

# Making More Voices Heard

2018/19



# Introduction

**Healthwatch Dorset is the independent champion for people who use health & social care services in Dorset.**

We listen to local people's experiences of local healthcare services and use them to influence change and improvement in those services.

We are particularly keen to hear from people whose voices aren't as loud, or as often heard, as others. To help us achieve that goal, we set aside funding to support local voluntary and community group projects that help us reach communities and people with "protected characteristics", as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Through support from our Community Investment Fund, the groups we work with are able to do more and also, in some cases, become more sustainable as our support leads to funding from other bodies too. In return, they become ambassadors for Healthwatch Dorset, spreading information about us in their own communities and enabling people to share their experiences of services with us. In that way, we increase the amount and diversity of feedback we hold from local people, which we use to influence positive change in local services.

Over the last 18 months we've funded and supported 18 local projects, covering a wide range of communities, from school and disability groups to homeless support and carers' groups.

This report gives a snapshot of those projects.

**"I'm delighted that Healthwatch Dorset has been able to invest in these amazing community initiatives which really help local people have their say"**  
Joyce Guest, Healthwatch Dorset Chair



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# Highlights



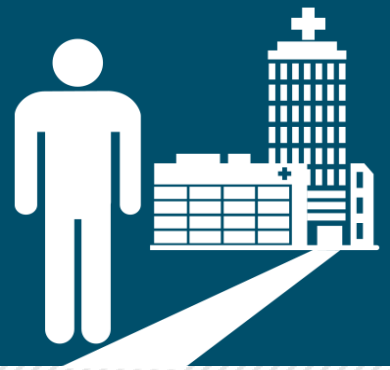
We've invested over  
**£11,000** in  
community projects  
across Dorset



Our community  
investment  
projects support local  
community groups to  
help more people...



We've learned more  
about local services



Our projects tackle  
issues ranging from  
support for people with  
cancer to helping  
children with special  
needs



We've reached over  
**7000** people

...and gathered feedback  
on local care services  
from people we might  
not have heard from  
otherwise



# Community Investment Projects



## Tuesday Club

Fresh Outlooks runs the Tuesday Club, a weekly educational & sociable workshop for people with disabilities in Bournemouth. The Tuesday Club was set up by volunteers who noticed many people with disabilities were left isolated. They wanted to provide fun social activities in a safe environment.



Our funding paid for a projector table & large screen for cinema events. The group have been enjoying regular movie sessions with the new equipment and they're now planning a new Cinema Club.

To find out more please go to:

<https://www.freshoutlooks.co.uk/projects>



*“The Tuesday Club is a vibrant hub of social activity with around 50 regular attendees that goes from strength to strength.”*

## The Purbeck Workshop

The Purbeck Workshop was set up to support people whose lives have been touched by cancer within the Dorset area.

The workshop hosts a wide range of activities and events throughout the year. Our funding provided oil cloths for the tables, flooring, materials for the mosaic class and publicity material.

The sessions aim to provide friendship, peer support and relaxation in a welcoming and supportive environment. Cancer journeys are very individual and personal, so you won't be asked to share your experience during the sessions, unless of course you want to.

For more details: [www.purbeckworkshop.org](http://www.purbeckworkshop.org)

*“I love it here at the Purbeck Workshop. It's a friendly and creative space that provides me with the support I need.”*



## A Little Group of Kindness

This group, run entirely by volunteers and donations, supports vulnerable people in Bournemouth by providing food hampers and clothes to low income families, hot drinks for the street homeless, and furniture for families and homeless people who are being rehomed.

Our funding paid for a gazebo and 3 large vacuum flasks for community events and homeless drop ins.



Leanne from the group explained:

“I don't think there are the right words to describe what a big difference the Healthwatch Dorset funding we received has made.”

For more details: <https://bit.ly/2NJRPGy>

*“Offering hot drinks to people who are homeless not only offers them warmth and comfort, it also enables us to engage with them over a hot drink and signpost them to other support that will help get them off the street.”*

## Cycling Without Age

Our funding bought the first adapted trishaw for this project in which volunteer pilots take local elders and care homes residents out on cycle rides to feel the wind in their hair. This project brings generations closer together using special trishaws (three-wheel cycles with a passenger cab out front). They have electrical power assist, so no need to be super-sporty to be a volunteer cycle pilot. Rides are comfortable, fun and free.

