



Annual Report 2019/20

# Guided by you

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**Healthwatch Dorset** is the county's independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We work with communities and organisations across the whole of Dorset to ensure local people are put at the heart of health and social care.

## Key

-  Dorset Council
-  BCP Council



# Message from our Chair

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Viv Aird,  
Chair, Healthwatch Dorset Steering Group

“Both councils would like to congratulate Healthwatch Dorset for the excellent work they have achieved in 2019/20. Evolving Communities, Louise and her team can take great credit for helping to establish a new service delivery model for Dorset whilst maintaining the very important role of listening to people to influence decision making and to make positive change.”

Christopher Skinner, Partnerships & Engagement Officer, Dorset Council

Welcome to Healthwatch Dorset's Annual Report for 2019/20. It has been a busy and productive year with many changes along the way. We have a new provider (Evolving Communities), we relocated to a new office so we are in the heart of the community, and we recruited two new members of staff. We also recruited a new volunteer-led Steering Group, bringing a wealth of additional skills and experience to the organisation.

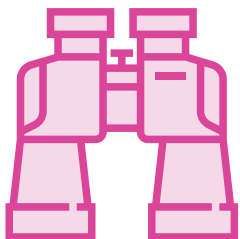
This report highlights our work over the last year to help put people at the centre of health and social care. During the year, the team gathered feedback from over 1,500 local people, produced reports on the future of health and social care services, including A&E and cancer support, and raised awareness of diabetes by working with an amazing group of young people. We also helped thousands of people find the information and support they needed about local services.

I would like to thank the Healthwatch staff and volunteers who are dedicated to making sure that the health and care system in Dorset reflects what local people expect and need. I would also like to thank everyone who has shared their story with us over the last year, your feedback really can make a difference.

At this anxious time, with the coronavirus outbreak having such an impact on all of us, it has never been more important to have a strong independent voice for local people. I am proud to be involved with Healthwatch Dorset and I am looking forward to working with local people in the coming year to improve health and care services across Dorset.

**Viv Aird**  
**Chair, Healthwatch Dorset Steering Group**

# About us



## Our vision is simple

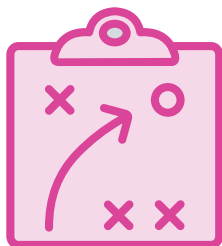
Health and care that works for you.

People want health and social care support that works – helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.



## Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.



## Our approach

People's views come first – especially those who find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



## How we find out what matters to you

People are at the heart of everything we do. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- Visiting services to see how they work
- Running surveys and focus groups
- Going out in the community and working with other organisations.



## Find out more about us and the work that we do

- 🌐 [healthwatchdorset.co.uk](https://healthwatchdorset.co.uk)
- 📘 HealthwatchDorset
- 🐦 @HWatchDorset
- 📷 [healthwatch.dorset](https://www.instagram.com/healthwatch.dorset)

# Our priorities

Last year (2018/19) over 2,000 people told us about the improvements they would like to see health and social care services make in 2019/20. These were our priorities for the year based on what you told us and taking into consideration national and local priorities in health and social care.

## Diabetes awareness

We encouraged young people to speak up about their experience of living with type 1 diabetes, to raise awareness and reach out to other young people living with the condition (see p.9).



## Raising awareness with real-life stories

Working with Bournemouth University, we produced a series of impactful films about local people's experiences of health and social care to inform and educate students and the wider community (see p.10).

## A & E services at Poole Hospital

We investigated what matters most to people who use Poole Hospital A&E, to help shape decisions about changes to A&E performance standards nationally and locally (see p.11).



## Cancer support in West Dorset

We reported on support services for cancer patients, their carers and family, to inform a new Macmillan project to provide earlier cancer support (see p.12).

## NHS Long Term Plan

We asked local people about the changes they would like to see to improve the NHS in Dorset, as part of the NHS Long Term Plan (see p.13).





# Highlights from our year

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Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported people in 2019/20.

