



Healthwatch Norfolk

Annual Report 2020-21

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Message from our Chair

As my term of office as Chair comes to an end I want to look back and also think about some of the challenges for the future.



Healthwatch Norfolk is the only statutory voice representing the public across the county and covering the whole of Health and Social Care. Please be reassured that your key messages get to both local and National leaders. We remain independent and are both critical and supportive as appropriate.

Our core funding has been used wisely; since the budget was reduced a few years ago we have successfully won a number of contracts which fit the aims and values of Healthwatch. This reflects the reputation and relationship of the organisation and our ability to deliver. I expect this impressive progress to continue in next year and beyond.

Alex Stewart, our CEO, and all the managers and staff are to be congratulated. The skill base is exceptional and I remain upbeat about the future having such an excellent team.

Fellow Trustees all make an excellent contribution reflecting vast experience from across Health and Social Care. We harness their expertise to further our core mission. Our volunteers' contribution is invaluable; it is amazing the range of skills present in the community and we must continue to harness those.

We welcome the concept of Integrated Care. The Public do not recognise

organisational boundaries BUT they must remain at the centre of care planning and provision. Partnership and Collaboration gives us the opportunity to transform the way services are provided. We are just starting the journey and much needs to be accomplished. We don't have a National plan for Social Care - long overdue despite numerous promises. I would urge those in positions of responsibility to embrace public engagement to achieve better solutions and public support.

I remain concerned that the "system" is underfunded to meet the demands of our population for both physical and mental health services together with Social Care. Vacancy levels across Norfolk are also a cause for concern in terms of maintaining and growing services.

Health and Social Care in the UK remain amongst the finest humanitarian organisations in the world. This is evidenced by the fantastic efforts to achieve the COVID-19 vaccination programme together with an amazing Public Health effort here in Norfolk.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to have been involved and I wish Healthwatch every success in the future.

David Edwards OBE
Chair, Healthwatch Norfolk

Message from our CEO

Despite the pandemic, Healthwatch Norfolk has continued its work in an innovative way. All of the evidence and stories that we gather are used to feed back the patient and carer view to those who are responsible for commissioning and providing our services.



Firstly, I would like to pay tribute to our outgoing Chair who has worked tirelessly over the last three years to ensure that Healthwatch Norfolk's voice is heard. He, along with Trustees, volunteers and staff have provided constant support to ensure that, despite the pandemic, we are still managing to make contact with the public.

I also want to congratulate and give a heartfelt thank you to all of our Health and Social Care colleagues who have gone "beyond the pale" to both care for those who have sadly died as a result of COVID-19 and for those that have recovered. Our Public Health Team has managed one of the most successful Track and Trace Test Teams in the country and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has been instrumental in delivering an outstanding vaccination rollout.

Despite the pandemic, Healthwatch Norfolk has continued its work in an innovative way. Technology has been embraced enabling us to engage with the public. We have managed to work with many marginalised members of our community ranging from sex workers to refugees; helped people trying to access services and have been commissioned to identify how best to help people who find

themselves digitally excluded. All of the evidence and stories that we gather are used to feed back the patient and carer view to those who are responsible for commissioning and providing our services.

We have been Highly Commended for our work by Healthwatch England and have also been awarded Best Independent Champion for Users of Health & Social Care 2020 - a Global Pharma Award.

We continue to be in regular contact with the public. We have undertaken a number of surveys and Teams and Zoom focus groups to understand peoples' fears, concerns and hopes, both as we went into the worst health crisis and, as the vaccination roll out continues.

As we return to normality, the Team are preparing to start meeting with the public face to face. We will be ensuring that the Integrated Care System keeps the public informed about any proposed changes moving forwards and we will be working with our acute and community trusts to ensure that your views and concerns continue to be represented and at the forefront of all their decisions.

Alex Stewart
CEO, Healthwatch Norfolk

About us

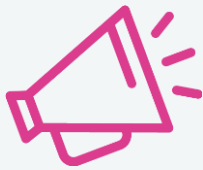
Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Norfolk. 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

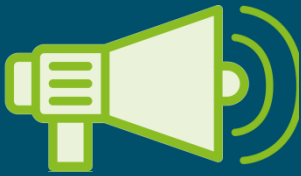
We want more services to use your views to shape the health and care support you need today and in the future.



