

Annual Report 2019–20

Guided by you

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Message from our chair



It's been a busy and varied year for us at Healthwatch Wiltshire.

This year saw the conclusion of four years of work focusing on dementia and we looked at the impact of this. Thanks to the comments of 1,600 people living with dementia and their carers, we are very proud to have played a part in work that has seen the introduction of 40 new community support groups and the rollout of specialist dementia training in care homes*.

We were pleased to have supported five excellent health and wellbeing projects through our Community Cash Fund scheme, and see how they have benefited and supported people with a variety of needs.

And, for the first time, our research team of volunteers have carried out their own project into how military families are accessing health and care services, following a large army rebasing programme last summer, which saw thousands of army personnel relocate to Wiltshire.

While the coronavirus pandemic has forced us to adapt our ways of working, we will continue to listen to people's experiences of how the outbreak has affected them and channel some of this feedback into our work for the coming year.

Finally, I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who has given their feedback to us over the past year, and to our volunteers, staff and Board members for their hard work and dedication, particularly in these unprecedented times.

Rob Jefferson

Rob Jefferson
Chair

*part of this work was carried out under our previous provider, Evolving Communities

A big thank you to everyone who has given their feedback to us over the past year

Our priorities

Last year, we gathered 3,792 comments about health and social care services. Here are some examples of the things you told us you would like to see.



- Making it easier to see a GP or healthcare professional



- Making it easier for people to access the support they need



- Making it easier to access mental health support



- Supporting health and wellbeing projects in the community



- Support for further development of dementia friendly initiatives and groups



- More development of services that support people with autism

Healthwatch Wiltshire have been an integral partner in shaping and developing dementia services in Wiltshire. Key achievements can be directly related to comments raised by the public during Healthwatch Wiltshire's Dementia Engagement work and subsequent published reports.
— Sara Young, Joint Commissioner — Dementia, Wiltshire Council

About us

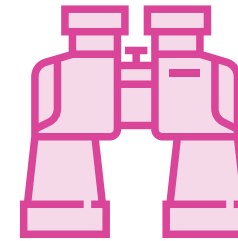
Here to make care better

The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of the Healthwatch network in giving people that find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up. The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan should be implemented locally. Thanks to the thousands of views shared with Healthwatch we were also able to highlight the issue of patient transport not being included in the NHS Long Term Plan review - sparking a national review of patient transport from NHS England.

We simply could not do this without the dedicated work and efforts from our staff and volunteers and, of course, we couldn't have done it without you. Whether it's working with your local Healthwatch to raise awareness of local issues, or sharing your views and experiences, I'd like to thank you all. It's important that services continue to listen, so please do keep talking to your local Healthwatch. Let's strive to make the NHS and social care services the best that they can be.

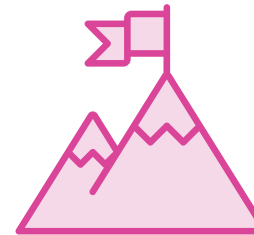
 I've now been Chair of Healthwatch England for over a year and I'm extremely proud to see it go from strength to strength, highlighting the importance of listening to people's views to decision makers at a national and local level.

Sir Robert Francis, Healthwatch England Chair



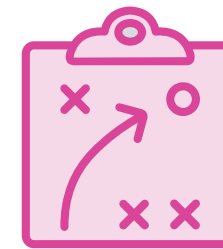
Our vision is simple

Health and care that works for you. People want health and social care support that works - helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.



Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.



Our approach

People's views come first - especially those who find it hardest to be heard.

We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



How we find out what matters to you

People are at the heart of everything we do. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- Visiting services to see how they work
- Running surveys and focus groups
- Going out in the community and working with other organisations



Find out more about us and the work that we do

Website: www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

Twitter: [@HWWilts](https://twitter.com/HWWilts)

Facebook: [HealthwatchWiltshire](https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchWiltshire)

Instagram: [healthwatchwiltshire](https://www.instagram.com/healthwatchwiltshire)

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2019-20.



Health and care that works for you



40 volunteers

helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 1,750 hours.

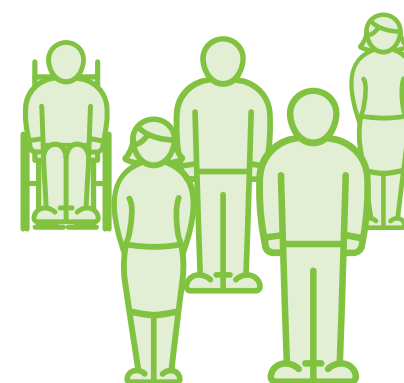
We employed 4 staff

3.3 in full time equivalent roles.

We received £179,619 in funding

from our local authority in 2019-20.

