

Here for the Isles of Scilly

Then and now

Healthwatch Isles of Scilly Annual Report 2020-21



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Message from our Chair

Our Annual Report is an opportunity to reflect on our work over the last 12 months. This could not be done without reference to Covid-19 and how it has affected individuals and our community, services and agencies, not only in Health and Social care but those that support us in our daily lives. Education, shops, transport links and many more have all been affected in some way. Throughout on Scilly I feel it should be noted that we have managed well, kept to the rules enabling us to look forward to a return to a little normality in the very near future.

Our 'usual' workload has been maintained through attendance and communication with agencies through technology and virtual meetings. We hope that those who have made use of our services have recognised we have done our best to maintain the quality of service delivery whilst recognising we have not achieved as much 'outreach' work to the off island communities as we would have wished due to governmental rules and guidelines. This area of our work will be reinstated in the very near future.

One benefit of Covid-19 is that an excellent 'community spirit' has evolved which we have been pleased to be a part of, which is that of volunteers guided by our Co-ordinators, have supported many people by helping with shopping; running errands, delivering newspapers or ensuring less able or home bound are ok. Along with this our co-ordinator staff have made telephone contact on a regular basis with those people who may be at some risk or have feelings of isolation. We have worked very closely with The Local Authority's Adult Care service who have given excellent support. In fact, such has been the success of this community involvement that funding for a more formalised voluntary activity service has been agreed by the council and will be initiated in the very near future. It will take the form of Scilly Support Service and we hope members of the community will join us in continuing to provide a valuable resource for those people living on our islands who for whatever reasons may have needs that need to be met or whose well-being can be improved.

In noting the above may I on behalf of Healthwatch Isles of Scilly, directors and Co-ordinators, thank those volunteers who have given their time to our positive response to Covid-19. I would also wish you to note that whilst the work undertaken has been by our staff and use of facilities it is funded quite separately to our usual funding streams.



We hope our Annual Report reflects what we have achieved and our plans and priorities for the future. Please contact us and let us know what you think can be improved or does not work so well or just an opinion on what we do. Our byword is: ' Everything we do starts with what you tell us'.

May I take this opportunity to say thank you to our volunteer directors and a very able staff in their role of Healthwatch Isles of Scilly co-ordinators. Without you all we would not be able to deliver this statutory service.

Best wishes to all and a safe year ahead.

Paul Charnock

Chair: Healthwatch. Isles of Scilly

About us

Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services on the Isles of Scilly. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure your views shape the support you need, by sharing these views with those who have the power to make change happen.

Helping you to find the information you need

We help people find the information they need about services in their area. This has been vital during the pandemic with the ever-changing environment and restrictions limiting people's access to health and social care services.

Our goals



1 Supporting you to have your say

We want more people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care, make informed decisions and shape the services that support them.



2 Providing a high quality service

We want everyone who shares an experience or seeks advice from us to get a high quality service and to understand the difference their views make.



3 Ensuring your views help improve health & care

We want more services to use your views to shape the health and care support you need today and in the future.



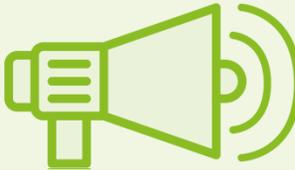
“Local Healthwatch have done fantastic work throughout the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is more work ahead to ensure that everyone’s views are heard. COVID-19 has highlighted inequalities and to tackle these unfair health differences we will need those in power to listen, to hear the experiences of those facing inequality and understand the steps that could improve people’s lives.”

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and how we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.

Reaching out



We heard from

75 people

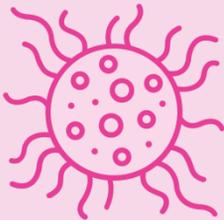
this year about their experiences of health and social care.

We provided advice and information to

177 people

this year.

Responding to the pandemic



We engaged with and supported

74 people

during the COVID-19 pandemic this year.

Making a difference to care



We published

7 reports

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. From this, we made 12 recommendations for improvement.

50% of recommendations

we made last year have been acted upon, at the point where we reviewed progress.