“Healthwatch Norfolk is the only statutory voice representing the public across the county and covering the whole of Health and Social Care. Please be reassured that your key messages get to both local and National leaders. We remain independent and are both critical and supportive as appropriate.” - **David Edwards OBE, Chair, Healthwatch Norfolk.**

Highlights from our year

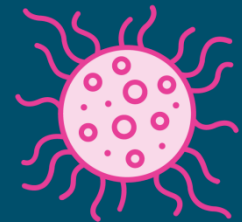
Find out about our resources and how we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.



We received **625 reviews** this year about experiences of health and social care in Norfolk.

We provided advice and information to **505 people** this year.

We provided advice and information on COVID-19 services to **50 people** this year and **7,853 people** visited the COVID-19 information page on our website.



We wrote more than **15 reports** about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services.

30 volunteers and **10 members of staff** helped us to carry out our work.

We received **£348,140** in funding from our local authority.



Our work this year

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the way we engaged this year. For most of the year our team have been working remotely from home and face-to-face engagement has not been allowed.

However, the team have all adjusted to working this way and found ways make sure the patient voice is still heard. They have been attending Zoom sessions with carers and patient participation groups. In the summer when the restrictions were lifted slightly we had stalls at Aylsham and Fakenham markets so we could meet the public in a safe environment.



The effects of COVID-19 on people and the health service have been huge, we have done two surveys on this during lockdowns to report the effects that the pandemic has had.

Care homes have also been dramatically affected by the pandemic. Norfolk County Council commissioned us to find out what the impact has been. Residents of care homes across Norfolk, their families and

friends, and care home staff spoke frankly about their experiences during the pandemic. Five care homes were lucky enough to win a visit from Miniature Donkeys for Wellbeing in a draw we held for taking part.

Other projects this year included two projects about hospital discharge, one was for Healthwatch England where we held five stakeholder interviews and the other was about District Direct. The District Direct service works with patients whose medical or practical needs could result in a delayed transfer of care or bed block, or who can be turned around at the Emergency Department, thereby preventing admission and potential readmission. This piece of work was commissioned by South Norfolk Council to review the effectiveness of the service and included a survey and interviews with patients and professional stakeholders.

The following pages of this report highlight some of the engagement and projects we have been involved in this year.



Our team at our socially distanced away day

Responding to COVID-19

Healthwatch Norfolk plays an important role in helping people to get the information and support they need, especially through the pandemic.

This year we helped 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 vaccine roll-out
- Supporting the community volunteer response

We recognised the importance of the correct guidance being shared and being made accessible to all during the pandemic. Therefore we created three 'COVID-19 Resource Packs' which included a range of useful information in one accessible document. The pack contained government guidance, advice from Healthwatch Norfolk and credible organisations, both nationally and locally, that could provide support to anyone that needed help. We also hosted the information on our website and have continued to update this section of [our website](#).

July 2020: Information and support during lockdown

Between April and July 2020, we ran a survey to find out about Norfolk residents' experiences of accessing information and support during the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We had 607 responses; key findings included:

- Information could sometimes be conflicting or confusing and was not always available in accessible formats, such as British Sign Language or Braille.
- Some of those who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) said they had difficulty registering for support.
- Carers felt particularly isolated. As such, we produced a separate report looking into the experiences of the 133

carers who answered the survey.

- Experiences with appointments varied, but mental health and dentistry services were particularly hard to access.

Whilst the survey was live, we produced summary reports which were shared fortnightly via Norfolk's Resilience and Recovery Cell meetings. At these meetings, representatives from stakeholders such as Norfolk County Council, hospitals, the mental health trust and community health trust came together to plan responses to community issues relating to COVID-19. The feedback from our survey enabled patient views and experience to be considered in these plans.

All reports are available on [our website](#).

October 2020: Care home experiences

Those living and working in care homes have been notably affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Autumn 2020, we worked with Norfolk County Council to gather feedback from care home residents, their relatives, and staff.

