



World of Glass, St Helens

Annual Report 2019-20

Guided by you

Contents

About us	5
Highlights from our year	7
How we've made a difference	9
Helping you find the answers	15
Our volunteers	19
Our finances	23
Our plans for next year	25
Thank you	27
Contact us	28

Message from our Chair



I'm very proud once again to introduce the Healthwatch St Helens Annual Report, for 2019-2020.

In these uncertain times we look forward to what's ahead."

It's been another busy year, with the Support Team and volunteers working hard to make sure that local people are involved in the improvement, development and design of local services.

I'm happy to say that Halton & St Helens Voluntary & Community Action were once again awarded the contract to deliver Healthwatch in St Helens and want to thank everyone who worked so hard during the tendering process.

VCA has been impressive in its rapid response to Covid-19 and the Healthwatch team have been supporting with that work as well as making sure that local people's views are still being heard, at this terrible time that has devastated so many families.

Healthwatch is seen as a trusted and valued partner across St Helens, partly due to its affiliation with Halton & St Helens Voluntary & Community Acton but mostly because of the reputation and relationships we've built up over the years. It's due to this that we've been able to work in collaboration with our statutory sector partners, on ventures like our series of listening event about what services are available locally.

I'm very proud of the Support Team for their commitment to their work, in a year that has seen them all touched, in some way, by bereavement or personal challenges.

As always, the volunteers who support the work of Healthwatch St Helens deserve a special thanks.

In these uncertain times we look forward to what's ahead, to being able to continue the excellent work around our borough's worrying suicide figures as well as our constant efforts to help local people find the right support and treatment.

Tom Hughes
Healthwatch St Helens Chair

Our priorities

Last year nearly 600 people told us about the improvements they would like to see health and social care services make in 2019-20. These are our four priorities for the year ahead based on what you told us.



Making sure that people with additional needs get the services that best meet their needs and have a say about their experiences when accessing services.



Looking at why suicide figures are so high in St Helens and what service providers could be doing better to help reduce these figures.



Helping people to find the services that best meet their needs.



Access to mental health services

The work that Healthwatch St Helens have done over the last year has been really valuable to local communities. They play a crucial role in supporting and signposting vulnerable people, and others who may be in crisis, to access health, social care support and advocacy services".

(Dean McGauley, Policy Unit, St Helens Council)

Covid-19 and our Communities

Being a trusted source of reliable information, Healthwatch has continued to act as a pivotal communication link between local organisations, health services, social care as well as local volunteers all working to help and support local people. The Team, putting themselves in the shoes of others and thinking about what information and support local people were likely to need, added a brand new section on the website covering as many key aspects of COVID-19 as possible, ensuring they had reliable information and links to advice, help, support and services."

Dilys Quinlan, Healthwatch St Helens Director

About us

Here to make care better

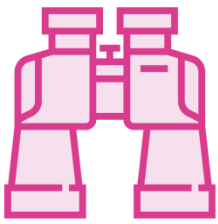
The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of the Healthwatch network in giving people that find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up. The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan 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.

 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.

Sir Robert Francis
Chair, Healthwatch England





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 we do

Website: www.healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

Twitter: @HWStHelens

Facebook: @Healthwatchsthelens

Highlights from our year

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



Health and care that works for you



19 volunteers

helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up around 600 hours.

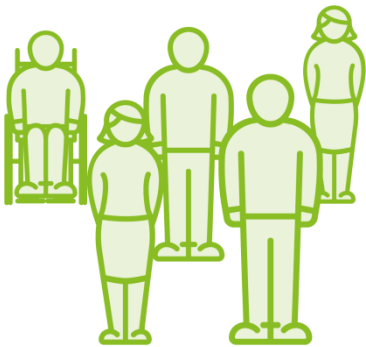
We employed
5 staff

40% of whom are full time, which is the same as the previous year.

We received
£168,000 in funding

from our local authority in 2019-20, the same as the previous year.

Providing support



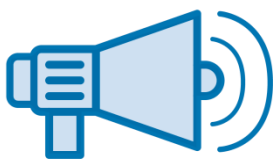
565+ people

shared their health and social care story with us, 47% more than last year.

Nearly 10,000 people

accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support, 125% more than last year.

