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Annual Report 2019–20

# Guided by you



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# Message from our CEO



Nathan Singleton  
CEO, LifeLine Projects

We were delighted that our recommendations were taken on board for the development of a new model of delivery.

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham is hosted by LifeLine Projects, based in Barking and Dagenham and founded in 2000. LifeLine exists to impact individuals and influence systems. Characterised by renewed hope, developed confidence and improved skills, the programmes that we offer give people the chance to grow, expand their horizons, and become agents of change in their own community. We focus on empowering and enhancing the lives of those people most isolated and vulnerable, building their confidence and helping them to learn new skills, so that they may fully live their lives and become a part of their community.

**I want to thank everyone who has contributed to the work of Healthwatch.**

Our volunteers have all played a huge part in our achievements by contributing a total of 800 hours of their time this year. They have assisted with back office tasks, visited health and social care sites, promoted Healthwatch and sought the views of the community about their experiences of health and care services.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the 2,452 members of the public who shared their experiences with us. This has helped us to challenge and share the needs of local people with commissioners and service providers.

We have worked on a number of different projects and ensured the voice of the community influences decisions makers. For example, we undertook an independent evaluation of the social prescribing project run by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, which involved interviewing residents and GPs who were involved in the scheme. We were delighted that our recommendations were taken on board for the development of a new model of delivery.

We are also very proud of the work that we have done so far on domiciliary care. The stories we heard from local people were shared with the social care team who were very welcoming of our findings. Although this work has been delayed due to coronavirus pandemic, we are looking at how we can develop the second stage of this project.

Healthwatch continues to be a critical friend to both commissioners and service providers.

As we continue to offer services in an uncertain time, the team will continue to deliver and explore new and effective ways of engagement.

We have continued to work with local GPs to deliver the recommendations from our GP project undertaken last year; one particular area we have worked on is communication with patients. This year, we will be keeping the issue of access to GPs on the agenda.

The NHS published the Long Term Plan in January 2019, setting out its key ambitions over the next ten years. Healthwatch were involved in the national project to find out the views of local people and we consulted 337 residents. Our findings were used in collaboration with eight other Healthwatches to influence the plans of the East London Healthcare Partnership.

One of our main challenges is to ensure that services are of good quality and meeting patients' needs. Healthwatch continues to be a critical friend to both commissioners and service providers. By understanding residents' concerns, we are able to identify good practice, highlight areas of improvement and provide solutions to decision makers. I would like to thank all the partners who have worked with us this year, and we look forward to the challenges of the year to come.

The coronavirus pandemic has meant that the way we engage and deliver services has had to adapt for the safety of our staff, volunteers and the public. Throughout the crisis, our Healthwatch team continued to provide our signposting, advice and information service, and we engaged with the public about their experiences throughout this challenging time. As we continue to offer services in an uncertain time, the team will continue to deliver and explore new and effective ways of engagement.

We have also been supporting and coordinating the borough's response to COVID-19 for the most vulnerable in our communities. Our team and volunteers helped local people with practical support such as shopping, medication pick-ups, gas and electricity top-ups, and befriending calls. Over 180 referrals were received at the time of writing this report.

Healthwatch is all about local voices being able to influence the delivery and design of local services. We believe that the work we choose to undertake should be decided by local people, so our plans for the coming year are based on our statutory duties and evidence we received from the local community over the year. Some of our future work will depend on the state of the coronavirus pandemic and government guidelines.

Lastly, I would like to encourage everyone that lives in the borough to continue to share their stories of accessing health and care to make a real difference to the way health and care is delivered in Barking and Dagenham.

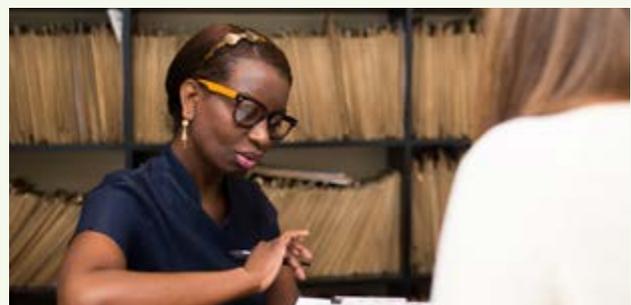


# Our priorities

Our plans for 2019/2020 were based on our statutory duties and the evidence gathered over the year from local people we had spoken to. We are committed to enabling local people to be able to influence the delivery and design of services, so the intelligence gathered is used to determine the main areas of work we focus on.

