

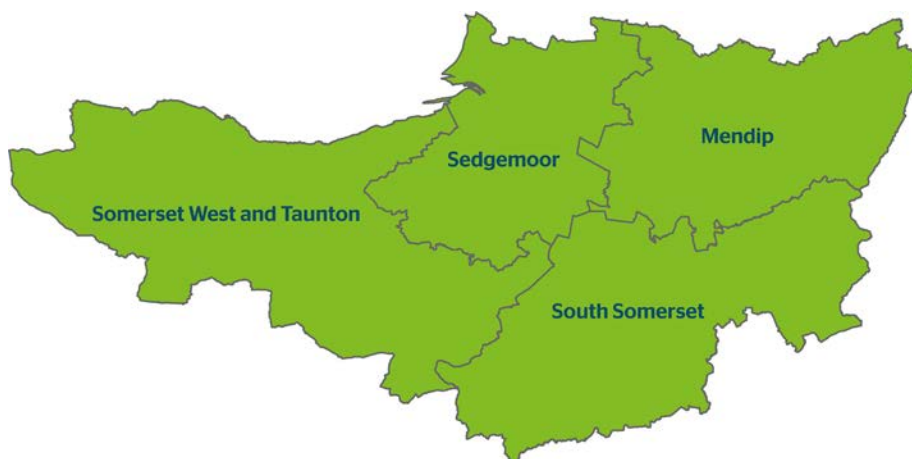


Annual Report 2020-21

On equal terms
Then and now

Contents

Message from our Chair	3
About us	4
Highlights from our year	5
Then and now:	
Access to primary care	6
NHS 111 service	8
Community care services	10
Responding to COVID-19	12
Volunteers	17
Finances	19
Statutory statements	20
Next steps	22
Thank you	23



Healthwatch Somerset is your health and social care champion. As an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure that NHS leaders and other health and social care decision makers listen to your feedback and use it to improve standards of care.

Message from our Chair

A remarkably productive year

This year, remarkably, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, we managed to deliver a full and impactful work programme. We adapted our plans so that we could continue to understand people's health and social care needs during this exceptionally challenging time, and we used their feedback to help services respond and improve.

New ways of working

Historically, we have engaged face-to-face with members of the public, but this year we had to rely on digital communications and technology. Thanks to our wonderful volunteers who have risen to the challenge and learned new skills in the process, and to our staff who have supported them and provided the professional expertise to enable this to happen.

Looking ahead

We have another full work programme planned for the coming year. Some of the areas we will investigate have arisen from the public's concerns, such as access to GP and dental appointments, and long waiting times for routine surgery. We are very conscious of the pain and impact on quality of life this increased wait has caused for some patients.

Thanks to our health and care workers

Finally, I'd like to applaud the dedication of Somerset's NHS and social care staff. They have worked tirelessly over the pandemic, caring for patients, communicating with relatives, and embracing the vaccination programme. We have had many comments from the public about how efficient and well run the clinics have been and the courtesy and time staff have given to their concerns. It is fair to say that staff have gone beyond the call of duty and this demonstrates that, despite some difficulties, we are lucky to have a quality NHS service in Somerset.



Judith Goodchild
Chair, Healthwatch Somerset Board



"Despite the tremendous challenges of the last year, Healthwatch Somerset has completed some really good work including gathering vital feedback from the public on how the pandemic has affected people's experiences of care locally. The service has steadfastly continued to provide information, advice, and signposting to the public via the telephone and social media and has been ably assisted by its dedicated team of local volunteers."

Rachael Pringle, Contract & Quality Assurance Officer, Somerset Council

About us

Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Somerset. 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 that their views make.



3 Ensuring your views help improve health and care

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



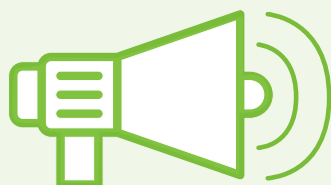
"Local Healthwatch have done fantastic work throughout the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is more work ahead to ensure that everyone's views are heard. COVID-19 has highlighted inequalities and to tackle these unfair health differences we will need those in power to listen, to hear the 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.

