



Speaking up for better care

Healthwatch Derby annual report 2025/2026

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Acting Chief Executive
Chris McCann

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“The NHS plays a vital role in our lives, and we know it faces real challenges. Listening to people’s thoughts about their care is one of the best ways to improve services. Every comment, concern, and compliment helps health and care professionals see what works and what needs to change, so care can be safer and better for everyone.

“We want to say a heartfelt thanks to all the local people who have taken the time to share their experiences, and to the health and social care professionals who have listened and acted on that feedback. Your commitment has helped make a real difference for our community.”

A message from our chair

As Chair of the Board, I am pleased to reflect on another year of dedicated work by Healthwatch Derby to ensure that the voices of local people are heard and acted upon.

We have continued to listen to residents from across Derby's diverse communities, gathering valuable insight into their experiences of health and social care services. This has helped decision-makers better understand what is working well, where improvements are needed, and how services can be shaped around the needs of the people who use them. I am particularly proud of our commitment to reaching those whose voices are often least heard. Through targeted engagement, community partnerships and our information and signposting service, we have continued to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to share their experiences and influence change.

This year has also brought significant uncertainty, following the Government's decision to abolish Healthwatch organisations in England. While the details and timescales for these changes are still emerging, it is clear the transition will present challenges for local organisations, partners and communities alike. At a time when independent public feedback and scrutiny remain essential, it is important that the voice of local people continues to be represented effectively within future arrangements.

Thank you to everyone who has shared their experiences with us during the year and to our dedicated team who make our work possible. Whatever changes lie ahead, the commitment to ensuring that people's voices shape health and care services in Derby for the better remains as important as ever.



Chair
Nav Sahota



Through targeted engagement, community partnerships and our information and signposting service, we have continued to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to share their experiences and influence change.

About us

Healthwatch Derby is your local health and social care champion.

We ensure that NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

Ensuring the voices of the seldom heard and most vulnerable, and not just those that shout the loudest, are included in order to tackle inequalities, empower the community and help deliver services that meet people's needs.



Our mission

Healthwatch Derby is a strong independent community champion giving local people a voice that improves and enhances health and social care provision on behalf of the people of Derby.



Our values are:

Inclusive: Listening to people and making sure their voices are heard and that everyone is included in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.

Credible: Being honest, open and accountable for what we say and what we do – using good quality local intelligence and data to challenge assumptions and raise awareness of the quality of services.

Influential: Sharing different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.

Collaborative: We work with care providers, Government and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.

Our year in numbers

In 2025/2026 we supported more than 16300 people to have their say and get information about their care. We employed 7 staff and our work was supported by 197 volunteers.



Reaching out:

8027 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

8254 people came to us for clear advice and information on topics such as how to complain about GP access or NHS services and how to access NHS dental provision.



Championing your voice:

We published 3 reports about the improvements people would like to see in areas like blood clinics, autism services for women and girls and GP access.

At the time of writing our most popular report was our Phlebotomy (blood test clinics) report 2025, highlighting people's struggles in accessing phlebotomy services.



Statutory funding:

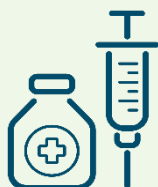
We're funded by Derby City Council. In 2025/2026 we received £235,000 which is the same as last year.

A year of making a difference

Over the year we've been out and about in the community listening to your stories, engaging with partners and working to improve care in Derby. Here are a few highlights.

Spring

Derby residents told us of their issues in accessing phlebotomy (blood clinics) services in the City.



Along with Healthwatch Derbyshire, we listened to people's experiences of cervical screening across Derbyshire and in the City.



Summer

We helped the Integrated Care Board engagement into women's health services.



We undertook a project with carers to help provide better understanding of how people become a carer and what and where support is available.

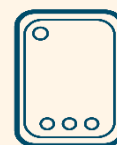


Autumn

We began a project about women and girls' experiences of accessing autism services.



We continued working with Team Up, calling some of those people who have accessed Team Up services or support in their home.



Winter

We began to develop a Healthwatch Derby app for local people to help them find local services and advice.



We started a project into seeing whether the changes to accessing GP services were leading to improvements.



Working together for change

We've worked with neighbouring Healthwatch Derbyshire to ensure people's experiences of care in Derby and Derbyshire are heard at the Integrated Care System (ICS) level, and they influence decisions made about services at Joined Up Care Derbyshire (JUCD).

