



Our year, your trust

Annual report summary
2025-26

Welcome

A year shaped by our people, our communities and our shared purpose

This year has been shaped by both challenge and progress.

Across Torbay and South Devon, demand continues to grow, more people are living with complex needs, often supported day to day by family members, carers and friends, and the environment we are working in remains financially and operationally constrained.

We serve communities with very different needs - from areas of significant deprivation to more rural and coastal communities where access, travel and isolation can all affect health and wellbeing. That context matters, because it shapes both the pressures people face and the way we need to deliver care.

And yet, through the commitment of our people and the strength of our partnerships, we have continued to take important steps forward - improving services, investing in our estate, embracing new technology, and strengthening the way we work together.

This has been a year where we have not simply responded to pressure, but where we have started to lay the foundations for a different future.

We have also taken time to reflect on who we are - marking 50 years of Castle Circus Health Centre, over 40 years of our Women's Health Unit and 80 years of our wonderful Torbay Hospital Nurses League.

These milestones remind us that our services are rooted in our communities - shaped by generations of people who have cared, volunteered and given their time.

At the heart of everything we do is our shared vision: supporting every person, family and community we serve to live well and recognising the role that families and carers play in that vision every day.

If you'd like to take a look at our full annual report visit www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk



Joe Teape
Chief Executive



Dr Martin Beaman
Chair

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Living well in our neighbourhoods

The biggest shift we are making is moving care closer to home.

This means strengthening community services, supporting people to recover more quickly, and making it easier to access help earlier — often before problems become more serious.

Over the past year, we've continued to invest in the places, teams and partnerships that make that possible.



It's a fantastic service and team were welcoming and incredibly kind. They listened to me and helped me to get back on my feet and become independent. With their help, I was able to walk again, prepare my own meals and build up the confidence to return to my normal routine.

Feedback about the new Harbour Service

St Edmunds: a community health hub

The refurbishment of St Edmunds Community Health Centre has transformed a traditional clinic base into a modern, flexible community hub.

With new clinical rooms, group spaces and improved working environments, the site now brings together a wide range of services — including speech and language therapy, bladder and bowel services for children, reablement, community nursing and mental health support.

Just as importantly, it has created space for more community-led wellbeing activity, helping people access support earlier and in ways that feel more natural.

This is what care closer to home looks like in practice — more connected, more accessible, and shaped around people's lives.

Prevention in everyday places

We have continued to bring preventative care into community settings.

Simple interventions - such as blood pressure monitors in libraries - are helping people understand their health earlier and take action where needed.

Alongside this, we have been expanding screening programmes, including lung cancer screening, as well as established bowel and breast screening.

These programmes are about catching illness earlier, when treatment can be more effective, and reducing the need for more complex care later.

Living well in our neighbourhoods

Supporting recovery and independence

Over the past year, we have strengthened how we support people to recover outside of an acute hospital setting - helping more people regain independence in the right environment for their needs.

The first full year of the Jack Sears Rehabilitation Centre has shown what can be achieved when rehabilitation is built into the pathway, not added on at the end.

The centre supports people who no longer need hospital care but are not yet ready to return home - providing focused, therapy-led rehabilitation to help them regain strength, mobility and confidence.

Alongside this, we launched The Harbour at Newton Abbot Community Hospital in October 2025 - a new service designed to support older people living with frailty.

Since opening, The Harbour has received more than 750 calls, helping more people access timely, holistic assessment and diagnostics closer to home.

For many people, this now means they do not need to come into hospital at all - instead receiving assessment, tests and treatment on the same day, or being supported at home with input from clinical teams, depending on what they need.

Together, these services mean more people can be supported closer to home, while others are helped to recover and regain their independence when they do need care.



Supporting people beyond treatment

We have continued to strengthen support for people beyond treatment, including community cancer wellbeing events and peer support.

These services provide space for people to connect, share experiences and access practical and emotional support - recognising that recovery and wellbeing don't end when treatment finishes.



I was slightly nervous when I was told I was ready to return home, but knowing I had phone support if I needed it really reduced my anxiety and reassured me that I wasn't alone; being able to sleep in my own bed again was the best feeling.



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue uniform with a red stethoscope, is driving a car. She is looking out the window to the right. The car's interior, including the steering wheel with a BMW logo, is visible. The background shows a blurred outdoor scene with greenery and a building.