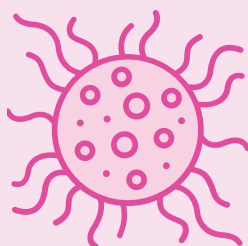
Reaching out



This year we heard from
1,689 people
about their experiences of health and social care.

We provided advice and information to
698 people

Responding to the pandemic



In total, we engaged with and supported
2,387 people this year;
1,030 of these were COVID-19 related comments and enquiries.

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
25 recommendations for improvement.

Health and care that works for you

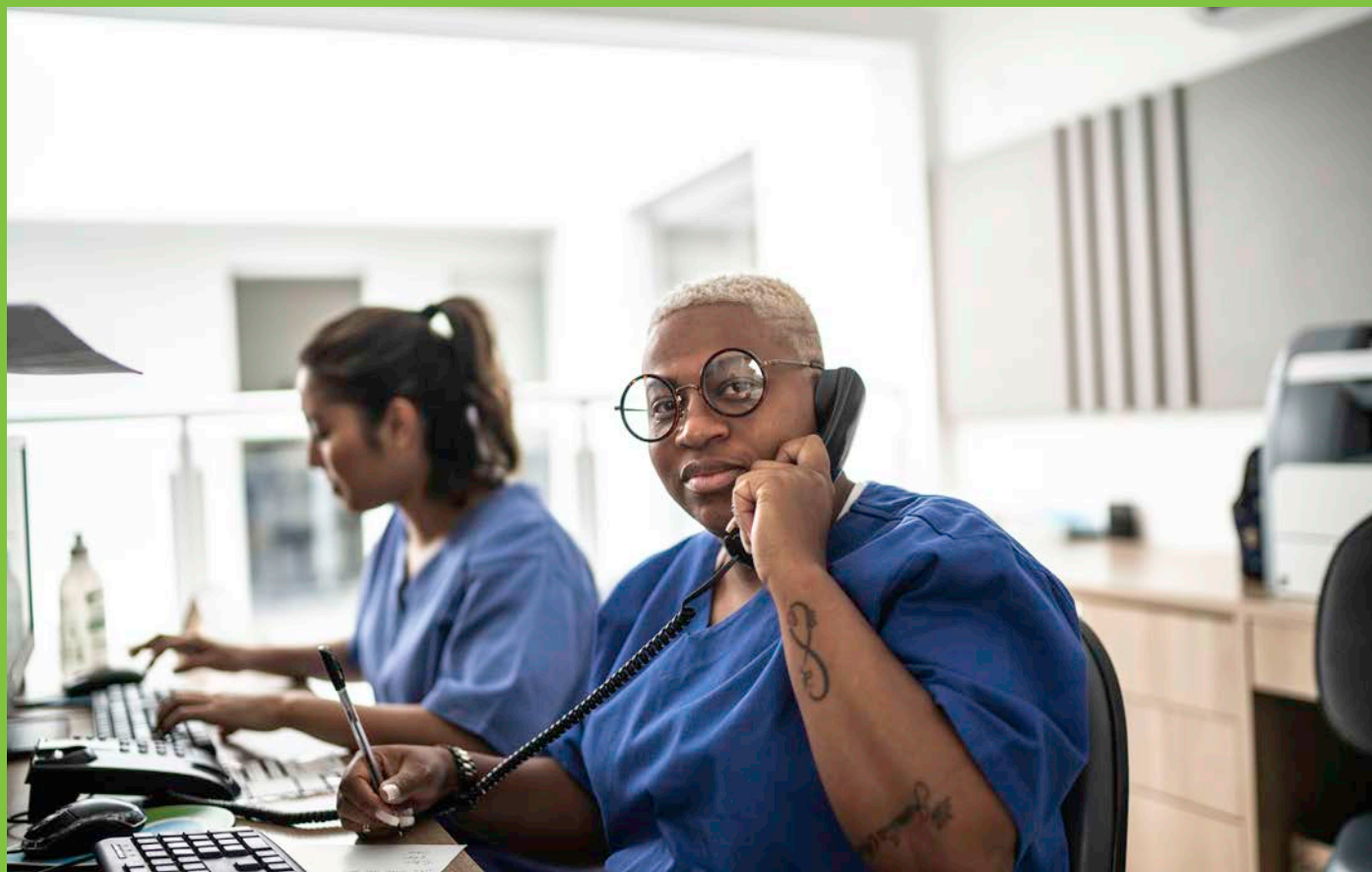


39 volunteers helped us to carry out our work.

