



Annual Report 2024–2025

Unlocking the power of people-driven care

Healthwatch Trafford

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"The impact that local Healthwatch have is vitally important. Healthwatch are empowering their communities to share their experiences. They're changing the health and care landscape and making sure that people's views are central to making care better and tackling health inequalities."

Louise Ansari, Chief Executive, Healthwatch England

A message from our Chair

In 2024/5, we have reached more people than ever before, particularly those who experience health inequalities.

Over recent times, we have had a keen focus on our young people and the year under review was no different as we reviewed the care pathway to Child and Adolescent mental health services across the 10 Greater Manchester boroughs, as well as the vaping habits of the over 13s across Trafford.

Not only did we work with Trafford's Public Health Team on vaping, but we also conducted a project in collaboration with them on people's experiences of accessing sexual health and information services.

Our Healthwatch 100 surveys provide us with a range of information on people's views of local health and care services in Trafford. When combined with feedback from our many community events, this gives us a good understanding of where we need to focus our efforts in developing our work plans.

Keeping abreast of the many changes in health and care over the past year has been challenging, but we are lucky in that we are included on many Boards and Committees where there is the opportunity to exchange views for the benefit of all.

This report outlines some of the differences we have made because of our work. We are core members of the Trafford Locality Board, and this allows us a regular opportunity to feed back on issues which we believe are both important and necessary. Indeed, some of our historic reports surface periodically, which serves to demonstrate that not all our achievements can be measured in a single year!

We remain part of the Greater Manchester network of 10 Healthwatch. We have a governance arrangement which allows us all to share ideas, work plans and strategies. We have been fortunate in being funded by the Integrated Care Board to enter into this arrangement, whilst individual Healthwatch remain funded by their local Councils.

We regularly meet with ICB members and attend many of their meetings, including the Integrated Care Partnership, which offers the opportunity to look at the wider perspective related to the health of our population and to various quality and performance groups.



We have well-established links with our VCFSE sector and the emerging neighbourhood's infrastructure. This will prove invaluable as we look ahead to 2025/26, when we hope to continue our work with children and young people in Trafford.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Heather Fairfield'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a thin, curved line that underlines it.

Heather Fairfield Chair, Healthwatch Trafford

About us

Healthwatch Trafford is your local health and social care champion.

If you use health services or need care, we want to hear about your experiences. We have the power to make sure NHS and social care leaders listen to your feedback and improve standards of care. We can also help you find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

To bring closer the day when everyone gets the care they need.



Our mission

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



Our values are:

Equity: We're compassionate and inclusive. We build strong connections and empower the communities we serve.

Collaboration: We build internal and external relationships. We communicate clearly and work with partners to amplify our influence.

Impact: We're ambitious about creating change for people and communities. We're accountable to those we serve and hold others to account.

Independence: Our agenda is driven by the public. We're a purposeful, critical friend to decision-makers.

Truth: We work with integrity and honesty, and we speak truth to power.

Our year in numbers

We've supported more than 6000 people to have their say and get information about their care. We currently employ 4 staff (3.4FTE) and our work is supported by 23 volunteers.

Reaching out:



5925 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

18,069 people came to us for clear advice and information on topics such as how to make a complaint and access to NHS dentistry.

Championing your voice:



We published **5** reports about the improvements people would like to see in areas like **Sexual Health Services, Vaping amongst CYP, Pathways to CAMHS** and **Accessible Information Standards**.

Our most popular report was the Vaping Habits of Children & Young People in Trafford, highlighting people's struggles in tackling vaping amongst CYP and understanding the risks involved.

Statutory funding:



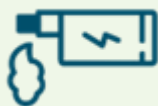
We're funded by Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council. In 2024/25 we received **£135,630**, which is 3.5% more than last year.

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 Trafford. Here are a few highlights.

Spring

We engaged with Children & Young People (CYP), parents and carers and professionals as part of our project on the vaping habits of CYP, giving them the opportunity to share their views on this growing issue.



Our Healthwatch 100: Alcohol Use in Trafford Report contributed to and was referenced multiple times within Trafford Alcohol & Substance Misuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2024/25



Summer

Our volunteers conducted an audit of Trafford Council Adult Social Care web-based information pages. A work plan was implemented as a result making the pages user-centred and inclusively accessible.



Our report on 'The Vaping Habits of Children & Young People' was published and shared with both system leaders and schools across Trafford. It has led to extended education and support in schools about the risks of vaping



Autumn

We ensured seldom heard local voices contributed to shaping health and social care delivery through the Trafford Locality Plan refresh. Issues such as 'Better access to community dentistry service' were included as a result.



The Pathways to CAMHS Report was presented to stakeholders ensuring the voices of CYP, Parent & Carers, commissioners and providers were heard. Measures were initiated to address some of the issues raised.