Local care home resident Miriam told us:

*“I haven't been on a bicycle in over 50 years! It was such a wonderful experience.”*

To find out more:

<https://cyclingwithoutage.org.uk/bournemouth>



## Ocean Academy School

Ocean Academy School in Poole applied for our funding to buy a set of 5 headphones to aid focus for children in the classroom, especially those with sensory needs.



Children with sensory processing disorders can have a low threshold for noise and other distractions, so it doesn't take much for them to be overwhelmed and overstimulated in a busy classroom. The headphones play calm music whilst the children are working and it helps them to remain focused on their tasks.

Ocean Academy School: [www.aatocean.org](http://www.aatocean.org)

*"The headphones have been such a help in class, some of the students struggle to focus & I've seen a real change in them when the headphones are being used."* Miss James, Teacher

## New Beginnings

This pilot project in Dorchester was set up to focus on empowering & inspiring young people between the ages of 13-19 alongside supporting parents and carers to maintain their own wellbeing.

*Karen explains: "I believe that difficulties in our lives can be turned into positives. My passion for this project has come from my own personal journey of struggling to get the appropriate support for my teenage son and my background working in local mental health services. I have always wanted to make a difference to the lives of young people."*

Our funding enabled New Beginnings to run a 3-month pilot project in Dorchester. Weekly drop in sessions brought young people together and monthly support groups for parents and carers supported families to access the help they need.

Lisa attended the young people's group, she told us:

*"I was a bit nervous about going along but the group were very welcoming. I hope this can help me find ways to manage my anxiety."*



## Harlequin Care

Our funding went towards a Carers' respite day in September 2018 at Holten Lee in Wareham. The session was attended by 40 carers from across Dorset.

The volunteers at Harlequin Care organised for 8 therapists to run relaxation and massage therapies throughout the day, along with tea and cakes and lots of useful information for carers.



Eileen from Harlequin Care told us:  
*"Healthwatch Dorset have been so helpful. I wish more community funding took this approach. We've been unable to apply for grants in the past because we're a small group without a professional fundraiser."*

For more details: [www.harlequincare.com](http://www.harlequincare.com)

*"Thank You. I always feel better having been at Harlequin Care. There is nothing else to compare to the time spent here."* Dorset Carer

## Charmouth Community Library

Our funding enabled volunteers to arrange five talks on health matters at this community run library, designed to support the health of Charmouth residents.

The talks were promoted through flyers, Facebook, posters and support from community groups in Lyme Regis and the local area. The feedback was very positive and well over 100 local people attended.

*"People found the talks interesting, informative and with rather more laughs and smiles than they had expected."*

The health talks covered a range of issues:  
 What Your Pharmacist Can Do For You  
 Maintaining Positive Mental Health  
 First Aid  
 Fighting Memory Loss  
 Cancer for Men



To find out more about Charmouth Community Library:

[www.charmouth.org/charmouth\\_village/charmouth-library](http://www.charmouth.org/charmouth_village/charmouth-library)

## SHARES

Sherborne Area Refugee Support group requested funding to help them deliver supported day trips for Syrian Refugee families living in North Dorset



Our funding enabled the families to go on days out to the seaside and London (photo above) and paid for a pass to Sherborne Castle Grounds. It's been a great way to give the families the opportunity to relax together over the school summer holidays and get away from their everyday concerns.

To find out more:

[www.sherbornearearefugeesupport.org.uk](http://www.sherbornearearefugeesupport.org.uk)

*"We cannot thank Healthwatch enough for this opportunity. It has made such a big difference to the families and has added much to their experience of living in Sherborne."*

## Hurting 2 Healing

H2H is a charity working with adult survivors of childhood abuse. Its continuing mission is to relieve the enduring suffering and distress of adult survivors of all forms of childhood abuse. This includes physical, emotional, psychological or sexual violation, financial abuse, deprivation and neglect of a child's human rights and needs. The charity provides a range of therapeutic services including counselling, creative therapies and wellbeing groups.

