



## LEAD MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

**DECISIONS** to be made by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment,  
Councillor Claire Dowling

**MONDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2021 AT 10.00 AM**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, LEWES**

**++ THE MEETING WILL BE HELD IN PERSON ++**

### **AGENDA**

1. Decisions made by the Lead Cabinet Member on 22 November 2021 (*Pages 3 - 4*)
2. Disclosure of Interests  
Disclosure by all Members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Members regard the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
3. Urgent items  
Notification of any items which the Lead Member considers urgent and proposes to take at the appropriate part of the agenda.
4. Petition for improved safety measures – Robertson's Hill, Hastings (*Pages 5 - 12*)  
Report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
5. Petition to address road safety concerns at Whatlington Road in Battle (*Pages 13 - 18*)  
Report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
6. Petition for the introduction of a speed restriction for the hamlet of Milton Street, Long Man (*Pages 19 - 36*)  
Report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
7. Updated Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/28 (*Pages 37 - 298*)  
Report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
8. Any urgent items previously notified under agenda item 3

PHILIP BAKER  
Assistant Chief Executive  
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent  
LEWES BN7 1UE

3 December 2021

Contact Simon Bailey, Democratic Services Officer,  
01273 481935  
Email: [simon.bailey@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:simon.bailey@eastsussex.gov.uk)

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## LEAD MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

DECISIONS made by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment on 22 November 2021.

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Councillors Wendy Maples, Julia Hilton, Ian Hollidge, Godfrey Daniel, Georgia Taylor, Sam Adeniji and Johnny Denis spoke on item 5 (see minute 25)

Councillors Wendy Maples and Johnny Denis spoke on item 6 (see minute 26)

### 22. DECISIONS MADE BY THE LEAD CABINET MEMBER ON 25 OCTOBER 2021

22.1 The Lead Member approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2021.

### 23. REPORTS

23.1 Reports referred to in the minutes below are contained in the minute book.

### 24. 40MPH SPEED LIMIT EXTENSION ON THE A2100 LONDON ROAD, BATTLE

24.1 The Lead Member RESOLVED to defer consideration of the petition regarding the extension of the 40mph speed limit on the A2100 London Road, Battle to a future meeting.

#### Reasons

24.2 Since the petition was referred in July 2021, a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) associated with a speed limit reduction for the Lillybank development on the A2100 London Road, Battle, has gone out for informal consultation. A draft TRO for this proposal will be advertised. The Lead Member therefore considered it appropriate to defer consideration of this petition pending the view of the Planning Committee. Any objections are expected to be considered at Planning Committee on 16 February 2022 and the petition will therefore be deferred until the Lead Member for Transport and Environment meeting on 14 March 2022.

### 25. NOTICE OF MOTION: EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S (ESCC) USE OF GLYPHOSATE BASED HERBICIDE TO CONTROL WEEDS ON THE PUBLIC HIGHWAY AND ON ESCC PROPERTY

25.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

#### DECISIONS

25.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to recommend that the County Council rejects the Motion for the reasons set out in the report.

#### Reasons

25.3 The Council is aware of the concerns about Glyphosate, notes the concerns raised by some councillors and residents and is committed to finding an alternative. Meanwhile we ensure that the authority meets its statutory duties of maintaining a safe and usable highway network. There are also difficulties in implementing a complete ban on the use of herbicides on all Council owned land and land managed by the County Council as set out in the report.

25.4 Therefore, at present the Council will continue to safely use a Glyphosate based herbicide, until a suitable alternative becomes available, as it is the most effective and efficient weed control method as an approved licenced product applied in accordance with best practice. Glyphosate is on the list of the Health and Safety Executive's GB Pesticides Regulation Regime licenced and registered products and ESCC is actively researching alternatives, but at present there is no alternative weed maintenance technique that is economically viable.

25.5 There are proposed trials for alternative weed maintenance techniques in 2022 with the aim of working towards introducing new methods as part of the next highways maintenance contract in 2023. It should also be noted that it may not be possible to eliminate the occasional use of herbicides for non-highways use.

## 26. REDUNDANT ASSETS OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE

26.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport.

### DECISIONS

26.2 The Lead Member RESOLVED to:

- (1) note that the proposed phased approach to disposal seeks to ensure that as many items as possible are donated to museums, galleries, and schools to maximise their use for educational purposes;
- (2) note that following an assessment by the County Archivist, artwork of cultural or historical significance to East Sussex will be relocated to The Keep and available to residents to view; and
- (3) approve the disposal of stock from the Schools Library and Museum Service collection.

### Reasons

26.3 The Schools Library and Museum Service (SLAMS) ceased in 2018 following a review of the service during the development of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. However a range of new services were introduced as part of the Council's Children and Young People offer including a library membership specifically for teachers and targeted librarian outreach to areas of need. Following the closure of SLAMS there are over 1,200 items held at Ropemaker Park without the facilities to maintain the collection in the long term or provide access to the public. Artwork of local significance will be moved to The Keep and a proposed phased disposal approach has been developed. The phased approach prioritises the donation to museums, galleries, and schools to maximise use for educational purposes.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Lead Member for Transport and Environment</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>13 December 2021</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Director of Communities, Economy and Transport</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Petition for improved safety measures – Robertson’s Hill, Hastings</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>To consider a petition requesting improved safety measures on Robertson’s Hill, Hastings.</b>

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***RECOMMENDATION: The Lead Member is recommended to advise petitioners that:***

**A potential scheme to provide:**

- ***A one-way system***
- ***A footway outside of Nos. 1-3 Robertson’s Hill,***
- ***Traffic calming measures including a 20mph speed limit, speed bumps, width restriction and/or a priority working system,***

**has been assessed through our approved High Level Sift process and is not a priority for the County Council at the present time; and consideration could be given to an application to the Community Match Initiative for local highway improvements.**

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## **1 Background Information**

1.1. At the County Council meeting on 23 July 2021, a petition was presented to the Chairman by Councillor Godfrey Daniel and Councillor Julia Hilton on behalf of a group of residents of the Robertson’s Hill area of Hastings. The petitioners request improved safety measures on Robertson’s Hill by the introduction of one of the following:

- Implement a one-way system from the bottom of Robertson’s Hill to the top, including Hardwicke Road
- Provide a footway outside of numbers 1, 2 and 3 Robertson’s Hill.
- Implement traffic calming measures including a 20mph speed limit, speed bumps, a width restriction and/or a priority working system.

1.2. A copy of the petition is available in the Members’ Room. Standing Orders provide that where the Chairman considers it appropriate, petitions are considered by the relevant Committee or Lead Member and a spokesperson for the petitioners is invited to address the Committee. The Chairman has referred this petition to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment.

## **2 Supporting Information**

2.1. Robertson’s Hill is covered by a 30mph speed limit as indicated by the system of street lighting in the road. It is a residential road with a footway on the western side. The properties fronting Robertson’s Hill are on the opposite side of the road to the footway. A location plan and site images can be found at Appendix 1.

2.2. Crash data supplied by Sussex Police for the period 01/10/2018 – 30/09/2021 shows that there have been no crashes resulting in personal injury within Robertson's Hill, with two slight injury crashes recorded at the junction with the A259. The location of these crashes is shown at Appendix 2 by the green squares.

2.3. The County Council has a limited amount of funding to develop local transport improvements and we need to ensure that we target our resources to those schemes which will be of greatest benefit to our local communities. To help us prioritise the numerous requests received for improvements, we developed a process to determine which schemes should be funded through our Integrated Transport Programme. The request for a one-way system, a footway outside Nos. 1-3 Robertson's Hill, a 20mph speed limit and associated traffic calming measures and/or a width restriction have been assessed to determine if they might be a priority for further consideration. The proposal(s) did not meet the benchmark score to enable them to be taken forward.

2.4. In relation to concerns about dangerous or anti-social driving, or vehicles travelling in excess of the speed limit, residents are advised to contact Sussex Police via the Operation Crackdown scheme. Residents are also advised to consider using the Community Speed Watch programme.

2.5 Whilst the introduction of improved safety measures on Robertson's Hill is not a priority for the County Council at the present time, an application through the Community Match Initiative could be considered. It is therefore suggested that the residents contact Hastings Borough Council to see whether they would support an investigation into the feasibility of the introduction of such measures. Details of the Community Match Initiative and the costs associated with a feasibility study and speed surveys can be provided if required.

### **3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1. It is recommended that the Lead Member for Transport and Environment agrees that the implementation of a one-way system, 20mph speed restriction with associated traffic calming and a width restriction, as requested by the petitioners, is not presently a priority for funding from the County Council's budget.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Victoria Bartholomew

