



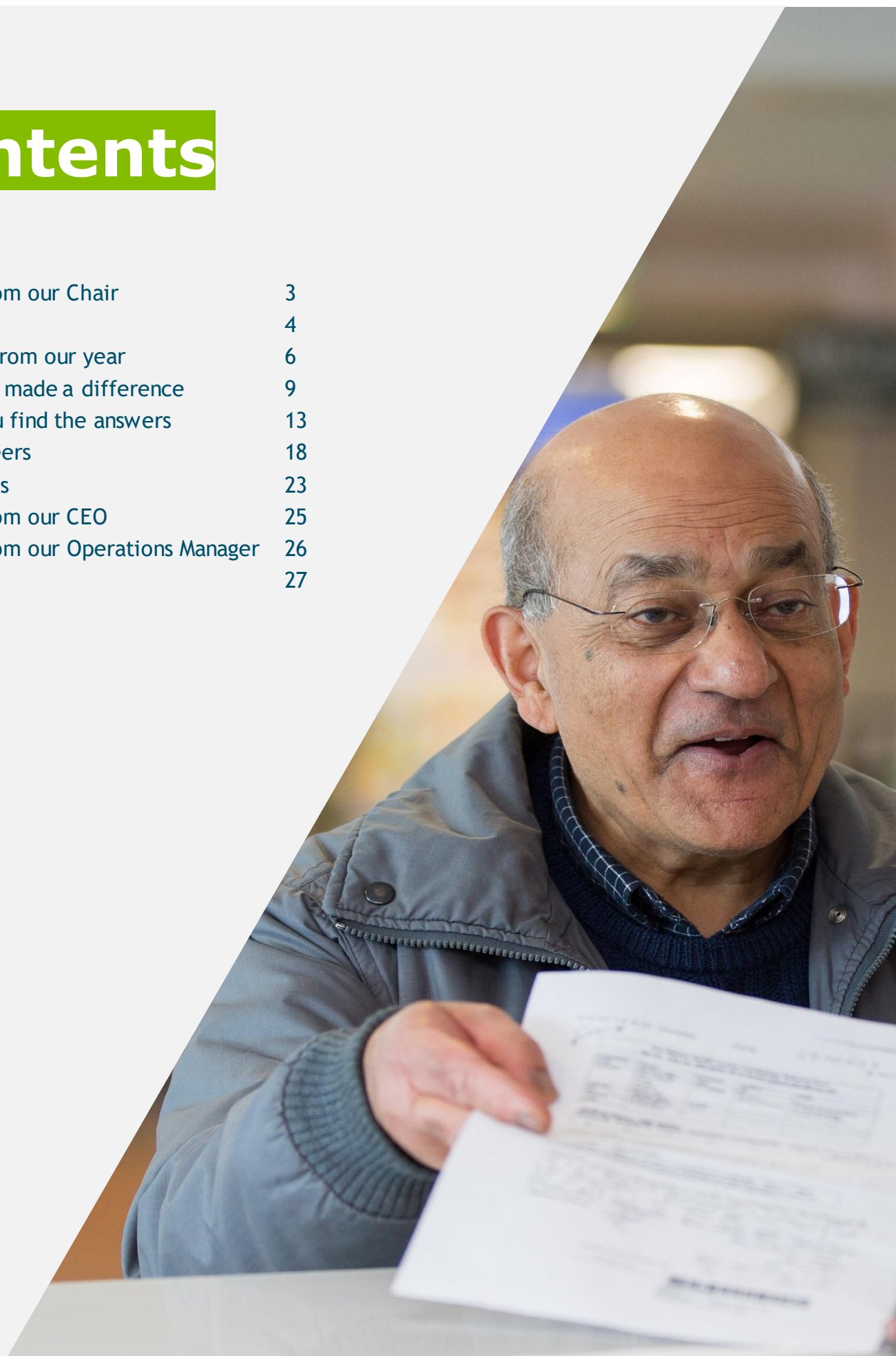
# Your Voice Counts

Healthwatch North Yorkshire  
Annual Report 2018-19



# Contents

Message from our Chair	3
About us	4
Highlights from our year	6
How we've made a difference	9
Helping you find the answers	13
Our volunteers	18
Our finances	23
Message from our CEO	25
Message from our Operations Manager	26
Contact us	27





# Message from our Chair

Having taken the role of interim Chairperson many years ago, it has proved a busy and rewarding challenge.

In 2017 we successfully established ourselves as a new charitable incorporated organisation and transitioned from a steering group to a board of trustees with full responsibility and accountability for delivering Healthwatch North Yorkshire.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow trustees, past and present, who have supported me in this role and given their valuable time towards governance and delivery of our services. In April this year I stepped down as Chairperson, handing the role to Chris Brackley, Vice Chair, who I know will continue to drive us forward with a focus on managing performance and with the patient and public at the heart of what we do. I remain committed to Healthwatch and will continue to serve as a trustee.

In August 2018 we appointed Michelle Thompson BEM as our CEO. Michelle has a wealth of experience in health, social care and indeed Healthwatch as she also serves as CEO of Healthwatch Darlington. I welcome Michelle to our team; her leadership and knowledge has already had a positive impact on the quality and effectiveness of our organisation and I look forward to working with her in the coming year. I also welcome Claire, Kirsty, Alex and Lada to the team, and of course thank Nigel our Operations Manager, now the longest-serving member of staff, for yet another year of helping us to meet the challenges of working across North Yorkshire. Not least, the challenge of

working across six Clinical Commissioning Groups and three Integrated Care Systems and representing a population of 600,000, some in deeply rural locations.