Our Community Investment Funding provided training and support for H2H volunteers.

To find out more: [www.hurting2healing.org.uk](http://www.hurting2healing.org.uk)

*Gerry has been volunteering with H2H for nine months and he told us:*

*"I started doing this because I wanted to repay the organisation for helping me. I enjoy being involved and helping others"*



## Up and Down

'Up & Down' sessions are run by Pramacare, aimed at teaching people of all ages and disabilities techniques of how to get up when they have fallen over. The project aims to reduce the frequency and impact that falls can have upon people's physical and emotional well-being.

Our funding paid for a session at the Barrington Centre in 2018 with fitness instructors, promotion & refreshments. This event was free, open to the public and proved to be of great value to people having issues with balance and falls, and their carers.



An attendee told us the event was:  
*"Very useful and a lot easier than I thought it would be"*

For more details contact Carol by email:  
[carol.davies@pramacare.co.uk](mailto:carol.davies@pramacare.co.uk)

*"It's been great for my confidence when I am on my own"*

## Craft in Mind

Our funding provided creche costs for this craft-based therapy group developed in partnership between Poole Children's Centres and Poole Health Visiting teams.

The group provides companionship, some time to do crafts and offer learning opportunities to support family life. Provision of a crèche has proved vital to allow the group participants to have time to reflect and discuss their issues and take part in therapeutic craft activities.

This pilot project gathered feedback & produced a report over 14 weeks which has led to ongoing funding.

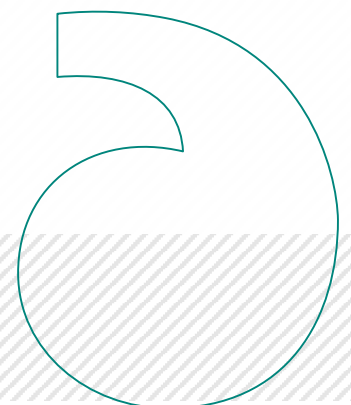
*"Best group ever. Lovely people and helped with problems in the week".*



Craft work produced by the group

*"It has taught me that being anxious and stressed will make the baby stressed. Staying positive gives the baby a positive life too".*

To find out more contact Amanda Brown:  
[amanda.brown@poole.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.brown@poole.gov.uk)



## Dorset Working Women's Project

The Dorset Working Women's Project (DWWP) is an HIV prevention and sexual health project working with women who sell sex, particularly those who also misuse drugs and/or alcohol. The Project is administered from The Junction in Bournemouth (on behalf of Dorset HealthCare) and covers the Bournemouth and Poole area.



Our funding enabled DWWP to provide essential provisions of food and hot drinks for a 6-month period. The team delivered 52 Outreach Sessions over 6 months and provided 280 food parcels to 44 women.

Pauline from DWWP told us:

*"We are able to talk to the women for longer whilst we are out in the red-light area because we have been able to offer such an enhanced service as a result of this grant. This means that we can give the women more detailed warnings about dangerous men and ultimately enables us to reduce harm and risk and keep them safer."*

DWWP has been successful in winning an NHS Dragons Den award for an outreach van for their evening street outreach. The funding is only available for 1 year and they are looking for funding to continue with this.

To find out more: <https://bit.ly/2Uqfi21>

*"I would not be here if it weren't for you. You have kept us safe and sometimes the food you gave me was the only food I had eaten all day."*

## Cake Concert

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) and Faithworks Wessex arranged for three musicians from the BSO to play for, and take tea with, local people living with dementia and their carers at the newly-rebuilt Parish Centre in Blandford.



The session took place from 2.00 - 3.30pm with music by Handel, Rutter, Bizet and Tchaikovsky, together with popular non-classical music such as Scarborough Fair and America from West Side Story.

There were 15 attendees including those from local day centres and care homes, and the responses were very favourable. One lady said she "had been transported to another world" and another was serenaded with "happy birthday" to her delight!

To find out more: [www.faithworkswessex.org.uk](http://www.faithworkswessex.org.uk)  
<http://www.bsolive.com/event/14341/cake-concert/>

With thanks to Kate Keats on Cello, Kate Ham on Concert Harp and Owen Bailey on the Flute.



