

Newsletter

Winter 2025 update from your local Healthwatch



Wishing you a healthy Christmas, from all of us at Healthwatch

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Directors

Since our last newsletter we have welcomed 2 new members of our board.

Sam Huczmann brings a wealth of experience in the health sector as an advanced clinical practitioner for Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

Sue Trapp has been connected to the islands for many years. She has experience of health and care services and understands the challenges people can face when accessing support. She is keen to help improve services through listening and engagement.

Thank you!

The Board of Directors and staff would like to extend their sincere thanks to Paul Charnock for the many years he dedicated as the volunteer Chair of Healthwatch. Paul's support, leadership, and unwavering commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of local people have been truly outstanding. His contributions have made a lasting difference, and we are deeply grateful for all he has given.

Recently, we reached out to our off-island community to see if anyone was interested in joining our Board as a Director, helping to ensure the voice of off-islanders is heard. We are very pleased to share that two people have come forward. We look forward to making a formal announcement in the New Year.



Open Monday to Thursday, 9:30 – 13:30



Facebook.com/HealthwatchIOS



01720 423037



www.healthwatchislesofscilly.co.uk



Healthwatch Isles of Scilly, Unit 1, Gleaner House, Buzza Street, St Mary's, TR21 0HW

What we have been up to...



Over recent months, we have been commissioned by the Isles of Scilly Health and Care Partnership to engage with the local community, gather views on health and care services, and produce a report based on this feedback. The survey findings provide a baseline understanding of residents' current experiences and priorities for improvement.

Over the coming years, the focus will be on developing more integrated health and care services, including improved access to clinics and treatments on the islands. A second phase of research will then be carried out to assess the impact of this collaborative approach. From this work, we made 15 recommendations to help improve services.

Help to shape health and care services



We have continued to collect feedback from the community about health and care services. Since April 2025, 31 people have visited Healthwatch to share their experiences or to be signposted to services, and a further 16 people have contacted us by phone, email, or through our website.

As a result of this feedback, health and care service providers are currently exploring ways to deliver more services on the islands and to improve existing provision. We hope to see improvements to the X-ray service, an increase in on-island clinics, and more choice in how people attend their hospital appointments.



**Cornwall and Isles of Scilly
Integrated Care System**

New to the islands?



We are a registered charity set up and run by local volunteers with paid staff, and are part of a network of over 150 Healthwatch throughout England. We are a statutory service and receive our principal funding from our local council. Part of our role is to provide information and signposting to support people in navigating their health and care journey.

How can we support you?

We have a range of information booklets that may help you. Hard copies are available from our office. They can also be accessed on our website:

healthwatch.website/vgh and our noticeboard in town, near Tideline.

Visit the link
for further
information

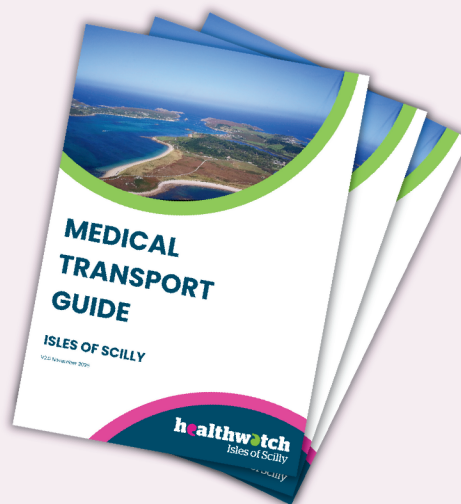


healthwatch.website/vgh

Patient Transport

Find out about:

- Booking patient transport through the central booking office
- Medical escorts
- Off-island medical travel
- Voluntary transport for travel between hospital and airport/heliport
- Amendments and cancellations of flights
- The appeal process



Useful Contacts

Our useful contacts booklet contains the telephone numbers and email address of local services and mainland services that support health and care. It's like a mini directory!

Who we are & why we are here



We are still here for you!

Although the government announced that it wants to change the law to transfer the work of local Healthwatch services to the NHS and local authorities, These changes cannot happen until the law has been changed. This means we are still here, open, and working for you.

We continue to:

- Listen to your experiences of health and social care.
- Share what we hear with those in power to help improve services.
- Provide advice and information to help you find the support you need.

We will keep you updated as more details become available. In the meantime, thank you for your continued support.

It's really important that you share your experiences

If you've had a negative experience of health or social care, it's easy to think there's no point in sharing and that 'nothing ever changes'. Or, if you've had a great experience, that you 'wish you could say thank you' for it. Remember, your feedback is helping to improve people's lives. So if you need advice or are ready to tell your story – we're here to listen.

Healthwatch will

- ✓ Work with service providers to help improve health and care services
- ✓ Set up or take part in joint working groups and committees, and regularly meet with services to make sure your views are represented
- ✓ Share information about what services do and providing updates on any changes
- ✓ Help you find the right service to get the support that is right for you

Healthwatch won't

- ✗ Take action on hearsay, rumour, gossip
- ✗ Pass on any information which could identify you without your consent
- ✗ Act with bias or prejudice towards any individual or group, within a dispute situation
- ✗ Charge for the services or information provided

Why Volunteer on Scilly?

Life is busy – we get it! But even a little of your time can make a huge difference to those who need some extra support. Volunteering that is designed to fit around you – No pressure, no long-term commitment.

