healthwatch
North Yorkshire

Guided by you

Contents

Message from our **chair**

In the last six months of the year I and my Trustee colleagues recognised the need for a fundamental restructure of the organisation – all during a year of changes, challenges and the unknown.

I took over the role of Chair from Judith Bromfield in April last year. Judith has made a significant contribution to Healthwatch North Yorkshire over many years and successfully created us in 2017 as an independent charity which has now become a well-established, respected, and influential member of the health and social care community in North Yorkshire.

I was delighted when Judith agreed to stay on as Vice-Chair and her support to me and my fellow Trustees has been of huge value. She has also contributed to this annual report by reporting on our financial position and has been instrumental in updating our plans for 2020/2021.

I want to take this opportunity therefore to thank her and my fellow Trustees for their help, guidance, support and encouragement in overseeing the organisation during a very challenging time in both our organisation and in dealing with the fall-out from COVID-19.

The word 'unprecedented' is much used, but I think we as individuals, we as a country and as Healthwatch North Yorkshire in common with our local Healthwatch colleagues will have to make certain we continue to behave responsibly, with care, empathy and understanding and in ensuring we prove our value to all.

As Judith said in her message last year: "(Chris 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". As indicated, this has been a major objective in the last six months, and I'm pleased to say we have successfully restructured our operations. We will be appointing a full-time Chief Executive Officer and a Research and Intelligence Officer.

I would also like to record my appreciation to Alex Day, our Communications Officer, Claire Canavan, our Outreach Co-ordinator and to Lada Rotshtein, our Volunteer Officer, for their work during the last year. We have seen a significant increase in our website and social media traffic, in our exposure to community and social organisations and in our volunteer numbers, despite the challenges in relation to COVID-19.

In future we will be gearing our activity on shorter and more timely reports focusing on current areas of importance, needs, views and relevance to the population of North Yorkshire

Not only are thanks due to our Trustees and staff but also to our volunteers. They are proving to be a valuable asset, notwithstanding the current challenges, and we hope they will continue to work with us in providing a real source of enthusiasm, expertise and enjoyment in helping others.

This restructure will put us in a strong position to continue to influence healthcare providers effectively and to build a positive platform for engaging further with the people of North Yorkshire in representing their health and wellbeing needs.

In future we will be gearing our activity on shorter and more timely reports focusing on current areas of importance, needs, views and relevance to the population of North Yorkshire. By doing so we will be able to respond quickly to issues flagged up to us by our constituents in what is the largest county in England.

I am fortunate in having a diverse and committed Board with knowledge and experience ranging from geo-political, NHS, voluntary sector and multi-national business skills, and we will be recruiting more Trustees this year.

We are entering a challenging, exciting and crucial period in the life of Healthwatch North Yorkshire and with the challenge of delivering valuable, meaningful and timely surveys and reports I know that with a new and reinvigorated team in place we can make a real difference and enjoy making our community a better place in which to live and work.

Chris Brackley
Chair, Healthwatch North Yorkshire

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 QC *Chair, Healthwatch England*
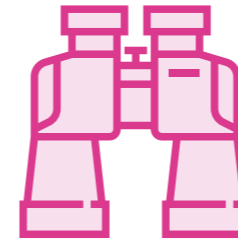
Our vision is simple

Health and care that works for you.

People want health and social care support that works – helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.

Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.

Our approach

People's views come first – especially those who find it hardest to be heard.

We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.

How we find out what matters to you

People are at the heart of everything we do. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:
- **Visiting services to see how they work**
- **Running surveys and focus groups**
- **Going out in the community and talking to members of the public**
- **Working with other organisations in North Yorkshire**

Find out more about us and the work that we do

Website: **www.healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk**

Twitter: **@HealthwatchNY**

Facebook: **@HealthwatchNorthYorkshire**

Highlights from our **year**

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

Lada Rotshtein from Healthwatch North Yorkshire with Knaresborough Town Crier Roger Hewitt in July 2019

Health and care that works for you

55 volunteers

helping to carry out our work, a 120% increase on 2018-19. In total, they gave up 1,602 hours.

We employed
6 staff

Full-time equivalent: five members of staff.

We received
£142,500 in funding
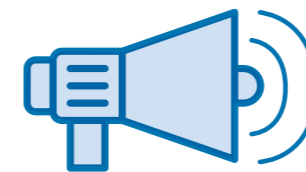
from our local authority in 2019-20.

Supporting people

1,764 people

shared their health and social care story with us in person, on email and over the phone.

257 people

contacted us for advice and information, and we signposted them to 164 different services.

