities@pcvs.co.uk) to be added to our distribution list if you would like to receive the newsletter regularly.

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## PCVS NEWS

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### **PCVS Membership Engagement Event**

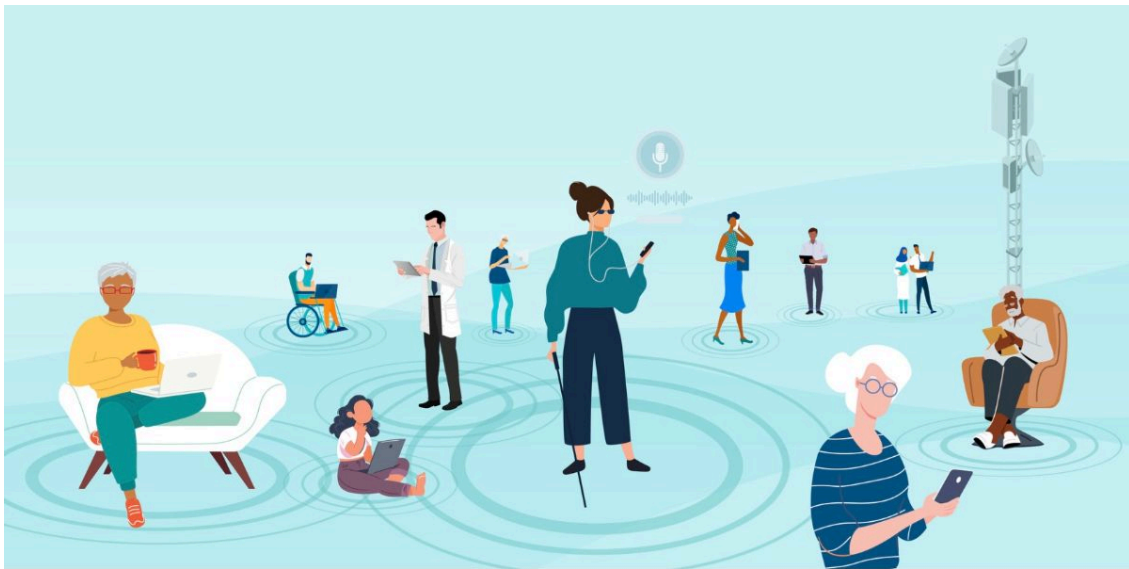
Following on from our successful Membership Engagement Events in March and June we are now pleased to announce the next event will be happening in July with an online meeting to help ensure that those of you not available previously can take part in our engagement activities.

11am-12pm on Tuesday 15th July - Online via Teams  
(joining instructions will be sent to you once you have registered)

**To register interest please email [frances.hunter@pcvs.co.uk](mailto:frances.hunter@pcvs.co.uk)**

There will be an opportunity to find out more about our proposed refreshed PCVS Membership Offer, ask questions and offer your thoughts and views.

We have been listening to all your feedback about our proposed Membership Offer and want to ensure that all members have the opportunity to participate and give their views, this is the final opportunity to ask direct questions before we end our consultation process with an online survey based on all the feedback we've received so far.



## **Connecting Peterborough: Digital Inclusion Project**

**We want to support you to gain some digital skills to help you access the thing you need**

The PCVS led Digital Inclusion Project has received a great deal of interest from those communities where access to basic digital support, basic skills and training is remote. Organisations have been approached based on evidence of digital need which has taken into consideration geographic location and population. We are delighted to say that there are now 10 digital hubs in place across the city who are gearing up to run activities ranging from offering a Digital Cafe, basic digital skills training and face to face support for form filling.

Each hub has taken into consideration their respective population needs and based their offer on making a difference for those who are digitally excluded. This is also an opportunity for volunteers to be involved. We are looking for Digital Champions who could support their communities to acquire those skills that make life just a little more easy. So if you have some digital skills to share, we would like to hear from you.