**These are some of the priorities we took on for 2019/20:**

- Continued to providing a free confidential information and signposting service
- Domiciliary Care Project
- Developing on the recommendations from our GP project
- Undertaking an independent evaluation of a social prescribing pilot, in preparation for the full role out of this initiative across all three GP networks in the borough
- Continued to represent and champion the voices of Barking and Dagenham at relevant statutory bodies
- Continued to raise our profile through pop-up engagement events across the borough, along with a strong social and traditional media presence and involvement with ward and borough-wide events
- Responded to the themes that emerge through the year
- Undertaking of quarterly analysis of views that people have shared with us and then using this information to share and challenge when needed, with commissioners, service providers and relevant stakeholders.
- Proactively respond to other areas of concern that arise throughout the year.



 We are undertaking an independent evaluation of a social prescribing pilot, in preparation for the full role out of this initiative across all three GP networks in the borough



# About us

Healthwatches are an independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share their views with those who have the power to make change happen. We also share them with Healthwatch England, the national body, to help improve the quality of services across the country. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services that are available locally.

**Our sole purpose is to help make health and care better for people.**

In summary, local Healthwatch is here to:

- help people find out about local health and social care services
- listen to what people think of services
- help improve the quality of services by letting those running services and the government know what people want from health and care
- encourage people running services to involve people in changes to care

Everything that Healthwatch Barking & Dagenham does brings the voice and influence of local people to the development and delivery of local services; putting local people at the heart of decision making processes.



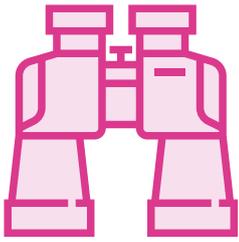
**Elspeth Paisley**  
Manager



**Manisha Modhvadia**  
Officer



**Richard Vann**  
Officer



## 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 that we do

**Website:** [www.healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk)

**Twitter:** @healthwatchbd

**Facebook:** [Facebook.com/healthwatch.bd](https://www.facebook.com/healthwatch.bd)

# 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



### 21 volunteers

including our board, helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 800 hours of their time.

We employed

### 3 staff

## Supporting people



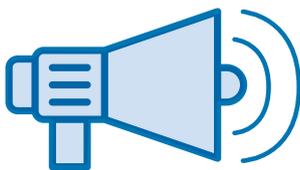
### 389 people

accessed our advice and information service with questions about local support.

### World Mental Health Day

We organised a media campaign on World Mental Health Day, providing information and advice throughout the day.

## Reaching out



### 2,452 people

engaged with us this year.

### 39 pop-up sessions

to engage with the local community.

### 180 households

supported during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We've had 1544 followers on Twitter, and 3407 people visiting our website.

We attended and held various stands at local events such as the Young Peoples Parade and the One Borough Day.

We undertook a project that looked at interpreting and translating services in GP practices and made recommendations to the Clinical Commissioning Group about improvements people would like to see with the service.

# How we've made a difference

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Speaking up about your experiences of health and social care services is the first step to change.

Take a look at how your views have helped make a difference to the care and support people receive in Barking and Dagenham.

### Supporting people during COVID-19

BDCAN is a partnership between the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and BD Collective. Our host organisation LifeLine Projects lead on delivering crucial services to residents of Valence and Becontree wards, working with the support of LifeLine Church, Harmony Christian Centre, Bethel Church and Community Resources. We were glad to be coordinating this piece of work on behalf of our organisation.

We received 180 referrals. The locality team supported households with doorstep drop-offs of food and care packages, medicines and top-ups of electric keys.

In addition to this, we also offered a befriending service - a friendly phone call to residents to see how people are doing. While residents might not always take us up on the offer, we've found that when we do get to speak to them, they're always very appreciative of the contact and just happy to have someone to talk to.

The conversations included anything from a relaxed chat and a catch-up about recent TV shows, to how they're coping with lockdown and their health and wellbeing. In some cases, we have been able to refer people on to other specialist services to ensure they get the support they need.



At times, we heard that our team members are the only people a resident has spoken to in over a week, and yet they are reluctant to identify themselves as being lonely. We know it can be hard for some people to reach out and ask for help, and there are some that might not consider it even an issue and just 'keep on keeping on' - but loneliness can affect any one of us, even when we're surrounded by friends and family.



## Translating and interpreting services

Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (BHR) Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) currently commission Interpreting Services and British Sign Language (BSL) services on behalf of GP practices across the three boroughs. The service is currently provided by 'Big Word' and offers a mixture of face-to-face and telephone interpreting services along with BSL translation services.

Within the new contract, there is a desire to include video translating. Given the diverse population in East London, the translation service in primary care is a key factor for ensuring that people get the right support early on and they are treated in the community where possible and appropriate.

