



On equal terms

Then and now

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent Annual Report 2020 - 2021

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Message from our Chair



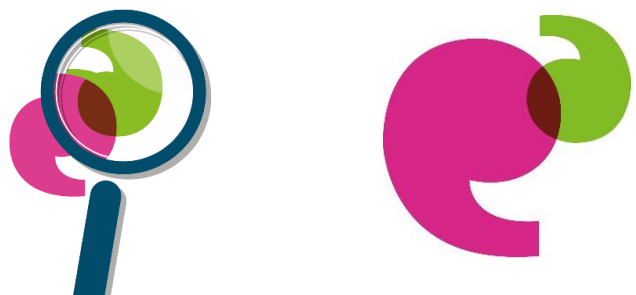
I am honoured to continue in my role of Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent Chair with this being my eighth year in this vital position. Our local Healthwatch is here to listen to your health and care stories and share these with the people who plan, buy and provide these services.

Sadly, as we turned the corner into 2020, none of us could know the seismic changes in store for all of us. As we entered into 2021, even the renewed optimism that the worst of the Coronavirus crisis might hopefully be behind us cannot blind us to the profound effect on daily living and, in particular, the way it has massively impacted health. So many people have suffered either through illness or bereavement. Many others have faced mental health challenges because of the impact of lockdown.

We all want to applaud all staff in the NHS and the wider care sector who have worked so tirelessly during this crisis. However, we are all aware that even in if we transition to Covid-free living the future looks grim with the knowledge of growing operation waiting lists and a concern about the number of serious health conditions going undiagnosed.

Prior to the Coronavirus, the most common areas of concern that Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent heard about were GP services, Mental Health Services, Social Care and Hospitals. Even with the focus on Covid over the last year, these issues are still high on people's list of health-related concerns.

Additionally, because the move from hospital care to community care continued to be a high priority for the local health and care economy, we continually aimed to remind commissioners and providers of the absolute need to ensure that patient safety and quality of care is not negatively affected during this process. Any new models of care must be discussed with the public, their views sought and incorporated into service change to ensure that the right care is provided in the right place with no gap in service provision. Furthermore, the skills and experience of the voluntary sector must be incorporated into future plans together with being appropriately funded.



Message from our Chair

I'm proud that Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent has worked tirelessly to ensure that we address your concerns. Of course, our aim is not just to "catch people doing it wrong" and so we have also endeavoured to compliment when we hear stories of good practise and excellent customer service. We have also sought to make sure that we connect with those underrepresented groups with our communities as we know that often less likely to be heard by these service professionals and decision makers.

Thank you to our Healthwatch staff and volunteers plus all who have supported and contributed to the work of Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent. In the last year we have sadly had to say goodbye to our former Chief Officer, Simmy Akhtar, but I'm delighted that we were able to secure the services of Simon Fogell as her replacement and who has proven to be an excellent appointment.

It is impossible to include all the detail of our work in this report and so only the highlights are included. If you wish to discuss any aspects of our work, then please do not hesitate to contact our staff team and if after having read about our role you would like to volunteer with us, please contact us to register your interest.

I look forward to working with you in the future in these challenging times.

Lloyd Cooke

Lloyd Cooke

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent Chair



About us

Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Stoke-on-Trent. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure your views shape the support you need, by sharing these views with those who have the power to make change happen.

Helping you to find the information you need

We help people find the information they need about services in their area. This has been vital during the pandemic with the ever-changing environment and restrictions limiting people's access to health and social care services.

Our goals

1



Supporting you to have your say

We want more people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care, make informed decisions and shape the services that support them.

2



Providing a high quality service

We want everyone who shares an experience or seeks advice from us to get a high quality service and to understand the difference their views make.

3



Ensuring your views help improve health & care

We want more services to use your views to shape the health and care support you need today and in the future.



“Local Healthwatch have done fantastic work throughout the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is more work ahead to ensure that everyone’s views are heard. COVID-19 has highlighted inequalities and to tackle these unfair health differences we will need those in power to listen, to hear the experiences of those facing inequality and understand the steps that could improve people’s lives.”

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and how we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.

Reaching out



We heard from

1,047 people

this year about their experiences of health and social care.

We engaged with, and provided advice and information to over

3,700 people

this year.

Responding to the pandemic



We engaged with and supported

528

people during the COVID-19 pandemic this year.

Making a difference to care



We published

7 reports

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. From this, we made **19** recommendations for improvement. You can access them [here](#).

89% of recommendations

we made last year have been acted upon, at the point where we reviewed progress (17 out of 19).

Health and care that works for you



25 volunteers

helped us to carry out our work. In total, they contributed to around 52 days.

We employed 4 staff

75% of whom are full time equivalent.

We received

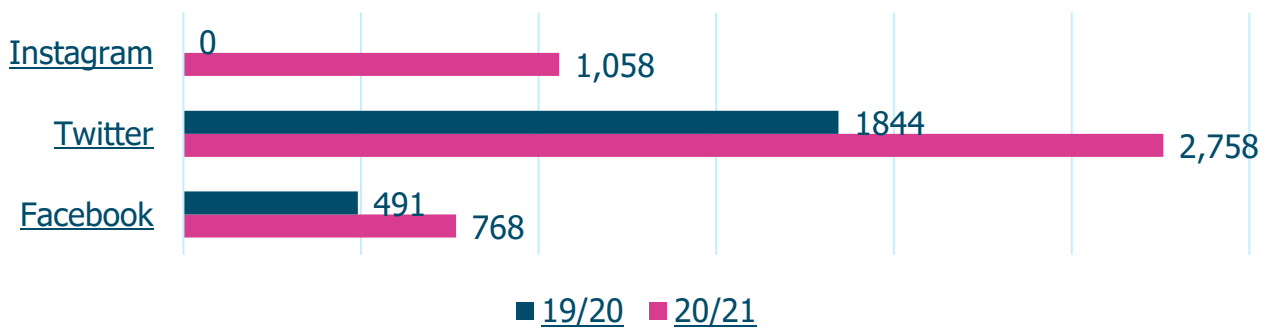
£153,711 in funding

from our local authority in 2020-21, **16%** less than the previous year.

