

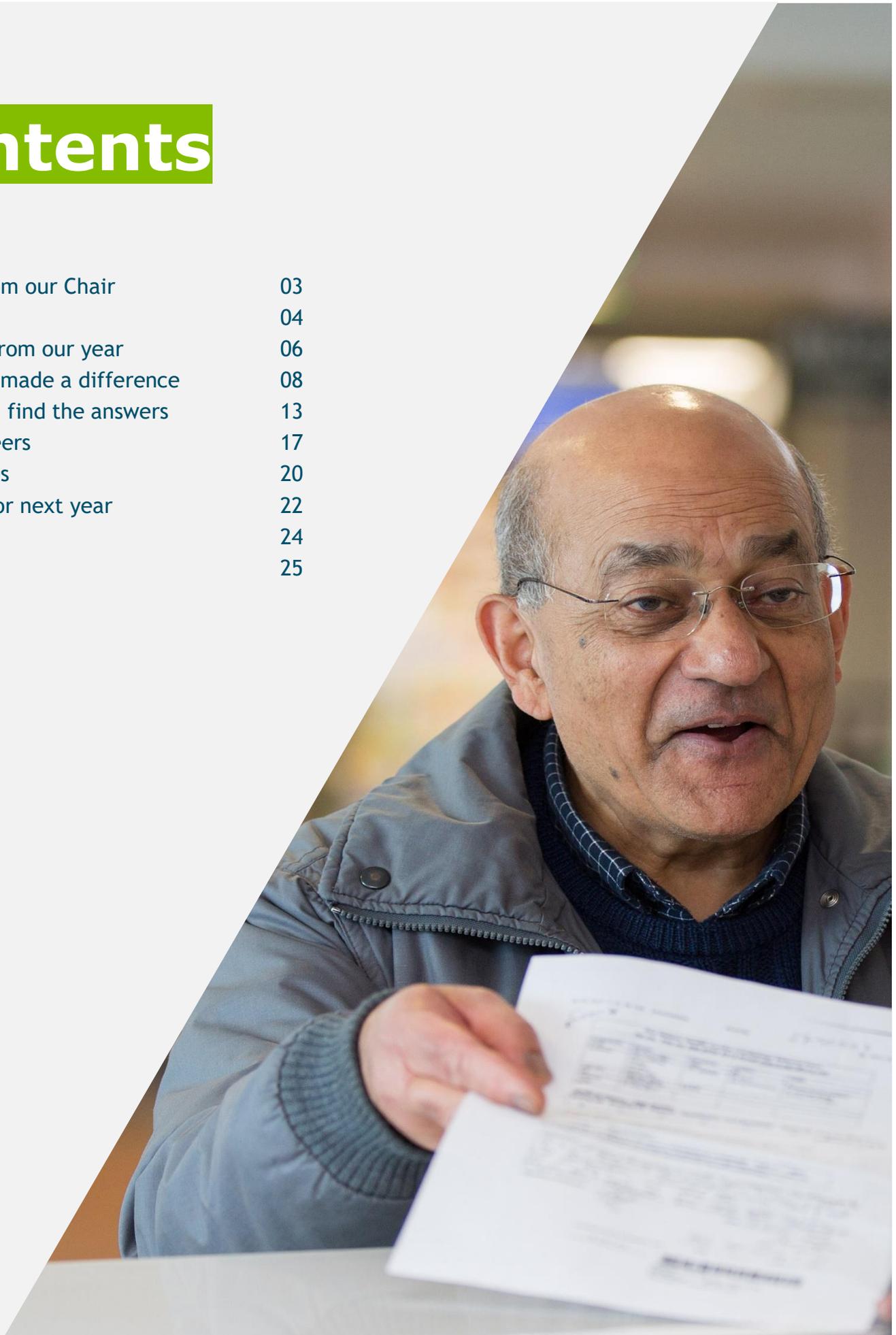


**Reflecting on a collaborative year**

Annual Report 2018-19

# Contents

Message from our Chair	03
About us	04
Highlights from our year	06
How we've made a difference	08
Helping you find the answers	13
Our volunteers	17
Our finances	20
Our plans for next year	22
Thank you	24
Contact us	25



# Message from our Chair

## Frances Russell

This has been an interesting but at times challenging year. It's one which has seen us reach and hear from more people than ever before.