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## Health and care that works for you



**120 volunteers** helped to carry out our work. In total, they gave up over **400 hours** of their time.

We formed a new Healthwatch Dorset Steering Group, with **5 members** and **4 special advisors**.

We employed **4 staff**, including two new members of the team.

We received **£204,800** local authority funding.

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## Providing support

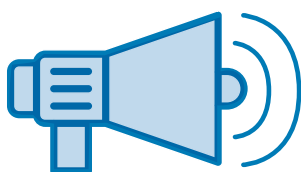


Over **1,500** people shared their health and social care stories with us.

Over **1,000** people contacted us for information, advice and support over the phone, by email, online and at community events and venues.

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## Reaching out



**26,874** people engaged with us through our website.

We reached **212,190** people through social media.

We engaged with thousands of people at over **200** community events across the county.

Our e-bulletin was sent to over **220** people each month to share our news, information and feedback.

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## Making a difference to care



We published **2 reports** and **7 short films** about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and we made **16 recommendations** for improvement.



# How we've made a difference

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Speaking up about your experience of health and social care services is the first step to change. Take a look at how your views have helped make a difference to the care and support people receive in Dorset.

## Empowering young people with diabetes to speak up

We talked to young people about their experiences of living with type 1 diabetes. We helped them raise awareness of the condition and to reach out to other young people in Dorset who are living with diabetes.

We worked with six schools and the Dorset Diabetes Nurse Team, and talked to hundreds of young people across the county. With our support, they ran assemblies during Diabetes Week, created a blog, and produced two short films that were shown in schools and promoted on social media during World Diabetes Day. The blog and videos have been seen by thousands of people and shared with health commissioners and providers.

14-year-old Rosey's blog raised awareness of what it's like to live with type 1 diabetes. She won the Young Person's Outstanding Contribution at the Diabetes UK Inspire awards for campaigning to get glucose sensors available on prescription.

“I have a lot of anxiety about going to sleep because a lot of diabetics die in their sleep and you just hope it won't be you. Please don't make assumptions about my diabetes and don't bully me about it - just ask me if you have any questions.”

Nicole, age 16



Rosey, campaigning to get glucose sensors available on prescription

“I used to have to finger prick my glucose levels eight times a day, but now I have the glucose scan 11 times a day which is much better. The insulin pump has changed my life. I really enjoyed working with Healthwatch Dorset. I wanted to reach out to other young people with type 1 diabetes and also raise awareness of the condition among those who do not know what it is like.”

Issy, age 13

The number of people diagnosed with diabetes has more than doubled in the last 20 years. There are now almost 3.7 million people living with diabetes in the UK. Approximately 15% of those are living with type 1 diabetes. (Source: Diabetes UK)

### For more information

Full details of this story, blog and videos are on our website: [healthwatchdorset.co.uk/work/our-projects/](https://healthwatchdorset.co.uk/work/our-projects/)

## Raising awareness with real-life stories

Sharing people's stories is a great way to build understanding and influence change.

We worked with Bournemouth University to create a series of films about real people's experiences of the health and social care system, including homelessness, end-of-life care and living with long-term health conditions.

The films were shared with health and social care students and promoted in the wider community.

Matt's story was nominated for a national Charity Film Award. It provides a powerful insight into how unexpected life events can create a pathway into homelessness, substance misuse and poor health, which can prove difficult to move beyond. Matt also tells how local charity Hope Housing helped him find stability and new direction.

**"We are delighted with the opportunity to have collaborated with Healthwatch Dorset on these films. They are part of embedding real world learning into health and social care education at Bournemouth University and ensuring that the voices of people with lived experience are central to our student's personal and professional development."**

Dr Mel Hughes,  
Bournemouth University



Matt, talking about his experiences of homelessness

***"I split up with my girlfriend. I was unwell and being stubborn, not asking for help and just trying to keep being self-employed. I was in and out of hospital with nowhere to go... I couldn't look after myself anymore, I just ground to a halt."***

### For more information

Visit our website to read more:

[healthwatchdorset.co.uk/work/our-projects/](https://healthwatchdorset.co.uk/work/our-projects/)

Watch the films:

[bournemouth.ac.uk/faculty-health-social-sciences/](https://bournemouth.ac.uk/faculty-health-social-sciences/)





Photo credit: Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

## Measuring A & E performance at Poole Hospital

Poole Hospital is one of 14 hospitals across the country testing new A&E performance measures, looking at the quality of care, communications, and facilities, as well as waiting times. We worked on this national project with Healthwatch England, gathering public feedback to inform future decisions about changes to A&E nationally and locally.