Reaching out

13,331 people

engaged with us through our website, a huge 207% increase on 2018-19. 2,074 engaged with us on Facebook, a 59% increase, and our Twitter posts had 299,593 impressions, a rise of 81%. 2,928 people engaged with us at community events.
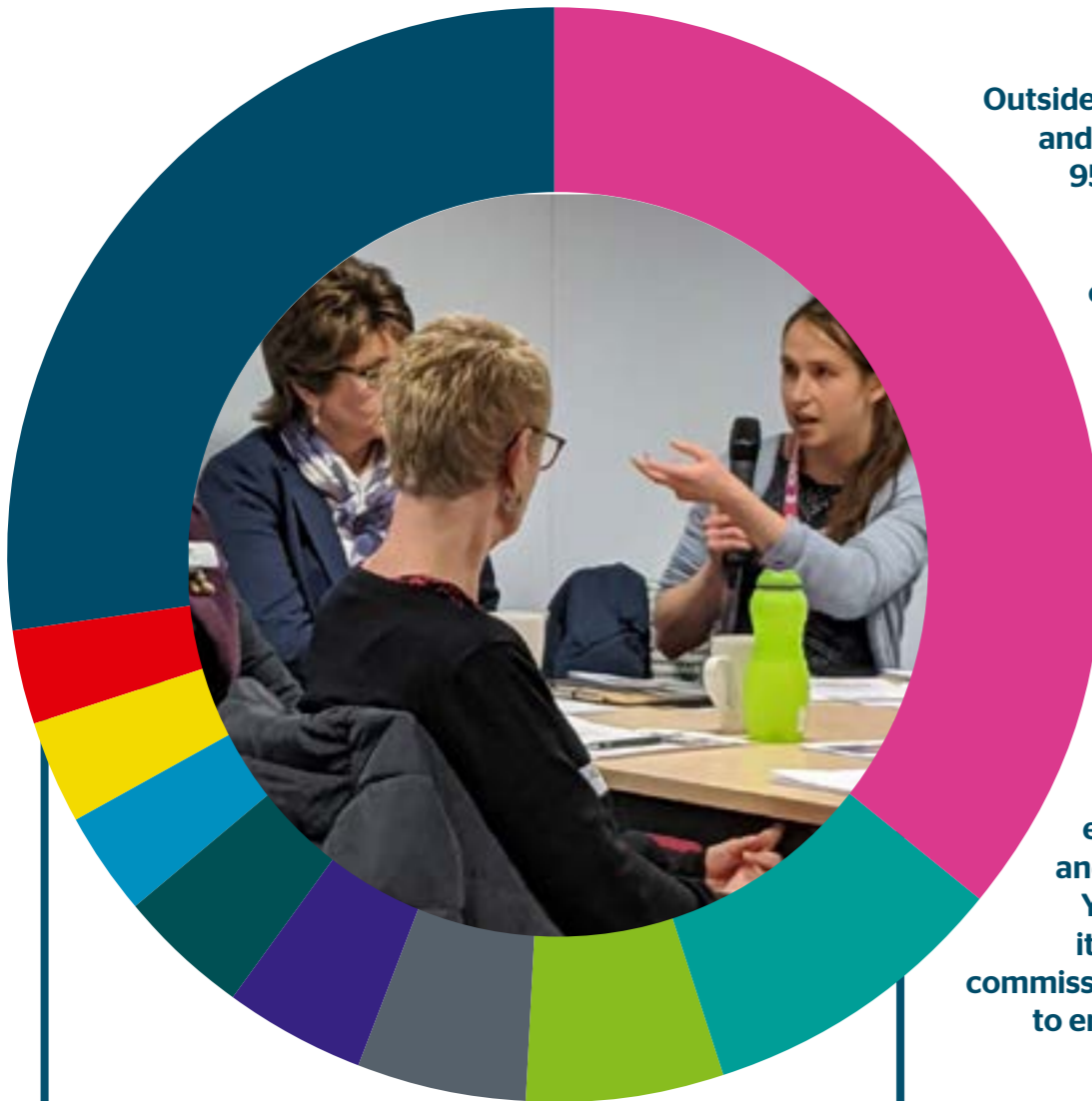
Making a difference to care

We published
5 reports

about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, representing the views of 943 people, and we made 12 recommendations for improvement.

Your **feedback**

Outside of our main projects and reports, we received 951 pieces of feedback throughout the year in person during our community outreach work, on the phone, on email and through our website. This graph shows the types of service about which we most commonly received feedback. All of the views we gather help us build up a picture of people's experiences of health and social care in North Yorkshire, and we use it to work with service commissioners and providers to ensure people's voices are heard.
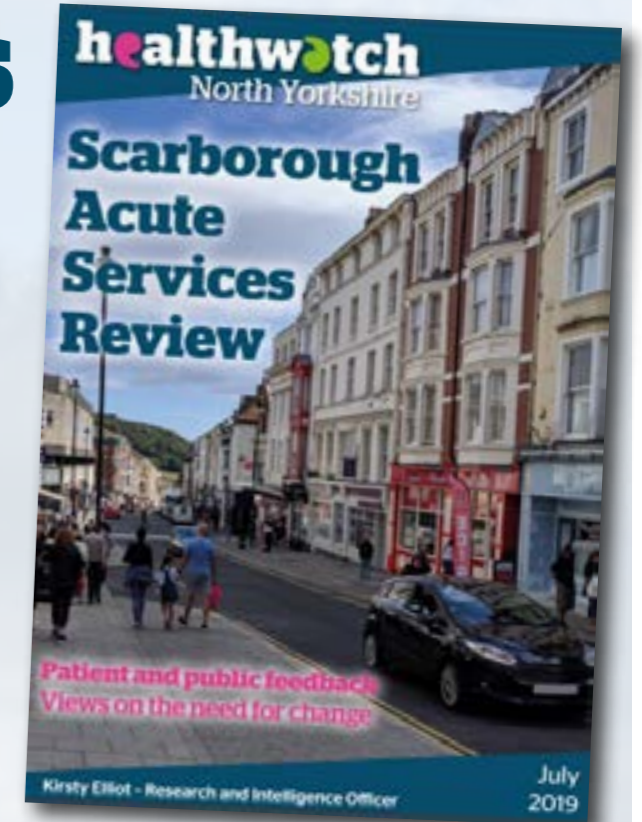
SERVICE	%
GP practice	**36**
Dentist (non hospital)	**9**
Accident & emergency	**6**
Urgent care services	**5**
Other (community services)	**4**
Ophthalmology	**4**
Oncology	**3**
Community pharmacy	**3**
Care at home	**3**
Other	**27**

Our **reports**

Scarborough Acute Services Review
July 2019

NHS Long Term Plan: What Would North Yorkshire Do?
August 2019
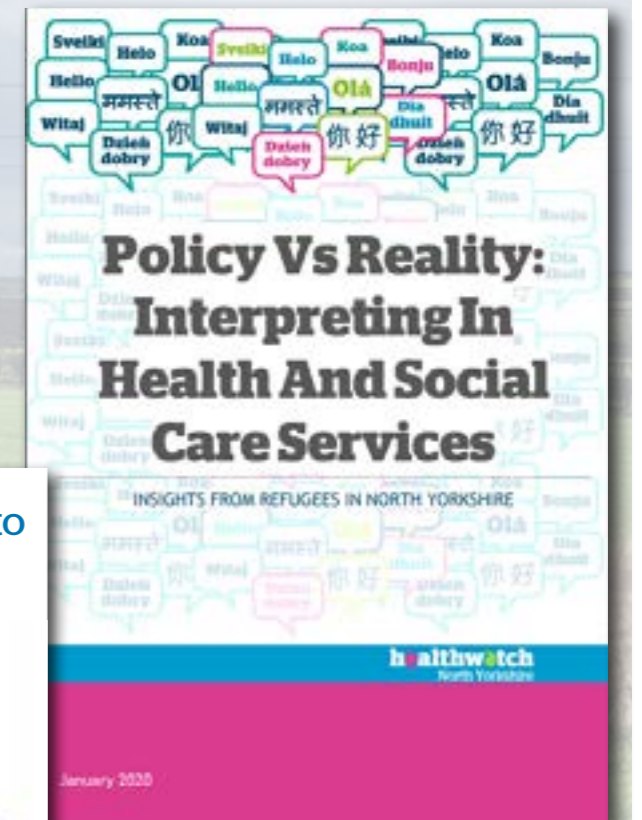
Policy vs Reality: Interpreting in Health And Social Care Services
January 2020

What's Important To North Yorkshire?
October 2019

Thoughts On Changes To The Friarage Hospital
January 2020

How we've made a **difference**

Simon Stevens, Chief Executive of the NHS in England, addresses the national Healthwatch conference in Birmingham in October 2019

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 people using health and care services in North Yorkshire.