Staying close to our communities is key to understanding peoples' experiences and views. We've developed strong community links which mean we can reach people we wouldn't have otherwise heard from. For this reason we will continue to invest our Social Enterprise income in Community Partnerships in the next year.

By listening to local people we understand and are able to prioritise our work around what is important to West Sussex residents. Access to GP care and community support come up time and time again, followed by the need to improve communication at an individual service level and between services.

We use all of the insight and evidence we gather (from our Listening Tours, our Help Desk, project work and community partners) to influence the health and social care organisations to make changes and improvements to future service provision. As a statutory member of the Health and Wellbeing Board we supported the development of their new strategy adding the peoples voice. As a member of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny board - HASC, we ensure peoples' concerns are heard by West Sussex County Council (WSCC). We also work with the NHS and

WSCC to influence the shape and delivery of services as the new primary care organisations begin to emerge and we move towards a truly Integrated Care System envisioned by the NHS Long Term Plan.

We have the positive impact we do as a result of the tireless work of our volunteers in a wide range of roles from Authorised Representatives visiting service providers to our Independent Board Directors. Thanks to them and our dedicated team of employees I am confident we are delivering an outstanding local Healthwatch to serve our West Sussex communities



*We can see the opportunity for exciting changes on the horizon and are championing ways of involving local people. Our work in Midhurst, a rural part of our County, where a new Primary Care Hub is being developed, is doing just this.*

Frances Russell  
Healthwatch West Sussex Chair

# About us

## Healthwatch is here to make care better

We are the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share their views with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

*As Chair of Healthwatch England, it's my role to make sure your Healthwatch gets effective support and that national decisions are informed by what people are saying all over England.*

*If you were one of the 400,000 people who shared their experiences with us last year, I want to say a personal thank you. Without your views, Healthwatch wouldn't be able to make a difference to health and social care services, both in your area and at a national level. One example of this is how we shared 85,000 views with the NHS, to highlight what matters most, and help shape its plans for the next decade.*

*If you're part of an organisation that's worked with, supported or responded to Healthwatch West Sussex, thank you too. You've helped to make an even bigger difference.*

*None of this could have been possible without our dedicated staff and volunteers, who work in the community every day to understand what is working and what could be better when it comes to people's health and care.*

*If you've shared your views with us then please keep doing what you're doing. If you haven't, then this is your chance to step forward and help us make care better for your community. We all have a stake in our NHS and social care services: we can all really make a difference in this way.*



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Robert Francis'.

**Sir Robert Francis QC**  
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.



*Healthwatch West Sussex has been instrumental in shaping the Health and Wellbeing Board's joint needs assessment and forward strategy, which sets out the direction of travel for our County and how we want local services to be shaped and commissioned in the future. We value the insight and challenge this local Healthwatch provides.*

*Anna Raleigh  
Director of Public Health, West Sussex County Council*

## 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 that 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.



## People are at the heart of everything we do

We play an important role bringing communities and services together. Everything we do is shaped by what people tell us. 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

Our main job is to raise people's concerns with health and care decision-makers so that they can improve support across the country. The evidence we gather also helps us recommend how policy and practice can change for the better.





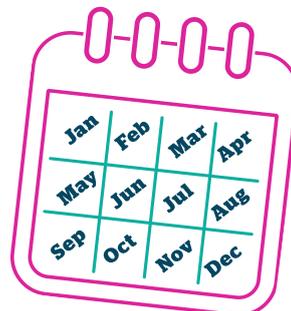
# Highlights from

# our year

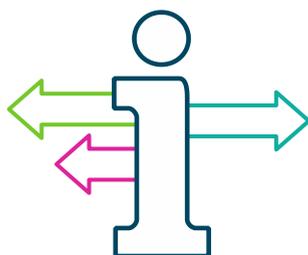
Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2018-19. **Our resources:**



Just short of **3,000 people** shared their health and social care story with us. Nearly double the amount of insight we heard last year



We have **33 regular volunteers**, and many more people who give time to helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave over **2,500 hours**