We reached out to care homes across Norfolk, sending paper easy read surveys for residents and paper surveys for staff. There was also an online relatives' survey. In total, we heard from 152 people.

The three key themes of the project were the impact of COVID-19, messaging, and recovery. The final report can be found on [our website](#). We found out:

- Mental health of residents was significantly affected, especially because of restricted visits;
- Residents generally felt well-informed about changes in their home, however relatives often felt more out of the loop;
- On the whole, staff said they had enough information about COVID-19 guidance, but that it was often difficult relaying this to residents in a simple way.

As a result of the project, six recommendations were made to the council. These included improving communication methods with relatives and working with local mental health trusts to establish how best to support residents who had been affected by the COVID-19 restrictions.



Five care homes won a Mini Donkeys for Wellbeing visit for participating in our survey.

November 2020: Interviews with professionals

We wanted to hear the perspective of health and social care professionals on how COVID-19 has impacted their ability to support local residents. We interviewed eight professionals who work in a variety of health or social care settings, including within the community, in hospitals, and for the Wellbeing mental health service. The impact of COVID-19 on their work included:

- Introducing new and creative ways of working
- An increase in digital and remote services; they told us about the benefits of digital working but also how it had negatively impacted service users who were less digitally confident.
- How they had struggled with a lack of face-to-face interaction, human connection, and being able to network with other professionals effectively.

This report was shared with partners from NHS trusts, Norfolk County Council, and clinical commissioners, as well as being available on [our website](#).

November 2020: Experiences during November lockdown

Following the success of our first lockdown survey, during the November 2020 lockdown we carried out another survey to hear about Norfolk residents' experiences. We received feedback from 40 people about their experiences of support during the first and second lockdowns and their views on the communication and information about lockdown.

“Spoke to my GP on phone and she referred me to the hospital so I was on the list whilst in lockdown. Hospital phones me to ask preliminary questions to hopefully speed things up when lockdown ended” *Experience shared by a survey respondent.*

This report was shared with partners from NHS trusts, Norfolk County Council, and clinical commissioners, as well as being available on [our website](#). It will allow these health and social care providers and commissioners to plan future provisions based on service users' experiences.



April 2021 onwards: Experiences with digital services

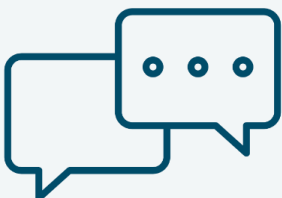
COVID-19 has impacted our lives greatly, particularly the way we access health and social care. Where patients cannot see a health professional face to face the system has worked to offer alternatives with patients attending appointments over the phone or by video consultation. Therefore, it's not surprising that digital technology and equitable access to healthcare have been at the centre a lot of our projects.

We are currently working with the CCG to collect feedback from patients with

cancer on how they have continued their treatment during the pandemic, particularly gathering their thoughts on video or telephone consultations.


Another project is exploring what assistive technologies for GP services are available for patients who are deaf or experience hearing loss.

We are also setting up a project collecting feedback on how patients have contacted their doctors using different web-based platforms. This project will continue over three years so it will be interesting to see how this changes over time and the impact COVID-19 will continue to have.



If you have used any health or social care services in Norfolk during the COVID-19 pandemic and would like to share your experience with us please visit our website or get in touch.

 www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/get-involved

 0808 168 9669

 enquiries@healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk

Mental health

Mental health continues to be a priority for Healthwatch Norfolk. Here are some of the projects we have been involved in this year to make sure your voices are heard.



August 2020: Mental health in Primary Care

In August 2020 we submitted our report ‘Experiences of Mental Health Support in Primary Care’ to the Norfolk & Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

The report presented results from our survey, which asked respondents a range of questions about: accessing initial mental health support via a GP; effectiveness of support arranged; information and advice; communication and continuity of care; and using digital systems.

A host of interesting themes were uncovered, including:

- An appetite for digital services.
- Inconsistency of GP attitudes towards mental health.
- A desire for services tailored at specific issues such as bereavement, addiction and LGBT+ issues.

Our report was received well by senior commissioners in mental health and crisis prevention. It added to the body of evidence used to make strategic decisions about the future services designed to support the mental wellbeing of patients who present at primary care services.

