

Health and Care in Westbury



An
independent voice
for the
people of Wiltshire

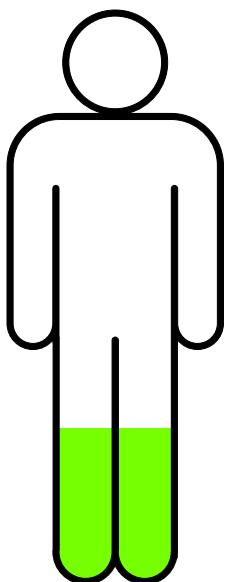
Health and care in Westbury

This report is about the work which Healthwatch Wiltshire did in Westbury over a 3 month period in 2016. Healthwatch Wiltshire is an independent organisation which exists to support local people to speak up on health and care. We are part of a national network of 148 local Healthwatch. The national umbrella organisation is Healthwatch England.

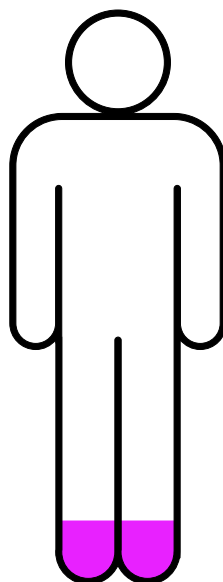
We were approached by Westbury people who were concerned about whether the town has its fair and adequate share of health and care services. They asked us to arrange a public meeting so that local people could talk with those who buy and provide our health and care services (the commissioners and providers). Healthwatch Wiltshire agreed to do this but we thought that it would be of more value to local people if we did some additional work to support the public meeting.

Population

- Westbury Community Area, at mid-year 2011, had an estimated total population of 19,650 persons making it the 8th least populous community area in Wiltshire (out of 19)
- Over the period Census 2001 to mid-year 2011, Westbury Community Area's population growth was 24.1% (3,820 persons), over two and a half times higher than the Wiltshire average of 9.6% (41,350 persons), and the second highest of all Wiltshire's community areas.
- In relation to the other 19 community areas, Westbury Community Area has the 3rd highest percentage of its total population under the age of 15 years, the 9th highest percentage of its total population being of working age, and the 13th highest percentage of its total population being of retirement age and over.



Westbury's Population Growth
24.1% (3,820 persons)



Wiltshire's Average population growth
9.6% (41,350 persons)

Our aims were to....

- facilitate a productive conversation between local people and commissioners
- carry out engagement in the town to find out what local people think about health and care including their experiences of using services
- find out the facts and provide some good quality information for local people
- provide some suggestions about any next steps

What did we do?

- arranged two planning meetings which included commissioners and local representatives to agree what we all wanted to get out of a public meeting and to discuss some of the 'hot issues';
- put out our own communications to publicise our work and invite people to get in touch. This was picked up by the White Horse News, through social media, and by BBC Radio Wiltshire;
- carried out engagement with local people in the town over two days in June. We also spoke to people who telephoned us and we accepted feedback by email. Overall we had contact with over 180 people;
- participated in Westbury's first 'health and wellbeing group' which has been set up by Westbury Community Area Board;
- held a stakeholder meeting at The Laverton in July to which we invited representatives from local groups, commissioners, representatives from Wiltshire Council, and the White Horse Health Centre. We shared the results from our engagement and invited those attending the meeting to tell us what we may have missed;
- carried out some 'desk top' research on the issues local people had raised with us;
- met with the White Horse Health Centre Practice Team to explore the issues people had raised with us about the practice;
- prepared and published this report;
- Arranged a public meeting for the 8th September 2016 to share this report and provide an opportunity for local people, commissioners and providers to talk together.



What did we ask people?

1. Have you used any health and social care service over the last year? (this includes doctor, dentist, optician as well as hospitals etc.)
2. What was your experience of using the service?
3. In general, what do you think is good about the health and social care services in Westbury?
4. Do you think there is anything that could be improved?

What are the results?

We have analysed all the feedback that people gave us and picked out the main themes which are described below along with the outcomes of any further research we did on the themes.

The GP Practice



Through our engagement with local people in the town we listened to issues raised about the White Horse Health Centre. These included:

- difficulties in accessing GP appointments (in particular, people feeling that they had to wait too long to see a specific doctor)
- an impression that there is a ‘high turnover’ of staff which can’t be a good thing for providing continuity of care
- dissatisfaction about GPs working part time hours and this therefore limiting their availability for appointments with patients
- concerns about whether the Centre will be able to cope with increased population arising from new housing
- difficulties with calling through to the Centre
- dissatisfaction with the triage system - in particular people feeling that it is not appropriate for non-clinical staff to decide whether a patient can see a GP
- people generally reported that the quality of care provided by clinical staff (GPs and nurses) at the Health Centre is good

It is difficult to draw comparisons between practices about accessing GP appointments given that there is no nationally recommended number of GPs per number of patients or guidance on appropriate waiting times for non-emergency appointments.