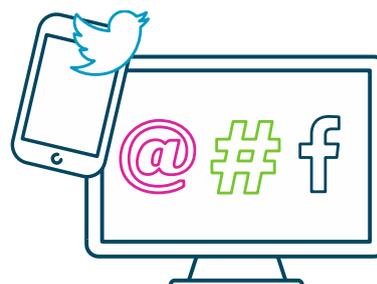
Over **2,000 people** accessed Healthwatch West Sussex advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support **70% more than last year**



We visited **80 services** and **572 community events** to understand people's experiences of care. From these visits, we made **120 recommendations** for improvement



**87 improvements** we suggested were adopted by services to make health and care better in our community. **32 of our recommendations** are still being worked on



**55% more people** engaged with us through our website and social media, as well as our face to face engagement



**How we've made**

**a difference**

## Changes made to your community

Find out how sharing your views with your local Healthwatch has led to positive changes to health and social care services in West Sussex. When people speak up about what's important, and services listen, care is improved for all.

Take a look at an example of how local insight has made a difference in our West Sussex communities...

### EXAMPLE STORY: Promoting Dignity in Pharmacies

People told us they were unaware that community pharmacies have consulting rooms - space for them to have their health conversation away from others. We noticed people having personal conversations at counters in earshot of people queuing.

National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guideline 102 is to enable pharmacies to promote health and wellbeing. If people know about these rooms and are encouraged to use them, pharmacists can offer greater support.

Working alongside our Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC), we created poster campaign and visited over 165 community pharmacies across West Sussex, over a week in September 2018.

These visits gave us the opportunity to talk to frontline staff and pharmacists and find out more about how they use their rooms. We looked at many and learnt about some really good practices which we were able to share.

Alongside the visits, we ran a social media campaign and a *spot-the-mistake competition*, to get more people looking at the posters.

The LPC issued our [report](#) to all their Sussex and Surrey members. Whilst short, the report shows what "good" looks like and where people could have challenges. As a result of our work, pharmacies are saying they have changed their practice to make sure more people are using the consulting rooms.

This has also helped us to better understand medication supply issues, which in turn has meant we can better support people with information and advice.

*Healthwatch posters raising awareness of ways to get more privacy and dignity*



## EXAMPLE STORY: Sorry did I hear you right? A build-up of ear wax problems

Thanks to people speaking up, GP practices across West Sussex will again provide an ear wax removal service.

We received a flurry of calls from concerned patients across our County, shortly after discovering they could no longer have ear wax removed at their local surgery (known as ear irrigation).

We made enquiries and found a large number of local GP practices had decided to stop providing this service, ahead of the conclusion of the NICE consultation on this treatment.

Advice from the Local Medical Council had failed to remind GPs of the need to involve local patients in decision making so we were able to do this. This something that was be noted for the future.

We were also able to highlight the difficulties people with a clinical need for this treatment were experiencing because of the ways services were commissioned, along with confusion over how people were being asked to self-care, and pay for treatment.

As a result, the way people access this treatment has now been reviewed and improved. The times people have to go between services has reduced. Locally commissioned service specifications are in place so in the future people who need ear irrigation can have this treatment at GP practices.

We are continuing to work with commissioners on improving the self-care guides, so where appropriate people can safely treat themselves.

*I will ensure any further letters from the LMC to practices around these issues, that is, unfunded services and the delivery of services, do more explicitly encourage colleagues to ensure Patient Participation Groups are aware of the practice's situation and plans, and obtain patient views.*

Surrey and Sussex Local Medical Council

*Local people speak-up when services suddenly change*





*Financial fairness? Looking into charging for Adult Social Care*

**EXAMPLE STORY: Fairer payment for care**

When peoples lives change and they're no longer able to live as independently as they had, asking for support can be difficult and stressful, particularly when people don't understand the system and processes.



In Jane's words: it's all very well telling families they can have this, and they can have that, but what's the point when they are giving it to you in one hand and taking it from the other? My son doesn't understand the concept of all of this and is quite upset at the fact that he is having his money taken away from him and it's very hard to explain it to him.

I spoke to Carers Support, who came together with Healthwatch West Sussex and other voluntary organisations, to understand what local people experience.