“My husband and I would like to take a moment to recognise the incredible work of our community nurses. Their dedication, compassion, and professional care often go unnoticed, but they are absolutely vital to the health and wellbeing of so many.”

Reimagining acute and specialist care

While more care is being delivered closer to home, our hospitals remain a vital part of how we support people - particularly for urgent, complex and specialist care.

Over the past year, we have continued to invest in our hospital services - improving environments, increasing capacity and supporting better patient flow.

Emergency Department redevelopment

We have made continued progress in redeveloping our Emergency Department - one of the most significant investments we are making.

The first two phases of works are already making a difference, improving space, patient flow and the environment for both patients and colleagues - with the work due to be completed in June 2026.

This matters in the context we are working in. Demand for urgent care continues to grow, and having the right space and layout is essential to providing safe, timely care.

Increasing capacity for planned care

Alongside urgent care, we have focused on increasing capacity for planned treatment.

Refurbishment and expansion of our day case theatres - including ophthalmology - is enabling more patients to be treated more quickly, often on the same day.

This is improving the experience for patients, while also helping us reduce waiting times and make better use of theatre capacity.

Strengthening specialist services

We have also continued to invest in specialist services, including oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMFS).

This has included building work at Torbay Hospital to create the right environment for these services to grow — improving clinical space and supporting more modern ways of working for teams.

This matters for our communities. By strengthening these services locally, more people can access specialist care closer to home, reducing the need to travel and making it easier to stay connected to family and support networks during treatment.

Reimagining acute and specialist care



Spencer: modernising pharmacy services
The introduction of Spencer, our new automated pharmacy robot, is improving how we manage medicines.

Replacing a system that had been in place for many years, it is helping improve accuracy and speed in dispensing, while supporting better integration with our electronic patient record.

Crucially, this is not just about efficiency - it is helping reduce delays in discharge and freeing up pharmacy teams to spend more time supporting patients directly.



Recognising the generosity of our communities

This year, we unveiled the Seagrass Meadow organ donor memorial at Torbay Hospital.

For many families, organ donation leaves a lasting impact - and until now, there hasn't been a dedicated space locally to recognise that.

Creating this memorial here, within the hospital, provides somewhere people can come to remember, reflect and feel that those decisions and those lives are recognised.

It is also a quiet reminder, at the heart of our hospital, of the generosity within our community - and the difference that organ donation continues to make to so many lives.



Torbay Hospital runs on teamwork, compassion and a lot of graft. I was someone who barely needed healthcare, and now here I am in middle age with a chronic condition, visiting hospital almost monthly. It's given me a whole new level of respect and appreciation for the NHS and the people who keep it going, often under huge pressure.

Joined-up care, every step of the way

One of the biggest challenges people face is moving between services.

Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen how care is coordinated across hospital, community services, adult social care and voluntary organisations - supporting safer discharge, clearer communication and better continuity at home.

A reset in our partnership arrangements

We have taken the decision to serve notice on our current Section 75 partnership arrangements for adult social care in Torbay.

This was a carefully considered decision.

The current arrangements have supported integration for many years, but they are no longer the right model for the future.

Serving notice creates the opportunity to design new arrangements with our partners that are clearer, more sustainable and better aligned to the model of care we are building together.

Preparing for Epic: getting ready for a different way of working

Over the past year, colleagues across all our services have been preparing for the introduction of our new electronic patient record, Epic.

This has been one of the biggest changes we've ever undertaken — not just introducing a new system, but rethinking how we work.

Teams have spent time redesigning pathways, improving how information flows between services and working through what this will mean in practice for day-to-day care.

We went live with Epic on 03 April 2026, just after the end of the reporting period — a milestone that reflects a huge amount of work behind the scenes.

Over time, having a single record will support how we coordinate care day to day - helping colleagues access the right information at the right time and reducing the need for people to repeat their story.

MY CARE: making it easier to stay connected

For patients, one of the most practical changes our new EPR brings is MY CARE - a secure app and website that people can use to view parts of their record, including appointments and test results.

It also supports proxy access, so a family member, trusted friend or carer can help someone manage their appointments and information where that's needed.

And, over time, it will reduce the volume of letters people receive, with more information shared through MY CARE (supported by text and email), making it easier to keep track of care.



Clinical Station

I was made to feel at ease immediately despite being very nervous and your team provided just the right level of humour and distraction when needed.