November 2020: Working with the CQC

Healthwatch Norfolk worked in collaboration with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to gather feedback about Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust (NSFT) services in the past year and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We received feedback from 41 respondents to our online survey. Comments included:

- Difficulty in accessing services and long waiting times for treatment.
- Mixed experiences with staff, with some patients telling us they were kind and helpful while others shared that they found some staff dismissive.
- Those who had received face-to-face care during the pandemic told us they felt the risks had been well managed.

“It’s been very very hard to have all treatment remotely but I understand why its necessary and the Trust have always done all they could.”

Experience shared by a survey respondent

The patient feedback in our report will be used by the CQC as part of ongoing monitoring of NSFT and helped identify areas of concern and of good practice.

March 2021: NSFT annual public engagement

Healthwatch Norfolk were commissioned to support Norfolk & Suffolk Foundation Trust (NSFT) in their annual public engagement.

The aim of this piece of work was to engage with the general public in order to understand their knowledge, perceptions, and ideas for mental health services in Norfolk.

We were responsible for engaging with harder to reach demographics including; people with learning disabilities, street sex workers, asylum seekers and refugees, along with several others, in order to support the Trust to hear from a more diverse range of public views.

This was a particularly challenging piece of work as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. In order to mitigate this as much as possible we offered a number of different ways to engage with people, including phone calls, a survey, and online focus groups.

Our engagement sessions had lively discussion and participants had lots of ideas to improve mental health provision. It was great to hear how passionate people are about mental health and hearing the views from such diverse groups.

From this we have produced a final report which will support NSFT to develop their service delivery over the coming year. The report can be found on [our website](#).



April 2021 onwards: Transformation of services

During the pandemic mental health has been talked about at great length; lockdown has encouraged some to be more open and honest about their wellbeing but has equally made others feel more isolated. Mental Health continues to be an active area of interest for Healthwatch Norfolk.

We have been awarded funds to work with the Mental Health Community

Transformation group on the transformation of services (Personality Disorders, Eating Disorders and Rehabilitation) over the next three years.

Healthwatch Norfolk's role will be to act as the independent link between the public and the change process, engaging with service users, collecting feedback and working as a critical friend to those making the changes. We have successfully recruited a new Research and Project Manager to lead on this important work.



LGBT+ evaluation



In March 2020, The Norfolk LGBT Project, run by Fiona Liew-Bedford delivered LGBT+ awareness training to Healthwatch Norfolk staff. The aim of the training was to help support local LGBT+ staff, service users, volunteers, friends and family and communicate a clear message of inclusivity and for individuals and organisations to better support LGBT+ people.

Around the same time, The Norfolk LGBT+ Project was awarded funding from the National Lottery to continue supporting LGBTQ+ people in Norfolk. As part of this funding, Healthwatch Norfolk were asked to carry out an evaluation exploring what the charity was good at as well as potential areas for improvement.

The information was gathered through surveys with service users, professionals and the staff and volunteers who worked there. We also held follow up interviews to explore peoples' opinions in more detail.

What people told us

People who have used the service, for themselves or for a family member felt that it was well run and that staff and volunteers were highly professional and could not be more helpful. People felt that they were made to feel welcome and did not feel judged. The Project provides a safe space for many where people feel able to be themselves. One of the key

themes that came out of the project was how the support positively impacted people's wellbeing. People told us that they often went to the Norfolk LGBT+ Project because they were struggling with their mental health.

The staff and volunteers were uncertain about the future sustainability of the Project. Whilst people agreed that the need for the Project would continue, people felt that LGBT+ services were undervalued and often overlooked.

The staff and volunteers felt that the Project was really good at reaching out to people and providing support. Using volunteers who have lived experience is a particular strength of the Project. Many of the volunteers had previously used the Project and were keen to "put something back".

The report, written by Healthwatch Norfolk will be published shortly. The charity is working with its Board members and staff to respond to recommendations made by us. We will be following up with Fi and her team later in the year to see how she got on.



Access to dentistry

In the last year 54% of people who contacted us for information and advice asked about accessing emergency or routine dentistry services.