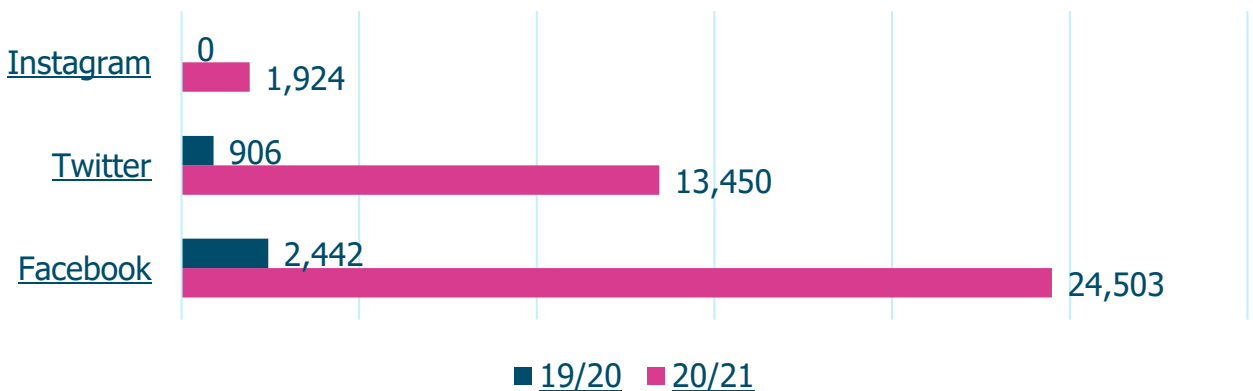
Digital engagement and adaptation

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic 2020 – 2021 has required significant digital adaptation to ensure our community outreach and engagement, signposting, advice and information and priority work was connective with the public in Stoke-on-Trent. To accomplish this, our social media platforms and website have been pivotal to ensure our reach delivered maximum capacity and efficiency. Consequently, our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram media channels achieved significant growth by means of new followers, public engagements and reach and impressions. Those who did not have access to digital technology were able to use our Feedback Card to identify alternate contact methods.

A Summary of Social Media Followers Growth



An Overview of Social Media Engagement Growth



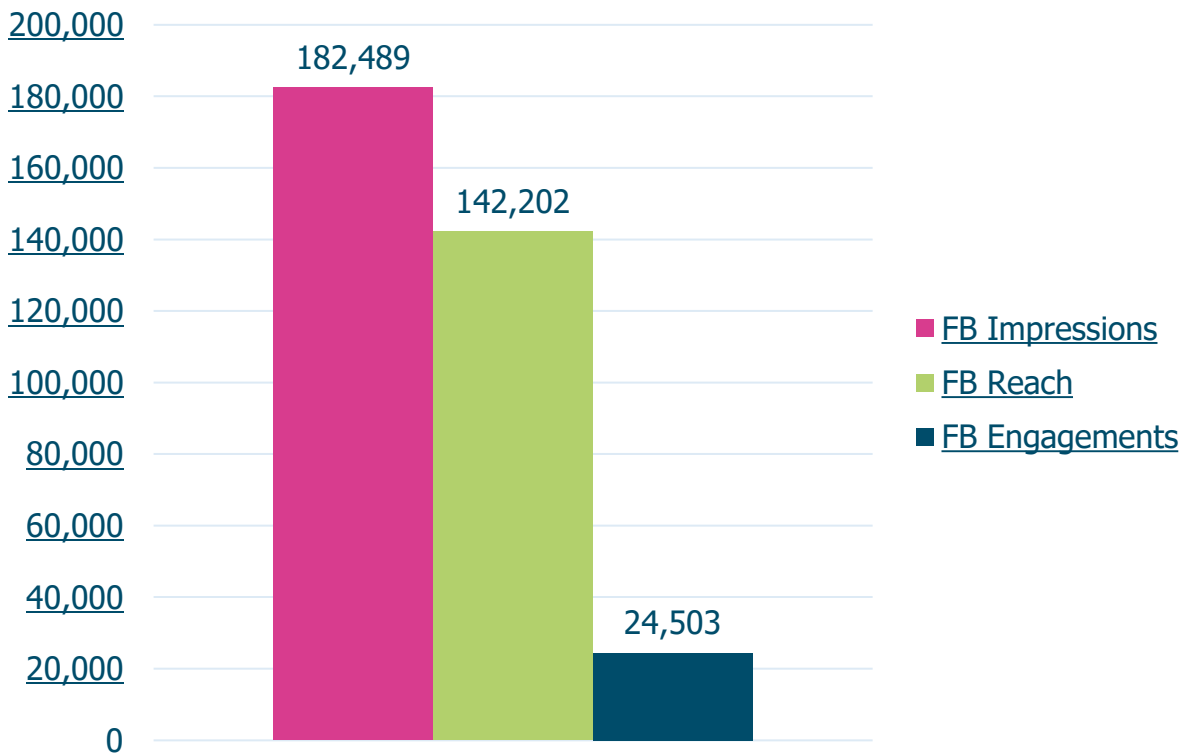
Our social media engagement grew by **1091%** from 2019 – 2020.

