

## Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin

### Youth Network Policy

#### Introduction

Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin (HWTW) has a legal responsibility to listen and learn from the experiences of children and young people who use health and social care services. By providing a strong voice for all age groups in the community, HWTW can fulfil its mission as the independent consumer champion.

Children and young people can face a range of disadvantages and inequalities. Poverty, disability discrimination and poor housing are some of the challenges they face. The health and social care problems faced by children and young people are significant and complex.

In the most recent figures available, Telford & Wrekin has significantly more young people than the national average, and this is expected to continue to increase.<sup>1</sup>

#### Policy Statement

HWTW is committed to ensuring that the voice of young people is heard in conversation and debate relating to health and social care issues in Telford & Wrekin.

To facilitate this, HWTW will create a Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin Youth Network (HWTWYN) to act as advisors to the board. The HWTWYN will comprise:

- HWTW Board member with responsibility for Children & Young People
- HWTW Community Engagement Officer
- Up to 12 HWTWYN Champions<sup>2</sup> from across the Borough

A HWTWYN Champion will be co-opted to the Board of HWTW with full voting rights.

#### HWTWYN Champions

A HWTWYN Champion will:

- Work with the Community Engagement Officer to ensure that HWTW is aware of issues affecting young people in the borough
- Advise on the suitability of literature and website material
- Raise awareness of Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin within their peer group

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<sup>1</sup> Telford and Wrekin Population Model 2011

<sup>2</sup> Residents of Telford & Wrekin aged 14-24 inclusive

- Support HWTW engagement activity as appropriate
- Lead on project work around issues affecting young people

Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin will:

- Actively recruit young people by prioritising engagement in schools, colleges, and other youth hubs
- Provide training and support which is appropriate for young people
- Refund out of pocket and travel expenses in line with HWTW Volunteer policy

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