



Annual report 2019-20

Guided by you

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Message from our chair



The views people shared with us have been used by the NHS to help plan better support in the future.

Working with communities and the organisations and groups that support them is needed now more than ever, and we are well-placed in Healthwatch West Sussex to make this the case

Our strategic investment in community partnership working is making a significant difference in amplifying local voices across many different platforms. Working collaboratively enables us to reach so many more people than we can on our own and shares a diversity of experience which is vital. It has also reinforced our role as a trusted source of information, advice and collaborative support.

We have now made community partnership a central part of our work future work. We continue to build and develop relationships with hundreds of local groups and organisations which help us understand the issues local people face and to provide specific health and care support. This has been particularly powerful during the coronavirus pandemic.

What we heard from the public led us to maintain work on the previous 2019 priorities. They remained relevant and are where we can make the most difference. Our statutory powers and understanding of public consultations meant we ensured people could talk about plans for changing adult mental health acute hospital beds. The impact was positive with the NHS now working on proposals taking into account what people said.

Similarly, our in-depth engagement with young people and their families meant we could evidence how commissioning and services for emotional and mental health support in Sussex was not always working for families. It has been recognised things need to change so that our younger residents can be supported to be resilient. We believe our work has demonstrated the value and benefits of involving young people early in any service development.

Now more than ever, we need NHS and Social Care leaders to embrace local residents working alongside them to recover and create support that is right and affordable.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Frances Russell'.

Frances Russell, Healthwatch West Sussex Chair

Our priorities

Last year 4,300 people told us about the improvements they would like to see health and social care services make in 2019-20. These were our four priorities for the year based on what you told us:



Mental health Supporting health and care partners to involve young people in meaningful ways. Giving young people a voice in shaping the response to the



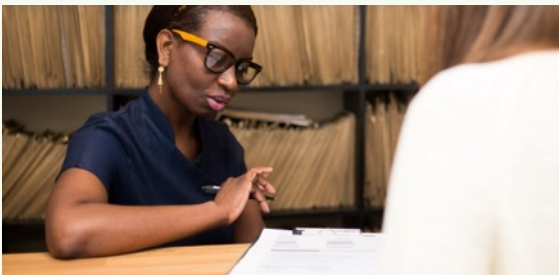
Independent Review of Sussex emotional and mental health support services, and the recommendations arising from this review.



Adult Social Care Focusing on how we could add value and avoid duplication at a transformation stage for our County.



Hot Topics Retaining the flexibility to respond to emerging issues.



General Practice and Community Care Exploring collaboratively what could be the benefits arising from Primary Care



Networks and looking at different ways of involving local people in shaping services.

Our focus was on making sure we added value to peoples' health and wellbeing by establishing expectations and a new approach to make it easier to show the difference we have made.


About us

Here to make local care better and have national impact

The Healthwatch England 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.

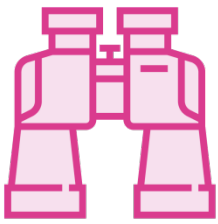
Thanks to the thousands of views shared with Local Healthwatch, we were also able to highlight the issue of patient transport not being included in the NHS Long Term Plan review – sparking a national review of patient transport from NHS England.

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 our network 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:

- Going out in the community and working with other organisations
- Visiting services to see how they work
- Running surveys and focus groups
- Engaging with groups and individuals through social media.



Find out more about us and the work we do

Website: www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

Twitter: @healthwatchws

Facebook: @healthwatchwestsussex

Instagram: @healthwatchws

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



60+ volunteers

helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 2,833 hours of support.

We employed

10 staff

The majority of our staff team are part time. We invested an additional 22% on top of the core into community partnerships.

We received

£342,600 in funding

from our local authority in 2019-20, no change since the 40% reduction in 2016.