NHS reviews patient transport after people tell Healthwatch about difficulties in getting to appointments

NHS England is carrying out a national review of non-emergency patient transport after people across the country told Healthwatch of their difficulties in getting to appointments.

People in North Yorkshire highlighted issues with getting to see GPs, long distances to hospitals and a lack of transport in rural areas as the key issues facing the NHS in the county. Some 530 people across the county engaged with Healthwatch North Yorkshire through surveys and focus groups in spring 2019 to tell us what changes they would like to see in local hospitals, GP surgeries and community services.

In January 2019, the NHS in England published an ambitious 10-year plan setting out all the things it wants health services to do better for people across the country. NHS England and NHS Improvement funded the Healthwatch network to carry out engagement with communities across the country between March and May to establish how the Long Term Plan (LTP) should be implemented locally. Across England, 152 local Healthwatch organisations engaged with people in their areas.

Our reports were published over the summer and in October, at the national

Some of the team from Bedale Community Transport, who helped us learn about the issues they face serving remote communities

Healthwatch Conference at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham, NHS Chief Executive Sir Simon Stevens announced the review in response to people's concerns about local transport, which emerged as a common theme. Several stories from people who provided feedback to Healthwatch North Yorkshire were featured in a national briefing which helped prompt the NHS review.

Working with providers across the county, and taking feedback and views from a range of sources including attendees of our annual general meeting, in March 2020 we submitted a localised briefing to the NHS's call for evidence on non-emergency patient transport, highlighting the issues facing community transport in North Yorkshire and the difficulties people had experienced in accessing NHS patient transport services.

This national review of non-emergency patient transport will listen and act on concerns raised by patients

Sir Simon Stevens
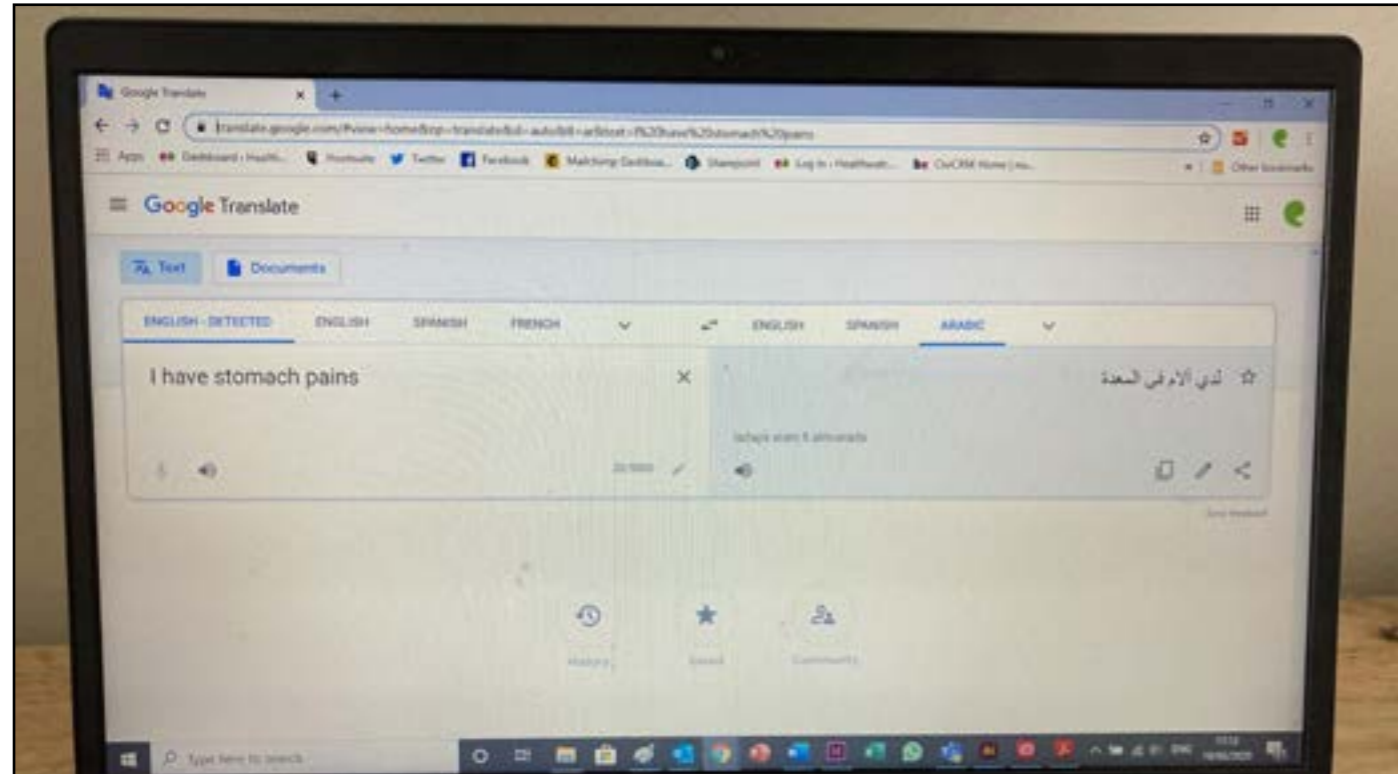
Our report showed many services were using Google Translate, contrary to NHS guidelines

Providers improve the quality of translation they offer for non-English speakers after refugees share their experiences of accessing NHS services

Health services in North Yorkshire are improving the translation services they provide after we highlighted inequalities faced by refugees attempting to access care in the county.