Reaching out



5600 people

engaged with us through our website, over 2500 people engaged with us through social media, and more than 350 people engaged with us at community events.

Making a difference to care



We published
6 reports

about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and from this, we made 17 recommendations for improvement.

How we've made a difference



Speaking up about your experiences 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 St Helens.

Helping services to communicate better with patients and their families and carers.

A lady came to see us, very distressed at the prospect of her daughter being discharged from the inpatient care of our local Mental Health Trust, while she was still in need of treatment.

She had attended a meeting where a discharge plan was discussed. Her main concern was that her daughter was very unwell and would be at risk if she was discharged too soon.

We spoke to a colleague at the Trust and found out that all patients have a discharge plan from the day they are admitted but it doesn't mean they are about to be discharged. It had not been fully explained to this lady what the plans were for her daughter's care.



Being clearer in communication.

We made a recommendation that staff should be reminded that the terms they use are often confusing to patients and their families and carers.

The Trust made a commitment to us to ensure that patients and their families fully understand terms being used, in all future conversations.

I was so afraid that my daughter was going to be discharged before she was ready'



Students from the Extended College Provision group.

Joint working with a local day centre and college to create accessible information and let more people have their say.

We asked if we could carry out some outreach activities at our local day centre for people with additional needs and this led to a collaboration that helped us reach a group of people in our communities that we might not have heard from.

We were put in contact with a member of the college's Learning Disabilities Team and invited to go along to their Extended College Provision sessions to talk to students about Healthwatch and

ask them about their experience of using services.

One of the groups we worked with had something else in mind than just telling us their experiences. They told us they felt that we needed some marketing material that was more accessible to them and other people with learning needs, and wanted to design a poster that could be used in various health and social care settings.

This has led to us being able to link in with more people with additional needs in our borough and we look forward to picking up this work again after the Covid-19 situation has passed.

They found the whole inclusive project to be a great opportunity to share their ideas and felt valued that their design may be shared with others who have additional needs. It was also interesting and informative, learning about Healthwatch.” Course tutor, Karen



Helping a mother of 3 young children to get the support she needed

I feel listened to and supported, thanks to Healthwatch St Helens.

We met Julie at a community health event. She is a young single mum to 3 children; her eldest is a 10-year-old boy with autism.

Julie told us she felt isolated, that she had no support and her mental health was being affected.

We signposted Julie to a local support service for parents of children with neurodevelopment conditions, where they can learn the best ways to support and understand their children and the challenges they face.

As well as this, we told Julie about a counselling and support service in our

area that is just for women, where she could get some support for herself and meet other women who are having a difficult time.

In addition we told Julie about a local café that is 'autism-friendly'. The café hosts social gatherings and activities where people can meet others in a similar situation to theirs.

Julie's children were able to watch a video about the café so they could see what it was like, which made them excited to go along.

Julie thanked us for what we did for her and told us that she no longer feels alone.

 **I don't feel alone any more".**



Share your views with us

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 St Helens is here for you.

Website: www.healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 111 0007

Email: info@healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

Long

Term

Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights



More than 500 people shared their views with Healthwatch St Helens.



We held focus groups and workshops, one of those specifically for people who have accessed mental health services or knew someone who had.



Healthwatch St Helens attended community events, visited coffee shops, community groups and spoke to people from the YMCA and a local support centre for people who are homeless.

In St Helens we worked in partnership with the other local Healthwatch in our Cheshire & Mersey network, with a total of nearly 3000 people providing feedback across the region.

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. Healthwatch launched a countrywide campaign to give people a say in how the plan should be implemented in their communities.

We engaged far and wide across the borough, with the surveys being distributed by all our statutory sector partners, too. It was on our website and available at all community events we attended as well as us going along to various local centres.

With over 500 surveys completed and two workshops held, the results very much echoed what local people tell us all the time,

that they want faster and smoother referrals to specialists, better access to GP services and more consistent, timely support for people with mental health issues, among others.

We presented our findings at the CCG's Quality Committee and local providers and commissioners are keen to develop services in accordance to what local people have said.

A Report from this work can be found on our website.

 A massive thank you to all the local Healthwatch in our Cheshire and Mersey network, in particular Healthwatch Cheshire, for their superb coordination of our collaborative approach."