In parallel to this, our Digital Network is growing, and we now have over 50 organisations who have an interest in expanding their own knowledge of the increasingly developing digital world. We are sending out regular information to the Network of what is available in terms of training & topic based webinars which can be easily accessed. We will also be sending out details of 4 training sessions we will be co-ordinating based on subjects decided by the Network.

To find out more and/or become a member of our Network, please contact:  
[john.robinson@pcvs.co.uk](mailto:john.robinson@pcvs.co.uk) or [cheryl.mcguire@pcvs.co.uk](mailto:cheryl.mcguire@pcvs.co.uk)

If you want to learn more about the scope of the project, please visit our



website.

[Digital Inclusion Project](#) | [PCVS](#)

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## Community Health Research Champions Event

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of June PCVS hosted a networking event to bring together Peterborough's Community Research Champions, interested researchers, and members of the community who are interested in becoming part of our work promoting health and care research.

It was also a good chance for us to be together after some time apart and catch up. Plus, nothing fosters connection like food, and the lovely chickpea curry that Farsh got in definitely helped!

We also took the chance to watch an excellent film that the NIHR developed of an event that Anameeka, one of Peterborough's Community Research Champions, put on late last year with money received through a PPIE Innovation Grant. View the

film here: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1btfl8lgF-KQ9VDCXg7T1JPeM5w\\_wlgg/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1btfl8lgF-KQ9VDCXg7T1JPeM5w_wlgg/view?usp=sharing)

If you're interested in learning how getting involved in health and care research can help your community, or you're a researcher looking to make connections, please get in touch by emailing [communities@pcvs.co.uk](mailto:communities@pcvs.co.uk).



## Peterborough Poverty Truth Commission

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, Peterborough's Poverty Truth Commission had the privilege of being invited to speak at the 2025 edition of the ISLAH Community and Social Research in Peterborough conference, hosted by University Centre Peterborough.

You may remember that we also presented at their last conference in 2023, just as our PTC was picking up steam. Getting to go back there and talk about what we learned was a nice full-circle moment.

We carved our presentation out of a larger piece of work we're doing to embed the learning of our PTC in Peterborough. It was called "Will They *Really* Listen?", as a response to one of the main concerns of our commissioners, and we talked about some of the smaller things we learned (like not assuming everybody can scan a QR code!), along with bigger picture results like the connections we've made between people, and our involvement with Peterborough City Council's Poverty Strategy.

Many thanks to Sameena and everyone else at ISLAH, as well as Claire Bowes and everyone else at University Centre Peterborough for hosting such a wonderful day. There's nothing else quite like it in Peterborough.

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### Third Thursday at PCVS

We were really pleased to welcome Heidi Haxeltine from The National Lottery Fund, to our June *Meet the Funder* session. With 15 organisations represented from across our network, the session was packed with valuable insights, practical advice, and brilliant discussion around successful funding applications.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many finding the guidance on using AI to support funding applications particularly useful. We're already planning further sessions to explore this topic in more detail and support our members in making the most of these emerging tools. Keep your eyes open for further training sessions coming up!

***"These training sessions are highly valuable to small organisations"***

Feedback comment from participant

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## **Direct Payments Team's Coffee Morning Drop Ins**

Join us for a cuppa and chat with our friendly Direct Payments team. Meet fellow service users and discuss any problems and queries with the team.

Open to all Direct Payment clients and carers, care agencies and social services staff.

Held on the first Wednesday of the month.

## **Volunteering Opportunity**

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## **Digital Inclusion Volunteer St Johns Church**



*Be part of our friendly team and help deliver vital online skills to digitally excluded members of the public.*

**Help by providing 1-2-1 assistance with basic digital tasks such as:**

- Using a mobile phone, tablet, laptop (basic IT)
- Setting up and using email and social media
- Completing online forms, updating CVs
- Scam awareness skills, online safety

**Requirements:**

- Competent digital skills
- Willingness to undertake necessary training

For more information and how to apply [Digital Inclusion Volunteer | Go-Vip](#)

## Training Opportunities



## **VCSE Training Opportunities**

### **Training Opportunities for PCVS Members**

Our training programme continues to offer a variety of sessions based on what you've told us are the topics you most need to know about. Sessions will grow



your skills and confidence, offer support with challenges your organisation may be facing and strengthen your connections across the sector.