In total, they contributed
31 days (250 hours)

We employ
5 staff, 60% of whom are full-time equivalent.

We received
£190,000 in funding from our local authority in 2020-21.



Then and now: Access to primary care



Then: Seeing a GP

Accessing primary care services has been our most common area of public feedback for some time. During 2018 to 2020, we recorded a lot of feedback about booking GP appointments.

In 2019, the *NHS National GP survey* and our report, *NHS Long Term Plan: the views of Somerset residents*, showed that a significant number of patients had negative experiences when accessing GP appointments. Feedback has also highlighted concerns about a lack of continuity of care and the importance of seeing the same GP, particularly for people with a long-term condition.

Read our report:

NHS Long Term Plan: the views of Somerset residents (July 2019).

Visit our website to read the full report: healthwatchsomerset.co.uk/reports-publications



Now: Improving access to GP care

We wanted to understand more about how people were accessing primary care through GP surgeries. We started this work in March 2020 and gathered feedback from 355 people via a digital survey.

Booking GP appointments

The most common improvement suggested was for more appointments to be made available. Most people said the booking process worked well, with 70% booking by phone, followed by in person. A significant number of people were not satisfied with the length of time surgery staff took to answer the phone, and some were not comfortable being triaged by reception staff.



"Was told to ring 8.30am to make an appointment; tried for four days, when eventually got through was told no appointments. Tried to ring again next day, and still not seen anyone."

Continuity of care

Some people like to see the same GP at each visit, valuing a more personal relationship, particularly those with mental health issues. Many who were satisfied with their continuity of care had been seen by the same person.



"I manage to see the same doctor who remembers what treatment/tests and why. We are able to have meaningful conversations as a result of this understanding."

Access to care during COVID-19

We gained further insight through our investigation into people's experiences of accessing health and care during the pandemic. The overwhelming message was that GP surgeries should use a variety of methods to ensure equal access for everyone (see p.15).



How have we made a difference?

We shared our findings with Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group and local Primary Care Networks, to inform their decisions on how to improve access to services for everyone, throughout the pandemic and in the future. This includes, for example, by offering a range of consultation methods to help reduce access barriers and health inequalities.



"Patients and clinicians have been reluctant to change how they access/deliver primary care for many years, but this crisis has forced a transformation in delivery of services... We need to use this (report) as a way of highlighting what a lot of work needs to be done to support patients in changing how they access primary care that doesn't leave our most vulnerable patients with reduced access." Ed Ford, Chair, Somerset CCG

Read our reports:

Access to primary care, GP surgeries in Somerset: What local people told us (December 2020).

Accessing health and social care during COVID-19: A Somerset perspective, (November 2020).

Visit our website to read the full reports: healthwatchsomerset.co.uk/reports-publications



Then and now: NHS 111 service



Then: Understanding people's needs

People regularly tell us about their experiences of using the NHS 111 and out-of-hours service. In 2017, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) rated the Somerset service, provided by Vocare Ltd, as 'requiring improvement' because it was not responsive to people's needs.

In summer 2018, we gathered feedback about the service from 662 people. They wanted to see quicker call-backs, less questions that are more relevant, immediate medical advice rather than a transfer or call-back, and more staff at busy times.

Our findings informed Somerset CCG's plans and supported the new provider, Devon Doctors Ltd, when the contract was transferred in February 2019.



Now: Highlighting inconsistencies in quality

In July 2020, the CQC found that Somerset and Devon's NHS 111 service 'required improvement'. They asked us to work with Healthwatch Devon, Plymouth & Torbay to help them understand people's recent experiences of the service.