We said goodbye to three members of staff this year, Becky, Claire and Beverley, I thank them on behalf of trustees and wish them well in their new roles.

And finally, I thank our volunteers for their loyalty and support.

**Judith Bromfield**  
Healthwatch North Yorkshire Chair



*'Chris will drive us forward... with the patient and public at the heart of what we do'*

# 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 North Yorkshire, 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.



## 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.





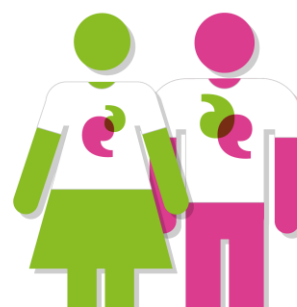


# Highlights from our year

Find out about our online feedback centre and what service users have been telling us about local health and social care services in 2018-19. **Our informatics:**



We have had 64 new likes on our Facebook page, 117 new followers on Twitter and a huge 3951 new views on our website.



We have 25 volunteers helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 600 hours of their time.



We have sent out 16 newsletter campaigns to a total of 465 subscribers through Mailchimp.



We have put out two surveys, 'What Matters to You' which had 326 responses and Healthwatch England's #WhatWouldYouDo campaign for which we received 56 responses up to March 2019.

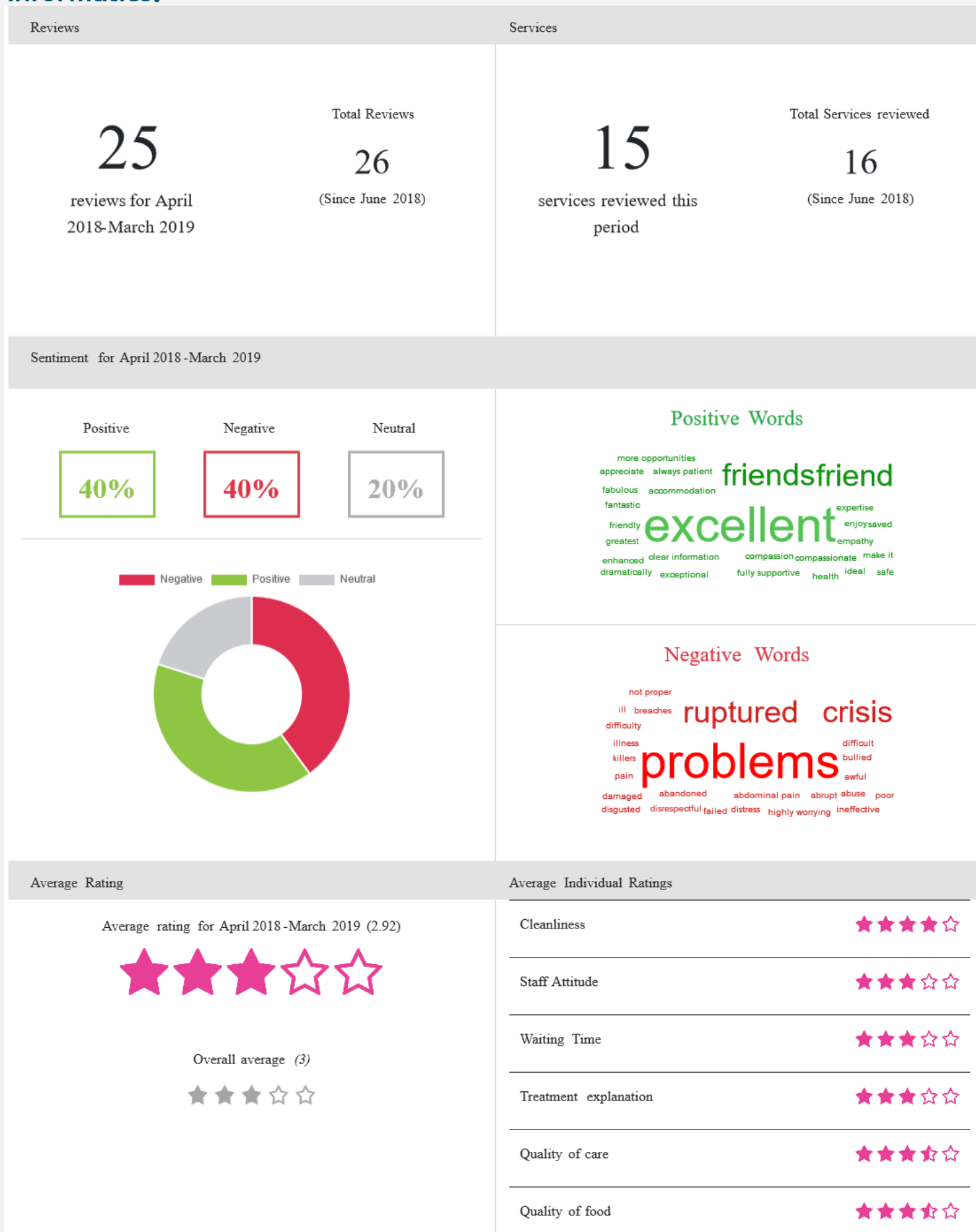


We have reached out to 50 groups.