Helping you find the answers

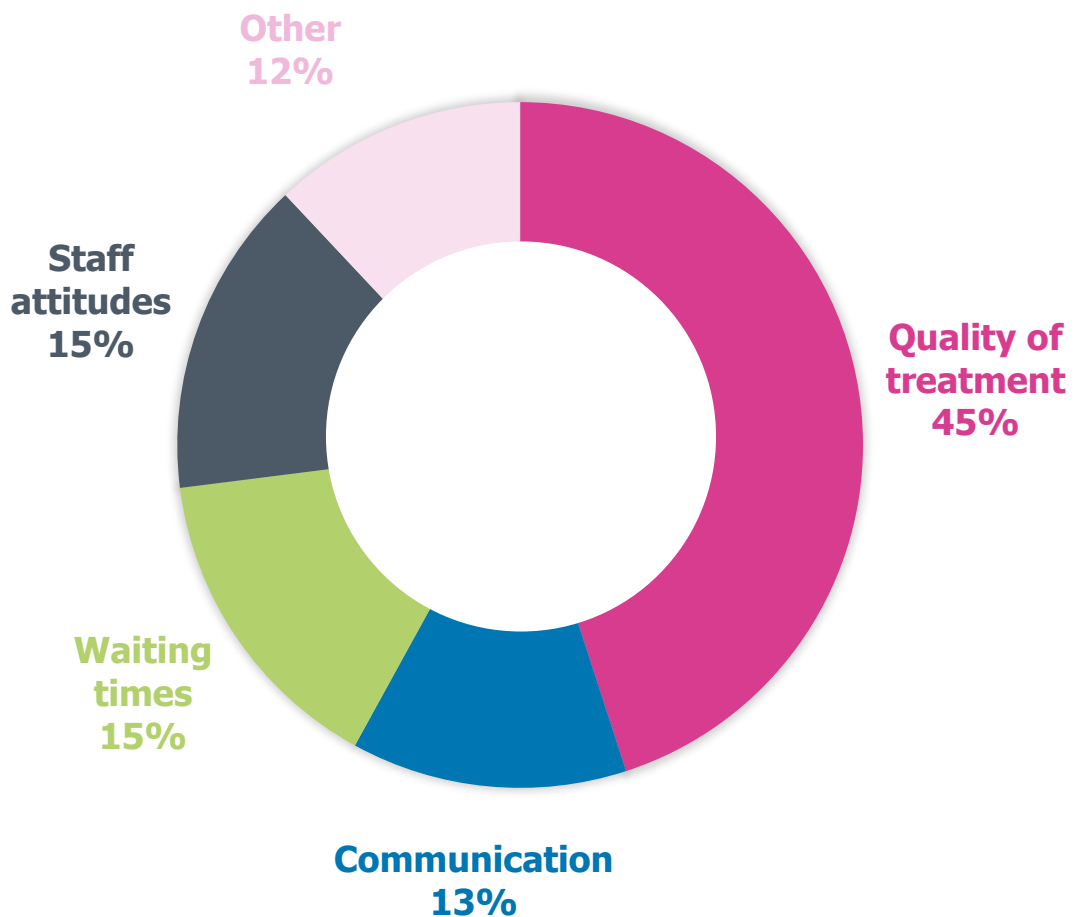


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped over 10,000 people get the advice and information they need by:

- Providing advice and information articles on our website.
- Answering people's queries about services over the phone, by email, or online.
- Talking to people at community events.
- Promoting services and information that can help people on our social media.

Here are some of the areas that people asked about.



Helping people in our communities to find out which service best meet their needs.

It was clear from what people were telling us that there was still some confusion about which services are the right services to best meet healthcare needs.

We designed a series of listening events, in collaboration with CCG colleagues, under the heading of, 'Who Can Help Me?' Each event provided a spotlight on a particular service such as the local pharmacy, looking at what that service offers and when we should use it, including self care and how easy and

affordable it is to manage minor illness and injuries at home.

Thanks to our strong partnership working with St Helens CCG and the Local Authority, we were able to invite key partners to deliver presentations on what services provide and we added in some interactive workshops so that people could demonstrate what they'd learned.

Feedback from people who attended was that we'd made them think twice about which service was the best one for them, in a way that was informative but fun, which would help them to remember what they'd learned.