This year, we've worked with Healthwatch Derbyshire across Derby and Derbyshire to achieve the following:



A collaborative network of local Healthwatch:

We have worked to ensure that the voices of local people's experiences are at the forefront of thinking when the Integrated Care Board (ICB) System Quality Group meetings take place. Helping the professionals stay focused on how the quality of service impacts real people when evaluating performance and making decisions across the system.



A big conversation:

We worked with Healthwatch Derbyshire and the JUCD Cancer Prevention Group. We learned from over 300 people about their experiences of cervical screening. We wanted to understand what encourages people to attend, what barriers and challenges they faced and what changes could be made to improve uptake.

The findings were shared with NHS Derby and Derbyshire ICB, NHS England, Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council.



Building strong relationships to achieve more:

With the changes to ICB boundaries meaning Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire will all be covered by one ICS. We met with other local Healthwatch across the new footprint to find how best to work together in the coming year to ensure patient voice and experience is represented at ICB level in the new structure and in the future. We look forward to continuing to collaborate to make care better.

We've also summarised some of our other outcomes achieved this year in the Statutory Statements section at the end of this report.

Making a difference in the community

We bring people's experiences to healthcare professionals and decision-makers, using their feedback to shape services and improve care over time. Here are some examples of our work in Derby City this year:



Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

Hearing personal experiences and their impact on people's lives helps services better understand the issues people face.

We continue to raise public concerns with the ICS that improvements to NHS dentistry in Derby are required urgently. Local people struggle to find NHS provision in the City. We currently have one of the highest levels of tooth decay in under 5s in the country. We have had minor improvements to urgent care and some specialist provision, but more needs to be done.



Getting services to involve the public

By involving local people, services help improve care for everyone.

We provide forums and access to networks to involve local people the opportunity to feed into the local health and social care system. An example of this is the Healthwatch Derby Reference Group. This provides the opportunity for local people to explain their experiences and needs to the service providers and commissioners directly.



Improving care over time

Change takes time. We work behind the scenes with services to consistently raise issues and bring about change.

In 2019, we undertook a project looking at sexual health services available across the City. We conducted interviews and a survey to learn and understand about people's experiences. Thanks to what people shared, we were able to give valuable insight to Derbyshire Community Health Services (DCHS) Integrated Sexual Health Service (ICHS). This led to improvements in access, development of online services, postal screening, improved waiting times, Increased staffing levels and improved pathways.

Listening to your experiences

Services can't improve if they don't know what's wrong. Your experiences shine a light on issues that may otherwise go unnoticed.

This year, we've listened to feedback from all areas of our community. People's experiences of care help us know what's working and what isn't, so we can give feedback on services and help them improve.



Listening to people's voice about phlebotomy (blood clinics) services In Derby City

Last year, we undertook a survey to understand local people's experiences of phlebotomy services across the City.

As most areas of medicine rely on diagnostic testing, the service is integral to people's overall health. Therefore, the decision was taken to take a closer look and ask recent service users what their experience of the service was.

What did we do

We launched a survey and spoke to 102 recent users of blood clinics in Derby to find out what they were saying.

Key things we heard:



70%

said it was easy to make appointments.

95%

stated the staff were professional and welcoming.

85%

made appointments through Swiftqueue online.

Our work showed that most users said the service was good. However, there were some issues highlighted for the elderly and those who had hearing or sight impairments or for those whose first language was not English. There were also some issues with the seating at Royal Derby Hospital.

What difference did this make?

The service providers:

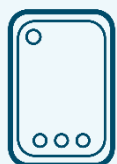
- increased capacity and flexibility
- are working with Swiftqueue to improve accessibility issues for non-English speakers, the Elderly and those with Impairments
- have added seating at the clinic at Royal Derby Hospital.

GP Practice Improvements 2026

Since October 2025, patients should have been able to request GP appointments and access other services online throughout the day rather than calling their surgery or visiting in person.

The purpose of this project was to see whether these developments have made a positive change to the experience of Derby residents and then share this feedback with providers, commissioners, partner organisations and other health and social care services to improve understanding, learning and development.

Key things we heard:



76%

of respondents told us they had tried booking appointments online.