Supporting people



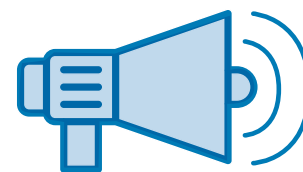
3,792 people

shared their health and social care story with us, 292% more than last year.

113 people

accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support.

Reaching out



281,652

engaged with us on social media.

We attended 142 events

Making a difference to care



We published 8 reports

about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and from this, we made 59 recommendations for improvement.

How we've made a difference



Speaking up about your experiences of health and social care services is the first step to change.

Take a look at how your views have helped make a difference to the care and support people receive in Wiltshire.

Focus on dementia

Dementia has been a priority area for us over the last four years. Read more about our work in finding out about people's experiences and working with others to improve services.

Two thirds say county is dementia friendly

Wiltshire is a dementia friendly community which is greatly valued by those living with the condition and their carers.

That's the key finding of our [How Dementia Friendly is Wiltshire? report](#), which gathered the views and experiences of more than 100 people in the county who are affected by dementia.

People also told us they valued greater dementia awareness, understanding from others, and community groups that they could get involved with.

How your feedback has helped - Working together to improve Dementia Services

We have listened to the experiences of more than 1,600 local people and used this feedback to work with a host of organisations to make improvements to services and introduce more support groups across the county.

People told us that training care home staff to a high standard was very important in order to provide good quality care for people with dementia and complex



Dementia support groups include Memory Cafés, left, and Music for the Mind, above

needs. People also said that they thought specialist services for people living with dementia were high quality but that they weren't always able to access them.

Following this, a range of organisations worked together leading to the implementation of specialist dementia training for more than 100 care home staff and the introduction of more than 40 new community groups across Wiltshire.

Our report, [Working Together to Improve Dementia Services in Wiltshire](#), details the work that has gone in to making these improvements.

Our Making life better for people with dementia video shows how we have used your feedback to work with other organisations to improve dementia services.

Watch now at www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk/focus-dementia



Volunteers June, Michael and Meg visit a GP surgery as part of our work looking at the new Improved Access Scheme

Views of GP access scheme shared with commissioners

Being able to see a GP in the evening or at the weekend is greatly valued by patients, but getting an appointment is not always easy.

These are the key findings of our survey which asked how the GP Improved Access Service, launched in October 2018, is running. The scheme involves GP practices working together to offer more routine appointments at evenings and weekends. These could be at another surgery and with someone other than a GP, such as a nurse.

We visited GP surgeries across Wiltshire and spoke to more than 170 people to get their views. We also carried out a mystery shop,

calling surgeries to ask about evening and weekend appointments, and asked staff to give their own views.

While patients valued the service and spoke highly of the care they received, our survey revealed that there is still some work to be done on how the service is implemented, and making sure that both public and staff are getting clear information about what appointments are available, when and where.

We are now working with the GP Alliance and local NHS to monitor how this service changes and develops going forwards based on the recommendations in our report.

Read more in our [What you told us about the GP Improved Access Scheme report](#).

“We were very glad to invite Healthwatch to carry out an independent and impartial assessment of the innovative Improved Access service. The introduction of evening and weekend appointments has not been without controversy, and it is pleasing to hear that patients really value this additional access... We will use the lessons learned... to further develop and improve the service.”

— Wiltshire GP Alliance



We visited colleges, youth clubs and the Prince's Trust to gather the views of young people

Young people share their views

Following the launch of Young Healthwatch Wiltshire in September, we went out and about talking to young people aged 16-25 about the work we do and get their views on health and care services.

We spoke to Health, Care and Early Years college students, and visited youth clubs and the Prince's Trust, to gather feedback on a range of topics from GPs and dentists to mental health and hospitals.

For most, the attitude of staff and professionals made it a good experience, but some felt they were not being listened to or taken seriously by the professional they were talking to. They also said they were

unhappy with waiting times, either for a routine appointment, or to get an initial consultation with specialist services, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Ideas for improvements included mental health talks in schools and colleges, free clubs and exercise classes, and support workers to help keep young people in education.

We will continue to visit schools and clubs, and will be sharing feedback with those who provide services.

More on Young Healthwatch Wiltshire can be found at www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk/young-healthwatch-wiltshire

“A trained professional that can support – not just giving me a leaflet or referring me but to walk the journey with you – a wellbeing mentor; someone to help push you out of your comfort zone and to talk to.”

— Young person's view



Clockwise from above: the Singing for Lung Health Choir, SPARK Festival, the Happy Hearts Dance Project, Wellbeing at the Orchard and Any Body Can Cook

Community projects prove popular

Our Community Cash Fund scheme saw five health and wellbeing projects get off the ground in 2019.