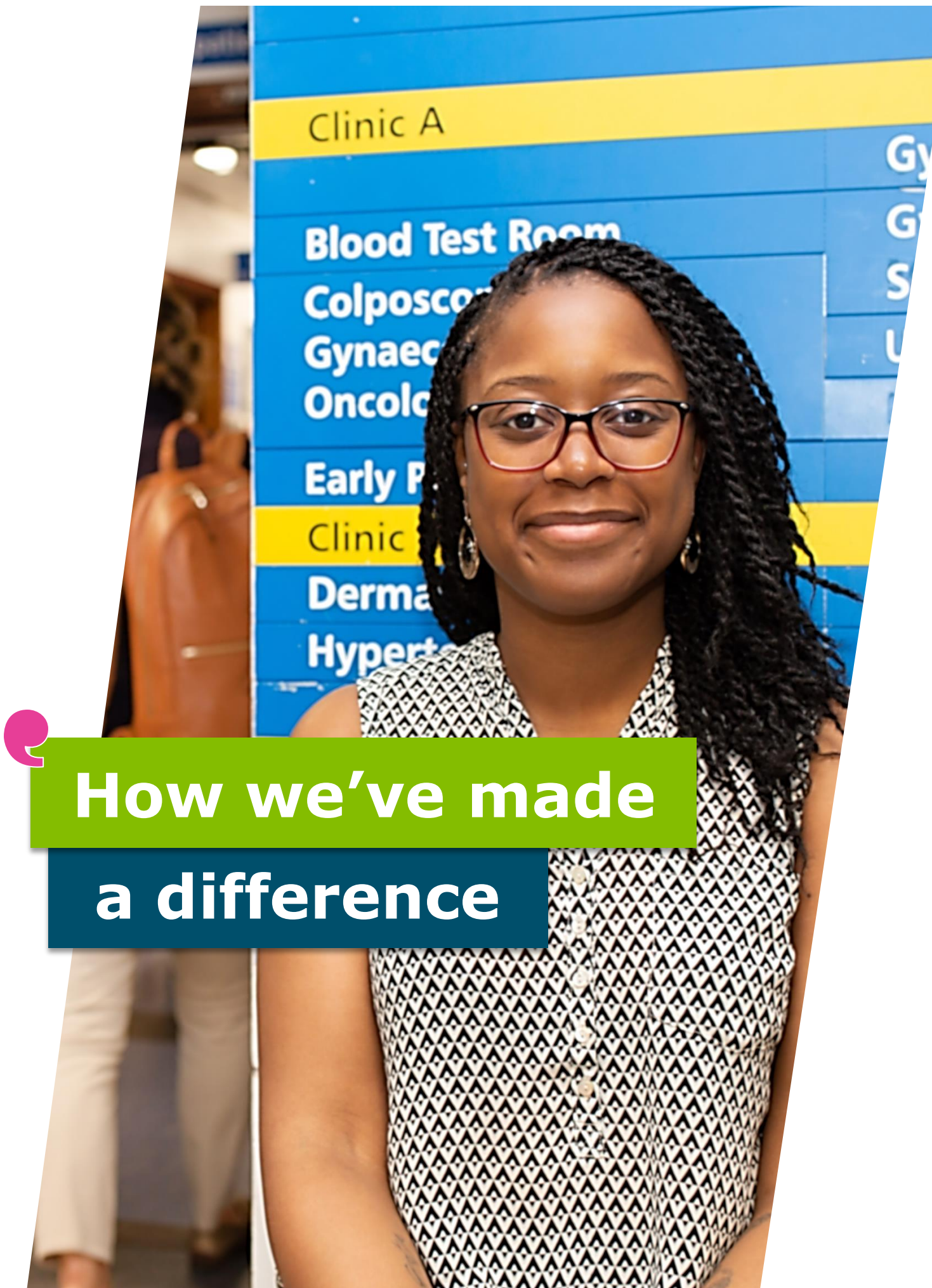


Our projects have ranged from Ambulance Handover Times and Do Not Attends to starting our own Youthwatch project.

## Find out about our online feedback centre and what service users have been telling us about local health and social care services in 2018-19. Our informatics:







## 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 North Yorkshire. We show that when people speak up about what's important, and services listen, care is improved for all.

### Helping to bring services closer to people's homes in hospital reopening plan

In April 2017 Castleberg Hospital in Giggleswick was closed on a temporary basis on safety grounds. There were issues with the heating, electrics and drainage which led to this decision.

In May 2018 Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven CCG discussed a proposal from the CCG's Clinical Executive Group that the hospital be reopened once repairs had been undertaken. They were presented with a joint piece of engagement work undertaken by the CCG and Healthwatch North Yorkshire as well as a specific report written by Healthwatch North Yorkshire on the issues facing rural access to services in Craven.

The Accountable Officer for the CCG stated at the meeting: "We have taken into account the challenge of living in rural areas. Our consultation outcome report reflects this.

"We also looked into the account Healthwatch North Yorkshire's *Rural Access to Services* report gave us, that was published last year. And the Clinical Executive Group did consider both of these when making its decision."

The governing body acknowledged the value of the feedback that was gathered from the local community in conjunction with Healthwatch North Yorkshire, with around 1,600 people involved.

The recommendation was to reopen the hospital with a future model of delivery across Craven with services closer to patients' homes complemented by Castleberg Hospital as a community-based facility.