I felt comfortable from the moment I entered and really can't praise your team enough for making this experience as good as it could have been.

Smart use of technology for better care

Technology is part of everyday care - but what matters is how it fits around people's lives and supports better outcomes. The examples below range from established tools that are becoming part of routine care, to newer approaches we are testing and learning from.

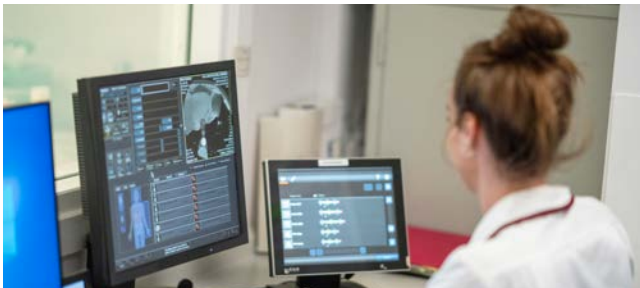
MyRecovery: supporting people before and after surgery

The MyRecovery app is supporting people having hip and knee surgery - both in the run up to their operation and once they return home.

Before surgery, it helps people understand what to expect and how to prepare.

After surgery, it provides tailored guidance, exercises and reminders to support recovery at home.

This kind of support helps people feel more prepared, more informed and more confident at every stage — not just when they are in hospital.



New approaches to managing chronic pain

We have also introduced immersive virtual reality (VR) therapy as part of our work with people living with chronic pain.

Over the past 18 months, around 50 patients have taken part in this work with our Pain Rehabilitation Team.

Using a headset, people are guided through immersive environments where they are encouraged to move and engage in gentle activity. The focus is not on the pain itself, but on building confidence, movement and new ways of managing symptoms.

For some people, this has helped them move more freely and rely less on medication, alongside their existing treatment.

It's still a developing area, but it offers another way of supporting people whose experience of pain can be complex and long-standing.

Making sure no one is left behind

As we make more use of digital tools, we are clear that access needs to be fair.

Digital exclusion isn't just about age or confidence. For many people in our communities, it's about whether they can afford the data or connection needed to get online - something we know is an issue in areas of deprivation locally.

Through our partnership with the Good Things Foundation, we've been providing free SIM cards with data to people on low incomes who otherwise struggle to get online.

It's a practical offer, but it's rooted in a bigger point: if digital is going to support better care, it has to be accessible - and we need to keep designing around real life, not ideal circumstances.



I had a procedure and thought it was dealt with by the same doctor from start to finish, but it was dealt with by people who work in departments that deal with biopsies and bloods and diagnose our illnesses.

Your work is unseen, but results are received thanks to your dedication

Caring, skilled people ready for tomorrow

Everything we've achieved this year comes back to our people.

Across our hospitals, our neighbourhoods and our communities, colleagues have continued to show up - often in difficult circumstances - to care for others, support each other and keep services moving.

That's not something we take for granted.

It's what makes everything else possible.

We're a large and diverse organisation, with more than 6,500 colleagues working across health and social care, supported by a strong and committed volunteering community.

Behind every number is a person, a team, and a contribution that really matters to the people we serve.

And this year, more than ever, we have seen what that looks like in practice.

Opening doors into health and care

We've continued to take seriously our role as a major local employer - not just in filling roles, but in creating opportunities for people who might not otherwise see a way into health and care.

One of the strongest examples of this is our partnership with The Open University, which is giving more local people the opportunity to train as nurses while staying in the communities they live in.

For many, this has removed barriers that would previously have made it impossible - whether that's cost, travel, or family responsibilities.

It's a different way of growing our workforce, but it reflects who we are: practical, inclusive, and rooted in our communities.

Building confidence early

The same principle runs through our work experience programme.

This year, that work was recognised nationally with an NHS England Silver Award — but what matters more is what sits behind it.

Across the organisation, colleagues have made time — often in busy services — to welcome students, explain what they do, and help people imagine themselves working here one day.

It's easy to underestimate how powerful that is.

For some, it's the first time they've seen what's possible. For others, it's the moment something clicks.

And that kind of quiet, everyday support is what builds the workforce we'll need in the future.



Caring, skilled people ready for tomorrow

Recognising what good care feels like

We've also continued to celebrate our people - not just for what they deliver, but for how they make people feel.

