



**Annual report 2019-20**

# Guided by you

# Contents

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# Message from our chair



As the Chinese saying goes 'may you live in interesting times'. Our Annual Report is usually viewed from a June perspective where the world looks similar to the previous year. That has all changed.

Due to COVID-19, much of our work with volunteers has had to be suspended. And most of our listening has had to be via social media, the phone and email. And of course video platforms! In truth nothing can be a substitute for the face-to-face interaction. And for us this has always been a cornerstone of our work.

Nonetheless I want to praise everybody involved who has helped us overcome these challenges and remain questioning, befriending, signposting and helping Wokingham Borough.

Our Healthwatch Wokingham Borough story is in the following pages. A testimony to our volunteers and staff. They ensure your voice can be heard and that service providers can be made aware and change. We are also doing our job properly when we help to identify good practices that help our community.

We have been active across Perinatal Mental Health, NHS Long Term Plan, Mental Health Advice, Pharmacies providing monitored dosages and working with organisations like Citizens Advice.

I have been privileged for the last 7 years to chair Healthwatch Wokingham Borough since its formation in 2013 and two of our directors have the same vintage.

I am pleased we were able to recruit a new director; Heather Murray last year. Additionally Joanna Dixon joined as Healthwatch Officer and Neil Bolton-Heaton as Head of Healthwatch to work alongside Nick Durman our full time Healthwatch Officer. All of them will keep us refreshed and reinvigorated. Along with our volunteers, we continue to punch above our weight.

I have taken a look at my previous introductions and it would appear that I have had the same theme every time. People and stories and action. And if nothing I want to be consistent. So please read the stories, recognise the people (it's you) and help us all to take action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Stockley', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jim Stockley

Healthwatch Wokingham Borough Chair

# Our priorities

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



NHS Long Term Plan – Engagement with the public via surveys and focus groups to help inform implementation of the plan.



Perinatal Mental Health Support – Hearing the views of mothers about mental health issues and available support.



Adults with learning disability. Hearing from local learning disability support group about what is important to them.



Mental Health Advice and Information – In collaboration with local organisations host world mental health day event



Pharmacies – Identifying the challenges faced by pharmacies to provide monitored dosage systems to patients.



Engagement collaboration with Citizens Advice in all parishes across the Borough.

“Thank you so much for making the time to visit the Group last night. They were most appreciative of the information & ideas you presented to them and what that stirred up in them positively & creatively - Peter Burton from Parenting Special Children Group

# About us

## Here to make care better

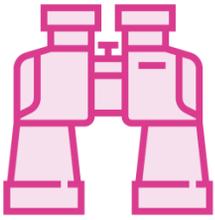
The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of the Healthwatch network in giving people that find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up. The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan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



19  
Jim Stockley (Healthwatch Wokingham) with Sir Robert Francis (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.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)

**Twitter:** @HWwokingham

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/HealthwatchWokingham](https://facebook.com/HealthwatchWokingham)

**Instagram:** [healthwatchwokingham](https://www.instagram.com/healthwatchwokingham)

# Highlights from our year

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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



### 11 volunteers

helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 246 hours

We employed

### 3 staff

1 of whom are full time equivalent, which is similar to the previous year

We received

### £92,00 in funding

from our local authority in 2019-20, 11% less than the previous year

## Providing support



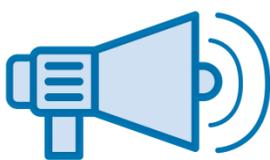
### 601 people

Provided feedback about services and shared their health and social care stories with us, 17% more than last year.

### 31,830 separate interactions

with Healthwatch Wokingham Borough advice and information: 2,772 via website, 8,496 via Facebook, 18,024 via Twitter and 2,538 via Instagram

## Reaching out



### 1,601 people

engaged with us with us at a variety of events in the community.

## Making a difference to care



We published

### 2 reports

about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and from this, we made 14 recommendations for improvement.

# How we've made a difference

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## 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 Wokingham Borough.

### Hearing what is important to learning disabled adults

We wanted to understand what issues learning disabled adults experienced when interacting with health care and whether they had enough support to socialise in the way they wanted.

