

Annual Report

2019/20



Contents

Message from our Chair	3
Who we are	4
Our year in numbers	5
How we engage with local people	6
How we've made a difference	7
Helping you find the answers	12
Our team	14
Our plans for next year	16
Our finances	18
Message from our Director	19
Contact us	20



Dedication

We would like to dedicate this report to Molly Herridge, long-standing volunteer and friend of Healthwatch and LINK North Tyneside, who sadly passed away recently.



Find out more about us and the work we do:

Website: www.hwnt.co.uk

Twitter: @HWNTyneside

Facebook: @HealthwatchNT

Message from our Chair

Chair of Healthwatch North Tyneside, Judy Scott introduces our Annual Report



Judy Scott, Chair of Healthwatch North Tyneside

It's been an exciting and challenging year.

“It gives me great pleasure to introduce Healthwatch North Tyneside’s Annual Report for April 2019 to March 2020. It’s been an exciting and challenging year in which we have heard from more local people than ever before. We have cemented strong relationships with decision makers, providers and commissioners to make sure service users’ voices are heard and have an impact on decisions.

During the reporting period we were delighted to receive national recognition for the impact of our work on mental health services, and improved information and access to services as a result. We are also taking forward an ambitious piece of work, looking at what people in North Tyneside do when they feel ill.

This has so far involved visiting Emergency Care facilities in North Tyneside and Newcastle, as well as all GP practices in our area - issues we had heard were concerning local people. Separately, we also began working with North Tyneside Council to gather experiences of adult social care services.

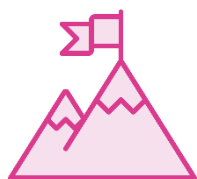
We have some wonderful volunteers who work closely with staff on such projects and help us to hear a wide variety of voices from across North Tyneside. Of course, engaging with people will face new challenges in the coming year.

The Coronavirus pandemic occurred at the end of this reporting period and its impact has been profound for us all. It has resulted in significant changes within our health and social care services and systems, and new challenges for services and users alike. I’m proud of the way that Healthwatch North Tyneside responded to the outbreak, quickly creating an online information hub to help people to access accurate information about service changes and updating it.

As health and care services look to the future and reopen, it’s more important than ever that providers listen to the voice of service users. We are pleased to hear that commissioners and providers are taking the opportunity to rethink how services are delivered into the long term and we welcome the opportunity to be involved in these discussions and ensure local people’s voices are heard.”

Judy Scott

Who we are



Our Mission is to champion the experiences, views and needs of local people in order to positively affect health and social care services in North Tyneside.

About Healthwatch North Tyneside

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in North Tyneside. We're here to find out what matters to residents and help make sure their views shape the support they need.

We listen to what people like about services, and what could be improved. We share these views with those who have the power to make change happen. We influence how services are designed and delivered. We also help people find the information they need about services in their area.

Healthwatch North Tyneside is an independent local charity. We are also part of a national network which is supported by Healthwatch England. Nationally and locally we have the power to make sure that those in charge of services hear people's voices. As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them.



Health and social care works best when people are involved in decisions about their treatment and care, but this doesn't always happen. We are here to help make sure that those designing, running and regulating health and social care listen to people's views and act on them.



Our Year in Numbers

Gathering feedback and listening to your views



2,809 people

told us about their experiences of health and care services

1,894 individuals

talked to our staff and volunteers at events across North Tyneside

4,806 pieces of feedback

were received about different local services

601 people

completed our annual survey

Volunteers



Our volunteers contributed

1,176 hours

to supporting Healthwatch, and a further

366 hours

were contributed by our Board members

Signposting and providing information



We signposted people for advice and support to

70 organisations

505

people follow us on Facebook (at March 2020)

1,689

people follow us on Twitter (at March 2020)

How we engage with local people

Listening to people's experiences of health and social care services is the bedrock of what we do, and we work hard to hear from people across North Tyneside about the services they use.