Many told us they had tried to contact multiple dentists; several telling us they had contacted over 20 different dentists or dentists up to 40 miles from their home. Others told us how they had tried to find an NHS dentist for over a year with no success.



54% of people who contacted us this year for information and advice asked about accessing dentistry services

Reasons for needing to access dentistry have included:

- Being in pain but not considered significant enough for emergency treatment
- Recently moving to the area
- Their current dental practice turning private or removing them for non-attendance
- A change in financial situation
- Having not visited a dentist in several years but now concerned they have pain.
- Accessing dentistry for children

Experiences shared with us:

“I live in North Walsham in North Norfolk and have several issues with teeth including my front tooth which is a false tooth connected to the peg which came out last April 2020 and is getting very painful around the area also because I’m not registered I can’t get any appointments with an NHS dentist around the area I’m on universal credit since being out of work since covid I’m self employed taxi driver”

“I have called 80+ surgeries across Norfolk - no luck getting registered and they have said that they aren’t offering emergency treatment either. Have tried Siskin Centre who said they aren’t taking any referrals as have 6000 people on the waiting list; tried 111 who said there were no appointments and to go to A&E if bleeding heavily”

“I am now in the position of needing a root canal treatment after my filling fell out and unable to access NHS care. My husband also needs a filling and can’t get one. My 6 year old daughter has never seen a dentist because we can’t get one and my 7 year old son has seen one once in his life.”

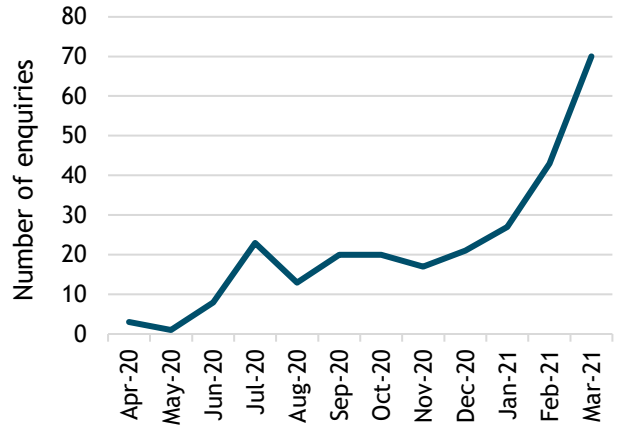


October 2020: Dentistry Report

In October 2020 we produced a report to highlight the concerns we were hearing around access to dentistry. We summarised signposting queries we had received regarding dental services in Norfolk since January 2020 and reviews of dental practices we had collected.

We also carried out investigations into dentists' websites and the availability of dental practices stating they were taking on new NHS patients.

From looking through the 90 dental practice websites, just over a third had not updated their information for more than 50 days. Of the 59 practices which had updated their information, only two practices were taking on new NHS patients and 37 dental practices were only taking on NHS patients by referral of a practitioner.



Number of dentistry enquiries we received this year.

Raising your concerns


Dentistry continues to be a priority for us, however it is a challenge. Healthwatch Norfolk staff have worked hard to keep up to date and informed about which local practices are accepting patients as well as the pathway to follow to help patients get the emergency care they need.

Through attending regular dental meetings and linking in with other Healthwatch from the region we have been able to share our problems ensuring that the patient voice is heard.



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 Norfolk is here for you.

 www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk

 0808 168 9669

 enquiries@healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk

Social media and website

The pandemic has changed a lot for everyone this year and the way we could engage changed overnight. Here's a quick snapshot of just how active and engaged you've all been with us online this year.



We have had **228,100** Tweet impressions, resulting in **1,603** engagements and **525** mentions from users. We have gained **117** new Twitter followers.

Our Facebook reach for the year totals **277,979**, resulting in **7,171** engaged Facebook users on our posts. We have gained **67** new Facebook likes.



In **August 2020** we made some updates to our website, check it out here: www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk

We have had **68,050** website sessions this year. This is nearly double the traffic to our website last year.

Of these website sessions, **11,221** were referred from other websites. **2,874** website sessions were people visiting our website from social media.