We arranged an interactive focus session with a local adult learning disability support group. The session concentrated on 4 issues:

1. Communication - Do health care staff communicate with you in a way that you understand?
2. Health Checks – Are you notified by your GP about your annual health check?
3. Health Passports – Do you know about health passports and do you have one?
4. Socialising – Do you receive enough support so that you can go out and socialise where you want and at the



Healthwatch offer our group members support, advice and guidance, as well as being great ambassadors for what we do and what we are about. We really feel that they will work hard to get us the best results. Thank you for being there to work alongside us.

Learning Disability Group Manager



Jo from Healthwatch talks with the group

The key issue identified was that only 1 member of the group had a health passport, which are extremely important should an individual need to go to hospital.

The key recommendation was that all members of the group should have individual health passports.

The learning disability group rolled out Health passports to group members in April and May 2020.



Mother with young baby

## Perinatal mental health support

Through previous community engagement the Healthwatch Wokingham team were aware that mental health support for new parents does not always meet the needs of the local population.

We gathered experiences to provide an insight into the current provision and understand more about how having a baby can affect parent's mental health.

We circulated a survey using social media and community-based partners and received 67 responses.

We visited messy play groups at Starlings

and Rainbow Park children's centres. We ran creative journaling workshops at Mumszone group and visited a support group for parents who have had a baby in special care at Royal Berkshire Hospital.

72% of people we spoke to felt their mental health had declined in the perinatal period and 42% were not able to manage their mental health needs with the NHS support services available to them.

Our project identified some key areas in Wokingham Borough that would benefit from development in the future. The **Experiences of Perinatal Mental Health Support** report will be published soon.

 Thank you so much for supporting Mums' Zone by delivering two fantastic workshops. We've had such positive feedback from all participants'- Alison Morrow, Health Communities Manager



Wokingham Mayor opens world mental health day event 2019

## Providing advice, information and signposting for mental wellbeing

We know from feedback from residents and from the success of our world mental health day in 2018 that local residents want more information about mental wellbeing and want the information to be accessible and easy to find.

In collaboration with the local 'well being in action group' and other local organisations, we planned and held a 2019 World Mental Health day event on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

The event attracted over 100 local attendees.

We delivered speaker sessions on 17 different subjects including; mindfulness, sleep and wellbeing, sing a long for the brain and nutrition.

In addition there were stands from service providers and various organisations to provide advice and information to the attendees.

Healthwatch Wokingham created a survey to ask attendees: what are the challenges people face when accessing support for their mental health? and what activities do the community use in order to help themselves?

We received 57 responses and the survey results have been shared with the Clinical Commissioning Group.

**We need more connections to support groups for adults. More support for young people with a mental health diagnosis not just at crisis point – response from survey respondent**



### 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 is here for you.

**Website: [www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)**

**Telephone: 0118 4126418**

**Email: [enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)**



Medication Compliance Aid pack

## Helping patients take their medication

We were contacted by a local older persons support organisation who alerted us to difficulties they were having with pharmacies in Wokingham town centre not fulfilling requests for medical compliance aids to help individuals manage their medication.

Medication compliance aids (MCAs) are a way of dispensing medication for those people who have difficulty remembering to take it due to cognitive impairment or who have physical conditions that prevent them from opening packaging.

We wanted to understand the extent of the issue so we talked to every pharmacy, 28, in the Borough.

Our audit revealed that the majority of pharmacies in the Borough were not taking any new customers who require MCAs. Three pharmacies did not offer MCAs at all, even for existing customers. There are 4 pockets in the Borough where new and existing patients could still access MCAs, primarily these were independent pharmacies near the outer boundaries of the Borough .

Reasons for not providing MCAs were, dispensing time, staffing and financial pressures, storage space and GP prescribing period.

We concluded, the lack of choice and support with medication for some of our most vulnerable residents causes us concern. Small, independent pharmacies, are helping people affected but this is likely to become a bigger issue in time.

The report was sent to the CCG, who responded:

"Thank you for the report. Another excellent rounded view of the problem that our residents and primary colleagues are facing.

As you are aware this is a national problem which the CCG, both as Berkshire West and jointly with the BOB Integrated Care System, have escalated nationally".

**I'm really struggling to see and open the medicine packs and worried that I'm going to take the wrong pill at the wrong time. Having the MCA boxes meant I could see what I had to take and when – response from individual who used MCA before they were withdrawn**

# Long Term Plan

**#WhatWouldYouDo**

## Highlights



More than 40,000 people shared their views nationally with Healthwatch.



Our network held over 500 focus groups reaching different communities across England.



Healthwatch attended almost 1,000 community events.