The scheme, which was launched in early March 2019, attracted 41 applications to apply for funds of up to £2,000.

As well as encouraging healthier lifestyles, the five successful projects also provided a way for us to get more feedback on local services from people we might not otherwise hear from, and all have proved popular with the public.

Pound Arts Centre and Rewired Counselling hosted SPARK Festival of Wellbeing, a two-day health and wellbeing event in Corsham on 12

and 13 July 2019. The first day was aimed at Year 9 students and focuses on sleep, stress, body, food and confidence, while the second day was open to all and included a variety of speakers and a marketplace of groups and services.

Wiltshire People 1st ran the Happy Hearts Dance Project for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism from June to September 2019. The sessions were designed to promote a healthy lifestyle through conversation, cooking and dance activities.

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's Wellbeing at the Orchard project, which ran from July to November 2019, was aimed at people experiencing mental health issues. The project, based at Roundway Orchard in Devizes, featured eight weeks of outdoor

I have found myself doing the breathing exercises as I do my housework, which can only help. I find it a little easier walking and going up steps. I've enjoyed it so much, I leave feeling relaxed and ready to take on life again. It lifts my mood so much.

— Singing for Lung Health Choir member



I now shop for healthier foods and go out on my own more.

— Happy Hearts participant

activities including conservation, wild-cooking and nature-based craft. WWT has now secured further funding to continue to run a wellbeing programme across Wiltshire, which several of the participants have joined.

Singing regularly is thought to have a positive effect on the quality of life of someone with a lung condition. With that in mind, Rowden Surgery in Chippenham launched a six-week singing course, forming the Singing for Lung Health Choir, to boost the health and wellbeing of patients with respiratory conditions such as COPD - and their carers. Many of the choir members sang carols at the Healthwatch Wiltshire volunteers' Christmas party, which was the first time they had all been together

as one. The choir has since been established as the Singing for Health Community Choir, now meeting regularly in Chippenham.

Any Body Can Cook has been running healthy eating courses for families on a low income at in Chippenham and Corsham. Their vision is to promote health equality across communities, with the ultimate aim being less visits to the GP and dentist, maintaining a healthy weight, better mental health and increased confidence. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the last few sessions have been postponed until later this year.

Read more at www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk/community-cash-fund



It's been an amazing experience. There's life out there — in all senses of the word — and something to get up for. I have gained the confidence to have a go - I've learnt that you can do things, and get on with life.

— Wellbeing at the Orchard participant

Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights



More than 340 people shared their views in Wiltshire.



Nationally, our network held over 500 focus groups reaching communities across England.



Healthwatch attended almost 1,000 community events across England.

NHS Long Term Plan

Following a commitment from the Government to increase investment in the NHS, the NHS published the 'Long Term Plan' in January 2019, setting out its key ambitions over the next 10 years. Healthwatch launched a countrywide campaign to give people a say in how the plan should be implemented in their communities.

Here's a summary of our work and what we found.

What do people want?

Working with Healthwatch Swindon and Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset, we asked people #WhatWouldYouDo to improve the NHS locally. Some of the themes that emerged from local people included:

- Increasing the use of technology for booking appointments and data sharing between health services
- Helping people lead a healthier lifestyle to prevent illness

- Shortening waiting times for access to GP appointments
- For health professionals to have a better understanding of long-term health conditions, such as autism.

What are we doing about it?

Our priorities for 2020/1 include keeping the public informed about changes to GP surgeries as Primary Care Networks develop, and involving people with learning disabilities and autism in updates to local services.

Visit our website to read the [full report](#).

Across the whole spectrum of autism — as indeed with learning disabilities — key staff need training in how to support people appropriately and recognise issues such as sensory overload. This can really help if someone is feeling overwhelmed. — Personal story

