

Together

healthwatch
Isles of Scilly

**we're making health
and social care better**

Annual Report 2022–23



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"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."

Louise Ansari, Healthwatch National Director

Message from our Chair

Once again it is my privilege to introduce our Healthwatch Isles of Scilly Annual Report to update our community on what work we have been undertaking representing your views on the health and social care services that many of us use both on the islands and mainland.

In April we welcomed Craig Evans to join Catherine Fuller as our coordinators and manage our workload. I also wish to thank our Directors who volunteer their time to oversee the work we do and represent your views at meetings with health and Social care agencies.

Examples of our work for the past year include managing and chairing of the Medical Travel and Transport group; having input into multi agency planning and discussion groups such as Health and Well-Being; Scrutiny committees and Adult Care services and many other statutory and non-statutory groups.

It is important, therefore, for us to represent your views on using services but we can only do this if you inform us of your experiences both good and maybe not so good. Please let us know.



Paul Charnock
Healthwatch Isles of Scilly
Chair



“In the near future there are going to be some major changes to the way that health and social care is delivered, both nationally and locally. They are so under pressure to meet the needs of individuals and communities, that improvements need to be achieved. We have many committed and professional people who work in the health and care sector, and they will need our understanding while change is achieved. Locally, we will do our best to keep you up to date.”

About us

Healthwatch Isles of Scilly is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

Our local communities across the five islands can all access the health and care services that they need.



Our mission

To ensure that people's experiences influence health and care provision.

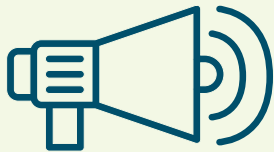


Our values

- **Listening:** We listen to people's stories and make sure that their views are heard
- **Including:** We listen to the views of people from all areas of the community
- **Analysing:** We look closely at people's experiences to learn how to improve care
- **Acting:** We use the information provided to drive change
- **Partnering:** We work closely with local and national health and social care and voluntary services

Year in review

Reaching out



91 people

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

44 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and the cost of living crisis.

Making a difference to care

We published

2 reports

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services.

Our most popular report was

Community Health & Care Survey

in which 187 people gave feedback on health and care services across the islands



Health and care that works for you

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) fund our work. DHSC gives money to local councils so they can commission an effective local Healthwatch service. In 2022-23 we received

£45,480, which is 3.4% more than the previous year.



We are lucky to have

5 volunteer Directors

We currently employ

2 part time members of staff

who help us carry out our work.

Highlights from our year

Spring



We gave our community the opportunity to meet with service leaders to learn about the service they provide, ask questions and offer feedback.

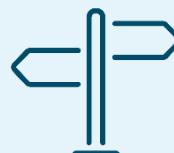


We submitted recommendations to 17 service providers on how to improve their service, based on feedback from our H&C survey.

Summer



We produced guides for medical travel and useful numbers, to help residents and visitors to access the services they need.



We enhanced the reach of information we share with the community by creating digital signs for our office window, providing another way for people to access it.

Autumn



We helped to reduce patients need to travel for medical appointments by supporting local services to increase the provision of remote consultations.



In partnership with Macmillan, we launched the Cancer Café to help and support island residents affected by cancer.

Winter



Teaming up with local services, we helped tackle the cost of living crisis by sharing and distributing information about the financial support available to residents.



We supported the Healthwatch England #BecauseWeAllCare campaign which saw 54,000 people come forward to tell Healthwatch about issues they faced with services.

10 years of improving care

This year marks a special milestone for Healthwatch. Over the last ten years, people have shared their experiences, good and bad, to help improve health and social care. A big thank you to all our Healthwatch Heroes that have stepped up and inspired change. Here are a few of our highlights:

How have we made care better, together?

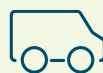
Adult mental health

We created a focus group to look at models of provision, long term planning and making recommendations to improve the support provided. Our local council and NHS Kernow Clinical Commissioning group, commissioned a post to facilitate improved and coordinated access to mental health services.



Patient transport

In 2014 we established the IOS Medical, Travel and Transport group, bringing together service providers to improve the medical travel experience for people across the five islands. This is still a bi-monthly meeting.



Off-island and access to x-rays

We voiced the concerns of those living on off-islands having to pay a high premium for travel to St Mary's for an x-ray. The day was changed to make it more accessible through cheaper travel.



Virtual consultation clinics

We worked with the transformation team, at the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust and progress was made to enable video consultations to happen for follow-up appointments. The first visual consultation clinic started in February in the speciality of orthopaedics, with the plan to offer virtual consultation in this speciality to IOS patients.

Travelling to a medical appointment

We recommended that travel for urgent treatment for Isles of Scilly patients to be included in the NHS Non-emergency funded patient transport policy and that escorts for 20 week maternity scans should not be means tested. As a result, our recommendations were accepted by NHS Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group and included in the Isles of Scilly section of this policy.



Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why over the last year we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feed this back to services and help them improve.

Making Cancer Experiences Count

Living on a remote island and facing a cancer diagnosis can add far greater levels of stress and anxiety. You must cope with crossing 28 miles of sea, sometimes without family or a friend travelling with you, and then use public transport to access treatment and support which can at times, seem an impossible challenge. No one should face cancer alone.

Support

We have partnered with Macmillan Cancer Support and The Cove (Macmillan Support Centre, Treliske Hospital), to help support Isles of Scilly patients through their cancer journey and beyond. We host quarterly Cancer Cafés, where patients and their families can access support staff, connect with others affected by cancer and share experiences. We are working together to provide resources, for example a wellness pack to take to hospital. This will have useful items to use during treatment. We have collected feedback from patients to help design a 'top tips' leaflet, that gives some practical ideas, especially for newly diagnosed patients, to help them through travel and treatment. We are talking to our local fitness provider to organise wellbeing sessions that are bespoke to cancer patient's needs.



- 35 people have attended the last 2 cafes on St Mary's
- We chatted to 20 people about what would have made their cancer experience a better one
- There are now 36 members of the Scilly Isles Cancer Support Group Facebook page

What difference will this make?

- **Local health services can signpost patients to the local support that is available.**
- **We provide a safe space for people to talk, if they wish to, with others in similar situations and somewhere to get information and support.**
- **Providing items to take to hospital will help manage some of the unpleasant side effects of treatment, like nausea and cold hands and feet.**
- **Offering well-being classes will help with social interaction, mental well-being and support, as well as gaining strength and fitness.**
- **The Facebook page connects patients to each other and enables them to keep up to date with events and participate in any feedback relating to cancer care.**



"The coffee mornings are a great success, thank you."
sadie, Island resident

Improving access to healthcare appointments

Getting to healthcare appointments can be both difficult and expensive for the island's residents, and with the cost of living crisis, more people are expressing concerns about travelling to the mainland for medical care. Changes to the way in which these healthcare appointments are delivered will make it easier for people to access support and reduce their need to travel.

For many people living on the Isles of Scilly, needing to travel to the mainland for medical appointments often means that they miss out on vital care. Travel disruptions on the outbound journey can prevent them from attending appointments, whilst disruptions on the return journey can mean that the person is stranded on the mainland, often for several days at a time, leaving them to find accommodation. This risk of increased difficulty and costs creates a significant health inequality, causing many to re-evaluate their medical needs.

Our recommendations:

1. Offer a hybrid model of medical appointments that include different options, such as video, telephone and face to face consultations/appointments, that give the patients' choice and personal preferences that meet their needs, and not just based on clinical need.
2. Implementing remote consultations for those without the technological means to access this, particularly on the off islands, must be considered and solutions sought to give everyone the opportunity to have equal access to health and care.
3. To work closely with the local health and care providers who can work together to provide the technological and personal support that will be needed for those who may have limited or no access to electronic devices, or the understanding of how to connect to digital appointments.

What difference will this make?

Working together with service providers we hope to reduce this requirement for travel, by expanding the availability of remote consultations offered and increasing the clinics provided locally.

More than 1,600 medical consultations took place between April 2022 and March 2023. Our recent survey revealed that many patients would like the option of a remote consultation if possible.

These changes should ensure that people don't need to skip their appointments simply because they can't afford to travel there, enabling them access to the care they need.

“I need information on transport for someone attending regular dialysis. They can't travel on public transport. It would require two buses and they are too ill. They also do not have anyone who can drive them there.” **Patient's representative**

Three ways we have made a difference for the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.

Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

It's important for services to see the bigger picture. Hearing personal experiences and the impact on people's lives provides them with a better understanding of the problems.



We shared the personal experiences of patients having issues with needing to sit in a certain seat on the aircraft when travelling to the mainland for medical appointments, and turning up for check-in to find that this was not possible. The transport company understood the situation, they identified that if patients need to sit in a certain seat, then they should contact them directly and ask if that seat can be reserved, and not to wait until they are checking in for the flight. This will now benefit many patients who may have aircraft accessibility issues.

Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.



One of our recommendations to the health centre was that their website provided regular updates of available services or signposting to services. The health centre now has a website where you can easily navigate to different areas of support. This enables people to have more direct access to information.

Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with services to consistently raise issues and bring about change.



We held a public meeting with the commissioners of patient transport where people shared their stories about the experiences of travelling to the mainland for a hospital appointment and the difficulties that they faced. This gave the decision makers a true picture of the difficulties that were faced by islanders when arranging travel for a medical appointment. The commissioners are now in the process of addressing some of these issues.



Hearing from all communities

Over the past year we have worked hard to try to hear from everyone within our local area.