## NHS Long Term Plan

Following commitments 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. Here is a summary of our work.

### What do people want?

Working with our Healthwatch partners in Reading, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and West Berkshire we asked people [#WhatWouldYouDo](#) to improve the NHS locally? Some of the top issues that people told us they wanted services to focus on were:

- Access to healthcare when needed, without delay
- People want to choose and manage their support when they have access to professionals who truly listen, set out options and answer their questions

- A caring and empathetic manner from health care professionals is as important as medical skills and knowledge
- Health professionals must use a variety of communication methods, particularly with people with disabilities, and those who do not speak English as a first language. so these people can be fully involved and informed about their care and kept safe
- People who are happy to use technology, want the NHS to enable it to its full extent (such as making all GP appointment slots bookable online)

You can find a link to the NHS Long Term Plan Public Engagement Report [here](#) or via our website:

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

# Highlights

We informed the public about the long term plan utilising our website and social media.

We held a focus group with a young carers youth club to explore mental and physical health.

We held a focus group with people with long term conditions.

168 surveys from local residents were undertaken.



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## What we have done in response

We shared the survey report with local and regional health and social care providers and commissioners.

A Healthwatch Wokingham volunteer has attended national forums to improve patient transport services.

The local NHS mental health provider reviewed services and we shared the mental health findings from the Long Term Plan survey.

**Better transport in rural areas, especially when getting to doctors' surgeries and hospitals. It is also important to have transport that enables people to visit people when they are in hospital, which can help them remain positive and so aid their recovery - Quote from a survey respondent**



# Helping you find the answers

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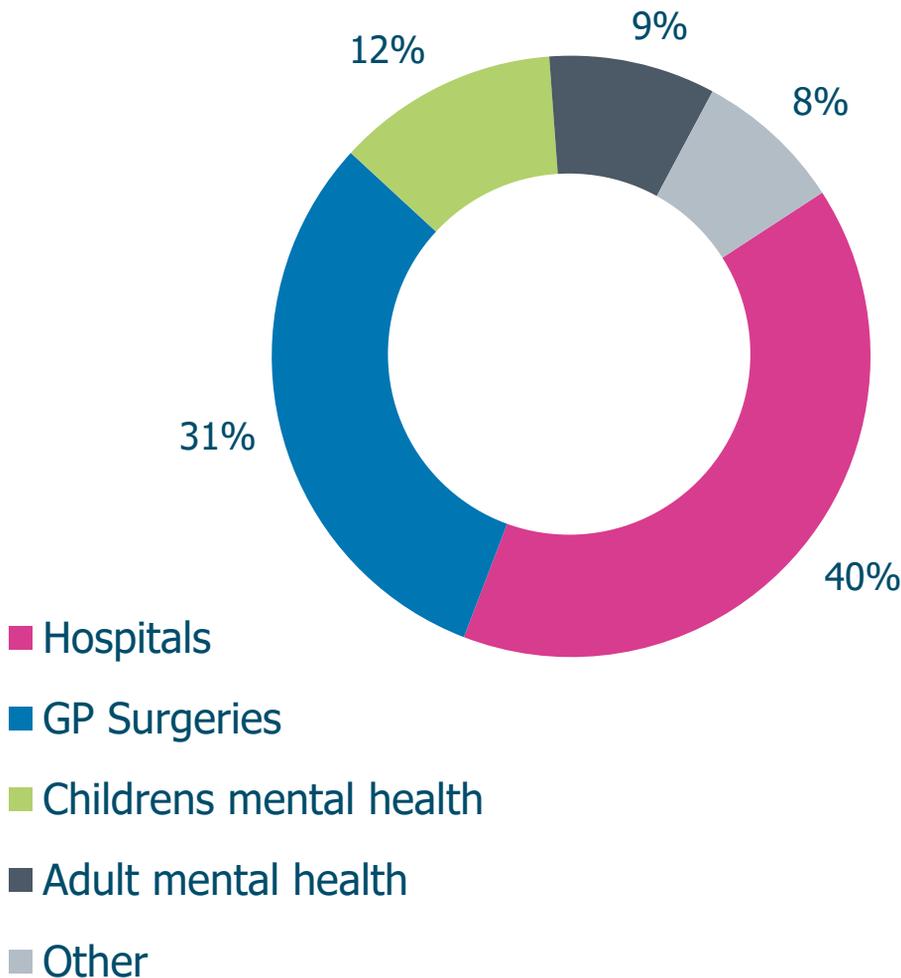


**Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.**

This year we helped people get the advice and information they need by:

- Building a new web site to make it easier to find information
- Providing advice and information articles on our website
- Answering people’s queries about services over the phone, by email or social media
- Talking to people at community events
- Joining in on other VCSe meetings
- Promoting services and information that can help people on our social media.