- 115 people (out of 180) gave feedback about the White Horse Health Centre

16 People gave positive feedback

37 People gave negative feedback

62 People gave mixed feedback (both positive and negative)

We asked if we could meet with staff at the Centre to share the feedback. The Centre was very keen to meet with us and explain what they are doing to respond to the issues. We have set out this information at the end of our report.

“Local services are under considerable pressure right across the country, including Wiltshire. Together we are doing our best to make sure we can support people, and we are making some great strides to enable us to deal head on with some of the issues we currently face.

One of our top priorities is to make sure that older people get the care and treatment they need - either in their own home or as close to home as possible. Using a specially-allocated budget called the Better Care Fund, local GPs have established new ways of supporting people to receive care, stay independent and keep well without having to go into hospital. There are some examples of that work described in this report, so that you can read how we are using the Better Care Fund to support people in Westbury. We mustn't forget about the wider community though, and we are working hard to get the systems in place so that people of all ages receive appropriate quality care as and when they need it.

We know that we face a tough road ahead but as well as outlining some of the challenges we face, this report discusses ways they can be overcome. We are confident that by continuing our positive collaboration we and our partners will carve the right path to make sure services are robust and resilient to meet the needs of the Wiltshire population not just now, but long into the future.

Wiltshire Council & Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Transport

“The nearest A&E is Frome though not fully operational as such, Bath is next option though no option as I cannot drive due to pain”

People told us that they felt the location of the White Horse Health Centre was not always easy to access by public transport. Also, that health services further afield can be difficult to access by public transport.

We know through our wider engagement work that accessing health and care services can be challenging for people without their own transport and on a low income. The options include non-emergency patient transport (subject to eligibility), public transport, taxis, and community transport (such as LINK).

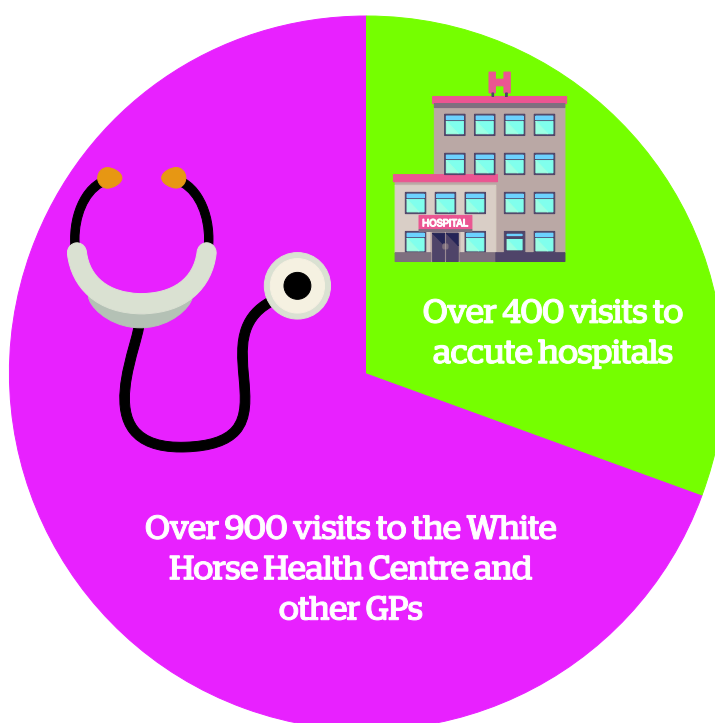
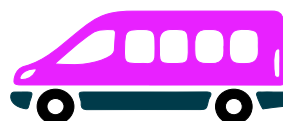
There is a local bus service called the Westbury Weaver. The route was altered when the White Horse Health Centre was opened ‘to assist residents of Westbury who need to get there by bus’. Some people told us that if you live in parts of Westbury then you need to get the bus into the town and

then another out of town to the White Horse Health Centre. Looking at the routes, this seems to be the case.

There are 2 LINK schemes, which are independent charities that cover the Westbury area: Westbury & District Link Scheme and Four Villages Link. Both schemes have between 30 and 40 volunteers at present and the majority of their journeys are health related, either to local hospitals or GP practices. During 2014/2015 the Westbury & District Link Scheme carried out over 900 journeys to the White Horse Medical Centre and other GP surgeries and over 400 journeys to the acute hospitals (principally the RUH and Salisbury). Four Villages Link said that 67% of journeys made are health related and roughly half of these to acute hospitals, and the other half to GP surgeries. Although the Westbury Scheme finds it difficult to recruit volunteers, both LINK schemes said it was very rare that they had to turn people down for transport, and those who were, were usually referred on to non-emergency patient transport (ARRIVA) or the Hopper service for the RUH in the past. Both LINK schemes are advertised locally and through word of mouth.

We were told that it is difficult for people to get to specialist appointments further afield such as Southmead, Bristol and Southampton especially if they are not eligible for non-emergency patient transport.

