



Annual report 2019-20

Guided by you

healthwatch
Thurrock

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Message from our CEO

Healthwatch Thurrock is a project of Thurrock CVS with the strategic lead being Kim James. I am pleased that once again Healthwatch Thurrock has increased its profile with both local engagement, commissioned projects and on the national stage.

As we enter the next year, we are going to navigate some uncharted waters following the Covid-19 pandemic.

We will strive to overcome obstacles manifesting from social distancing, we will seek to engage with residents differently and continue to collect their views. As services become delivered differently, we will as always keep monitoring to ensure they are right for Thurrock



Kristina Jackson
Chief Executive Officer,
Thurrock CVS

Healthwatch Thurrock has always been able to take a very granular view of services and how residents use or access them.

This is due to the close and important relationships we have with both residents, service providers and partners.

Holding seats on strategic boards, Healthwatch Thurrock is able to be involved, contribute and influence decisions as well as challenge them

All our work is heavily evidenced based on what residents tell us and analysing any trends that emerge.

We are hoping to update our website this year and part of that update will be a more interactive site, so that it is easier to use, holds more information and looks a bit more modern and fresher.

Thank you to everyone that has contributed to the Healthwatch Thurrock work this year.

From our Staff, Advisory Group, volunteers and all the residents who spoke to us.



Kim James, Chief Operating Officer
Healthwatch Thurrock

Message from Chair of Advisory Group



This year has proved to be a successful and impactful one for Thurrock residents due to the work of Healthwatch Thurrock.

The reports, both research and commissioned have not only shaped local services but were underpinned by the strength of the users voice.

The Advisory Group has been satisfied once again that the dedication and work that the team puts in not only gets results but uncovers areas of improvement.

Being acknowledged as an organisation that independently represents local people is so important to co-producing needs based services and is at the core of what Healthwatch Thurrock stands for.

I personally want to thank Kim, Barbara and Julie for another year of professional and dogged determination to hear, report and make a difference.

And of course a huge thankyou to my Advisory Group colleagues and all the residents in Thurrock who have taken part, spoken up and contributed to make change happen.

Kevin Brice
Chair
Healthwatch Thurrock Advisory Group

Our priorities

During 2019/20, Healthwatch Thurrock met and worked to its priorities in most areas with little disruption due to Covid-19. This year it will pick up on any priority that was paused but also look at them through a different lens. The view will be of a world affected by Covid-19, the changes this has brought and the new ways of working that will need to be adopted.

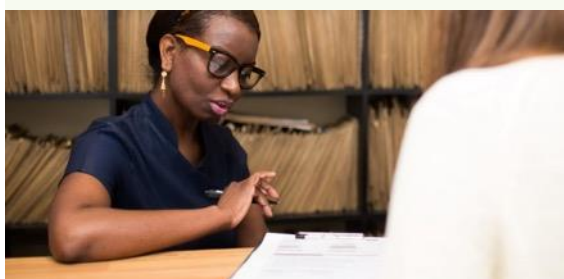
Whilst there may be initial difficulties in engaging as we would normally, we will consider, adapt and change so that we can continue looking at local service provision, always from the point of the patient and always available, proactive and responsive.



- Equality of Services



- Cancer Services



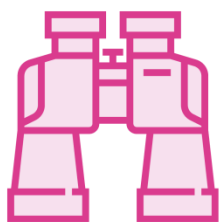
- Dignity in Care



- Mental Health and Wellbeing



Keeping a light shining on the impact of Covid-19



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 working with other organisations



Find out more about us and the work we do

Website: www.healthwatchthurrock.org

Twitter: @healthwatchthrk

Facebook: @healthwatchthrk

Highlights from our year

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



Health and care that works for you



10 volunteers

helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 80 hours.

We employed

4 staff

We received

£ 124, 357 in funding

from our local authority in 2019-20

Providing support



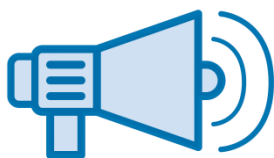
3500 people

shared their health and social care story with us, 18% more than last year.

1158 people

accessed Healthwatch Thurrock advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support, 452 more people than last year.

