

Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch Isle of Wight
Annual Report 2021-22



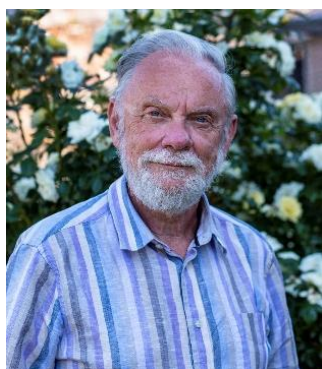
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Message from our chair

Throughout this very difficult year we have continued listening to the experiences of islanders on the full range of health and social care services. What they've told us, has been regularly fed back to services in our monthly intelligence reports designed to inform and to encourage change where required.

We have also been working closely with other local Healthwatch across the Hampshire and IOW Integrated Care System area. This has led to joint working in areas such as access to GP services and NHS dentistry, where we have highlighted the particular issues of Island residents. This work is continuing. In addition, we have been working in partnership with the Isle of Wight Council in the area of mental wellbeing, working with their mental health champion to reach out to people from all areas of the Island. We have been visiting and working with the IOW NHS Trust in improving quality and supporting quality team visits to care and nursing homes. All this work and more will be continuing and developing this year as changes within the health services develop.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Chris Orchin'.

Chris Orchin
Healthwatch Isle of Wight Chair



“The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown long-standing health inequalities into stark relief. With NHS and social care facing even longer backlogs, the unequal outcomes exposed by the pandemic are at risk of becoming worse. Local Healthwatch play an important role in helping to overcome these adversities and are uniquely placed to make a positive difference in their communities.”

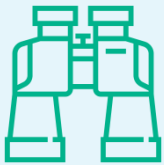
Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England



About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Isle of Wight is your local health and social care champion. From Sandown to Freshwater and everywhere in between, we make sure NHS leaders and other 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

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



Our mission

To make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.



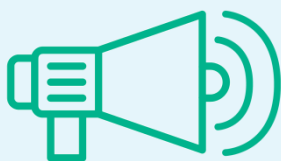
Our values

- Listening to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- Including everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- Analysing different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- Acting on feedback and driving change.
- Partnering with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.

Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

Reaching out



3,174 people

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

4,979 people

Visited our website, coming to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and COVID-19.

Making a difference to care



We published

10 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Access to GP-Led Services Report

which highlighted the struggles people have with accessing GP practices.

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

18

outstanding volunteers, who gave up 299 hours to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2021-22 we received:

£153,000

which is the same as the previous year.

We also currently employ

3 staff

who help us carry out this work .which is the same as the previous year.

How we've made a difference throughout the year

These are the biggest projects we worked on from April 2021 to March 2022.

Spring



We began supporting the Isle of Wight NHS Trust with their quality visits, to each area of the hospital.



We spoke to patients, staff and carers about their views and experiences. We fed back intelligence reports to the Trust following each visit.

Summer



We set up a regional and local working group to support the development of our GP Access work. We worked with patient groups and GP practices on the Island to ensure the work was



coproduced. We developed surveys to capture the views of patients and also of GP practice staff.

Autumn



We met with Public Health in to discuss how the recommendations in our Suicide Prevention report would contribute to their Mental Health and Suicide Prevention workstream.

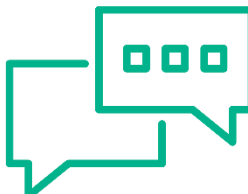


We delivered a presentation on our work at the 'Shaping the Future of the Island, Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Strategy' workshop in September.

Winter



We delivered safeguarding adults training to voluntary sector groups across the Island. 100% of people found the training useful and 87% said their confidence



and knowledge of the safeguarding process had increased since the training. "The training was well delivered and made accessible for all on the course whatever prior knowledge you had."

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 feedback to services to help them improve.



Making it easier to access GP led services

Thanks to people sharing their experiences of accessing GP led services with us over the last year, we've helped the Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning group commit to improving access for people across the Island.

This project began because we were receiving a lot of feedback from the public regarding primary care. We met with other local Healthwatch in the south to discuss this emerging trend and decided that it was a sensitive issue that required a measured and balanced response.

We felt it was essential to work with both patients and surgeries to work out how services could be improved.

