



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

About this survey

Dumfries and Galloway's Integration Joint Board are a public body responsible for planning health and social care in the region. As part of their work, they asked for a review of maternity services in Wigtownshire. The Clenoch Suite at Galloway Community Hospital was temporarily suspended in 2018 due to staffing pressures.

A review took place earlier this year and was led by independent health professionals. Two preferred options for birthing services were identified in the review and the Integration Joint Board want to find out what people think about them. They have now asked a team from NHS Dumfries and Galloway to carry out a consultation.

The consultation team are asking people, groups and organisations what they think about these options to help the Integration Joint Board decide what happens in the future.

This survey is one of the ways that you can share your views about maternity services. It will take around 10-15 minutes to complete (depending on how much detail you want to give). Any information that you provide in this survey will be analysed by Sleeping Giants and shared with the consultation team. The findings will be presented in a report for the Integration Joint Board. Sleeping Giants - a social enterprise in Dumfries and Galloway - have been asked to run this survey by the consultation team. The survey will be available to complete until 5pm on 11th February 2023.

The survey does not ask you to provide your name so that you can tell us what you think without being identified.

If you start the survey but don't complete it, we'll use the answers you have given unless you contact us and ask us not to before the 11th February 2024. This is when we'll close the survey and start analysing the responses.

Further information about how we will use and store your answers is available here [\[link\]](#).

The words women and woman (and mums / mothers) are used in this survey, recognising that this reflects the biology and identity of the great majority of those who are childbearing. Here, these terms include girls, and people whose gender identity does not correspond with their birth sex or who may have a non-binary identity. All those using maternity care and services should receive

individualised, respectful care including use of the gender nouns and pronouns.

**If you have any questions about the consultation, please email
dgcommunications@nhs.scot**

*** Before you begin the survey:**

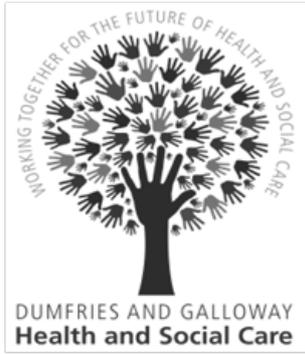
- Please tick this box to confirm that:
- you understand how your survey answers will be used and that you're happy to take part
 - if you are under 16 years of age, you have your parent or guardian's consent to take part



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Which of the following best describe you and your interest in maternity services?

- A family member has accessed maternity services in Dumfries and Galloway in the last 10 years
- I know someone that has accessed maternity services in Dumfries and Galloway in the last 10 years
- I have accessed maternity services in Dumfries and Galloway in the last 10 years
- I'm planning to have a baby in the future
- I work in health and social care in Dumfries and Galloway
- Other (please write in):



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Maternity services accessed

Where did you or your family member access maternity services in Dumfries and Galloway in the last 10 years?

- Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary
- Galloway Community Hospital (Clenoch Birthing Suite)
- Oak Tree Family Centre, Stranraer
- GP surgery
- At home
- Another service (please write in)

In what year did you or your family member access these services? If services have been used in more than one year, please tell us when you last accessed them.



Maternity Services in Wigtonshire

About this consultation

The questions in this survey ask about the two options being considered by the Integration Joint Board for maternity services in Wigtonshire. The information on the following pages of the survey explain how:

- maternity services are currently delivered
- why the review of maternity services is taking place
- how the two options have been chosen
- what the two options are

The care mothers receive before, during and after birth depends on whether their pregnancy and birth are high or low risk.

By low risk, we mean pregnancies where the mother:

- Is having one baby that is developing normally to 'term' (37-42 weeks) and is in a head down position.
- Has no significant medical or other conditions and has been healthy and well throughout the pregnancy.

By high risk, we mean pregnancies where the mother:

- Has a higher body mass index.
- Is giving birth later in life.
- Has had previous complications during pregnancy.
- Has current or previous medical conditions.
- Is carrying more than one baby or a baby that is not developing normally or is in a breech position.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

14% of the Wigtownshire population are women of childbearing age.

The number of pregnancies across Wigtownshire is falling but the percentage of pregnancies that are high risk has been increasing.