Tel. No. 01424 724284

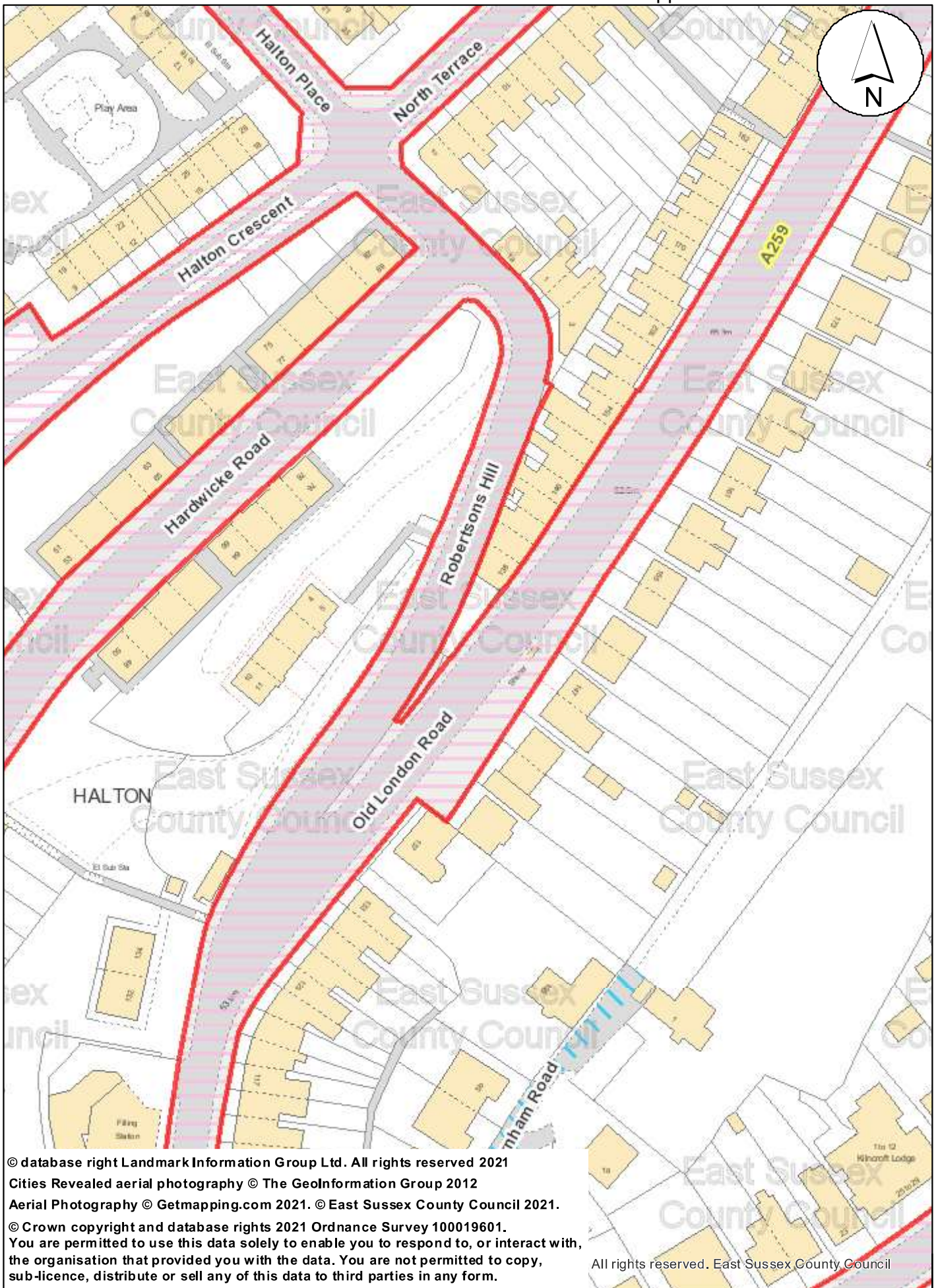
Email: Victoria.Bartholomew@eastsussex.gov.uk

#### **LOCAL MEMBERS**

Councillor Hilton

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None







Robertsons Hill, Hastings – eastbound  
view towards Hardwicke Road



Robertsons Hill, Hastings – eastbound  
view from Hardwicke Road to property Nos. 1-3



Robertsons Hill, Hastings –  
southbound view towards Old  
London Road



Robertsons Hill, Hastings –  
north-eastbound view from Old  
London Road





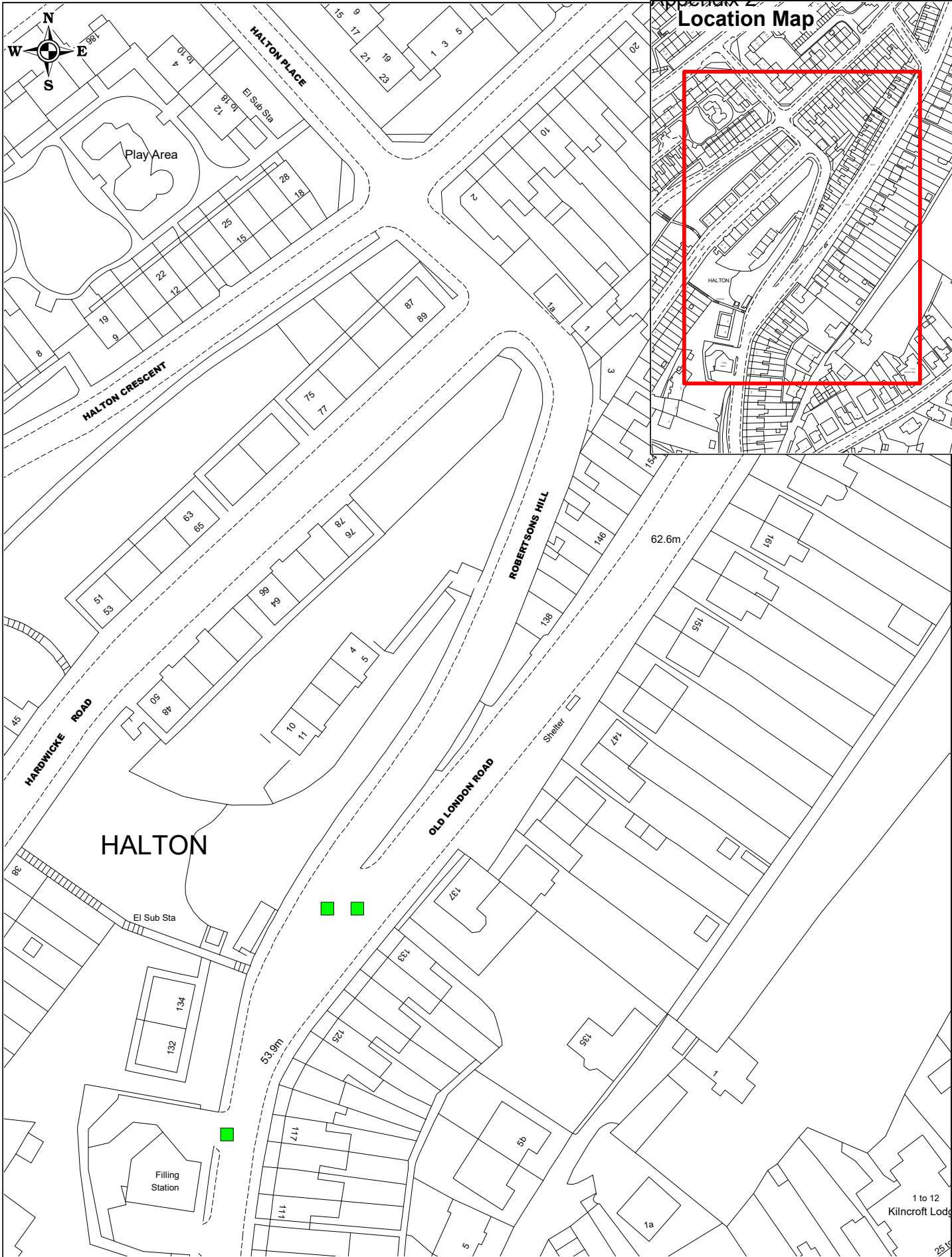
Robertsons Hill, Hastings – northbound  
view towards property Nos. 1-3



Robertsons Hill, Hastings – northbound  
view towards Hardwicke Road



Appendix 2  
Location Map



Robertsons Hill, Hastings - crash map

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Lead Member for Transport &amp; Environment</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>13 December 2021</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Director of Communities, Economy and Transport</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Petition to address Road Safety concerns at Whatlington Road, Battle.</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>To consider a petition for East Sussex County Council to urgently address speeding and overtaking along Whatlington Road in Battle from Caldbec Hill to Punchbowl Corner.</b>

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**Recommendation:** *The Lead Member is recommended to advise the petitioners that:*

- (1) A potential scheme to reduce vehicle speeds and overtaking is not a priority for the County Council at the present time; and**
  - (2) Petitioners and Battle Town Council may wish to consider taking a potential scheme forward through the Community Match Initiative. A Feasibility Study (at a cost of £500) would be required prior to a Community Match application.**
- 

## **1 Background Information**

1.1 At the County Council meeting on 23 July 2021, a petition was presented to the Chairman by Councillor Kathryn Field on behalf of residents concerned about road safety on Whatlington Road, Battle, requesting that *“the council urgently look at issues of speeding and overtaking along Whatlington Road from Caldbec Hill to Punchbowl Corner”*. A plan showing the length of Whatlington Road where concerns have been expressed is attached in Appendix 1.

1.2 A copy of the petition is available in the Members’ Room. Standing Orders provide that where the Chairman considers it appropriate, petitions are considered by the relevant Committee or Lead Member and a spokesperson for the petitioners is invited to address the Committee. The Chairman has referred this petition to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment.

1.3 The section of Whatlington Road from Caldbec Hill to Oakhurst Road (just to the south of Punchbowl Corner) is subject to a 30mph speed limit and is a straight section of road. The speed limit changes to 40mph from Oakhurst Road for the remaining length of Whatlington Road and includes the bends by Punchbowl Corner to the north of Oakhurst Road. A 7.5 tonnes weight restriction with an ‘Except for Access’ provision is in place on Whatlington Road from the junction with Virgins Lane in Battle to the junction with Riccards Lane in Whatlington.

1.4 The crash data supplied by Sussex Police for the most recent three-year period (up to 30/09/2021) does not show any recorded personal injury crashes on the section of Whatlington Road from Caldbec Hill to a point north of the bends at Punchbowl Corner (by a property called 'Olde Wayes').

## **2. Supporting Information**

2.1 The County Council has a limited amount of funding to develop local transport improvements and we need to ensure that we target our resources to those schemes which will be of greatest benefit to our local communities. To help us prioritise the numerous requests received for improvements, we developed a process to determine which schemes should be funded through our Integrated Transport Programme.

2.2 A request to install priority working build-outs/chicanes to reduce vehicle speeds on the straight section of Whatlington Road between Virgins Lane and the bends by Punchbowl Corner was made by Councillor Field in July 2021 and was assessed to determine if it was a priority to be funded through our Integrated Transport Programme. A potential scheme on this section of Whatlington Road was not identified as a priority for funding.