Reaching out



34,139 people

engaged with us through our Facebook and Twitter.

Making a difference to care



We published

5 reports

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

Working to promote early diagnosis



Targeted Lung Checks



Working closely with the East of England Cancer Alliance – Thurrock CCG and Luton CCG, Healthwatch Thurrock promoted and attended local venues with the roll out of the Targeted Lung Health Checks Programme. People who are considered at risk of developing lung cancer or other lung diseases were identified by GPs and other health professionals and then invited to attend.

Conducted by a lung specialist nurse, tests and discussions will determine a person's individual lung cancer risk.

Launched early 2020, Healthwatch Thurrock played a key role in promoting the programme to ensure residents in Thurrock looked out for their invitation or queried with their GP if they didn't receive one.



NHS 2019 Expo



Healthwatch Thurrock's Operations Manager Barbara Rice was invited onto a national stage to talk about the Targeted Lung Checks at the NHS 2019 Expo Conference.

Along with BBC journalist Jeremy Bowen, delegates heard about the experiences of people with cancer and the importance for early diagnosis. Speaking about his own Bowel Cancer, Jeremy explained that 9/10 people survive when diagnosis is early.

The Targeted Lung Health check programme aims to address this issue by identifying early lung cancers with proactive testing of those people most at risk.

Another speaker at the Conference Dr Neil Smith, GP from Blackburn and Darwen CCG said "Lung cancer is one of the most common causes of death and the targeted lung health check programme will help save lives".

Our Published Work 2019/20



Healthwatch Thurrock provide “voices” to victims of Sexual Violence and Abuse and the support they receive and the impact it makes

Sexual Violence and Abuse Services in Thurrock Report

Thanks to the work carried out by Healthwatch Thurrock, the value and importance of specialised services was evaluated through their Sexual Violence and Abuse Services Report.

Healthwatch Thurrock had been made aware of changes to the commissioning of current sexual violence support provision. On the basis of this information, conversations were had with commissioners and providers around the impact of changes to the victims and survivors within Thurrock and surrounding areas. The result of these discussions were taken to the Health, Overview and Scrutiny Committee which prompted an independent review that would feed into an understanding of needs to direct future commissioning.

Through this piece of work, Healthwatch Thurrock were able to provide “voices” of experience supporting the newly created Joint Strategic Needs Assessment around Sexual Violence and Abuse support.

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/jsna-sexual-violence-abuse-202001-v01.pdf>

Data alone cannot give a true account of an individual's experience and it is only by hearing the voices of individuals can you gain a sense of what it really feels like.

Healthwatch Thurrock would like to thank every individual who participated in bringing this report to life by allowing us to share their voice.

Every quote given is from a real conversation from someone who has experienced trauma and bravely allowed us to share it.

I was listened to but it was difficult to talk about what happened

Talking and realising that what happened was not my fault. The support I've received has been invaluable



Thurrock Healthwatch provides an invaluable voice for residents on Thurrock Council's Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

As Chair of the Committee I am grateful for the collaborative way Healthwatch always work with us. Speaking regularly to Councillors and Officers they ensure we are aware of any issues residents have raised with them.

Last year Healthwatch raised concerns regarding possible funding reductions for a local sexual violence support service, following this being brought to the committee the funding reduction to this service was halted. This resulted in a detailed Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, carried out in partnership with Thurrock Council's Public Health Team and Healthwatch. Healthwatch also facilitated a survey of survivors which ensured an informed report from the most important perspective.

This is just one example of the breadth of work Healthwatch carries out. I look forward to working together in the forthcoming year.

Cllr V Holloway
Chair, Health Overview Scrutiny Committee



Healthwatch Thurrock conduct independent report for Brighter Futures Service

Independent Report for Brighter Futures Service

Brighter Futures early help service is an integrated service encompassing Health Visiting, School Health, targeted support and a range of health interventions for children, young people and their families.

To help shape and inform the current and future Brighter Futures provision, Healthwatch Thurrock was commissioned to independently engage with users of the service around a range of areas.

- Referral process to service
- Which services were used
- How supported people felt
- What was good
- What needed improving

The report was created using both data in survey completion and interviews.