In 2021, approximately three out of four births in Wigtownshire were considered to be high risk.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Where care is provided now

Before and after birth

The Oak Tree Family Centre in Stranraer provides midwife led care for both low risk and high risk pregnancies before and after birth. This includes scheduled ultrasound scans and parenthood education classes. Being able to provide this service locally means that people don't have to travel to other locations.

Care might be provided by staff at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary if the pregnancy is more complicated.

After birth, care can often be delivered at home if there are no complications.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Where care is provided now

During birth

Mothers with low risk births can choose to have a planned midwife led home birth.

In the event of an emergency or urgent transfer during a home birth, mothers would be transported by ambulance to Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary for more specialist care and support. It can take up to two hours to travel to the hospital from some parts of Wigtownshire.

Mothers with low risk, planned births can also choose to have their baby in Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary.

All mothers with a planned and unplanned high risk birth are recommended to have their baby at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary where they will be looked after by senior doctors if needed. A neonatal unit will look after very unwell babies. This specialist care isn't available at Galloway Community Hospital and has never been provided there.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Why maternity services in Wigtownshire are being reviewed



Birth rates are falling

Between 2012 and 2021, pregnancies across Dumfries and Galloway fell by 19% and by 34% in Wigtownshire.



Very few mothers gave birth in Stranraer

Only 17 mothers gave birth in the Clenoch Birth Suite in Galloway Community Hospital in 2017. Most mothers in Wigtownshire chose to give birth in Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary because of personal preference or a high risk pregnancy.



The Clenoch Birth Suite was temporarily suspended in 2018

The birthing suite in Galloway Community Hospital was temporarily suspended because of staffing pressures.



Covid-19 pandemic

The home birth service was suspended across the region during the pandemic. Although this has now re-started, it's a good time to ask people what they need from services post-Covid.



Requests by members of the public

Some local people and councillors asked the Integration Joint Board to think about how maternity services could be delivered in the future.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

An independent review of maternity services

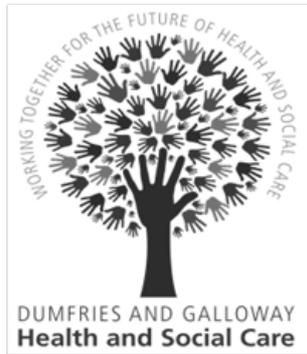
The review of maternity services earlier this year heard from people in Wigtownshire. Some of the key points raised were:

- Communication: women called for clearer information about which services are available and who they should contact for support (local midwives or Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary).
- Travel: it was thought that too many journeys to Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary were being made. Women were concerned about giving birth on the way to the Infirmary or being told to go home if they arrived in early labour.
- Staff: recruitment issues were raised. Also, the staff members consulted supported providing choice but wanted clear pathways for local midwife led care and referrals to Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary.

These conversations were used to create several different options for maternity services. A panel of independent health professionals reviewed these options and considered:

- Their safety and quality.
- Whether they could be delivered with the staff and money available.
- Whether they could be delivered in the longer term.

Two options were given similar scores and the Integration Joint Board recommended that both of these options were taken out to a public consultation so that people could influence the decision.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

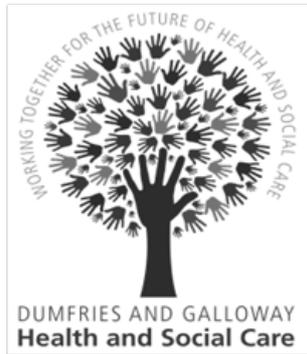
Option 1

This is the same as the current maternity service arrangements. It provides midwife led care and support for pre-planned, low risk births which take place at home.

All other services would be delivered as they are now:

- All high risk and unplanned births would still be recommended to take place at Dumfries and Galloway Infirmary. This is where the most specialist care can be provided for both mothers and babies.
- This would include overnight hospital stays at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary for urgent and unplanned care.
- Care before and after birth will remain the same as it is now and will either be provided at home, the Oaktree Family Centre in Stranraer or, for more complicated cases, at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary.