**Here are the top services areas that people talked to us about.**



## Case study: Community peer support project to benefit postnatal mental health

Mumzone was set up as a holistic health and wellbeing intervention targeting inactive mums at risk of poor mental health in Slough and Wokingham.

The weekly programme provided physical activity in the form of yoga and support through informal workshops aimed at encouraging behavioural change.

Healthwatch Wokingham facilitated 4 creative journaling sessions at Mumzone. This was welcomed by the participants who felt that journaling and the resulting discussion helped

with their wellbeing.

Each session had a theme such as 'My Journey' and involved creating a journal entry, discussion of mental health support and sharing their pages.

The group participants supported each other to open up about the joys and challenges of raising small children therefore increasing social connections.

Healthwatch were able to signpost families towards local support and use their experiences to inform recommendations in the forthcoming Healthwatch Wokingham **Experiences of Perinatal Mental Health Support** Report.

**I would like more community groups like Mumzone. It is brilliant to be able to exercise, meet other Mums and do something creative. I really liked doing the artwork – group participant**



Art work from one of Mumzone discussion groups



### Story 1:

Member of the public contacted us at the beginning of the Covid-19 lockdown and told us "I have a 91 year old Grandmother living in the area who needs help getting food shopping. I live outside the area with a GP so don't want to risk making her ill. Is there anything you could do to help?" We signposted the caller to the local Citizens Advice for support.



### Story 2:

Caller contacted helpdesk on behalf of their friend. The friend is a carer for a child who has learning disabilities and mental health issues. A recent assessment outcome meant a reduction in the amount of care that the child could receive and as a family, they were finding things really difficult. Signposted to Learning Disability services and health advocacy, caller was sent information regarding complaints procedure.



### Story 3:

Individual called for information about the local hospital complaints procedure, as they had not received acknowledgement of their complaint which they hand delivered 10 days ago.

The helpdesk signposted the individual to the local hospitals Patient Advice and Liaison service.

### 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 is here for you.

**Website:** [www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)

**Telephone:** 0118 418 1418

**Email:** [enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)

# Volunteers

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**At Healthwatch Wokingham we are supported by 11 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what people would like to improve, 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.
- Took part in PLACE assessment visits.
- Helped support our work to gather local views on the Long Term Plan through surveys and focus groups
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on.

### **Volunteer helping to drive improvement in patient transport**

Volunteer transport is an important part of Non-Urgent Patient Transport and Roger previously wrote a report for Healthwatch Wokingham on the value of volunteers in the area. It led to improvements in parking for volunteers at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, and a dialogue about additional improvements for volunteers.

Roger is a volunteer driver and knows that patients are really appreciative of what volunteer drivers do for them.

In 2019 he worked with a local ambulance service who wanted to form closer relationships with volunteer driving schemes. The ambulance service contacted local schemes and arranged for 38 representatives to attend a seminar to foster closer working.



Patient transport was the number one issue highlighted in the Long Term Plan Surveys. Roger was invited to join a Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service study and attended a round table meeting in London in February and a further roundtable session in early March.

The study will be published later this year.



#### **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 Wokingham.

**Website:** [www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)

**Telephone:** 0118 418 1418

**Email:** [enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.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.



**Lynne** I contacted Healthwatch a few years ago with a hospital problem I had. They were so understanding I wanted to know more. Colin, my son and I wanted to help in some small way with this unique organisation. Healthwatch are thorough and have a deep understanding of local services.



**Roger** I have been a volunteer with Healthwatch Wokingham for several years, it is a really valuable local resource, and I believe makes a real difference in the community.



**Colin** I joined Healthwatch when I realised how hard they work to make our local people safer and our town more accessible to differently abled folk like myself. They are the voice we need to call upon when issues arise and we find our voices can't be heard. I wanted to help any way I could.



## Sally

I volunteered for Healthwatch as I was newly retired and wanted to get involved in something that would give something back to the local community and make use of some of the skills and experience from my many years working in different types of organisations.