“The surgery being out of town is difficult, if you don’t drive it is hard to get to”



New Housing

“We worry that there will be new houses and more people without services”

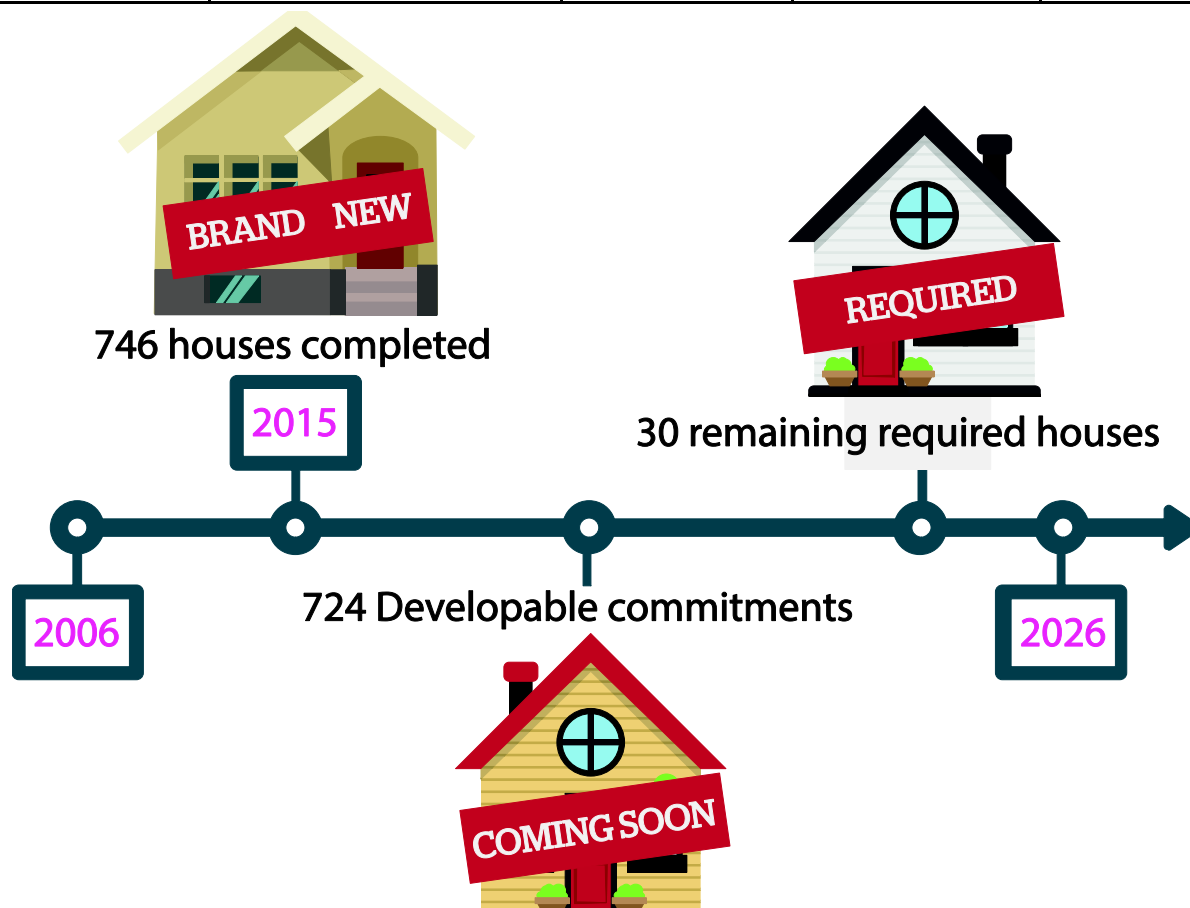
There are concerns about new housing in the town and whether the White Horse Health Centre will have the capacity to cope. People told us that they felt that Westbury was getting more houses than was originally planned. People raised concerns about air pollution which may arise through increased traffic in the town. We asked Wiltshire Council for information about this and it provided us with this:

The Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted January 2015, sets out indicative housing requirements by Community Area to support a sustainable distribution of housing growth across Wiltshire. The housing requirements are not intended to be prescriptive maxima or minima but instead they are an indication of the general scale of growth appropriate for each area and named settlements during the plan period. For the Westbury Community Area: “Over the Plan period

(2006 to 2026), approximately 1,615 new homes will be provided, of which about 1,500 should occur at Westbury” (Core Policy 35).

Wiltshire Council’s latest published housing monitoring data at 1 April 2015 shows progress against delivery of this requirement:

Area	Indicative requirement 2006-2026	Homes Completed 2006-2015	Developable Commitments	Remaining requirement
Westbury market town	1500	746	724	30



Land supply data is updated annually in order to take into consideration new permissions that have been granted and ones that have expired without implementation. Since 1 April 2015, 300 homes have been granted on appeal at a site known as Bitham Park, Westbury. If this is considered against the above residual requirement for Westbury, this indicates that the indicative requirement would be exceeded by 270 homes or 18%. In terms of significant outstanding planning applications (not yet determined) these relate to 47 dwellings at Bratton Road, Westbury and 58 dwellings on land at the hospital, Westbury.