#### Castleberg Hospital in Giggleswick





## Giving people a voice in mental health care planning

One of our key priorities for 2018-19 was to improve people's experience of Care Planning in Mental Health.

This was highlighted to us as a key area of focus, and having raised it with our mental health provider it became clear that this was a joint area of focus. We were invited to a very early-stage brainstorming and planning session for a project designed to review the process of writing Care Plans across Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust.

As a part of the project, we are helping to encourage service user input and provide feedback at every stage of the process, rather than reviewing decisions that have been previously made.

HWNY has agreed to take on the responsibility for involving Patient Voice in

*Service users are having a say on changes*



the ongoing Care Programme Approach project being carried out by Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS.

As mental health care is currently a key issue of public interest and in our service user feedback, we are committed to becoming involved in relevant projects to highlight seldom-heard voices.

*'Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys (TEWV) NHS Foundation Trust is committed to improving the care planning experience, something that is central to the Care Programme Approach (CPA), a framework used nationally by mental health and learning disability services to deliver care and treatment in a caring and joined-up way.'*

*'Healthwatch North Yorkshire quickly realised that this was common ground, and over the last year they have made it clear that they are willing and able to support TEWV with this work, having already participated in some key events which have set the direction of change.'*

*'The changes needed are systemic and cultural to ensure that care planning is wellbeing-focused and harm-minimising, where basic needs are viewed as a priority, and which results in a plan that is evidently personalised - this will require some big changes and will be over a longer period of time.'*

*'The involvement and feedback of service users and carers is vital to this process, and we look forward to working with Healthwatch North Yorkshire again through 2019/2020 to make the most of their expertise and interest in this area, and to allow us to build with confidence on the work done so far.'*

*- Michael Cowan, Care Programme Approach (CPA) Lead Officer, Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust*





*We were invited by service users who wanted to air their concerns over mental health care*

## Working with service users on changes to mental health services in Harrogate

Healthwatch North Yorkshire has worked closely with service users in the Harrogate area around changes to services, in particular the potential closure of inpatient mental health beds in the area.

In addition to attending and ensuring that we are aware of the daily issues that arise in services, we took a step further and facilitated a focus group with the TEWV Harrogate Service User Group. This was done after we were invited by the service users themselves, who wanted an opportunity to air their concerns. We aimed to take a deeper look at the experiences of the group, their beliefs about the system, and feelings about how they are treated, both within physical and mental health care services. Several themes were established during the conversation and a report was published at the end of the year.


During this period the decision was also taken by Harrogate and Rural District to relocate inpatient facilities out of the area.

Healthwatch North Yorkshire was able to draw on the knowledge we have from service users to make representation to the North Yorkshire Health Scrutiny Committee. This led to further analysis being undertaken by a joint scrutiny of Health Committee with members from North Yorkshire, York and Leeds.

The work that has been undertaken by Healthwatch North Yorkshire is feeding directly into the proposals for new community provision in the area and we have been invited by the commissioners to help work with service users in developing any new models of care.

We were also able to work together for the first time with the North Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner, issuing a joint statement highlighting individuals' concerns about the potential impact on crisis care of any proposed changes. This received significant coverage across the region including:

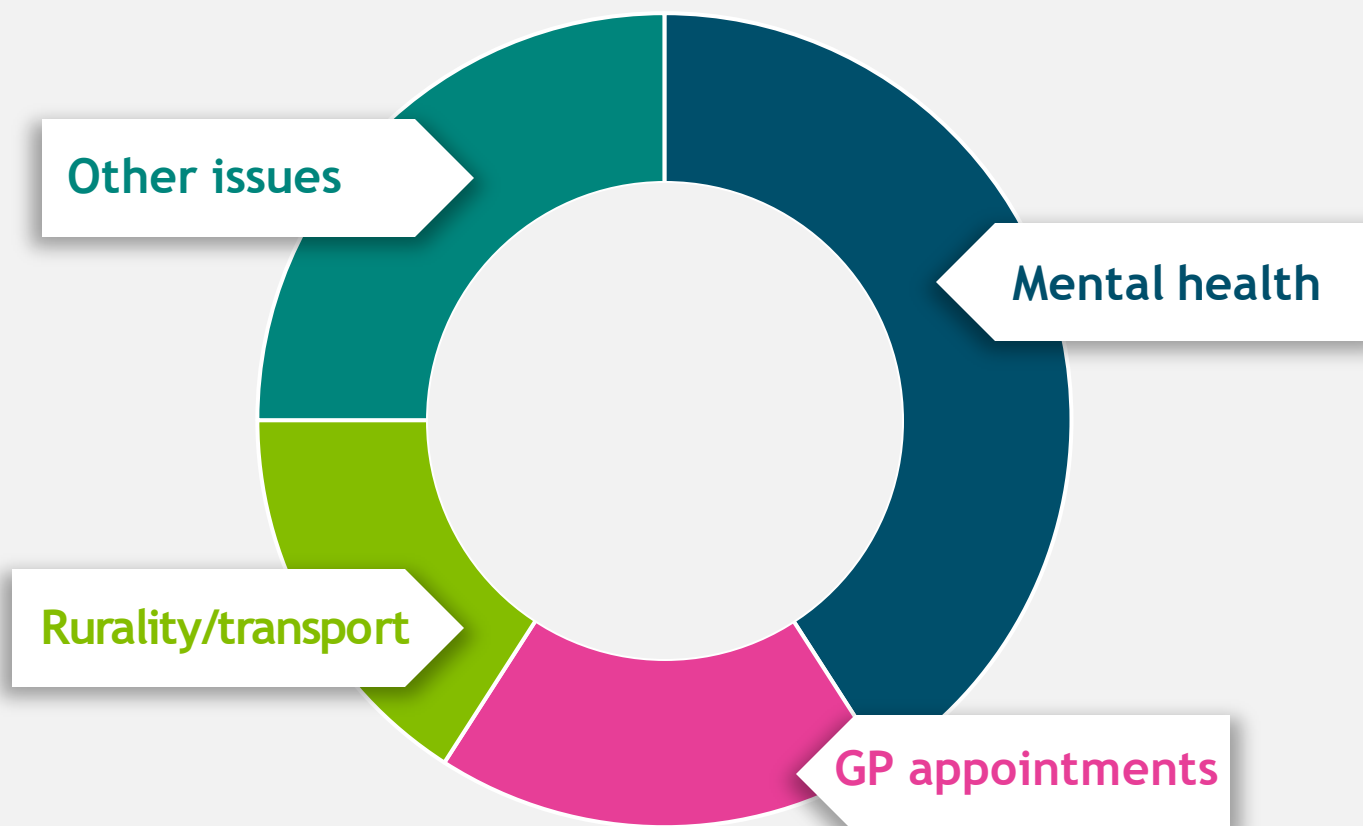
- + The Yorkshire Post
- + York Press
- + Radio York
- + Stray FM
- + Darlington and Stockton Times
- + Northern Echo



