



Annual report 2019-20

Guided by you

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Message from our chair



Keith Stevens
Healthwatch East Sussex
Chair

e share information,
expertise and learning
to improve health and
social care services

This is Healthwatch East Sussex's seventh year of operation and we have continued to play a key role working to ensure that the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services are understood by those who commission and deliver them.

Our year started by coordinating activity with Healthwatch West Sussex and Healthwatch Brighton & Hove to capture and feed resident's and patient's views from across Sussex into the NHS Long-term Plan.

Throughout the year we continued our work on the well-being of children and young people. We also undertook our 'Listening Tour' in the High Weald to capture local views on health and care services, 'Mystery shopped' dentistry services and completed an independent review of Care Homes.

This year we joined the Health and Care Systems Partnership Board in East Sussex and have worked to ensure that the views and concerns of the public, patients and users are considered in their decision-making and will continue to do so.

We were delighted to win the top award in the 'Championing Diversity & Inclusion' category at the 2019 Healthwatch England National Conference for our work with vulnerable residents living in temporary accommodation at Kendal Court.

All of our success in 2019/20 is thanks to our dedicated staff, the tireless work of our volunteers, the continued support of East Sussex County Council and the willingness of the health and social care providers to listen and act upon what we have to say. So once again a big "thank you" from the board of Healthwatch East Sussex.

Keith Stevens
Healthwatch East Sussex 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 were our four priorities based on what you told us.



Priority One: Influencing the Preventative Health Agenda



Priority Two: Young people's mental health



Priority Three: Primary Care and getting to the right health professional



Priority Four: Raising the profile of Healthwatch East Sussex

'Following the CQC [Care Quality Commission] inspection results for ESHT [East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust], I am writing to thank you directly for your contribution to the improvements that we have been able to make. This has given us really helpful feedback and ensured that we have focused on the aspects of care that most needed it. You have also helped us to strengthen the involvement of patients and the public in our work.'

Dr Adrian Bull, Chief Executive, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

About us

Here to make care better

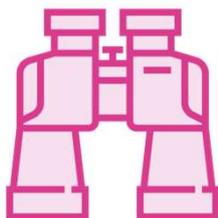
The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of the Healthwatch network in giving people that find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up. The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan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





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
- Undertaking surveys, focus groups and events
- Going out in the community and working with other organisations



Find out more about us and the work we do

Website: www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk

Twitter: @HealthwatchES

Facebook: Facebook.com/HealthwatchESussex

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



24 volunteers

helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 1,250 hours of their time to contribute to Healthwatch activity.

We employed
9 staff

62.5% of whom are full time equivalent

We received
£468,000 in funding

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

Providing support



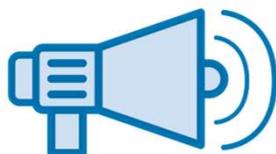
Approx. 2,500 people

shared their health and social care story with us.

363 people

accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support, or to find out how to make a complaint.

Reaching out



16,753 people

engaged with us through our website, we reached 63,251 people through Facebook, generated 45,657 impressions via Twitter and 1,220 people engaged with us at community events.

Making a difference to care



We published
5 reports

about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and from this, we made 19 recommendations for improvement.

How we've made a difference

Healthwatch East Sussex staff receiving the 'Championing Diversity and Inclusion Award' at the 2019 Healthwatch England National Conference for their work supporting vulnerable people at Kendal Court in Newhaven.



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 2019-20.

Helping young people access better mental health support

In 2019 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) launched its 'Declare Your Care' campaign to capture experiences of care and raise the profile of services amongst those with a low awareness of them.

Healthwatch East Sussex collaborated with '[People in Partnership](#)' to focus on the understanding of and attitudes towards mental health support, both amongst young people and service providers.

A number of young people were [interviewed](#) to explore their 'lived experiences' of mental health issues and the services they had come into contact with.