Volunteering means you can:

- Choose how, what and who to support
- Give as much or as little time as you can
- Use your skills or learn new ones
- See the impact of your efforts
- Meet amazing people and become part of a supportive, like-minded team

Every bit of time helps, so join us and make a real difference today!

ACCESSING
ONLINE
SERVICES

REMOTE
CONSULTATIONS

WALKING
BUDDIES

LIBRARY
DROP-OFF

MEDICAL
ESCORTS

BEFRIENDING

SHOPPING

To find out more, please contact Catherine or Craig.



01720 423037



www.healthwatchislesofscilly.co.uk

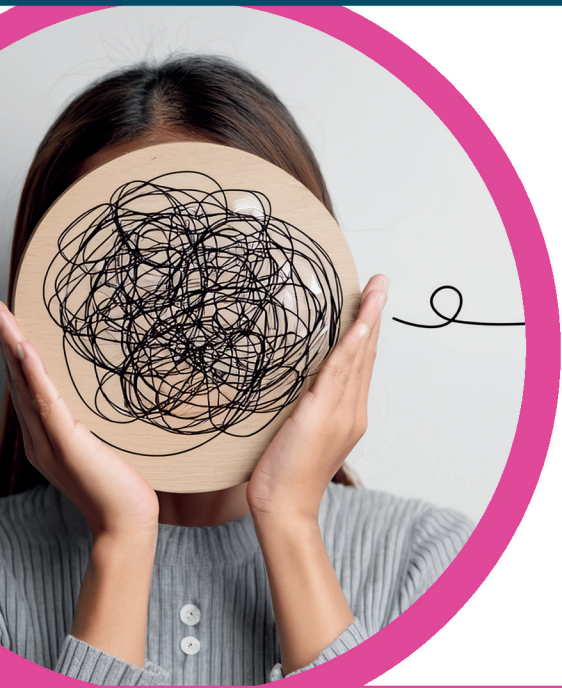


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Mental Health Support

if you feel overwhelmed, lonely, or in need of someone to talk to, there is always help available.

For urgent mental health support, get help from NHS 111 online, or call 111 and select the mental health option.

Free listening services – These services offer confidential support from trained volunteers. You can talk about anything that's troubling you, no matter how difficult:

- Call 116 123 to talk to Samaritans, or email jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours
- Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the Shout Crisis Text Line, or text "YM" if you're under 19.

Drugs & Alcohol Support

If you're struggling over the festive season, there is help available for you. Here's a list of helplines that will be open on Christmas Day and New Year's Day if you need support:

Talk to Frank: 0300 123 6600

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Narcotics Anonymous: 0300 999 1212

Cocaine Anonymous: 0800 612 0225

The Samaritans: 116 123

Childline: 0800 1111

If it's an emergency or you don't think you can keep yourself safe, please call 999. If you or someone you know needs urgent care but it's not life-threatening, call 111.



Optician Service

Reminder: If you have an optician appointment and cannot make the appointment, please can you let the health centre reception team know as early as possible, as the appointment can be reallocated.

The optician can see adults and children.

Where: St Mary's health centre

When: Accessible 3 to 5 days every 3 months

Who?: There are appointments for adults and children

How? Phone the health centre on 01720 422628 and ask to be added to the waiting list



Did you know that in many cases you have the legal right to choose where you have your NHS treatment?

The NHS is offering more and more options to enable you to make choices that best suit your circumstances, giving you greater control of your care and hopefully better results.

If your GP needs to refer you for a physical or mental health condition, in most cases you have the legal right to choose the hospital or service you'd like to go to. This will include many private hospitals and independent sector providers as long as they provide services to the NHS and it doesn't cost the NHS any more than a referral to a traditional NHS hospital.

You do not have a legal right to choice if you need urgent or emergency treatment or are:

- *serving in the armed forces*
- *accessing maternity services*
- *detained under the Mental Health Act*
- *detained in or on temporary release from prison, in court, an immigration removal centre or a secure children's home*
- *referred to high-security psychiatric services, or drug and alcohol misuse services provided by local authorities*

You can also choose a clinical team led by a consultant or named healthcare professional, as long as that team provides the treatment you require.

Visit the link
for further
information
healthwatch.website/kp2





THE ISLAND HAVEN

YOUR HOME FROM HOME IN TIMES OF MEDICAL NEED

The Haven is a registered charity creating something special for the Isles of Scilly – a comforting home-from-home for anyone needing medical treatment on the mainland.

The Island Haven is a warm, supportive place to stay: whether you're undergoing treatment yourself, standing by a loved one, or simply waiting until it's safe to travel back to the islands. Our goal is simple – to bring care, comfort, and peace of mind when it's needed most.

Whether you need a quiet retreat or a supportive place to stay, your Island Haven is here for you.



You can pre-book a room by:

- Calling **07407 156 867** between the hours of 10.00–15.00 (Mon–Fri)
- E-mailing **bookings@theislandhaven.com**
- Book online at **www.theislandhaven.com/accommodation-details/**

WINTER SOUP AND TEA

COME TO THE LIBRARY EVERY THURSDAY THIS WINTER FOR A WARM WELCOME, INCLUDING TEA AND SOUP

OUR ADULT SOCIAL CARE TEAM WILL ALSO BE HOLDING THEIR WEEKLY ST MARY'S DROP IN SESSIONS AT THE LIBRARY 11:30 TO 13:30



Please come and see us in person to:

- **get information or advice**
- **discuss concerns**
- **provide feedback**
- **book in time with a member of the team to discuss anything that requires more time/a private space**



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