Health and care that works for you



We employ 2 staff

who work part time and their hours are equivalent to 1 full time member of staff, this is the same as the previous year.

We received

£44,600 in funding

from our local authority in 2020-21, the same as the previous year.



Theme one: Off-island access to medical appointments on St Mary's



Then: Off-island access to medical appointments on St Mary's.

Thanks to the residents of the off-islands for sharing their experiences of medical appointments on St Mary's. This enabled us to help commissioners understand and recognise the need for a change of the day services were available.

Throughout 2020, X-ray and physiotherapy appointments were taking place on a Wednesday at St Mary's hospital. During the winter months, patients travelling from the off-islands for one of these appointments would have to book a special boat at a cost of approximately £100 for a return journey.

We actively worked on ensuring that these appointments take place on a Thursday so that they can be easily accessed by residents living on the off-islands. A Thursday is the only day during the week that off-island residents can travel across at a minimum cost on a scheduled boat throughout the whole year.



Now: Off-island access to medical appointments on St Mary's.

In order to receive feedback, the survey was available on the Healthwatch Isles of Scilly website, advertised on Facebook and on leaflets distributed across all of the off-islands.

Just over half of the respondents booked a 'special boat' (Private boat) to travel across to their appointments.

From the feedback, 78% of people told us that they have had to cancel appointments. The majority of these cancellations were due to the weather conditions and the cost involved in arranging non-scheduled boating.

From April 2020 to March 2021(inclusive) St Mary's hospital have held **28 X-ray Clinics**, attended by **237 patients** across all five islands. We are unable to obtain how many of these patients travelled from the off-islands, but even if only a few did, since the day was changed, at £100 for a return boat fare, that will be a significant saving to patients.

"Accessing NHS services from the off-islands, particularly during the winter is prohibitively difficult and expensive. Especially in the case of more urgent appointments, it is almost impossible to use scheduled boats during the winter. The cost of return 'special' boats is in excess of £100." Off-island resident

Following the survey, we made recommendations:

* In the winter, appointments should be booked on a Thursday where possible, as this is the only day that a scheduled boat runs.

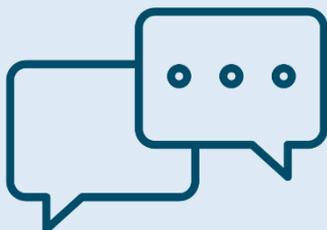
*Cost of special boats for primary care appointments covered for all off-island residents travelling for a pre-arranged medical appointment on St Mary's, when unable to use a scheduled boat.

*More scheduled boat times in winter.

X-ray has now been changed to a Thursday and NHS Kernow is still looking at moving Physiotherapy to a Thursday.

Although we are unable to measure the success of this change, we hope that that not only will it save money for off-island residents, they should experience less stress and ultimately manage to attend their appointments.