2.3 The use of double white line systems is strictly controlled by national guidance and would only be considered in instances where forward visibility is severely restricted and/or there is a significant personal injury crash record involving overtaking manoeuvres. It is not appropriate to install double white line systems on all roads where bends are present. The national guidance makes it clear that the emphasis should always be not to provide double white lines unless they are clearly justified.

2.4 Visibility on the section of Whatlington Road between Caldbec Hill and Punchbowl Corner, where speeding and overtaking is of concern, is very good as this is a straight section of road. There have been no crashes involving overtaking reported to Sussex Police on this section of road in the last twenty years. A double white line system to prohibit overtaking is therefore not appropriate. The issue of overtaking on this straight section of road may be positively influenced by the introduction of some form of traffic calming/priority working scheme.

2.5 The Community Match Initiative is a possible way forward should the Town Council and the local community identify this stretch of road as a priority for them to part fund a traffic calming/priority working scheme to reduce vehicle speeds and overtaking.

## **3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 It is recommended that the Lead Member for Transport & Environment agrees that the installation of measures to reduce vehicle speeds and overtaking is not presently a priority for funding from the County Council's road safety budget. However, appropriate improvements could be considered should an alternative source of income become available or if an application through Community Match was successful.

**RUPERT CLUBB**

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Helen Pain  
Tel. No. 0345 6080193  
Email: Helen.Pain@eastsussex.gov.uk

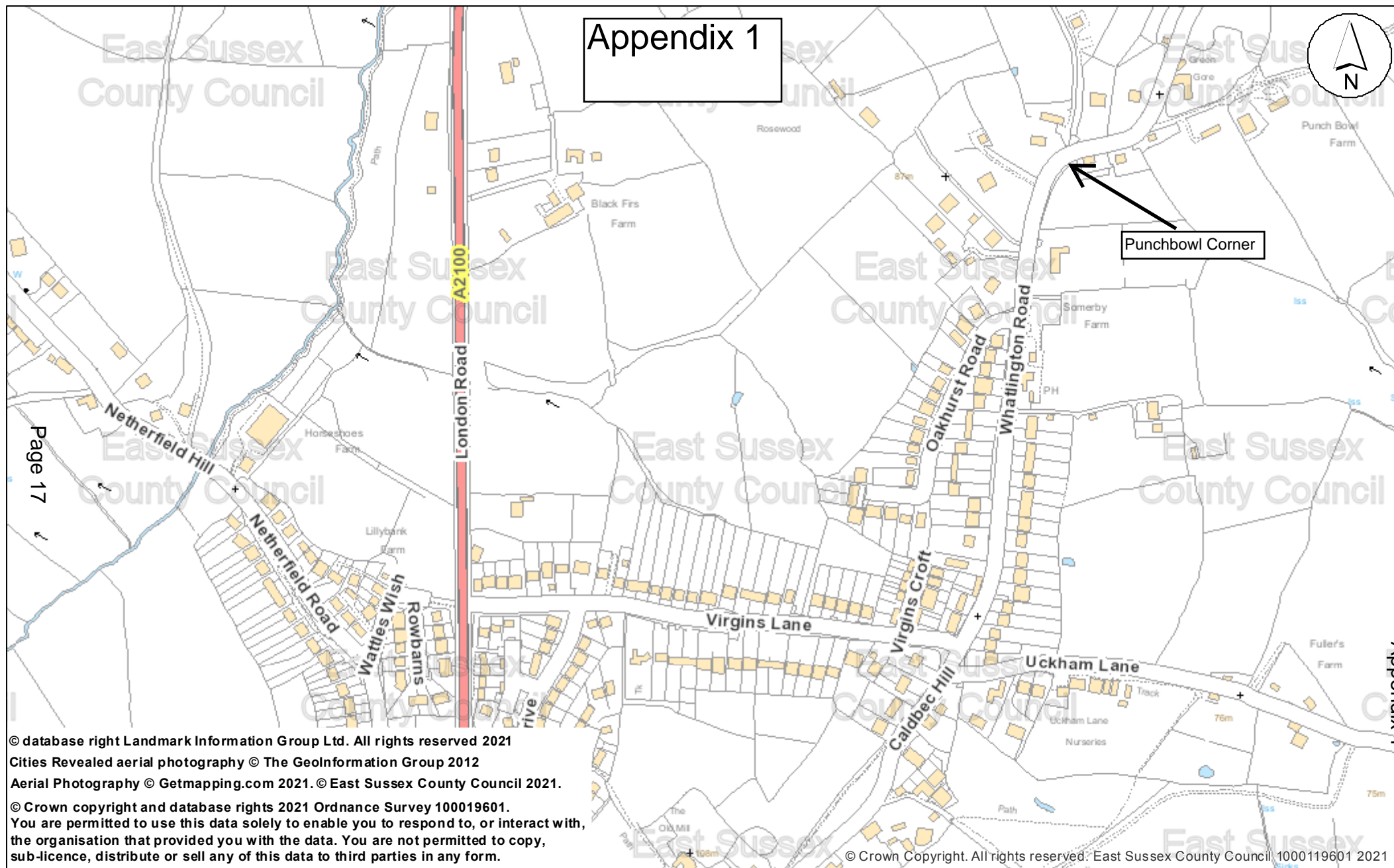
LOCAL MEMBER

Councillor Kathryn Field

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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Plan showing Whatlington Rd between Caldbec Hill & Punchbowl Corner, Battle

Scale: 1:5,000

Author:

Date: 05/11/2021



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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Lead Member for Transport &amp; Environment</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>13 December 2021</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Director of Communities, Economy and Transport</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Petition for the introduction of a speed restriction for the hamlet of Milton Street, Long Man</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>To consider a petition requesting a reduction in speed limit from national speed limit to 30mph</b>

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***RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to advise petitioners that:***

- (1) A 30mph speed limit in the hamlet of Milton Street does not meet the criteria requirements set out in approved policy PS05/02;**
  - (2) The investigation of additional measures is not a priority for East Sussex County Council;**
  - (3) The petitioners may wish to consider taking a potential scheme forward through the Community Match Initiative. A Feasibility Study (at a cost of £500) would be required prior to a Community Match application; and**
  - (4) Contact will be made with National Highways with a request to improve signing at the junction of the A27/Milton Street as this falls within their jurisdiction.**
- 

## **1 Background Information**

1.1. At the County Council meeting on 23 July 2021, a petition was presented to the Chairman by Councillor Stephen Shing from a group of residents calling on the County Council to reduce the speed limit within the hamlet of Milton Street, Long Man, from national speed limit to 30mph. This is from its junction with the A27 to 'Longbridge House', where the footpath LON/27/1 meets Lullington Road.

1.2. A copy of the petition is available in the Members' Room. Standing Orders provide that where the Chairman considers it appropriate, petitions are considered by the relevant Committee or Lead Member and a spokesperson for the petitioners is invited to address the Committee. The Chairman has referred this petition to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment.

## **2 Supporting Information**

2.1. Milton Street (C724), Long Man is located south of the National Highways (formally Highways England) A27 Trunk Road, A location plan and photos are included as Appendix 1.

2.2. The C724 Milton Street is predominantly rural and narrow in nature, with most of the sparse development being set back from the road and screened by vegetation. This type of environment would not give a driver a clear indication of why a 30mph speed limit had been imposed and, in line with national guidance and adopted Policy PS05-02 (Appendix 2), the current national speed limit is considered appropriate.

2.3. The absence of a posted speed limit indicates to a driver that the road does not require a specific speed limit and that they should drive to the conditions of the road and should also be aware of horses, cyclists, walkers etc. that may be in the carriageway.

2.4. Major improvement works are currently being carried out along the A27 Trunk Road. This includes the roundabout at Drusillas (next junction west of Milton Street) which also leads to Alfriston. Vehicles may have been using Milton Street as an alternative route whilst these works are being carried out. When this work is completed the need for drivers to divert onto the local road network will be reduced.

2.5. Sussex Police crash data indicates that there have been no personal injury crashes recorded along the section of the C724 Milton Street indicated in Appendix 1 in the most recent ten-year period.

2.6. At the present time, we have very limited funding available for assessing lower speed limits and associated measures. The only resources currently available are being targeted at the 'A' and 'B' roads in the county with a crash rate above the county average. As Milton Street is a 'C' class road and in the absence of a recorded crash record as indicated above, this would not be a priority for us to consider at the present time.

2.7. It is noted that improvements to the signs at the junction of the A27 are needed, however the signs are placed within the curtilage of the A27 which is within the jurisdiction of National Highways. We will ask that this is investigated by National Highways. The signs include the 7.5 tonne weight restriction signs and the national speed limit signs. The national speed limit signs could potentially be removed as this section of the A27 is also national speed limit and therefore they may not be necessary.

### **3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1. It is recommended that the petitioners be advised that their request for a 30mph speed limit through the hamlet of Milton Street does not meet the County Council's criteria which are set in line with national guidance.

3.2. The investigation of additional measures for Milton Street is not a priority for the Road Safety Team due to the road's good safety record.

3.3. It is recommended that the petitioners be advised to contact Long Man Parish Council to see if they would support a Feasibility Study into whether any measures could be considered for part funding through the Community Match initiative.