In assessing any planning proposal, account is taken of the infrastructure requirements arising from proposals consistent with Core Policy 3 'Infrastructure requirements' of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This recognises that developer contributions may be needed for different types of infrastructure such as school places, open space, play areas, highways improvements and healthcare facilities. These can only be sought where it is necessary to mitigate the direct impact of the development concerned. However, existing capacity issues cannot be addressed through developer contributions. All planning applications are subject to consultation providing the opportunity to raise issues regarding infrastructure capacity, NHS England are directly consulted in appropriate circumstances.

Core Policy 55 'Air Quality' of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that air quality issues are appropriately assessed as part of any development proposal. This states that *"Development proposals, which by virtue of their scale, nature or location are likely to exacerbate existing areas of poor air quality, will need to demonstrate that measures can be taken to effectively mitigate emission levels in order to protect public health, environmental quality and amenity"*.

Volunteers and venues for community activities

People told us that there is a shortage of volunteers in the town and it was the 'same people' who volunteer for things. They felt that new housing is likely to be occupied by people who will commute out of the town for work and leisure and may not be available to contribute to the town through volunteering. We spoke to the local Community Engagement Manager about this. He told us that there isn't a single place where people can find out about volunteering but he is publicising opportunities through the Our Community Matters website (westbury.ourcommunitymatters.org.uk). The local free newspaper, The White Horse News, also will include articles about volunteering opportunities. Apparently some opportunities have been very appealing with lots of local people coming forward (for example, Clean for the Queen). It would seem therefore that volunteers can be more easily recruited for some kinds of community activity.

Some people told us that they felt the town lacked accessible venues for community activities. The Community Engagement Manager provided us with a list of local venues which included various options in and around Westbury. It would be interesting to find out what specifically people think is missing.

Wiltshire Council provides funding for local voluntary sector organisations which support people in Westbury. These include Age UK Wiltshire, Alzheimer's Support, and Carers Support Wiltshire. The Council also provides funding for the White Horse Day centre which provides lunch, transport, activities and days out. The Westbury League of Friends also provides funding for community activities including for Alzheimer's Support.

- Overall in Westbury, the Council supports 65 people over the age of 55 to access day services
- There are an estimated 1,982 people providing unpaid care in Westbury. In the Westbury Community area 559 carers are registered with local charity Carer Support Wiltshire.



**1982 people in
westbury are
providing unpaid
care.**

The hospital

Local people regretted the loss of the hospital facility and thought that it would have been a good location for intermediate care, which people felt was lacking in the town.

“the former Westbury Hospital should be used for minor injuries and respite care”

“Why can’t they renovate the hospital and have a surgery there as well (like they had before), so you’ve got a surgery at each end of the town”

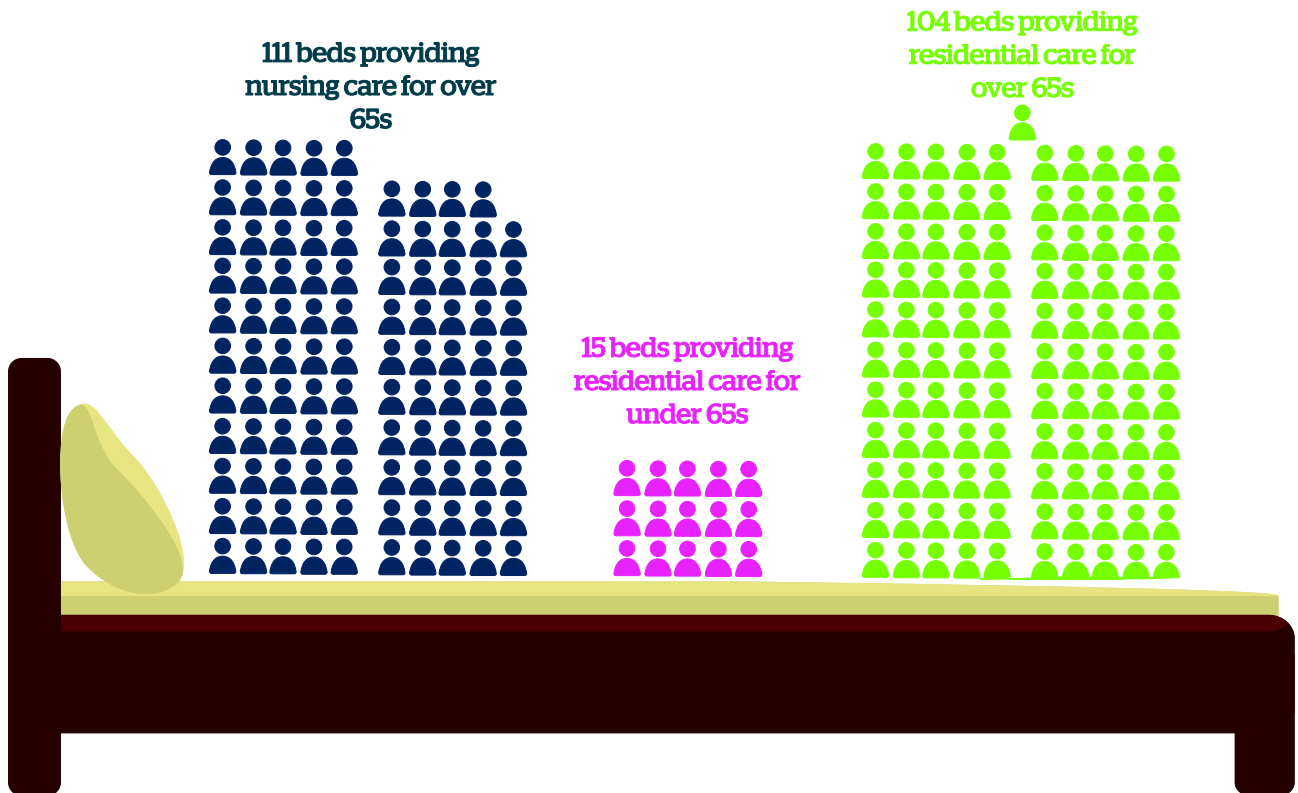
“Hospital gifted to town and taken away. Shouldn’t have happened. Frome and Malmesbury [get] brand new health centres and [they] close our hospital”