A deeper dive into social media analytics

As a predominant part of our 2020 – 2021 priority work, engagement and outreach has relied upon the efficiency of our social media channels, we recognise the importance of being able to understand key performance measures. Considering this, the following content will spotlight:

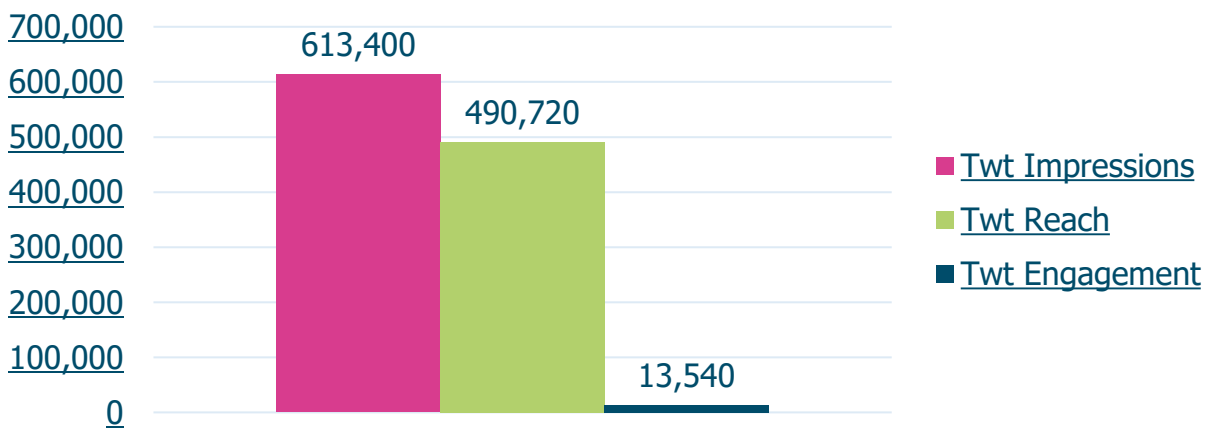
- The number of times people have seen or come across our posts
- The number of unique individuals who has seen our posts
- The number of actions taken from our posts

Under the surface of Facebook

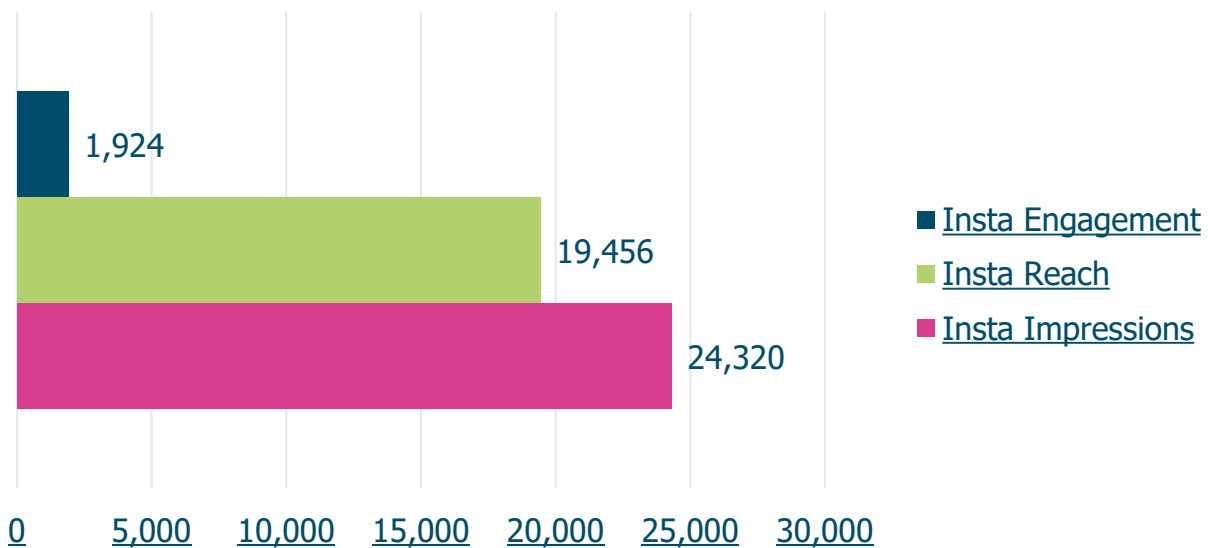


A deeper dive into social media analytics (continued)

A jump into Twitter



A plunge into Instagram



Web relations

Insight into website analytics spotlighted further opportunities to improve our communications and content sharing, advertisement of virtual events, getting involved opportunities to share experiences and feedback. As a result of these new features, our website analytics highlighted not only an expanded income of traffic but a greater relationship with our audience. We were able to identify this because of a significantly higher number of new website users, returning visitors and page views per month.



In early 2021, we created a new website and transferred to a more contemporary style with advanced features to ensure that we strive to meet the public need. The updated website contains a new reports hub, events pages, upgraded Feedback Centre and bulletin features.

Looking ahead, whilst we expect face to face engagement to become more frequent over the course of 2021-2022, we recognise the successes of active digital platforms and the opportunity each avenue brings to collect public experiences on a wider scale. Therefore, we will aim to coincide our digital channels with resumed outreach and engagement to sustain our digital interactivity with our audience.