We are now just one click away on over **70** GP websites so it is even easier for you to share your experience with us. We have seen an increase of **8,490** website sessions via referrals from other websites this year. We have also seen a **450%** increase in website reviews a month since our link on GP websites was introduced in September 2020.



Press and media

Galvanising support for our work requires using as many channels as possible to publicise opportunities. This year we have, yet again, been consistently mentioned in the local media, making 38 appearances across print, digital, radio and television.

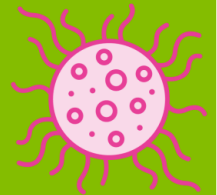
Outlets such as the Eastern Daily Press and BBC Radio Norfolk have supported us throughout the year, covering many of our projects including:

- Building safety and resilience in Norfolk's care homes during COVID-19
- Dental provision in Norfolk
- Public COVID-19 surveys (various)
- Patient and staff engagement at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital

However, it is not just our range of engagement work that has got us noticed in the press. Over the years we have steadily built a reputation for our knowledge of the local health and care system. As a result, we regularly provide comments for journalists seeking insight on a vast array of issues, especially when patient experience is concerned.

For example, in September 2020 ITV Anglia visited us to interview our CEO, Alex about public access to NHS dentists during the pandemic. Dentistry has been a topic widely covered by the media this year, who have used our insight to demonstrate the scale of demand in Norfolk. We have also provided comments for articles about hospital improvements, out-of-hours GP services, cancer and ambulance services.

Over the last 12 months we made a total of 22 media appearance in relation to COVID-19



Unsurprisingly though, most of our PR activity over the last 12 months has been dominated by COVID-19. We made a total of 22 appearances relating to COVID-19, demonstrating we are a valued and trusted voice in Norfolk.

In an increasingly digital world, we value our relationships with traditional media outlets in the county and will continue to use them as a key method of communication with the general public.



Our volunteers

Throughout this year, despite the challenges presented to us, our volunteers have continued to work hard to support the work of Healthwatch Norfolk.

We currently have 30 volunteers (including Trustees) who are active across Norfolk.

They have ensured that Healthwatch Norfolk is represented at a wide range of Health and Social Care meetings across the county, provided support and insight into our various projects, and reviewed content for local organisations.

Volunteers attend the following and more:

- STP Clinical & Care Group
- CCG Local Delivery Groups
- End of Life/Palliative Care Groups
- Norfolk Older People's Partnership
- NCH&C Equality & Diversity Group
- Patient Participation Group Forum
- Maternity Services Liaison Committees
- Non-emergency & out of hours working groups
- Cancer Programme Board
- Community Engagement Panels

Volunteers have been on hand to provide reviews of engagement materials for local Health and Social Care providers, including Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital, and East Coast Community Healthcare.



Healthwatch Norfolk Volunteer Jane shares her experience of being our volunteer:

“Being a volunteer, for me means that I am able to keep the patient and carers' voices heard, reminding meeting attendees and policy makers that they are caring for human beings who are all individuals. During the last year, with everything that has been going on, it has been fantastic to see the pilot for Compassionate Communities East has started. I recommend anyone that has experience of receiving health & or social care and a passion to provide an input that can improve care for all, to volunteer. Every *voice*, can make a difference.”