We investigated what matters most to people who use Poole Hospital A&E, carrying out 10 visits and interviewing over 40 patients, family members and carers. The most common concerns were about the quality of communications. People wanted to be better informed about waiting times, about what would happen while they were in A&E, and who they could talk to for information and support.

***“The department seems heavily staffed, but no-one will tell us what’s happening. I keep having to ask the questions.”***

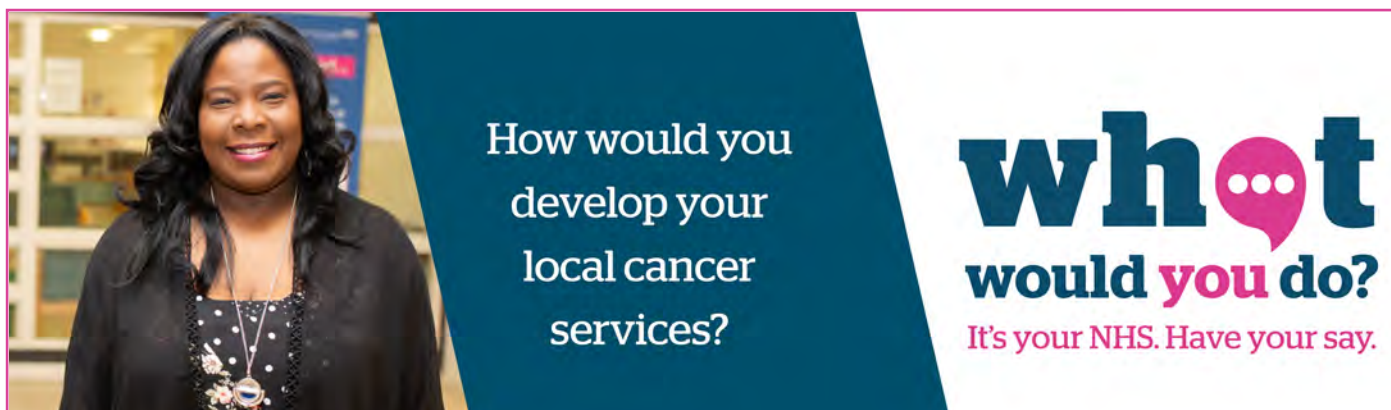
***“I didn’t want to bother the staff, but I’d had an hour wait and felt that was enough of sitting, not knowing what was happening.”***

### For more information

Visit our website to read the full report:  
[healthwatchdorset.co.uk/reports-publications/](http://healthwatchdorset.co.uk/reports-publications/)

**“I welcome this report and how it has captured what we know to be true – that patients want timely care that they are kept informed about, and to know who is providing it. I am looking forward to working with Healthwatch Dorset to identify how their recommendations can best be implemented to better support our patients.”**

Mark Mould, Chief Operating Officer,  
Poole Hospital



## Improving cancer support in West Dorset

Macmillan Cancer Support and the Wessex Cancer Alliance want to provide earlier cancer support for people in the community. We gathered community insight to help them develop two new pilot projects called **Right by You**, for West Dorset and Southampton. We worked in partnership with Wessex Voices and Healthwatch Southampton.

Over 100 cancer patients, carers, and family members responded to our online survey and we interviewed almost 40 people face-to-face across Dorchester, Weymouth, and Portland.