Using mine and other peoples' personal accounts, they showed what needed to change to make determining if someone can pay towards the cost of care, fairer and more transparent.

Healthwatch West Sussex shared recommendations with the council. Using these ideas, the council is changing its social work and financial assessor training and processes and communications are being reviewed.

By working together, the information and support available to people is improving, to help people better understand what disability related expenses are allowed for and how the process works.

Working in partnership is helping reduce the risk of people being asked to pay for care they simply cannot afford.



**Have your say**

Share your ideas and experiences and help services hear what works, what doesn't, and what you want from care in the future.

w: [www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk)

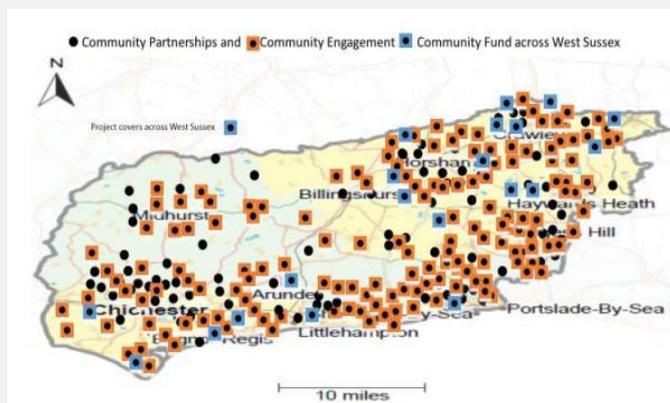
t: 0300 012 0122

e: [helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](mailto:helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk)

## EXAMPLE STORY: Reaching out to communities

In addition to our statutory work, we have invested in developing more collaboration and joint working, through Community Partnerships.

This has added a richness to our work and made sure we are able to listen to more people. We now hear from a greater range of voices from across our communities and these are helping us shape and influence those who commission, deliver health and social care at this time of transformation in the NHS and our Local Government.



Coordinator increased our impact by:

- **partnering** with 123 community and voluntary groups
- engaging with 1068 residents at events
- capturing 723 pieces of insight/personal stories and experiences
- Enabling 23 community fund projects, running across the county with powerful results for example:

*We were delighted to work with Healthwatch. Although the girls on our **This Is Me** programme are always very open about their mental health challenges, the research that we undertook in conjunction with Healthwatch actually threw up a couple of issues we hadn't as yet identified. This has meant that we've been able to add even more support through our programme, which has benefited the girls further. We would definitely work with Healthwatch again, and are grateful for their support.*

**Ali Golds, Founder/CEO**

w: [www.thejunoproject.co.uk](http://www.thejunoproject.co.uk)

As members of the **Community Solutions Consortia** we made a short film to **capture** the thinking and innovation from our conference - inspiring partnership working for vibrant communities.

*Sharing information and insight through Community Partnerships*



## Information Event

On the 5th March 2019 Bentswood Community Partnership and Healthwatch jointly hosted an event in the Saltworks Community Hub (supported by Sussex Clubs for Young People, and Clarion Futures).