Healthwatch undertook a survey of the Brighter Futures, Early Help Services in Thurrock last Summer. This survey provided a valuable insight into what parents, carers, children and young people thought of Children's Centres and the Prevention and Support Service. Having had this independent piece of work undertaken, it has assisted in driving forward any identified shortfalls in service provision across the borough.

Clare Moore
Strategic Lead – Youth Offending Service and Prevention

Healthwatch Thurrock and Cancer Conversations Report with MacMillan, St Lukes Hospice Information and Resource Service

Information for Cancer Journeys; when, what and where

Healthwatch Thurrock led on a piece of work looking at information given to people going through different stages of Cancer. From diagnosis, assessment, treatment and post treatment, information can vary including:

How much information is given
Who the information is given by
Whether it is the right information
Where they can find out more

Using a series of conversations prompted by measured questions, Healthwatch Thurrock and St Luke's Hospice gained valuable insights into the quality and quantity of information that is available and given to people.

With the data and subsequent report, MacMillan Cancer Services were able to make improvements to their resources

including the timeliness of them and to know from an individuals perspective; what information is required.

The general feeling was that most people are happy and informed at most stages of a cancer treatment.



Diagnosis 2017. At diagnosis information was given verbally by a Consultant and timing plus amount of information was considered adequate to address initial fears and answer questions. However, she told Healthwatch Thurrock that she would have liked more support group information. She researched her cancer online and sourced a support group herself. The most important thing she wanted to know when diagnosed was "Am I going to survive?"

Female, Breast Cancer

Healthwatch Thurrock Long Term Conditions Report – Informing the local JSNA

Development and improvement of services for people with long term conditions

With an ageing population, consideration over services and care for people with long term conditions is a priority. Thurrock Public Health engaged Healthwatch Thurrock to conduct engagement with Thurrock residents to inform the local JSNA from which commissioned services are guided.

A good picture was painted from Thurrock residents that they:

- Were in control of their condition/s
- Over half of the recommended lifestyle changes were made to improve health
- Referrals to services were felt to be easy

The research uncovered useful community resources were underused and many comments showed that home adaptations would help support people more.

The full report can be found on the Healthwatch Thurrock website:

http://www.healthwatchthurrock.org/sites/default/files/long_term_conditions_report_december_2019.pdf



I would like to find support groups. Useful to share with others and not feel so alone



Your Voice is Important – Looked After Children Report

Thurrock Healthwatch captures children's voices

A large and very confidential piece of work carried out by Healthwatch Thurrock was that of understanding Looked After Children's experiences.

Using a model of whole experience, Thurrock Healthwatch spoke to Looked After Children, Foster Carers and Professionals.

The Report gave an insight into what it is like for the children and the carers with regard to being in the care system and that of working with the care system.

Taking a different approach, Thurrock Healthwatch changed the language and the format of discreet and non-onerous surveys for the children and young people that participated. Using friendly

graphics and bold questions, Thurrock Healthwatch tried to get a feel of real experiences for all those involved.

Some of the comments, particularly from the children were a challenge to read, but woven within the answers was a collective thread showing good understanding that their interests were paramount.

For a few, the stories they told were more negative but more so of situation rather than experience.

Foster Carers were given the chance to also reflect on the dual role they play of maintaining a "normal" family environment and that of a trained professional.





Helping residents find a way through signposting and information


During a visit to a local sheltered housing complex, a resident informed Healthwatch Thurrock staff that she was supposed to be seen by the Cardiology Department. This was following a problem encountered with heart failure. The elderly resident could not recall the name or department or even any of the people she had already seen through her treatment. The resident was anxious that she should have had a follow up and was unable to navigate the system to obtain the necessary information.

Healthwatch Thurrock were able to make the necessary enquiries on the residents behalf.

Outcome

The resident should have had a follow up appointment which Healthwatch Thurrock discovered had never been issued. The department was able to rectify this error and contacted the resident who was given an urgent appointment.

The resident was very grateful for Healthwatch Thurrock intervention

 Healthwatch Thurrock is open between 9-5pm, Monday to Friday.