## Butterflies Cancer Group

Butterflies Cancer Support Group was set up two years ago after founder, Mel Whatley, couldn't find the support she needed in following her treatment for breast cancer.

The group provides social, emotional and psychological support to anyone with any type of cancer and at any stage of their cancer. They give the same support to friends and carers, and continue that support in bereavement, plus signposting to other cancer specific groups as well as other avenues of help and support. Our funding helped the group to move to new premises in 2018.



Butterflies Cancer Support Group meets every Wednesday at the Dorchester Community Church, Liscombe Street, Poundbury, DT1 3DF, from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm. The group organises activities, complementary therapy and provides guidance and information on accessing services in the local area.

To find out more please go to:

[www.butterfliescancersupport.co.uk](http://www.butterfliescancersupport.co.uk)

*“To be told the words ‘you have cancer’ was without doubt the most terrifying thing that had ever happened to me.”*



## Marnhull Men's Shed

Healthwatch Dorset invested in the set up of Marnhull Men's Shed in North Dorset in 2018.

### What is a Men's Shed?

It's a community space for men to connect, chat and create. The activities are like those of a garden shed, practicing skills and enjoying making and mending as a group. They help reduce loneliness and isolation, bring people together and most importantly they're fun.

*“I'm proud to be involved. Marnhull Men's Shed shows what people can achieve when they come together and share ideas.” Steve*



Over 40 “shedders” have spent the last year finding premises on the outskirts of the village, renovating the shed, building a new toilet ‘shed’ and gathering tools and equipment.

The group are looking forward to running regular sessions, making and mending things for the village and they even have plans for cookery classes in the future. The Shed has developed friendships & created a safe space for conversations about illness, caring responsibilities and loneliness. To find out more [www.marnhullmensshed.org.uk](http://www.marnhullmensshed.org.uk)



## #LifeUnfiltered

The latest in our #LifeUnfiltered project is a series of interviews showing the impact of the short film #LifeUnfiltered made by young people, for young people to raise awareness of mental health.



This project was a collaboration between a group of 25 young people, supported by Healthwatch Dorset, Dorset Mental Health Forum, Dorset Mind, Dorset Healthcare NHS Trust, Poole Youth Forum and Bournemouth University.

The young participants were involved in every step of the process - from the initial workshops, through to interviewing film companies, planning and shooting the film itself, editing and promotion. The film was launched on World Mental Health Day and has over 12,000 views on YouTube.

#LifeUnfiltered was shortlisted for a national Charity Film Award & has won a British Youth Council Star Award.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRCizkYX7KM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRCizkYX7KM)

*“For me, working on this film was a way to not only get to know new people and gain confidence, but a way to make sure fewer people end up so mentally unwell that they end up in psychiatric hospitals.”* Siobhan

## Lyme Forward

Our funding helped launch the “Care Links Lyme” project which aimed to increase the number of non-clinical support groups and strengthen links with health & care professionals in and around Lyme Regis.

Two events were held in April & November 2018 bringing together the public, voluntary sector groups & health and care professionals. The feedback was very positive and well over 100 local people & over 30 organisations attended.

*“A great opportunity to talk to representatives of groups offering such a wide range of support to Dorset communities.”*

**Health and Wellbeing**  
**Care Links Lyme**  
part of LymeForward

### Drop-in to DRoP!

Medication is sometimes essential. GPs and nurses are sometimes vital. Hospitals are sometimes critical.

But equally important is doing all we can to keep fit and healthy; so is having good support if recovering from treatment or living with long-term conditions.

DRoP! (Don't Rely on Pills!) is a free one-off drop-in event bringing to Lyme Regis a range of people and organisations that offer non-clinical services helping us to maintain physical and mental health, to live in as fulfilling a way as possible, or to manage living independently when that is difficult. Thirty-five organisations have so far promised to come, with more on the way.

**When? Wednesday 28th November**, any time between 4.00pm & 7.00pm.

**Where? The Pine Hall of the Baptist Church**, Broad Street.

Please put the date in your diary now.



To find out more about Lyme Forward  
<https://www.lymeforward.com/>



# Making a difference together

[www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk)  
@HwatchDorset & Facebook