Providing support



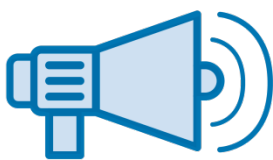
4,300+ people

shared their health and social care story with us, 44% more than last year.

2,000+ people

accessed Healthwatch West Sussex advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support. We also supported others by providing face-to-face information and advice.

Reaching out



128,000 people

engaged with us through our website, social media, and face-to-face at community events.

Making a difference to care



We published

24 reports

about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and from this, we made 73 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 peoples' views have helped make a difference to the care and support for whose needs are not always fully understood.

EXAMPLE STORY: Helping those who lack capacity to access better health support

Thanks to people speaking up, professionals and families now have a [Toolkit](#) that supports meaningful conversations, evidencing and sharing decisions, when working with people who do not fully understand treatment options and health decisions, in the same way as others.

Working together with [The Disabilities Trust](#) and learning from peoples' experiences, we were especially struck by how Roger's poor experiences could have been avoided.

The concept for a Best Interest Decision Toolkit was based on the principle that decision-making around treatment, should be a shared process between the professional and the patient, but this cannot be the case when someone lacks capacity to make such a decision.

We designed a toolkit to address this after presenting it to the *West Sussex Learning Disabilities Managers Forum* and *Selsey Care Managers Forum* members immediately took it away and later told us how valuable it had been.

We've received many strong examples of the difference this has made to individuals receiving care, families and carers and health professionals.



Community support activity

Our toolkit was presented at the 2019 national Healthwatch England Conference and we then made it freely available for everyone to use. It is now being shared by Healthwatch England as best practice.

You came to speak at the our forum last week about the Toolkit. I went back and used the tools with someone who had a dental issue and the tools worked really well. Then a couple of days later someone called into the centre and I used the toolkit and followed the questions, again it worked really well. The toolkit is now part of our information pack and all staff are using it



Contact us today to take advantage of our free and easy-use Youth Pack

YOUTH

Young people have co-designed with Healthwatch West Sussex, a range of activities and information to promote productive health and care conversations.

These conversations are important to:

- know how to support young peoples' physical and mental wellbeing
- test out new ideas and assumptions
- promote health and care as a positive career opportunity
- empower young people to have their voices heard and to be active partners in making positive changes to our health and care system.

Contact us for our FREE Youth Pack

Healthwatch West Sussex - facilitating young people to become partners in the future of healthcare.

0800 012 0122 www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk
helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

EXAMPLE STORY: Young people at the heart of designing conversations for service change

Over the last 18 months we have been working with colleges, family and youth groups and the National Citizen Service to engage young people in health and care conversations.

We collated stories from 1,400 local people themed under each key-line of enquiry set out by the Independent Review panel looking at Children and Young Peoples Emotional and Mental Health Support Services in Sussex.

Whilst our formal submission presents a challenge to providers and commissioners, what was clear was that **when young people are proactively involved in meaningful conversations about services, they offer a powerful opportunity for solutions.**

Together, we have developed a **Youth Pack** in partnership with young people. This is freely available on our website and has more recently been adapted so conversations can continue through the coronavirus pandemic lockdown and beyond.

We are exploring how our pack can be used a part of the **Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education** curriculum, as well as developing better support for young people. It is also being used by several voluntary youth organisations.



Listening to Bewbush residents, a Crawley community

EXAMPLE STORY: I've found out about support in our area

We met 300+ residents and had many valuable conversations. Most Bewbush residents were more than happy to share their lived experiences and views with us.

One of the key concerns expressed by many was that they did not know about services. When they had heard about a particular service, they didn't know what it offers or how to access it. For some there is a huge and negative carer burden, that serves to impact on their own mental wellbeing. We heard examples of how people can get caught in a vicious cycle.

We addressed this gap in partnership with *Rivers*, a local community group which supports ethnic minority residents, by promoting a well-attended Community Information Event.



The buzz in the room and feedback from people demonstrates the value of bringing service information through a well-promoted event directly into a community.