During Covid-19 we have continued this service with staff working from home and offering a remote telephone advice service

Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights



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

Healthwatch Thurrock gathered 448 views



Our network held over 500 focus groups reaching different communities across England

Healthwatch Thurrock held 3 focus groups



Healthwatch attended almost 1,000 community events

Healthwatch Thurrock attended 18 groups to gather views

NHS Long Term Plan

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

Here's a summary of our work and what we found.

Thurrock coordinated the work with Essex and Southend covering the Mid and South Essex Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP).

We asked people #WhatWouldYouDo to

improve the NHS locally. The top issues that people told us they wanted services to focus on are:

- Reduce waiting times
- Increase appointment opportunities
- Communications
- Information and guidance for both diagnosed conditions and wider support offerings

What are we doing about it?

Healthwatch Thurrock produced a tri-borough report and individual report to reflect the views of residents. This was submitted for consideration at STP level.



Easier access to information.
My GP didn't tell me I could go to a health hub out of hours.
This info should be available

NHS Long Term Plan - Thurrock



Most commonly used words by residents within the NHS Long Term Plan project

NHS Long Term Plan

Thurrock Insights

The two surveys used in the NHS Long Term Plan project gave useful insights into the local level of needs and requirements.

Better communication

- Between GPs and specialist services
- Between different health services
- Between individuals and health services
- More Appointments

To reduce waiting times

- To access flexible times that fit in with people's lives
- To be able to see a GP on the same day as you need to

Information and Guidance

- To understand their medical condition and how best to manage it
- To understand the process and outcomes to give choice
- To be able to utilise wider support services within communities
- To help achieve a healthier lifestyle

The full report can be found on the Healthwatch Thurrock's website:

http://www.healthwatchthurrock.org/sites/default/files/ltp_report_mid_and_south_essex_0.pdf



Healthwatch Thurrock supporting residents to receive the correct help

An older person rang for help for advice. She had not been out of the house for many months due to anxiety and depression. Taking anti-depressants for some time, the resident had now run out and needed a repeat prescription.

Her GP needed her to attend the surgery for an appointment to assess the resident and medication she wanted.

Due to her current situation, the resident felt unable to leave her home and asked whether Healthwatch Thurrock could help.

Healthwatch Thurrock made contact with the surgery and explained the situation, which the resident felt she was unable to

communicate when she had them.

Outcome

The GP arranged for a home visit, carried out the assessment and medication was prescribed



Sometimes, having someone to navigate or explain can overcome obstacles for residents when they feel overwhelmed due to illness and need someone independent to help them