Share your views with us

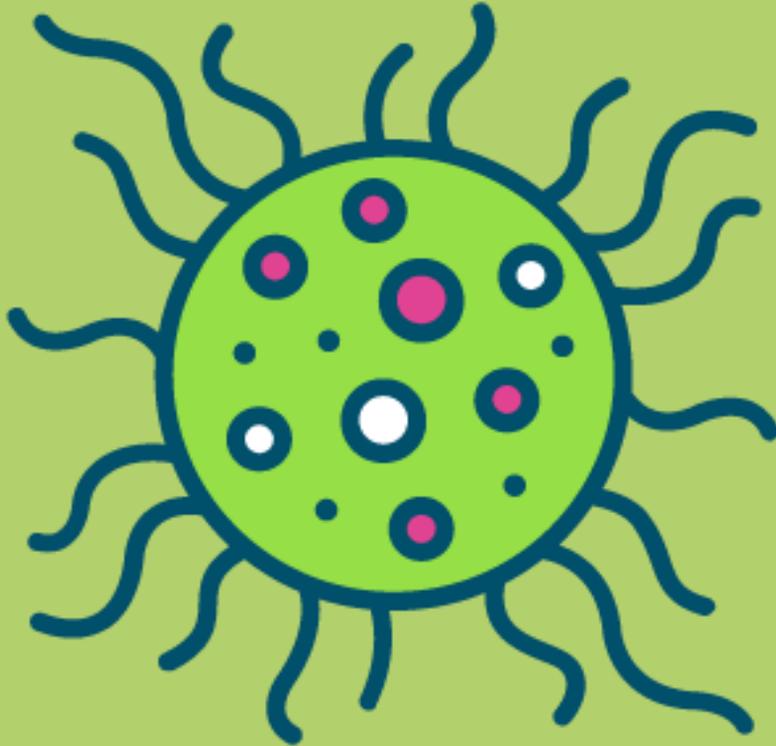


If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

 www.healthwatchislesofscilly.gov.uk

 **01720 423037**

 contact@healthwatchislesofscilly.co.uk



Theme two: Emergency response to COVID-19



Then: Emergency response to COVID-19

The start of the pandemic in March 2020, was a situation that had never been seen before. Priorities of Healthwatch Isles of Scilly changed, face to face engagement stopped, residents across the islands were told to stay at home, hundreds of people began shielding and we found ourselves in a situation where we could offer help and support for those in need. This was an emergency response to the situation and not one of the usual statutory Healthwatch responsibilities.

Our focus was to make sure the vulnerable members of the community had access to food, prescriptions and to offer regular phone calls to those who had limited contact with other people, therefore reducing loneliness and helping to improve well-being.

Flexible to respond:

We have shown we are a flexible resource when we need to support community resilience. We set up and ran a volunteer service which provided the following:

- Food shopping
- Dropping off and collecting prescriptions
- Delivering newspapers



Now: Emergency response to COVID-19

What we do

- We coordinate the matching up of members of the community requiring support with volunteers.
- We make regular weekly phone calls to vulnerable members of the community as identified by adult social care.
- We liaise with adult social care on a regular basis and share relevant information.



“Thank you so much for your support through this crazy time. We really appreciate it; it has meant such a lot.” Resident

We are now in the process of finalising this work to support lonely and vulnerable people, through a new volunteering service called ‘Scilly Support Service’.

Now that Healthwatch is delivering their statutory functions, the volunteering service is planned to be run as a separate service to Healthwatch Isles of Scilly.



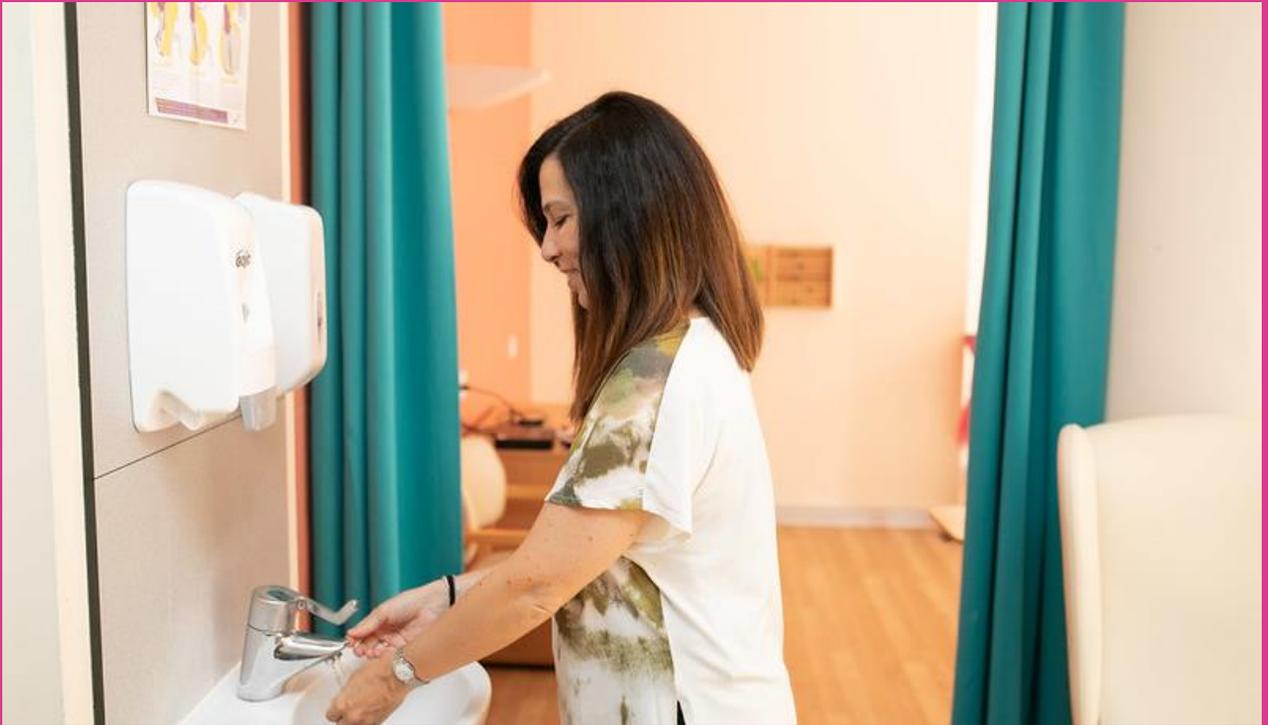
“Thank you for your hard work helping us to stay safe. (Name of volunteer) is a wonderful help to us.” Resident