Share your views with us

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

Website: www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 012 0122

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Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights



244 West Sussex residents completed the NHS survey and more took part in informal conversations



Two focus groups informed the Long Term Plan for mental health



Healthwatch West Sussex held and took part in a diverse range of community events to gather insight.

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.

Our [work](#) on this centred on adult mental health support. What matters most to people living with a mental health condition is:

- **Safe areas** in the community to help people to stay well and connected.
- **Access to services** (including GP care), with trained/empathetic professionals is available promptly when needed.
- Having **information** about support services at your finger-tips
- Support to understand and **manage medication**
- A **diagnosis** would help some to move forward with their lives.

When you are in crisis, researching what's out there may be the last thing you want, or can do. There needs to be a community network.

Working with Healthwatch East Sussex we asked people #WhatWouldYouDo to improve the NHS locally. The top issues people told us they wanted services to focus on are:

- Availability and timeliness of medical appointments
- Being able to see any medically appropriate health professional, whilst recognising the need for continuity of care
- More joined up understanding between physical and mental health
- Better communication with parents, staff and between organisations.

What are we doing about it?

As well as informing the strategy, the feedback has fed into existing work across Sussex to ensure 'business as usual' better reflects the needs of our local populations. We'll continue to reflect this in helping the Sussex recovery from COVID-19.