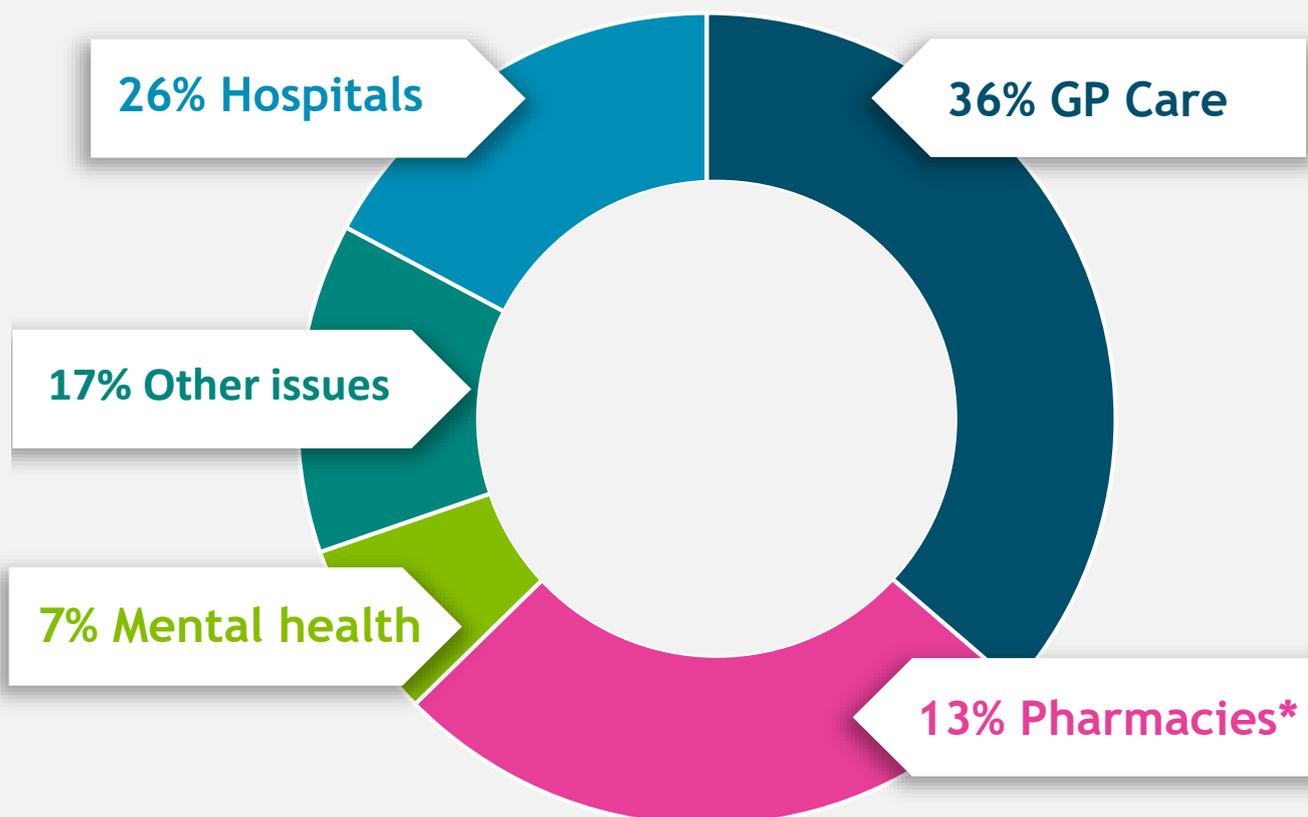
**Helping you find**

**the answers**

## What services do people want to know about?

People don't always know how to get the information they need to make decisions about their own health and care. Healthwatch plays an important role in providing advice and pointing people in the right direction for the support they need.

Here are the most common things that people ask us:



\* Largely due to our Pharmacy Campaign (see page 10)



## How we provide people with advice and information

Finding the right care or support can be worrying and stressful. There are a number of organisations that can provide help, but people don't know where to look.

Last year we helped **2,064 people** access the advice and information they needed.

You can come to us for free and independent advice and information in a number of ways including:

- + At community events
- + Promoting helpful services across our social media channels
- + Advice and information online resources
- + Over the phone
- + Via online contact us form
- + By email

### Example story: Not being heard

I struggled with nurses not listening when I tried telling them they wouldn't find a vein. Still they tried many times anyway. Healthwatch West Sussex helped by speaking to the hospital. I have a "flag" on my record now and they use a scanner to locate a vein.

*'Even the hospital staff say this is great. As it saves so much time! And, it's a whole lot less painful for me.'*

### Example story: Mental Health

People living in Burgess Hill struggle to find information relating to local mental health support. To help combat this issue, we have showcased services in our [Listening Tour Report](#), which has gone to health and care services in the Town and local businesses. We are working in partnership with the District Council and others so more information is available.



### Example story: Making a difference to peoples' lives

Sophie, in our engagement team, was delighted to meet again, a lady we had given some advice and information to at a previous event. Having asked about walking aids and what she could do as she felt she was not coping as well at home, she told us she had followed up on the advice. The lady now hires a rolling walker from the Red Cross, and having had an assessment from Age UK, she has applied for Attendance Allowance. She will shortly be £40-£60 a week better off.

## Improving services through learning when things go wrong

Local people and NHS providers in West Sussex benefit from having an **Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCAS)** integrated alongside Healthwatch.