Young People told us:

- Seeking support or complaining about the quality of care can be most challenging when people are at their most vulnerable.
- Continuity of care can be an issue, especially the transition from child to adult services.
- Due to limited capacity, services aren't always able to provide support when it is most needed such as times of crisis.
- Raising awareness of the issues and the help available may assist in early interventions.
- There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution.



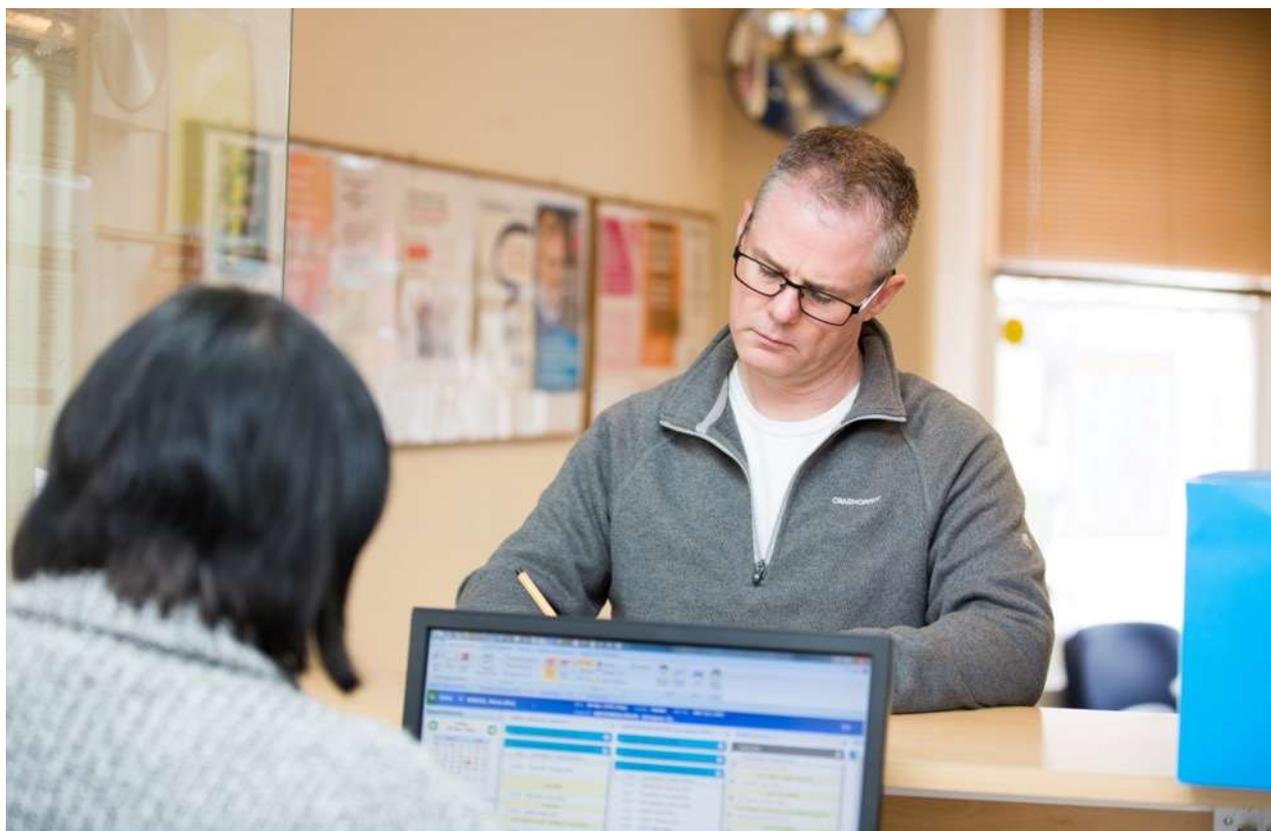
'Declare Your Care' social media messaging

Our main recommendations included:

- Mental health support services needing to be visible and accessible.
- Providing early support could prevent issues becoming more significant.
- Services should be linked and mutually supporting in relation to mental health provision.

These experiences and findings have been fed back to the CQC and shared with local decision-makers in order to inform the provision of mental health support for young people.