**“When you are going through a diagnosis or treatment for cancer, it’s so important to have the right support. Your comments will be used to inform and support the evaluation of our pilot projects in West Dorset and Southampton, which aim to provide people with support in the community earlier in their cancer journey.”**

Chris Scally, Strategic Partnership Manager,  
Macmillan Cancer Support

This is what they told us:

- People are grateful to the NHS for their medical treatment.
- Those affected by cancer would like more support with emotions, medical treatment, finances and transport.
- There is less support available for some groups, including younger patients, carers, and family members.
- People are seeking different support options in their local communities.
- Almost 40% of those who completed our online survey and 60% of those we interviewed, had not talked about their support needs with a NHS professional.

### For more information

The publication of this report has been delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic, but it will be available on our website later in the year.



### 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 Dorset is here for you.

🌐 [healthwatchdorset.co.uk](https://healthwatchdorset.co.uk)

☎ 0300 100 0102

✉ [enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk)



# Long Term Plan

**#WhatWouldYouDo**

## NHS Long Term Plan

Following a commitment from the Government to increase investment in the NHS, the NHS published the **Long Term Plan** in January 2019, setting out its key ambitions over the next 10 years. In the summer of 2019, Healthwatch launched a countrywide campaign to give people a say in how the plan should be implemented in their communities.

We asked people #WhatWouldYouDo to improve the NHS locally? Here is a summary of our work and what we found.

### What do people want?

The top issues that people told us they wanted services to focus on were:

- Quicker and easier access to GPs
- Faster diagnosis and treatment options
- Annual health checks and more regular support for people with long-term conditions.

### What are we doing about it?

We have been working with Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group to embed our findings into their future plans for local services. In the coming year, we will be working with local Primary Care Networks, made up of groups of local GPs and Patient Participation Groups, to help improve access to GP services, annual health checks, and support for people with long-term conditions and their carers.

### For more information

Visit our website to read the full report: [healthwatchdorset.co.uk/reports-publications/](https://healthwatchdorset.co.uk/reports-publications/)

## Highlights



More than **500** people shared their views with Healthwatch Dorset, **306** completed our online survey and **195** people shared their views at events and meetings.



We visited **5** local groups reaching different communities across the county, including **3** focus groups to find out about the views and experiences of people with learning disabilities and autism.



We attended **6** community events and venues to speak to the public about their views and experiences, including a Picnic in the Park at Swanage, patient groups at GP surgeries, hospitals, and a local college.



## Listening to people with learning disabilities and autism

As part of our campaign to identify how people wanted to improve their local NHS, we held three focus groups to find out about the views and experiences of people with learning disabilities and autism. Common themes emerged about the care and support they would like to help manage their condition and stay healthy:

- Advice on how to sleep well
- Access to friendship groups
- More speakers at groups to provide information around health and care
- More general easy read information provided by their GP.

The following needs were also highlighted:

- The opportunity to be accompanied when accessing services
- Shorter waiting times for appointments to help reduce anxiety
- Opportunities to talk to other patients to find out what treatments would be like
- Always being told about test results, whether positive or negative
- Being able to maintain normal levels of independence during care.

“Healthwatch Dorset has done a great job reaching out to our communities... to find out what they think about health and staying well in Dorset. We would like to thank Healthwatch Dorset and everyone who took part, because it’s vital we hear what’s important to local people, where they think we need to do better and where they think we should focus our efforts for the future.”

Tim Goodson, Leader for Dorset Integrated Care System and Accountable Officer for Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group