Our Training Tuesdays programme is underway and our regular Third Thursdays are continuing to prove popular.

More opportunities are being added all the time—so keep an eye on our website and make sure you don't miss out!

**Check out the calendar here [Training and Infrastructure Support](#) | [PCVS](#)**

# Upcoming Events

Summer

2025

JUNE  
**2nd**

**How to recruit volunteers**

JUNE  
**19th**

**Meet the Funder: The National Lottery - Reaching Communities**

JULY  
**1st**

**How to use AI for funding**

JULY  
**17th**

**Meet the Funder - National Gas**  
**Bitesize Training- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

AUGUST  
**21st**

**Meet the Funder - Cambridgeshire Community Foundation**  
**Bitesize Training - 5 Steps to Assessing Risk**

AUGUST  
**27th**

**VCSE Leaders Intro Session**



# MEET THE FUNDER

## *PCVS 3rd Thursday Event*



Come and meet Kiera Pullen from National Gas, and find out what funding opportunities can be accessed, followed by a 'Bitesize' training session on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.



Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July

**10AM - 12PM**



PCVS Offices

**ALLIA FUTURE BUSINESS  
CENTRE, LONDON RD,  
PE2 8AN**



This event will be popular and spaces are limited.  
To book your place use the QR code above or go to  
<https://www.pcvs.co.uk/events/#pcvsEvents>



There will be time  
allocated for questions  
and networking.



Please note that no specific  
advice on applications can  
be provided.

Free Parking & Refreshments provided

Peterborough Council for Voluntary Services, Allia Future Business Centre, London Road, Peterborough, PE2 8AN  
Tel 01733 342683 – email [pcvs@pcvs.co.uk](mailto:pcvs@pcvs.co.uk) – website [www.pcvs.co.uk](http://www.pcvs.co.uk)  
Company Registration 02119687 Charity Registration 02119687

Our Thursday networking sessions are continuing to be a fabulous opportunity for you to meet other people within the sector, share knowledge, skills and find out important information relevant to you.

July's session looks to be popular so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Visit our website to book your place [Training and Infrastructure Support | PCVS](#)



## Fabulous Discount Offer for PCVS Members!

*"At Media Trust, we believe when everyone has an equal voice, we'll get to a more equal society. That's why we connect media organisations with charities and under-represented talent to empower the third sector and advance media representation. We design and deliver innovative and impactful training for charities so they can communicate more effectively to support their communities and drive social change. We also match charities with media industry volunteers for hands-on support."*

Media Trust has a wide range of training courses covering all sorts of topics from volunteering to TikTok, and storytelling to social media strategy, most of them are online and lead by experts in their field. Many are free to attend but where there is a charge PCVS has secured a **20% discount** for our members!

Check out Media Trust's website and opportunities here [www.mediatrust.org](http://www.mediatrust.org). You can also find a whole host of members and other's training events as well as those delivered by PCVS on our Training pages on [www.pcv.co.uk/training-and-infrastructure-support](http://www.pcv.co.uk/training-and-infrastructure-support)

Fran from PCVS attended a Media Trust training session and said

*"This was an excellent course presented in an engaging way by an industry expert. The subject matter was complex and new to me, there was a lot to take in, but Andrew made it interesting and had some great take away tips. I came away with a plan of action and the tools to do it. When I get the transcript and slides I'll go over it again as a good refresher!"*

Please contact [Communities@pcv.co.uk](mailto:Communities@pcv.co.uk) and ask for the discount code if you see a charged for course you'd like to attend, remember to include the name of your organisation.





**Tesco Stronger Starts** <https://tescostrongerstarts.org.uk/apply-for-a-grant/>

The programme is open to all schools, registered charities and not-for-profit organisations, with priority given to projects that provide food and support to young people.