Our report *Policy Vs Reality: Interpreting In Health And Social Care Services*, released in January, outlined how some refugees seeking medical help were being denied access to interpreters or were discouraged from using them at GP surgeries, dentists, pharmacies and hospitals. Research carried out by speaking to more than 40 refugees across the county, backed up by "mystery shopper" exercises carried out by Healthwatch North Yorkshire volunteers, showed that health professionals often relied on Google Translate – which NHS guidelines state should be avoided due to its lack of accuracy.

York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, which runs hospitals including York, Scarborough, Malton and Bridlington, has issued an action plan responding to the findings of our report. It has also pledged to remove the use of Google Translate from its website, which is being improved to ensure it can be accurately translated into more than 100 languages. Staff will be given more regular training on how to support patients to access interpretation services, and computer systems will be improved to better identify patients who need this kind of help.

> The valuable work delivered by Healthwatch North Yorkshire has created important opportunities for the Trust to understand the diverse needs of our patients. Through effective partnership working, we have been able to work together to develop and plan for improvements to our services
>
> Nichola Greenwood, Lead for Patient Equality& Diversity, Chief Nurse Team, York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The coronavirus outbreak affected every aspect of our lives in March 2020 – and we had the right information

Healthwatch North Yorkshire helps keep people informed as coronavirus affects every aspect of our lives

When the coronavirus pandemic took hold in early 2020 and the UK went into lockdown in March to try to control the spread of the pandemic, the immediate priority of the Healthwatch network was to support the NHS and the Government in ensuring that people were receiving the right advice and information.

We focused on utilising our extensive signposting database to create a Coronavirus Links A-Z section on our website, linking people with the latest local and national information and advice relating to a range of medical conditions, social circumstances and issues such as cancer, autism, debt, dementia, mental health, scams, shielding and pregnancy. The resource continues to be maintained and updated into 2020-21.

When launched in the very early days of lockdown, our resource was shared widely by a range of organisations across North Yorkshire and thousands of people came to us to find the right advice and information, with views of our website well up on average for March 2020 – up to four times the average for the previous six months, by some measurements, including new visitors.

> In these testing times, the links you have posted here will make an incredible difference to a lot of people – myself included
>
> Email to Healthwatch North Yorkshire in March 2020

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.healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk**

Telephone: **07882 421394** (temporary contact number while staff work remotely during coronavirus pandemic)

Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights

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

In North Yorkshire, we gathered the views of 530 people in surveys and focus groups.

152 local Healthwatch organisations attended almost 1,000 community events in England.

NHS Long Term Plan

Following a commitment from the Government to increase investment in the NHS, the NHS published the 'Long Term Plan' in January 2019, setting out its' key ambitions over the next 10 years. Healthwatch launched a countrywide campaign to give people a say in how the plan should be implemented in their communities.

Working with Healthwatch Darlington, Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire and Healthwatch Leeds, we asked people #WhatWouldYouDo to improve the NHS locally.

People in North Yorkshire highlighted issues with getting to see GPs, long distances to hospitals and a lack of transport in rural areas as the key issues facing the NHS in the county.

They also called for more joined-up working between health and social care professionals in treating multiple and complex conditions, and for the people treating them to be given the time to build up a picture of their health rather than targeting individual symptoms.

People with mental health conditions said the time taken to receive treatment after diagnosis was very slow, and were less likely to describe accessing support as easy, compared with people with cancer or heart and lung disease.

They also said their conditions made it harder to be treated for other ailments.

> If you go in with leg pain, they say it's because of your mental health problems. Doctors just fob you off for your physical health problems because you have a mental health diagnosis

Response to our NHS Long Term Plan consultation
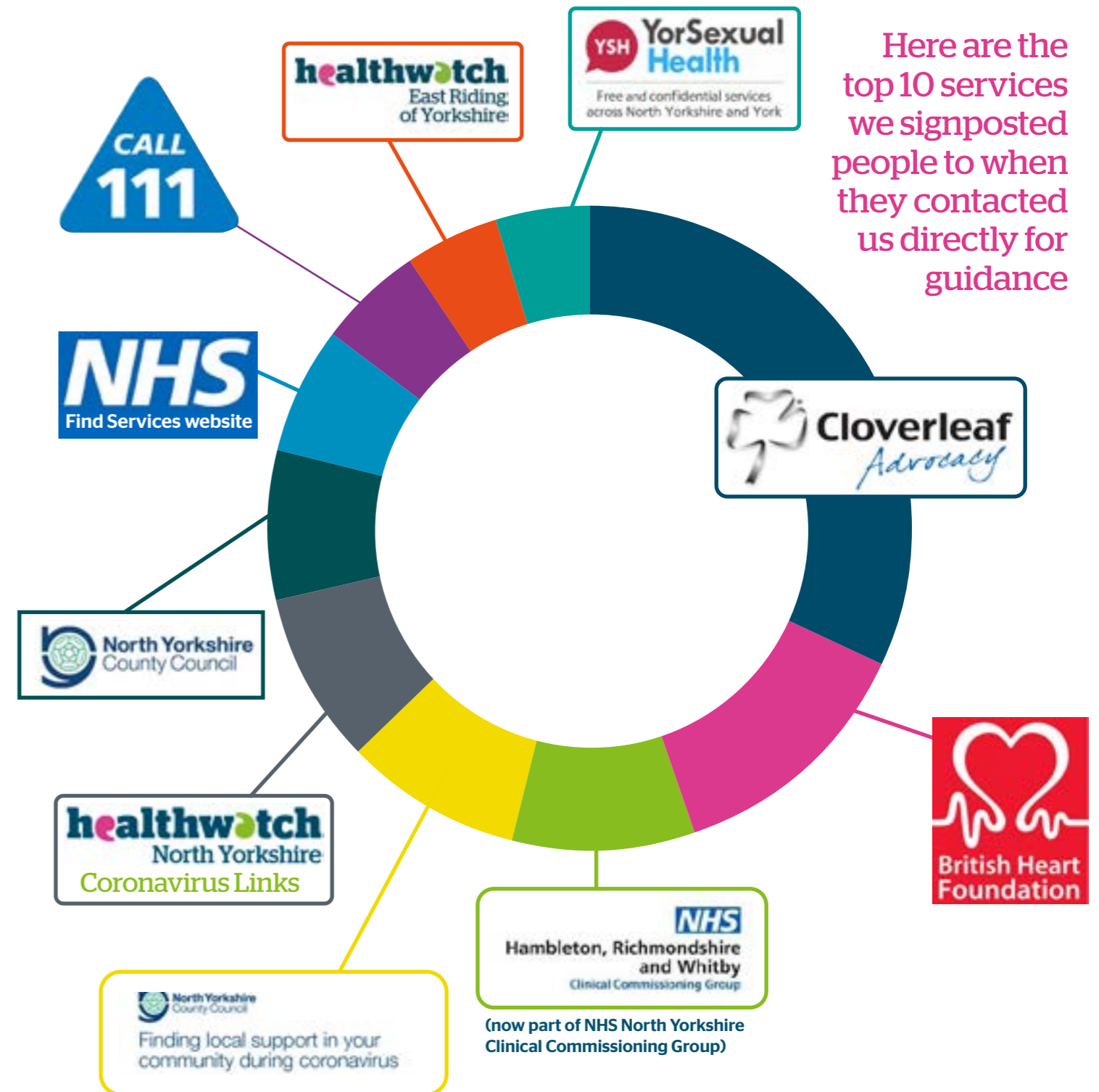
Helping you find the **answers**