Lessons learned inform practice, beyond an individual case. We support local NHS to improve services through sharing learning more widely. We also carry out work to support services to improve how they listen to patients and their families.



This year we followed up on the review of GP websites - looking at how easy it was for patients to make a complaint or give feedback.

We worked with Practices, through the Clinical Commissioning Groups and saw **improvements**. We had a fantastically positive reaction to the recommendations we made.

We've added to our guides **[getting the most out of Local Resolution Meetings](#)**.

## Example Case: Getting more from GP appointments

Jo had come to us with an outstanding issue which she felt she was unable to discuss with the GP. With the support of an advocate, Jo was able to talk through concerns at a Local Resolution Meeting. By discussing issues and sharing details about family dynamics, Jo and the Practice, had a much better understanding and support has been put in place.

Now Jo has control over health appointments and repeat prescriptions, by having access to the online booking system and has appropriate time in consultations.



## Have your voice heard

This free and independent service from Healthwatch West Sussex helps local people explore options for getting their voice heard when they feel something has gone wrong with their health service.

For more information on making a complaint please read our guide **[How We Can Help You With Making Your NHS Health Complaint](#)**.



# Our volunteers



## How do our volunteers help us?

At Healthwatch West Sussex we couldn't make all of these improvements without the support of our 33 regular volunteers that work with us to help make care better for their communities.

### What our volunteers do:

- + Visit services to make sure they're meeting people's needs
- + Act as Independent Directors on our Community Interest Company Board to support our governance and represent us at other strategic bodies
- + Collect people's views and experiences which we use in our reports
- + Review all our insight and evidence
- + Raise awareness of the work we do in the community
- + Attend committees and meetings as Liaison Representatives to help us to amplify local voices and share our insight



*Debriefing after a morning of visiting hospital wards*

## EXAMPLE STORY: Volunteers supporting improvements in hospital care

Thanks to a dedicated group of volunteers, staff attitudes towards cleanliness have gone from a low starting point, to a positive acceptance of the need to maintain good standards in a busy hospital.

Following a disappointing visit, as part of the *Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment* (PLACE) national programme, our volunteers' Alan and Sue, worked directly with the Trust's Director of Estates.

Through monthly visits, Sue and Alan have been able to positively influence how staff view their responsibility in helping to maintain a good environment.

The cleanliness and maintenance of wards across the hospital has developed and we have seen sustained improvements.

*Thank you for taking the time to visit the Princess Royal Hospital today, your input and observations are much appreciated and help us in continually improving our environment for our patients and staff.*

## Meet our volunteers

We caught up with a couple of our fantastic volunteers to show you how their work truly makes a difference to the lives of people in our area.



### Martin, (Retired)

I got involved with Healthwatch West Sussex as I felt this would complement other volunteering I do and it has. I'm a member of the Safeguarding Adults Board, championing the need to better understand peoples' experiences and concerns.

We've been successful in getting a pilot system in place, for getting feedback directly from people about the safeguarding process.

### Lizzie, (Student)

I needed work experience on my CV to get a job after my studies. Healthwatch West Sussex has been so accommodating, providing me with skills that I know will be useful in the work place. This has included shadowing experienced volunteers on service visits.

They have also asked to speak to more young people about their experiences and I have been able to input into their new engagement resources.



## Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for more volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering get in touch.

w: [www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk)

t: 0300 012 0122

e: [helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](mailto:helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk)