During the reporting year **2,809** people told us about their experiences of health and social care services by completing our surveys or participating in interviews; talking to us in focus groups, in waiting rooms and at community events; using our Feedback Centre; and calling our information line. People gave us **4,806** pieces of feedback about services that individuals use.

We held **126** different engagement events across North Tyneside including events at GP practices, shopping and sports centres, sheltered accommodation settings and community events such as Wallsend Festival.

601 people completed our Annual Survey. This gave us detailed feedback about individual services and an overall sense of the feelings and expectations of health and care services. You can see more about what people told us on our website.

See below for details of the impact that COVID-19 has had on our engagement activity.



Engagement during COVID-19

The outbreak of COVID-19 meant that we had to put our face-to-face engagement activities on hold. We refocused our efforts on gathering experiences by telephone, social media, online surveys and leaflet and information drops. We are now working with other organisations and community groups to try to reach as many people as possible across North Tyneside, putting special effort into reaching those who cannot access services online.

How we've made a difference

Our Impact in 2019-20

Charting our impact on the design of services is a challenge. When commissioners and providers make decisions about services, they consider many factors - legal guidance, financial constraints, workforce issues - as well as what the public want and expect of them.

Our role is to articulate the views of the public, and to have the most impact this must be fed into the right places at the right time. Our work must be trusted to accurately reflect people's views, including those sections of the community most impacted by decisions and those whose views are least heard.

To ensure local people's voices *are* heard we share information and feedback with service providers.

We are also involved in key decision-making boards including North Tyneside's Health and Wellbeing Board and Future Care Board, the Carers' Partnership Board, Mental Wellbeing in Later Life Board, Ageing Well Board and Mental Health Board.

We provide information, presentations and reports about what people are telling us and ensure experiences are considered in decision making. During the reporting year we have been championing transport issues with the Health and Wellbeing Board and influencing their priorities. We have also been working with North Tyneside Council and the Carers' Centre to review communications with carers. What we do know is that changing systems and services take time.

Paul Jones, Director of Healthwatch North Tyneside





GP SERVICES AND PRIMARY CARE

Local people have consistently told us about issues getting access to primary care services, particularly appointments with GPs. People also told us that their experiences were very different depending on which practice they were registered with. During this year we focused on gathering views and experiences of primary care.

We heard from over 1,500 people through an online and paper survey and by conducting 755 interviews when we visited each surgery and spoke with patients waiting for their appointment.

We also spoke to practice managers and North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group. The outbreak of Coronavirus brought significant changes to how primary care services are delivered and we have been gathering people's views about how they want these services to be delivered going forward.

We are sharing this information with North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group, GP practices and the local Primary Care Networks to inform how they deliver services into the future.



www.healthwatchnorthtyneside.co.uk/ourwork/primary-care

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

We began working with North Tyneside Council to understand people's experiences of Adult Social Care Services. This work is commissioned separately to our main Healthwatch work and has helped build stronger relationships with the local authority.

STROKE SURVIVORS

We spoke to 19 people who had experience of stroke support services. Using the information they shared with us we published a short report, which has been shared with service providers and commissioners who have subsequently reviewed provision.



URGENT AND EMERGENCY CARE

Local people have told us about issues with getting care when they are ill and how important it is that GP services and urgent and emergency care services work together.

Over the last 18 months we have gathered feedback from users of the Emergency Department at the Northumbria Hospital, Cramlington (pictured above), the Urgent Treatment Centre at North Tyneside General Hospital and the Emergency Department at the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI). We've completed this work in partnership with the local NHS Trusts, Healthwatch Northumberland and Healthwatch Newcastle. We are also gathering feedback about people's experiences of using NHS111.

Linking this work with the information we have gathered about access to primary care means we have a more holistic view of what people in North Tyneside do when they are ill and how support could be improved.

We have shared our initial findings with NHS service providers, North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group and North Tyneside's Health and Wellbeing Board. We will be sharing more findings in the coming months.

