



Suffolk User Forum
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16th June 2022

Dear SUF Community Member,

Here is my regular update from the board which I hope you will find interesting.

Developing partnerships

As a small charity in a much larger system, we work hard to nurture good relationships with other organisations. Several SUF members met with senior representatives from Suffolk County Council in May, and we will continue to build these partnerships. This month we also signed a renewed partnership agreement with Healthwatch Suffolk which sets out how we can combine our efforts and work together effectively.

The Human Rights Act and advocacy

You may have heard in the Queen's Speech last month that the government is taking forward plans to introduce a Bill of Rights which may replace the Human Rights Act (1998). Those plans were initially announced in December 2021 and you can [read about them here](#). The Human Rights Act is a wide-ranging piece of legislation and from SUF's point of view it is particularly significant in relation to advocacy. National MIND has produced a helpful article explaining [why this is important](#). Our view is that the need for advocacy extends far beyond the current, narrow arrangements. There are many settings, such as in housing, where advocacy could make a significant difference for people with mental health needs. We will watch the development of the proposed Bill of Rights carefully and make the case for strengthening provision of this important service.

Cyber-security

Although cyber-security can seem a difficult and perhaps obscure topic, it is an area that the board gives a very high priority. We are constantly looking at how we can best protect SUF's security.



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This month we reviewed our local systems as part of our board development session, and we also gave the go-ahead for an independent company to carry out tests to check the robustness of our IT systems from outside attack. The good news is that as a result of this work it has been confirmed that we meet the NHS Digital Standards for IT security as part of our Healthy Together project. Of course, it is important not to be complacent and one can never say that cyber-security is 'done' so this is an area where we will continue to invest time and effort.

That's all for this month. Whether you are a keen royalist, a republican or somewhere in between, I hope you enjoyed the bank holiday celebrations.

Yours sincerely

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Chair of Trustees