“I would advise anyone to try and find services out there that can help you – only takes a few clicks on google! If you're not happy with a service, tell someone, even if they don't listen straight away, someone is out there to help!”



Influencing the Preventative Health Agenda

There has been much talk of 'prevention' being a high priority for health and care services in East Sussex.

Evidence shows how effective prevention not only improves outcomes for the public but also saves money compared to addressing more complex problems. This priority status has not always been truly reflected in the policies and practices of policy makers and commissioners.

The NHS Long Term Plan and development of a new Health and Care Partnership and Plan for East Sussex provided an ideal opportunity to put prevention at the centre of new developments.

We listened to the public telling us they wanted more focus on preventative services in the county.

Healthwatch East Sussex have made a consistent case for strong preventative services.

We have contributed to local plans and policies through the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership, East Sussex Health and Care Partnership, East Sussex Communications and Engagement Steering Group and Clinical Commissioning Group-led Primary Care Network (PCN) developments.

We are exploring prevention issues in collaboration with East Sussex Community Voice's European project which focuses on identifying young people who are struggling at school and supporting them before their needs become more complex.

We are also founder members of the East Sussex Housing-related Need Support Group, bringing together county and local authorities and the NHS to prevent increases in homelessness.



The 'Chatty Van' on location as part of Healthwatch East Sussex's 'High Weald Listening Tour' in 2019

Primary Care: Getting to the right health professional

Feedback from the public, such as from our [High Weald Listening Tour](#), has told us that support for local primary care services is high, but there are concerns about the sustainability of GP practices and their ability to accommodate timely appointments in some areas.

Some local practices have closed down whilst others are collaborating to become 'Primary Care Networks' and offering appointments with other health professionals, including paramedics and nurses.

Healthwatch in Sussex have worked closely with Primary Care Network developments in the county and Sussex-wide to relay public attitudes to accessing primary care services.

Through the two East Sussex Primary Care Commissioning Group Committees, we have influenced the development of changes such as social prescribing, which involves offering non-clinical health support.

We have also been closely involved in development of a 'Community of Practice' in the 'Havens' part of East Sussex. This multi-agency forum oversees the impact of multiple primary care interventions in the area, involving GPs, mental health services, voluntary organisations, Public Health and Healthwatch.

Healthwatch East Sussex have also started to raise the profile of the difficulties faced by people in temporary accommodation when accessing local health and care services when placed by a neighbouring authority.



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.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk

Telephone: 0333 101 4007

Email: enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk

Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights



More than 600 people shared their views with Healthwatch across Sussex.



We promoted surveys and undertook focus groups reaching different communities across Sussex.



Healthwatch encouraged participation through engagement at community events.

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.

This set 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.

Healthwatch East Sussex co-ordinated the activity of the three Healthwatch in Sussex (Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex) to ask the public and patients across the county #WhatWouldYouDo to improve the NHS locally?

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

- Access to mental health support

- A more holistic and personalised approach to care and treatment – joining up mental and physical aspects
- Balancing accessibility with continuity of care
- Clear and timely communication with and between the public, patients, staff and organisations

These findings are set out in a report available on the Healthwatch East Sussex [website](#), which was shared with the Sustainability & Transformation Partnership, local Clinical Commissioning Groups and Healthwatch England.

'They addressed the medical symptoms only; they did not address any lifestyle changes I could make to improve my future outcomes'