Helping you find the answers

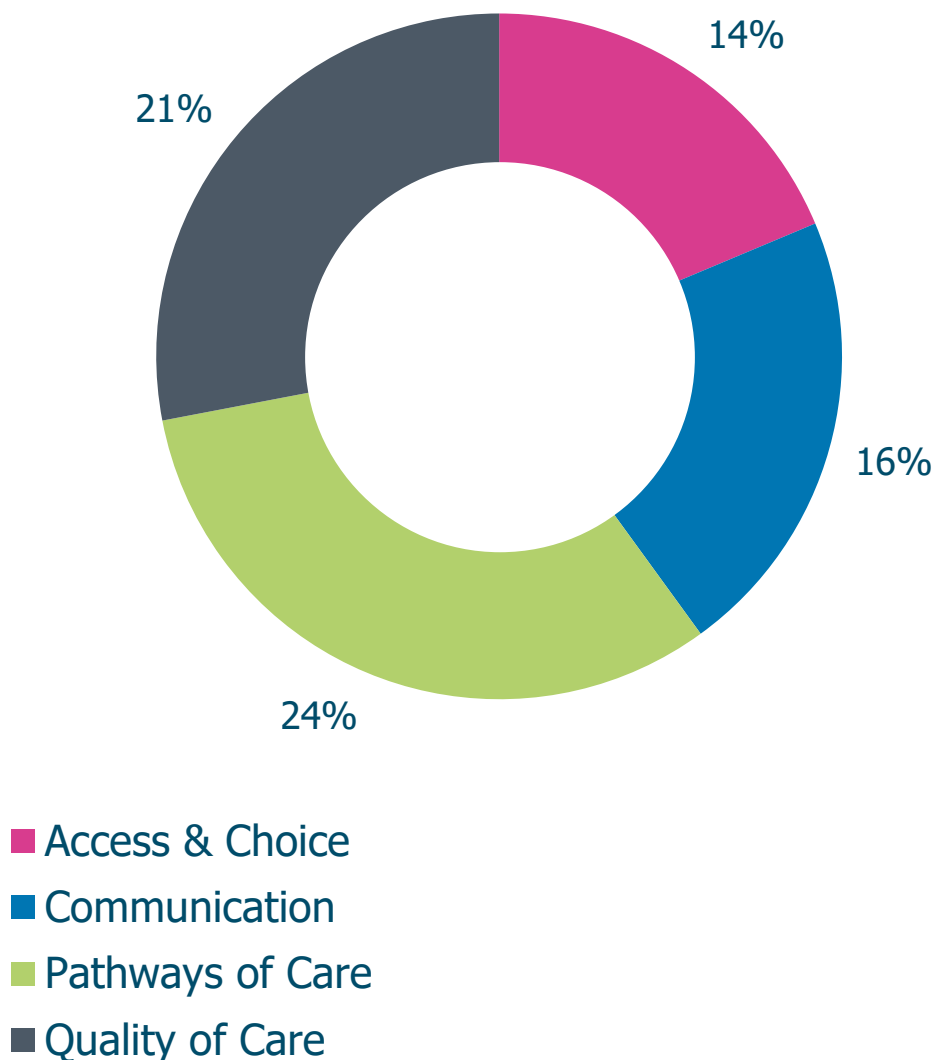


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped 2,000+ people get the advice and information they need by:

- Providing advice and information articles on our website.
- Answering people's 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 the top areas that people asked about.



Case study: Understanding barriers to accessing health services in Rural West Sussex

We helped people access information about health and social care services across rural North Chichester, by partnering with the area's Clinical Director and Primary Care Network.

As well as producing a series of vlogs updating people on the potential for an integrated health hub for the area, we carried out a series of community engagement events and activities.

During our engagement, people told us that one of the main problems is Community Transport, we followed this up with some key questions around this issue.

As a result of this, GPs have changed their clinic times to accommodate bus timing, to resolve some of the immediate problems, and Community Transport is firmly embedded in the development.

Together with local partners we have an ambition funding application under consideration – which would help create far-reaching integrated transport solutions.

Transport to get to places is a real problem. My husband has been sent to Southampton hospital and we do not know how we will get there.

Talking to local people in rural West Sussex





Example story 1:

Ann emailed us for help in supporting her 11 year old daughter, who has been mentally struggling for months. She had been seen by several different psychiatrists over a year and was awaiting support from mental health services. We were able to support Ann with information about *Young Minds*, and local specialist Asperger's support. Ann also now knows there is support if she decides to make a complaint about the lack of service for her daughter.



Example story 2:

Tom emailed us with concerns about not being able to get an appointment at his local dentist. After speaking to the local dentist, we found out that they were at capacity, but managed to find him another dentist nearby.



Example story 3:

Sangini had been waiting for an operation to remove her appendix, as well as a laparoscopy for 20 months. After contacting PALs twice, with no response, she had contacted us to ask how she could go forward with her complaint.

We were able to support Sangini to get the answers and support she needed.



Contact us to get the information you need

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Volunteers



At Healthwatch West Sussex this year we have been supported by over 60 volunteers who helped us find out what people think is working and how services in their communities could improve.

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 including forming our Independent Board and representing Healthwatch on other local boards and bodies.
- Co-designed and input into the development of our projects, reports and recommendations.
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on.

EXAMPLE STORY: Volunteers support towards a culture of continual environmental improvement

Thanks to the hard work of a group of our volunteers, instrumental changes have been made to the environment in which patients experience care.

Our volunteers carried out over 40 visits to hospitals throughout our County, speaking positively to staff and raising awareness of hazards and issues within the environment that may impact on people's stay.

Our volunteers write reports highlighting to those in charge what is good and what needs to improve, raising concerns such as:

- Medication for patients leaving hospital
- Signage – that left people struggling to get to the right place
- Operational issues including Patient records and equipment.



Hospital Visiting Programme



OUTCOME

In response to these concerns, local providers took immediate action to address issues or reported on the work they were doing with staff, such as holding a rapid process improvement week.

With our volunteers' help, we have kept an eye on what people think of local hospital services. We then work with the relevant managers to make sure people's views and experiences inform changes.



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 West Sussex.

Website: www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 012 0122

Email: helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

Our young volunteers

Over the last year we've engaged with, and involved more young people than ever before.