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.healthwatchthurrock.org

Telephone: 01375 389883

Email: admin@healthwatchthurrock.org

Helping you find the answers

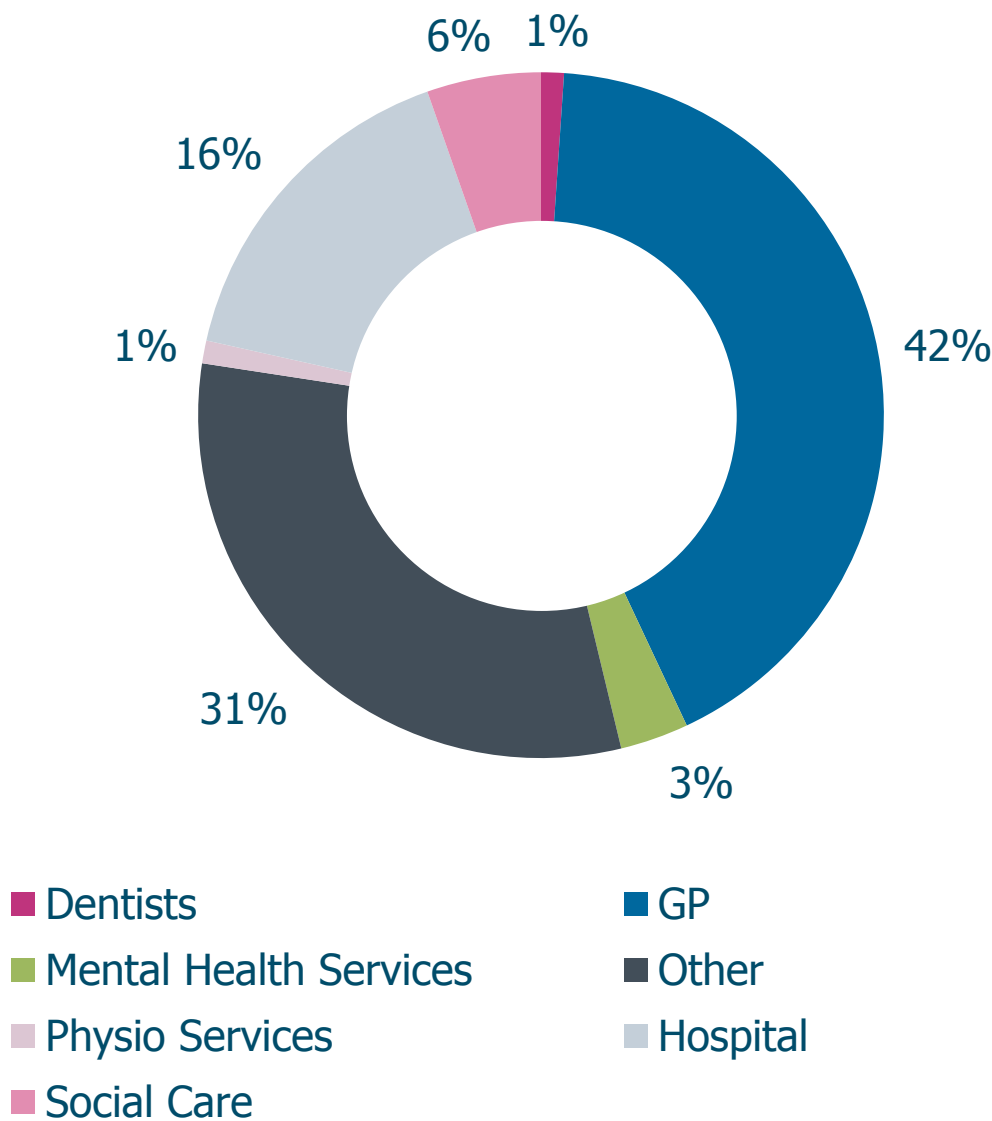


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch Thurrock plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

Each year we help 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.

Here are some of the areas that people asked about*.



*Based on monitoring 1/1/20 – 31/3/20

Signposting support

Healthwatch Thurrock received a phone call from a young gentleman with mental health challenges.

Being on the autistic spectrum, he was also waiting for an assessment with an ADHD specialist and was unsure where he was in the system and did not know who to contact to ask.

Healthwatch Thurrock signposted to Grays Hall providing a number for the gentleman to call. The gentleman was not comfortable and felt he would not be listened to.

Healthwatch Thurrock telephoned on the gentleman's behalf and procured the information he needed.

Outcome

Healthwatch Thurrock confirmed with Grays Hall that funding was in place for the assessment and a date was being arranged.

Healthwatch Thurrock were able to relay this information to the gentleman and assure him that progress had been made. We were also able to alert him to the timeframe when his appointment would be posted so he could look out for it.

 The gentleman was very grateful for Healthwatch Thurrock’s support





Over the past year Healthwatch has worked closely with Mental Health Commissioning at Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure that the user's voice informs redesign and transformation of mental health services not just in Thurrock but in the Mid and South Essex system too.

In 2018 Healthwatch undertook a public consultation on the state of mental health services in Thurrock, the outcome of which has informed the development of the Integrated Primary and Community Care Mental Health Programme which will provide a comprehensive wrap-around mental health service offer for the four Primary Care Networks (PCNs) scheduled for implementation later this year and into 2021-22.

In 2019 Healthwatch worked with the Mid and South Essex system on the development of the Costed Delivery Plan, a framework that guides rebalancing of the system in favour of prevention, early intervention, resilience and recovery. Healthwatch is a stakeholder in the Thurrock Mental Health Recovery and Restoration planning group which is a multi-partner initiative tasked with developing the approach Thurrock as a system will take in defining the post COVID19 reset for mental health.

It is a pleasure to recognise the contribution Healthwatch has made and continues to make in holding commissioners to account and helping shape the transformation of mental health services.

Jane Itangata
Associate Director of Mental Health Commissioning
Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership

Volunteers



At Healthwatch Thurrock we are supported by 10 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what people would like to improve, to 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 make sure they are providing people with the right support.
- Helped support our day-to-day running.
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on.