Helping you find the answers

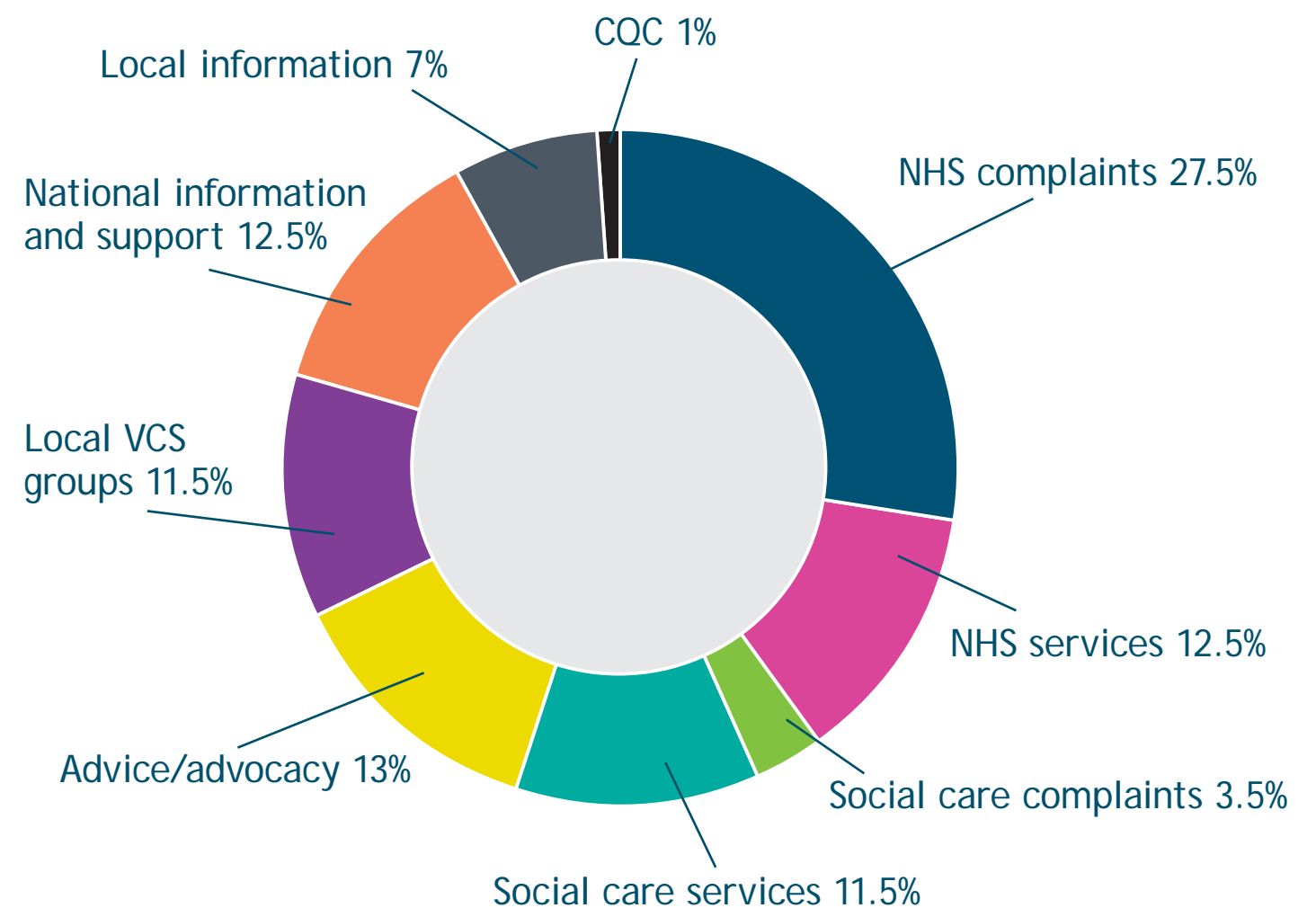


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped people get the advice and information they need by:

- Providing advice and information articles on our website.
- Answering 113 queries about services over the phone, by email, or online.
- Talking to people at community events.
- Promoting services and information that can help people on our social media.

Here are some of the services we gave people information about:



Ordering online prescriptions for a child

During a visit to a local carers group, Fiona*, an unpaid carer, told us about her difficulties ordering medication for her child.

She said that ordering medication monthly by phone could be stressful and frustrating as she were caring for two children with autism with significant needs and there were other family pressures. She said it was difficult for her to find a quiet time during the day to phone and it was not always easy to get through.