I am always interested in how organisations can improve and provide a better service to the people they support and Healthwatch seems well placed to do that.

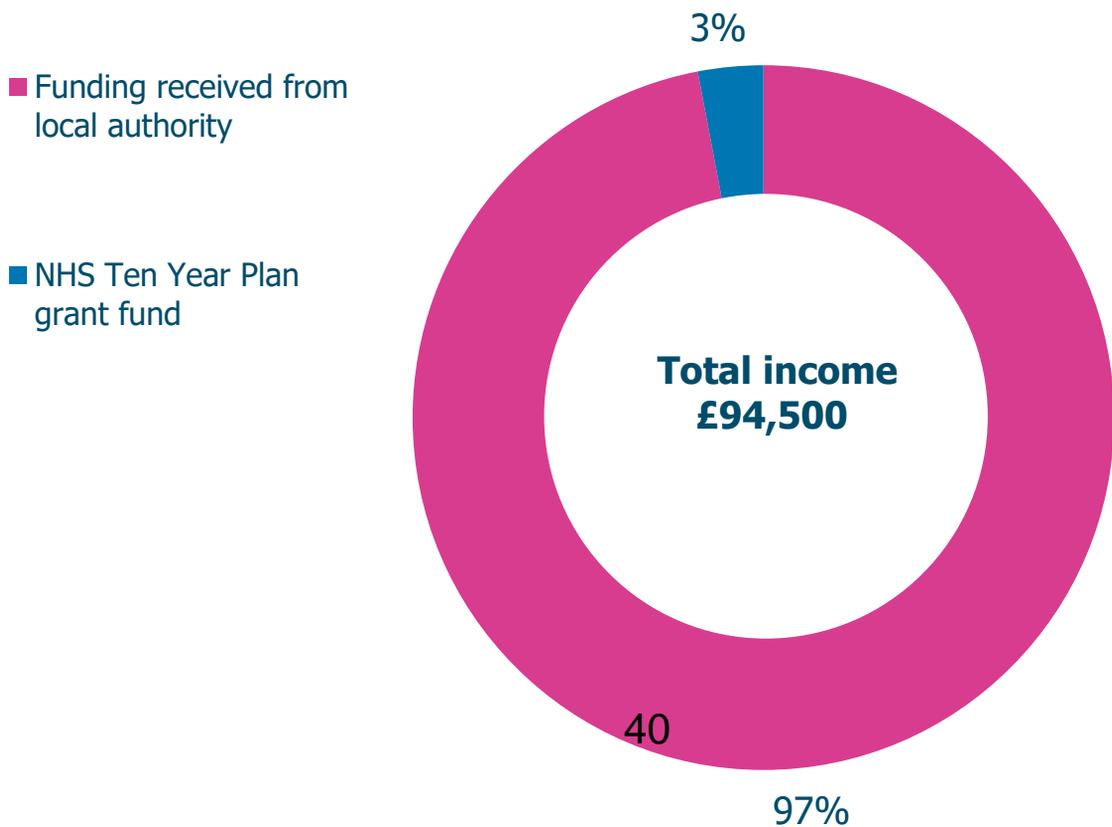
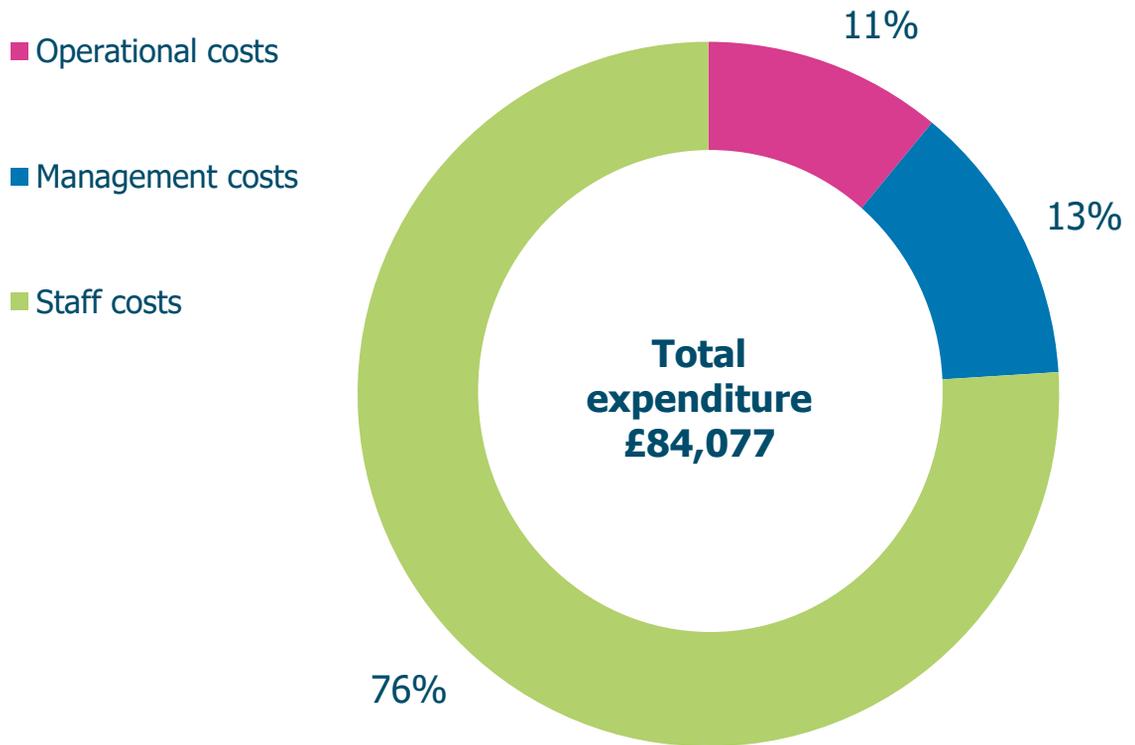
I also thought it would be a good opportunity to meet some new people (and keep my brain active!). Although Covid-19 has put a stop to my immediate involvement I'm keen to get going when I can.

