Celebrations as Healthwatch Wiltshire gets national recognition

(from left) Volunteers Mick and Marilyn Stowe with Stacey Plumb and Lucie Woodruff from Healthwatch Wiltshire

Volunteers and staff at Healthwatch Wiltshire are celebrating after being recognised by a prestigious national award for its excellent volunteering programme.

The Investing in Volunteers accreditation - the UK quality standard for good practice in volunteer management - has been awarded to Healthwatch Wiltshire, which has more than 60 volunteers on its books.

A celebration event was held at Melksham Football Club to thank all the volunteers for giving their time to gathering feedback on local health and care services over the last year. And a special cake was made to celebrate the achievement.

Stacey Plumb, Volunteer Officer at Healthwatch Wiltshire, said: "We're thrilled to be recognised with this quality standard! Investing in Volunteers aims to improve the quality of the volunteering experience and for organisations to acknowledge the enormous contribution made by these dedicated volunteers."

The Investing in Volunteers award is the gold standard for organisations who work with volunteers. Assessors from Investing in Volunteers visited the offices in Melksham to chat to volunteers and staff, and see its work in action. Healthwatch Wiltshire was assessed against a range of best practice standards and proved to excel in all aspects of working with its volunteers.

Helen Davies from Malmesbury, who has been a volunteer with Healthwatch Wiltshire for 18 months, said: "As a Healthwatch volunteer I have been involved in numerous projects, engaging with the public to get their views regarding the NHS.

"The Investing in Volunteers award that Healthwatch Wiltshire has recently received reflects the standards that are expected of us, as volunteers and the standards we can expect from the team. Volunteering with Healthwatch is a two way process which gives us the feeling of being valued, well trained and ultimately making a professional difference to the organisations we represent."

Investing in Volunteers is managed by the UK Volunteering Forum and delivered by NCVO, Volunteer Scotland, Volunteer Now in Northern Ireland and Wales Council for Voluntary Action. Further information about the award, which will last for three years, can be found on **iiv.investinginvolunteers.org.uk**.

Or to find out more about volunteering with Healthwatch Wiltshire visit: **healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk/volunteering**.

INVESTING IN VOLUNTEERS ™

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Healthwatch Wiltshire is a local independent organisation which exists to speak up for people on health and care. If you have used a service recently then we would like to hear from you. We use what people tell us when we meet with the commissioners and providers of services to make sure that they take account of your views and experiences.