57%

of respondents said they had not noticed any improvement when trying to make an appointment.



"Online system only available during surgery hours so still difficult when work full time"

The survey was only based on a small sample and only a couple of months after the service changes were implemented. However, it does highlight the need for better communication about service availability, online services to be available out of hours and more flexibility of appointment options required.

What difference did this make?

Our report has been shared with the GP practices across the City and with the commissioners of the services Joined Up Care Derbyshire (JUCD).

The findings have helped with understanding of what is working and what is not and discussions are underway to improve the service and create better access across the City.

Hearing from all communities

We're here for all residents of Derby. That's why, over the past year, we've worked hard to reach out to those communities whose voices may go unheard.

Every member of the community should have the chance to share their story and play a part in shaping services to meet their needs.

This year, we have reached different communities by:

- undertaking a project with carers to understand and highlight the experiences they go through better and
- Working with autistic women and girls to understand their experiences and needs..



Improving understanding of carers

We invited unpaid carers to tell us their stories.

People told us about how many of them seemed to just become carers, looking after a loved one. In many cases, they were overwhelmed dealing with the system, the level of care they needed to provide, the lack of information or support they had or did not realise was available to them.

What difference did this make?

The stories were shared across the system and helped provide insight and the importance of using simple plain language which is understood by those who are not professionals working in a service. The stories are available on our website and links to carers help and resources available with Derby City Council.

Understanding autistic women and girls in Derby

We spoke with women and girls who had been given a diagnosis of autism and/or ADHD.

The report highlights the needs that more research is required as most of the previous research has been based on males. What was clear that it is imperative that Early recognition and diagnosis is key. Better communication and understanding by professionals and better community support is required.

What difference did this make?

The report has created a discussion across the local system. An acceptance that more needs to be done and, as our report is a brief snapshot, a more in-depth piece of work needs to follow on.

Information and signposting

When you're struggling to find an NHS dentist, looking for help about how to make a complaint, or need advice about a good care home for a loved one – we're your first port of call.

This year 8254 people have reached out to us for advice, support or help finding services. These conversations also help us to understand where, and how, your care can be made better.

This year, we've helped people by:

- Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Supporting people to look after their health
- Signposting people to additional support services



How we provide people with advice and information

Finding the right care or support can be worrying and stressful. There are a number of organisations that can provide help, but some people don't know where to look.

We can help people access the advice and information they need.

You can come to us for advice and information in a number of ways including:

- Specific advice and information online
- Our contact us form on our website
- At community events
- Promoting helpful services across our social media channels
- Over the phone
- Cartoons to help find services

Dental care



I was struggling to find a dentist for my family after we had moved to the area. I had tried 111 but all the dentists I had tried had were not taking NHS. Healthwatch Derby provided me with a couple of phone numbers and I was able to register.
Thank you Healthwatch Derby.
Jane

Cartoons: Winter support

Many people are often at a loss at where to go to get help for their health needs over winter. To help combat this issue, we developed some cartoons with advice to show people where they can go to access support out of hours, including NHS111, A&E or their local pharmacy. These are friendly way of showing local people which services are most appropriate for their needs.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjlpfpkBsVY>



Showcasing volunteer impact

Our fantastic volunteers have given 280 days to support our work. Thanks to their dedication to improving care, we can better understand what is working and what needs improving in our community.

This year, our volunteers:

- Visited communities to promote our work
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views
- Carried out Enter and View visits to local services to help them improve



Showcasing volunteer impact

From finding out what residents think to helping raise awareness, our volunteers have championed community concerns to improve care.

Board Members,

We have a dedicated team of volunteer board members who give their time and expertise up to provide governance to Healthwatch Derby. They provide support in the ongoing day to day operations, strategy and direction as well as support for staff whilst ensuring that everything the organisation does is with what is best for the people of Derby City in mind.

Enter and View

Enter and View is the opportunity for staff and volunteers to visit health and social care premises, observe the nature and quality of care and to collect views from service users, visitors and staff members at the point of service delivery. This is a key part of our work programme. Healthwatch Derby uses these evidence-based findings to report associated recommendations and evidence of best practice to the local community and relevant partners, including CQC, Derby City Council, NHS commissioners, quality assurers, Healthwatch England and any other relevant partners.