Healthwatch Thurrock volunteers support in many ways.

Our Advisory Group helps set operational priorities. Meeting regularly, they bring a wealth of experience and knowledge.

Volunteers also help out at events and talking to residents on our behalf.

Notably, Healthwatch Thurrock volunteers can be the conduit to some areas of the community that historically do not engage with services.

Only through these strengthened links to particular communities is Healthwatch Thurrock able to really hear the voices of that community.



Bisola Sheu



Volunteer with us

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

Website: www.healthwatchthurrock.org

Telephone: 01375 389883

Email: admin@healthwatchthurrock.org

Partnership Working



Partnership working with the Clinical Commissioning Group

NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commissions health and care for the people of Thurrock. The CCG has a close working relationship with Healthwatch Thurrock. Its Chief Operating Officer sits on the Governing Body and regularly attends the patient reference group (CRG).

Patient involvement is sought throughout the commissioning cycle, the CCG seeks to work with Healthwatch Thurrock to ensure patient views are heard and supported within any commissioning decisions or changes to services.

This year the CCG has worked with Healthwatch Thurrock to seek patient views and further roll out of social prescribers and other services. Healthwatch has also supported the work of the Thurrock Integrated Care System on new models of care, including supporting the setting up of a Citizen's Panel to bring the Whole Systems Obesity Strategy to life with local action.

Support has been provided by Healthwatch Thurrock within mental health service redesign, where evidence and patient views were gathered to support improving services for the 'missing middle' who were falling through the gaps in existing mental health provision.

Gathering intelligence and monitoring quality

Healthwatch Thurrock feeds in to the CCG any issues around quality of care, working closely with primary care around patient experience and feedback on services available in Thurrock.