Our Our People Awards bring this to life in a way nothing else quite can.

What stands out each year isn't the scale of what people have done - it's the consistency of compassion, kindness and professionalism across the organisation.

The stories people share - from patients, families and colleagues - are often simple, but powerful:

- being listened to
- feeling safe
- being treated with dignity at the right moment.

Those are the things people remember - and they're the things our colleagues deliver, day in and day out.

Volunteers: the difference people bring

Alongside our people, our volunteers continue to bring something unique.

They give their time freely - offering support, reassurance and connection in ways that make a real difference to patients and families.

Whether it's helping someone find their way around hospital, sitting with someone who would otherwise be alone, or supporting mealtimes - these aren't small things. They shape how care feels.

And they reflect something wider about the place we serve - a community that steps forward to support each other.



Supporting our people to keep going

We also know that caring for others comes with a cost - particularly in a year like this.

Supporting our people to stay well, to develop, and to continue to do their jobs safely and sustainably matters. There's more to do here. We're realistic about that.

But what we have seen this year is a community of colleagues that continues to look out for each other, to adapt, and to keep going - even when it's hard.

That says a lot about who our people are.



Caring, skilled people ready for tomorrow

If our strategy is about the future of care, then our people are the ones who will make it happen.

That means continuing to invest in skills, creating opportunities for local people, and making sure this is somewhere people can build a career, not just have a job.

But it also means holding onto what already sets us apart: the commitment, the compassion, and the sense of shared purpose we see every day.





Welcome to CASTLE CIRCUS HEALTH CENTRE

A huge thank you to the amazing podiatry team at Castle Circus Health Clinic.

The team is, without exception, compassionate experts who have helped my mother for many years

Research and innovation

Research plays an important role in how we improve care - giving people access to new treatments and helping shape what care looks like in the future.

This year, we have continued to build on our strong track record in clinical research, with local people taking part in studies that are making a difference nationally and internationally.

Leading research from Torbay

At Torbay Hospital, we became the first site in the UK to open a major breast cancer clinical trial - the Trans-EndoNET study.

This research is exploring how insulin levels influence the effectiveness of hormone therapy in the most common form of breast cancer - an important question that could improve treatment and reduce recurrence in the future.

Alongside this, we are the only site in the South West taking part in the NHS Cancer Vaccine Launch Pad.

Through this programme, patients in our community can be matched to trials of personalised cancer vaccines, including studies for colorectal and head and neck cancers.

These investigational vaccines use mRNA technology to help the immune system

recognise and target cancer cells more effectively.

This means that people in Torbay and South Devon can access emerging treatments and trials locally, without needing to travel elsewhere.

We have also continued to take part in major national studies, including the Chariot MS trial.

This study focuses on people with advanced multiple sclerosis, testing whether a treatment can help slow the loss of arm and hand function - something that has a direct impact on independence and day-to-day life.

Importantly, it includes people who have often not been eligible for research studies in the past, helping to widen access to new treatments and support.

Research that makes a difference locally

These studies give local people the opportunity to take part in research without needing to travel elsewhere, while also ensuring our teams are actively involved in developing new approaches to care.

We continue to be one of the highest recruiters to cancer trials nationally, reflecting both the scale of our research activity and the commitment of colleagues across our services.

Taken together, this means that people in Torbay and South Devon are not only receiving care - they are helping shape what care will look like in the future.



From the early pregnancy team to the surgical team, everyone explained everything so well and took such care and time to answer my questions and concerns.

Everybody who I came into contact with went above and beyond for me, I was so well looked after and cared for, with such sensitivity and kindness. You all truly do not get enough recognition for what you do.

Our money

We operate in a challenging financial environment.