BHR CCG proposed a targeted eight-week engagement, involving consultation with community groups who represent the current and potential users of the interpreting

service. BHR CCG asked Healthwatch to carry out this work.

Our findings included:

- The majority of people who may need these services were unaware of them.
- Patients who had used the service found that consultation times need to be longer when interpreting services are being accessed.
- Half of the women we spoke with said they took their child with them to the doctors to interpret.
- The majority of the people we spoke with thought that video interpreting was a good idea.

Our recommendations were based on these findings and will be used by the CCG to inform their decisions about the future of interpreting services.



## Independent evaluation of social prescribing pilot

We undertook an independent evaluation of a social prescribing project run by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, which ran from October 2018 to May 2019. Our evaluation looked at the experiences of ten clients and three GP practices who were involved in the pilot scheme and included recommendations for improvements and developments.

In conclusion, most of the clients had positive experiences through their pathway; eight people described the intervention as having a positive impact on their wellbeing. After reviewing feedback received from interviews with both the clients and health professionals, the following recommendations were made to be considered when focusing on future models of social prescribing, to improve the outcomes and client experiences:

- Link workers need to be fully trained and aware of the full range of organisations and activities across the council, primary care and voluntary sector (including the faith sector) that can be accessed by local people. This should not be limited to the preference or knowledge of an individual, but must be holistic. Therefore a central system needs to be in place to ensure that up to date information is available, maintained and utilised by those undertaking the role.
- Link workers should be required to have a proactive approach to building both

knowledge and relationships with the whole of the voluntary sector. This should be highlighted in the job description.

- Link workers should always arrange face to face meetings in preference to telephone calls with those who are referred.
- A regular feedback forum should be considered, where GPs, link workers and voluntary sector organisations are able to hear feedback and improve the offer.
- When clients are referred to internal Barking & Dagenham services, clear instructions need to be given about where to meet and clients should be given a telephone number to call should there be any confusion.
- Staff need to be trained in how to spot the holistic needs of clients and be prepared to refer them to services outside of the council.
- Clear information needs to be provided to health professionals about what support is available through social prescribing.
- All staff should take a holistic approach to ensure every aspect of the client's situation is assessed and that appropriate support offered.
- The next stage of the social prescribing programme should be designed to include a client follow up at a relevant period after the initial referral, as part of a continual cycle of monitoring and evaluation.

Our report was well received and has informed the development of the social prescribing service.



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## Domiciliary Care Services

This project focuses on the experiences of people accessing domiciliary care services provided by home care agencies.

The services are for any individuals over 18 that require ongoing care support. For some, this is support after being discharged from hospital.

Healthwatch worked with the local authority to get access to speak with service users and informal carers. They provided a list of people who were interested in talking about their experiences and who gave their permission to be contacted, initially by telephone.

Each person was contacted to explain more about the project and to establish if they wanted to arrange to speak again, either face to face or by telephone.

Of the 39 people contacted, 13 agreed to tell the story of their experiences. To

support each person during the discussion, Healthwatch developed a series of questions to explore the different aspects of their experience and the person could decide how much or little they wanted to discuss.

This work led to an invitation to attend a Social Work Team Manager's meeting to talk through examples of two people's experiences and to hear the views on these from the practitioner's perspectives. The issues that the stories raised were well received by the senior managers in the team and as an outcome, the Operations Director of Social Care in the borough invited Healthwatch to present one of the stories at a borough wide event that looked at local care services across the sector.

Other outcomes and the recommendations for this project haven't been published yet as the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed further consultations that we have planned for this project.

### Involvement of young people

Our relationship with Coventry University London has continued to develop this year, and we welcomed seven students from Coventry University's Health and Social Care course to spend six days with the team. The placement offered students the chance to get involved with local healthcare by finding out what matters to people who live in Barking and Dagenham.

Students were trained as Enter and View representatives and carried out a visit to the sexual health services at Queen's Hospital and Barking Community Hospital. During the visits, the students spoke to service users about their experiences of accessing sexual health services.

One student commented "I really enjoyed the Enter and View visit, I liked the idea that the information gathered might help to improve the service and experiences of others".



Students also attended external meetings, so they can understand the role of Healthwatch and the importance of working together in health and care. Students commented, "Attending this meeting has put things into perspective about what I am studying at university".

### Involvement of people who work in the area

Anyone connected to Barking and Dagenham can get involved with us; it is important to hear from individuals who work or volunteer in the borough and we encourage them to take part in the work we do. Every year we undertake a service review of our service, we ask residents, organisations and those working and volunteering in the local area to let us know how we are doing and how we can better. This also gives an opportunity for everyone to share what areas of work they would like us to consider in the coming year. Enter and Views also allow people working in the borough or accessing services to give feedback.