Caroline, our *Raising Awareness Lead* has created inclusive and accessible ways for young people to be involved in our work and established strong and positive links with schools, colleges, universities, clubs and organisations working with young people across our county.

This year we have welcomed several young people into our team to work individually on projects. But, most often we work with young people in groups.



Developing resources

In the summer our team worked with the National Citizen Service, delivering social action workshops to over 300 young people, aged 15 and 16. Together we explored the impact social action can have in improving health and wellbeing. As well as sharing their personal experiences, we were able to learn and improve the way we work with young people. And we were excited when some of the young people volunteered to develop engagement and support resources for our [youth pack](#).



Emma, 16

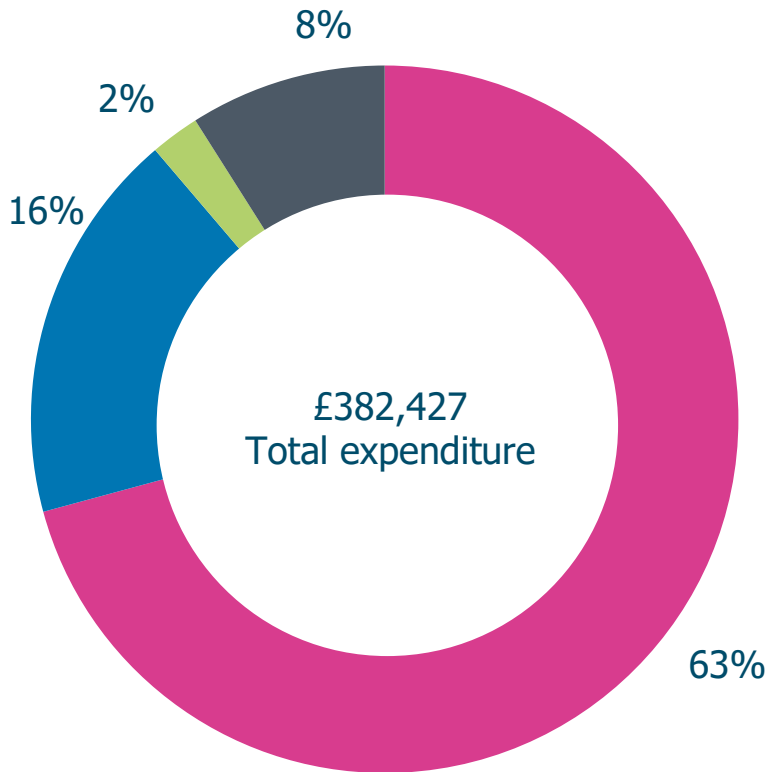
I've volunteered for Healthwatch so that my experiences could be shared with other young people who may be struggling with their self-esteem. I'm happy that sharing my story can help others, and I'm proud of what we achieved. Thank you for letting us be a part of the change to help young people open-up. I hope this leaflet goes on to make a difference and help stop other young people going through what I did. I think that mental health is really important, and something we all need to open-up about and discuss.