Mystery Shoppers

Healthwatchers and Healthwatch Champions can also tell us more about their experiences by getting involved in the Mystery Shopper programme or completing a 'One day at a time' diary. Mystery Shopper involves completing a short survey about their observations and experiences following appointments at GP surgeries, hospitals, dentists and opticians and visits to pharmacies. The diary is for anybody using health and social care services on a regular basis – for example, care at home, regular GP or outpatients' visits or a course of treatment – whether separate or consecutive days, to tell us more about their experiences than the Mystery Shopper surveys allow. We are looking at new ways of involving volunteers more in the future

Be part of the change

If you've felt inspired to become a volunteer, contact us today and find out how you can be part of the change. Or download our new app at Google Play or the Apple App Store..



www.healthwatchderby.co.uk

01332 643988

info@healthwatchderby.co.uk

Finance and future priorities

We receive funding from Derby City Council under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to help us do our work.

Our income and expenditure:

Income		Expenditure	
Derby City Council	£214,000	Expenditure on pay	£174,643
Additional income	£21,000	Non-pay expenditure	£11,758
		Office and management fee	£39,001
Total income	£235,000	Total Expenditure	£225,402

Additional income is broken down into:

- £21,000 received from Derby City Council for office support

Finance and future priorities

Over the next year, we will keep reaching out to every part of society, especially people in the most deprived areas, so that those in power hear their views and experiences.

We will also work together with partners and our local Integrated Care System to help develop an NHS culture where, at every level, staff strive to listen and learn from patients to make care better.

Our top three priorities for the next year are:

1. A project looking at people's experiences of local pharmacy services.
2. A project focussing on an area of social care
3. We are undertaking a project to reach out to about what screening services are available locally and identify if there are any barriers to uptake.

Statutory statements

Healthwatch Derby

The Council House

Corporation Street

Derby DE1 2FS

Company Registration Number: 8233546

Healthwatch Derby 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 11 members who work voluntarily to provide direction, oversight, and scrutiny of our activities.

Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2025/26, the Board met 6 times and made decisions on matters such as undertaking the phlebotomy report and the Derby autistic women and girls report. We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible can provide us with insight into their experience of using services.

During 2025/26, we have been available by phone and email, provided a web form on our website and through social media, and attended meetings of community groups and forums.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website <https://www.healthwatchderby.co.uk> and our new Healthwatch Derby app.

Statutory statements

Responses to recommendations

We had no providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to the Healthwatch England Committee, so there were no resulting reviews or investigations.

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insights and experiences shared with us.

For example, in our local authority area, we take information to the Health and Wellbeing Board, Place Partnership Board and Safeguarding Board.. We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers at Joined Up Care Derbyshire ICS along with Healthwatch Derbyshire – for example, through the Integrated Care Partnership.

We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Derby is represented on the Derby City Health and Wellbeing Board by Nav Sahota (Chair), and James Moore (CEO).

During 2025/26, our representative has effectively carried out this role by attending meetings and presenting the phlebotomy report..

Healthwatch Derby is represented on Derbyshire Integrated Care Partnership by James Moore who also is a member of the Derby City Place Partnership Board.

Statutory statements

Enter and View

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Florence Nightingale Community Hospital	Combining UHDB's PLACE and our Enter and View visits looking at facilities and overall patient experience and annual PLACE	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient experience improved.
Royal Derby Hospital	As above	As above
- Florence Nightingale Community Hospital - Royal Derby Hospital - Queens Hospital Burton	Annual PLACE as experienced patient representatives	Contributed to findings on the day to enable a report to be written by the trust
- Carsington Unit - Kingsway Hospital - Radbourn Unit - Derwent Unit - Bluebell Ward	As above	Contributed to findings on the day to enable a report to be written by the trust
Clova House	Part of our social care Enter and View programme	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service followed up on these and resident, staff and visitor experience improved.

2025 – 2026 Outcomes

Project/activity	Outcomes achieved
Phlebotomy(blood clinics) report	Led to positive changes , more seating provided in waiting areas, improvements to capacity of bookings,. And a commitment for the service provider to improve accessibility issues highlighted .
Carers project	Raised awareness of what it is like to be a carer, helped signpost new and current carers to help and support available.
Autistic women and girls report	Helped understanding and has begun discussions across the system to understand needs better.

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