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

☎ 0808 168 9669

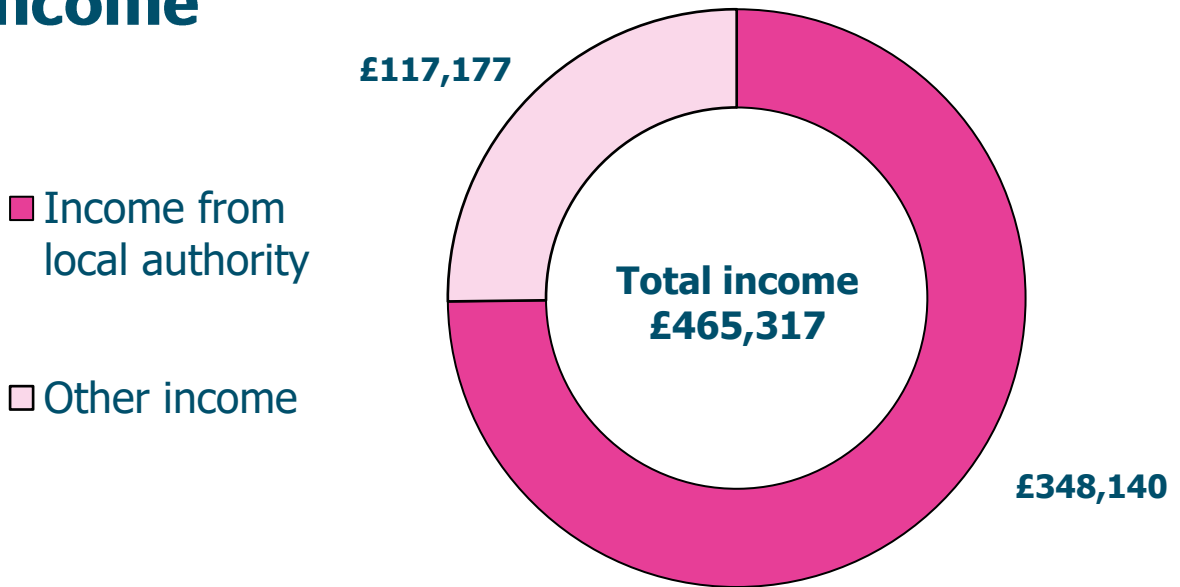
✉ enquiries@healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk

Our finances

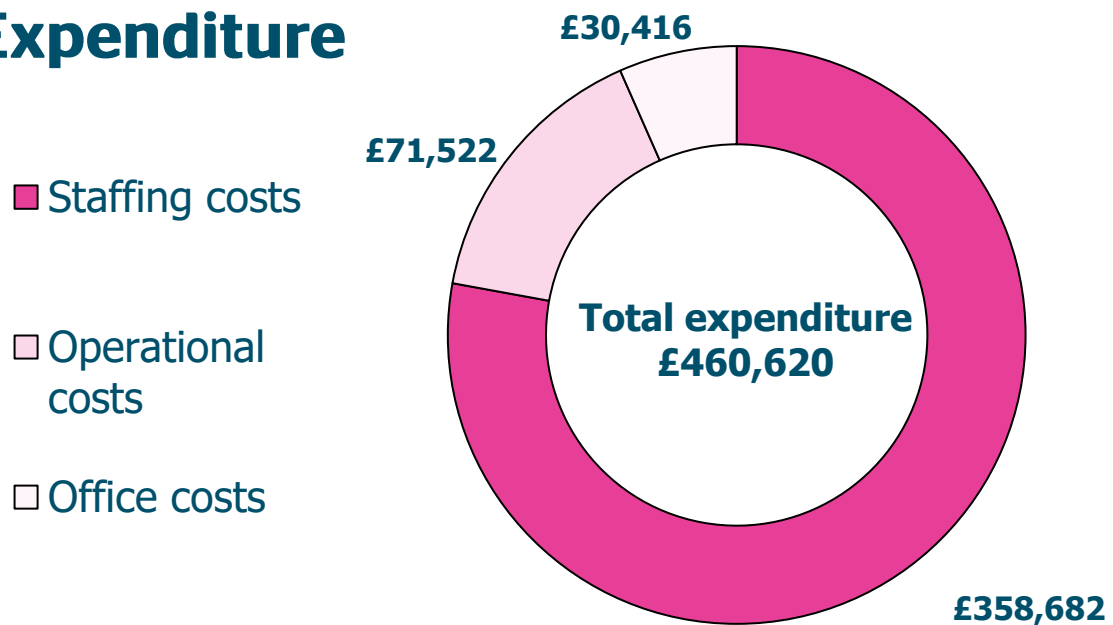
To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

We brought forward £399,777 from 2019/20.

Income



Expenditure



Next steps

In the year ahead, our main focus will be to restore our public engagement work. Following government guidance and careful risk planning we hope to see a lot more of you in person. We will also review the ways we have engaged with the public during the pandemic, both virtually and through more traditional ways such as the Healthwatch Norfolk post boxes and advertising in parish newsletters. A lot of things have worked really well and we will take what we've learnt into the next year.