Winter

Our report on 'Occupational Health Aids & Adaptations' influenced decisions made around the delivery of the One Stop Resource Centre. Recommendations contributed to ensuring the future model for the service will be fit for purpose.

Recommendations from our report on Access to Sexual Health Services now form part of the 2025/26 plan of the Trafford Sexual Health Network. This includes our suggestions to simplify the booking process and address waiting time.

Working together for change

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

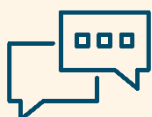
This year, we've worked with 9 Healthwatch across Greater Manchester to achieve the following:

A collaborative network of local Healthwatch:



We have progressed into the second year of our partnership agreement with the ICS, as part of a network of 10 local Healthwatch to amplify the voices of people across the region. We've contributed to regional strategies, produced GM-wide reporting, and launched shared platforms to strengthen our insight. Our representative ensures lived experience is heard and influences decisions across the ICS.

Voices from our communities:



We listened to thousands of people across Greater Manchester on topics like ADHD, Menopause, Pharmacy, Urgent Care and CAMHS. These insights were shared with the ICS and used to inform strategy, consultations, and influence service design. By working together across the region, we've made sure the experiences of individuals and communities are central to how health and care services are planned and delivered.

Building strong relationships to achieve more:



In November, Healthwatch in Greater Manchester hosted a conference, bringing together ICS leaders, Healthwatch staff, the VCFSE sector and communities. We presented our work across the network, the importance of Healthwatch work and explored new ways of working, including stronger patient representation and co-production at ICS level.

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 Trafford 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.

Our report on Young People's Digital Mental Health Support helped to shape the project plan of the Young People's Comms & Engagement Task and Finish Group, which was designed to support the delivery of the priorities and outcomes in hearing and listening to children, families, and the workforce about mental well-being.

Getting services to involve the public



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

We presented the Pathways to CAMHS report to the Trafford Children's Commissioning Board in March, where our suggestions, specifically those in relation to the need for interim communication, were well received. This provides us with an opportunity to make the voice of local people heard and for us to influence decisions based on our recommendations.

Improving care over time



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

In 2017 we published a report on Bed Based Intermediate Care. Since then, we have continually advocated for improvements through our representation at strategic forums. In 2024 this report helped to inform a review of intermediate care by Trafford Council; this review is due to be published in 2025. This has ensured focus has remained on key points like whether intermediate care services can provide an integrated nurse-led model (as opposed to the current therapy-led model).

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 health and care help us know what's working and what isn't, so that we can give feedback on services and help them improve or identify examples of best practice.



Listening to your experiences

Boosted support to under 18s for vaping cessation

Last year, we championed the voices of the Trafford community to identify the prevalence of vaping among 13–18 year olds and support currently available for them to stop.

We heard from over 5500 local people about their experiences of vaping and/or smoking. Responses highlighted the need for vaping awareness to encourage prevention and support for cessation.

What did we do?

We surveyed children and young people and parents/carers to investigate the rate of children and young people vaping, how aware they are of the risks and awareness of support to help them stop.

Key things we heard:



81%

of children and young people told us they do not vape and have never tried it. 5% told us they vape regularly.

42%

of children and young people who currently vape are planning to either cut down or stop vaping or are already trying to cut down or stop.



“Most of us know the risks, we just don’t care enough about our lives to do anything about it”

What difference did this make?

Our findings are referenced on Trafford Council’s Public Health webpages and the ‘Vaping Guide’ to support young people to stop vaping. Schools have since reported greater awareness of the risks of vaping, continued rollout of workshops and resources in schools from School Nursing and Early Break teams and subsequently, fewer instances of young people vaping in school. We also alerted schools and parents/carers to the dangers of snus*.

*Snus is an oral smokeless tobacco product which is usually placed behind the upper lip, either in a loose form or in portioned sachets.

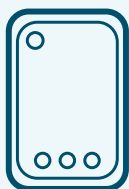
Listening to your experiences

Access and awareness prioritised after feedback on Sexual Health Services

We investigated how and where the people of Trafford accessed sexual health services and information.

In partnership with Trafford Council's Public Health Team, we opened a survey focused on where people look for advice and information on sexual health, where they access care and the quality of their experiences.

Key things we heard:



Respondents were most likely to seek sexual health information either online or speaking to friends.

Some sought information via social media; the most popular platform was Facebook

Sexual Health clinics were the most frequently mentioned of all services. Respondents also told us they were looking for the widest range of advice, care or support from this service.

Most respondents were able to access the services they required, and feedback was largely positive.

Waiting times for Sexual Health clinics was the main barrier to access.