We spoke to NHS Wiltshire and Wiltshire Council about this matter. We understand that there are no plans for the hospital to be returned. Targeted short term support is available for people (‘intermediate care’) following discharge from a hospital (such as the RUH in Bath) or to avoid admission to hospital. It is funded by the NHS and provided through local care homes or support at home following a ‘care and support assessment’. Admission to a care home is only considered once all options to support someone at home have been exhausted. People said to us that whilst discharge to home may be appropriate for some patients it is important that it is well managed and safe.

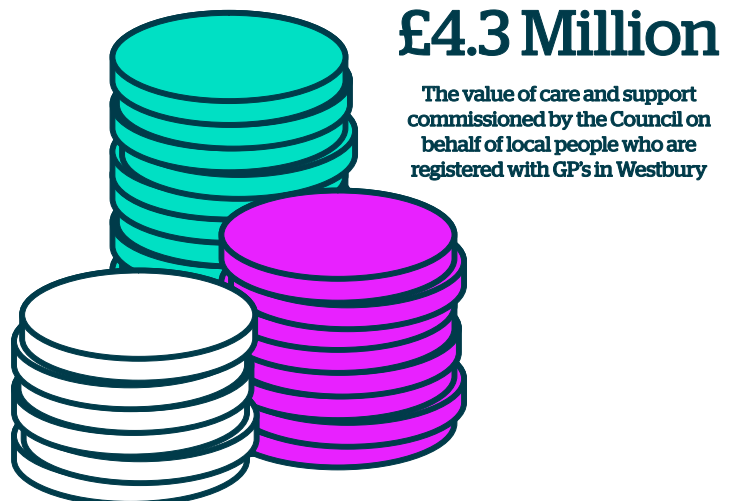
- In the last 12 months 29 people from Westbury have been supported in intermediate care beds. Most of these have been provided in care homes in Westbury, Sutton Veny, or Trowbridge. The average length of stay is 39 days.
- There are between 0 and 3 people from Westbury delayed in hospital in any given week

Only about 10% of people aged over 65 in Westbury are in receipt of funded care services from the Council (about 276 people). This includes funding for a place at a care home or care at home (including equipment). Given that social care is 'means tested' the majority of people will be funding some or all of their own care.

In Westbury there are:



- Overall in Westbury, the Council supports 65 people over the age of 55 to access day services
- The value of care and support commissioned by the Council on behalf of local people who are registered with GPs in Westbury is £4.3 million
- Less than 10% of over 65s living in Westbury are in receipt of care commissioned by the Council



Dementia service

People told us that there was a dementia club in the town but it had been moved to Trowbridge and they were concerned by what they saw as a local service being relocated. We contacted Alzheimer's Support which is the local charity which ran the club. They told us that the club ran from Grassacres Hall in Westbury every Saturday but was closed almost a year ago and moved to Mill Street in Trowbridge. Mill Street was standing unused on a Saturday and most of the members of the club lived in Trowbridge (two out of the ten members were from Westbury). The charity also felt that the club didn't comply with their quality standards and volunteers were not effectively used. The decision was taken after consultation with the funders (Westbury League of Friends). It was replaced with the ever popular Movement for the Mind at Grassacres Hall which attracts about 30 people every week.

Deprivation and impact on health

Not only did some local people feel that they were not getting their fair share of Wiltshire's health and care allocation in the town, but having been identified as an area of relative deprivation, they felt that services and funding should be prioritised. For example, we were told that funding for Wiltshire's 19 community areas (to use for projects through the new health and wellbeing groups) had been divided up with no account of deprivation (£6,700 per community area). We understand that if the formula used for Area Board funding had been used then the funding for Westbury would have been reduced (by £2,100) because it takes into account rurality and population (as well as deprivation).