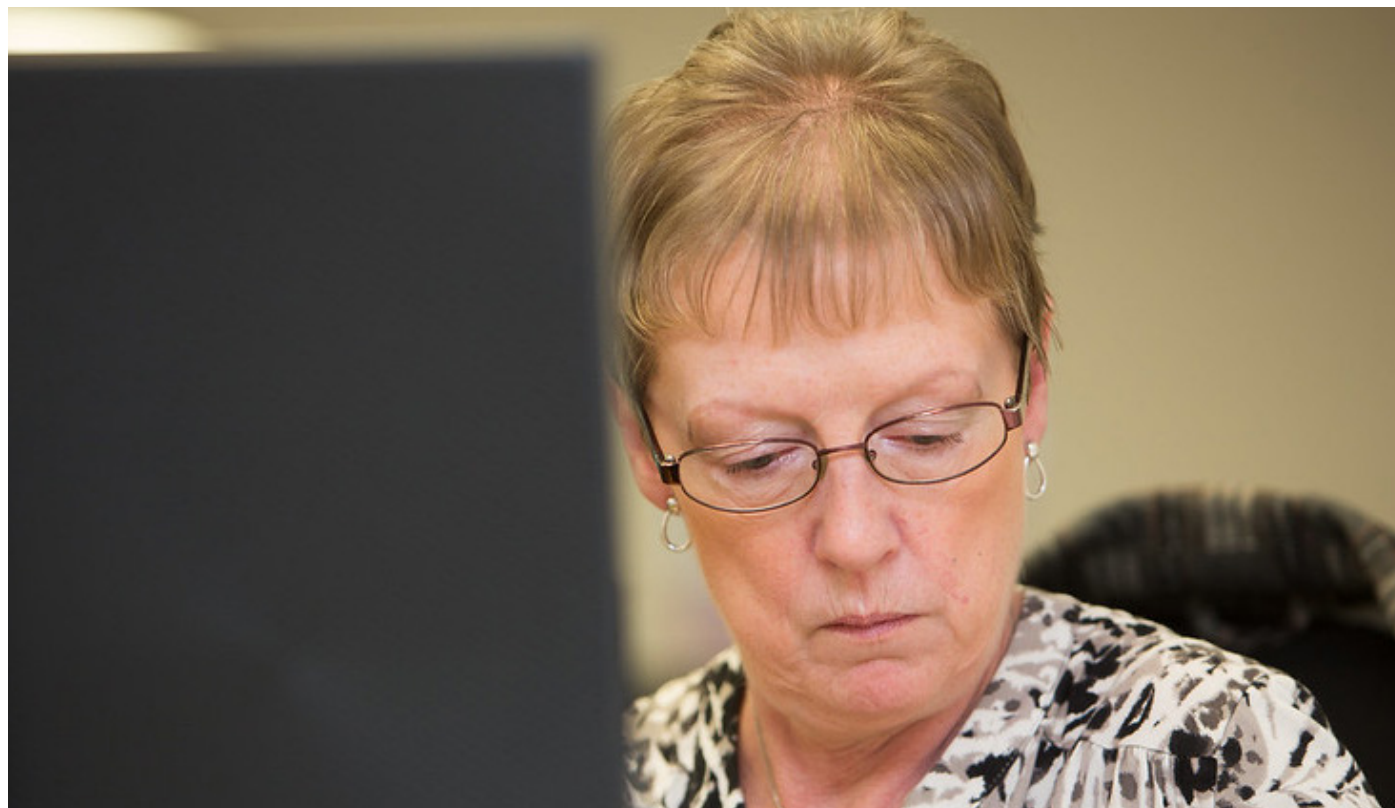
Fiona told us she ordered her own medication online, when things were quieter in the

evening. This worked well for her, but she had been told that this was not possible to do for her child's medication. She felt being able to do this would make a difference to her and relieve some of the stress she was under. After several attempts to resolve this had been unsuccessful, she contacted us again for help.

We advised her that the next step would be to raise the issue formally with her GP surgery, and researched and shared information with her about where and how she could do this. We suggested that Fiona explained how the issue was impacting on her role as a carer, and what she felt would help her. Fiona did this and subsequently contacted us to let us know that the issue had been resolved.

It was great news. In fact Ann* [the Practice Manager] called me herself and said I could order via the online service and under the circumstances she would be happy for me to do that. So I really would like to take this opportunity to thank you very much... Your help was much appreciated and I could not have done this without you. — Fiona*

We helped a carer to order prescriptions online for her child from her GP surgery



Signposting to health coaching

Jill* contacted the Healthwatch Hub Team with multiple health conditions.

She said that she was a positive person but had been feeling low and would like some emotional support/health coaching.

She had a mental health diagnosis which was being managed very well so she was mindful about being proactive and getting the right support in place to avoid any crisis. She had support from carers who take her shopping and she had started to do gentle walking exercises.

With her new diagnosis she was going to enquire about the oxygen chamber at the MS Centre in Warminster. Her GP had been very supportive. She was looking for health



coaching/emotional support to discuss the impact of the new diagnosis.

The Healthwatch Hub was able to signpost to Self-Management UK and the Health Trainers in Wiltshire for further support.

Accessing patient transport

Mrs B* e-mailed on behalf of her friend, Stuart*.

Stuart's sister was due to attend hospital for chemotherapy but another company had recently taken over the hospital transport and advised that Stuart could not attend with his sister.

He was very concerned and anxious and didn't want her attending on her own. The Healthwatch Hub signposted to Community First, the local group that provides patient transport and the patient transport advice centre at the Clinical Commissioning Group.



Stuart emailed back to thank the Hub for the information.

*Names have been changed in all case studies.



Contact us to get the information you need

If you have a query about a health or social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

Website: www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

Telephone: 01225 434218

Email: info@healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

Volunteers



At Healthwatch Wiltshire we are supported by 40 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what people would like to improve, to services in their communities.