3.4. It is recommended that the petitioners be advised that we will approach National Highways with a request for signing improvements at the junction with the A27/Milton Street.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Jo Reed

Tel. No. 07748 761449

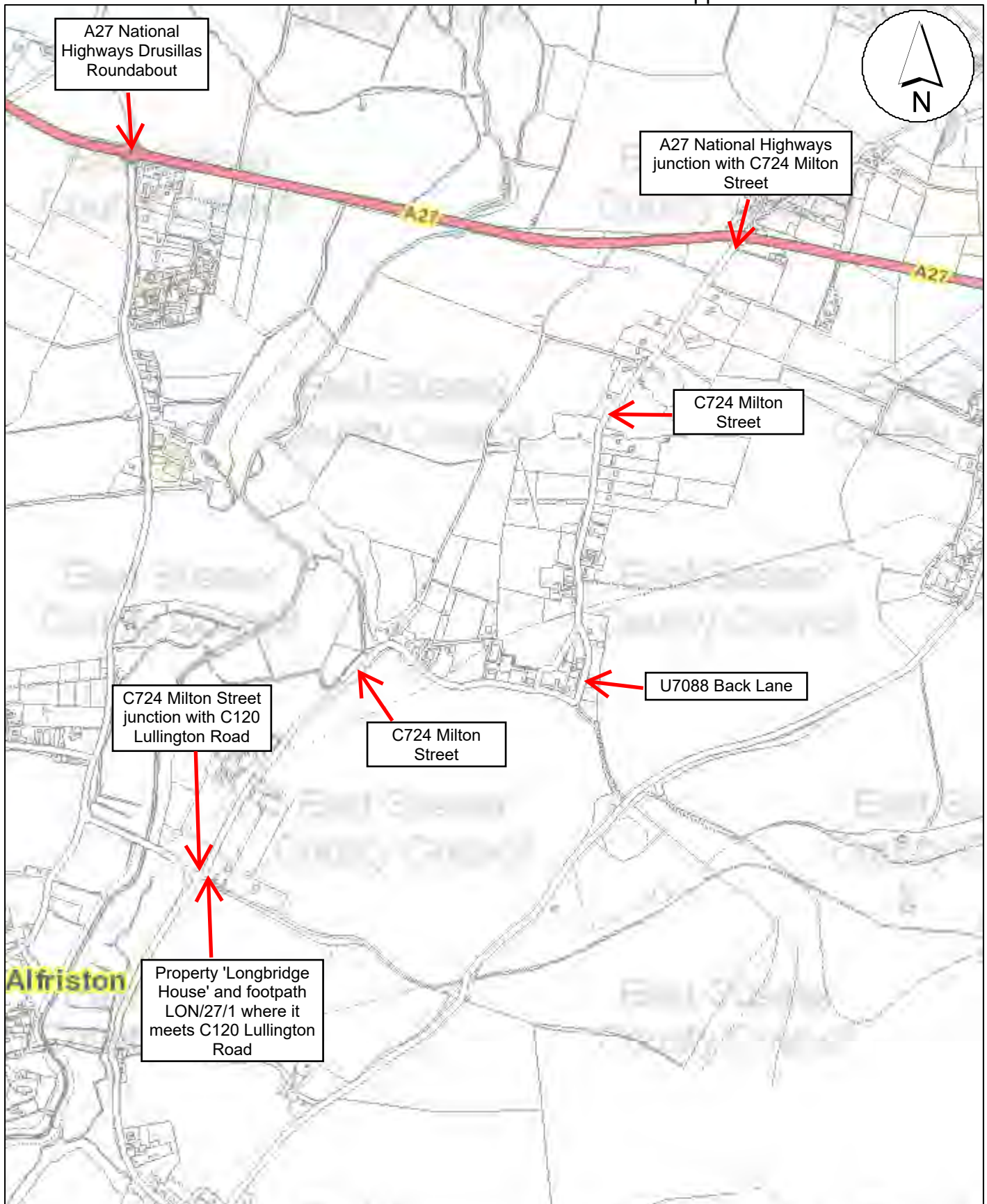
Email: [jo.reed@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:jo.reed@eastsussex.gov.uk)

### **LOCAL MEMBERS**

Councillor Stephen Shing

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None



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Map Milton Street, Long Man

Scale: 1:12,500

Author: Jo Reed

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Date: 17/11/2021











































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## EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

**LEAD MEMBER – COMMUNITIES AND SAFETY**  
**POLICY SUMMARY**

<b>LOCAL SPEED LIMITS</b>	<b>PS05/02</b>
<p><b>PURPOSE OF POLICY</b></p> <p>To achieve a safe distribution of speeds consistent with the speed limit that reflects the function of the road and the road environment</p>	
<p><b>SPECIFIC POLICIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On trunk roads, speed limits (in common with other orders regulating traffic) are the responsibility of the Department for Transport (DfT), through its executive agency, Highways England. The County Council has no jurisdiction over this class of road.</li> <li>2. On all other roads Orders are made by the County Council subject to the statutory requirements for the advertisement of the proposals and considerations of any objections.</li> <li>3. The principle determinant of a proposed speed limit should be the appearance and character of the road as described in Appendix A.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>SUPPORTING STATEMENT</b></p> <p>Adherence to the criteria ensures consistency in the introduction of Local Speed Limits on a countywide basis and supports the work that has been undertaken with neighbouring authorities. It is recognised that, where appropriate, a lower speed limit can assist in the reduction of the number and severity of casualties and help to improve environmental aspects and quality of life for local residents. Reference should always be made to the latest national guidance available.</p>	
<p><u>References – Further Information</u></p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984  Department for Transport – Circular Roads 01/2006  Department for Transport – Circular Roads 02/2006  Department for Transport – Traffic Advisor Leaflet 1/04  Department for Transport – Traffic Advisory Leaflet 2/06  Department for Transport- Circular Roads 01/2013  H &amp; T Committee – Agenda Item 10  H &amp; T Committee – Agenda Item 18  Cabinet Committee – Agenda Item 5  Lead Member for Transport and Environment – Agenda Item 11  Lead Member for Communities &amp; Safety – Agenda Item 31</p>	<p><u>Date of Approval</u></p> <p>17.03.1993  19.10.1994  15.11.2000  25.06.2007  16/03/2018</p>

## **SPECIFIC POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

4. Subject to paragraphs 5 and 6 below, villages may be considered for the introduction of a 30 mph speed limit in accordance with recommendations of DfT guidance for setting local speed limits providing that there are 20 or more properties served by private accesses which adjoin the main road (on one or both sides of the road), located over a length of not less than 600 metres, and clearly visible to drivers.
5. Speed limits should be set in accordance with the table below :-

<b>Speed Limit</b>	<b>Average Speed Below</b>
20	24
30	33
40	42
50	52
60	62

6. Where the average speed is above the figures quoted in paragraph 5 for a particular speed limit being investigated then, subject to available resources, either :-
  - a) Where the history of injury crashes at the site justifies the necessary expenditure, engineering measures appropriate to the function of the road should be investigated to reduce vehicle speeds below the figures quoted in paragraph 5 for a particular speed limit. If this can be achieved a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the proposed speed limit may then be made in conjunction with the introduction of engineered measures.
  - b) Where engineering measures are not appropriate due to the function of the road or cannot be justified by the history of crashes a TRO may be considered for a higher limit than that originally proposed which reflects the speed quoted in paragraph 5.

### **7. 20mph Speed Limits and Zones**

20mph speed limits or zones can positively contribute to quality of life and encourage healthier modes of transport such as walking or cycling. They can also help in creating a sense a place, better serving the local communities' needs. However, to ensure that they are effective, they will only be pursued if the following general criteria are met: -

- a) It can be demonstrated that there are clear benefits to be gained in terms of casualty reduction, particularly involving vulnerable road users;
- b) The lower limit is an integral part of either an area wide traffic calming scheme, a School/ Community Safety Zone or a Town Centre Management Scheme; and
- c) The lower limit is effectively self-enforcing



**Proposed Speed Limit Criteria – Route Assessment**

*Below gives an indication of appropriate speed limits, reference should be made to the latest Department for Transport guidance for more detailed information.*

<b>SPEED LIMIT/ CHARACTER OF ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>CHARACTER OF ROAD</b>	<b>TRAFFIC COMPOSITION</b>
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**20 mph Speed Limit**

Town centres, residential areas, in the vicinity of schools	Constrained in terms of vehicle movement with existing conditions or engineered features influencing vehicle speed with available alternative routes for through traffic	Mean vehicle speed below 24 mph  High proportion of vulnerable road users in direct conflict with traffic
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**30 mph Speed Limits**

Built up areas, visible properties with frontage access, the road giving a clear indication to drivers of the need to reduce speed	Urban streets  Roads through villages and identified rural settlements with 20+ visible properties within a 600m length	Mean vehicle speed below 33mph  Significant number of vulnerable road users in conflict with vehicular traffic
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**40 mph Speed Limits**

Less built up areas, set back properties with frontage access indicating to drivers the need to reduce speed	<b>Urban</b> Suburban distributor roads buildings set back from the road  <b>Rural</b> Roads through villages and identified rural settlements over a minimum length of 600m	Mean vehicle speed below 42mph  <b>Urban</b> Vulnerable road users segregated from road space  <b>Rural</b> A noticeable presence of vulnerable road users
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**50 mph Speed Limits**

Limited frontage development	Higher quality urban distributors with few points of access  Low standard classified roads	Mean vehicle speed below 52mph
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**60 mph Speed Limits (Dual Carriageways)**

Limited frontage development	High standard rural classified roads	Mean vehicle speed below 62mph
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*Note: Vulnerable road users include pedestrians (particularly children, the elderly and disabled) and cyclists.*

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Lead Member for Transport and Environment</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>13 December 2021</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Director of Communities, Economy and Transport</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Updated Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/28</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>To consider the findings of the review of the implementation of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy and the proposed updated Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/28</b>

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***RECOMMENDATIONS: Lead Member for Transport and Environment is recommended to:***

- (1) Note the significant progress made in delivering and implementing new services including the new children and young people's offer to support literacy and numeracy, an enhanced modern eLibrary, and increased outreach work in our most disadvantaged communities.**
  - (2) Note that following the extensive review and update of the evidence base, including the Needs Assessment (Appendix 4) and Accessibility Analysis (Appendix 5) the current Vision and 4 Strategic Outcomes remain relevant and correct for the medium-term focus for the Library and Information Service and so remain unchanged. In addition, this assessment has concluded that we should maintain our network of 17 public library buildings, which have around 1 million visits annually as well as continuing to host partners and their service offers.**
  - (3) Agree the Updated Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/2028 and implementation to ensure the Library and Information Service continues to support residents' needs.**
  - (4) Agree the implementation of additional services to address the identified emerging needs, including the extension of homework and code clubs for children, the development of our Step into Reading service to help adults improve their reading and new services to help young people into employment including Job Pods. In addition, enhance access further to the Library and Information Service through removing reservations fees so that people can reserve books from across the whole catalogue and collect them at their local library, making the entire lending stock freely available to all residents (para.2.37).**
- 

## **1 Background Information**

### **Libraries Strategic Commission Strategy 2018-23**

1.1 In March 2018 the Council adopted a five-year Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy (LSCS) for the period 2018-2023. The LSCS was informed by a comprehensive evidence base, which included a Needs Assessment, an Accessibility Analysis and a Property Review. The LSCS was part of a wider project to deliver a modern and sustainable Library and Information Service for

East Sussex, based on current and future needs for the county, as identified at that time and to ensure East Sussex County Council continued to meet its statutory duty.