Our overall website growth increased by **131%** from 2019 – 2020.



HEALTHWATCH STOKE-ON-TRENT SHORTLISTED FOR PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL AWARD [under the section the Impact Our Team Makes...](#)



“Since the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded in March, staff and volunteers within local Healthwatch across England have not stopped working. Together, they have done amazing work, mobilising staff and volunteers to advise a concerned public, and alerting services to the issues that were confusing or preventing people from getting the care they needed.”

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England



“Many congratulations on being shortlisted for the Public Experience of Pregnancy and Maternity Services Report; what a fantastic achievement. These services are so important, not only locally, but nationally, and I am really pleased that Healthwatch is focusing on them. As you say, you are making a positive difference to people’s lives, and during these very difficult times, I would like to commend you and your team on such an accomplishment, it just goes to show how far hard work and commitment can go.”

Councillor Abi Brown, Stoke-On-Trent City Council

Virtual outreach

Our traditional outreach and engagement work has had to be adapted because of the pandemic. To achieve continued successes we have ensured our presence in virtual meetings has remained high. Resultingly, we have merged into a range of new meetings to connect with the public and also professionals. Some of which include the Learning Disability and Partnership Board Meeting, Parent Carer Forums and public consultations.

By being a part of new local groups and meetings, based upon our intelligence we targeted two seldom-heard demographics to digitally engage with throughout the year to ensure we captured as many voices as possible across Stoke-on-Trent:

- Young People, aged 11 - 16
- Communication Barriers

We created animated surveys, competitions with gift cards and have enrolled onto a British Sign Language Course to spotlight our desire to become more inclusive.

Furthermore, our Community Outreach and Volunteer Lead hosted **Virtual Coffee Morning and Evening** sessions once a month to interact and engage with residents and organisations. These sessions were designed to firstly inform residents about Healthwatch services and secondly to identify any local intelligence trends regarding health and social care services across the city.

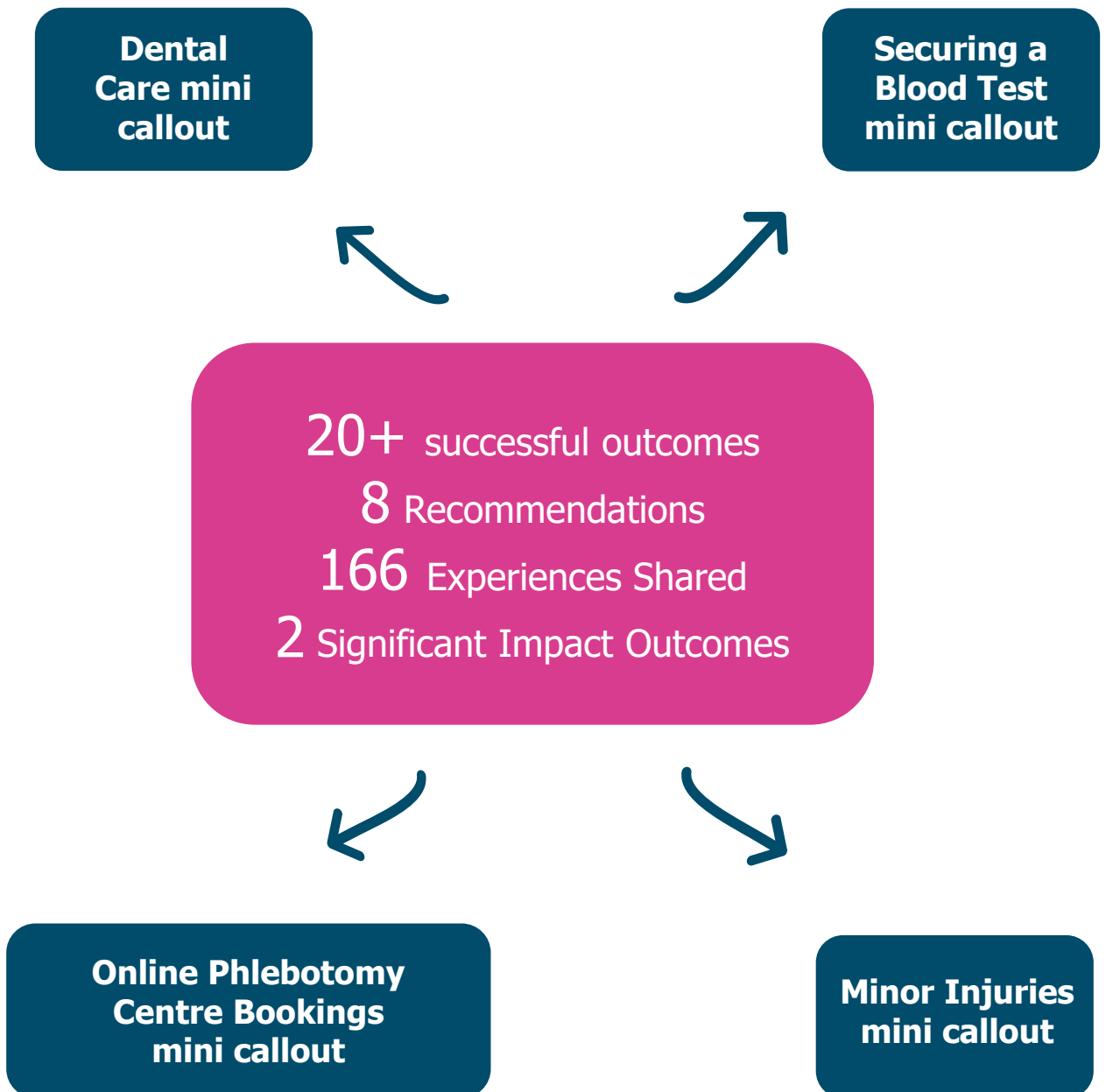
As a result of the shared public intelligence this paved the way for us to assess what standout issues required action. Consequently, we designed a programme of **virtual mini callouts** for public feedback. Each mini callout was themed around a particular health and social care topic which tied into our intelligence trends.