This year our volunteers:

- Raised awareness of the work we do at events, in the community and with health and care services.
- Visited services to make sure they are providing people with the right support.
- Helped support our day-to-day running.
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on.
- Carried out their own volunteer led project
- Represented Healthwatch Wiltshire to share the views of local people with decision makers.

Volunteer team analyse military families survey

Last autumn, our research team of volunteers launched a survey to ask military families how they access GP surgeries, dental care, mental health, social care and other services.

It follows an army rebasing programme, which saw 4,000 personnel and their families relocate to Wiltshire in 2019. We were also keen to find out how services in Wiltshire compare to where families lived before.

This is the first time that Healthwatch Wiltshire volunteers have led a whole project from start to finish and we are really pleased with how this has progressed and what the volunteers have achieved.

Our volunteers have been busy analysing the views shared by 106 people associated with the military and writing a report to highlight what they found.



Our research team Meg, Hazel, Deborah and Chas led our military families project

In March, they presented what they had found so far and their experiences of working on a volunteer led project to other local Healthwatch supported by Help and Care (our host organisation).

The final report will be published soon, and will include recommendations for commissioners and providers of services on how they could improve services for military families.



Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please get in touch at Healthwatch Wiltshire.

Website: www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

Telephone: 01225 434218

Email: info@healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

Our volunteers

We could not do what we do without the support of our amazing volunteers. Meet some of the team and hear what they get up to.

Meg Newbery

Meg, a former headteacher, became a Healthwatch volunteer in 2016, following the death of her husband.

She says: "After my husband died, I needed to find something that would allow me to reconnect with society, ease my sense of isolation and allow me to continue to contribute to the community in some worthwhile way.

"I was attracted by the flexibility of Healthwatch, which offered the opportunity to volunteer for as many hours as you like and also training opportunities to learn new skills. I also became a committee member of the Patients' Participation Group of my local doctors' practice and the two fitted well together.

"I have enjoyed talking to the public, working on projects, taking part in Enter and View



assessments, focus groups and attending and reporting on public information meetings.

"I recently took part in Healthwatch Wiltshire's first volunteer-led project, focusing on the experiences of military families who have relocated to Wiltshire. It was interesting to follow a whole project through and hopefully it will encourage further volunteer-led projects in the future."

Joanna Wittels

Joanna is one of our Board Members and has a special interest in children and young people. She was a personal injury solicitor for 25 years before taking early retirement and has been a volunteer for local charities for 10 years.

She says: "I have always had an interest in healthcare. My favourite part of the role is meeting lots of new people, going to all parts of the county, and feeling like I can make a difference to the quality of the lives of people in our county.

"I think Healthwatch can make a difference by getting the voice of the people living with difficulties and health issues heard by those who are making the decisions. We all need



to be involved in shaping the services which have such a profound effect on our lives and making sure that standards are maintained and improved wherever possible."

- All of our work is overseen by our Local Leadership Board. More on our [website](#).