**Helping you find  
the answers**

## What are your priorities for Healthwatch North Yorkshire?

Our sole purpose is to make care better for people. As the independent champion for people using health and social care services, we asked people in North Yorkshire what NHS or social care service they thought we should focus on in our next work programme, and some clear priorities emerged.





## What's important to you?

During our survey from October 2018 to March 2019 we heard from 328 people.



### Mental Health

Around 36% of responses suggested we should look at mental health in our next working programme. The main sentiment of this theme was about the lack of provision or support services available in North Yorkshire and the long waiting times. There were contrasting views on which aspects of care and varying levels of mental health issues. Age, rurality and multiple conditions are all suggested topics.

### GP appointments, access and waiting times

Around 16% of people told us we should be focusing on GPs or primary care. There were a few positive comments about GPs being supportive and accessible, but many people told us their difficulties in getting an appointment and the long waits involved at their local surgeries.

### Rurality and transport

There were also a number of responses that suggested we look at issues of rurality and transport links or travel to health and social care appointments. 14% of responses suggested we look at this in our next working programme. Many of these used the elderly as an example of people who are particularly disadvantaged by a lack of transport, though there were other examples such as people living with disabilities or those on lower incomes. The lack of services

in rural areas was again highlighted. People also commented on the need for more local community support and better local access to community activities to reduce social isolation and increase health wellbeing.

### Hospitals

There were a lot of suggestions about various hospital services included in around 9% of responses. Most of these related to A&E services, including lack of access due to travelling distances, long waits during distressing times and staffing levels.

### Disabilities and Learning disabilities

6% of people mentioned we should concentrate on learning disabilities or other disabilities. Examples included looking at autism support services, wheelchair services, services for adults with learning disabilities and services for children with disabilities, especially in hospitals.

### Dentists

About 5% of people told us we should look at dentists, noting a lack of NHS dentists in their area. This often related to closure or movement of services and little local rural access. This was a particular issue for Scarborough residents.

## 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 hundreds of people access the advice and information they need in person, on the phone and online.

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

- + Specific advice and information blogs online
- + Our contact us form
- + At community events
- + Promoting helpful services across our social media channels
- + Over the phone

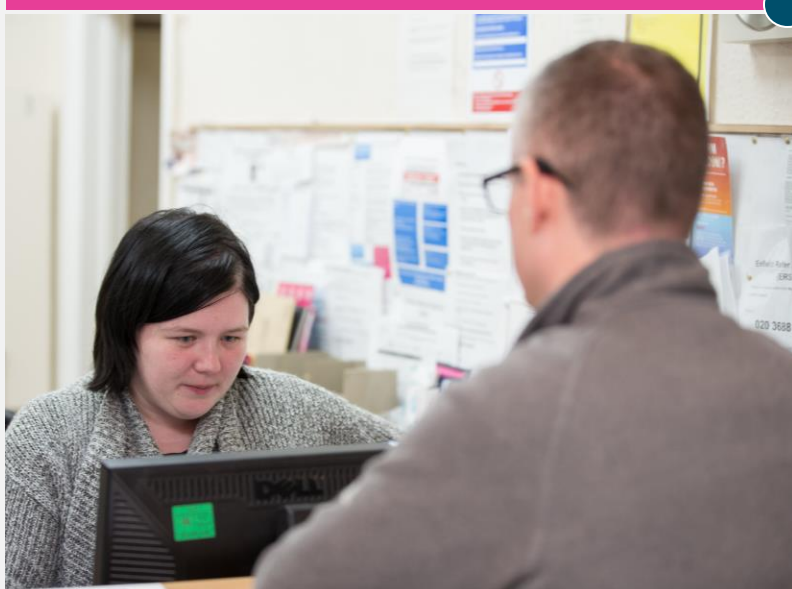


### Tackling isolation

A gentleman commented on a Facebook post about loneliness and isolation in older generations - his comment gave cause for concern about his own wellbeing, so HWNY contacted him through direct message on Facebook. We asked him if he would like help with signposting to local services - he said that he would. We researched and contacted local services and passed contacts and information over to the gentleman, including a group run by AGE UK.