To ensure our digital reach was effective, we shared **callouts for information posts** across our social media channels, our website and bulletins. These methods proved to be a success as we went on to capture meaningful public experiences to compile and report on. You can read more about our mini callout successes on the next page.



Mini callout successes

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic we ensured that we continued to capture public experiences. Between August 2020 and January 2021 we decided to carry out a series of mini callouts for information. Our mini callouts were centred on topical health and social care topics with the aim of encouraging members of the public to feel empowered to share personal experiences where applicable.





Theme one: then and now blood tests



Then: booking a blood test appointment

We received a sustained high volume of feedback and issues regarding booking a blood test. It was evident that people were experiencing difficulties in accessing blood tests and therefore we organised a call-out for public feedback on experiences around accessing blood tests during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

In July 2020, over 70 residents shared their experiences of attempting to book a blood test.



“My brother-in-law who is 84 has been trying to book a blood test for two days non-stop. He constantly keeps getting cut off on the telephone and he has now given up. We are very frustrated.”



Now: booking a blood test appointment

Initially we provided advice and guidance to residents regarding how to contact the phlebotomy centre to book a blood test. Residents repeatedly experienced **busy phonelines** and 'call back later' messages. Due to the limited alternatives, we were only able to advise when to avoid peak periods and to persevere as there were no other active phone lines to book a blood test. Internally, we recognised this was a growing concern.

As a result of the influx of dissatisfied patients because of the inability to book a routine blood test via phone call, we compiled the public intelligence and formed a 'Public Experience of Booking a Blood Test' report **with three individual recommendations** for University Hospitals of North Midlands (UHNM) to evaluate and act on.

Consequently, UHNM published details of a **new digital phlebotomy online booking system**. They developed a web-based booking system for patients needing to book a blood test in the community. The online booking service allows patients to book an appointment much quicker and provides a text confirmation with the secured date, time and venue for patient ease.

We continue to support residents to book blood tests digitally because of barriers in navigating and understanding how to book online. Several **residents shared their thanks** for the prompt assistance in order to secure an appointment as soon as possible.



"I thought it was brilliant. It took a while to get an appointment but well worth it because I was in and out in two minutes. I have got two kids under 3 so you can imagine what a nightmare it is for me to get a test done in the week with the usual queues. I hope they keep this current system to be honest".

- ❖ **Our follow up report in December 2020 found that 70% of responders were happy with the new online booking system.**



Theme two: then and now dentistry



Then: access to NHS dental services

Throughout 2020/2021 we have taken great pride in supporting local residents to identify available dental services in order to access appointments, receive emergency treatment and care and enrol onto waiting lists.

Throughout our continued interaction with residents, we identified that communication with dental practices has been limited and hard for residents to obtain information. Similarly, it was clear that residents' access to services was highly problematic. In excess of **100** residents have engaged with us, of which **100%** were provided with an adequate next step.

- **60%** could not access a dentist
- **25%** did not know where to go for emergency treatment
- **15%** suggested they had encountered negative or limited returned information



Now: ongoing dentistry issues

After a sustained period of engagement with Stoke-on-Trent residents, we have been able to contribute towards the national intelligence sharing with Healthwatch England to ensure that NHS England are fully informed of local issues and barriers that residents face in accessing suitable and timely treatment and care.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, **135** residents of Stoke-on-Trent shared their experience or requested further support from us. **85%** of the 135 people encountered a negative experience regarding dentistry services in the city.

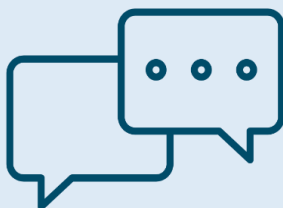
The core **themes** that made up the 135 experiences included:

- No access to book a routine appointment
- Emergency treatment and care
- Could not enrol onto a waiting list
- Lack of directive support or information



“My partner has been trying for past 3 days for an emergency dentist tried all the numbers suggested by NHS helpline either not answering or telling him to ring back in morning. Fortunately, Healthwatch pointed me in the right direction of an available practice ”

To ensure that we were able to support residents as much as possible, we contacted in excess of **50 local dentists** to identify if they were currently, or had plans to enrol new patients in the near future. In light of this, we were able to find a small number of dentists who were enrolling new patients and share this information upon request.



Share your views with us

If you have a query about a health and 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.



www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk



01782 683 080



info@healthwatchstoke.co.uk



Theme three: then and now accessing your local GP



Then: accessing your local GP

Being able to get an appointment with a GP has been a priority for Healthwatch since it was first established.

In 2019, we were involved in the NHS Long Term Plan with 731 responses, some of which was designed to advance GP services and set out measures it intends to take to address public needs.

Our respondents answered two questionnaires. One with general questions relating to their opinions on how best to keep them well, and another more focussed upon people with specific conditions, their experiences, and views on how to improve services.

One area of the public experiences suggested that GP communication with young people and vulnerable groups needed reviewing and improving.

The Long Term Plan is an important tool and part of ongoing engagement with NHS leadership to ensure that GP services can adapt and remain reactive to wide-ranging concerns in society.