Helping you find the answers

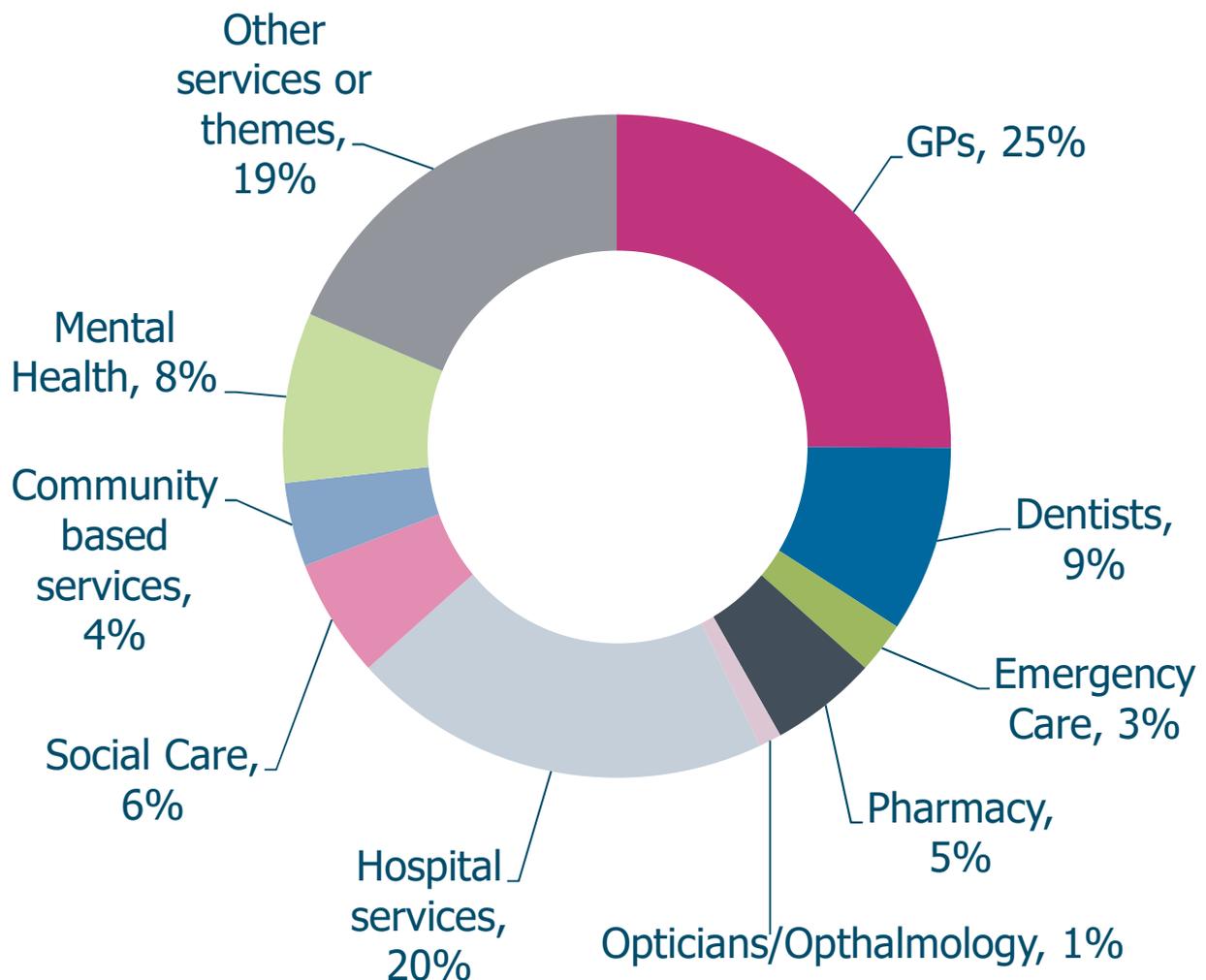


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped 363 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.
- Offering support and assistance through our NHS Complaints Advocacy service
- Promoting services and information that can help people on our social media.

Here are some of the areas that people asked about.



Case study: Supporting residents to access health and social care services at HMP Lewes

Healthwatch East Sussex, alongside seAp who we commission to deliver the Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy service for East Sussex, have worked to understand residents' access to health and care services.

We deliver bi-monthly information days in the Prison Library to identify issues before they escalate and share health and wellbeing information with residents and prison staff.



Thank you for listening and helping me, it has been so supportive to have someone there to talk with'

This has helped identify issues around preventative behaviour, continuity of care resulting from missed appointments, access to urgent treatment and the impact of literacy on resident's access to information and support.