There is a lot of information available from the Westbury Community Area Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA). The data includes an entire section on health and wellbeing (www.wiltshirejsa.org.uk/issue-location/westbury). There is a clear gap in healthy life expectancy between the most deprived and least deprived areas of Wiltshire. In Westbury the gap is 14.3 years. A new JSA for Westbury is due to be published later in 2016 along with its presentation at a public meeting (date to be confirmed).

Many (if not most) health and care services are commissioned for a bigger area than Westbury and are available to Westbury people on the basis of need. Whilst some services may be available in the town (such as care to live at home, intermediate care, and primary care services) many others are not (such as A&E, maternity, and specialist dementia beds).



General feedback

- Our work was focused on the town of Westbury. People said that we ought to have included the villages in the wider community area in our work;
- Local people pointed out to us that we could have reached more people through our engagement if we had gone out at different times of the day and been in different locations (for example, we might have reached commuters at the railway station if we had gone there early or later in the day) and if we had done this we might have had different findings;
- We found that many people tended to think only in terms of their GP when we asked them about health and care services;
- Very little was raised about mental health and mental health services;
- People wanted us to assess whether Westbury is getting its 'fair shares' of services. This is not easy to do because health services are commissioned across a bigger geographic area than Wiltshire's market towns. Also many health and care services are available to people on a needs basis (social care, NHS continuing health care);
- People from other areas have asked if Healthwatch Wiltshire can do a similar piece of work in their area. We are happy to work with the new health and wellbeing groups (which are formed under the Council's Area Boards) as they will be responsible for looking at health and care issues in their areas.

Suggestions for next steps

1

Many people raised issues about the difficulty in accessing GP appointments.

We feel that it would be beneficial for NHS Wiltshire to put out more information about what people can reasonably expect in terms of accessing their GP and alternative sources of clinical care (for example, nurses and pharmacists).

2

Some local people have taken to writing to local newspapers and social media to express their dissatisfaction with the White Horse Health Centre.

There is a benefit to raising concerns locally with the Centre or its Patient Participation Group and Healthwatch Wiltshire would encourage people to do this also.

3

There is a new 'health and wellbeing group' for Westbury which is hosted by the Area Board.

Healthwatch Wiltshire suggests that it is important for the White Horse Health Centre to be represented on this group. The group will have an important role in agreeing any actions to respond to the evidence in the new Community Area Joint Strategic Assessment when it is published (later in 2016).

4

Given the widespread concern about the impact of new housing and population growth on local health services and community infrastructure in Westbury it is important that NHS Wiltshire and Wiltshire Council demonstrate how they are planning for this.

5

Communicating with local people about the challenges facing the White Horse Health Centre and the steps being taken to address them is important.

We are suggesting that the Centre reviews how it communicates with local people to find effective methods which may include, for example, a regular piece in the local free newspaper.

6

There may be a benefit to there being a local discussion about the issue of promoting volunteering opportunities (at a local level) so that people know what is available and be supported to get involved in activities.

7

The new health and wellbeing group will be well placed to build on the work which Healthwatch Wiltshire has carried out so far and to monitor the issues raised going forward.

Thank You

Healthwatch Wiltshire would like to thank everyone who participated and supported this process including local charities, the STOP group which initially approached us, NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group, and Wiltshire Council. A big 'thank you' to all local people who shared their views and experiences with us.

Notes

The statistical information has been provided by Wiltshire Council and NHS Wiltshire CCG. Some information has come from the Community Area Joint Strategic Assessment <http://www.wiltshirejsa.org.uk/issue-location/westbury/>. This is being updated and will be ready in the winter of 2016.

Please see our website for information about Healthwatch Wiltshire's methods for evaluation <http://www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk/project/rationale-and-explanation-of-methods-used>



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Information from our meeting with the White Horse Health Centre

The following information has been provided to Healthwatch Wiltshire by the White Horse Health Centre when we met with it to share the feedback we gathered through our engagement in the town.



Staffing

- The accelerated decision making process and subsequent acquisition of Smallbrook Practice in Warminster in October 2015 had a significant impact on the Centre. There were some human resource issues that had not been anticipated by the Centre. During this period the Centre also had its own human resource issues including staff on long-term sick leave and an ongoing recruitment problem relating to GPs
- A lot of effort has gone into the recruitment process and as a result, the Centre has been successful in recruiting 2 new GP Partners, a salaried GP, a long-term locum GP, Practice Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, and a Chronic Disease Nurse. In addition, a Pharmacist has been recruited to deal specifically with medication issues. Two members of the nursing team are nurse prescribers
- One of the new GP Partners is an education supervisor which means the practice is now a training practice for GPs. Therefore, the Centre will be taking on two high level GP trainees in August 2016
- Once all staff are in place the Centre believe that they will have the resource to manage the current workload and meet the needs of the town going forward (including growth in population).