1.2 It is timely to review the Strategy to evaluate its success, review the evidence base, including the Needs Assessment, Accessibility Analysis and Property Review, and based on the findings, review the strategic outcomes and offers to ensure they reflect the emerging/changing needs of residents. In the light of the pandemic and the financial pressures facing East Sussex County Council, it was decided to bring forward the review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2018-2023 to ensure the Library and Information Service responds to the changing needs identified and supports the recovery of our residents and businesses.

1.3 The current Vision for the LSCS is to provide a Library and Information Service that promotes reading and knowledge as a route to leading fulfilling lives, prioritising our resources and expertise to support the needs of residents and communities in East Sussex to achieve four key outcomes.

1.4 Our current four key strategic outcomes are:

- improving child and adult literacy and numeracy
- supporting the economy
- better health and wellbeing
- increasing digital inclusion

1.5 Under section 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 it is: 'the duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof'. The extensive review and update of the evidence base, including the Needs Assessment and Accessibility Analysis, evidence that the updated Strategy would enable the Council to continue to provide a comprehensive and efficient service

1.6 Access to library services is provided by 17 library buildings across the county, the online eLibrary, the Community Information Service (ESCIS) and the Home Library Service. To ensure we reach and engage with as many residents as possible we also deliver a range of outreach activities in community settings such as children's centres. Membership of the Library and Information Service is free to everyone who lives, works and studies in East Sussex. There are currently 292,635 registered library members (members have to re-register every two years) and in 2019 there were 1,020,804 visits.

## **2 Supporting Information**

### **Review of the implementation of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning**

2.1 A detailed review of the implementation of the LSCS (Appendix 2) has been carried out. In the years since the launch of the Strategy in 2018, we have made significant progress delivering activities in line with our strategic outcomes.

2.2 To ensure effective delivery of the Strategy, the Service realigned resources to meet need and introduced new ways of working:

- The Service focussed on support for the most vulnerable people e.g., young people with mental health issues, people who need support to improve their literacy, isolated people and supported families.
- The team have also proactively bid for external funding to deliver initiatives which support the delivery of our Strategic Outcomes. For example, we secured funding and equipment from the NHS, SELEP Digital Skills Partnership and the Good Things Foundation to increase digital inclusion.

- As part of our new culture offer, we submitted a bid to achieve funding from Arts Council England to deliver a project for Key Stage 1 (KS1) children, bringing them to libraries for a puppet show about using the library and encouraging them to return with their family.

2.3 In March 2018, we completed an extensive £9.5m refurbishment of Hastings Library enabling customers to access a wide range of services from four storeys of the library, creating a Learning Centre for adults taking qualification courses in English, Maths and ICT and bringing the children's library into the same building.

2.4 Also, over the last four years we have invested over £1.27m in our library buildings to configure our libraries to provide the best possible space and facilities to deliver our strategic outcomes. This includes the complete refurbishment of Battle, Crowborough, Lewes, Eastbourne, Heathfield, Uckfield and Hampden Park libraries.

2.5 Progress and successes are outlined below against each of the strategic outcomes, further detail is provided in Appendix 1.

### **Our offer for improving child and adult literacy and numeracy:**

2.6 Literacy skills, whether traditional or digital, underpin success in all walks of life, and libraries have a key role to play in ensuring children, in particular, have the building-blocks for future academic and employment success. Central to the above Strategic Outcome has been the launch of the new Children and Young People's Offer, which provides literacy and numeracy support, including outreach work for pre-school and school age children and their families. As a result of our offer for children and young people, we have seen an increase in the number of books borrowed by them in 2019/20, which was higher than the previous two years. As a result, we have increased the percentage of spending on stock for children from 27% of the spend on lending stock in 2018/19 to 39% in 2020/21.

2.7 We have seen a significant increase in the number of participants in Rhymetime and Storytime: Rhymetime participants increased from 10,469 sessions in 2017/18, 14,842 in 2018/19 to 16,111 in 2019/20; Storytime participants increased from 1,837 in 2017/18 to 2,004 in 2019/20.

2.8 There has been an increase in our outreach offer to communities with higher need, for example, we work closely with children's centres in areas of the highest need, target schools in areas of the highest need and support the literacy work of the Hastings Opportunity Area. 50 outreach sessions were delivered by Librarians at children's centres in areas of deprivation in 2019/20. The sessions introduce families to the importance of sharing books with young children to support speech and language development, encourage a love of reading and spend quality time together enjoying an activity.

### **Our offer for supporting the economy**

2.9 Beyond the traditional role of libraries to facilitate reading and literacy, the Library and Information Service provides information and support to individuals and businesses to help develop the economy. We offer free access to over 200 computers across our 17 libraries and each library also has free Wi-Fi, available to anyone who joins the library.

2.10 We have increased our stock to support the development of adult literacy during the period from 2018 to 2021. The stock has been used to support projects such as Step into Reading where volunteers assist people to develop reading skills in one-to-one sessions.

2.11 Our Learning Services Team supported learners to achieve over 150 qualifications in English, Maths and ICT between April 2018 and March 2020. Learners can study from home or in Eastbourne or Hastings Libraries and are fully supported by a dedicated tutor.

### **Our offer for better health and wellbeing**

2.12 As part of the offer for better health and wellbeing, a comprehensive range of self-help materials have been provided both in libraries and online. The Library and Information Service has

developed Wellbeing Boxes to help people to take ownership of their health. These boxes contain interactive resources, local service information and literature about different areas of wellbeing, using the NHS '5 steps to mental wellbeing' and the Library and Information Service has also launched Teen Wellbeing Bags. In 2019, customers were able to have Health Checks in libraries and smoking cessation clinics were delivered in Hastings Library through partnership working with the NHS.

2.13 We are working in partnership with the Hygiene Bank, a community initiative to give hygiene, personal care and household cleaning products to those who need them. We launched the Periodbank in January 2021 at Eastbourne and Hastings libraries. From January to March 2021, over 120 bags containing free, donated period products have been taken by members of the public.

### **Our offer for increasing digital inclusion**

2.14 We continue to work to support people who are digitally excluded; all 17 of our libraries offer free access to computers and Wi-Fi. There is still significant need in East Sussex for free access to computers and the internet.

2.15 In 2019/20 there were 158,519 sessions by over 25,000 residents on our computers and 37,413 sessions by over 6,000 residents on our Wi-Fi, a total of 195,932 sessions. On average, there are 3,812 sessions per week taking place in our libraries.

2.16 We have increased the number of activities to increase digital inclusion, including the support provided by Computer Buddies and the IT for You sessions run by volunteers. A basic course is available to help people to get online (Learn My Way), and Library and Information Service Tutors support people to gain qualifications in ICT, English and Maths when they undertake online courses.

### **Review of the evidence base**

2.17 We have undertaken a comprehensive review of the Needs Assessment in 2021 (Appendix 4) with colleagues from across East Sussex County Council.

2.18 A review of the evidence base has identified the context in which the Library and Information Service in East Sussex is operating in terms of reducing demand for traditional library services, the needs of the population of the county and East Sussex County Council's priority outcomes, as well as the financial challenges facing the authority. This included a consideration of factors which may influence need in the future, such as changes in population and housing growth, the age and health of the population, economic factors, and developments in new technology (the service has seen more customers accessing electronic service throughout the last 18 months).

2.19 The Needs Assessment identifies significant areas of need across a broad range of indicators, where the Library and Information Service would be well placed to help achieve better outcomes for the people of East Sussex. In addition to providing a core library offer accessible to all residents, by re-prioritising and developing new, more targeted services we have a key opportunity to continue to support and empower those with the greatest needs to make potentially transformational changes to their life chances.

2.20 Literacy skills underpin success in all walks of life, providing children with the building-blocks for future academic and employment success, thereby improving their future prosperity, health and wellbeing. In East Sussex between 25% and 35% of adults have low literacy skills.

2.21 There are areas of East Sussex among the 10% of most deprived areas in England for working age adults with no or low qualifications or who cannot speak English well or at all. 22 out of 329 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are amongst the most deprived 10% of LSOAs in England, 7% of all LSOAs in the county. 16 of these are in Hastings, four are in Eastbourne and two in Rother.

2.22 Similarly, there are also parts of East Sussex in the top 10% of worst areas of England for health deprivation and disability. Average life expectancy by borough or district varies by four years. Hastings has the lowest (79.8) and Lewes has the highest (83.5).

2.23 The highest health deprivation levels and disability measures are concentrated in the coastal towns, either in central residential areas or large estates on the edge that often have other income, employment and social exclusion issues. There are some pockets of health deprivation in each of the three more rural districts, but usually associated with the mid-sized towns. One area with a relatively high percentage of residents with long term illness is east Bexhill. Other high levels are found in Eastbourne, Hastings, St. Leonards and Newhaven.

