

Activity Report Q4

1st January 2026 – 31st March 2026

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Project Work & Reports

NeuroAccess Herefordshire: Empowering Neurodivergent Voices in Public Spaces & Transport

This project, which began at the end of September 2025, has now successfully concluded. The initiative sets out to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of public spaces and transport across Herefordshire for neurodivergent people, including those with autism.

Through close collaboration with individuals, schools, institutions, and support services, the project has co-created a sensory-friendly audit tool alongside neurodivergent participants. This tool has been used to support participants in carrying out audits of community spaces and transport networks, helping to identify both strengths and barriers within local environments.

Recommendations Summary:

The project identified key recommendations for improving accessibility and inclusion for neurodivergent people in public spaces and services. Central to this is creating a welcoming, respectful, and safe environment where individuals can engage at their own pace. Staff training is critical, with an emphasis on understanding neurodivergence, recognising signs of anxiety, and providing consistent, non-judgemental support. Strong communication, clear policies, and a culture of feedback and continuous improvement were highlighted as essential.

Practical adjustments include offering quiet or low-stimulation spaces, alternative entrances and exits, and better management of sensory factors such as noise, lighting, temperature, smells, and décor. Clear signage, accessible information (including maps and pre-visit details), and maintaining consistency in services help reduce anxiety. Additional measures such as quiet hours, sensory aids, inclusive signage, and accessible facilities further support comfort and inclusion.

Feedback also emphasised that many neurodivergent people currently feel uncomfortable in public environments, but improved understanding and

implementation of these recommendations could significantly increase confidence and participation. The wider community, including businesses and the public, plays an important role in fostering inclusion through empathy, kindness, and constructive feedback, helping to create more welcoming spaces for everyone.

Our conversations have also demonstrated the importance of trust and accountability in the wider system who have consulted those living with neurodiversity before and nothing has ever changed as a result. Throughout this piece of work, we continually work in a transparent way. Ensuring people know what will happen with their input and how the groups we work with will be involved beyond consultation – all of this will be vital to the sustainability of the outcomes and recommendations that are made at the end of the project time.

Report can be found [here](#)

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Please help to Shape More Inclusive Spaces



We need to hear from Neurodivergent people with Autism, ADHD or Sensory processing differences.

Can you spare some time to tell us about your experience of community spaces in Herefordshire including shops, cafés, leisure centres, and public transport.

Please fill a sensory check list of the places that are good and not so good. Places you use and would like to use
<https://tinyurl.com/HWNeuro2026>

Improve Herefordshire environments with your feedback

Please get in touch if you need a hand filling the check lists or need a hard copy
Deadline February 27th 2026
Thank you.

Get in Touch 01432 277044
Mary@healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk
www.healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk

Led by lived experience
Flexible and informal
Real local impact

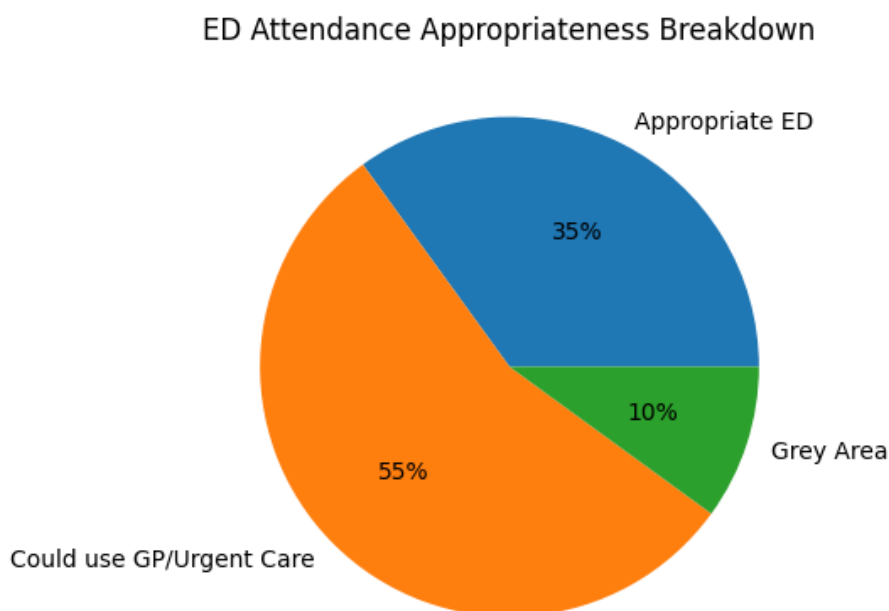
Routes to Emergency Care – Understanding ED Attendance in Herefordshire