Since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic:

- 37 residents have accessed support through our volunteering service
- 44 volunteers have supported people
- The number of times we have matched up a volunteer with a member of the community needing help is 58
- We have been phoning approximately 30 residents every week

Feedback we have received from those that we have supported has been overwhelmingly positive, knowing that they have access to essential items and support, through what has been a very lonely time for some.





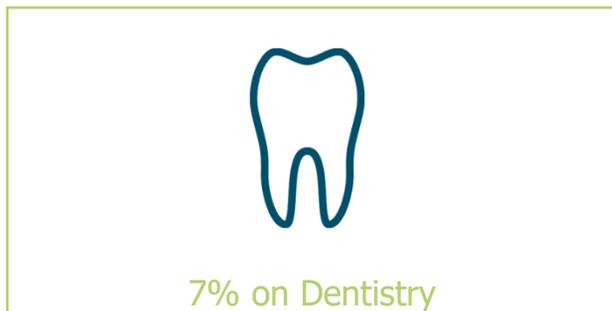
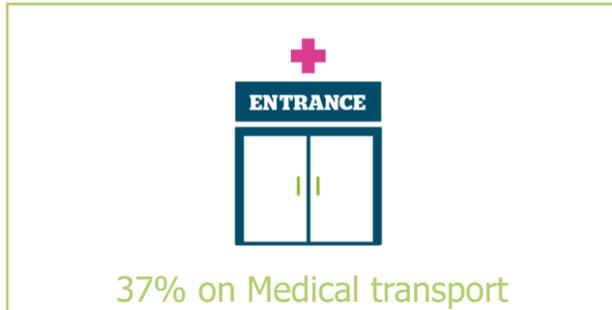
Responding to COVID-19

Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need, especially through the pandemic. The insight we collect is shared with both Healthwatch England and local partners, to ensure services are operating as best as possible during the pandemic.

This year we helped 74 people by:

- Providing up to date advice on the COVID-19 response locally
- Linking people to reliable up-to-date information
- Providing weekly phone calls to those feeling isolated / requiring support
- Coordinating the community volunteer response
- Helping people to access the services they need

Top four areas that people have contacted us about:



Example case study



During the pandemic, we heard from **50** people regarding medical transport. This included people's experiences, concerns about upcoming travel to hospital and general signposting.

Our role became much more focused on providing people with clear, consistent and concise advice and information. This included articles on our website and giving out leaflets outlining clear information on everything to do with medical travel, to help address people's concerns.