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

Claire Canavan from Healthwatch North Yorkshire, left, with volunteer Caroline Forber at an event in Northallerton

Here are the top 10 services we signposted people to when they contacted us directly for guidance

CALL 111

healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire

YSH YorSexual Health
Free and confidential services across North Yorkshire and York

NHS Find Services website

Cloverleaf Advocacy

North Yorkshire County Council

healthwatch North Yorkshire Coronavirus Links

North Yorkshire County Council
Finding local support in your community during coronavirus

NHS Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby Clinical Commissioning Group
(now part of NHS North Yorkshire Clinical Commissioning Group)

British Heart Foundation

Helping you find the information you need

During 2019-20, as more and more people came to our website to find the information they need about health and social care in North Yorkshire, we added lots more information and links to advice and support from a range of sources, including Healthwatch. Here are some of the sections we created:

Information

Our general A-Z information resources contains sections dedicated to explaining how the local NHS works in North Yorkshire, details of local hospitals and who runs them as well as guidance on how to make a complaint about different kinds of service. It also links to national and local organisations dedicated to conditions and issues such as dementia, carers, parenting and sexual health, as well as a host of advice and guidance from Healthwatch.
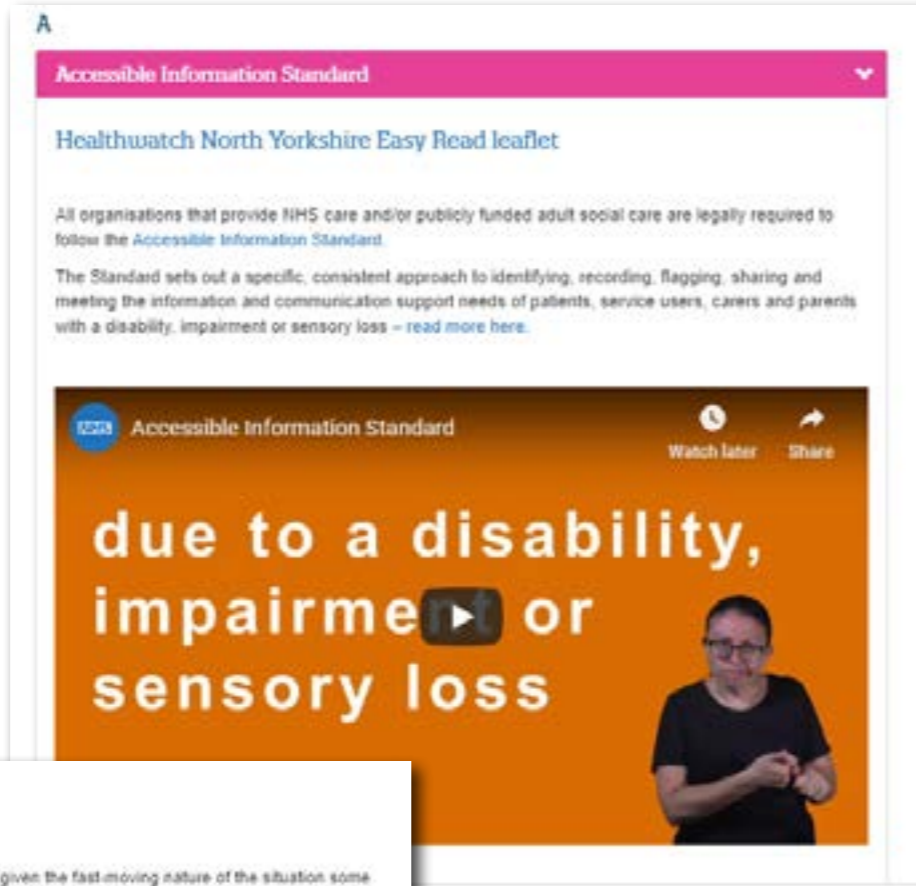

Coronavirus Links

As the coronavirus pandemic took hold at the end of the 2019-20 year, we acted quickly to pull together various sources of official information and guidance from the NHS and Government as well as a host of local and national organisations offering coronavirus-specific guidance and support for a range of medical conditions and personal circumstances. This resource has brought thousands more people to our website.