Examples of eligible applications with a focus on food security, children and young people could be:

- A school providing pupils with food for breakfast clubs or snacks throughout the day.
- A school wanting to buy equipment for outdoor or indoor activities.
- A school wanting to develop a food growing area.
- A school supporting an after school club.
- A voluntary organisation working with families to run a food bank.
- An organisation addressing holiday hunger.
- A healthy eating project that supports families to cook healthy meals on a budget.
- A Brownie or Scout group needing funding for new play equipment or activities.

Grants are up to £1,500. There is a rolling deadline but we are currently accumulating applications for Oct-Dec 2025 vote in store.



## One Stop – Community Partnership <https://www.groundwork.org.uk/one-stop-community-partnership/>

Successful applicants will receive an initial grant of up to £1,000 and begin a partnership with their local One Stop store.

This programme is designed to support community groups or organisations operating within two miles of a One Stop store and which are;

- Tackling food poverty
- Supporting the vulnerable
- Supporting the elderly
- Supporting low-income families
- Running youth sports teams
- Reducing / recycling waste
- Improving the environment

| Applications open | Applications close | Decision Date W/C |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 2 June            | 30 June            | 11 August         |
| 1 September       | 29 September       | 10 November       |



The climate and nature emergency affects us all, but local action can make a real difference. We fund community-led projects that improve the environment and help people connect with and enjoy nature where they live.

You can use the funding to:

- start a new activity or continue an existing one
- help your organisation adapt to new challenges
- run one-off events that have a clear environmental benefit.

We're looking to fund projects that:

- help people connect with and care for nature in their area
- make a positive difference to the environment

To find out more information follow this link:

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery->

## Community Events and News

Please see below some of the events that are over the next month. You can find out about many more by visiting our website

[Member Events](#) | [PCVS](#)