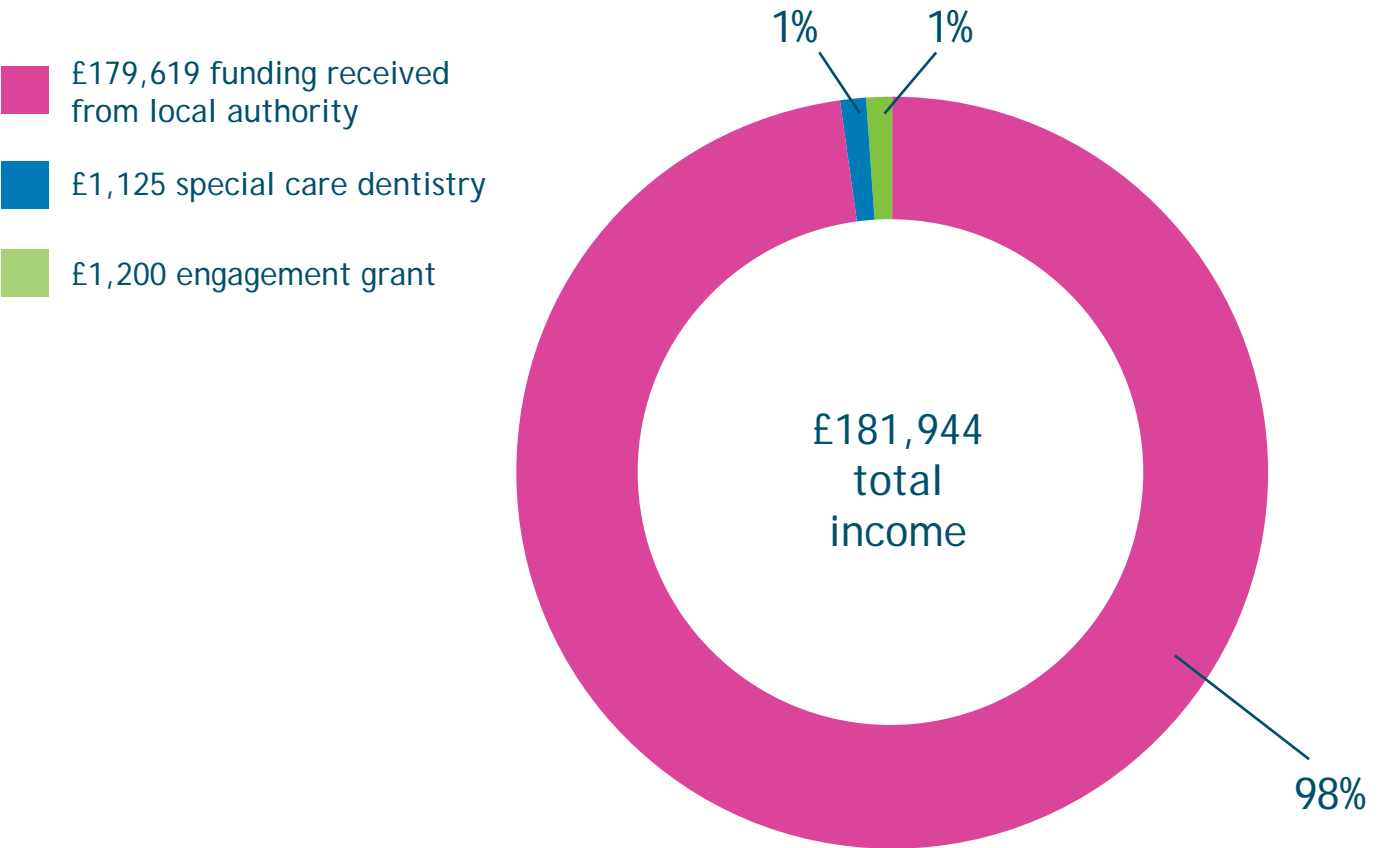
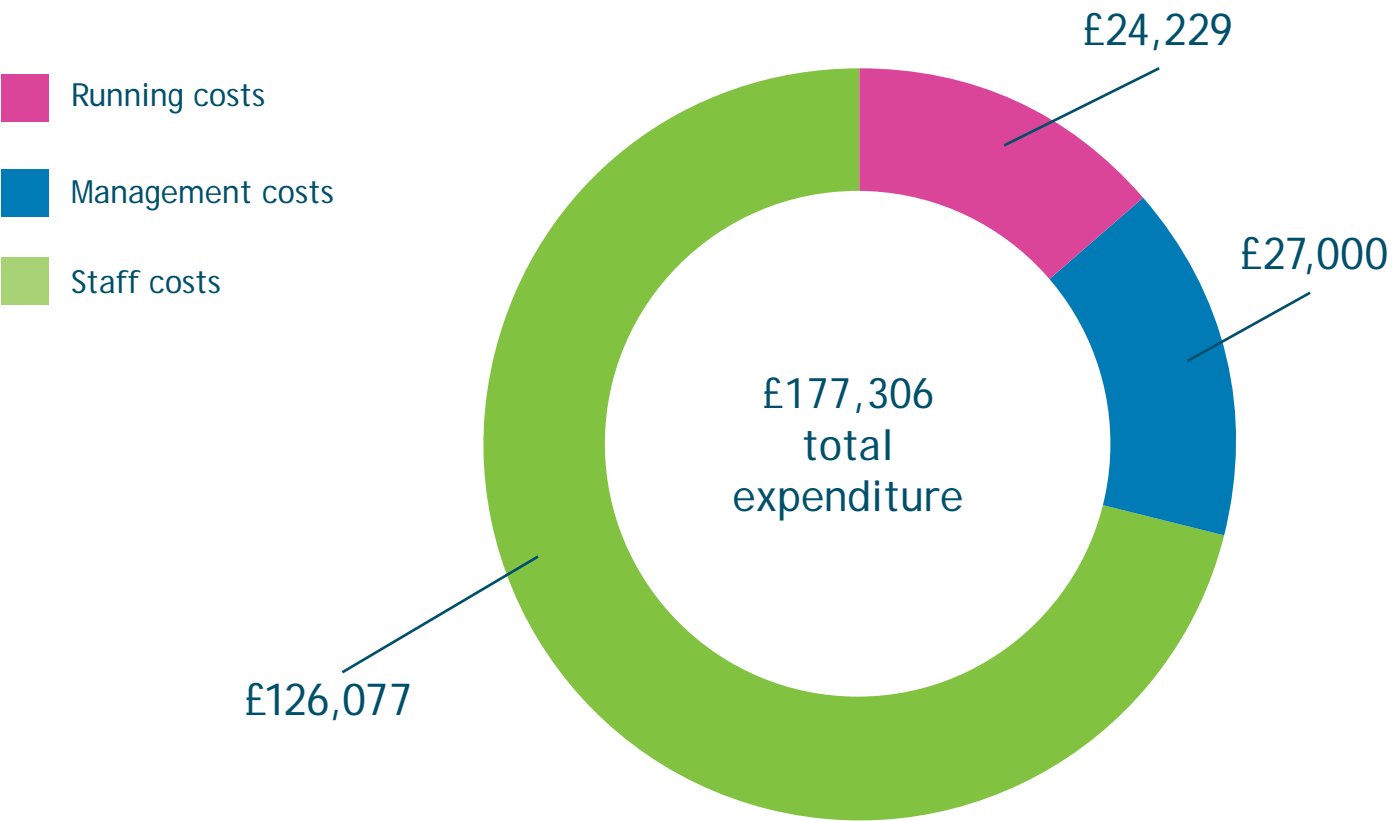
I want to make sure people who use health and social care services have a voice.