During 2025, through our involvement with the Herefordshire Inequalities Group, we committed to undertaking focused work within the Emergency Department at Hereford Hospital to better understand the drivers behind public behaviours when accessing urgent care services. The Healthwatch Engagement Team initiated this project, working alongside staff and volunteers to gather qualitative insight and lived-experience evidence. This work is designed to complement existing NHS quantitative data, providing a more holistic understanding of patient decision-making.

The project has now concluded, with a final report currently being developed and due for publication shortly.

The project aims to achieve the following by its completion in April 2026.

Summary snapshot from the pending report showing attendance breakdown:

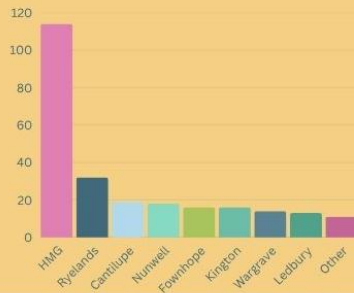


We spoke to 501 patients

Understanding our Patients

This infographic provides a snapshot of the people we spoke to in the Emergency Department (ED), showing their age, gender, nationality, and local areas to help us better understand our community.

GP Locations

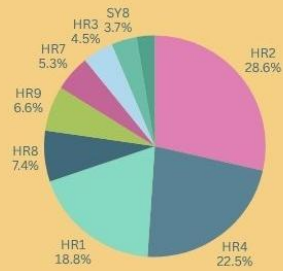


GP Registration



Postcode Distribution

This pie chart highlights population distribution across postcode areas, reflecting known patterns of deprivation in Herefordshire.

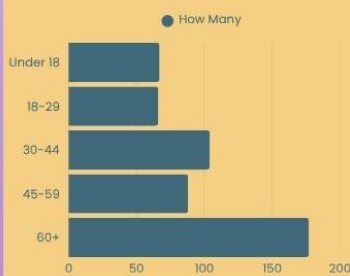


Ethnicity Breakdown

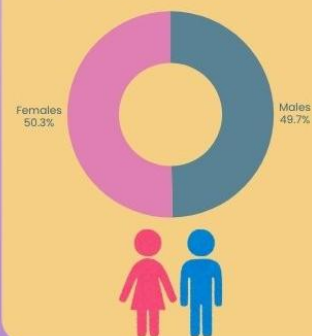


- British: 440
- Other: 38
- Indian: 7
- Any other Asian background: 7
- African: 2
- White and Black African: 1
- Any other ethnic group: 1
- Any other mixed background: 1
- Prefer not to say: 1
- Not recorded / unclear : 3

Age Categories



Male or Female



Severe Mental Illness (SMI) Inequalities Project

This project explored the experiences of people living with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) in Herefordshire, with a particular focus on the impact their mental ill health had on physical health and access to support. Engagement work highlighted the significant challenges individuals face in managing their physical health alongside mental health conditions, including barriers to accessing routine healthcare, difficulties navigating services, and the impact of stigma.

Findings identified that people with SMI are at increased risk of poorer physical health outcomes, often linked to reduced access to preventative care, lifestyle factors, and side effects of medication. Participants also reported gaps in communication between services, limited continuity of care, and a need for more holistic, person-centred support that considers both mental and physical health together.

The project emphasised the importance of improved integration between services, increased awareness among healthcare professionals, and proactive support to address physical health needs earlier. The insights gathered will inform local stakeholders and contribute to ongoing work to reduce health inequalities and improve outcomes for people living with SMI in Herefordshire.

Find the published report [here](#).



The poster features the Healthwatch Herefordshire logo at the top left. The main headline reads 'Let's help remove inequalities together'. Below this, a paragraph explains the project's focus on health challenges for people with serious mental health conditions. A call to action asks for help from local organizations and charities. The poster also includes a 'Contact us' button and illustrations of people with mental health struggles.

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Let's help remove inequalities together

We're exploring the health challenges faced by people living with serious mental health conditions, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, PTSD, eating disorders, and severe depression.

We are looking for local organisations, charities, support groups/services who can help us with our project-

Can you help?

we aim to identify what needs to change and how we can make services more inclusive and person-centred.