Now: accessing your GP during the pandemic

On arrival of the pandemic, throughout 2020 we received a growing number of GP service-related questions, support and information requests and feedback of personal experiences. Because of this pressing concern we decided to look further into these issues. We did this by posing public questions, callouts for information and continued engagement on social media.

During 2020, in excess of 200 people contacted us to share their experience relating to GP services.

We were able to identify appointment adaptation to consider if patients were being offered digital appointments. **71%** of residents we engaged with were offered a telephone or video appointment, which was a clear sudden need for residents as a result of COVID-19.



"I have accessed my GP many times over the past few months. I find the phone call system more accessible than trying to get an appointment. Repeat prescriptions have gone through ok."

In contrast, some residents did not deem digital appointments as a suitable method to temporarily replace face to face appointments. **25** residents specifically shared their difficulty in accessing a digital appointment due to struggling with technology or joining the remote meeting. To address all noted GP concerns we published a Primary Care Access Report, whereby local CCGs were able to review and make a statement to address concerns.



"I had to wait a week before any more telephone appointments available and then told it would be 3-4 weeks before I could book."

As a result of people sharing their experiences, we are in collaboration with Healthwatch England who are calling on NHS England and NHS Improvement to conduct a formal review into how people are accessing their GP so that access can be made easier for all.



To find out more > > >

Read about the Healthwatch England GP access during COVID-19 report [here](#).
Read about the Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent Primary Care report [here](#).



Theme four: then and now primary care



Then: access to Primary Care Services

As a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic in early 2020, GP services were required to adapt and alter the way that services are planned and delivered.

As such, appointment methods, bookings and direct communication between practices and patients have been at the heart of crucial service changes. Consequently, this led to many residents expressing their concerns about being able access core primary care services, empathise with cancelled appointments, tolerate long waiting lists and access ever-changing information.

In September 2020 we gathered 75 public feedback experiences on local Primary Care Services.

- ❖ **28% of residents shared dissatisfaction with the treatment and care**
- ❖ **25% of residents experienced a form of poor telephone communication**



Now: access to Primary Care Services

We worked closely with Healthwatch Staffordshire to **devise a joint Primary Care Services survey during the Covid-19 pandemic** for all residents of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. We wanted to hear experiences from people that included all services under Primary Care, comprising Dental Care, Podiatry, Dietician, Care Co-ordination and Health and Wellbeing Teams, to ensure that we could work effectively with Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire CCGs to include patient experiences and viewpoints in forthcoming local service planning and delivery.

Several recommendations were formed and shared with the local CCGs to reflect and act on, some of which included, ensure surgeries are providing their contractual numbers/type of appointments, consider the use of NHS apps to allow patients autonomy requesting medication and viewing progress, retraining staff and ensure all surgeries have access to support services such as British Sign Language interpreters, text services and interpreters.

The Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent Advisory Board and the Healthwatch Staffordshire Advisory Board have agreed that **part of their annual work programme** will be to find out what the public want from Enhanced Primary Care services embedded with Community services as set out in the Integrated Care System plans for Staffordshire for the Primary Care Networks that sit within the Integrated Care Partnerships covering the north of the Staffordshire including Stoke-on-Trent, as well as the west and east of the County.





Responding to COVID-19

Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need, especially through the pandemic. The insight we collect is shared with both Healthwatch England and local partners to ensure services are operating as best as possible during the pandemic.

This year we helped **528** people by:

- Providing up to date advice on the COVID-19 response locally
- Linking people to reliable up-to-date information
- Supporting the community volunteer response
- Helping people to access the services they need
- Supporting the vaccine roll-out
- Supporting residents to book medical appointments

Impact of COVID-19 Survey Report

Following the global coronavirus outbreak in early 2020 there have been significant measures to obstruct and limit the infection of coronavirus, including a national lockdown and many forms of social distancing for several months. Consequently, the required measures have had a considerable impact on individual lifestyles through physical health wellbeing, psychosocial health and financial challenges.

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent and Healthwatch Staffordshire, the local independent champions for health and social care worked with Together We're Better including Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire County Council on a collaborative piece of work to devise an Impact of Coronavirus survey which asked members of the public about their experiences of health and social care services during the coronavirus pandemic.

The survey was designed to understand the public experience of using health and social care services during the coronavirus pandemic in consideration of the following four themes:

- ❖ **experiences coronavirus**
- ❖ **access to services**
- ❖ **mental health**
- ❖ **digital engagement**

217
responses

6 recommendations
formally addressed

Former Chief Officer of Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent Simmy Akhtar said *"People have told us what works for them, what could be better and what did not work during a time when health and social care services were adapting to meet the demands of this new disease. Whilst COVID-19 continues to be a huge priority we are asking that the feedback provided by our residents informs service improvement to ensure patient care, safety and quality are not compromised and furthermore that our recommendations are implemented without delay."*

October 2020



To find out more > > >

Read more about our Impact of COVID-19 Survey Report [here](#).

Top four areas that people have contacted us about:



20% on GP services



12% on Dentistry



18% on Hospital Services



50% on COVID-19

Reacting to the public



Early in the pandemic, we heard from **over 150** people about the lack of clear information and often inaccurate information. Our role became much more focused on providing people with clear, consistent and concise advice and information articles on our website to help address people's concerns. From April 2020 – March 2021 our advice has been accessed by **over 71,000** people.