# Helping you find the answers



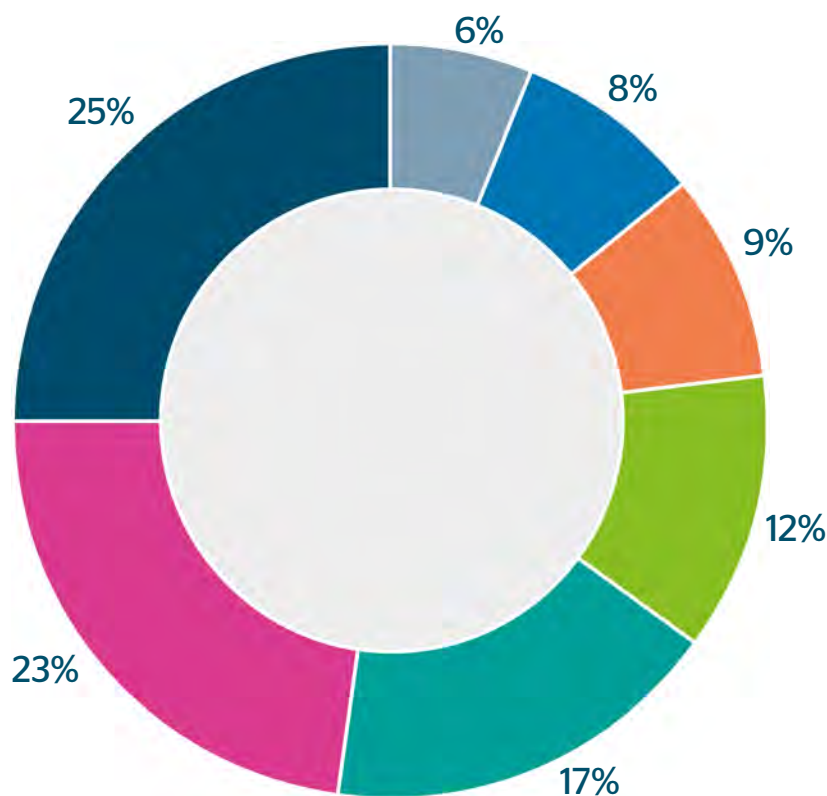


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch Dorset plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped over 240,000 people get information and advice by:

- Answering over 1,000 enquiries over the phone, by email, online, and at community events and venues
- Providing information and advice to 26,874 people via our website
- Promoting services and information that can help people on our social media, reaching 212,200 people.

Here are some of the areas that people asked about







## Sharing your ideas to improve care

When Mary visited Bournemouth Hospital for an appointment, she was frustrated because nobody knew she has learning disabilities. She suggested the hospital adopt the Sunflower Scheme used by supermarkets, where sunflower lanyards are given to customers who have a learning disability if they want to be easily identified. We shared Mary's suggestion with the hospital, and they told their staff about the scheme.



## Helping you access NHS dental care

David from Weymouth wanted to know how to find a local NHS dentist - this is something we are regularly asked about. We directed him to the NHS website that shows dentists who are taking NHS patients, and he was able to register with a dentist in his area.



## Transport to health appointments

Sarah from Christchurch asked for help getting her husband to Lymington Hospital. He has idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis and is unable to walk far, but the hospital is a 20-minute walk from the bus stop. We gave Sarah information about local patient and community transport schemes and she made arrangements with Christchurch Neighbour Cars.



## 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 Dorset is here for you.

 [healthwatchdorset.co.uk](https://healthwatchdorset.co.uk)

 0300 100 0102

 [enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk)

# Our volunteers

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Lisa, Healthwatch Dorset volunteer

At Healthwatch Dorset we are supported by 120 volunteers. They help us find out what people think is working well, and how people would like to improve services in their communities.

This year our volunteers:

- Raised awareness of our work at events, in the community and with health and care services
- Visited services to make sure they are providing people with the right support
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on
- Helped support our day-to-day running.

Steering Group members, who are also all volunteers, represented Healthwatch Dorset at meetings with partner agencies.

## Assessing the care environment in Dorset hospitals

Twenty-one of our volunteers helped eight Dorset hospitals with their annual NHS Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE), reporting on their strengths and areas for improvement.

They were guided by our staff to use the national NHS assessment framework to look at non-clinical elements of hospital care which affect patient experience. This includes cleanliness; food and hydration; privacy, dignity, and wellbeing; condition, appearance, and maintenance of hospitals; how well the needs of patients with dementia are met; and how well the needs of patients with a disability are met.

The results, which were published by the NHS in March 2020, showed that all hospitals rated very highly for overall cleanliness, while other areas need some improvement.

### For more information

Visit our website: [healthwatchdorset.co.uk/work/our-projects/](https://healthwatchdorset.co.uk/work/our-projects/)



Chris, Healthwatch Dorset volunteer

“It is great to be involved in PLACE, as helping to ensure a good environment really matters. The role is an important one, giving up some time to help patients is really rewarding and plays a small part in helping the NHS to improve.”