We worked in partnership with Healthwatch St Helens on the design and delivery of listening events that also provide the community with an opportunity to engage with the CCG. This is another example of how we work together to try and make local health and social care services better for local people.” (Paul Steele, St Helens CCG)

Taking part in an interactive workshop about pharmacy services





Scan QR code to view information in British Sign Language

Reaching our D/deaf community and speakers of other languages.

Through working with our local Deafness Resource Centre and Signing Solutions, we added a QR code to our leaflets so that people in our D/deaf community can watch a video about us and what we do, in British Sign Language. We added a section to our website where this video can be viewed and our information is available in other languages too.



Support after a bereavement.

A lady called us who was unsure about some of her husband's care in his final days. We arranged for her to meet with the Bereavement Coordinator at our local Hospital Trust who answered her questions and helped her to understand some of the things that she was confused about. We heard from this lady again when she called to thank us and tell us that, by arranging for her questions to be answered, we'd helped her find closure.



Help to get dental treatment.

A lady who is 81 years old with sensory impairment, told us that she was in a lot of pain after losing a filling. She was struggling to get treatment as most dentists weren't taking on new patients. We made some calls for her and found one that was. She was so grateful to us for finding her a dental surgery where she could get the treatment she very much needed.



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. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch St Helens is here for you.

Website: www.healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 111 0007

Email: info@healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

Volunteers



At Healthwatch St Helens we are supported by 19 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what improvements people would like to see, to services in their communities.

This year our volunteers:

- Raised awareness of the work we do at events, in the community and with health and care services.
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on.
- Visited local services as part of our Enter & View team.

Volunteers identify what's happening when people who live in residential care homes go into hospital

Thanks to our volunteers listening to care home staff, we were able to make sure that people who live in residential care have a better patient journey when they are admitted to hospital.

Our Local Authority Quality Monitoring Team had introduced the 'Red Bag scheme' which involved all of the resident's information going to hospital with them, in a red bag, including any 'Do Not Attempt Resuscitation' paperwork.

Our Enter & View volunteers were finding more and more, in their conversations with staff at residential homes that residents' information was not always coming back with them, when they were discharged from hospital. Then one of our volunteers who attends the Patient Safety Council at our local Hospital Trust told us that staff there were



Helping elderly people have a better patient experience at our local hospitals

concerned about the cost of replacing lost and damaged bags.

Our recommendation was that more emphasis was put on the bags staying with the patient every step of their journey. Hospital staff committed to ensuring this happened, meaning that vital information would stay with the patient so that their wishes were met as well as their healthcare needs.



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 at Healthwatch St Helens.

Website: www.healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 111 0007

Email: info@healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

Our volunteers

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



Kath

I joined the Enter & View team because I had experience of my elderly father receiving care and realised that there was so much more to consider other than providing basic care. For me, it is about making sure that elderly and vulnerable people are still treated with dignity and respect, whatever their age or disability. These days, many people live away from their families and so it is now much more important that they have someone who gives them a voice.



Pam

When I joined the Board of Directors I felt it was a privilege to support the team and other volunteers. I know that Healthwatch St Helens is working really hard to make sure local people have their voices heard, influencing the improvements, design and delivery of locals services and to make informed choices for their healthcare needs.



Brian

I joined the Advisory Forum of Healthwatch St Helens to help, support and improve local health and wellbeing. I am so proud to have been part of the NHS system for over 10 years in various roles. As a volunteer, I now welcome the new challenge and opportunity to use my skills and experience in the role I undertake with Healthwatch. Also to be part of a great and motivated team.

It's so important for local people to know about Healthwatch and its purpose, and get key messages out into our communities".
Pam Meredith, Director