We take an active part in the 'whole prison approach', using monthly stakeholder meetings to collaborate with prison staff and all of the providers and support agencies to share information and address concerns. This includes commissioned health providers, local NHS Trusts and Adult Social Care.

Collaborative work is ongoing to ensure that information and support is delivered appropriately.





Example story 1:

A caller made contact identifying that they had not been un-subscribed from a local Trust's Maternity Self-referral system after experiencing a miscarriage and were still receiving messages. The individual gave consent for our Advisor to contact the Trust on their behalf and request that the personal details be removed. This was undertaken and the caller received an apology directly from the Maternity Manager.



Example story 2:

Our Information & Signposting service was contacted by a caller struggling with back pain and waiting to obtain physiotherapy. Our Advisor supported the caller in escalating their concerns with their GP and local NHS musculoskeletal services. This helped them navigate the escalation pathway and resulted in their treatment being brought forward.



Example story 3:

We were contacted by a patient who had not seen their dentist for over two years, who had discovered they had been removed from the patient list when booking a check-up, despite being a client of the practice for 20 years. Our staff liaised with NHS England and the practice manager to support the individual in clarifying the situation and assisting them to seek out and register at a dental practice.



Contact us to get the information you need

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Volunteers



At Healthwatch East Sussex we are supported by volunteers to help us find out what people think is working and what services they would like to see improved in their communities

This year our 24 volunteers supported us to deliver a variety of activities including:

- Participating in annual Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE)
- Undertaking Enter and View activity in relation to Dentistry provision in East Sussex
- Engagement activities as part of our High Weald Listening Tour programme
- Championing 'Healthwatch East Sussex' at meetings and through wider community networks; and
- Reviewing our Volunteer Handbook and overall Volunteer Involvement Strategy

Volunteers review dentistry provision in East Sussex

In July 2019, our volunteers undertook a pilot programme of 'Enter and View' visits to seven dental practices in the High Weald and to the three Emergency Dental Clinics covering East Sussex.

Our volunteers reviewed the facilities, accessibility of information and undertook questionnaires with staff and patients. They also undertook 'Mystery Shopping' activity to review websites and out-of-hours messages.

Our staff and volunteers wrote a report '[Knowing the Drill](#)' letting commissioners and practices know what the process and feedback had identified:

- A majority of people felt they received quality care and services.
- Confidential spaces for discussions and accessibility in practices could be improved.
- Some practices could significantly improve the quality and accessibility of information and ensure it is up-to-date and accurate.
- Information on NHS charges and exemptions could be clearer.



The findings from the engagement have been shared with the Local Dental Committee in East Sussex and the commissioners of the Emergency Dental Service (EDS).

Lessons from this pilot approach to 'Enter and View' and 'Mystery Shopping' of dental provision is being used to inform similar activity scheduled for delivery in 2020/2021.



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 East Sussex.

Website: www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk

Telephone: 0333 101 4007

Email: enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.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.



Paula

"I have volunteered with Healthwatch East Sussex for several years now, but I find that I am still enjoying new experiences. This past year I undertook a PLACE visit (Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment) to a secure mental health unit, joined in with visits to care homes and participated in visits to the Emergency Dental Services and spoke to patients about their experiences. So, three firsts for me personally and two firsts for Healthwatch East Sussex."



Miranda

One new volunteer joined us earlier in the year with expertise in dentistry provision. Miranda, a Dental Therapist and studying for her Masters degree, was able to contribute to planning our review of NHS High Street Dentist and Emergency Dental Services in East Sussex as well as taking part in some of the activities.



Phil

"The focus of my involvement with Healthwatch has been with the enter and view programmes, to care homes and hospital settings. The last series of visits to care homes were to those deemed to be good and outstanding. It was heartening to be able to identify many examples of very good practices and outcomes for residents at these visits."