Phones

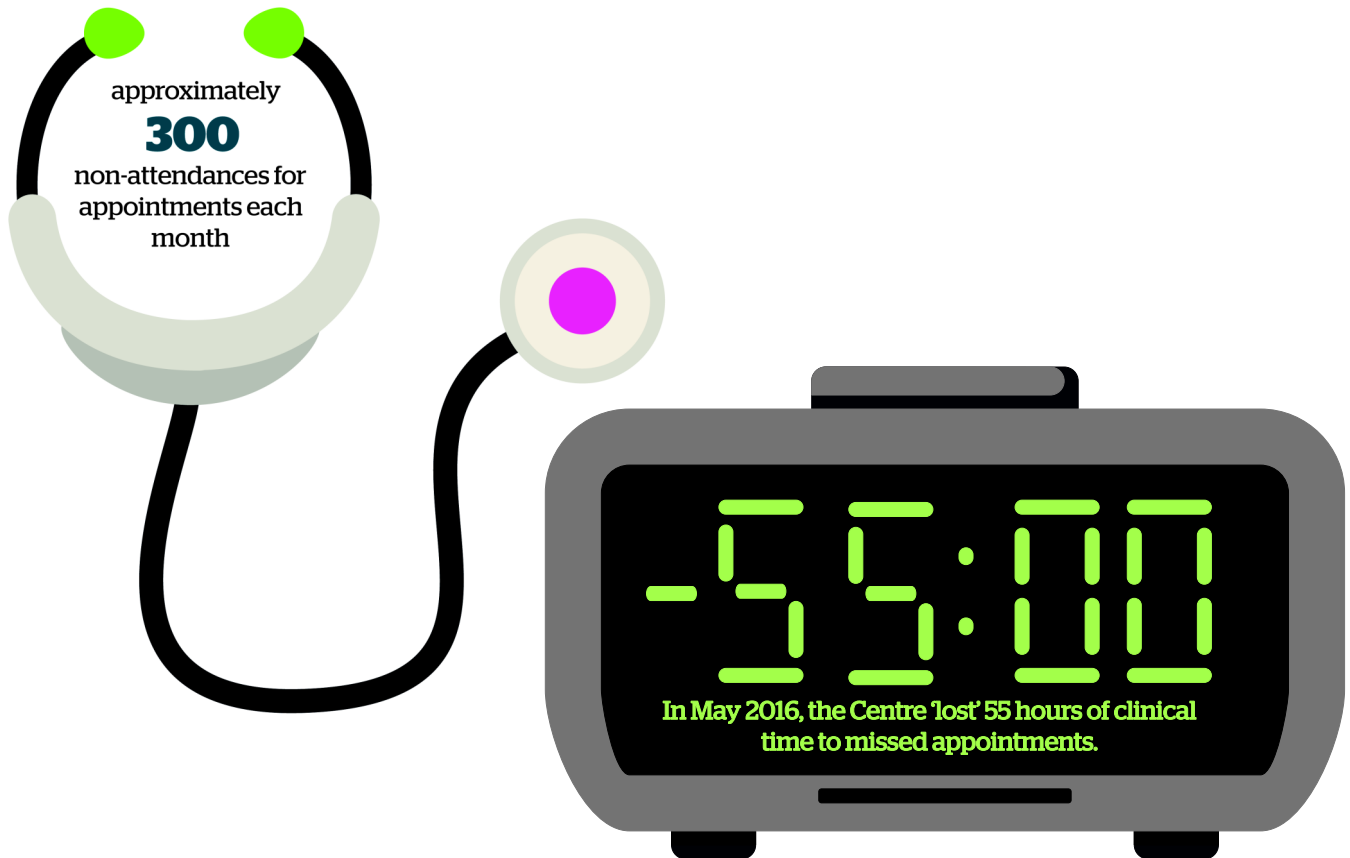
- A new, centralised phone system will come into place in July 2016. Extra staff will be brought in to manage this. There are currently dedicated lines for cancellations (option 1), reception and secretaries. A new full-time dedicated results line is being set up. This should lead to a more efficient system. The new system will have a call recording facility for the purpose of monitoring.

Reception/Triage

- There are 22 members of reception and admin staff. All reception staff receive 6 weeks of initial training that incorporates triage. This involves shadowing more experienced staff, listening to calls and dealing with calls under supervision.
- Staff have a script that they use as a guide when triaging patients. They are encouraged to consult with more experienced staff or the GPs if they are unsure about a patient.
- A notice is displayed in reception that states that patients should tell the receptionist if their issue is sensitive as a private interview room is available.
- The Centre takes seriously any reported issues relating to the reception team. Processes are in place to deal with staff who the team feel require extra training and support.