Primary Care Networks

Primary Care Networks (PCNs) are a key part of the NHS Long Term Plan. Across North Yorkshire, GP practices have been coming together to form networks, typically covering 30,000-50,000 patients, to provide the structure and funding for services to be developed locally, responding to the needs of their patients. Our dedicated section explains where these networks are, and which GP practices are members.
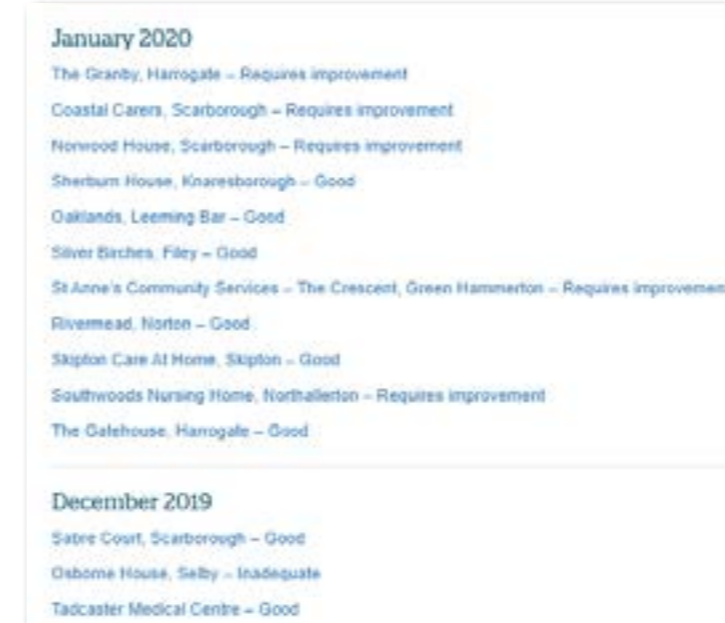
CQC reports

The Care Quality Commission is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. The CQC monitors, inspects and regulates services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety. It publishes its findings, including performance ratings to help people choose care. Our section links to the latest inspection reports for services in North Yorkshire.

Easy Read

We now produce Easy Read material – an accessible, easy-to-read format – to support our outreach work and focus groups, to explain how we can help people and to summarise our reports.

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.healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk

Telephone: 07882 421394 (while staff work remotely during COVID-19)

Email: admin@hwny.co.uk

Volunteers

At Healthwatch North Yorkshire we are supported by 55 volunteers, including 35 new recruits in 2019-20, to help us find out what people think is working, and what people would like to improve, with 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.
- Visited services to take part in official assessments.
- Supported our projects with expertise in research and intelligence
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on.

Healthwatch North Yorkshire Volunteer Officer Lada Rotshtein, right, with some of our volunteers at a get-together during 2019-20

Volunteers investigate how local pharmacies deal with interpretation

Volunteers played a key role in our report which urged GPs, dentists, pharmacists and hospitals in North Yorkshire to do more to help refugees access key health services.

They carried out a "mystery shopper" investigation at 25 pharmacies across the county, seeking support for a friend whose first language is Arabic – and found only four willing to provide interpreter services.

With the NHS heavily promoting the Help Us Help You campaign to encourage people to use their local pharmacy as their first port of call for managing minor illness, volunteers looked into whether services were fit for refugees – but found that many attempting to find help from pharmacists will be forced to take their ailments elsewhere.

Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Website: www.healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk

Telephone: 07882 421394 (while staff work remotely during COVID-19)

Email: admin@hwny.co.uk

Our **volunteers**

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

Ahmed, 40

My experience at Healthwatch North Yorkshire includes translations of Government guidance and Public Health instructions as well as social care information, and delivering them locally to people with access or health issues during the coronavirus pandemic.

I've also taken part in Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment at York and Scarborough hospitals, improving our signposting, working alongside other members of staff in my community and seeking and recording community views on their health care and social experiences.

I like to read about sociology, I have a degree in Arabic language and I would like to get an Economics degree at Leeds University.

Being a volunteer with Healthwatch means a lot to me. It gives me a lot of confidence, self-belief and positivity. When I have joined the lovely Healthwatch team in their office I have felt I am a member of their staff, not just a volunteer. Also, I feel I've learnt a lot of new skills and experiences.

I chose Healthwatch North Yorkshire because I would like to support my community and to be able to do something positive for those who welcomed me and my family when we first arrived in the UK, and I previously worked with health and social services.

Working with Healthwatch has been an extremely valuable, enjoyable and extensive experience and I am really glad to listen to people's experiences in my community here.

Even though life has been completely changed since this pandemic started, Healthwatch North Yorkshire, whether staff or volunteers, have been working hard from home and they have been working with their colleagues who work in the NHS to support and protect people with different conditions and keep them healthier and safer by communicating with them through Zoom, telephone, email and signposting.
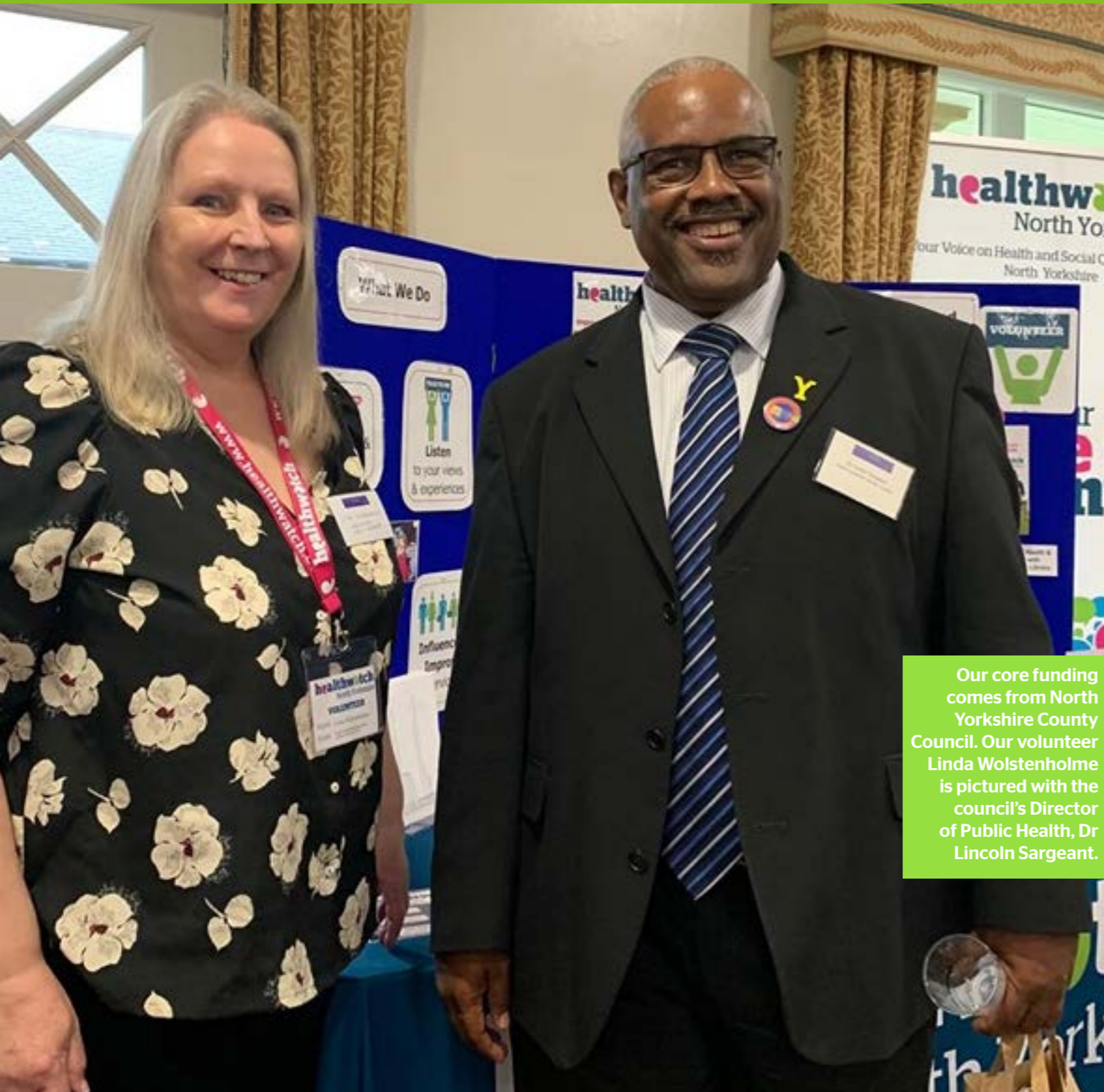
Jessica, 18