Feedback was generally positive about services, but we also heard concerns regarding difficulties with communication and obtaining appointments



We recommended that waiting times be addressed, for verified sexual health information to be easily accessible online and for booking processes to be simplified.

What difference did this make?

Our recommendations have helped shape Trafford Sexual Health Network's priorities and associated actions for 2025/26. We are pleased to have worked with Public Health to focus on ensuring the right services are in the right places and to raise awareness of sexual health services.

Hearing from all communities

We're here for all residents of Trafford. 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:

- We spoke to 500 people from seldom heard groups as part of engagement for the Trafford Locality Plan Refresh.
- Amongst others, we engaged with and gathered the experiences of unpaid carers, those with a severe mental illness (SMI), those with a learning disability and those with lived experience of care.
- The feedback we receive from residents of Trafford is summarized and included in our quarterly Performance Reports. These reports are submitted to Trafford Locality Board, where they are reviewed and any actions arising are documented.



Hearing from all communities

Improving understanding of the needs of Deaf people in Trafford

We investigated access to health & social care for the Deaf community.

We held a listening session with Trafford Deaf Partnership (TDP) to hear the collective stories of members of the group. 12 people shared comments with us and raised issues around barriers to accessing services; many of these are the same issues previously reported to us, illustrating a lack of change.

What difference did this make?

We shared this feedback with stakeholders and are working with them to identify where and how changes can be made. This includes identifying which strategic forums we can present the findings at, to ensure the Deaf community's voice is heard by those providers and commissioners with the power to action change.

Helping the voices of seldom heard people be heard and included in future plans

We were commissioned to undertake engagement with seldom heard groups in Trafford as part of Trafford Locality Plan Refresh.

We conducted focus groups, interviews and survey work with a variety of seldom heard groups including unpaid carers, people with SMI, people with learning disabilities, minority ethnic groups and the Romany community.

What difference did this make?

The experiences of the people we spoke to were included in the Trafford Locality Plan along with clear commitments from Trafford ICP and partner agencies to both work towards addressing identified issues such as obesity in 4-5 / 10-11-year-olds, levels of community nursing, reduced rate of permanent admissions to residential and nursing care and effectively measuring the success of this.

Information and signposting

Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, making a complaint, or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us. This year 18,069 people have reached out to us for advice, support or help finding services.

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



Improving access to information on vaccines

Diane was struggling to find out how to access an alternative COVID vaccine – they had not been able to get help from several other organisations.

Family members had allergies to the regularly available vaccine and they had not been able to find any information about how to access an alternative vaccine. Neither their GP nor several local charities were able to signpost them.

The process of helping them successfully access an alternative highlighted the lack of accurate and up-to-date information on available vaccines and caused a review of the information available to help ensure that patients can find that information when needed.



“Just a quick email to thank you for your help. My mum had her vaccine today in Davyhulme! Such a big relief! Both of us can’t thank you enough.”

Helping people find the information they need to make informed choices.

We try to ensure that our knowledge and information is up to date and where we don’t know the answer to a request for information, we do our best to find out. Common requests for information included access to NHS dentists, hospital and emergency care, social care provision and mental health support.

The below narrative gives just a few examples of some of the issues that we have heard about from Trafford residents over the course of the year and how we were able to assist:

- Complaints across services: callers asked for more information on the complaints process and escalating them after a breakdown in local resolution. In one case, the process had been going on for two years. We were able to provide guidance and information to enable them to make informed choices about how to progress their issue.
- Advocacy: people were looking for advocacy help with their complaints, for reasons such as neurodivergence and learning disabilities. In these instances, we were able to signpost them to Advocacy Focus.
- Social care: we heard from a person who had been made homeless; we were able to signpost them to organisations providing urgent housing help.

Showcasing volunteer impact

Our fantastic volunteers have given 200 hours 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:

- Our volunteers took part in the interviews of parents who had accessed or tried to access CAMHS services in Trafford. They also collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views.
- TMBC will be working to redesign the Trafford Council Adult Social Care website pages and improve user experience as a result of three of our volunteers conducting a review. The results of our volunteer led audit were shared with the lead for the Adults Social Care web pages, and the Chief Digital Officer at TMBC.
- Our volunteers helped to redesign our Enter & View (E&V) process for visiting health and social care facilities. They attended revamp meetings and put forward fresh approaches. This enables us to resume our E&V programme, helping to fulfil our scrutiny role and the provision of information to the public.