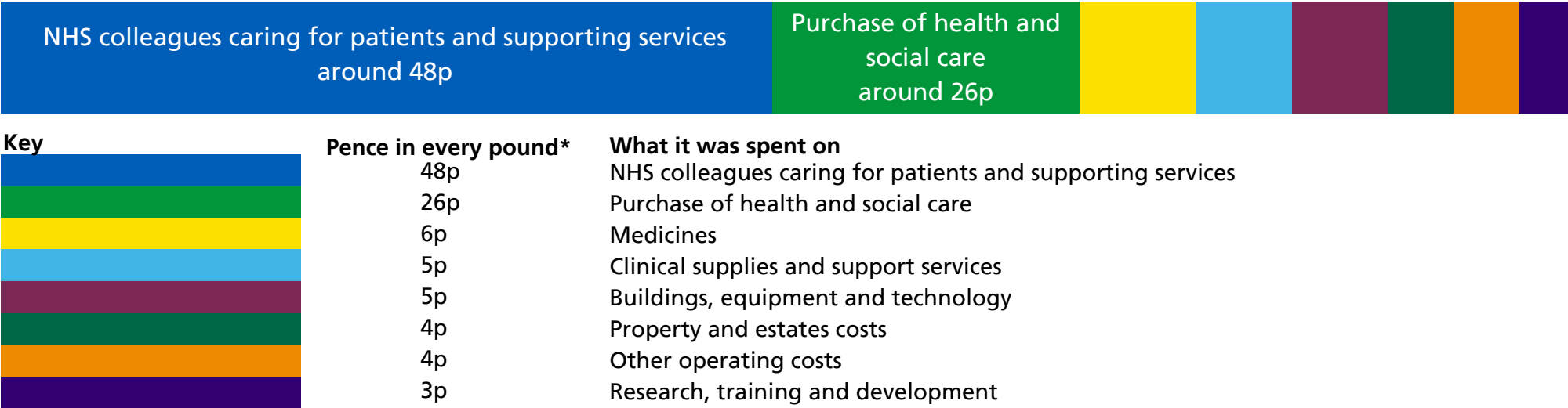
Rising demand, workforce pressures and the cost of maintaining our estate mean we must make careful decisions about how we use public money.

- This year, we have:
- delivered significant efficiency savings
 - continued to invest in priority areas such as estates, theatres and digital
 - strengthened our focus on productivity and value

We have also had to make difficult choices about how we prioritise, balancing day-to-day pressures with the need to invest for the long term.

Financial discipline is essential - not as an end in itself, but as the foundation for sustaining high-quality care and supporting the improvements our communities need.

In 2025/6 we spent £814.2million delivering care and support across Torbay and South Devon. For every £1 we spent:





It's a real privilege to support the hospital in this way.

Every donation reflects the generosity of our local community and a shared desire to do something extra for patients and families when they need it most.

Torbay Hospital League of Friends

Our charity and community support

Our Torbay and South Devon NHS Charity continues to play an important role in supporting patients, families and colleagues - funding things that go beyond core NHS provision, but make a real difference to how care feels.

This year, that has included investment in improving our environments and supporting care in practical, often very personal ways - often at the point people need it most.

Across our services, charitable funding has helped provide things like specialist chairs in physiotherapy to support people to mobilise more independently, equipment for urgent community response teams so care can be delivered safely at home and sensory tools and portable projectors to help reduce anxiety and promote relaxation for children receiving palliative and end of life care.

It has also supported more personalised aspects of care - from essential oils to help manage nausea and changes in appetite during cancer treatment, to memory boxes and resources that support families at the most difficult times.

This work sits alongside the generous support of our eight Leagues of Friends, who are independent charities with their own long-standing commitment to supporting our hospitals and services. A huge thanks to our Leagues of Friends from Ashburton, Brixham, Dawlish, Newton Abbot, Paignton, Teignmouth, Torbay and Totnes and to our Torbay Hospital Nurses League.

We are also grateful to local organisations, including Rotary groups and wider community partners, who continue to give their time, funding and energy in ways that directly benefit patients and colleagues.

Together, this reflects something important about the place we serve - a shared commitment to improving care, and people stepping forward to make a difference.





Looking ahead

As we move forward, we do so with a clear direction.

Our strategy sets out how we will:

- strengthen care in communities
- modernise hospital services
- use technology to support better care
- invest in our people

There is more change ahead - and we know it won't always be easy.

But we will approach it in the same way we always have: by working together, listening to our communities, and staying focused on what matters most.

Because everything we do comes back to one shared purpose:

supporting every person, family and community we serve to live well.



Torbay+
South Devon
NHS Charity

I'm helping
to make
things better

NEWTON ABBOT COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

“A huge thank you for going the extra mile for me. You really put me at the heart of matter, trying to find ways to ease my pain. I’m not sure everyone would have had the level of concern and empathy you showed to me. I really appreciate everything you have done for me.”



If you would like to read our annual report and accounts in full, visit www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk

For more information, or if you would like this document provided in a different language or format, please contact:

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