I am a full-time student studying Public Services. As part of my college course we have to complete relevant volunteering. Being a volunteer with Healthwatch is extremely rewarding and I have learnt many new skills – working in a professional environment, having the confidence to speak in front of large groups, time-management skills, teamwork, the ability to work alongside other people and a good work ethic. The skills will benefit me in the future because I have learnt how to deal with members of the community in a professional way, which is extremely important in any public service.

I chose Healthwatch North Yorkshire because I knew I wanted to improve my confidence and I wanted to learn how to speak to members of the public in a professional manner. It will help me in whatever career path I want to take, which is extremely important because the skills I have learnt will last me a lifetime.

Taking part in listening to other people's experiences and being able to make a change for the better makes this volunteering opportunity extremely rewarding.
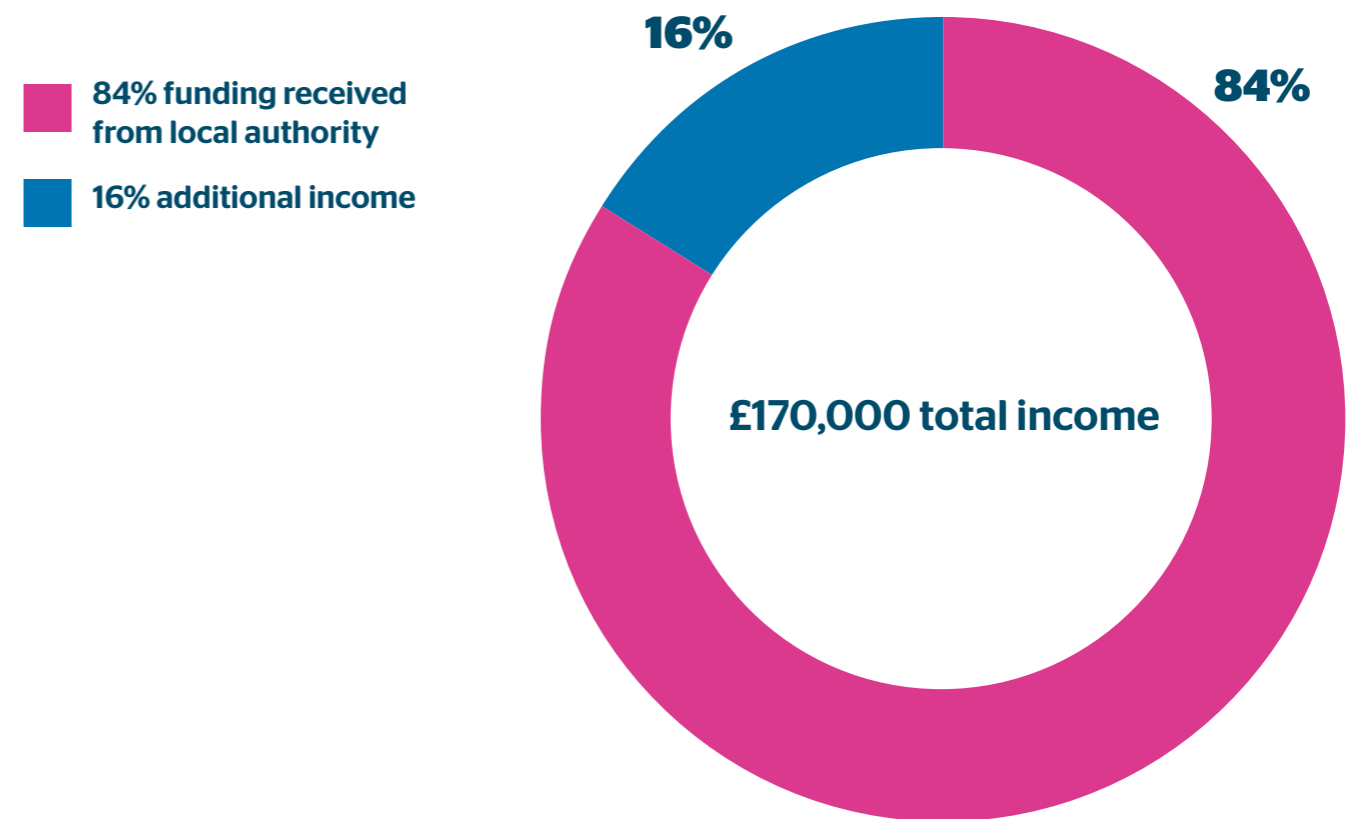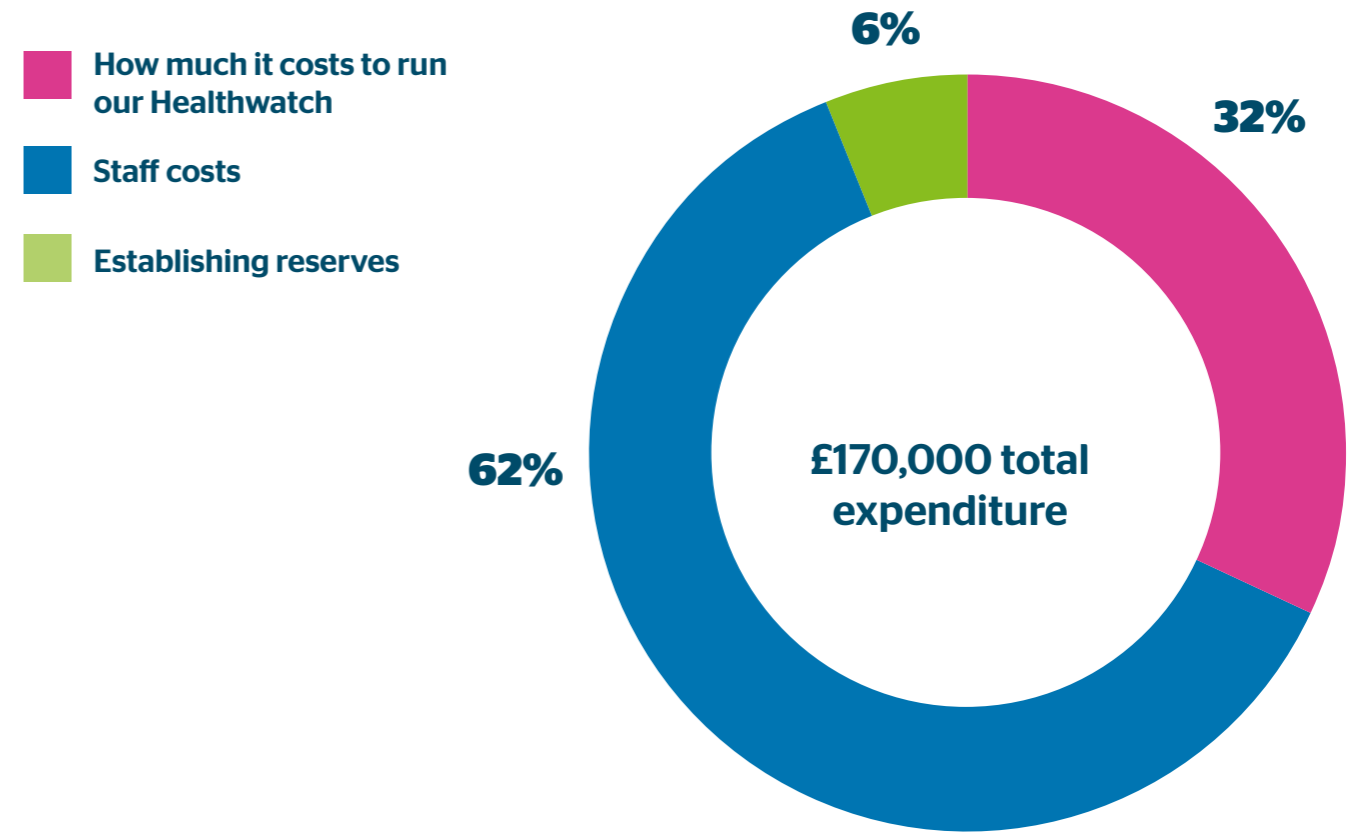
Finances