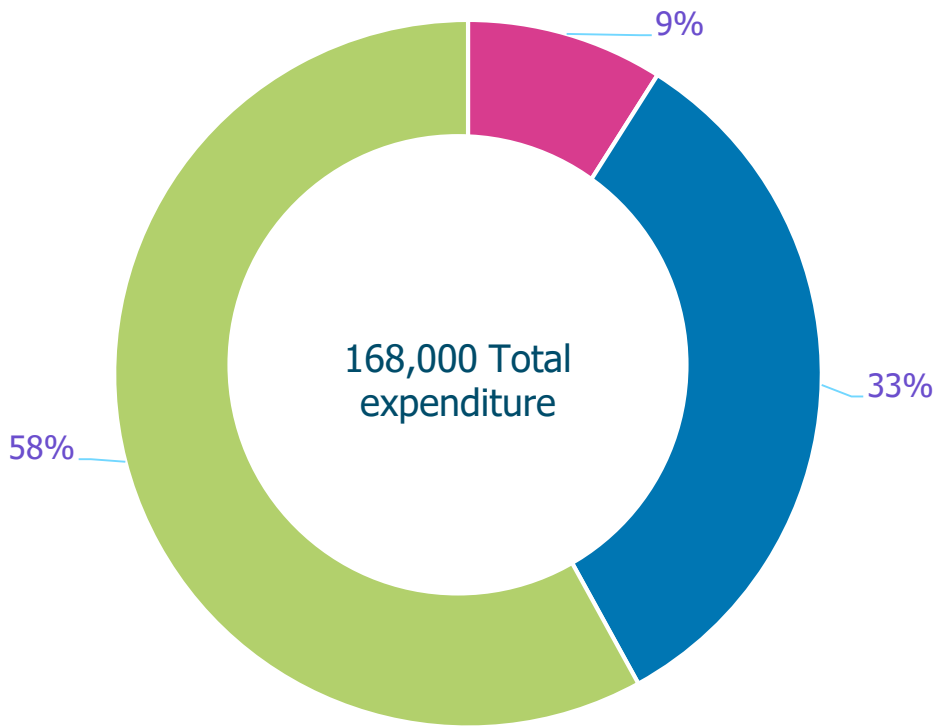


'The Dream', St Helens

Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent 168,000.



- Our Healthwatch activities
- Management & admin costs
- Staff costs

Our plans for next year



Message from our Manager

Looking ahead

In the coming year we will continue to look at the quality of mental health services and focus on the high number of suicides in St Helens. With support from Public Health and a local community-led suicide prevention group we will engage with people who have been bereaved by suicide to gain different insight into what might have happened. Our aim is to identify what's missing in local services and what providers of mental health services need to do better.

We will build on the work we've carried out to gather people's experience of accessing services during the Covid-19 crisis but most of all, we are looking forward to getting back out there in our communities, as soon as it's safe to do so.

Thank you

I couldn't close an Annual Report without thanking the amazing people who help us to do what we do to the standard that we do it. To our Chair, for his continued commitment to making services better for local people and to our Advisory Forum members who give up their time to support our work, as Healthwatch Champions, Representatives, or as part of our Enter & View team.

To our parent company, Halton & St Helens Voluntary & Community Action, I must reserve a special thank you, for the help, support and expertise we benefit from every day. We felt very privileged to be able to support their amazing rapid response to Covid-19, that made a massive difference to the most vulnerable people in our communities.



Looking forward to another exciting year ahead.

This has been a challenging year for all of us, with almost everyone in the support team facing personal tragedy in some way, and who could have predicted Covid-19? Yet we continue to do everything we can to make a difference to the lives of local people. I couldn't ask for a better team around me.

We look forward to finding out what challenges wait for us in the coming year.

Jayne Parkinson-Loftus
Healthwatch St Helens Manager

We are looking forward to getting back out there in our communities".

Thank you

Thank you to everyone that is 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.
- St Helens Clinical Commissioning Group
- St Helens Council
- Halton & St Helens Voluntary & Community Action



Listening to local people

Contact us

Contact number: 0300 111 0007

Email address: info@healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

Twitter: @HWStHelens:

Facebook: facebook.com/@Healthwatchsthelens

Website: www.healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

Contract holder:

Halton & St Helens Voluntary & Community Action, St Marie's,
Lugsdale Road, Widnes, WA8 6DB.

Contact number: 01928 592405

Email address: info@haltonsthelensvca.org.uk

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

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

Healthwatch St Helens is a Registered Charity No. 1106001 and a Company Limited by Guarantee No. 2539153



Healthwatch St Helens
The Beacon
College Street
St Helens
Merseyside
WA10 1BD

www.healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

t: 0300 111 0007

e: info@healthwatchsthelens.co.uk

 [@HWStHelens](https://twitter.com/HWStHelens)

 [Facebook.com/Healthwatchsthelens](https://www.facebook.com/Healthwatchsthelens)