The key issues people contacted us about included:

- Concerns around lack of flights and space on flights
- Staying overnight on the mainland and accommodation
- The ability to book flights in advance, to make sure they can attend their appointment



Contact us to get the information you need

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.



www.healthwatchislesofscilly.co.uk

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Finances

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

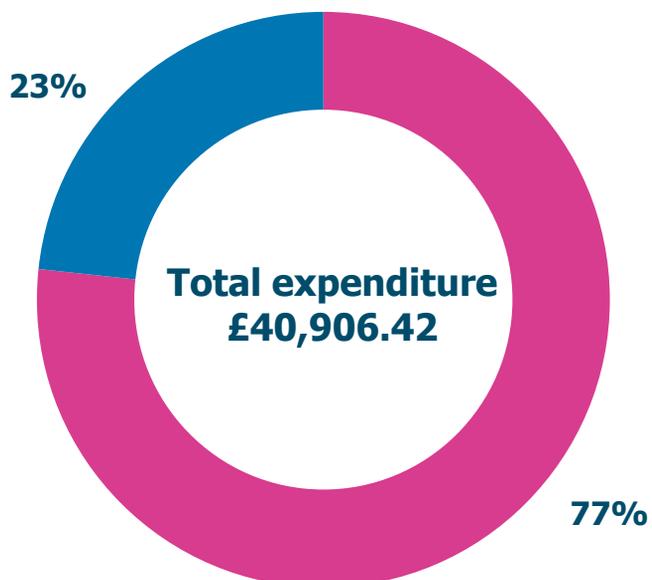
Income

- Funding received from local authority



Expenditure

- Staff costs
- Operational costs of running our Healthwatch



Next steps & thank you

Top two priorities for 2021-22

1. Improved experience of cancer treatment and support for patients living on the Isles of Scilly.
2. Improved opticians service for residents living on the Isles of Scilly.



Next steps

- As we move away from national restrictions we are planning to spend more time actively engaging face-to-face with the community on both the off-islands and St Mary's. This will give more opportunity for residents who do not have access to the internet / social media to engage with us.
- Following on from last year's feedback and research, we plan to continue to focus on hospital discharge and work closely with the Patient Experience Team at RCHT. We aim to ensure that there are clear processes in place for Isles of Scilly patients being discharged from hospital.
- We will continue to focus on issues around medical transport and share feedback to service providers to help improve the experiences of patients travelling for medical appointments.



“One benefit of COVID-19 is that an excellent community spirit has evolved which we have been pleased to be a part of.” Chair of the Board of Directors



Statutory Statements

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 five 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. Through 2020/21 the board met four times and made decisions on matters such as policies, Board of Director roles and spending.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. We have done this for the year 2021-22 based on what we have found out from our bi-annual cross-island survey, from feedback from members of the community and from talking to partners.

Developing partnerships

Healthwatch know that to be most effective it is essential that we work in collaboration with partners. Over the past year we have worked with the following:

Patient Experience Team, RCHT, to support their work to improve services and the overall experience and care of patients. We feedback intelligence on a regular basis.

Patient Transport, to support their work to ensure that we are providing accurate information to patients and keep them informed of any issues/concerns experienced by members of the community.

Adult Social Care, to ensure that the service provided to vulnerable residents is working.

Macmillan, currently working in partnership to improve cancer care across the islands.

We will build on these positive relationships when taking forward our upcoming priorities.

Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience.

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of health and care services. During 2020/21 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, provided a feedback system, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums and engaged with the public through social media.

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers. This year we have done this by, for example, gaining feedback from the community via an increased number of surveys, leaflet drops and by making regular phone calls to vulnerable members of the community.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it on our website and provide hard copies that can be picked up from various locations on the islands.

2020-21 priorities

Project / activity area	Changes made to services
Medical Travel	Day x-ray appointments take place at St Mary's Hospital.
Health and Social Care	We worked closely with adult social care in our emergency response to the pandemic, supporting vulnerable residents to get the help and support they needed.

Responses to recommendations and requests

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. Consequently, no recommendations or other actions resulted from this area of activity.

There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Isles of Scilly is represented on the Isles of Scilly Health and Wellbeing Board by Paul Charnock, Chair of the Board of Directors. During 2020/21 due to COVID-19, only two meetings took place and two were cancelled. We presented feedback about our activities and the reports from the surveys we had carried out.



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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.

Company number 8321886 Charity number 1152039

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