### Work experience students

This year we have offered work experience placements to three students from local secondary schools and sixth forms.

#### The views of a work experience student

I've researched and learned about many different topics and I've experienced various different types of views and opinions in person and through the internet. I've also gained an abundance of skills and information which will definitely help me in the future when I start to work.

Through this work experience placement, I've learned to:

- Write reports correctly from the view of a young person
- Formally and politely speak to people on a telephone call
- Be more confident

- Share my views and opinions more comfortably
- Interact with people I've never engaged with

I've enjoyed my experience and I believe that this was the best work experience I could have obtained. My mentors were filled with so much knowledge and taught me well about the organisation Healthwatch. All the staff who worked in the Lifeline House treated me with great care and were all so kind to me. I was able to get involved in diverse and interesting conversations between parents about health and social care while also being able to hear their views, opinions and experiences. Being at Healthwatch has vastly expanded my knowledge health and social care and the way I think of it.

## Access to GPs

We continued to receive feedback from the community about accessing GP services. This year, we continued to work with the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to improve access to GP services. We have met with the Chair of the Barking and Dagenham CCG and discussed our recommendations from our report.

The CCG welcomed the findings and we began to discuss solutions and ways forward in improving access to services for local people. We also met with Primary Care Network Directors to talk about the importance of communication and patient access. The coronavirus pandemic has meant that the way services have been



delivered have changed. This has affected the focus of the GP project and we are seeking the views of individuals who have accessed primary care during this time. We will use the evidence to work with GPs with a solution-focused approach.

## Our visit to the Tenants and Residents Group

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham visit each of the 17 wards in the local borough - an opportunity to reach out, engage with and provide advice and support to as many people who want to, from a diverse variety of backgrounds and cultures.

We visited a tenants and residents group in Barking, who invited Healthwatch to present information about who we are and the role we carry out in the borough.

It was an opportunity for the residents to be informed directly; to ask questions and describe experiences concerning specific

issues that affect their access to health care services in that part of the borough.

Healthwatch representatives spoke about the areas of work the organisation carries out and asked for individuals in the group to give their views for a survey of information that fed into a bigger consultation about the shape and delivery of services they would like to see in the future.

Over 60 people gave their views and many provided their personal contact information to receive updates about the local health care issues Healthwatch focus on or to enquire about how they might get more involved.

## Barking & Dagenham Youth Parade

Healthwatch had a stand at the annual celebration of youth and youth culture in the borough. We provided the opportunity to engage with young people, their friends and parents.

To encourage people to share their feedback with us, we used our own pop-up stand decorated with balloons to highlight the message about changes to the NHS organ donation system.

With the help and support of our wonderful volunteers, we had a pharmacist and a nurse on the stand, who carried out health checks for people.

We also had the support of a First Aid Paramedic Practitioner who carried out



demonstrations of how to do life-saving CPR techniques, with the help of a model manikin. 43 people engaged with Healthwatch on the day.



## 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.healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk)

**Telephone:** 0800 298 5331

**Email:** [info@healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk)

With the help and support of our wonderful volunteers, we had a pharmacist and a nurse on the stand, who carried out health checks for people.



**Long**

**Term**

**Plan**

**#WhatWouldYouDo**

## Highlights



337 people  
shared their views  
with us.



We held four focus  
groups reaching  
different communities  
across Barking and  
Dagenham.



We  
attended 6  
community events  
to seek views from  
residents.

### NHS Long Term Plan

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

The outcomes from the Barking & Dagenham Long Term Plan report were used to collaboratively influence the plans of the East London Healthcare Partnership.

Locally, we shared the findings with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Chair emphasised that local providers of primary care should be using the findings to shape their plans.

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham have gone on to champion the experiences of local people in the areas of primary care, prevention and personalisation when accessing GP services, Interpreting Services, Urgent Care in the Community and Domiciliary Care Services.

In addition, working in partnership with neighbouring Healthwatches, the scrutiny of changes made by the local hospital trust to the provision of Chemotherapy services has been extended.

The work from our findings of the Long Term Plan report is ongoing and will continue to develop as local providers plan to implement changes to the way their services can be delivered.