Early discussions with the NHS and other groups, showed that the best way to ensure success would be to establish a regional advisory/working group that would be made up of key people in primary care and beyond. This included: the Care Quality Commission, GP's, Practice Managers, Reception staff, Local Authority Scrutiny Officer, Commissioners, Integrated Care System communication staff and local Healthwatch.

A local advisory group was also set up on the Isle of Wight to gather the views of practice managers and members of GP Patient Participation Groups.

We worked with other local Healthwatch from Wiltshire and Hampshire to West Sussex, recognising that we had identified similar themes across the south.

We developed a survey for the general public and also one for GP practice staff



70% of people

we heard from were not satisfied with the length of time taken to answer their call.



"Absolutely awful each time. On three separate occasions I had to try about 15-25 times, 3 times rang and cut me off after waiting 15 minutes."

IOW Patient



Who completed our Surveys?

Thank you to the 1109 people across the Isle of Wight who responded to our patient survey.

There are 12 GP practices on the Isle of Wight and patients from all 12 practices completed the survey

Most respondents were aged between 50 – 64 (423).

15% (155) of people said they are unpaid carers

65% (719) of respondents have a long term condition.

Snapshot of themes:

- **Long telephone queues** - many people had to try multiple times to get through to their surgery.
- **Availability of consultations** - people found that by the time they managed to get through to their surgery, all the appointments had gone.
- **Appointment type** – people were concerned about the diagnostic effectiveness of online and telephone consultations.
- **Triage system** – people were confused about the way triaging works and the need for this.
- **Staff attitudes** – many people had a positive experience once they managed to get an appointment, but others were frustrated by the approach of some GP staff.
- **Online Services** – A mixed collection of responses from those who like the convenience of online services such as eConsult, to those who find it frustrating or impersonal.



What difference did this make

Due to our call for change, the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Integrated Care system has agreed to:

- Work with GP practices to improve access and increase appointment availability at weekends.
- Improve triage services and learn from those who do this well.
- Improve communication to the public about primary care services and where people can go for support.

Improving access to support for mental wellbeing in the community

Thanks to people sharing their experiences of mental wellbeing during our Mental Wellbeing Listening Tour, we have been working with the IOW Council to distribute £50,000 to voluntary sector organisations to improve people's access to well being support in their local communities.

In partnership with Councillor Michael Lilley, the IOW Council mental health champion and Mayor of Ryde, we visited many areas of the Island, listening to people's experiences during the pandemic.

People told us:

- They were struggling to cope with bereavement, made worse by restrictions imposed during covid.
- Unpaid carers are struggling with accessing services and many need respite care.
- Isolation and loneliness has increased and many people are still frightened of the effects of covid.



"As we recover from the pandemic it is so important we understand people's experiences and the impact this has had on their mental and emotional wellbeing. This will help us develop ways to better help people to improve their own mental wellbeing and to ensure people can access the right support at the right time."

Simon Bryant, Director of Public Health



What difference did this make

During our Listening Tour, we were able to hear from people about what support they value within their local communities and what they felt was missing.

The IOW Council contributed over £50,000 of funding to support community and voluntary sector organisations and we supported them to distribute this to local organisations making a difference to people's lives.

The successful applicants support unpaid carers, veterans, disabled children, people who feel isolated and lonely and the LGBTQ+ community.



"This funding enables the projects to support more people than ever before, in particular, many of them support people who are socially isolated or from areas and communities of deprivation."

Councillor Karl Love, Cabinet member for Public Health



Improving care in residential care and nursing homes

This year we have supported the IOW Quality Team in their visits to care and nursing homes, by providing experts by experiences for the visits.

Our Experts by Experience visited 10 nursing homes and 7 care homes.



Experts by Experience spoke to 72 members of staff, 29 managers, 6 family members/visitors and 91 people who live at the homes.



Experts by Experience spent over 58 hours speaking to people and observing practice during the year.



94 recommendations for improvements were made

What difference did this make

Following our visit to a local nursing home the home manager contacted us to say she had implemented the following as a result of our recommendations:

“ I have now allocated an extra staff member to help during dining and also asked the Activities Coordinator every day to go and ask if they needed more help through lunches as I am aware it can be very demanding having to look after the dining room resident/patients and also to assist some of the residents to eat. Due to this concern, I have now asked my (staff) to oversee the dining room to make changes and advise all my staff to how we expected the dining experience to be on a daily basis and how important is to communicate effectively with our residents but also be polite, calm and respectful at all times. The changes we have already made are making a difference to the setting, communication has now much improved and music is not loud but pleasant which helps the atmosphere, lunch service now seems smooth and feeling more organised and we will continue to monitor the dining experiences daily. Hopefully, when our call bell system will be replaced at the end of the year, dining experience will improve even further as I am aware the noise of the call bell doesn't help our residents/patients to have an enjoyable experience.”