### Preparing Your Business for the Digital Switchover: Including 2G and 3G switch-offs advice

#### Online Webinar:

June 19<sup>th</sup> | 11:00 - 11:45

#### In-Person Events:

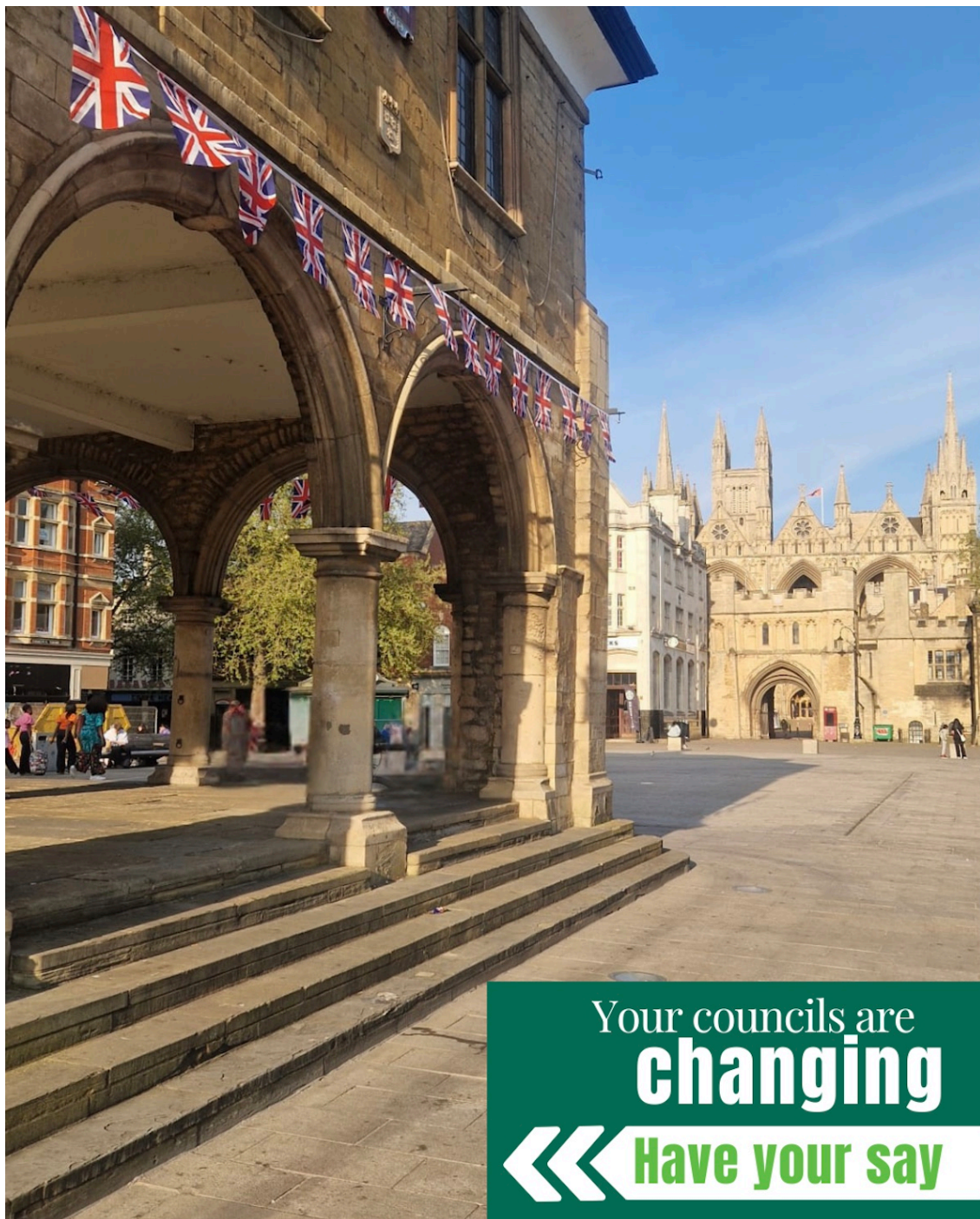
Sept 9th | 10:00 – 11:30

South Cambs Connect, Cambourne

Sept 9th | 14:00 – 15:30

Eco Innovation Centre, Peterborough





## **What could the future of local government look like?**

Following a government announcement last year, councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are exploring new ways of working together.

This could mean fewer councils, more streamlined services, and a different way of making decisions.

Your input matters. Take part in the consultation before 20 July [click for the survey below](#)

[Local councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are changing -](#)





## **We need your help to shape the future of the voluntary sector**

Here at PCVS we know how hard our local voluntary and community organisations work to make a difference for those living in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and we want to make sure that this is well recognised and properly valued.

The Third Sector Trends Survey helps to do just that, and we would encourage you to take part and help raise the profile of the VCFSE and highlight the achievements, challenges and ongoing amazing work across the sector.

Many of you will have helped with this research before and if you're a new organisation, Durham University are just as keen to see what you do, how things are going and what you're achieving.

Whether you're big or small - thriving, struggling or just going along as normal – they need to hear from you. It's quick and easy to do on your PC, laptop, tablet or phone. It's interesting too and really helps to build a picture about how the voluntary sector responds to and initiates change in society.

So if you're an amateur sports, dance or gardening club, a village hall, a carers' group, an arts organisation, a campaigning trust; or if you deliver social or health services, care for the environment or run a hostel or food bank – whatever you do, it's all equally important.

The study is big (6,000+ responses in 2022) and runs right across England and Wales. But its focus is still very local – looking at how the voluntary sector develops and works in areas like ours – whether the interests you serve are focused in a neighbourhood/village – or span national/international boundaries. It's completely confidential, incredibly relevant to the voluntary sector and those who support it and only happens every three years.

To take part, click here [Third Sector Trends in England and Wales 2025](#).

If you're worried about anything – please contact Professor Tony Chapman, Durham University [tony.chapman@durham.ac.uk](mailto:tony.chapman@durham.ac.uk)



## Careers Hub

As a result of the NHS changes the reality is that there will be job losses across the ICB.