# Helping you find the answers

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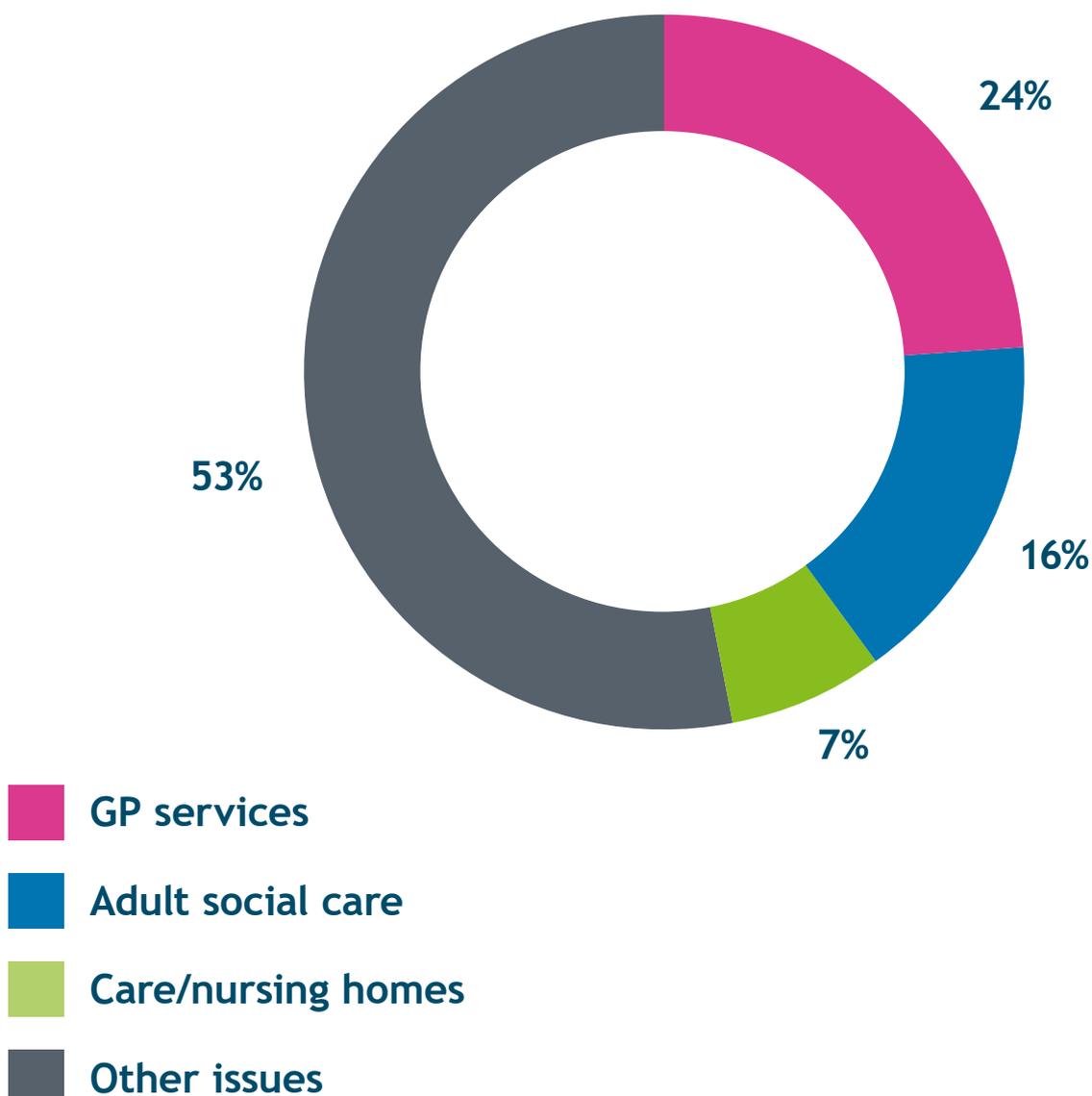


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped 389 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.



## Case study: World Mental Health Day #TalkAboutIt campaign

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham asked Healthwatch to take the lead on spreading the message to #TalkAboutIt on World Mental Health Day this year.