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 the NHS and social care services to step back and see the bigger picture, through hearing personal experiences, and the impact on people's lives. This provides a deeper understanding than using data alone, can challenge assumptions and motivate people to think and work more creatively.

With other local Healthwatch and partners from the Hampshire and IOW Integrated Care System, we have set up a 'Solutions Group' designed to hold system leaders to account and to support health and social care staff to understand how to engage with people in a positive way.



Getting services to involve the public

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

We gave advice to a local GP practice to enable them to provide better support for their Patient Participation Group which enabled them to collect the views of local people directly and improve services directly as a result.



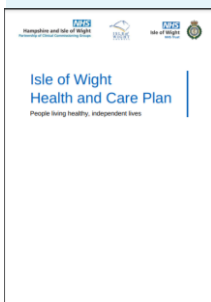
Providing regular, up to date feedback to system leaders

We share monthly intelligence reports with leaders across the health and social care systems.

These anonymised reports detail what people have been telling us over the past month, identifying themes and trends and enabling system leaders to identify where the problems are and what matters most to local people.

Three more ways we have made a difference for the community

Isle of Wight Health and care plan



We supported local health services and the IOW Council to develop their Health and Care Plan which sets their priorities for the next three years and describes the changes that people can expect to see.

We highlighted people's experiences about what is working well and what needs improving.

"Through recent engagement and the valuable support offered by Healthwatch Isle of Wight, we have been able to put together a clear picture of what matters to local people."

IOW Council, IOW NHS Trust & Hampshire, Southampton & IOW Clinical Commissioning Group



Getting services to involve the public

In partnership with other local Healthwatch in Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth, we provide training for health and social services in engaging with and involving the public.

In 2021, our Empowering Engagement training was successfully delivered to the Wessex Cancer Alliance. Participants were supported to engage with people as part of their everyday work activities, supported by their local Healthwatch.



Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with health and care services to consistently raise issues and push for changes.

We have known about dental problems for a long time. In 2021 we published our report highlighting that many people were struggling to access dental care. We have since met several times with Bob Seely, the IOW MP and have appeared on several local media sites including the BBC Politics Show and local radio stations, highlighting the lack of NHS dentists on the Island.

This year we have been working with commissioners to identify some tangible solutions to the lack of NHS dental provision.

Celebrating the commitment and resilience of the Isle of Wight Voluntary Sector: December 2021



The response from the Isle of Wight Voluntary sector to the Covid-19 pandemic has been nothing short of phenomenal. Organisations went above and beyond their usual remit to support people in ways that they had never needed to before, all whilst a work from home order had been implemented from the Government. With face to face visits ceasing, these services adapted their approach almost overnight and continued to make their services as accessible as possible for people.

During the summer of 2021, we contacted local voluntary sector groups to discover the challenges they were facing, the achievements they were proud of and what they felt would be the key issues to affect the people they support in the next 12 months.

Although voluntary organisations were understanding of the ever changing situation that the pandemic presented, it was felt that clarity around Covid prevention measures was lacking and that the uncertainty that surrounded this served to exacerbate peoples concerns.



30% of voluntary sector organisations

we heard from, felt mental health would be the biggest issue that people they support face in the next 12 months.



“There is a growing mental health crisis and a sense that people are currently holding things together because they have to, but that once life returns to a more normal state we will see an increase in anxiety and depression.”

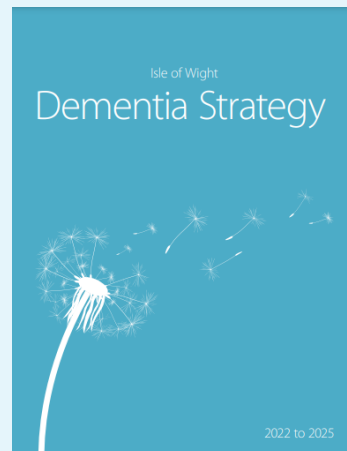
LOW voluntary sector organisation



IOW Dementia Strategy

Plans to improve the health and wellbeing of people with dementia were launched with the publication of the IOW Dementia Strategy in May 2022.