Contact us

Engagement & Events

Quarter 4 has been a busy quarter for engagement, aside from Chatty Caravan outings we have engaged through a wide variety of channels and working with other local providers to maximise contacts with communities.

Here are some examples of the places we have been:

- Homeless & Rough Sleeper Engagement – Lee’s Place
- Local supermarket pop-ups
- Talk Community Network Meetings
- Ledbury Food Bank – Drop Ins
- Afghan Community Group weekly sessions – Hereford
- Ukrainian Support Groups
- Herefordshire Engagement Network
- Primary Care Network Meetings

Student placements

Beacon college attend the hub once a fortnight with 10-12 students to prepare and cook for the homeless hub. One of these students is progressing to do a weekly work experience session joining the batch cooking every Monday.

During February-April Healthwatch have hosted a Health & Social Care student from the sixth form every Friday to do work experience. Assisting the team with research and project work for Healthwatch.

Influencing Strategy & Planning in Health & Care

Healthwatch plays a partnership role in a varied range of boards, working groups and forums in Herefordshire and across our wider integrated care system footprint (Herefordshire and Worcestershire), where we:

- Hold commissioners and providers of health & care services to account.
- Advocate for the involvement and co-production of service design and delivery with communities.
- Feed in the views that we have heard directly from residents or from other voluntary and community sector organisations.

The following are some of the strategic work undertaken this quarter:

- University of Worcester Thrive mental health and rural inequalities supporting lived experience
- Complex Lives strategy development
- Neighbourhood health development workshops
- Herefordshire Community Anchors

Forums Healthwatch Attend

Regional Forums:

- Healthwatch England forums; Engagement, communications, volunteering, Equality Diversity & Inclusion Network
- Healthwatch West Midlands Network

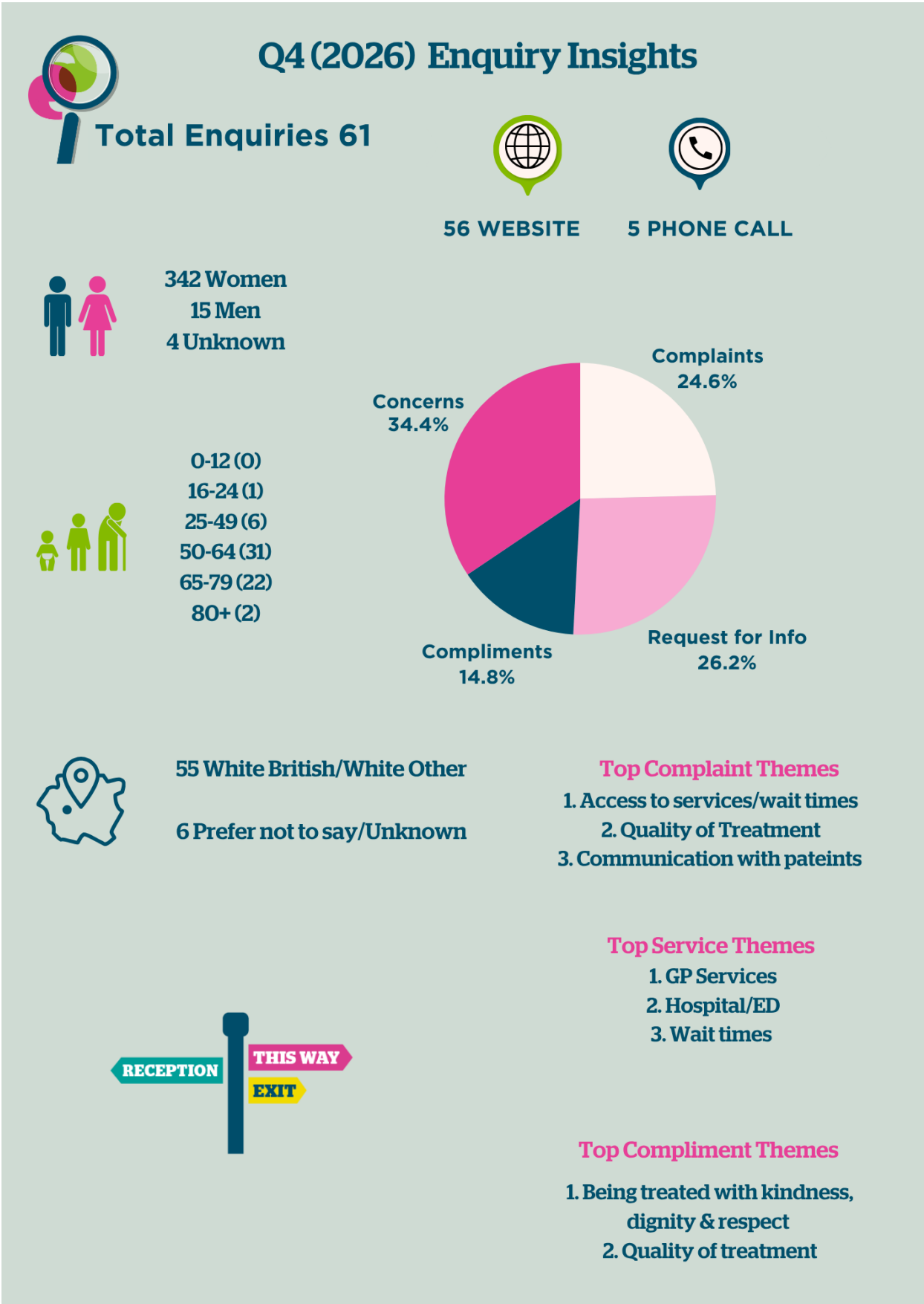
Herefordshire & Worcestershire Integrated Care System Forums:

- Mental Health Joint Committee
- ICS Partnership Assembly
- Children's Programme board
- Health inequalities prevention and Personalisation collaborative
- Quality, resources, and delivery committee
- Dementia Programme board
- Strategic Commissioning Committee
- Embedding the VCSE in the ICS
- Carers Partnership
- VCSE Faculty
- ICS Academy Steering Group

Herefordshire Forums:

- Health & Wellbeing Board
- One Herefordshire Partnership
- Herefordshire Engagement Network
- Children's and Adults Scrutiny Committees
- Learning Disability Partnership Board
- Autism Partnership Board
- Adult Mental health partnership
- Children and young people emotional health & wellbeing partnership
- Dementia Partnership
- Children & Young People's Partnership
- Transformation Tuesday
- Adult Safeguarding Board
- Wye Valley Patient Experience Group
- Herefordshire Together Collaborative
- Youth engagement forum
- Oral health improvement board
- BRAVE strategic group.
- Homelessness Forum
- Herefordshire Health Inequality board.
- Community Action Network meetings

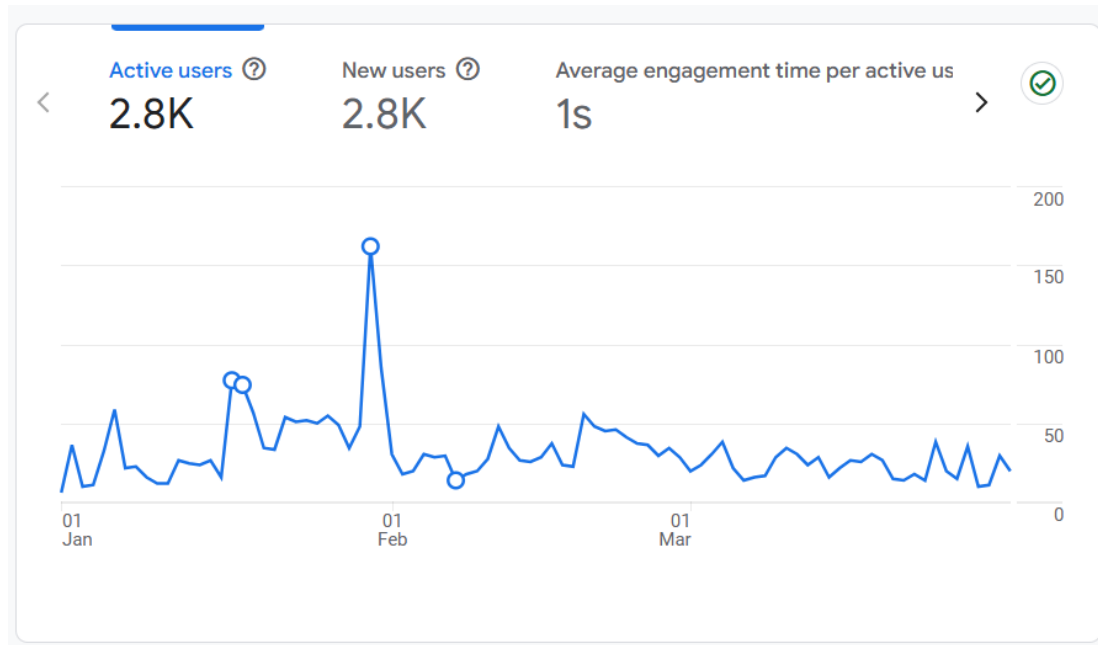
Information, Advice & Feedback



Analytics

Appendix A – Q4 Web Performance Healthwatch Herefordshire

1st January 2026 – 31st March 2026



Q4 Social Media Performance Healthwatch Herefordshire

Values	
Sum of FB Views	38065
Sum of FB Viewers	22427
Sum of FB Content Interactions	341
Sum of FB Link Clicks	53
Sum of FB Visits	723
Sum of FB Follows	33
Sum of Instagram Views	1757
Sum of Instagram Reach	1058
Sum of Instagram Content Interactions	18
Sum of Instagram Profile Visits	29
Sum of Instagram Follows	17
FB Followers	2225
FB Following	532
FB Likes	
Instagram Followers	1177
Instagram Following	1066

Q4 Social Media Performance Lee's Place

Values	
Sum of FB Views	362197
Sum of FB Viewers	158609
Sum of FB Content Interactions	4400
Sum of FB Link Clicks	402
Sum of FB Visits	15831
Sum of FB Follows	306
Sum of Instagram Views	6394
Sum of Instagram Reach	1963
Sum of Instagram Content Interactions	169
Sum of Instagram Clicks	1
Sum of Instagram Profile Visits	314
Sum of Instagram Follows	149
FB Followers	1405
FB Following	0
FB Likes	1400
Instagram Followers	174
Instagram Following	208

Q3 Social Media Performance Community Power

Values	
Sum of FB Views	26897
Sum of FB Viewers	14644
Sum of FB Content Interactions	560
Sum of FB Link Clicks	34
Sum of FB Visits	707
Sum of FB Follows	50
Sum of Instagram Views	314
Sum of Instagram Reach	66
Sum of Instagram Content Interactions	14