In autumn 2020, we gathered feedback from 186 people via an online survey. Although many people rated their experience highly (40.86%), and most people said that their call was answered in a timely manner (75.81%), we found inconsistencies in the quality of the service.

23.66% (44) of people waited longer than three hours for a call-back, 20.43% (38) never received a call-back, and 7.59% (12) said they had to call 999 or visit A&E due to an inadequate response. Better training for call operators was the most common suggestion for improvement.



"I was told one hour for the initial call back and waited four. I then waited over another eight hours for the GP to visit."



"The NHS 111 service needs to be run by people who are more flexible and with actual medical knowledge."

How have we made a difference?

We enhanced the inspection process by making sure that public feedback is at the heart of ongoing service evaluation and improvement. Our findings echoed the CQC's December 2020 inspection, and in March 2021 the Devon Doctors service was placed in 'special measures'. We will continue to collaborate with our partners to drive improvements.



"The organisation is currently delivering a programme of service transformation to ensure that the quality of the service provided, including patient experience, enables us to deliver the best possible clinical care to patients... The feedback from this report has helped shape elements of this plan to ensure that improvements are made." Martin Cordy, Interim Director of Contract Assurance, Devon Doctors Ltd

Read our report:

NHS 111 out-of-hours service: Public feedback from Somerset, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay (January 2021). Visit our website to read the full report: healthwatchsomerset.co.uk/reports-publications



Share your views with us

Tell us about a recent health or social care experience, or share your views about local services to help make care better. Get in touch. Healthwatch Somerset is here for you.

- healthwatchsomerset.co.uk
- 01278 264 405 or 0800 999 1286 (freephone)
- info@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk



Then and now: Community care services



Then: Care homes

In January 2020, we conducted Enter and View visits to three care homes that we had identified with the CQC and Somerset County Council.

We reported on good practice and made 15 recommendations for improvement around quality of service and environment. We gained further insight into people's experiences of care homes during COVID-19 (see p.16).

How have we made a difference?

We made sure the views of residents and families were used to monitor and improve the quality of care homes.



"I'm very happy with the report... A wide variety of opinions were sought, and the residents, relatives and staff I spoke to after the inspection found the day interesting and pleasant, and all felt their views had been listened to." **Andy Kirby, General Manager at Oak Lodge**

Read our Enter and View reports: Visit our website: healthwatchsomerset.co.uk/reports-publications



Now: District Nursing Service

As our older population grows, there is a greater demand on community services and the 'out of hospital' model of care. We regularly receive feedback about community care services and this is a key development area for Somerset's NHS and social care commissioners.

We wanted to make sure that patient and carer feedback is used to influence how the District Nursing Service (DNS) is developed to meet the growing demand for quality care at home. From February 2020 to April 2021, we worked with Somerset's district nursing teams to gather feedback from 175 patients, carers and family members.

We found that the DNS is highly valued, with 93.6% of people rating it as 'very good'. Most people would welcome weekend and evening visits, but many were cautious about the introduction of digital consultations, with 67 people indicating that they would be subject to digital exclusion. People were also keen to see appointment time slots and improvements to continuity of care.



"The service is brilliant. They give me the confidence to carry on caring for my husband. I couldn't manage without them."



"It would be good if they extended their hours, it might be less stress on the nurses trying to fit everything in."

How have we made a difference?

We regularly share feedback about community care services with Somerset County Council and the CCG to inform their Fit for My Future strategy, which includes developing more joined up health and care services in the community. We will work with service commissioners and the DNS to make sure that patient and carer feedback is used to inform service development.



"Somerset NHS Foundation Trust is about to commence a transformation process for the District Nursing Service in Somerset and our patients' voice is at the centre of this work. This report... will be invaluable... and it will positively influence our future service."
Gillian Cook RD, Neighbourhood Service Lead, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust

Read our report:

The District Nursing Service: People's experiences of using the service in Somerset (June 2021).