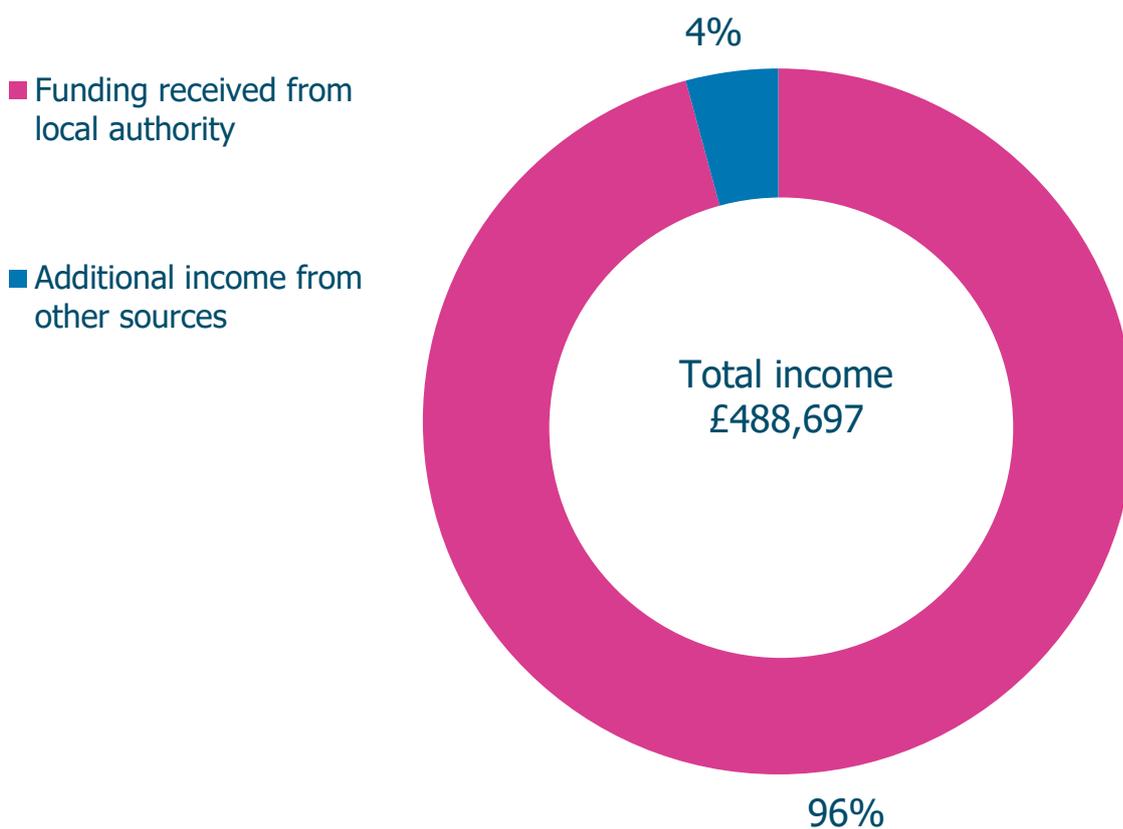
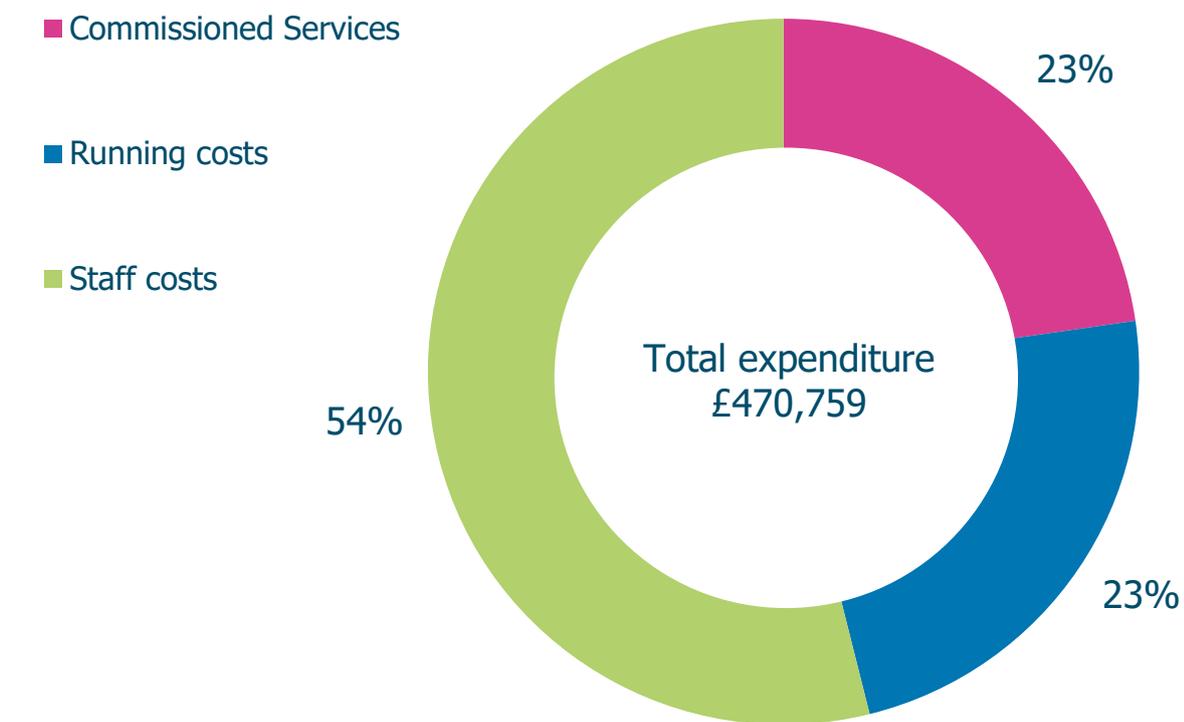
e I just want to thank you so very much for your understanding, patience and help that you given me.'



Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £470,759.



Our plans for next year



Message from our Director

I'm overwhelmed by the way that Healthwatch East Sussex (HWES) staff, volunteers and board members have worked so effectively to capture public views on health and care in 2019/20.

We have made good use of the feedback provided by the public to influence the shape of health and care services in East Sussex and the wider Sussex Integrated Care System.

In 2019, we set ourselves four key priorities:

1. Influencing the Preventative Health Agenda
2. Young people's mental health
3. Primary Care and getting to the right health professional
4. Raising the profile of Healthwatch East Sussex

Highlights of our year include winning the national Healthwatch England Award for Inclusion and Diversity for our support for homeless people being placed in emergency accommodation from out of area.

During the year we ran a successful 'Listening Tour' in the rural High Weald area of the county and captured examples of the best practice from the highest rated care homes in the county.

We have effectively held commissioners and providers of services to account, contributing many ideas and recommendations to our local Health and Care plans.

This includes raising the issues that matter to local people through our membership of various strategic partnerships and boards such as the Health and Wellbeing Board and Integrated Care Partnership.



John Routledge
Executive Director of Healthwatch East Sussex

The COVID-19 crisis has turned Healthwatch upside down with the closing down of face to face contact, and we have revised our work programme to engage people online, by telephone and by post.

This pandemic will continue to leave a mark and we will work with health and care services to support 'Restore and Recovery' plans, and we are looking further ahead and engaging the public and our partners in setting future priorities.

We have a lead role in the Integrated Care Partnership and Integrated Care System, including the Communications and Engagement workstreams. We will be working with our Healthwatch colleagues across Sussex to ensure that effective public engagement takes place before key decisions are made about future health and care services.

John Routledge
Executive Director, Healthwatch East Sussex

Thank you

Thank you to everyone helping Healthwatch East Sussex gather the views of the public and put these at the heart of health and social care decision-making, including:

- Members of the public sharing their views and experience with us
- Our dedicated staff team, volunteers and board members
- Voluntary and community organisation's contributing to our work
- Our commissioners at East Sussex County Council
- All our partners who commission and deliver local health and care services
- Our colleagues in Healthwatch Brighton & Hove and Healthwatch West Sussex



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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.

Company Name: East Sussex Community Voice

Company registration number: 8270069

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