The key questions people were asking included:

- How to book blood tests under restricted access
- Local COVID-19 testing site
- Visiting our main coronavirus updates webpage

Contact us to get the information you need



If you have a query about a health and 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.



www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk



01783 683 080



info@healthwatchstoke.co.uk



Volunteers

At Healthwatch Stoke-On-Trent we are supported by **25 volunteers** to help us find out what people think is working, and what improvements people would like to make to services.

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home, by attending virtual coffee mornings and meetings.
- Shared digital content for our website and social media platforms.
- Digitally interacted with other volunteers and members of the public to offer signposting and advice.
- Helped with the local volunteering efforts of shopping and collecting prescriptions for those self-isolating or shielding.

The Advisory Board and Officers of Healthwatch Stoke-On-Trent say a massive 'Thank you for all your hard work and commitment' to all the volunteers who work so tirelessly to help us hear from the people of Stoke-on-Trent about their experiences of Health Care and Social Care services. See some of the work they do on the next page.



Healthwatch Advisory Board member - Hilda

Hilda our long standing HAB board member sadly passed away in 2020. She contributed a great deal to not only Healthwatch but also to the North Staffs Users Group and North Staffs Combined Healthcare Trust. Hilda's enthusiasm, dedication, and determination to improve health and care for others will be missed by all in Stoke-on-Trent.



Helping online - Ruby

The year it was certainly different for me as a volunteer. Thanks to the technological advantage of Zoom, I was still able to volunteer for Healthwatch by attending meetings, doing virtual visits, and sitting on committees. There were also social events where we met with communities and fellow volunteers.



Young volunteer - Bethany

I started volunteering with Healthwatch in October 2020 and have since enjoyed attending a variety of community meetings enhancing my knowledge around local health and social care services. I hope to continue to learn and develop to gain further knowledge around health and social care.



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 Stoke-on-Trent:



www.healthwatchstokeontrent.co.uk



01782 683 080

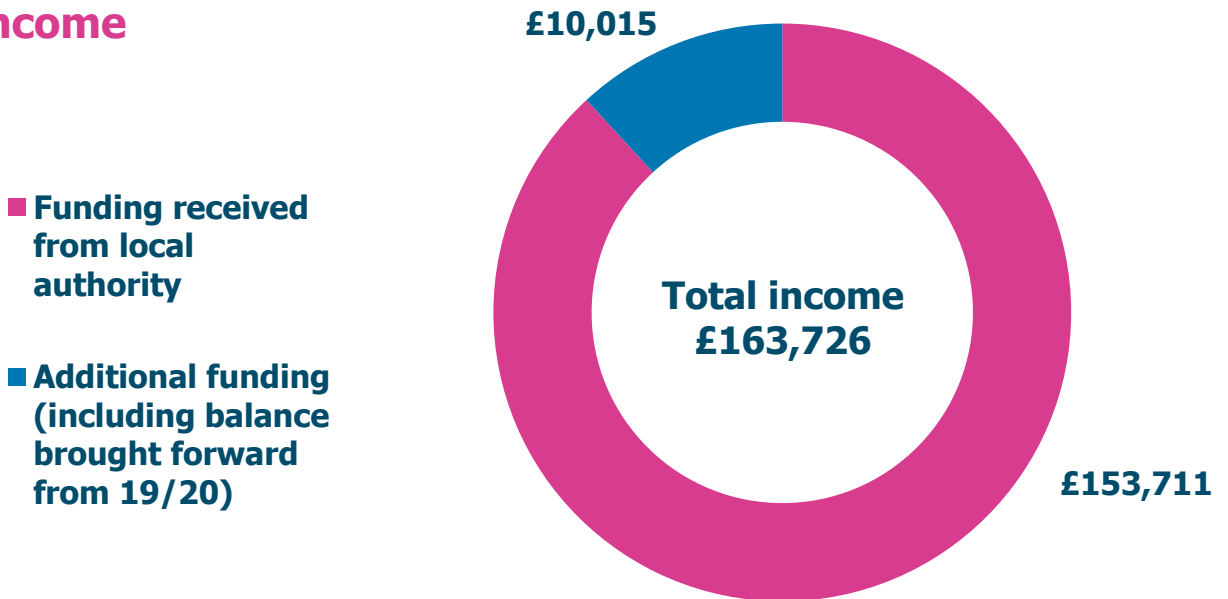


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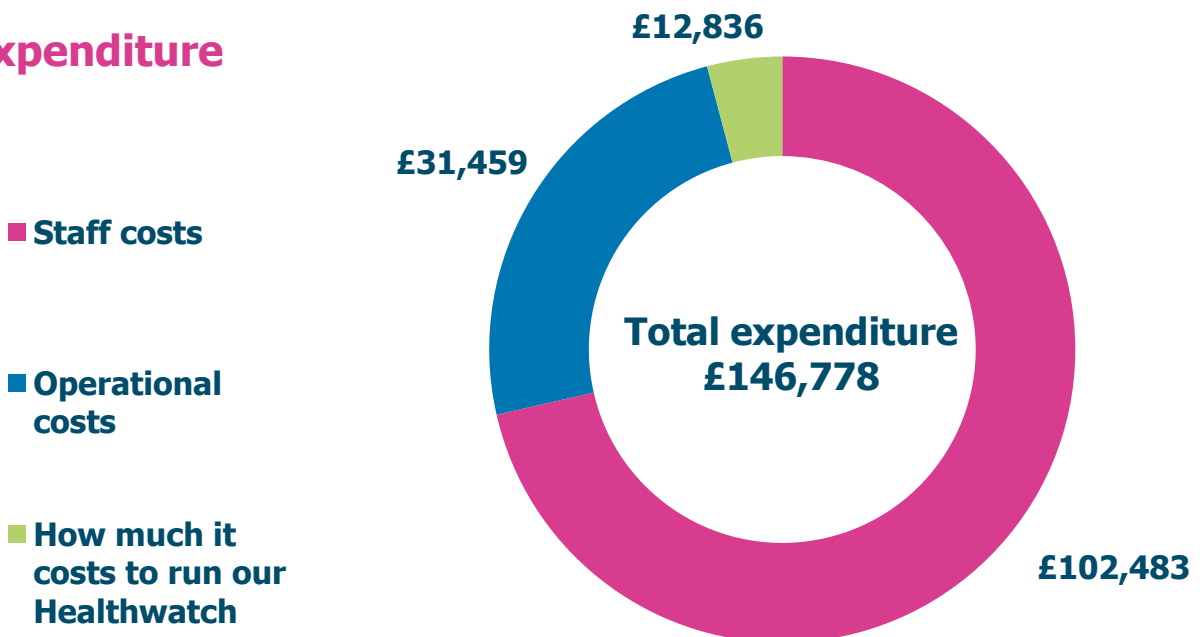
Finances