Visit our website to read the full report: healthwatchsomerset.co.uk/reports-publications



Responding to COVID-19

Healthwatch Somerset 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 1,030 people by:

- Providing up-to-date advice on the COVID-19 response locally
- Linking people to reliable up-to-date information
- Helping people to access the services they need
- Supporting the community volunteer response
- Supporting the vaccine roll-out
- Gathering people's feedback and using it to help services support people during the pandemic

Top four areas that people have contacted us about:



63% on GP services



30% on dentistry



4% on COVID-19



3% on mental health

Surgery delayed due to COVID-19

John is in his seventies and his mobility is severely limited because he is waiting for a knee replacement and cataract surgery on both eyes. His first knee operation was scheduled for August 2020 but was postponed until October due to COVID-19. In January 2021 he was still waiting for a second knee replacement and an appointment with a consultant about his cataracts. John cannot get back to normal life until he has surgery, but he understands the delays are due to the pandemic.



Moving to a dementia care home in lockdown

Bernard is in his late eighties and he has lived in a care home for several years due to his advancing dementia. In February 2020, while he was in hospital after a fall, his care home decided it could no longer manage his dementia. In March, as the country went into lockdown, Bernard's family had to find a specialist dementia care home. Only one family member could visit the new home to decide if it was suitable and then to help Bernard settle. Care home staff kept in regular contact with the family through weekly emails and with video messages when Bernard celebrated his 90th birthday.



"The home has been amazing; they have sent us pictures and Bernard looks very settled. We had to make a rushed decision about this home, but I believe it was the right one. We were trusting them with our loved one." Bernard's daughter in law

Support at home after leaving hospital

Julie is disabled and has lung and heart problems. Just before lockdown she spent a week in hospital with a UTI and E. coli, and she was unable to see visitors. Sadly, during this time Julie's husband died. Before leaving hospital she completed the discharge questionnaire stating that she had lost her husband and there was nobody at home. She was told an Occupational Therapist would visit her at home to put support in place, but this did not happen.

After an extremely stressful couple of weeks with no support, Julie called her GP who was very helpful. She was put in touch with her local Village Agents and they helped her to get grants, arranged for a paid care agency to help with daily care, and organised a weekly check-in phone call from a Healthwatch Somerset volunteer.






"Healthwatch Somerset is an integral part of our external stakeholder engagement. The independent, timely and up-to-date insight they provide is invaluable in ensuring we remain laser focused on the issues affecting local communities, by ensuring patients, their families and carers have a voice. The collaborative approach and leadership provided by Healthwatch Somerset has undoubtedly contributed towards improved quality care across the county and I look forward to our continued working relationship."

Ian Fraser-Roe, Inspector, Care Quality Commission - Primary Medical Services and Integrated Care Directorate, Southwest Team



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. Healthwatch Somerset is here for you.

-  healthwatchesomerset.co.uk
-  01278 264 405 or 0800 999 1286 (freephone)
-  info@healthwatchesomerset.co.uk

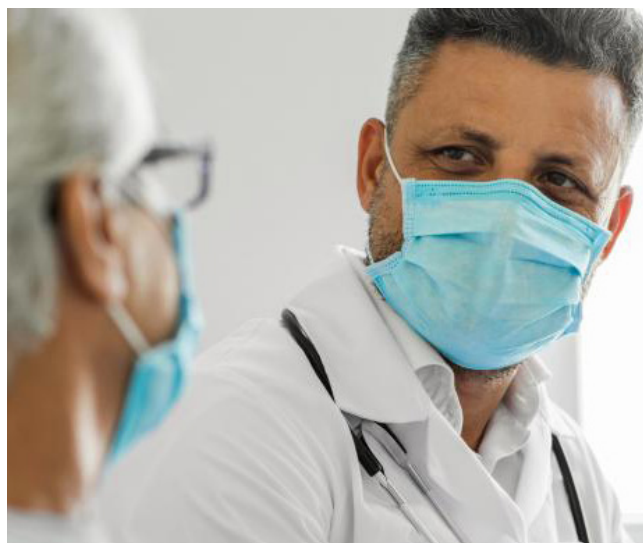
Using feedback to inform response and recovery

The pandemic required health and social care services to adapt at speed to care for people with the virus, while trying to reduce infections and maintain care for sick and vulnerable people. Changes were made quickly to how services were delivered to local people.