OLDER PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH

Working with North Tyneside's Mental Health in Later Life Board, we have been investigating people's experiences of memory services. Over a period of six months we spoke to 61 service users and carers about their experiences of support with memory loss, to identify what's working well and what could be done better. The findings have been shared with the Board and are being used to develop improvements in services.



MENTAL HEALTH

Our work on improving local mental health services was recognised with a highly commended award at the Healthwatch Network Awards in October 2019. The awards recognised the difference we had made in mental health crisis services, as well as improving access to information about local provision.

Thanks to local people for sharing their experience, our voluntary sector partners - particularly Launchpad North Tyneside - and our system partners North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group, Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and North Tyneside Council for their support and willingness to listen and respond to local people's views.

In May 2019, we awarded small grants to local voluntary sector organisations to gather and/or respond to the health and wellbeing needs of young people in North Tyneside.



YOUNG VOICES: WORKING WITH OTHERS

Phoenix Detached Youth Project used part of our Young Voices grant to work with young people to create a new mental health resource. The young people involved came from Phoenix Detached Youth Project, Barnardo's The Base, North Tyneside Council's Participation Team, Launchpad North Tyneside, CAMHS and other local organisations.

Young people identified the mental health services that they used and found helpful, and designed a leaflet providing information for their peers.

Healthwatch North Tyneside funded the printing of 10,000 leaflets and we have helped distribute these to schools, GP practices, young people's organisations and services across the borough. The leaflet and the approach of creating it have been incredibly well received and are being used as a model to produce similar resources in other local authority areas.

Phoenix Detached Youth Project also used our funding to support young people to write, direct and star in a film aimed at helping GPs to talk to young people about mental health issues. Unfortunately, the opening night for the film had to be postponed because of the outbreak of Covid-19.

North Tyneside Carer's Centre are completing an action research project with young carers about their experiences of health and social care. Again, Coronavirus has meant this project has been delayed but they are now meeting again online.

We worked with **DePaul UK** to deliver a mental health event with young homeless people to understand their health issues and support services in February 2020.

Barnardo's The Base have worked with a group of LGBTQ+ young people to create resources and a campaign about mental health and self-acceptance.



Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo



Focus groups and
online consultations



150 people in North
Tyneside offered feedback



Reports shared widely
with partners and NHS

NHS Long Term Plan

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

More than 30,000 people from across England shared their views about how the NHS can better support their overall health and how it can improve care for specific conditions too.

Staff and volunteers from all 151 Healthwatch ran more than 500 focus groups across England, bringing together people from all sections of the community to share how they would improve local NHS services.

In North Tyneside, we heard from over 150 people through our surveys and focus groups. They told us about:

- Access to services when needed being a key area of concern, particularly in relation to access to GP appointments.
- The importance of joint decision-making processes when receiving health treatment and care.
- Positive experiences of quality of care when using cancer health and care services.
- Difficulties in accessing appropriate services when using NHS mental health services.

Healthwatch North Tyneside's engagement fed into the combined Northumberland, Tyne and Wear and Durham report. The NHS decision makers are using this information to develop their plans.

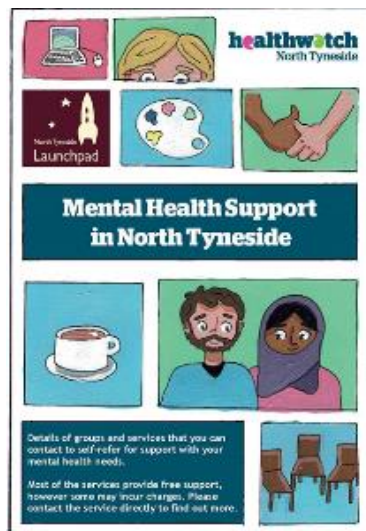
We also shared a more detailed version of this report, which focused on the views of North Tyneside residents, with the Clinical Commissioning Group. The full report can be found on our website.