We worked with Alzheimer Cafe IW, Carers IW, Age UK IW, and Independent Arts to lead this work, ensuring the voices and views of people with lived experience, and their carers, were at the heart of the strategy which will act as a driver for change.



“This strategy could not have been developed without their views and the help of the local organisations gathering evidence and feedback on the ground and I am extremely grateful to them.”

Councillor Karl Love, Cabinet lead for health and social care



The strategy is ground breaking in that it was developed by voluntary sector organisations and Healthwatch Isle of Wight. It clearly sets out the priorities and wishes of local people and will be used to hold health and social care providers to account in their delivery of the actions.

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 mental health support, how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we helped people by:

- Providing up to date information on COVID-19
- Linking people to reliable information they could trust
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to access the services they need



Signposting people who needed additional support

Individual with cancer, was unable to start oncology treatment due to not being able to access the dental care they needed. They were unable to find an NHS dentist taking on new patients and could not afford private treatment.

We contacted all NHS dental providers on the Island and one practice agreed to see the individual as a private patient, but would only charge them NHS fees.

We were contacted by an individual who is severely needle phobic and as a result of this has not been able to have a covid vaccination. Their GP practice has been unhelpful, telling them to “pull themselves together” or “stop being silly.”

We got the individual’s permission to contact the Clinical Commissioning Group on their behalf and they contacted them directly to offer additional, individualised support to enable them to get a covid vaccination.

Access to NHS dental care

We were contacted by a veteran who has served in the armed forces through two conflicts. He advised that when contacting his dental practice they told him that he had been taken off their list. He explained that because of covid, he had been waiting for them to contact him with an appointment and he was now in some discomfort due to tooth ache, but he was refused an appointment and has since not been able to find another dentist on the Island. We signposted him to NHS Choices and gave him the contact details for NHS England/Improvement, should he wish to make a complaint about the lack of NHS dentists on the Island.

He thanked us for our help and confirmed that he would also highlight his issue to our MP.



Volunteers

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are the heart of Healthwatch. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving in NHS and social care.

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home, collecting feedback about health and social care services.
- Sharing surveys on Access to GP services, Healthwatch Priorities, and Elective Care.
- Inputted anonymised data from our surveys onto our CRM (online information system).
- Assisted as part of 'Readers' Panels' – checking local services' publications to make them more people focussed and easier to read.
- Conducted quality visits to care and nursing homes and to many areas of the IOW NHS Trust.





Alison

"I trained as a Healthwatch Enter and View Representative during 2021 and since then have had the privilege of working alongside Local Authority and Isle of Wight NHS Trust Quality Inspection Teams. We have been welcomed into Nursing Homes and wards and departments at St Mary's Hospital in Newport. As the Healthwatch Representative my remit has been to speak with residents, patients and staff members to hear their experiences of health and social care. I have been able to pass on compliments and suggest where improvements might be undertaken. Representing the public in this way is an excellent use of my pre-retirement skills and I am glad that Healthwatch has given me this opportunity."

Pam

I have been a volunteer with Isle of Wight Healthwatch Enter and View Panel since its inception. As a Healthwatch volunteer I have always felt valued, and this continues. We are well trained and supported by the permanent staff who equip us to carry out the tasks we volunteer for. The esteem in which our local Healthwatch is held makes it easy for the volunteers to be accepted by the staff of the various organisations we work with. The projects we have participated in range from visits to the local Trust's Emergency Department, visiting Care Homes to complement the Local Authority's quality visits, surveys of GP practices and undertaking "Mystery Shopping" to find out how the Local Authority and GP practices respond to specific queries. All this work is to first hand find out what it is like to be a receiver of the services, to feed any compliments or suggestions for improvements back to the service providers so that Healthwatch, with regard to Health and Social Care issues, can truly be said to be the voice of and watchdog for the island community.



Do you feel inspired?

We are always on the lookout for new volunteers, so please get in touch today.



www.healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk



01983 608608



Enquiries@healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk

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.