### Help finding a dentist

A person at Scarborough Refugee Drop-in has had difficulties getting registered with a dentist. They were initially registered with a dentist but removed from the list as they missed two appointments and did not realise that they needed to cancel. HWNY, together with other volunteers at the drop-in, provided information about finding other dental practices, getting on waiting lists, using 111 service for urgent appointments and using Leeds University dental services.







*We worked with a neighbouring Healthwatch after being contacted by someone from their area*

## Healthwatch working together across borders for the benefit of the public

A person's spouse passed away earlier in the year and the person is now trying to claim back holiday insurance for their late partner.

Their GP has said they need to sign a disclaimer stating that they will not sue the practice regarding any content in the records before they are able to release them. The person is unsure if this is necessary and would like some advice.

We contacted a neighbouring Healthwatch to ask for advice as the person lives in their area. The neighbouring Healthwatch contacted their CCG and will follow up as they gain more information.

The person gave us permission to pass on their details as needed.

## THIS WAY



## Are you looking for help?

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.

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

t: 01904 552687

e: [admin@healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk](mailto:admin@healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk)





## Our volunteers



## How do our volunteers help us?

At Healthwatch North Yorkshire we couldn't make all of these improvements without the support of our 25 volunteers, who work with us to help make care better for their communities.

- + Raise awareness of the work we do in the community
- + Visit services to make sure they're meeting people's needs
- + Support our day to day running e.g. governance
- + Collect people's views and experiences which we use in our reports



*Healthwatch North Yorkshire volunteers are involved in a full range of our key activities*

## Our Health Connectors play a full role in our projects across North Yorkshire

Our Health Connectors share their time, energy and experience to help others by making a difference not only to our community but also to vulnerable individuals who may be struggling to find the right support from their health and social care services.

Some of our volunteers help by observing local services such as care homes, hospitals or GP services as part of our Enter and View team.

Others have worked in the health and social care sector and use their experience at a strategic level to help represent Healthwatch North Yorkshire.

Many of our volunteers love to be out and about in the community chatting with people about what they think of local services and also listening to what's most important to them. We encourage people to #speakup and share their experiences and ideas about how services can be improved which means we can also ensure our residents are involved in local decision-making right from the start.

*Many of our volunteers love to be out and about in the community chatting with people about what they think of local services*



## Our volunteers' work

We throw the spotlight onto some of our fantastic volunteers to show you how their work truly makes a difference to the lives of people.

*Volunteers at an engagement event during the Yorkshire Game and Country Fair*



A Healthwatch volunteer was invited to talk to the Friends of St Monica's Hospital in Easingwold in June, as part of their final coffee morning before changing their charitable status.

Accompanied by the Volunteer Co-ordinator, approximately 20 Friends listened to a presentation about our origins, our role and achievements within the community.

There was a lively question-and-answer session and opinions regarding health and social care were shared. The Friends of St Monica's were very complimentary in an *Easingwold Advertiser* article, where they thanked HWNY publicly for their contribution to the morning.

HWNY were also able to contribute to two Community Engagement events in Whitby and Malton as part of Safeguarding Week.

Working in collaboration with the police, fire service, local authority, IDAS and community support workers, we were able to share information about HWNY, and listen to the public voice on a number of issues from cold calling/harassment of vulnerable people, children being safe online and other health & social care issues.

Leaflets were available from the mobile police office and handed to every person we spoke to at the events.



## 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.healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk)

t: 01904 552687

e: [admin@healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk](mailto:admin@healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk)





*Healthwatch North Yorkshire volunteers have been researching why people miss GP appointments*

## Volunteers lead the way on investigating why people miss appointments with their GP

We delivered a volunteer-led project on the subject of missed appointments at GP offices, with a volunteer lead appointed to work alongside the Research and Intelligence Officer.

As members of the public, volunteers have had the opportunity to be directly involved in every aspect of the project designed to investigate an issue that has attracted a lot of public interest and concern.

We confirmed a research protocol and plan for a project aimed at exploring the issue of individuals failing to attend their GP appointments. This was a new type of project for Healthwatch North Yorkshire, as it was volunteer-led. With the help of two volunteer leads, we conducted a meeting to introduce the project to interested volunteers and agreed on a series of targets and milestones.

The project had two prongs: pursuing a line of

inquiry with GP practice managers and more broadly with members of the public. Volunteers were instrumental in the design, and remained involved throughout the data collection.

A great deal of autumn was also spent focusing on the final stages of the project, looking at the reasons why individuals miss GP appointments. We finalised the contents of a survey, jointly created with our volunteers. Collaborating with one of the volunteer research leads appointed to the project, we created a training session on how to deliver semi-structured surveys and conduct interviews for research purposes. This was held with three volunteers in December. CCGs were also approached to provide their endorsement for the section of the project focusing on GP surgeries.