Accessing care during COVID-19

Between April and September 2020, we investigated how the pandemic was affecting people's experiences of health and care locally. 271 people responded to our online survey, in addition to feedback gathered through enquiries and information requests.

Most feedback was about GPs, followed by pharmacies, hospitals, dentists, and mental health services. Key themes included support for the NHS, praise and concern around changes to services, the benefits and barriers of online consultations and digital communications, and the value of voluntary and community groups.




 "They are continuing to look after me. I've had a telephone consultation with my consultant, email advice from my specialist nurse, prescriptions from my pharmacy, injections at home."

 "It's been very difficult for me to see about a repeat prescription. I tried ringing but they won't do it over the phone. They said go online but that never worked."

How have we made a difference?

We identified where changes to services worked well and where improvements could be made, helping Somerset's health and care providers adapt and respond to meet people's needs. Our findings have also been shared with Healthwatch England to inform change at a national level.

 "The report provides us with insightful information. We will pull together the key themes from all the feedback... and take these into consideration in our service planning for the future, both in the short term over the winter months and in the longer term."
Maria Heard, Incident Director COVID-19 and Programme Director, Fit for My Future, Somerset CCG

Read our report

Accessing health and social care during COVID-19: A Somerset perspective (November 2020). Visit our website to read the full report: healthwatchsomerset.co.uk/reports-publications



Working in a care home during COVID-19

We wanted to understand more about the challenges faced by care home staff and residents during the pandemic. In August 2020, we conducted a focused feedback interview with a local care home.

Staff shared their experiences about a wide range of issues including their anxiety, how residents were affected by changes to visiting arrangements and PPE, the importance of COVID-19 testing for patients returning from hospital, and the value of support received from local NHS, social care services, and the community.



"Someone came from hospital with Covid; within 12 hrs she developed symptoms. Public Health advised us to lockdown the unit so it didn't spread anywhere else in the home."



"The care home support team and the continuing health care team have been in touch... we've had weekly calls."



"PPE mask wearing has been dramatic for some, so we've done a lot of work to familiarise and make them feel safe. Some people have sensed the loss of their spouse not visiting."

How have we made a difference?

During this exceptionally challenging time we gave care home staff the opportunity to speak about their experiences and the impact on their residents, confident in the knowledge that we would share their views with those responsible for improving social care policy and delivery.

Read our report

Care homes during Covid: care staff perspective (September 2020). Visit our website to read the full report: healthwatchsomerset.co.uk/reports-publications



Richard, Healthwatch Somerset volunteer

Volunteers

At Healthwatch Somerset we are supported by 39 volunteers. They help us find out what people think is working well, and what improvements people would like to make to local health and care services.

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home, by carrying out phone surveys and through online forums.
- Reviewed and improved public information produced by local services.
- Represented the voice of local people at meetings with health and care organisations.
- Supported the review of a new nursing training programme across the county.
- Helped with local volunteering efforts, supporting those who were self-isolating or shielding, and assisting at vaccination sites.
- Helped promote our work through their local networks.
- Gained new knowledge and skills to support our work.



Pamela

Feedback interviews over the phone

"I was able to speak with 12 people about their experience of receiving assistance from the District Nursing Service. Every one of them spoke with great admiration of the service. One lady was 90 years old, and the nurses are the only people she sees." **June**

Improving public information about local services

"As a member of the Readers Panel I comment on documents being prepared by health and social care agencies to inform and support patients and service users. The purpose of seeking input from lay people like myself is to ensure that the information is easy to read and understand. It is always interesting and very rewarding as I may have helped someone to better understand a health issue." **Pamela**



Wendy

"I was so pleased to be on the Readers Panel, especially during lockdown. I am slowly growing more confident thanks to the opportunity and the support. It often feels like there is an abundance of information in a variety of formats about our health and wellbeing journey, so to read through draft copy of a leaflet and provide honest feedback as a member of the public feels very positive." **Wendy**



Anne

Supporting the vaccination programme

"After a very strange year, it was great to be able to get out and back to volunteering. The first group of people to get vaccinated were mainly the older generation, many of whom needed reassurance and gentle support. The majority of people were very appreciative of us giving up our time. I feel proud that I was able to be involved in a mass public vaccination programme, that hopefully, will enable us to resume a more normal, though probably different, life." **Anne**

Young Listeners

Between January and March 2021, we recruited 9 young volunteers aged 12-18, to lead and deliver our new Young Listeners project. They will engage with other young people from across Somerset, listening to their health and social care experiences and gathering their ideas on how services could work better for young people. Read more about the project on our website: healthwatchsomerset.co.uk/project/young-listeners



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 with Healthwatch Somerset.