— Sarah Davies,
Healthwatch Wiltshire volunteer

Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £177,306.



Our plans for next year



Our work for the year ahead is driven by what people have told us is important to them.

The coronavirus outbreak has had a big impact on our work in the last few months. All face to face engagement activity and meetings were cancelled in early March, volunteer engagement visits have been paused and all staff are working from home for the foreseeable future.

This has resulted in some of our work being postponed until later in the year or our engagement activities finishing earlier than planned.

We have set up a dedicated coronavirus section on our website which is regularly updated, including all the latest national and local information and advice. We have also launched a survey to collate people's experiences of how services are responding to the outbreak, and have been publishing fortnightly reports on the feedback we're receiving.

But we are still here to listen to people's views and experiences and have been encouraging people to get in touch with us on the phone, through our website or email.

Looking ahead

In the last year, we have collected more than 1,400 pieces of feedback about health and social care services. These have all been analysed with our volunteers and Local Leadership Board to decide what our focus will be for the coming year. Our main areas of focus for 2020/21 are:

- Monitoring the impact of coronavirus
- Mental health
- Learning disabilities and autism
- Primary Care

We are in the process of linking in with commissioners and providers to identify specific areas of work.



There are lots of changes expected within the health and care system over the next few years and we want to make sure the public plays a key role in helping to shape them.

— Stacey Sims, Manager

Stacey Sims, Healthwatch Wiltshire Manager, said: "There are lots of changes expected within the health and care system over the next few years and we want to make sure that the public plays a key role in helping to shape them.

"Mental health remains high on everyone's agenda, and we'll be looking to local people for their views on how services can be redesigned. We'll also be focusing on services for people with learning disabilities and autism and ensuring that service users and their families have a say in how these services develop.

"And as GP surgeries establish themselves as Primary Care Networks, we'll be monitoring people's experiences of accessing GP services as part of these networks.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone that is helping us put people at the heart of social care, including:

- Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us.
- All of our amazing staff and volunteers.
- The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work.
- Any Body Can Cook CIC
- Alzheimer’s Society
- Alzheimer’s Support
- Bradford on Avon Health Partnership
- Care Skills Partnership
- Carer Support Wiltshire
- Durlston Lodge
- Ferfoot Care Home
- Laverstock Care Centre
- Laverstock Memory Support Group
- NHS England and NHS Improvement South West
- Pound Arts Centre and Rewired Counselling
- Prince’s Trust
- Rethink Mental Illness
- Rowden, Lodge and Hathaway Surgeries
- Salisbury District Hospital
- Swan Advocacy
- Swindon Borough Council
- Swindon and Wiltshire Community Pharmacy
- Wessex Care
- West Wilts Multi-Faith Forum
- Wiltshire Care Partnership
- Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- Wiltshire College
- Wiltshire Council
- Wiltshire GP Alliance
- Wiltshire Health and Care
- Wiltshire Parent Carer Council
- Wiltshire People 1st
- Wiltshire Service Users Network
- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
- University of Stirling



Engagement Lead Julie Brown, left, joins staff at Hathaway Surgery in Chippenham for their annual Flu Fayre

Contact Us



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Freepost RTZK-ZZZG-CCBX, Healthwatch Wiltshire, The Independent Living Centre, St George’s Road, Semington, Trowbridge BA14 6JQ

If you need this report in an alternative format please contact us.

Help and Care hold the contract for Healthwatch Wiltshire.

Telephone: 0300 111 3303

Address: Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road, Pokesdown, BH7 6DL

Monday-Friday: 10am-4pm

Website: www.helpandcare.org.uk



We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

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