Income	
Funding received from local authority	£153,000
Additional funding	
Total income	£153,000

Income	
Staff costs	£88,806
Operational costs	£47,891
Support and administration	£15,000
Total expenditure	£151,697

Top three priorities for 2022-23

1. NHS Dental Services.
2. Improving access to GP led services.
3. Highlighting the particular issues that Island residents face when having to travel for treatment.

Next steps

The pandemic has shone a stark light on the impact of existing inequalities when using health and care services, highlighting the importance of championing the voices of those who all too often go unheard.

Over the coming years, our goal is to help reduce these inequalities by making sure your voice is heard, and decision makers reduce the barriers you face, regardless of whether that's because of where you live, income or race.

We will be working with dental providers and commissioners to identify how more people can access NHS dental care on the Island, focusing on children and young people, people with a mental health condition and those who cannot afford private dental care.

At our request, an oral health needs assessment was completed by NHS England/Improvement in Dec 21. This identified the level of need on the Island and we will build on this to ensure that there is a fairer system of access for all people.

Three ways we plan to make a difference for the community 2022/23



Listening to people's experiences of community pharmacies

This year, people have shared concerns about the short notice closure of some community pharmacies, leading to people struggling to get essential medication.

One of our social media posts about pharmacies reached almost 2,000 people and 40 people shared their experience via this route. We raised concerns to the Hampshire, Southampton and IOW Clinical Commissioning Group and we also contacted the regional manager of a community pharmacy provider to ask how they would be addressing the problems. They have since recruited additional staff and there have been no subsequent closures from this group of pharmacies.

We will continue to monitor this closely and escalate concerns when we need to.



Improving support for people waiting for hospital treatment

We are working with other local Healthwatch within Hampshire, to listen to people's experiences of waiting for hospital treatment.

Hospital waiting lists have been increasing steadily and this has been made worse by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The NHS in Hampshire and the IOW are looking to develop an elective care hub in Winchester to provide treatment for people across the region and to help reduce the waiting lists.

We are currently seeking people's experiences of waiting for planned hospital care. We are also interested in hearing whether Isle of Wight residents would be willing to travel to Winchester for treatment and if so, what support they would need to get there and home again.

All feedback we receive will be anonymised and shared with health providers and commissioners to improve the support people are getting whilst waiting for treatment.

Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Isle of Wight CIC, subcontracts Healthwatch activity to Help&Care, Community Action IW and Citizens Advice IW.

Healthwatch Isle of Wight 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 8 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 8 times and made decisions on matters such as prioritising work activity and agreeing communication and media plans.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. Every year, we identify the 20 most common services, that people contact us about and we use this as the basis for our public Prioritisation Survey. We ask people to identify their top 3 health or social care priorities from this list and these become our areas of focus for the forthcoming year.

We regularly review our CRM (information management system) to identify key themes and trends from the feedback we are getting. We ensure that we have enough capacity and flexibility within our team to deal with emerging issues.

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 centre, attended virtual and face to face meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities 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, partnering with voluntary sector partners who have been our 'eyes and ears' on the ground.

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 share with system leaders and partners.

Responses to recommendations and requests: We had no providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. 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/ Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Social Care

Healthwatch Isle of Wight is represented on the Isle of Wight Health and Wellbeing Board by Gill Kennett, Non Executive Director. Chris Orchin, Chair and Joanna Smith, Manger of Healthwatch Isle of Wight, attend the IOW Council Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Social Care.

During 2021/22 our representatives have effectively carried out this role by highlighting the issues of access to NHS dentists, access to GP led services, the covid vaccination process and suicide prevention.

2021-2022 Outcomes

Project / Activity Area	Changes made to services
Dentistry	Oral health needs assessment completed Dec 20
Learning Disability	We have been supporting Kings College London, to complete a project looking at improving the environment for people with a learning disability: https://feelingathome.org.uk/ A photography exhibition of the findings will be held in Brighton, Sept 14 th 22 and toolkit developed to support managers and staff to make group settings more 'homely'.
Cancer Services	Following our work on cancer services, cancer patients will be treated together in the hospital setting under a medical team. Urgent care systems have been changed to ensure cancer patients do not have long waits in A&E if they need urgent care.
Translations services	Following feedback received regarding difficulties in accessing translation services within the emergency dental service, we contacted NHS England who shared translation service contact details. This led to a more positive experience for patients.



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