



Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Care Awards 2026

Partnership with People and Communities Award

A Community That Cares

Botesdale Health Centre, BHC Patient Participation Group, Botesdale Singing for All, Botesdale Parish Council, Friends of Botesdale Health Centre, RBR Parish Magazine volunteers, Parkview Chapel, Rickingham Village Hall, Botesdale Methodist Chapel, Local Anglican Community, Rickingham Women's Institute, St Botolph's Bowls Club, Botesdale and Rickingham Good Neighbour Scheme, Rickingham Day Centre Lunch Club

Botesdale – a community that cares is recognised for its outstanding, community-led approach to improving health and wellbeing in a rural area through strong collaboration between Botesdale Health Centre (BHC), its Patient Participation Group (PPG), and over 50 dedicated volunteers. Together, they have created a thriving network linking parish councils, faith groups, charities and local organisations, tackling challenges such as poor transport, digital exclusion, social isolation and an ageing population with complex health needs. Since 2018, this partnership has evolved into a sustainable model based on shared decision-making, co-design and co-production, aligning closely with NHS priorities around prevention, reducing inequalities and delivering care closer to home.

Volunteers play a central role in amplifying patient voices and shaping inclusive healthcare services. Their work includes co-producing accessible information, raising awareness of patients' rights to reasonable adjustments, and supporting digital inclusion through guidance on tools such as the NHS App. They also ensure information reaches non-digital residents through newsletters, printed materials and face-to-face outreach. In addition, the volunteers support a wide range of community wellbeing activities, including walking groups, social clubs, arts sessions, singing for all, dementia-friendly initiatives and cancer support groups, alongside local transport and social events. These initiatives reduce isolation, foster friendships and improve overall wellbeing.

The impact has been significant, strengthening community connections, increasing confidence in accessing healthcare, and improving inclusion for often underrepresented groups. By combining lived experience with practical action, it demonstrates how empowered communities can transform health outcomes and create a more connected, supportive and resilient local system.