We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £170,000.

■ How much it costs to run our Healthwatch

■ Staff costs

■ Establishing reserves

6%

32%

62%

£170,000 total expenditure

■ 84% funding received from local authority

■ 16% additional income

16%

84%

£170,000 total income

Our core funding comes from North Yorkshire County Council. Our volunteer Linda Wolstenholme is pictured with the council's Director of Public Health, Dr Lincoln Sargeant.

Our plans for next year

Healthwatch North Yorkshire Vice-Chair Judith Bromfield reveals why we're keeping it simple when it comes to our plans for 2020-21

The coronavirus pandemic and lockdown was just getting into its full devastating stride as the 2019-20 year drew to a close at the end of March. A startling and terrifying reminder of the fragility of everything we hold dear, the widespread outbreak of a virus most of us had never heard of at Christmas has changed almost everything about how we live our lives.

The effects – in the short, medium and long term – will be most acute in the worlds of health and social care. Lockdown has been geared towards protecting the front line of the NHS from a deluge, and care homes have been hit hard.

As we start to ease out of the first phase of the response, and into some kind of "new normal", many questions will need to be answered about the response. What went well. What went wrong. What needs to be put in place to ensure that next time – and it seems certain there will be a next time – we are better prepared to withstand the challenges that will come.

It also seems certain that the way we access health and social care services will be different in future. Maybe some advancements whose rapid implementation became necessarily widespread – such as video consultations – will be here to stay. There will be many unforeseen consequences and developments as services strive to adapt.

What's absolutely certain is that people must be at the heart of these changes, and their needs and views must drive the "new normal" for those responsible for commissioning and delivering services. This is why Healthwatch is here, and this is why our plans for 2020-21 are extremely simple. We will be engaging with more people than ever before across our wonderful county, in any way we can, to ensure we're capturing and representing the full spectrum of voices and experiences of

Healthwatch North Yorkshire Vice-Chair Judith Bromfield

people using local services. It's also why we will be producing more reports more often, ensuring that the latest views are being made known to those making the decisions as they create this new normal.

Our core activities will focus on people's experiences of health services and care homes during COVID-19 and the reconfiguration of local health services including hospitals and mental health. We will also be developing signposting resources to enable our volunteers to better support their communities, and growing our Young Healthwatch work with those aged 14-25.

Thank you, from all of us, to everyone who spoke to us, worked with us and helped us in 2019-20. We did some good work, but we need to be better still. We are in an unprecedented time of great challenge and yet great opportunity to build a better future, and we hope you will be there with us again as we work for North Yorkshire.

> **What's absolutely certain is that people must be at the heart of these changes, and their needs and views must drive the "new normal"**

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**

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HealthwatchNorthYorkshire

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healthwatch