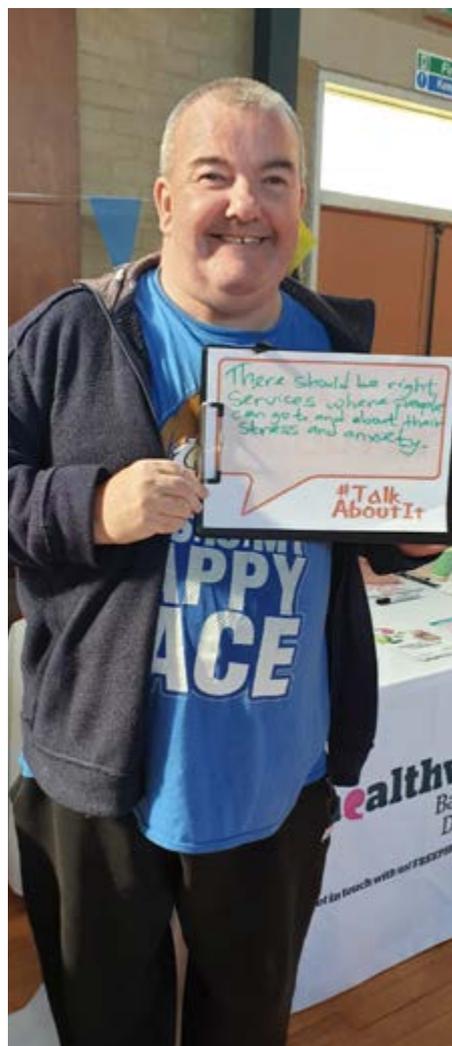
The voluntary sector, employers, GPs, local hospitals, schools and faith groups were invited to join in the social media and Twitter storm designed to get the community talking about this year's theme of suicide prevention.

The campaign was hosted by Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham, with expertise provided on the day by the Mental Health Foundation's THRIVE team. The hashtag for the day was #TalkAboutIt, a hashtag already associated with a mental health theme

through its use by grime artist Nick Brewer, who is an ambassador for Anxiety UK. Nick also took part in the social media campaign.

We designed a suite of graphics to be used across all media outlets, providing a consistency of the message across the day. This was freely shared with all organisations who wanted to join in with the campaign. Local GPs and the council also shared the message across the borough on their television screens.

The #TalkAboutIt hashtag was used 421 times by a variety of local organisations, including Healthwatch and its associated partners. We would like to thank all the organisations who took the time to support the campaign.





## Daniel

Daniel contacted Healthwatch because he was concerned about his brother's appointment at the hospital. He lives outside the area and wasn't able to support his brother to get him where he needed to go. He didn't know who or where to contact in Barking and Dagenham to find assistance.

Healthwatch gave him the contact details for the local authority helpline and the department at the local hospital where his brother was due to visit. Daniel later contacted Healthwatch to thank the staff member for their help.



## Lynne

Lynne contacted Healthwatch by email during the COVID-19 lockdown. She was in pain and incapacitated due to an ongoing hip problem. She had tried to contact her consultant who is based in a hospital outside the borough and was frustrated at not being able to contact him quickly. Due to her health issue, Lynne was worried that she would be unable to get around and do things for herself, including getting necessities. She was struggling to cope. It became apparent that she needed support to get food and other essential items. We provided her details of a local initiative called BDCAN, which supports the most vulnerable residents with getting shopping and other essential needs.



### Contact us to get the information you need

If you have a query about a health or 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.

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# Meet the Board

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**Our board consists of local residents, healthcare professionals and community leaders. Their unique and valued set of skills helps to inform Healthwatch about the reality and experiences that people face when accessing local health and care services.**

They use their local knowledge and experience to focus on issues that the Healthwatch team should be working towards.

The Board meets quarterly with the Healthwatch team. These meetings are open to members of the public.

Between meetings, the Healthwatch team keeps in contact with each member; to listen to any health or care related feedback they have heard from members of the community. This intelligence forms the basis for discussions and items of work that the board want Healthwatch to pursue.



**Daniel Singleton**  
Interim Chair



**Robert Calderia**  
Member



**Kim Blyth**  
Member



**Barbara Sawyer**  
Member



**Val Shaw**  
Member



**Zahra Ibrahim**  
Member

# Our volunteers

At Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham we are supported by 21 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working and what they would like to see improved 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
- Helped with data input and researching

## Volunteers support the team to engage with over 500 residents

To ensure that we are constantly improving and delivering a good service, we undertake an annual survey that aims to find out:

- If people have heard of Healthwatch and are aware of the signposting service we offer
- If they have used our service and what the outcome was
- How we can do better
- What areas of health and social care we should look at in the future

Thanks to the hard work of our group of volunteers, we engaged with over 500 individuals. Our volunteers visited colleges, spoke to family and friends and used their connections to encourage local people to take part and share their views.

Our volunteers had an opportunity to share what they thought should be included in the Long Term Plan report. The findings from the report assisted us in deciding where to focus our time and resources and what areas of health and care are causes for concern.

We could not do what we do without the support of our amazing volunteers. Meet some of the team and hear what they get up to.