- 🌐 healthwatchsomerset.co.uk
- ☎ 01278 264 405 or 0800 999 1286 (freephone)
- ✉ info@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk

Finances

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

Income

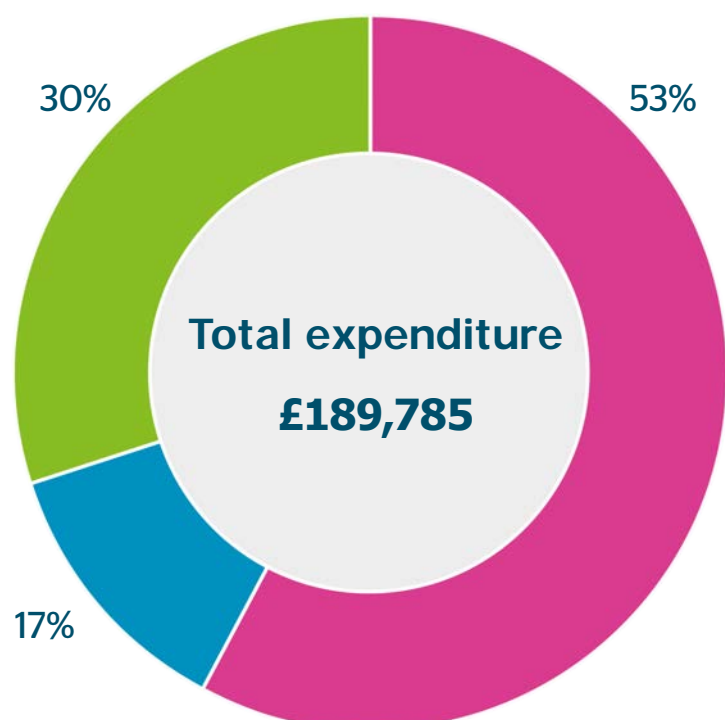
■ Funding received from local authority £190,000



Expenditure

■ Staff costs £99,999
■ Operational costs £32,786
■ Support and administration £57,000*

* Central support services include research and insight, HR, finance and communications.



Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Somerset, Woodlands House, Woodlands Business Park, Bristol Road, Bridgwater, TA6 4FJ.

Healthwatch Somerset is run by Evolving Communities CIC, a community interest company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 08464602. The registered office is at: Unit 2, Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH

Healthwatch Somerset 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 Somerset Board consists of five 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 six times and made decisions on matters such as key projects to be undertaken by the Healthwatch Somerset team, as well as monitoring the quality of services provided across Somerset through representation at strategic meetings, for example, Fit for My Future Programme Boards and Trust and Governing Board meetings.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. We use insight gathered from information and signposting enquiries across the year to identify key areas of focus for future projects and to inform our response to emerging issues. We also work closely with partner organisations and stakeholders to understand their priorities and areas of focus to ensure public feedback informs service development and improvements.

Methods and systems used across the year 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 and email, provided a feedback form and online surveys on our website, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided virtual activities and engaged with the public on social media.

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 done this by, for example, joining partner organisations outreach activities with transient communities in Somerset and with local foodbanks.

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 and announce this via press, social media and our monthly news bulletin. We will also provide hard copies for use in local GP practices and at our public engagement activities. We will also present the findings at the Somerset Health & Wellbeing Board later in the year.