We will continue to support local people, especially those that are typically underrepresented or find it difficult to be heard. Norfolk Safeguarding Adult Board (NSAB) asked Healthwatch Norfolk to work with local professionals to explore their understanding of domestic abuse in older people. We hope that the project will lead onto more work in this area. The report will be published in the Summer of 2021.

We've also been asked to evaluate the transformation work being undertaken in mental health services, focussing on personality disorders, eating disorders and rehabilitation. This is a really important piece of work, spanning 3 years and will involve lots of local people. The project is currently in the planning stages but will be underway later this year.

Looking ahead, a priority for next year will be to seek funding for specific projects working with local communities. We are keen to develop project ideas that include face to face engagement, particularly with those groups that have often felt isolated or excluded during the pandemic. A new Research and Project Manager, Rachael Green, has also joined Healthwatch Norfolk to support the growing number of projects that we're undertaking.

“The Team are preparing to start meeting with the public face to face. We will be working to ensure that the Integrated Care System keeps the public informed about any proposed changes moving forward and we will be working with our acute and community trusts to ensure that your views and concerns continue to be represented and at the forefront of all their decisions.” - Alex Stewart, CEO Healthwatch Norfolk



Healthwatch Norfolk at Fakenham market.

Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Norfolk
Suite 6 The Old Dairy
Elm Farm
Norwich Common
Wymondham
Norfolk
NR18 0SW

Healthwatch Norfolk uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

Registered company limited by guarantee:
8366440

Registered charity: 1153506

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 we will also be sharing it with Healthwatch England, NHS England, Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group, Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Norfolk County Council.

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

The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch Norfolk board consists of ten 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 five times and made decisions on matters such as provision of a COVID-19 Information Pack to be made available for all residents to download from our website. Additional resource was allocated to the provision of an Easy Read version of the pack as well as a printable version for those who were digitally excluded. It also led the way in undertaking three surveys across Norfolk and Waveney to gain an understanding of the issues facing residents in relation to accessing primary/secondary care as well as social care provision. Findings were shared with all stakeholders, local regional and national.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. For example, if our intelligence provides us with a range of information from the public about specific service provision concerns; we will undertake discrete areas of research to gauge wider public opinion. The findings, are in turn, shared with the relevant stakeholders. We regularly signpost residents to organisations or individuals who may be able to provide more detailed information in relation to specific queries. Examples of this have been the number of queries relating to dental provision across Norfolk which we now report to a fortnightly meeting that we have with NHS England/Improvement.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Norfolk is represented on the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Wellbeing Board by David Edwards - Chair and Alex Stewart - CEO. During 2020/21 our representative has effectively carried out this role by attending Health and Wellbeing Board Teams Meetings and providing regular reports in relation to residents' experiences of health and social care services during the pandemic.

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 feedback centre/rate and review system, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through 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 working with specific organisations who are more used to dealing with some minority issues. For example, we have worked with a local organisation who work with street workers to gain a greater understanding about what wellbeing services streetworkers would like to access. Similarly, we have worked closely with refugee and asylum organisations when liaising with 128 refugees awaiting decisions on their residential status which has been delayed as a result of COVID.

2020-21 priorities

Project / activity area	Project outcomes / changes to services
Dentistry in Norfolk	Healthwatch Norfolk are present at East of England dentistry meetings where a clear escalation process has been established.
The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kings Lynn observation	Recognition of good practice as well as areas for improvement, aligning with service improvement plan for the Trust.
Norfolk LGBT+ Project Evaluation	Independent evaluation demonstrating charity's value to service users, their families and professionals. The report will be used to help secure future funding for the continuation of the project.
Norfolk Care Homes during COVID-19	Recognition of good practice as well as areas for improvement in the event of another wave of COVID-19.
Discharge Processes in Norfolk hospitals (District Direct and Healthwatch England Discharge Process)	Independent evaluation of the District Direct Service and discharge processes during COVID-19. Local findings contributed towards a larger National report with recommendations for change.

Responses to recommendations and requests

We had no providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were not able to 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.




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