To support staff and help them find new roles the ICB have set up this [Careers Hub](#) where partners can advertise their job opportunities directly to ICB staff. This is now open to voluntary sector organisations. You can request a link be added to your job vacancies webpage by emailing: [cpicb.cphub@nhs.net](mailto:cpicb.cphub@nhs.net)



We are delighted to share with you the July news bulletin from the Voluntary Sector Network

[Cambridgeshire and Peterborough + Voluntary Sector Network - Update Bulletin - July 2025 - Support Cambridgeshire](#)

This month you can read about the development of the ICS Anti-Racism work and how you can support it, as well as short summaries from the VSN June meeting.

## Core20PLUS Ambassadors

Advance notice that the recruitment of the fourth cohort of NHS England's Core20PLUS Ambassadors Programme opens on **14 July 2025** and closes on **12 September 2025**. They are seeking individuals working within the NHS, across Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), local authorities, the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector, or industry who:

- Are committed to improving access, experience, and outcomes in healthcare
- Have strong connections to Core20PLUS communities
- Work in underserved areas, including rural and coastal regions.

To learn more, join one of the introductory webinars:

8<sup>th</sup> July - [Register here](#)

10<sup>th</sup> July – [Register here](#)

Email NHS England with any queries [england.core20plusambassador@nhs.net](mailto:england.core20plusambassador@nhs.net)

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## Changes to Microsoft's offers that may affect small charities

Microsoft is ending its free software offers, like Microsoft 365 Business Premium and Office 365 E1, for charities starting in July. They will instead provide discounts of up to 75% on these services and offer up to 300 free licenses of Microsoft 365 Business Basic.

This change has raised concerns among UK charities, particularly smaller ones, due to the potential for increased costs and the short notice provided. Microsoft states the changes are to "streamline and simplify" their offerings, while charities fear a negative impact on their services. An online petition has been launched urging Microsoft to reconsider.

For more details, you can read the full article on Civil Society: [Concerns Shared as Microsoft Ends Free Software Offers for Charities](#).

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YMCA Trinity group are organizing a fund-raising event to raise money for a Community Hub at The Cresset.

The event will be a Sleep Out, the event will be held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at Peterborough Lions Rugby Club between 7pm and 9am! Cardboard boxes and a Sleeping bag provided...

We will be seeking support from local businesses as well as partners for the event. Whether this is providing food, entertainment or joining us in our sleep out, everyone is welcome!

If you would like to take part in this event please sign up here: <https://ymcatrinitygroup.org.uk/peterborough-sleep-out-2025/>

If you are able to sponsor me/donate, please visit this link: [https://www.justgiving.com/page/stuart-bowell-sleepout?utm\\_medium=FR&utm\\_source=CL&utm\\_campaign=015](https://www.justgiving.com/page/stuart-bowell-sleepout?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL&utm_campaign=015)

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**Are you between 17 and 25 years old?**  
**Have you used mental health services?**  
**Take our survey!**

We have launched our new mental health survey. We want to hear from young people aged 17 to 25 who have experience of mental health services — or from their family members, parents or carers. Get involved and have your say. We are offering a £15 Love2Shop voucher for your time!



[Are you between 17 and 25 years old? Have you used mental health services?](#)  
[Take our survey! | Healthwatch Peterborough](#)

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## **NHS Community Participation Group Volunteer Role**

We are working with NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (also known as the Integrated Care Board or ICB) to recruit local people to join a new NHS Community Participation Group.

We are recruiting 8-10 local people to share lived experiences and local voices. Your insight will help to influence priority areas for your local NHS to focus on. You'll help review NHS service proposals, offer insight into how changes might affect different people and communities, and advise on how the NHS can better involve and engage local people in meaningful, inclusive ways.

If you live in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough or Royston, this opportunity is for you! We welcome hearing from people with diverse backgrounds including young people, carers, disabled people and ethnic minorities.

- You will attend the NHS Community Participation Group (six meetings a year), contribute your views and connect with your local community.
- As a guide, you can expect to spend approximately two hours for each formal meeting, plus additional time for preparation and debriefing.