2.24 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has also informed this Needs Assessment and revision of the Strategy. The Covid-19 pandemic led to changing needs for many of our residents, including a greater need to access online services for work, shopping, socialising and for health information and access to health services to support both physical and mental health. There is a need for children and young people to recover from lost education and lack of opportunities to socialise with their peers. Those who lost their jobs need support to build their employment chances and individuals and communities need to regain their confidence and community networks to combat isolation and loneliness.

2.25 Therefore, in assessing the needs of individuals and communities in East Sussex, and how the Library and Information Service meets those needs, it is important not to focus on the demand (who is currently using the service) or the want (those who express a desire for a library) but on those specific needs that can be satisfied best through access to the Library and Information Service (the supply).

2.26 Given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the updating of some data sources used to evidence the current Strategy, the service has also worked with internal and external partners to gauge emerging needs affecting residents of East Sussex.

2.27 We have reviewed relevant research published since 2020 to inform our identification of emerging needs and gaps in provision. In addition, to ensure we capture any emerging/changing needs, we have met with colleagues from across the council to discuss any initiatives, projects, changes they are aware of which the service can support. We have also engaged with the Youth Council and the Seniors' Forum as well as partners including the Citizens Advice Bureau and 3VA Voluntary Action in Eastbourne, Lewes District and Wealden. We will continue to work with colleagues and partners to identify further emerging needs as data is available.

2.28 Several areas of emerging and changing need have been identified from this analysis which include:

- higher youth unemployment, young people aged 16-24 have been hard hit in terms of employment opportunities
- increased social isolation and loneliness
- children need support to recover lost education
- digital exclusion is preventing people from accessing vital services and communicating with friends and family.

2.29 We have also identified some gaps where we can develop provision of services. These are addressed in this updated version of the Strategy.

2.30 A new Accessibility Analysis (Appendix 5) has been carried out. The research we undertook for the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2018-2023 of the types and duration of journey people make shows that a journey time of 20 to 25 minutes to a library by public transport and car is reasonable.

2.31 The accessibility data and analysis has been updated in 2021 and the percentage of the population of East Sussex within a 10-, 20- and 30-minute drive of one of the 17 East Sussex libraries has been calculated. The same calculations have been undertaken for public transport journey time and walking time. There is no significant change to accessibility since the previous

analysis: accessibility to our library network is at least the same and, in some cases, marginally better than when the analysis was carried out in 2017/18. For example, the proportion of the population that can access a library within a 30-minute journey by public transport has increased slightly, from 95% to 97% which may be due to changes in localised population distribution as a result of new housing development.

2.32 We have carried out a Property Review (Appendix 6). The County Council owns 12 of the 17 libraries, and the remainder are leased. The Library and Information Service will continue to identify whether library services could be delivered in the same locality in a more cost-effective way. The Service will also continue to seek out new partnerships to share accommodation with other organisations, to reduce costs or to deliver a better service in conjunction with other services, or both.

### **Updated Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/28**

2.33 Following the extensive review and updating of the evidence base, including the Needs Assessment, Accessibility Analysis and Property Review, our analysis demonstrates that the current Vision and 4 Strategic Outcomes remain relevant and correct for the medium-term focus of the Library and Information Service and so remain unchanged. In addition, this assessment has concluded that we should maintain our network of 17 public library buildings, which have around 1 million visits annually as well as continuing to host partners and their service offers. We have, therefore, incorporated the review of the current Strategy and the evidence base to develop an updated Strategy which incorporates additional activities to address gaps in provision and support identified emerging/changing needs.

2.34 The review of the extensive evidence base contained within the Technical Appendices of the Strategy demonstrated that libraries can and do support a wide range of needs, directly and indirectly. In terms of implementation, each Strategic Outcome will be delivered through a range of different offers, or services, provided according to evidence of need.

2.35 Going forward, the Library and Information Service will adopt the following approach:

- target spending on stock and resources to ensure they support the delivery of Strategic Outcomes and continue to provide a range of quality materials to meet residents' needs so they can enjoy the pleasure and benefits of reading as well as the better life chances that literacy and numeracy unlock
- provide access to library services through our eLibrary, continuing to expand the range of online services and materials that are offered, including the provision of reliable information and services to promote good health, and support people to manage their own health and the health of those they care for
- continue to provide, both in libraries and online, training and guidance for people of all abilities seeking to learn and to work, so they are able to build skills and confidence in a supportive environment
- focus on outreach provision, working closely with other County Council services and partners to make sure that we directly reach the communities and individuals with the greatest needs.
- continue to provide a range of services through our Children and Young People's Literacy offer, including literacy support and outreach work for pre-school and school age children and their families
- enhance the role of libraries as cultural spaces within their communities, developing our Culture Offer to support the wider cultural economy of the county.

2.36 The four Commissioning Themes represent the important role that libraries play in society as a gateway for individuals of all ages to access information, support, knowledge and culture. We propose to launch additional offers and activities to address emerging needs for each of our four Strategic Outcomes, including:



### **Improving child and adult literacy and numeracy**

- We will support children to recover lost education, build their confidence and increase their social interaction by providing homework clubs with enrichment activities to support their physical and mental health
- we will codesign our offer for young people to support their study to ensure we meet their needs and promote the offer
- we will extend our code club provision for children; this is where children can learn coding in the libraries
- we will improve the promotion of our support for schools to increase take up of services

### **Supporting the economy**

- we will expand our Step into Reading service to help adults to improve their reading
- we will develop our Jobs Pod offer which provides confidential space, a computer and support for people with online job interviews
- We will increase our services to support people into employment, targeting support for 16–24 year-olds who are currently experiencing high levels of unemployment. We will provide access to training, skills and qualifications, as well as interview support
- We will support Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) and entrepreneurs by being part of the Brighton & Hove Business and Intellectual Property hub which offers business insights and access to free resources, training and events, both online and in-person, for business development

### **Better health and wellbeing**

- We will develop initiatives to encourage people, including our volunteers, to return to library buildings, building social interaction and helping to combat isolation
- We will work with colleagues to support programmes which build food security for individuals and communities to help people to have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life
- we will develop and expand our offer for better health and wellbeing, including our initiative to provide free period products in libraries
- We will support the work of the Family Focus team, working closely with key workers to support their initiatives such as anti-bullying and promoting the benefits of accessing library services to improve resilience

### **Increasing digital inclusion**

- We will work to ensure vulnerable people have access to online services, including health services, by lending equipment as well as providing connectivity to the internet and training for those who need to improve their digital skills
- We will promote the free access to computers and Wi-Fi in our libraries to improve digital inclusion
- We will continue to develop our IT for You offer, where people are supported by staff and volunteers to use computers to go online

2.37 In addition to the additional offers, in order to enhance access further, from April 2022, we propose to provide free reservations so that people can reserve books from across the whole catalogue and collect them at their local library, making the entire lending stock freely available to all residents.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

2.38 The Strategy has been developed using the 'strategic commissioning framework'. This ensures a clear understanding of 'need', before identifying the best way to meet it. It also sets out a clear rationale for the review and decision-making process. The assessment of local needs must demonstrate that the proposals meet the requirements of section 7 Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service (Appendix 4). A number of Technical Appendices have been prepared which collectively and comprehensively assess needs within East Sussex and establish the type of service offer that is required to deliver the Strategic Outcomes and to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service. The Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/28 draws on the conclusions of each of these documents.

2.39 The Library and Information Service considers inclusivity of those with protected characteristics as a core element of the offer and strives to develop the offer with the evolving needs of its users. An Equalities Impact assessment is appended as Appendix 3 must be read and its findings taken into consideration when determining this proposal.

## **Financial analysis**

2.40 The budget for the Library and Information Service for 2021/22 is £3,751,600 net and £4,540,600 gross (planned income of £789,000). This follows on from savings of £240k in 2021/22 and £1.9m delivered through the Libraries Transformation Programme between 2014/15 and 2018/19. Staffing levels have decreased from 168.3 FTE in 2010 to 150 FTE in January 2015 to the current staffing level of 96.5 FTE posts. In addition, we have the support of over 400 volunteers.

## **3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 The report and accompanying appendices describe in detail the excellent progress made to deliver the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2018-2023. The offers outlined in the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/28 have been developed following a comprehensive review of the data. The Strategic Outcomes allow for some flexibility in developing offers which will meet the challenges that the community will face going forward, in this period of Covid-19 recovery.

3.2 There are no financial implications to updating the Strategy. We will refocus existing resources to provide additional services and support.

3.3 We are seeking Lead Member approval to implement the updated Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/28, from April 2022.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Nick Skelton

Tel. No. 01273 482994

mail: [Nick.skelton@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Nick.skelton@eastsussex.gov.uk)

## **LOCAL MEMBERS**

All

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

**December 2021**

# **East Sussex Libraries: The Way Forward**

## **Updated Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2022/23 – 2027/28**



**2021**

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# Foreword by Councillor Dowling

## Lead Member for Transport and Environment

The Library and Information Service, its staff, in-library and online services as well as its wide range of outreach activities can provide the knowledge, information and inspiration to support and empower people to make transformational changes to their lives. The Library and Information Service plays an important role in providing opportunities for individuals and communities to improve their life chances and wellbeing.

It helps individuals to build confidence and resilience by connecting with their local community, improving their employment chances, taking up volunteering opportunities, participating in courses, gaining the digital skills to use online services, as well as improving their literacy and numeracy skills.

It supports families by delivering a wide range of activities including rhymetimes and story times for young children to support speech and language development, code clubs where young people learn programming skills, courses where families learn together, welcoming spaces where children and young people can study as well as access a wide range of quality books and eBooks.

The Service provides information about health and health services as well as providing space for third party sector organisations to provide information and advice. It works with partners to make best use of resources and deliver better services and outcomes for the people of East Sussex.