2020-21 priorities

Project/activity area	Changes made to services
Improving access to primary care services (see p.7)	The impact of the pandemic resulted in changes to how primary care services are delivered, with remote and digital methods prioritised. We shared our report with the CCG and local Primary Care Networks. We recommended that GPs continue to use a range of consultation methods to improve access for everyone and ensure access is not reduced for the most vulnerable patients.
Review of the NHS 111 and out-of-hours service (see p.9)	Our findings fed into a CQC follow up inspection, which resulted in the provider being placed in special measures to ensure ongoing service change and development to improve patient safety.
The impact of COVID-19 on people's access to health and care services in Somerset (see pp.15-16)	We identified where changes to services worked well and where improvements could be made to help providers respond effectively to meet people's needs, in the short term and for future planning and development.
Information, advice and signposting to support local people during the pandemic (see pp.12-14)	Through regular communication and data sharing with our health and care partners we supported people with a wide range of enquiries and care needs during a period of accelerated change and uncertainty.

Responses to recommendations and requests

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 Healthwatch Somerset to the Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations. We regularly share our anonymised data, reports and recommendations with Healthwatch England so that these can be fed into the national picture.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Somerset is represented on the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board by the Healthwatch Somerset Manager and Chair. During 2020-21 our representatives have effectively carried out this role by attending and contributing to both Executive and Public Board Meetings to ensure the voice of people in Somerset is represented, and by reporting to the board on our annual programme of work and seeking the board's input into our work planning to ensure this aligns with local priorities.

Next steps

We will continue gathering feedback from the public to make sure that local people's views and experiences are used to drive and support improvements in Somerset's health and care services. We will also help people navigate health and care services through our information and signposting service.

As we move out of the pandemic and restrictions lift, we are looking forward to restarting our face-to-face and public engagement activities, particularly as Enter and View visits will feature heavily within one of our priority work areas this year.

Top priorities for 2021-22

Access to Primary Care

Building on our previous work, we will continue to gather public feedback to drive improvements in access to primary care, by influencing the recovery of services post COVID-19 and the ongoing expansion of the Primary Care Networks in Somerset. We will focus on the impact of digitalisation of services and the barriers and inequalities this can create, as well as the benefits. We will also investigate access to NHS dentistry which became a major area of concern during the pandemic.

Children and young people's health and social care services

We will ask young people about their experiences of Somerset's health and social care services and gather their ideas on how services could work better for them. The project is being designed and delivered by a group of volunteer 'Young Listeners' with our support and training.

Hospital discharge through 'Pathway 3 Beds'

We want to look at the experiences of patients who are discharged from hospital care into care homes and care at home due to their continuing needs. We hope to carry out Enter and View visits once it is safe to do so, to help us evaluate the effectiveness of the supported discharge process (Pathway 3). This might include, for example, access to transport services, rehabilitation and wellbeing services, and community support.

Referral to treatment waiting times

Waiting lists for treatment have been hugely impacted by COVID-19. We will build on our recent exploratory work to look in greater depth at the impact on people's lives of long waits for treatment.



"We will need to work closely with our health and social care partners as we move out of the pandemic, so that we can ensure the excellent work that they have achieved this year, in tackling the virus and continuing to provide good quality care, continues and is recognised and enhanced by what patients and the public tell us at Healthwatch Somerset."

Judith Goodchild, Chair, Healthwatch Somerset Board

Thank you

Thank you to everyone helping us put people at the heart of health and social care in Somerset, including:

- Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- Our amazing staff and volunteers
- The voluntary organisations who have supported and contributed to our work
- Our partners including:
 - ◇ Somerset NHS Clinical Commissioning Group
 - ◇ Somerset County Council
 - ◇ Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board
 - ◇ Somerset NHS Foundation Trust
 - ◇ Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
 - ◇ South Western Ambulance Service



healthwatch

Somerset

local health and care shaped by you

☎ 01278 264 405 or 0800 999 1286 (freephone)

✉ info@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk

🌐 healthwatchsomerset.co.uk

Healthwatch Somerset
Woodlands House
Woodlands Business Park
Bristol Road
Bridgwater
TA6 4FJ

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

Find us on social media:

📘 [healthwatchsomerset](#)

🐦 [@HWatchSomerset](#)

📷 [healthwatchsomerset](#)

🌐 [healthwatch-somerset](#)