Helping you find the answers

A key part of our role is supporting individuals to get the help they need. Our information line, 0191 263 5321, is available five days a week and our website is updated regularly. During the reporting period, we signposted people to 70 organisations for advice and support. People come to us with questions and issues that can be quite straight forward to resolve or can be complex and take several interventions, but we are clear that we do not take on a case management role.





Updated Mental Health Leaflet

Working with the Service User and Survivors Forum and Launchpad North Tyneside, we produced an updated resource for people needing mental health support. The leaflet provides details of the services that people can self-refer to get the support they need in North Tyneside. Most of the sources of support included are free to use but some services may charge.

People with lived experiences were involved in deciding what services were included, and in choosing the new cover illustration following a competition for North Tyneside residents. This is the third printed version of this leaflet. So far over 5,000 have been distributed to local services and community venues across the Borough. They have been very well received by professionals and users alike.



Useful Contacts

We reviewed our signposting activity over the last 18 months and put together a leaflet with useful information about the organisations we signpost people to most frequently. We also produced fridge magnets with useful information aimed primarily at older people, which have proved very popular at engagement events.

Coronavirus Service Changes Information Hub

Many health and care services were changing as we entered lockdown in March 2020 and people told us they were confused and unsure what was happening. In response, we created our online Coronavirus Service Changes Information Hub to help keep residents up-to-date with changes in local health and care service during the Coronavirus outbreak.



Our web-based resource brought together rapidly changing information about local services in one place, including advice and guidance, operating hours and service changes and closures. The hub included sections on local hospitals, urgent and emergency care, GP practices, mental health services, dental care, pharmacies and where to get help, all of which were vitally important to residents at the time. The Hub continues to be an important source of information for people as local services change.



The Service Changes Hub is brilliant! It's the only place I could find out about what's happening about hospital outpatient appointments... Gold star HWNT!

- Facebook comment

Our Team

Mary Low, Engagement and Insight Officer, tells us how volunteering with Healthwatch North Tyneside gave her the experience and confidence to join the team as a paid member of staff.

“Volunteering with Healthwatch was a springboard for me to change direction at a point in my life where I most needed inspiration and support. I first got in touch with Healthwatch when I was looking for something worthwhile to do in between having two hip replacements. It worked perfectly for me as I could access the training and begin to get to know people during this time, so that when I was fit enough to begin getting involved with engagements with the public I was ‘good to go’.

Talking to people about their experiences and having them share their thoughts is always a privilege, and as a volunteer I felt it was my responsibility to ensure their voice was accurately recorded and passed on to have the greatest impact on the delivery of services in the area. I still feel this way now I have progressed to a paid position as Engagement and Insight Officer for Healthwatch North Tyneside.

“Volunteering allowed me to try out my skills in a new context after working for many years in a primary school. It enabled me to broaden my outlook and get involved with my community in a different, but equally fulfilling way. It also gave me a new set of friends and a knowledge that, with my help, we can all work together to make a change for the better.”



Our Volunteers



Our volunteers contributed an amazing 1,542 hours of their time to Healthwatch over the past year. They have been involved in all sorts of activities including capturing people's feedback of local health and care services, conducting surveys, inputting data, providing information on local services, running discussion groups, representing Healthwatch North Tyneside at events and meetings, and lots more.



Even though, due to coronavirus, we aren't currently able to offer volunteers the usual opportunities, they are still helping us by completing and sharing online surveys with friends and family to make sure our reach is as large as possible. They are also able to help us raise awareness of who we are and what we do. We are very proud of the contribution our volunteers make and they help shape our priorities and how we work.

Our Trustees



Our Board of trustees are also volunteers. They oversee our work and help represent the voice of local people at key meetings with decision makers. They come with a wide range of experience; some bring direct experience of having worked in health or social care, while others bring a strong understanding of the needs of communities within North Tyneside.