This option can be delivered with the current Dumfries and Galloway midwifery workforce and budget.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

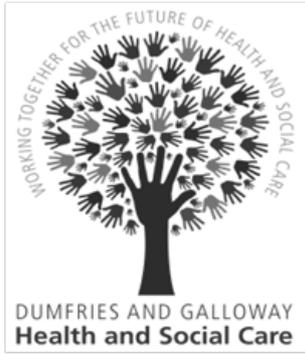
Option 2

Option 2 would provide the same level of midwife led care and support for pre-planned, low risk births but give women the choice on whether they have their baby at home or in the Galloway Community Hospital. No midwives are based at Galloway Community Hospital (which is why only planned births could take place in the hospital) and women who have their baby here would be expected to go home within a few hours of giving birth.

All other services will be delivered as they are now and in the same way as in Option 1:

- All high risk and unplanned births would still be recommended to take place at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary. This is where the most specialist care can be provided for both mothers and babies.
- This would include overnight hospital stays at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary for urgent and unplanned care.
- Care before and after birth will remain the same as it is now and will either be provided at home, the Oaktree Family Centre in Stranraer or, for more complicated cases, at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary.

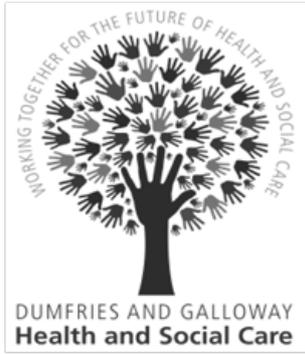
This option would cost more because there would be a one-off cost of approximately £103,000 to set up a birthing suite at Galloway Community Hospital. Option 2 can be delivered with the current Dumfries and Galloway midwifery workforce and budget.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

What's different about the two options

	What happens now	What would happen in Option 1	What would happen in Option 2
A home birth service for pre-planned, low risk births. Care is midwife led.	✓	✓	✓
A birth service at the Galloway Community Hospital for pre-planned, low risk births. Care would be midwife led. Women would return home within a few hours of giving birth.	✗	✗	✓
High risk and unplanned births would be recommended to take place at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary where more specialist care for both mothers and babies is available.	✓	✓	✓
This would include overnight hospital stays at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary if needed for urgent and unplanned care.	✓	✓	✓
Care and support before and after birth would take place at home, the Oaktree Family Centre in Stranraer or, for more complicated cases, in Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary	✓	✓	✓



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

What do you like about Option 1?

Pre-planned low risk births can take place at home in the same way as now and all other maternity services are delivered as they are now.

What do you like about Option 2?

Pre-planned low risk births can take place at home or in Galloway Community Hospital. All other maternity services are delivered as they are now.



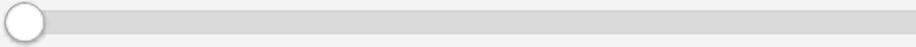
Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

If Option 1 was chosen, how much would this affect you?

In Option 1, pre-planned low risk births can take place at home in the same way as now and all other maternity services are delivered as they are now.

0 - Not at all

10 - A lot





Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

In what way might you be affected if Option 1 is chosen?
If you don't think it will affect you, please go to the next question.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

If Option 2 was chosen, how much would this affect you?

In Option 2, pre-planned low risk births can take place at home or in Galloway Community Hospital. All other maternity services are delivered as they are now.

0 - Not at all

10 - A lot





Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

In what way might you be affected if Option 2 is chosen?
If you don't think it will affect you, please go to the next question.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

What do you think could be improved about Option 1?

Pre-planned low risk births can take place at home in the same way as now and all other maternity services are delivered as they are now.

What do you think could be improved about Option 2?

Pre-planned low risk births can take place at home or in Galloway Community Hospital. All other maternity services are delivered as they are now.



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Is there anything else you'd like to say about maternity services in Wigtownshire?

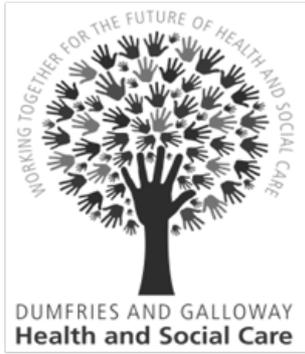


Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

About you

Which of the following best describes your gender?

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say
- I'd prefer to self describe (please write in)



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Have you ever identified as a transgender person?