We launched the pilot project towards the end of the 2018-19 year, the findings of which will feed into our forthcoming work on primary care access. It is the first volunteer-led piece of work that Healthwatch North Yorkshire has ever completed. It is hoped that this will lead to positive, actionable recommendations on improving people's experience of visiting their GP.

During the year our volunteers have contributed 600 hours to Healthwatch North Yorkshire



‘The views and stories you share with us are helping to make care better for our local community’

**Mike Smith**  
Healthwatch Volunteer





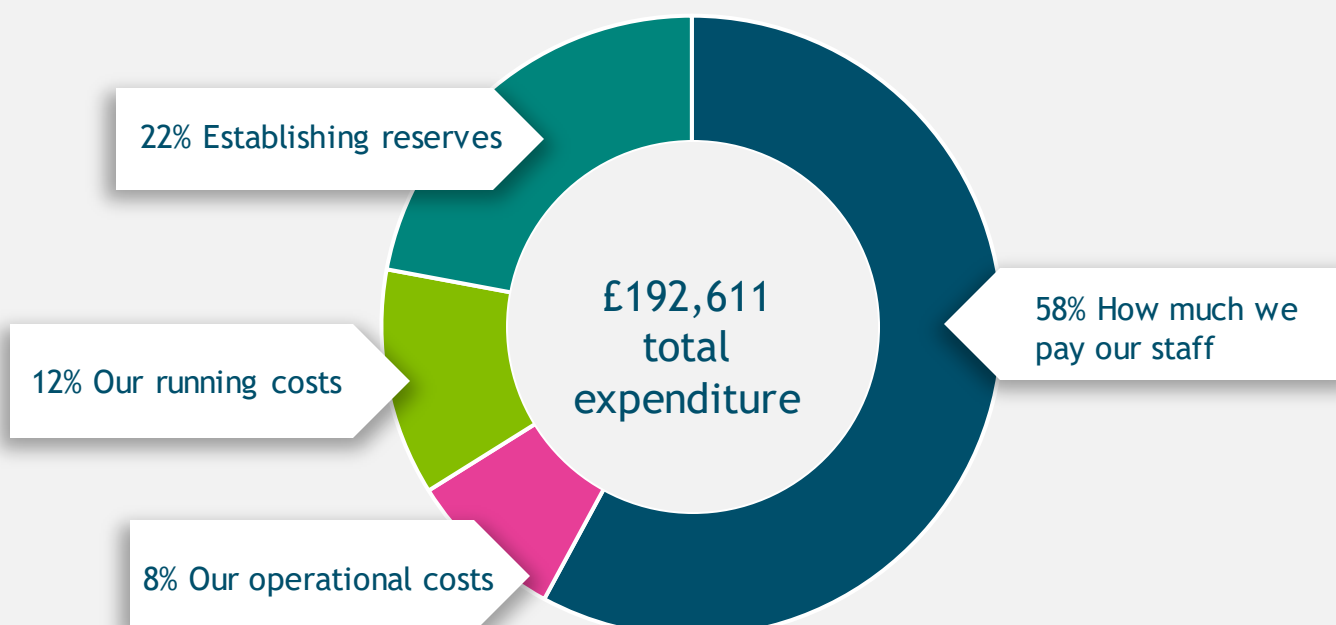
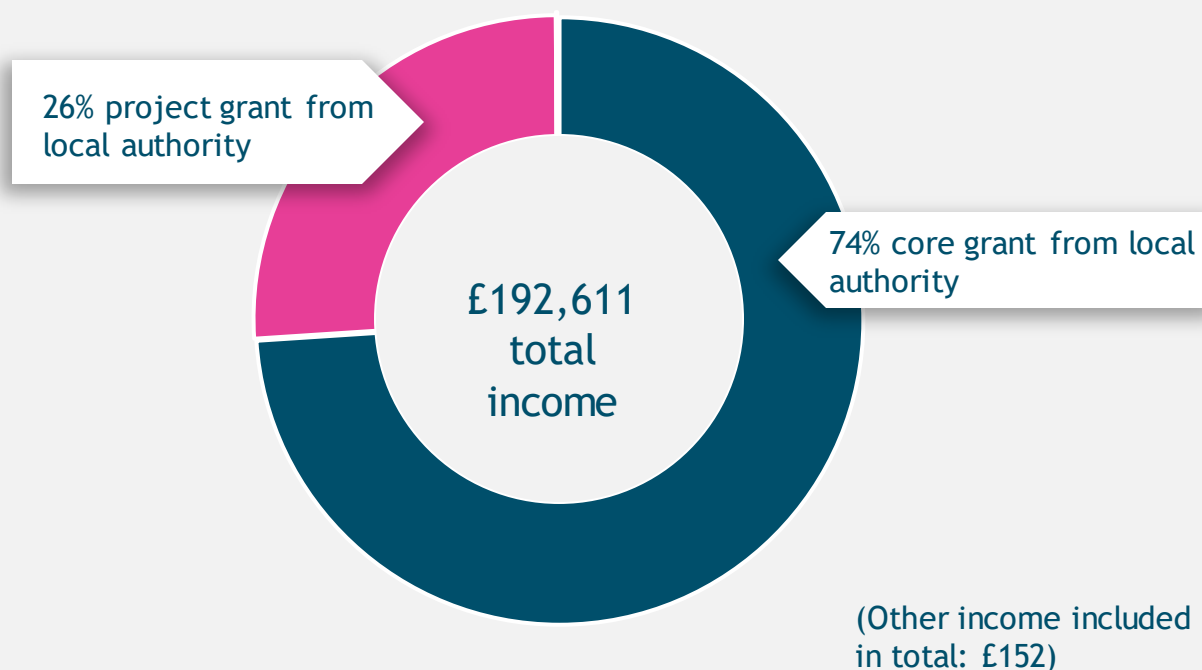
## Our finances

## How we use our money

To help us carry out our work, we are funded by North Yorkshire County Council.