Our trustees 2019-20:

- Judy Scott
- Natalie Underwood
- Julia Charlton
- Beth Allan
- Steve Nicklin
- Theresa Culpin (from January 2020)

We owe a big thank you to our trustees who stood down during the year:

- Iain Kitt (former Chair and previous treasurer)
- Bea Groves-McDaniel (former Vice-Chair)
- Amanda Normand



Our plans for next year

Looking ahead to 2020/21

We focus on the issues that local people tell us matters to them. During the reporting year, we gathered views through engagement events and interviews as well as through our annual survey. Our volunteers, staff team and board of trustees come together annually to review what local people have told us and to select the key themes and issues to focus on in the coming year.

The Coronavirus pandemic emerged after our annual survey was completed, but we cannot ignore the profound impact that it has had on people's lives and the services that people experience. We now have the opportunity to ensure local people's voices are heard as service providers and commissioners begin re-designing and re-opening services.



Our plans for next year

In 2020/21 we will be focusing our work on the following key issues:



Responding to coronavirus by providing information and supporting organisations to respond to emerging needs.



Understanding experiences and lessons from coronavirus by gathering people's views, experiences and how they want services to look in the future.



Experiences of memory services: We will complete our research and present our findings.



Care coordination: We will gather people's experiences and present our findings.



Transport: We will gather people's experiences of transport to and from health and care services and present our findings.



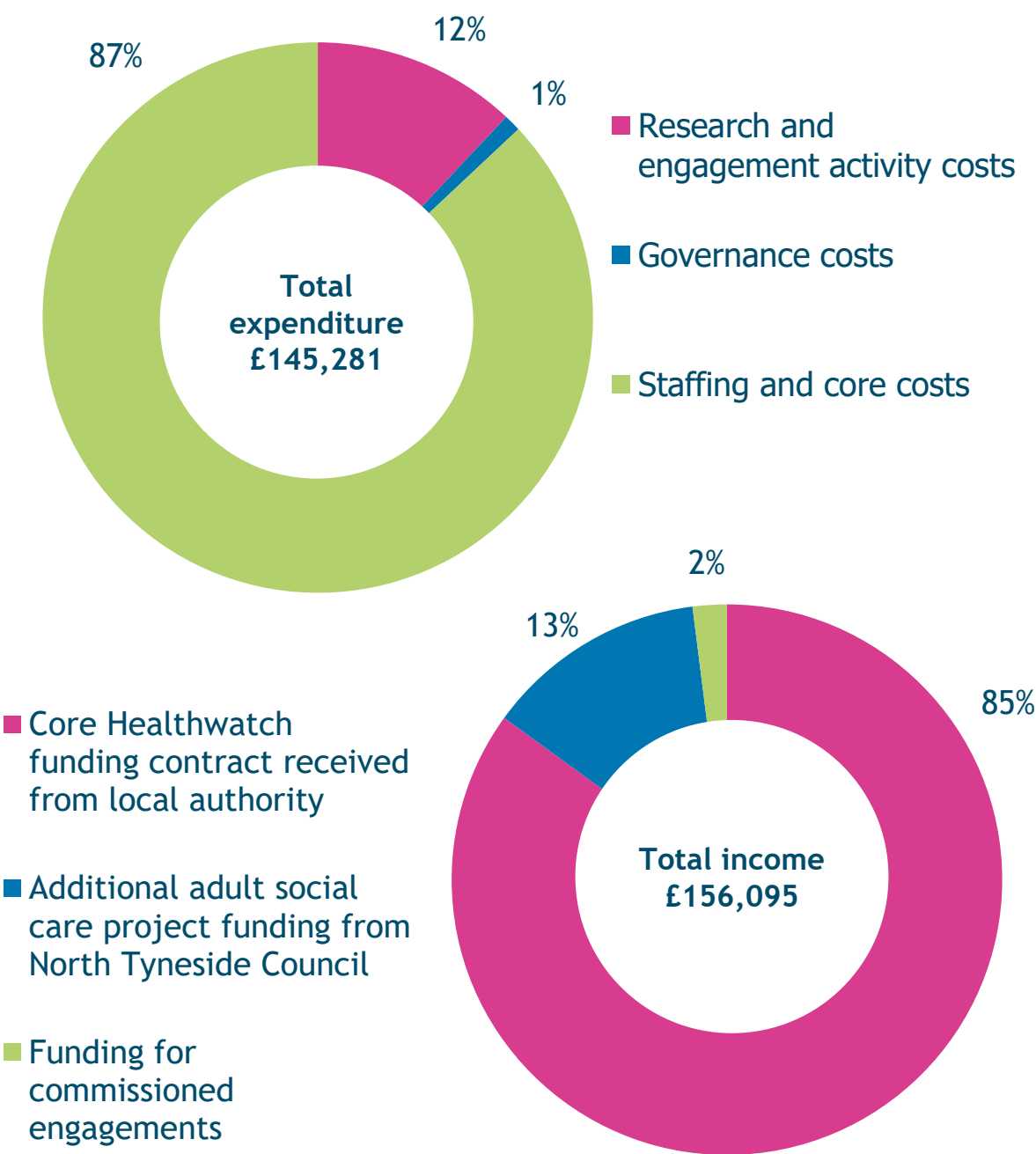
Priority groups: We will focus on hearing the views and experiences of carers, children and families, people with additional support needs and people from different cultural backgrounds.