We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently, to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard and services meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Having Community Voices forum events that are also accessible remotely
- Providing information leaflets and posters to the off-islands
- Reaching out to local services to share information and events
- Holding cancer café events to gather feedback about cancer care

Cancer support –Wellness activity sessions

We received feedback from members of the community at our cancer café telling us they would like to be able to access wellness sessions, like those available through The Cove, the Macmillan Information and Support Centre in Truro. We met with the Macmillan Engagement Lead for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and staff from The Cove, to identify the types of sessions that would be beneficial to those people whose lives are affected by cancer. We are now in the process of talking to our local activity provider and finalising plans to enable people to access funded sessions.



“To be able to access wellbeing sessions here on Scilly would be amazing! All the doctors I've seen have recommended these to help with recovery during and after treatment and also to help deal with the mental toll cancer takes on people's lives.”

Island resident



Physiotherapy

Accessibility to physiotherapy services has always been an area where we received negative feedback. After managing to secure the service for a Thursday so that off-island patients can access it, the islands gained a resident physiotherapist. This has meant that the service is reliable and accessible for more patients and not reliant on someone travelling from the mainland, which was often disrupted due to the weather.

Our biennial survey identified that people wanted to be able to self-refer for physiotherapy and that the form had to be collected from the health centre. We recommended that the health centre put the form on their website. This has now become available, along with other information to support the patient with physiotherapy.

“It is great to be able to see a physiotherapist more quickly, so I didn't have wait for what could have been quite a long time for one to come from the mainland.”

Local resident



Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding out information about patient transport, booking an optician appointment, or making a complaint, you can count on us.

This year we've helped people by:

- Providing up to date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Helping people access medical travel
- Supporting people to look after their health during the cost of living crisis

Helping to enable single day medical travel

In our health and care survey 50 people rated the hospital appointment time provided to fit with flight times as poor or satisfactory. We work with RCHT to help ensure that, where possible, mainland travel for medical appointments can be achieved in a single day, reducing the barriers to patients accessing medical care.

Patients not able to return within the same day are forced to find accommodation on the mainland, often at significant cost.

A patient informed us that they had been unable to get an appointment with the audiologist at a time they were able to attend, as the 9:00am Monday morning appointment would have required two nights stay over the weekend before the Monday appointment.



“My last appointment was at 8:00am on a Monday morning, wintertime, so had to leave Scilly on a Friday afternoon.”

Islands resident

We contacted the Referral Management Service who then brought it to the attention of the referral team and service providers, to supply appointment times for Isles of Scilly residents between 11:00 and 14:00, where possible.

Helping residents to understand mainland travel

With guidance from Patient Transport, we produced a medical travel guide to help island residents with travel to mainland appointments and shared this with our community digitally as well as having a hard copy available. The guide offers information on booking travel for medical appointments both to and from hospital, along with guidance on medical escorts, amendments and cancellations.

In the past year 75% of feedback was about medical travel. Many residents are not familiar with the unique system the islands share when it comes to travel for medical appointments, and navigating this process can be difficult, especially when the patient is feeling unwell.

One elderly resident had expressed a high degree of anxiety about travelling to an appointment on the mainland, being particularly concerned about maintaining their specific medical needs while travelling.



“I’m not yet sure whether I’ll attend. It all just seems such a bother.”

Islands resident

After contacting us with these concerns we were able to supply a copy of the guide, which provided them with both the reassurance that their needs would be met, along with an understanding of the process.

Finance and future priorities

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Some of this funding is from the Department of Health and Social care, who give the money to our local council so that they can commission an effective Healthwatch service.

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£45,480	Expenditure on pay	£30,500
		Non-pay expenditure	£10,998
		Office and management fee	£3,120
Total income	£45,480	Total expenditure	£44,618

Next steps

In the ten years since Healthwatch was launched, we've demonstrated the power of public feedback in helping the health and care system understand what is working, spot issues and think about how things can be better in the future.

Services are currently facing unprecedented challenges and tackling the backlog needs to be a key priority for the NHS to ensure everyone gets the care they need. Over the next year we will continue our role in collecting feedback from everyone in our local community and giving them a voice to help shape improvements to services.

We will also continue our work to tackle inequalities that exist and work to reduce the barriers people face when accessing care, regardless whether that is because of where they live, their income or race.

Top three priorities for 2023-24

Cancer support

Improving the experiences of cancer patients



Medical travel

Improving access to medical transport

Children & young people

Making their voices count





Statutory statements

Healthwatch Isles of Scilly
Unit 1 Gleaner House, Buzza Street,
St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, TR210HW.