# Our finances

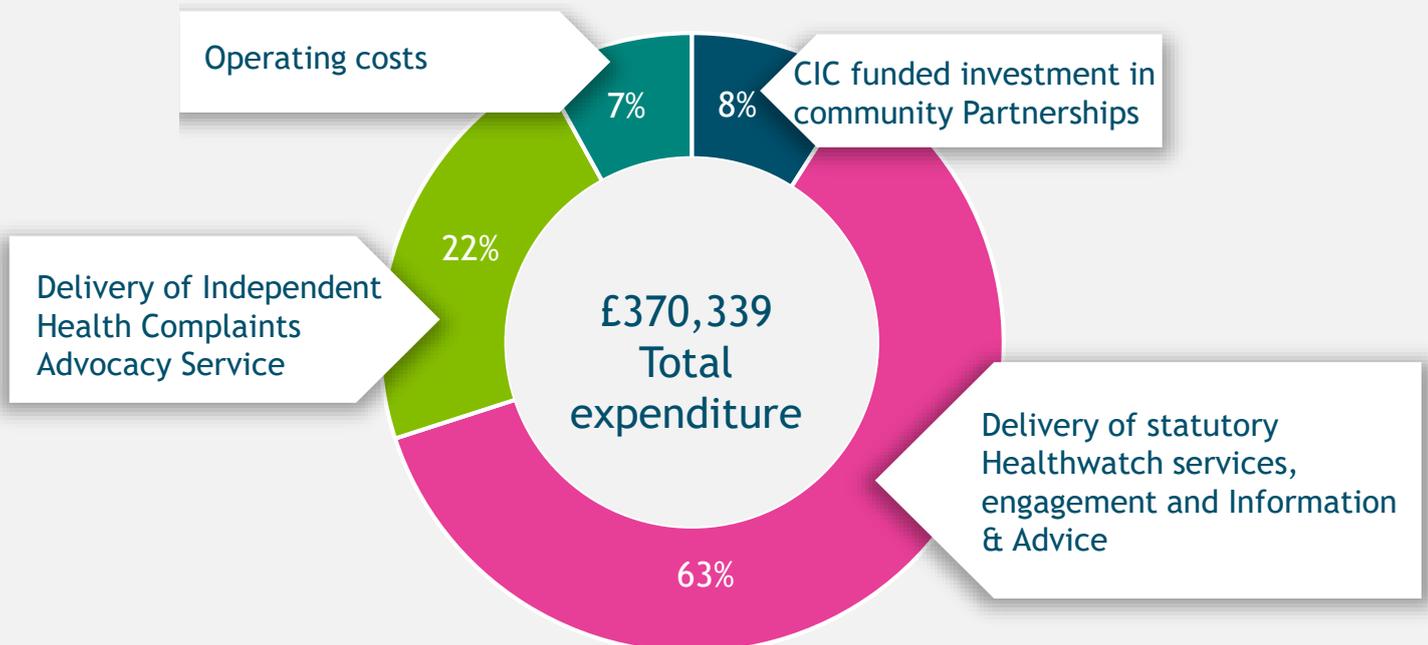
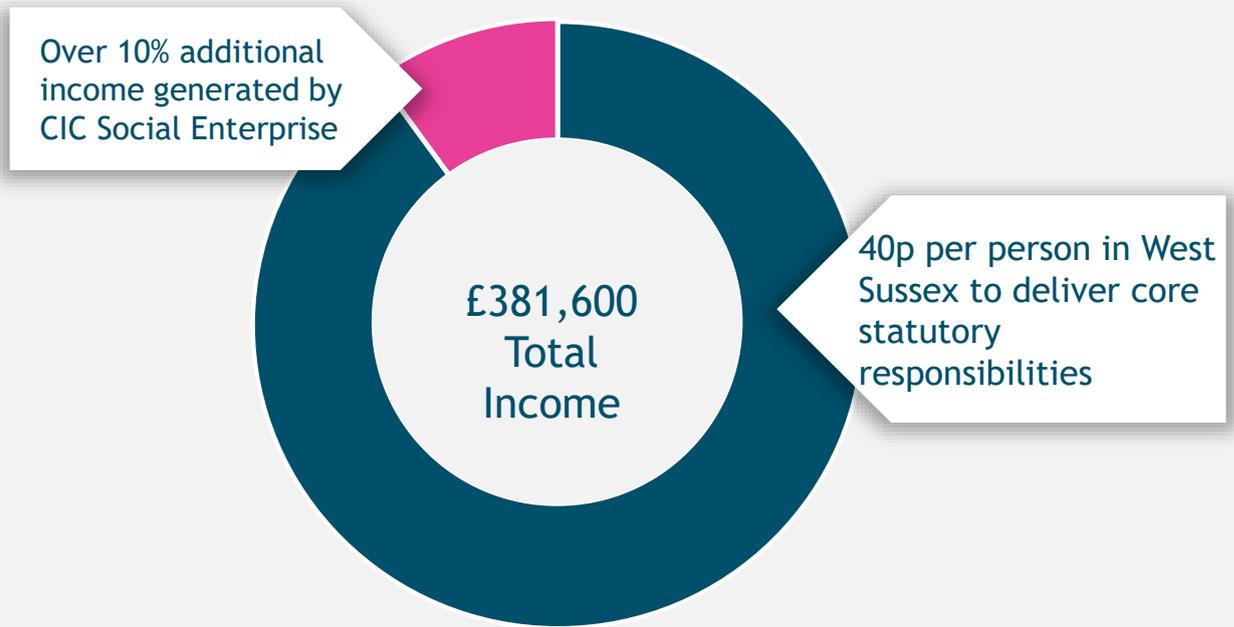