Sum of Instagram Clicks	0
Sum of Instagram Profile Visits	34
Sum of Instagram Follows	0
FB Followers	165
FB Following	214
FB Likes	0
Instagram Followers	22
Instagram Following	4

Contract metrics

Contract Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicator	Evidence
Volumes and nature of enquiries and signposting activity	P10
Customer Satisfaction	<p><i>Can I pass on my thanks to Samantha Jenkins who came out to us, the PPG, at Kington Medical Practice. Her enthusiasm and knowledge was wonderful. – Susie PPG member at Kington Surgery</i></p> <p><i>Thanks so much for looking into this for me. I really appreciate it. – feedback from a member of the public who we helped with her enquiry about a removal from a GP surgery list.</i></p>
Numbers and characteristics of customers assisted through Healthwatch Herefordshire (Gender / Age / Geographic location / Disabilities / Ethnicity Customers from traditionally difficult to reach groups)	P10
Accessibility and engagement	Engagement & reports section p3-8, Strategies and influencing work Page 9-10
Numbers of reports and recommendations produced and the outcomes of these,	Engagement reports section p3-8 To be developed, an action tracker for recommendations

Social Value

Social Value Indicator	Evidence
Deliver 300 unpaid work experience and /or volunteering weeks for young people aged 14 - 24, including individuals from underrepresented groups.	

<p>Offer a number of curriculum and career support activities with schools.</p>	<p>In Q4 when worked with Beacon College, Hereford & Ludlow Colleges, Art College, NMITE & Kingstone High School. We have offered a day a week work experience to a Health & social care student from the sixth form college from February to April.</p>
<p>Work with the voluntary community and social enterprise and charity sector (VCSE) to deliver 1000 hours of community activities that support localised needs.</p>	<p>Work through Lee's place and the volunteers there (see Lee's place report from previous reports in 2025) Daily sharing of social media posts that support local VCSEs in their events/awareness campaigns & inclusion of VCSE info in eBulletins.</p>
<p>Reducing carbon use by 2030 - contributing towards making sustainability, resilience, and carbon minimisation central to all our actions.</p>	<p>Home working, recycled paper, local suppliers, digital tools. Car sharing for project working and meetings.</p>

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