Chris, Healthwatch Dorset volunteer



## 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 Dorset.

🌐 [healthwatchdorset.co.uk](https://healthwatchdorset.co.uk)

☎ 0300 100 0102

✉ [enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk)



## Spotlight on our volunteers

We could not do what we do without the support of our amazing volunteers. Meet some of the team and read what they get up to.



### Ellie-May

#### **Young Volunteer of the Year [Awarded by Dorset Volunteer Centre, nominated by Healthwatch Dorset]**

Ellie wants to work in healthcare in the future. She has volunteered with Healthwatch Dorset for a few years, joining us at engagement events to empower local people to make positive changes in local health and care services. She also volunteers to raise funds for Cancer Research UK.



### Bob

#### **Volunteer of the Year [Awarded by Dorset Volunteer Centre, nominated by Healthwatch Dorset]**

Since retirement, Bob has been a valued volunteer with Healthwatch Dorset. He gives his time to help others and supports us with a variety of activities. He takes an active role, helping to improve the way patients, the public, service users and carers can influence their own care and how services are planned and delivered.



### John

#### **Dementia Friends training**

Our volunteer John delivered a Dementia Friends training session to our staff and volunteers this year. This is just one example of how our volunteers can use their skills and knowledge to raise our awareness and understanding, as well as supporting the work we do in the community.

“I love volunteering as it allows me to interact with the public, share the charity’s message and it gives me a real sense of achievement.”  
Ellie-May

“The award-winning volunteer scheme goes from strength to strength and the newly formed steering group has a wealth of knowledge and experience that can only benefit Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.”  
Christopher Skinner, Partnerships & Engagement Officer, Dorset Council