The 17 Council libraries across the county are welcoming, safe places where residents can find free access to books, computers, wifi, and activities to gain information, knowledge, and opportunities. Online services, including access to eBooks and eNewspapers are also free.

East Sussex libraries and online library services are open to all and the service works hard to ensure all residents have access and that it supports those most in need.

Over the past eighteen months, the Library and Information Service has worked hard to support residents wherever possible. Many staff helped with delivery of food parcels, delivered books to the homes of people who were shielding and supported other essential council services. Innovative new ways of working were set up to provide access to as many library services as possible including a new loan scheme for tablets to help digitally excluded, vulnerable people to access online services, a Select and Collect service to allow residents to request books for collection at the door of the library and an expansion of our online offer – more eBooks and other online resources. Learners carrying out online courses to gain qualifications and participating in Family Learning have been supported by Tutors working remotely to ensure their studies could continue.



The Covid-19 pandemic has led to changing needs for many of our residents, including a greater need to access online services for work, shopping, socialising and of course for health information and access to health services to support both physical and mental health. There is a need for children and young people to catch up on their education and also for those who lost their jobs to be supported back into employment. Many people experienced isolation and loneliness and need to regain their confidence and community networks.

This updated Strategy sets out the path for the Library and Information Service for the next five years, taking into consideration the Service's ability to support residents' needs with access to services in libraries, online and through community outreach that support reading and literacy, health and wellbeing, economic recovery and digital inclusion. Significant progress has been made since the launch of the previous Strategy in 2018. The Service has reviewed this work and analysed how it can best support residents going forward, building on good practice and adding new service offers.

I am confident that the Library and Information Service will continue to deliver high quality services that support individuals and communities, particularly those with the greatest needs, with their literacy, attainment, employment, health and wellbeing. These are needs which the Library and Information Service is ideally placed to help tackle.

## Executive Summary

In the light of the pandemic and the financial pressures for East Sussex County Council, it was decided to bring forward the review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2018-2023 and to launch an updated edition of the Strategy from 2022/23 to ensure the Library and Information Service responds to the changing needs identified and supports the recovery of our residents and businesses.

We have reviewed the progress of the current Strategy and evaluated the offers, services and strategic outcomes delivered currently by the Library and Information Service. Key analysis including the needs assessment, accessibility analysis and property review has been reviewed. Importantly, we have considered any new data and research, and gathered information from external partners and stakeholders about the changing needs of our residents. We have identified those needs that can be supported by the Library and Information Service and where there is a gap in our provision. Based on these findings, no amendments have been made to the Vision and the four key priority outcomes for the Service. They continue to reflect the diverse and changing needs of residents and set a clear direction for service delivery. We have however added new offers to each strategic outcome.

Our Vision, remains unchanged: **to provide a Library and Information Service that promotes reading and knowledge as a route to leading fulfilling lives, prioritising our resources and expertise to support the needs of residents and communities in East Sussex to achieve four key outcomes:**

- **improving child and adult literacy and numeracy**
- **supporting the economy**
- **better health and wellbeing**
- **increasing digital inclusion**

This updated edition of the Strategy remains rooted in a robust evidence base which determines how best to deliver a needs-based library service through a commissioning approach.

It is based on clear evidence of need, which enables the Council to prioritise the resources available for the Library and Information Service to deliver the best outcomes for residents. The Strategic Outcomes were developed on the basis that library services can and do support a wide range of needs, directly and indirectly. They enable us to support the Council's four overarching priority outcomes of driving sustainable economic growth, keeping vulnerable people safe, helping people help themselves, and making best use of resources in the short and long term, as well as enabling us to deliver the Libraries Connected Universal Library Offer which aims to connect communities, improve wellbeing and promote equality through learning, literacy and cultural activity.

Three underlying transformation principles also ensure that the library service works effectively. These are working together, promoting use of libraries and increasing our capacity to add value to what we do.

In order to meet need and provide accessible library and information services, we will continue to deliver our offers from our network of 17 library buildings, our eLibrary, website pages and through outreach activities in community settings. To increase access to books even further, we will provide free reservations so that people can reserve stock from across the whole catalogue and collect it at their local library, making the entire lending stock freely available to all residents.

## What does the library and information service look like now?

Libraries and library services offer people the enjoyment of reading for pleasure and access to culture and they also support people in many other ways - to go online and use online services, to find employment or take up new training opportunities, to find information about health and other services in their local community, to improve their sense of wellbeing, to study, to pursue hobbies and interests, and much more. Libraries and library staff can provide the knowledge, information and inspiration to support and empower people to make transformational changes to their lives.

We ensure we keep abreast of strategies and developments in the sector through engagement with the national development agency for libraries, Arts Council England (ACE) and Libraries Connected which provides strategic support to the library sector.

We deliver a range of initiatives, both local and national, often with partners and externally funded, to support literacy and numeracy and to help people into employment by developing their IT skills. Many of these services are delivered with the support of over 400 volunteers.

In 2019/20, there were over 1 million visits to our 17 libraries and just under 1.5 million items borrowed. There is significant growth each year in the number of customers using our eLibrary and downloading eBooks and eMagazines.

### Our statutory duty

East Sussex County Council is one of 151 local councils in the UK with a statutory responsibility (a legal duty) to provide a local library service in accordance with the *Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964*. The Act requires each local authority to provide a library service that is 'comprehensive and efficient'. It is for local decision how the library service best meets this requirement practically, including how many libraries there are, where they are, when they are open, and what each one offers.

### Core Offer

We will provide a library service which meets our assessment of current and future needs.

### Access to library services

Membership of the Library and Information Service is free to everyone who lives, works or studies in East Sussex.

Access to library services is provided by 17 library buildings across the county, the online eLibrary, the Community Information Service (ESCIS), the Home Library Service and the Prison Library Service at HMP Lewes. To ensure we reach and engage with as many residents as possible we also deliver a range of outreach activities in community settings such as children's centres.

To enhance access further, from April 2022, we will provide free reservations so that people can reserve books from across the whole catalogue and collect them at their local library, making the entire lending stock freely available to all residents.

### **Library Buildings**

There are 17 libraries in East Sussex, each offering a wide range of quality books for loan, as well as providing access to other material including local history. Every library has free access to computers and Wi-Fi, and we welcome volunteers for a range of roles, including helping others to go online. Eastbourne and Hastings Libraries have Learning and Information Suites where adults can access informal learning as well as gain qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ICT. We deliver activities and events in our libraries and work with partners such as Citizens Advice who deliver services in Uckfield Library and the NHS who carry out health checks in some libraries.

- Battle Library
- Bexhill Library
- Crowborough Library
- Eastbourne Library
- Forest Row Library
- Hailsham Library
- Hampden Park Library
- Hastings Library
- Heathfield Library
- Hollington Library
- Lewes Library
- Newhaven Library
- Peacehaven Library
- Rye Library
- Seaford Library
- Uckfield Library
- Wadhurst Library

### **Online eLibrary**

The eLibrary provides a wide range of online services and resources, available at any time.

Using the eLibrary residents can:

- Download eBooks and eAudiobooks to their own device (computer, phone or tablet) without having to go to a library. This includes high quality fiction and non-fiction for adults and children.
- Download a wide range of eMagazines, both current and backdated copies, free of charge to their own personal device.

- Access our online reference library, which includes lots of information resources such as newspapers, encyclopedias and dictionaries, business information and family history sites.
- Search all the stock across East Sussex County Council libraries using our online catalogue.
- Access their library account, renew their loans and place reservations on items they would like to borrow.

### **Community Information Service (ESCIS)**

Residents can also access ESCIS online. ESCIS is our online database of local and community information and events across East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. It's an invaluable community resource and supports social prescribing. It is free for organisations to be listed and currently lists over 8,000 organisations.

### **Home Library Service**

We provide a free home library delivery service to customers who cannot easily visit a library due to disability, frailty or caring responsibilities. As well as working with our partners Bexhill Caring Community, we recruit and train volunteers to select and deliver books, not only providing reading material but also helping to combat loneliness and social isolation.

### **Prison Library Service**

The library in HMP Lewes is provided by the Library and Information Service as a traded service. We purchase and manage the book stock, recruit, train and manage staff for the library as well as working with the Prison to deliver initiatives to support literacy.

## **Summary of Review of Current Strategy**

The Review (Appendix One) demonstrates that significant progress has been made in the delivery of offers that meet our four key Strategic Outcomes since the launch of the Strategy in 2018, including:

- an increase in the number of books borrowed by children and young people in 2019/20, which was higher than the previous two years
- an increase in our range of eBooks and eMagazines available online and significant increase in usage
- a focus on supporting people to improve their employment chances through informal and formal learning opportunities to gain confidence and qualifications
- the development of partnerships and initiatives to support health and wellbeing with partners such as the NHS, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Hygiene Bank, a community initiative to give hygiene, personal care and household cleaning products to those who need them across the UK

- the development of new services to support digital inclusion such as a loan scheme for devices and IT for You at Home, a telephone support service to help people to go online

We have also identified some gaps where we can develop provision of services. These will be addressed in this updated version of the Strategy:

- we will improve the promotion of our support for schools to increase take up of services
- we will codesign our offer for young people to support their study to ensure we meet their needs, and promote the offer
- we will extend our code club provision for children
- we will expand our Step into Reading service to help adults to improve their reading
- we will develop our Jobs Pod offer which provides confidential space, a computer and support for people with online job interviews
- we will develop and expand our initiative to provide free period products in libraries
- we will promote the free access to computers and WiFi in our libraries to improve digital inclusion
- we will continue to develop our IT for You offer, where people are supported by staff and volunteers to use computers to go online.

## **Summary of the updated Needs Assessment (Technical Appendix One)**

We have worked closely with colleagues in Adult Social Care, Public Health and also Children's Services, as well as external partners to identify emerging or changing needs, including those caused by the effects of the pandemic. In some cases, for example, pupil attainment, data is not yet available which reflects the changing needs. However, we feel it is important to address these needs in this updated Strategy to provide our residents as quickly as possible with the support they require at this challenging time.