### **What you'll receive**

You'll influence decision-making and get £20/hour for formal meetings, and travel expenses. Training is provided by Healthwatch. For more information and how to apply [Work with us | Healthwatch Peterborough](#)

**Closing date: Friday 11th July 2025.**

If you have any questions or you would like to find out more before applying, please call Caroline Tyrrell-Jones, our Head of Operations, on 07539 295865 or email [caroline.tyrrell-jones@healthwatchcambspboro.co.uk](mailto:caroline.tyrrell-jones@healthwatchcambspboro.co.uk).

If you would prefer a paper application form, please email Caroline.

## **Statement on Proposed Closure of Healthwatch**

On Saturday 28th June 2025, it was reported that the forthcoming Penny Dash Review will recommend the closure of Healthwatch and other independent NHS

organisations. According to the report, funding for patient and public engagement would instead be redirected in-house: to Local Authorities for adult social care, and to Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) for health services. The stated aim is to bring the patient and public voice closer to service delivery, by embedding engagement directly within these organisations.

We are deeply concerned by these proposals, not only because of the dedicated staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure that people's voices are heard at every level of the health and care system, but also because of the implications for patients and service users.

*"Independence is essential to truly effective public engagement. Without it, there is a real risk that the public will lose a trusted, impartial advocate that can hold services to account and speak up without fear or favour."*

The Board and Senior Leadership Team will be meeting over the coming weeks to consider how we respond together – and how we can make a strong, collective case for the value of Healthwatch, especially while there is still time for decisions to be influenced or reversed.

We are united in our belief in the vital role Healthwatch plays, and in the values we all share - independence, integrity, and a deep belief in the power of people's voices to drive positive change.

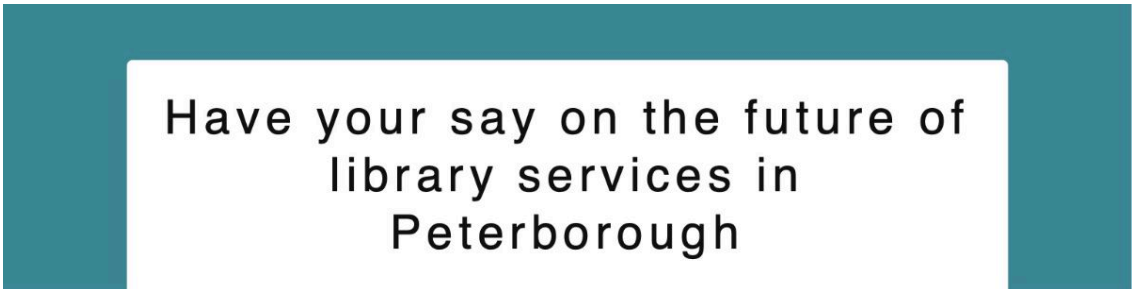
We will continue to keep you updated as soon as we have more clarity on the way forward. Thank you for your continued patience

**Jess Slater, CEO of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.**

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**Contacting your MP - If any member of the public is concerned about the decision and wishes to raise their concerns formally, we encourage them to contact their local MP.**

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**Have your say on the future of  
library services in  
Peterborough**

**A new Library Needs Assessment survey is now open, and Peterborough City Council is inviting all residents to share their views on the future of library services across the city.**

Run by an independent team, the survey explores:

- How people currently use Peterborough's **10 libraries and mobile library**
- What services and facilities matter most to residents

**Survey deadline: Monday 5 August at 5pm**

**Paper copies** are available at all library locations.

**Library opening times and addresses** can be found on the [library website](#).

This consultation follows feedback received during the 2025/26 budget discussions, where a proposal to reduce the number of libraries was paused. The council has committed to a full needs assessment and is working closely with staff, volunteers, and Friends' groups to ensure everyone has a voice.

Survey results will be analysed and shared by the end of the year.

[Click here to take the survey](#)

**Our mailing address is:**

Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service

Allia Future Business Centre

London Road

Peterborough, Cambs PE2 8AN

United Kingdom

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