Appointments

- There are 27 duty (on the day) appointments available a.m and p.m. The system can be flexible around certain times of the year such as the week before Christmas and after Easter.
- In August a new system will be trialled whereby patients should not have to wait longer than one week to be seen by an appropriate clinical member of staff (which may not be a GP but a nurse for example)
- There are approximately 300 non-attendances for appointments each month. In May 2016, the Centre 'lost' 55 hours of clinical time to missed appointments. Reminder texts are sent to those patients for whom they have mobile numbers.

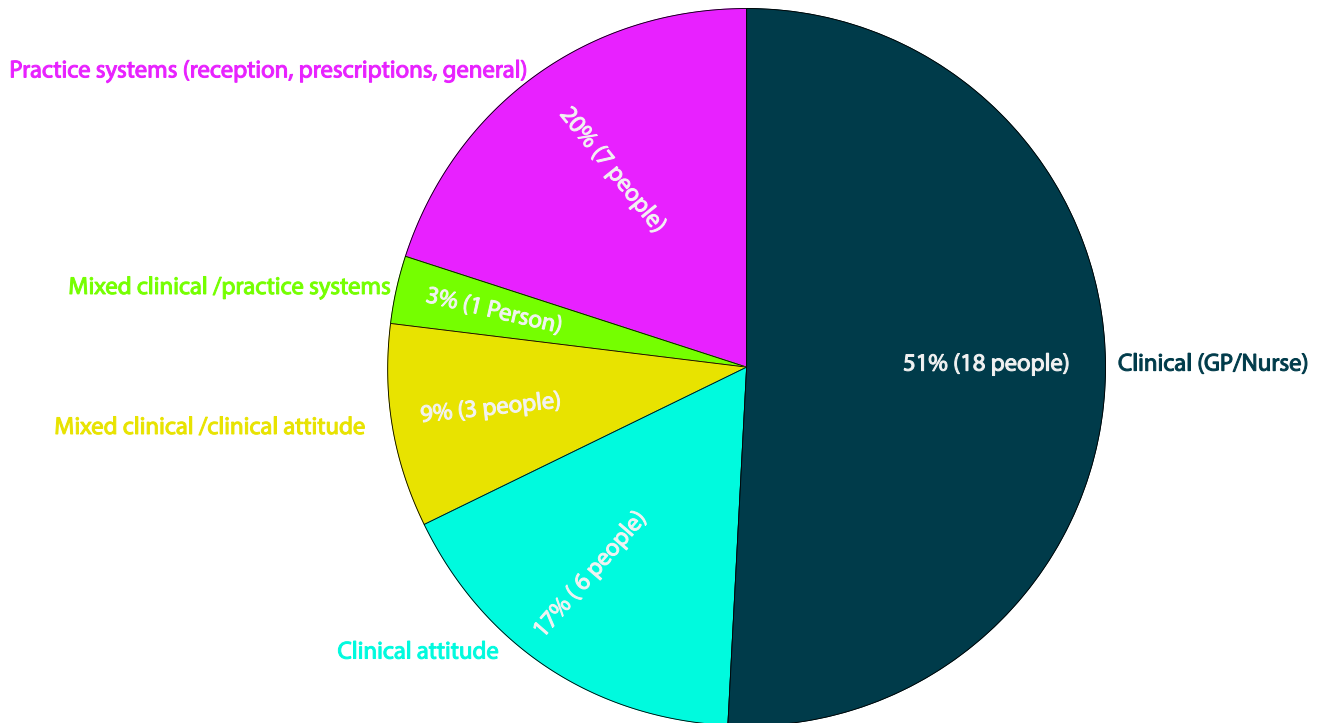


Communication

- The Centre is currently looking at a new more interactive website that will improve the experience of patients. This will include a new, less complex online booking system. Paper leaflets are available that cover a number of topics.
- The Centre is making efforts to gather more mobile numbers and emails so that they can communicate more widely with patients with news and updates.
- It has a quarterly newsletter that in addition to news about the Centre, contains educational articles and information about specific services.
- It has an active 'patient participation group' and are trying to encourage more people to join so that it can be more representative of the local population.

Feedback and complaints

- Patients are able to feedback via email or directly to the Centre Team. There is a comments box in reception but this is little used.
- There is a formal complaints process and a yearly meeting is held where learning from complaints is discussed.
- Between April 1st 2015 and March 31st 2016, a total of 35 formal complaints were received:



- A patient survey was carried out in March 2016. Members of the patient participation group attended the surgery and encouraged and helped patients to complete the survey. A total of 408 people took part.
- Positive feedback included: Feeling listened to, having results explained well, satisfaction with the length of the appointment, opening hours and cleanliness. 78% rated their experience of being dealt with by reception staff as good, very good or excellent.
- Areas where patients were least satisfied included: the ease of getting to speak to preferred GP or nurse; time waiting after arriving for appointment; ease of contacting the practice by telephone; experience of making an appointment. 75% of people rated the care received as good, very good or excellent.
- The team also receive a number of compliments from patients and relatives.

Why not get involved?

Visit our website: www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter: @HWWilts

Email us: info@healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

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September 2016

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