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Income



Expenditure



Next steps & thank you

Top three priorities for 2021-22

- ✓ GP services with concentrated effort to find out what the public want from Enhanced Primary Care services embedded with Community Services.
- ✓ Hospital services with a focus on communication between staff and patients, delayed cancer treatment and care quality and staff attitudes.
- ✓ Mental health services with attention on length of waiting times, lack of support, referrals to mental health services from the GP.

Next steps

Looking ahead, we will continue to observe and act upon theme-based feedback items to ensure that health and social care services are informed of resident opinions, suggestions and concerns. Furthermore, over the coming months we aim to follow national guidelines to plan a safe but efficient transition back into the heart of the community, in anticipation of having our traditional presence at local events to continue our successful engagement and outreach.

“Thank you to everyone who has supported us over the past year. We could not do the work that we do without the feedback from the public that we use to seek to improve health and social care services. I would ask as many people as possible to continue to share their experiences and ideas with us so that we can inform health and social care leaders to support the provision of the right services in the right place for our local communities – services must meet needs as best as possible.”

Simmy Akhtar, former Chief Officer of Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent

“It is vitally important that you, the public, continue to share your experiences with us in light of the plans to redesign the way that services are delivered under the Integrated Care System plans. Healthwatch needs to use your collective voices to help shape services in any new models of care so that it is provided in the right place and at the right time for all members of the community.”

Simon Fogell, Chief Executive Officer of Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent





Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent, The Dudson Centre, Hope Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 5DD. Engaging Communities Solutions is the organisation holding the local Healthwatch contract.

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making.

Our Healthwatch board consists of 3 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2020/21 the board met 3 times and made decisions on matters such as **Primary Care Access project planning** and **seldom-heard targeted groups to engage with**.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. The **public help to shape our priorities** through an examination of annual themed intelligence and by completing **public priority surveys** to ask what is important to local people regarding health and social care services.

Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of health and care services. During 2020/21 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, provided a feedback centre, digital bulletins, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through our active social media channels.

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers. This year we have focused on engaging with residents who experience communication barriers. In the coming months we plan to increase staff education to further our inclusivity by partaking in nationally accredited British Sign Language courses.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it on our website under the respective annual report webpage. In addition, we will share the report with local partners to disseminate as appropriate.

2020-21 priorities

<u>Project / activity area</u>	<u>Changes made to services</u>
Public Experience of Minor Injuries at Haywood Hospital	Referral process in aligning decision making between medical consultants in order to refer patients to suitable health and care departments.
Outreach and Engagement with Seldom-Heard Groups	Young people (11-16) have been provided with opportunities to share their opinion on local services and pressing contemporary topics.
Primary Care Access	Reviewed telephone communication to satisfy the volume of telephone enquiries.
Impact of Coronavirus Survey Report	Communication with long-term condition patients to ensure their pathway of support for treatment and care does not affect their prognosis.

Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience (continued)

Responses to recommendations and requests

We had **1** provider who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. Consequently, no recommendations or other actions resulted from this area of activity. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.

Health and Wellbeing Board

In 2020/21 Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent was represented on the Stoke-on-Trent Health and Wellbeing Board by Simmy Akhtar, former Chief Officer and her successor Simon Fogell, Chief Executive Officer of Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent. During 2020/21 our representatives have effectively carried out this role by sharing local health and social care intelligence.

Looking back at 2020-2021 makes you realise what a challenging year it has been for everyone. For a lot of us it will be a year many will want to forget and put behind them. We have experienced anxiety, suffering, tragedy, restrictions on our activities and employment not to mention the challenges to our health and social care systems that no one could have foreseen in our lifetimes.

We have also seen great community spirit, marveled at the ingenuity and resilience of front-line health and social care workers, and those that support the delivery behind the scenes not to mention the Public Health and Local Government staff plus the army of volunteers that have stepped up to the plate.

I am incredibly proud of our Advisory Board, Volunteers and Officers who continued to work and deliver the Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent service. I would like to thank each and everyone of them for their hard work and commitment. This made sure the health care and social care system leaders heard about your experiences of services that you shared with us.

We also saw significant changes in our service with Simmy Akhtar leaving and Dave Ruston retiring. We welcomed Jamie Ward to the team. In all these changes we have continued to deliver effectively for the people of Stoke-on-Trent.

Simon Fogell, Chief Executive Officer, Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent



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The contract to provide the Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent service is held by Engaging Communities Solutions C.I.C.

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