Finances

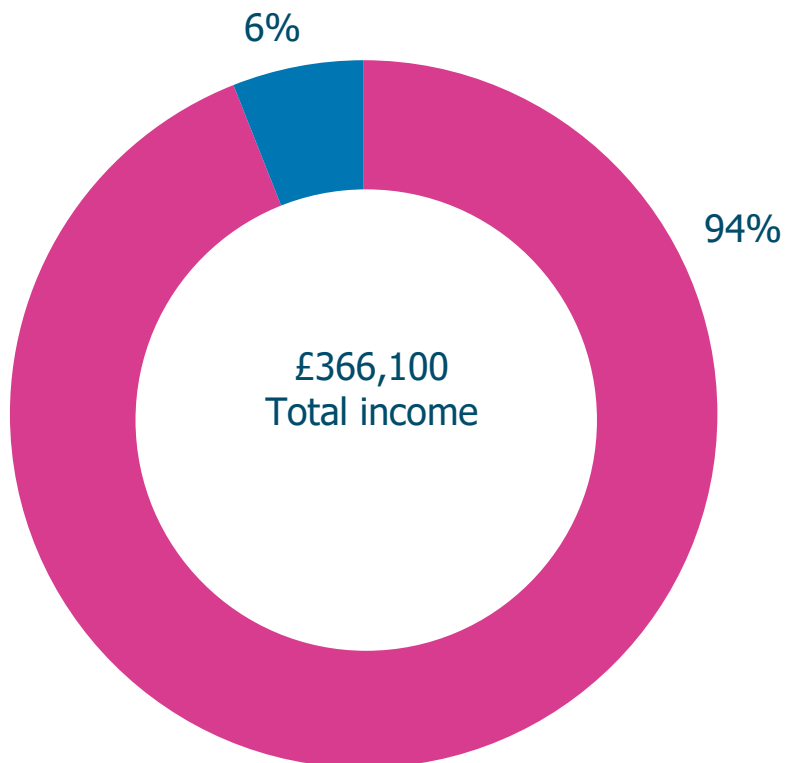


We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012) and we generate additional funds from our social enterprise commissions as an independent Community Interest Company.

- How much it costs to run core Healthwatch
- How much it costs to run IHCAS
- CIC funded investment in community partnerships
- CIC management, volunteers and overheads
- Shortfall covered by CIC Board investment of Social Enterprise Reserves



- 94% funding received from local authority
- 6% social enterprise income



Our plans for next year



Supporting West Sussex through working in partnership with our communities:

Looking ahead

At the time of writing this report our country faces incredible uncertainty and has yet to understand the scares and impact on individuals, families and communities resulting from the global coronavirus pandemic.

What we know for sure is that now, more than ever, we need a true learning culture in West Sussex; one that puts aside our professional fears, is based on shared compassion, and involves those in need of support in the short and long term.

Coronavirus has discriminated, as shown by statistics on the loss of life and forecast economic impact. Some individuals, communities and geographies are suffering more than others.

This will bring forward many challenges and one of these will be how we each take responsibility for our health. To be able to succeed we will need easy access to the right information, timely support and be empowered to take greater control over how our care is managed.

Thank you

We would like to thank residents and partners for the support they have given us. We were delighted to be awarded a contract by West Sussex County Council, to continue to deliver the local Healthwatch for our county over the next five+ years which will enable us to plan and work strategically, have more impact and help improve health outcomes for more people.

The investment we have made in developing strong community partnerships, together with the innovations in technology led by our delivery partner, Help & Care, meant we have been quick to adapt to changes needed to continue to work effectively during the pandemic.



Sally Dartnell, Chief Officer

We have seen and supported positive and rapid change and adaptation in a number of areas of our Health and Care System which we believe will underpin the development of our Integrated Care System. We will work hard to ensure that these positive elements are taken forward as we recover from the pandemic and that the greater collaboration that has emerged can be used to address peoples changed needs and potentially updated priorities for the NHS long term plan.

We are working with our digital partner, developing resources for our frontline and helpdesk teams to give us greater scope for providing the latest information and advice to others

Sally Dartnell
Healthwatch West Sussex, Chief Officer

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 experiences of health and social care with us.
- All of our amazing staff and volunteers.
- The hundreds of voluntary organisations and community groups and their members, clients, families and friend carers that have contributed to our work.



We are here to listen and understand your experiences of health and care services

Contact us

Healthwatch West Sussex CIC is a Community Interest Company limited by guarantee and registered in England & Wales (No. 08557470) at Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road, Pokesdown. BH7 6DL.

Contact number 0300 012 0122

Email address helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

Website www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk



0300 012 0122



@healthwatchwestsussex



@healthwatchws
@NHSadvocacy



@healthwatchws

Healthwatch West Sussex works with Help & Care to provide its statutory activities.



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.

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

Note:

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healthwatch

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