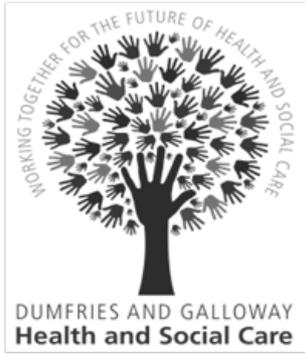
- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Prefer not to say



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

What is your age?

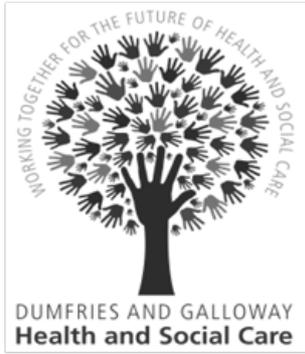
- 0-14 years
- 15-44 years
- 45-64 years
- Over 65 years
- Prefer not to say



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Do you consider yourself disabled?

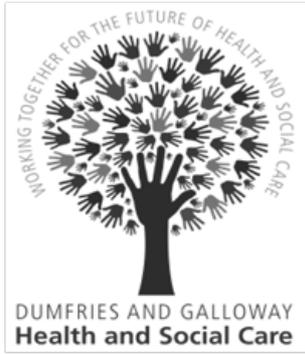
- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Prefer not to say



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Please tell us which of the following affect you:

- Physical disability
- Deafness or partial hearing loss
- Learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia)
- Blindness or partial sight loss
- Long-term illness, disease or condition
- Mental health condition
- Learning disability (e.g. Down's Syndrome)
- Neurodivergent condition (e.g. Autistic Spectrum Disorder or Asperger's Syndrome)
- Prefer not to say
- My condition is not represented here. (Please tell us how you would describe your condition)



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

What is your sexual orientation?

- Bisexual
- Gay or lesbian
- Heterosexual (straight)
- Prefer not to say
- My sexual orientation is not represented here (Please tell us how you would describe your sexual orientation)

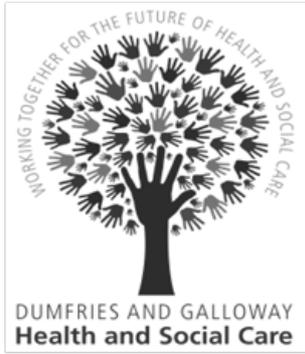


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What is your ethnic group?

- White - Scottish
- White - Other British
- White - Irish
- White - Gypsy or Traveller
- White - Polish
- White - Other white ethnic group (please write in your ethnic group in the comment box below)
- Mixed or multiple ethnic group - any mixed or multiple ethnic group (please write in your ethnic group in the comment box below)
- Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British - Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British
- Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British - Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British
- Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British - Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British
- Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British - Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British
- Asian - Other (please write in your ethnic group in the comment box below)
- African - African, African Scottish or African British
- African - Other (please write in your ethnic group in the comment box below)
- Caribbean or Black - Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British
- Caribbean or Black - Black, Black Scottish or Black British
- Caribbean or Black - Other (please write in your ethnic group in the comment box below)
- Other ethnic group - Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British
- Other ethnic group (please write in your ethnic group in the comment box below)
- Prefer not to say
- My ethnic group is not represented here (please write in your ethnic group in the comment box below)

If your ethnic group is not represented above, please tell us how you would describe it



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

What is your religion or belief?

- Atheist or none
- Christian: Church of Scotland
- Christian: Roman Catholic
- Other Christian
- Baha'i
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Humanist
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Pagan
- Sikh
- Prefer not to say
- My religion or belief is not represented here (please tell us how you would describe your religion or belief)



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Please write in the first part of your postcode. For example, DG9



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

We want to improve the way we consult with people. To help us do that, we'd like to find out what you think of this survey and the information pack. How easy or difficult was it to understand the survey and information pack?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Neither easy nor difficult
- Difficult
- Very difficult

Is there anything we could do to improve the survey and information pack?



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

This survey is part of a wider consultation and there are other ways to have your say. You can find out more about how you can get involved and the scheduled events on the consultation webpage:
<https://dghscp.co.uk/maternity-consultation/>



Maternity Services in Wigtownshire

Thank you for taking the time to tell us what you think.