# Finances

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**We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £84,077.**



# Our plans for next year

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## Looking ahead

Our future priorities for 2020/21 will need to be flexible so that we are able to respond to the changing health and social care environment as we start to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. To support this we will be:

- Working closely with our partners in health and social care as services are restarted. As part of this we will be focusing on ensuring that public information regarding services is as informative as possible and that any changes to service design and delivery involve the public.
- Acting on the findings of our Covid-19 survey. This may result in new streams of work such as Digital Inequality.
- Reviewing our Enter and View programme which has been on hold due to Covid-19. This will require new and innovative methods to ensure we safely gather the voice and experiences of people who use health and social care services.

In addition:

- We will continue to work collaboratively with our local Healthwatch partners in Berkshire West.
- We will continue to work with our colleagues in the voluntary and community sector and aim to develop a Healthwatch Ambassador programme.
- We will be working towards Investing in Volunteers accreditation and reviewing our volunteer offer in light of Covid-19.
- We will be implementing the Healthwatch England Quality Framework following our involvement in the pilot.

The challenge for us all, Healthwatch, the NHS and social care providers - is to make sure that we continue to look outwards, talking with communities and listening closely to their experience of the services that they use.

The best services know their customers. They listen to what they like and what could be



better, and they make changes where they are needed.

Although we have seen some progress when it comes to services understanding and acting upon what people want, there is still some way to go before this is commonplace.

Therefore, we will continue to raise awareness of how people can have their say and encourage services to act on their service users' views. Changes that are ongoing in the health and social care system in Wokingham are challenging yet also present us with opportunities. Our strong working relationships with partners across the health, social care and community sectors enhances our ability to collaborate, challenge and identify opportunities to ensure that public voice is at the center of the changes. We will actively seek out and respond to these opportunities over the coming year.

Neil Bolton-Heaton  
Head of Healthwatch

# Thank you

Thank you to everyone that is helping us put people at the heart of 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.



# Contact us

Address of local Healthwatch and contact details of any relevant Healthwatch subcontractors as of 31/03/2020.

**Postal Address:** c/o Town Hall, Market Place, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1AP

**Contact number:** 0118 418 1418

**Website:** [www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)

**Email address:** [enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/HealthwatchWokingham](https://facebook.com/HealthwatchWokingham)

**Twitter:** @HWWokingham

**Instagram:** healthwatchwokingham

Address and contact details of the organisation holding the local Healthwatch contract as of 31/03/2020.

**Name:** Help & Care Registered

**Address:** The Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road  
Bournemouth BH7 6DL

**Contact number:** 0300 111 3303

**Email address:** [HubHelpdeskGroup@helpandcare.org.uk](mailto:HubHelpdeskGroup@helpandcare.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.

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