In 2020/21 we will also be completing our research and findings on **GPs and primary care**, and **urgent and emergency care**, which you can read more about on pages 8 and 9.

Our Finances

We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £145,281. Some of the project funds received are to fund work in 2020-21.



Message from our Director

Director of Healthwatch North Tyneside, Paul Jones closes this year's Annual Report



Paul Jones, Director of Healthwatch North Tyneside

“It’s been another busy year for us at Healthwatch North Tyneside. We have made a real effort to reach more people than ever through our engagement activities. We launched our new leaflets and feedback cards and shared 3,000 of each with health and care services across the borough, alongside the mental health leaflets we helped to produce. We hope to launch our new website in July 2020 with more useful information for local people and new ways for them to share their views.

With the support of our volunteers and partners, we have gathered detailed evidence from local people about their experiences of accessing Primary Care, memory services, NHS111 and a range of other services. We were completing our analysis of the evidence we gathered when the Coronavirus pandemic hit. We recognise that the services we were looking at have changed significantly because of the outbreak and are gathering additional

evidence to ensure our reports are as relevant as possible, whilst continuing to provide decision makers with regular updates about what people are telling us.

We continue to develop strong relationships with providers and commissioners, helping to resolve day-to-day issues for people and to make sure voices are heard. We have used our membership of North Tyneside’s Health and Wellbeing Board to champion the emerging issues people tell us about, including patient transport and support for people with additional needs.

Our partnerships with voluntary sector organisations, community groups and health and care services have enabled us to hear from all parts of our community. Like many organisations, we face new challenges engaging with people whilst social distancing. We want to pay particular attention to those who don’t have access to digital technology and who are isolated.

We saw some significant changes within our team during the reporting year. In October, Helen Bedford returned to Healthwatch North Tyneside to work on our Adult Social Care research separately funded by North Tyneside Council. In February, we said goodbye to Jo Brown, our Research and Engagement officer. Jo’s skill, creativity and passion will be missed as will her care and support for everyone. Finally, Mary Low joined our staff team as our new Insight and Engagement Officer in March 2020 - you can see Mary on page 14.

I’d like to thank our team of staff, volunteers and trustees for their hard work and support throughout the year. And finally I’d like to thank the people of North Tyneside who have taken the time to share their views and experiences with us so that services can be improved for everyone.”

Healthwatch North Tyneside
The Parks Sports Centre
Howdon Road
North Shields
NE29 6TL

Telephone: 0191 263 5321

Email: info@hwnt.co.uk

Website: www.hwnt.co.uk

Twitter: @HWNTyneside

Facebook: HealthwatchNT

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you need this report in an alternative format please contact us.

Registered Charity Number: 1160753

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