In 2018-19 we received £192,611 including a core grant of £142,459, a

project grant of £50,000 and £152 in other income. Including staff costs, operational costs, running costs and establishing reserves, we spent £192,611.





# Message from our CEO

Since joining Healthwatch North Yorkshire in August 2018, I have been privileged to work with such a great team of volunteers, staff and Board of Trustees.

As a small organisation trying to reach 608,000 people across the biggest county in England is quite a challenge, but we recognise and embrace the need to work with the wealth of expertise and knowledge across the public and voluntary sector.

We have a responsibility to ensure the voices of all North Yorkshire communities are heard and considered, both children and adults and we cannot achieve this by working in isolation.

I am proud of our achievements so far and this report reflects the dedication of our team and emphasises the need to work in partnership with others in order to gather relevant information and ensure high quality local social care and health services.

I feel very strongly that volunteers are a charity's most valued asset and I am keen to empower local people, explore recruitment opportunities and create new and exciting engagement ideas that appeal to our diverse population.

Our "What's Important to You?" survey as well as information gathered at our community outreach has informed our work plan for 2019/20. This includes mental health, rural communities, primary care access, and hospital services and seldom heard groups. We look forward to looking into these topics in more detail to ensure the planning and delivery of services meets your needs and those of your family and friends.

I would like to thank everyone who has completed our surveys and to the participants in all our focus groups and workshops. Your experience of local services, your comments and opinions and your patient journeys are so appreciated and will help us to influence at a strategic level.

Finally, thank you to all our volunteers we could not do what we do without your fantastic support. Your willingness to support our team has helped to showcase our work as the independent champion for health and care services, not only to commissioners and providers of services but more importantly to patients, carers and the public.

Here's to another exciting year!



*'Volunteers are a charity's most valued asset'*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Michelle Thompson', is positioned above a pink horizontal line.

**Michelle Thompson BEM**  
Healthwatch North Yorkshire  
Chief Executive Officer

# Message from our Operations Manager

2019 represents my sixth year of involvement with Healthwatch, first as a member of the board and for the last three as a member of staff. In that time the organisation has changed and grown and now I believe is in the strongest position since inception.

When I started as Healthwatch manager we were a small team of two covering the largest county in England. This year saw us finish the year as a team of six and in a much better place to help amplify the patient and public voice in North Yorkshire and drive improvements in health and social care. It's been a period of farewells with three members of staff leaving to take up new opportunities elsewhere. They have been invaluable in the work we have done this year and I thank them on behalf of the management team and the board and wish them well in the future.

Our chair Judith also stood down at the end of this year, though she remains a key member of board. Judith took on the role of interim and then permanent chair and has been instrumental in the transition to a fully-fledged independent charity and one that thrived in its first year of existence. It has been a pleasure to work with her and we hope she enjoys her semi-retirement as board member. At the same time it has been a pleasure to welcome five new members of staff who all bring a range of different skills and are a real asset to the organisation. Each has quickly embraced the ethos of Healthwatch and are already making a real contribution to the work we are doing.

The health and social care landscape in North Yorkshire continues to be a genuine challenge. We have feet in three Integrated Care Systems stretching from Cumbria in the West, Hull in the east, Wakefield in the South and all the way to the Scottish border in the North. We liaise with

six Clinical Commissioning Groups as well as a county and district councils. As services become more and more centralised the challenges facing rural populations like North Yorkshire become greater and we work hard to ensure the voices and experience of these people are heard when decisions are made.

The coming year will see more changes with the introduction of Primary Care Networks, the proposed mergers of clinical commissioning groups and potential changes to acute services across the county. We are well placed throughout all of this to ensure patient and public voice is truly at the heart of decision-making and will continue to work hard in our communities, gathering that knowledge and experience and taking it to those in a position to deliver real improvements.



*'As services become more and more centralised the challenges facing rural populations like North Yorkshire become greater'*

**Nigel Ayre**  
Healthwatch North Yorkshire  
Operations Manager



# Contact us

The Centre @ Burnholme  
Mosssdale Avenue  
York  
YO31 0HA

- + 01904 552687
  - + [admin@healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk](mailto:admin@healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk)
  - + [www.facebook.com/HealthwatchNorthYorkshire](https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchNorthYorkshire)
  - + [www.twitter.com/HealthwatchNY](https://www.twitter.com/HealthwatchNY)
  - + [www.healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.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.

Charity no. 1171152



Healthwatch North  
Yorkshire

The Centre @  
Burnholme

Mossdale Avenue

York

YO31 0HA

w: [www.healthnorthyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.healthnorthyorkshire.co.uk)  
t: 01904 552687

e: [admin@healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk](mailto:admin@healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk)

tw: @HealthwatchNY

fb: [facebook.com/HealthwatchNorth  
Yorkshire](https://facebook.com/HealthwatchNorthYorkshire)