Healthwatch Isles of Scilly uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making

Our Healthwatch Board consists of 5 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Throughout 2022/23 the Board met 5 times and made decisions on matters such as priorities for the year, roles and responsibilities, policy and budgetary setting.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible are given the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of using services. During 2022/23 we have been available by phone, email, social media, meetings of community groups, forum events, and through our webform on our website.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website, and it will also be available at Mumford's newsagent, the Post Office on St Mary's and at the 4 off-island shops/post offices.

Responses to recommendations

There were not any providers who did not respond to our requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations were necessary.



Taking people's experiences to decision makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area for example, we take information to our Medical, Travel and Transport Group meeting, Patient Experience Group meeting (RCHT), and Safer Scilly. We also take insight and experiences to decision makers in the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Integrated Care System. For example, we share information at the Health and Wellbeing Board. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

We have met with the following people this year to share patient feedback and stories and to collaborate on how to improve the health and care services that are accessed by our local community:

- Steve Williamson, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust
- Kate Shields, CEO of the Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Debbie Richards, CEO of Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Anita Cornelius, ICB West Area Director

We regularly attend the following meetings:

- Council of the Isles of Scilly Scrutiny
- Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Joint Health and Well-being Board
- Isles of Scilly Integrated Health and Care Partnership
- Involving People and Communities, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Integrated Care Board
- Safer Scilly
- Patient Experience Group (RCHT)
- Isles of Scilly Belonging and Inclusive Group
- The Cove Forum
- Healthwatch South-West Network

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Isles of Scilly is represented on the Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Health and Wellbeing Board by Paul Charnock, Chair of the Board. During 2022/23 our representative has effectively carried out this role presenting our report to the Board and raising any health and wellbeing concerns.

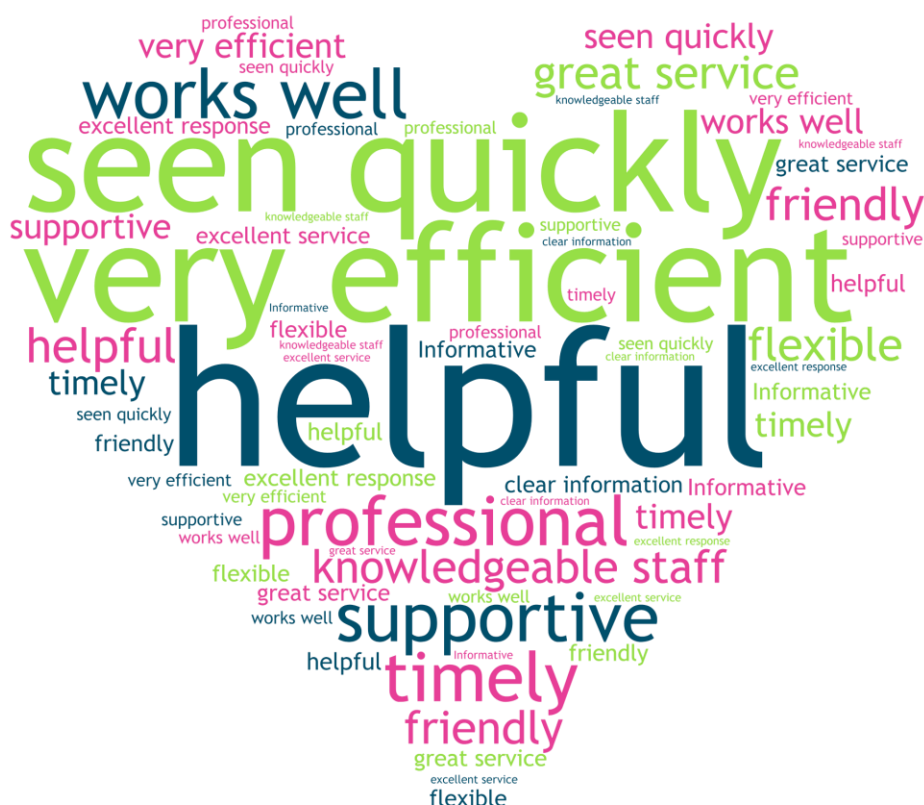
Healthwatch Isles of Scilly is represented on Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Integrated Care Partnerships by Steve Manning and Integrated Care Boards by the CEO of Healthwatch Cornwall, who at present, is our representative.

2022–2023 Outcomes

Communication	Changes made to services
Digital display boards	Accessible information on health and care services provided 24 hours a day.
Booklet of useful numbers. Information provided about different health and care services, including contact details (Electronic and hard copy available).	The directory enables easy access of health and care contact information available to most members of the community.
Hospital discharge guide to support staff on hospital wards within the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust, with the discharge process of an Isles of Scilly patient.	This guide will mean that there will be less opportunity for a patient to be discharged from hospital without the appropriate medication and travel arrangements organised so that they able to travel back from the mainland the same day.

Thank you


Over the past year we have also had many positive comments about local health and care services.




We would like to thank everyone who is helping us to put people at the heart of care.

healthwatch

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