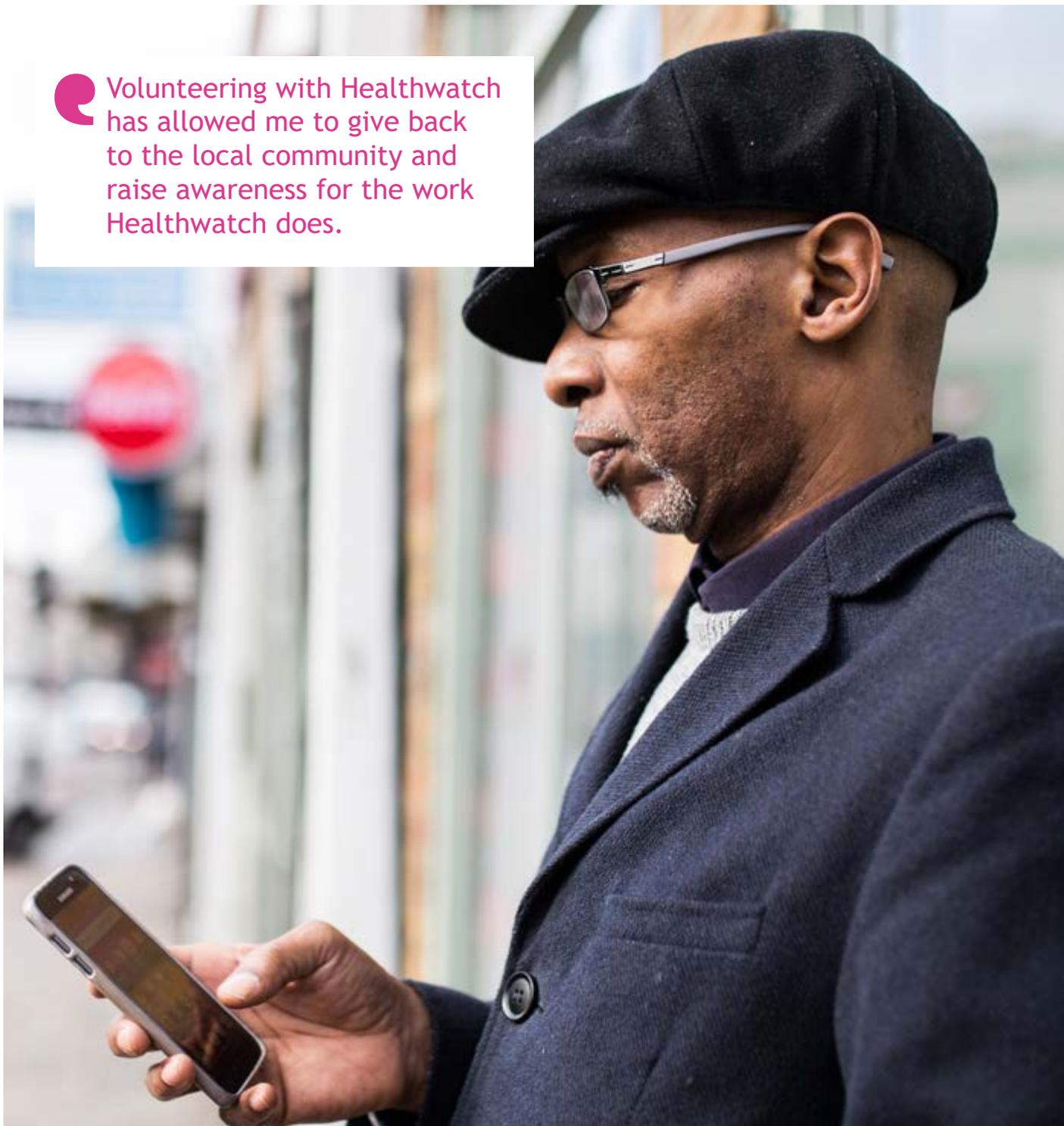
## Ola

"I found out about Healthwatch at an event where they had a stand. I have spare time and wanted to get involved in helping to improve local services. I am now also studying and my volunteering role has influenced what I write about for my essays. The team at my local Healthwatch are also a great support."

## Joanna

"Volunteering with Healthwatch has allowed me to give back to the local community and raise awareness for the work Healthwatch does. I have gained relevant experience and improved my communication and research skills."

Volunteering with Healthwatch has allowed me to give back to the local community and raise awareness for the work Healthwatch does.