## How we use our money

To carry out our statutory work, we were funded £342,600 by our local authority, West Sussex CC.

We also invested £39,000 of our

Community Interest Company (CIC) Social Enterprise income into our innovative Community Partnership activities.





**Our plans for  
next year**

# Message from our Chief Officer

We've made sure we talked about difficult issues and have been honest and collaborative in our approach with local people and service providers.

## Looking back

Our priority areas: Primary Care, Adult Social Care, Children & Young Peoples' Mental Health & Wellbeing, were always going to challenge us but we've seen positive changes by:

- + Working with GP practices to think about how they respond to patient demand for consultations
- + Championing professional teams to better understand how those with safeguarding concerns experience the processes designed to protect people
- + Collaborating with others for greater understanding of local issues and a stronger voice to push for changes
- + Working with young people to develop resources for powerful conversations in schools and youth groups.

## Looking ahead

At the same time as acknowledging the financial challenges within the NHS and local authorities, we also recognise there are other barriers which potentially hamper the development of more appropriate services.

We'll continue to use our independence, constructive communication, statutory powers and ability to escalate matters, to support ways of overcoming such challenges and barriers.

We've set an ambitious [Priority Work Plan](#) based around positive outcomes and how we aim to achieve these.



*Thank you to all the local people who've contributed to our work, to our partners and the system leaders who've listened and responded to improve outcomes.*



healthwatch  
West Sussex

**Priorities 2019/2020**



Sally Dartnell

Healthwatch West Sussex Chief Officer

# 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 community and voluntary sector organisations that have collaborated and contributed to our work - which is now a [huge list](#).

Healthwatch West Sussex has been instrumental in shaping the Health and Wellbeing Board's joint needs assessment and forward strategy, which sets out the direction of travel for our County and how we want local services to be shaped and commissioned in the future. We value the insight and challenge this local Healthwatch provides.

*When I first wanted to set up a support group for people with COPD in East Grinstead\*, I contacted Healthwatch West Sussex for help. Not only did they give me a grant to help with expenses, but also they provided continued advice and support, and made us feel that the group was important to them, and offered a way to link up with other services. We would have been much the poorer without Healthwatch and heartily commend them for the great job they do.*

*Loral Bennett, Group Founder and Lead \* The COPD East Grinstead Group who received a £200 community grant from Healthwatch West Sussex*



# Contact us

**Healthwatch West Sussex**  
Billingshurst Community Centre  
Roman Way  
Billingshurst  
West Sussex  
RH14 9QW



0300 012 0122



@healthwatchws

@NHSadvocacy



@healthwatchwestsussex

**Healthwatch West Sussex CIC** is a Community Interest Company limited by guarantee and registered in England & Wales (No. 08557470) at Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road, Pokesdown. BH7 6DL.

Healthwatch West Sussex works with Help & Care to provide its statutory activities

t: 0300 111 3303

Mon - Thu: 9am-5pm (10am-4.30pm Fri)

e: <https://www.helpandcare.org.uk/contact/>

a: Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road, Pokesdown, BH7 6DL



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 West Sussex  
Billingshurst Community Centre  
Roman Way  
Billingshurst  
West Sussex RH14 9QW

w: [www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk)  
t: 0300 012 0122  
e: [helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](mailto:helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk)  
tw: @HealthwatchWS  
fb: [facebook.com/HealthwatchWS](https://facebook.com/HealthwatchWS)