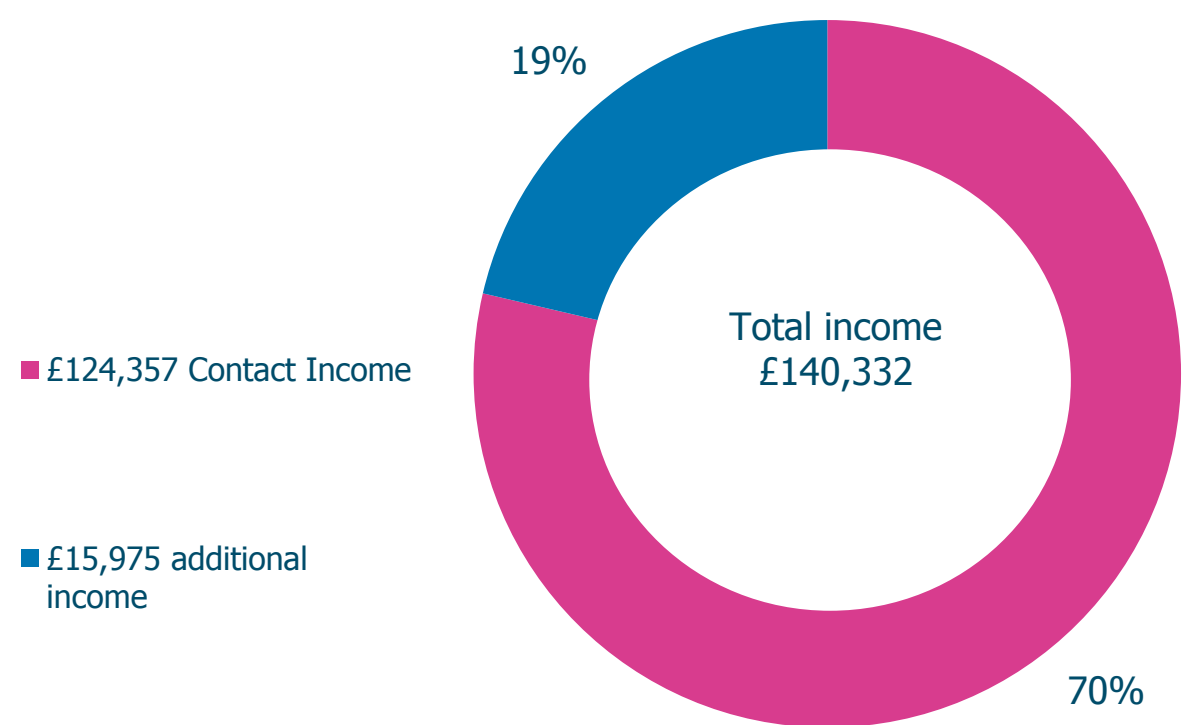
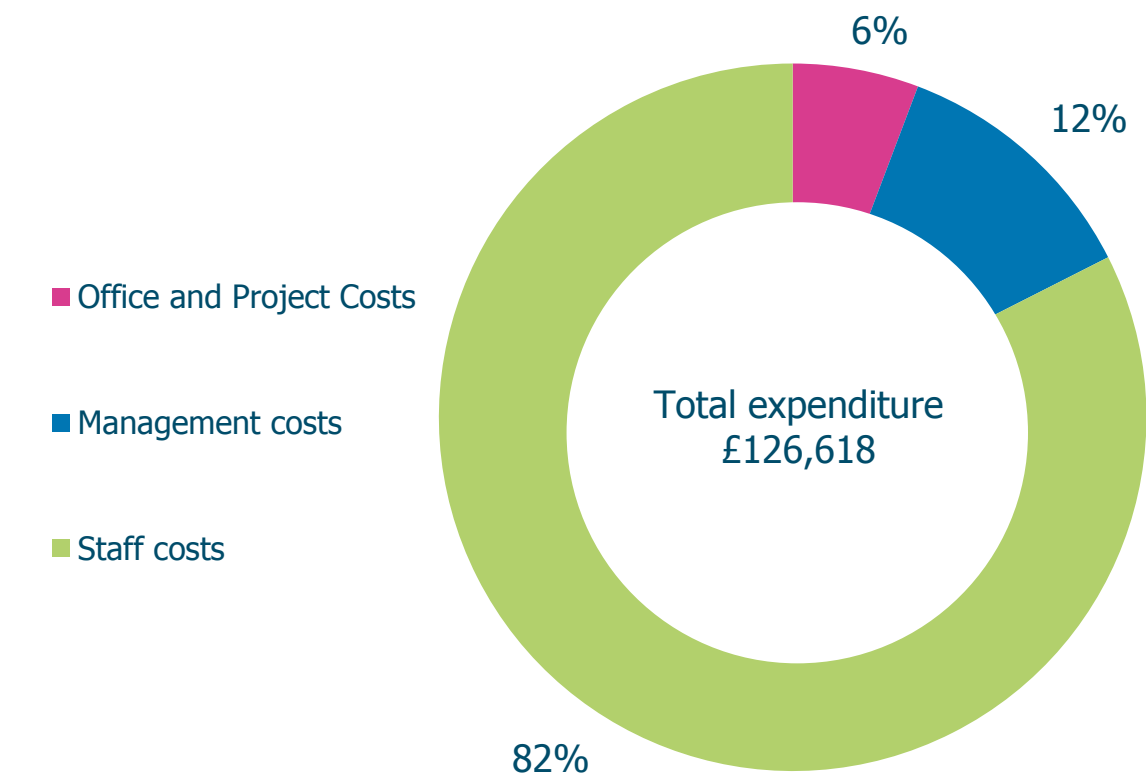
The CCG relies heavily on the support of Healthwatch Thurrock to bring patient views to the table and reach a wider group of people that would be difficult for the CCG to reach out to directly.



Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012).



Thank you

Thank you to everyone that is helping us put people at the heart of health and 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.



Healthwatch Thurrock
The Beehive Resource Centre
West Street, Grays
Essex RM17 6XP

www.healthwatchthurrock.org

t: 01375 389883

e: admin@healthwatchthurrock.org

[@Healthwatchthrck](https://www.instagram.com/Healthwatchthrck)

 [Facebook.com/Healthwatchthrck](https://www.facebook.com/Healthwatchthrck)



Address and contact details of the organisation holding the local Healthwatch contract as of 31/03/2020.

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.

Healthwatch Thurrock is a Project of Thurrock CVS – Charity Number 1090253 Company Number 4300967
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