### 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 with us.

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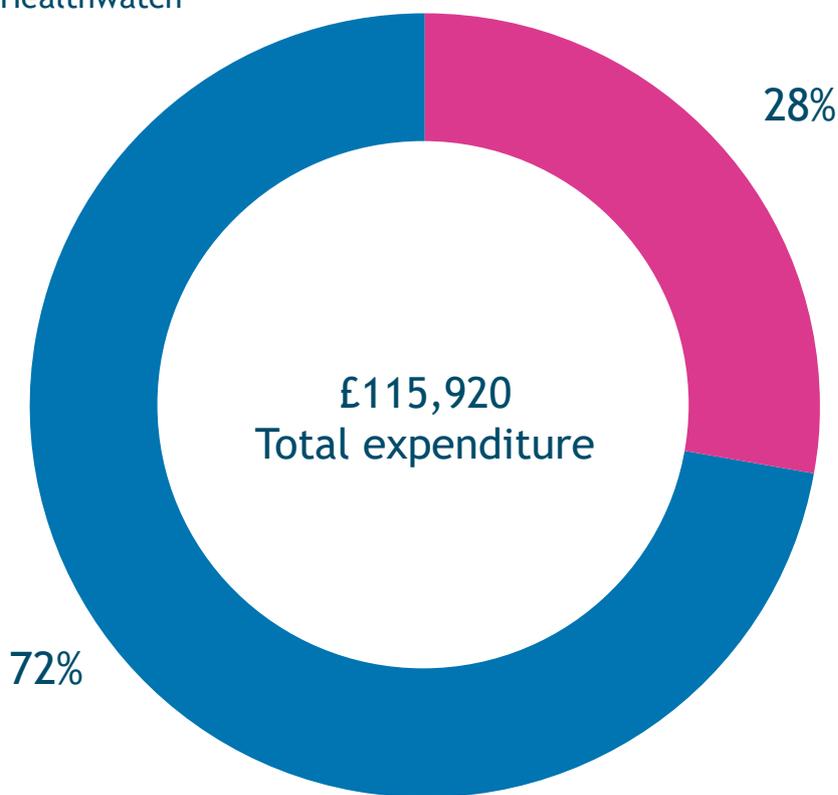
# Finances

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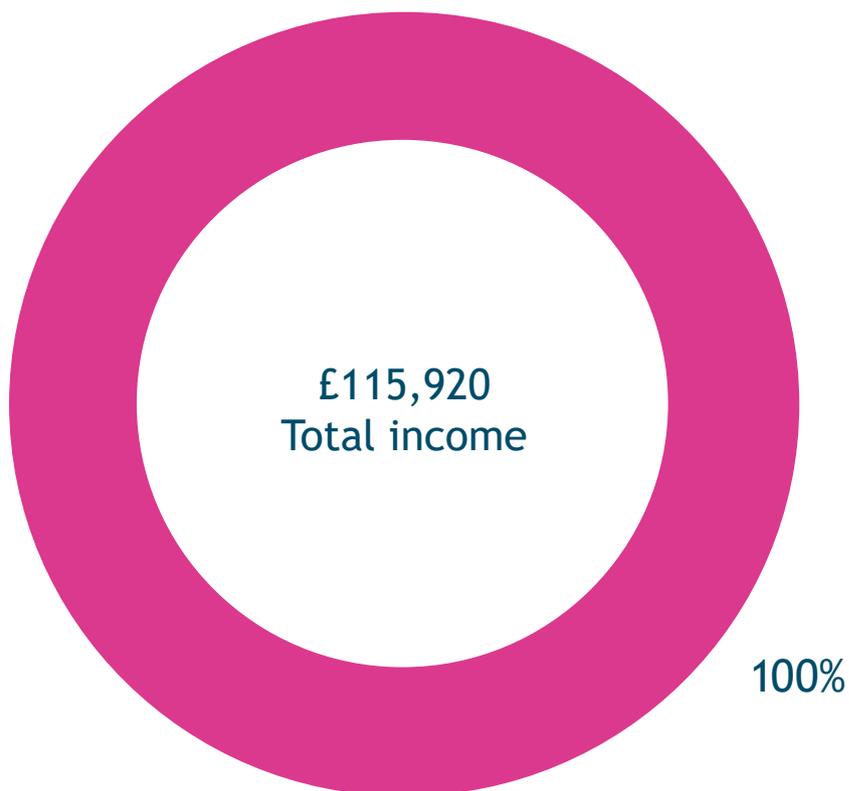


We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20, we spent £115,920.

- How much it costs to run our Healthwatch (inc. operational costs)
- Staff costs



- Funding received from local authority



# Our plans for next year

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Our plans for the forthcoming year are determined by feedback we have received from the local community and based on our statutory duties.

- Exploring new ways of engaging with the public
- Continuation of domiciliary care project
- Continuation of access to GP services
- Experiences of the local community accessing health and care during the COVID-19 lockdown
- Continue to represent the views of local people on relevant boards
- Engagement sessions across the borough
- Recruitment of local people to represent Healthwatch
- Respond to themes that emerge throughout the year



# Thank you

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



# Contact Us

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## Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham

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Charity number 1084634

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