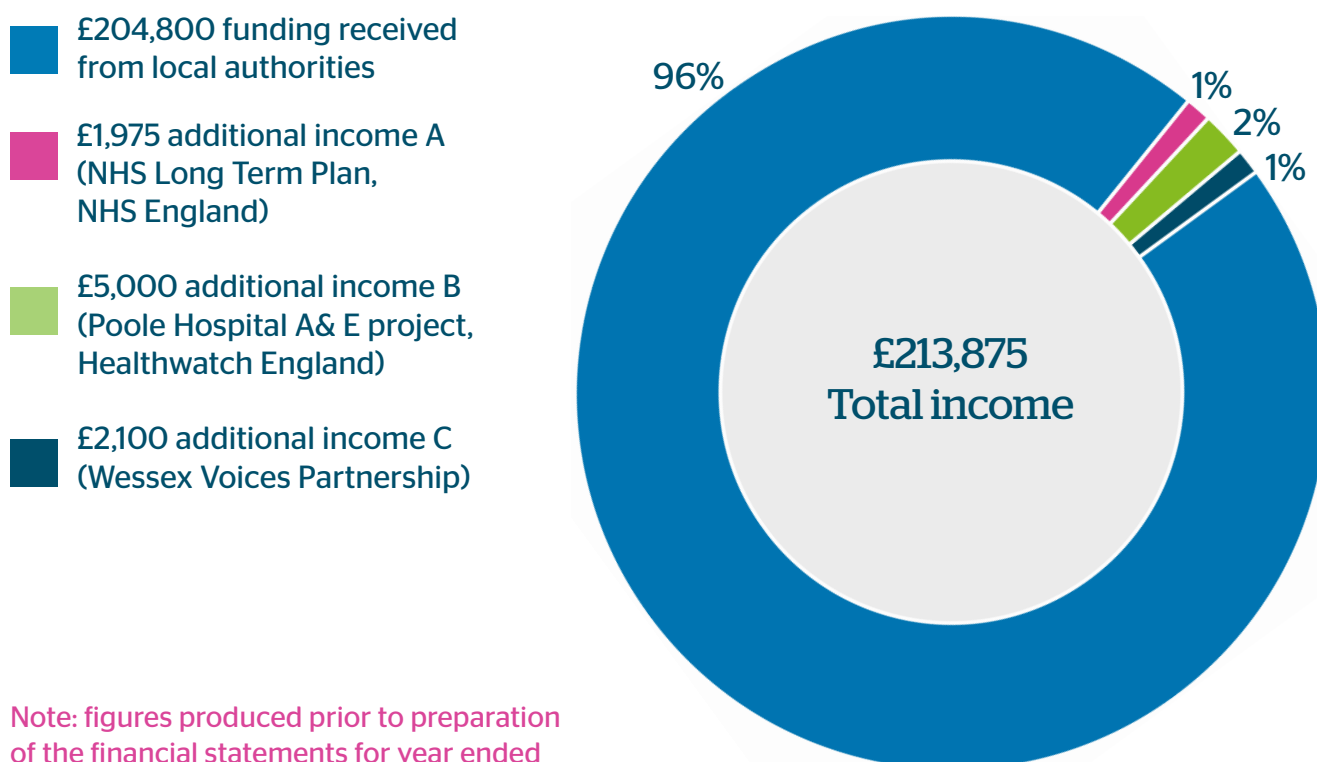
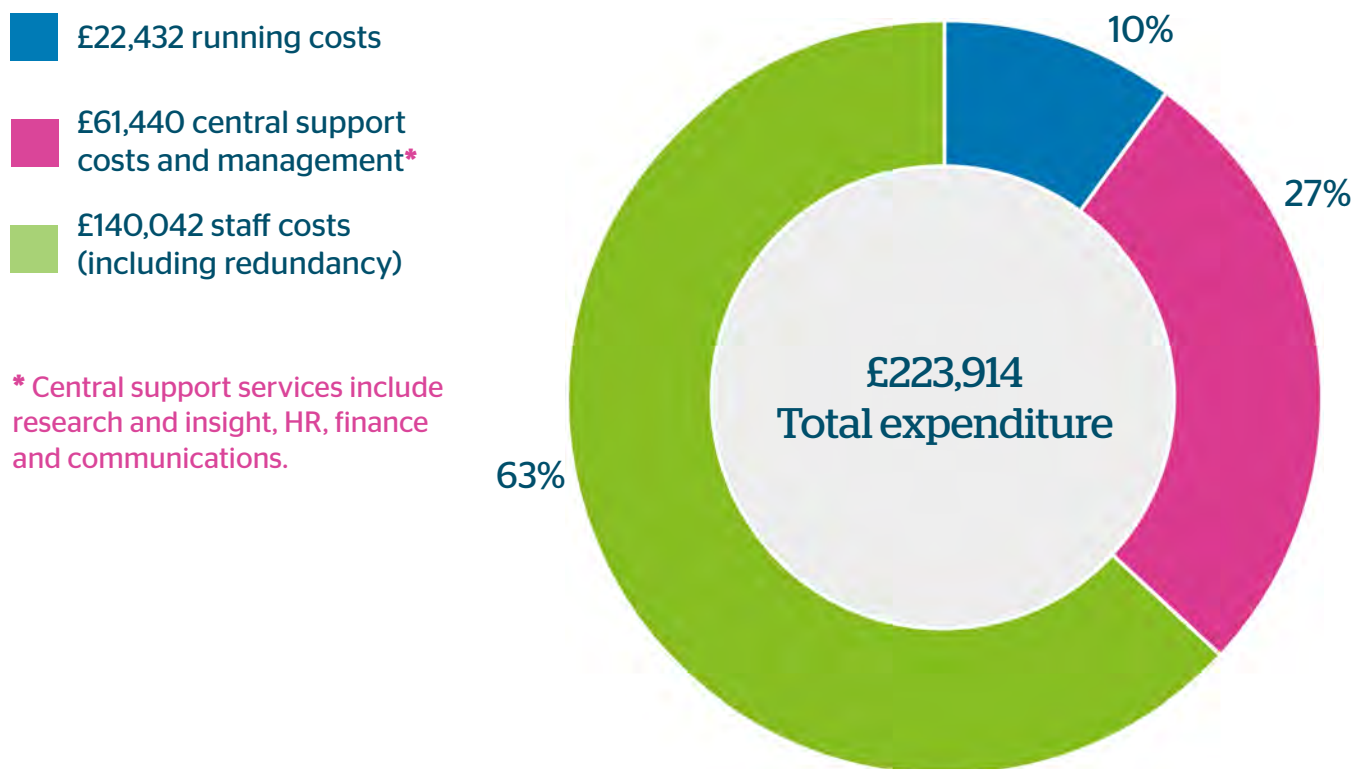
# Our finances