Showcasing volunteer impact

At the heart of what we do

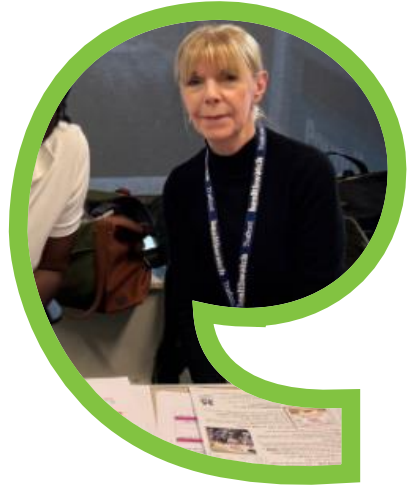
From finding out what residents think to helping raise awareness, our volunteers have championed community concerns to improve care.

"I have been a volunteer with Healthwatch Trafford for 11 years.

In that time, I have had the opportunity to be involved in a variety of activities around health and social care services in Trafford. This year I have reviewed reports as a member of the readers panel, and I have joined area network meetings to share ideas with other community groups. I also attended a Volunteers Day as part of a showcase of community groups to recruit new volunteers.

It has been a pleasure to meet people in the community and offer them a chance to talk about their experiences and concerns. Through Healthwatch this feedback has been directed towards improving services and I feel my work as a volunteer has been valuable in helping my community."

Catherine Barber



"I volunteer with Healthwatch because like everyone else in Trafford I want my local NHS services to be the best they can be"

Laurence Walsh



Be part of the change.

If you've felt inspired by these stories, contact us today and find out how you can be part of the change.



www.healthwatchtrafford.co.uk



0300 999 0303



info@healthwatchtrafford.co.uk

Finance and future priorities

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

Our income and expenditure:

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Trafford Council	£135,600	Expenditure on pay	£128,834
Additional income	£12,003	Non-pay expenditure	£7,327
		Office and management fee	£14,998
Total income	£147,603	Total Expenditure	£151,159

Additional income is broken down into:

- £3,000 received from Trafford ICP for work on Trafford Locality Plan Refresh
- £2,000 received from HWinGM for collaborative work in GM.
- £2,000 received from HW England for work on the GP Choice Project
- £5,000 received from TMBC for evaluation of the Long-Term Conditions Project

Integrated Care System (ICS) funding:

Healthwatch across Greater Manchester also receive funding from our Integrated Care System (ICS) to support new areas of collaborative work at this level, including:

	Amount
To enable and coordinate the 10 Healthwatch across Greater Manchester to work collaboratively as a critical friend to the ICS—coordinating public insight across localities, producing GM-wide intelligence reports and embedding the peoples voice of GM in system governance.	£99,000

Finance and future priorities

Next steps:

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. Oral Care in Under 5s
2. Discharge to Assess (D2A)
3. Mental Health

Statutory statements

Healthwatch Trafford, 12 –14 Shaws Road, Altrincham, WA141QU

Healthwatch Trafford 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 seven 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 2024/25, the Board met six times and made decisions on matters such as agreeing and approving our workplan for the year; We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities through consultation with the public and external partners.

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 2024/25, 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, submit it to Trafford Locality Board and submit it to the publicly available Healthwatch England Reports Library.

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 Trafford Locality Board, Trafford Clinical Practitioner Senate, Trafford Provider Collaborative Board and Trafford Health and Well Being Board.

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers in Trafford. For example, we attend Trafford Health Scrutiny Committee, Trafford Children's Commissioning Board and Trafford ICP Participation Group. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Trafford is represented on the Trafford Health and Wellbeing Board by our Chair of Directors, Heather Fairfield.

During 2024/25, our representative has effectively carried out this role by attending five meetings and raising issues such as the lack of District Nursing provision in Trafford.

Healthwatch Trafford is represented on Trafford Integrated Care Partnership and Trafford Integrated Care Board (Trafford Locality Board) by the Chair of Directors, Heather Fairfield..

Statutory statements

2024 – 2025 Outcomes

Project/activity	Outcomes achieved
The Vaping Habits of Children and Young People	As a result of this project, our findings have been referenced on Trafford Council Public Health's webpages and contributed to the 'Vaping Guide' they created to support young people to stop vaping. We have also heard positive feedback from schools since our project, which demonstrates greater awareness of the risks of vaping in schools, the continued rollout of workshops and resources in schools from School Nursing and Early Break teams and subsequently fewer instances of young people vaping in school.
Sexual Health Services	We presented the contents of our report on access to sexual health services to the Trafford Sexual Health Network. As a result, our recommendations have helped shape the Network's priorities and associated actions for 2025/26.
Pathways to CAMHS	We presented this report to the Trafford Children's Commissioning Board in March, where our suggestions, specifically those in relation to the need for interim communication, were well received. As a result, Trafford Council colleagues are supporting us to push the report through governance processes.
Alcohol Use in Trafford	Our Healthwatch 100: Alcohol Use in Trafford Report contributed to and was referenced multiple times within Trafford Alcohol & Substance Misuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2024/25.

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