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Ebi, Special Advisor  
Healthwatch Dorset Steering Group

We are funded by our local authorities, Dorset County Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council (BCP), under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019/20 we received £204,800.



Note: figures produced prior to preparation of the financial statements for year ended 31 March 2020.



# Our plans for next year

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# Message from our Manager

## Working together to make a difference

We worked with many people and organisations across the county last year to make health and social care better for local communities, and we are looking forward to working with many more as we continue to help services develop and improve.

## Looking ahead

We have several new projects planned for 2020/21. These will look into issues raised by local people, while reflecting national and local priorities in health and social care, including the impact of coronavirus.

Our projects will focus on the following themes:

- Accessing local health and care services during the coronavirus pandemic
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Primary Care Services (such GPs, pharmacy, and dentistry)
- Transport to health and social care services
- Accident and Emergency Care (A&E).

We will develop and adapt our plans during the year, as services begin to recover from the pandemic, to make sure our work is relevant, meaningful and reflects people's needs.

## Connecting with local communities

Social distancing measures may mean we need to be creative about how we reach our communities, but there are plenty of ways people can share their experiences with us through online surveys and focus groups, social media and by talking to us on the phone.

**“We will reach out and listen to our local communities, and work with you to influence positive change in health and social care.”**



Louise Bate, Healthwatch Dorset Manager

## Thank you

Finally, I would like to say a personal thank you to everyone who has shared their story with us, and to our volunteers and the many groups we work with. Your invaluable support helps us connect with local communities so that we can ensure their voice is heard by those working at the highest levels in health and social care across the county.

**Louise Bate**  
**Healthwatch Dorset Manager**

# About Healthwatch

## Here to make care better

The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of Healthwatch in giving people who find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up.

The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan should be implemented locally. Thanks to the thousands of views shared with Healthwatch we were also able to highlight the issue of patient transport not being included in the NHS Long Term Plan review – sparking a national review of patient transport from NHS England.

We simply could not do this without the dedicated work and efforts from our staff and volunteers and, of course, we couldn't have done it without you. Whether it's working with your local Healthwatch to raise awareness of local issues, or sharing your views and experiences, I'd like to thank you all. It's important that services continue to listen, so please do keep talking to your local Healthwatch. Let's strive to make the NHS and social care services the best that they can be.

Sir Robert Francis, Healthwatch England Chair



“I’ve now been Chair of Healthwatch England for over a year and I’m extremely proud to see it go from strength to strength, highlighting the importance of listening to people’s views to decision makers at a national and local level.”



# Thank you

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

- Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- All of our amazing staff and volunteers
- The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work
- Our partners including Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council; Dorset Council; NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group; Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Health and Wellbeing Board; Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board; and the Dorset NHS Foundation Trusts, including The Royal Bournemouth & Christchurch Hospitals, Poole Hospital, Dorset County Hospital, Dorset Healthcare University, and South Western Ambulance Service.



The Healthwatch Dorset Steering Group (pictured left to right): Viv Aird, Naomi Patterson, Sue Warr, Ebi Sosseh, Margaret Guy, Peter Greensmith, Amanda Shirlin-Brown, Richard Selby and Lauren Bishop.

# Contact us

Tell us what you think of health and social care services in Dorset and help make health and care better for everyone in our community.

☎ 0300 111 0102

✉ [enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchdorset.co.uk)

🌐 [healthwatchdorset.co.uk](http://healthwatchdorset.co.uk)

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