We have identified the following additional needs where the Library and Information Service can work with East Sussex County Council colleagues and external partners to provide support and where we currently have gaps in our provision. We will incorporate these into our current offers:

### **Improving child and adult literacy and numeracy**

- We will support children to recover lost education, build their confidence and increase their social interaction by providing homework clubs with enrichment activities to support their physical and mental health

## **Supporting the economy**

- We will increase our services to support people into employment, targeting support for 18-24 year olds who are experiencing high levels of unemployment. We will provide access to training, skills and qualifications, as well as interview support
- We will improve our learning offer by giving learners the option of accessing tutor support remotely so that they have the flexibility they need to study at a library or at home
- We will support SMEs and entrepreneurs to find the information they need by being part of the Brighton & Hove Business and IP hub

## **Better health and wellbeing**

- We will develop initiatives to encourage people, including our volunteers, to return to library buildings, building social interaction and helping to combat isolation
- We will work with colleagues to support programmes which build food security for individuals and communities. Food security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life
- We will support groups and individuals disproportionately affected by the pandemic and/or other issues including, but not restricted to, people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, carers, people with dementia and learning difficulties, people in temporary accommodation, refugees and asylum seekers by working with partners to deliver appropriate services and activities
- We will work with partners to provide hygiene products to help combat period poverty
- We will support the work of the Family Focus team, working closely with key workers to support their initiatives such as anti-bullying and promoting the benefits of accessing library services to improve resilience

## **Increasing digital inclusion**

- We will work to ensure vulnerable people have access to online services, including health services, by lending equipment as well as providing connectivity to the internet and training for those who need to improve their digital skills



## Summary of the updated Accessibility Analysis

The Library and Information Service comprises the physical infrastructure that people can use (e.g. library buildings and the services available within them), the digital services that people can access online without having to visit the library, such as reserving and renewing items, downloading eBooks and eMagazines, and accessing online reference materials and information resources, and outreach services such as the home library service and delivery in community settings.

Stantec was commissioned by East Sussex County Council to prepare an accessibility analysis of the Council's Library and Information Service. This analysis is an update of the work previously undertaken during the development of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy which was launched in 2018, with the scope to identify any differences in library accessibility due to updated public transport networks and timetables or changed traffic and highway conditions.

The findings of the Accessibility Analysis combined with the findings of the Needs Assessment enable the Library and Information Service to identify the needs-based library provision (both physical and digital) required to deliver the identified Strategic Outcomes and meet the Council's statutory duty to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" service.

### Population accessibility to East Sussex libraries

The research we undertook for the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2018-2023 of the types and duration of journey people make shows that a journey time of 20 to 25 minutes to a library by public transport and car is reasonable.

The accessibility data and analysis has been updated in 2021 and the percentage of the population of East Sussex within a 10-, 20- and 30-minute drive of one of the 17 East Sussex libraries has been calculated. The same calculations have been undertaken for public transport journey time and walking time. There is no significant change to accessibility since the previous analysis.

Analysis shows that over 90% of the population of East Sussex currently live within a 10-minute car journey time of one of the 17 East Sussex libraries. This increases to over 98% of the population for car journey times up to 20 minutes.

For public transport, using 2019's public transport timetables as the basis for this analysis, 60% of the population of the county lives within a 10-minute journey time of an East Sussex library. This figure rises to 92% for journey times up to 20 minutes, and just over 97% of the population of the county lives within a journey time of 30 minutes by public transport to one of the 17 East Sussex libraries.

These figures are very similar to the analysis carried out in 2017/18 to inform the Strategy.

15% of the population of the county lives within a 10-minute walk of an East Sussex library. This figure rises to 40% for walking times up to 20 minutes and 58% within a 30 minutes' walk of a library. According to our calculations, 41% of the population of

East Sussex has a journey time by foot of in excess of 30 minutes. Our calculations are based on a presumed walking speed of 5km per hour. It is acknowledged that speeds vary, especially for some older people and people with limited mobility.

	minutes	0-10	10-20	20-30
Driving	population	502,879	45,236	6,862
	cumulative population	502,879	548,235	555,097
	cumulative population %	90%	98%	100%
Public Transport 2019 network	population	333,503	177,471	32,109
	cumulative population	333,503	510,974	543,083
	cumulative population %	60%	92%	97%
Public Transport 2020 network	population	331,863	181,870	29,350
	cumulative population	331,683	513,733	543,083
	cumulative population %	59%	92%	97%
Walking	population	84,380	140,531	100,004
	cumulative population	84,830	224,911	324,915
	cumulative population %	15%	40%	58%
Total East Sussex population 2019		555,097		

### Access to online/digital services

In addition to the physical libraries provided by the Council, the eLibrary service provides another means of accessing library services via the internet, 24 hours per day. The eLibrary offer includes the ability to access the library catalogue, reserve items and renew loans, and download eBooks, eAudiobooks and an extensive range of eMagazines, as well as accessing online reference materials.

Despite the high proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content.

Age is a key factor in people's level of digital skills and therefore use of the internet. Whilst 74% of people nationally aged 65-74 had used the internet in the past three months, in a 2016 survey, this figure was only 39% for people aged 75 and over.

Based on income levels, the Accessibility Analysis also shows that residents in a small number of areas of East Sussex, in proximity to the main towns of Rye, Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Newhaven, Peacehaven, Lewes and Hailsham may be less able to access the Library and Information Service's digital services due to the affordability of broadband, mobile data packages and the costs of devices. Small geographical areas around Rye, Hastings and Eastbourne are also where residents are more likely to not have the digital skills required to access the eLibrary services independently.

The areas of the county where people's age is likely to be a factor which creates a barrier to eLibrary accessibility because they are less likely to use the internet is geographically slightly wider, and is around the coastal towns of Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Seaford and Peacehaven. Areas around the towns of Crowborough, Heathfield, Uckfield, Hailsham and Lewes are also included.

In these areas people are more likely to rely on access to a library building to use the resources available. Staff in libraries can help people access the resources they need, and both staff and computer buddy volunteers can help people who lack digital skills to get online and help narrow the digital divide.

### **Outreach services**

Since the launch of the Strategy in 2018, the Service has focussed on support for the most vulnerable people many of whom are isolated for a range of reasons, including young people with mental health issues and supported families.

There is an increase in our outreach offer to communities with higher need, for example, we are working closely with children's centres in areas of the highest need, targeting schools in areas of the highest need and supporting the literacy work of the Hastings Opportunity Area.

## **Summary of the updated Property Review**

East Sussex Library and Information Service has a network of 17 public library buildings, which host over 1 million visits annually. Many libraries offer services delivered by, or in partnership with, other organisations. The County Council owns 12 of the 17 libraries, and the remainder are leased from public sector or private landlords. The Library and Information Service also leases Ropemaker Park in Hailsham, which is the central storage and distribution point for library stock and base for some staff. Ropemaker Park is also the County Council's records centre.

The total running cost of our buildings, excluding Ropemaker Park, is approximately £959,000 per year, excluding staffing costs, refurbishment costs and income. Around £487,000 is spent on business rates, £241,000 on maintenance and £191,000 on rents and service charges. Utility costs make up the remainder of around £40,000 per year.

With 1 million visitors annually, wear and tear on library buildings, furniture and fittings is inevitable. Worn and damaged items can quickly pose a risk to the health and safety of customers and staff or become damaged beyond economic repair. In the past decade the County Council has spent approximately £12.1 million on improvements to and major refurbishment of East Sussex library buildings.

East Sussex County Council has committed to a capital programme of expenditure for libraries until 2030. Each year we work on projects for our libraries to ensure they are safe, in a good state of repair and that they meet the needs of our customers.

It is estimated that for the 17 library buildings the service currently operates, this will cost approximately £2.5 million over the next five years or approximately £513,000 per year, in addition to annual maintenance costs of approximately £241,000.

We continuously review our buildings, space and partnership opportunities to generate rental income to mitigate savings or to reinvest in services. Income from partners helps to offset the running costs of libraries, whilst helping them to reduce their expenditure on premises by co-locating. We will continue to assess and seek out opportunities to utilise these in the best way possible. Most libraries have movable shelving and furniture which enable the layout to be changed to accommodate a wide range of different potential uses.

As a result of continued efforts to maximise the opportunity for leases and medium term rentals with local partners and other East Sussex County Council teams, the Library and Information Service will generate approximately £300,000 per year.

The Library and Information Service will continue to identify whether library services could be delivered in the same locality in a more cost-effective way. The Service will also continue to seek out new partnerships to share accommodation with other organisations, in order to reduce costs or to deliver a better service in conjunction with other services, or both.

## **East Sussex Libraries: The Way Forward, updated edition Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2022/33 to 2027/28**

In light of this new analysis, information and evidence, we have produced an updated edition of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy for 2022/23 to 2027/28 which addresses emerging needs and reinforces the work of the Library and Information Service to support residents who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable, whilst continuing to provide a high quality range of universal services for everyone in East Sussex.

### **Summary**

The Library and Information Service will continue to provide a range of quality materials and personalised support for people's different needs, so they can enjoy the pleasure and benefits of reading as well as the better life chances that literacy and numeracy unlock. We will provide reliable information and services to promote good health, and support people to manage their own health and the health of those they care for. We will target our spending on stock and resources to ensure that it supports the delivery of Strategic Outcomes. We will also continue to provide, both in libraries and online, training and guidance for people of all abilities seeking to learn and to work, so they are able to build skills and confidence in a supportive environment.

We will provide access to library services through our eLibrary, continuing to expand the range of online services and materials that are offered. We will promote the eLibrary more widely, ensuring that our customers have a much better understanding of the resources it offers and confidence to use it, and we will actively promote the benefits of the eLibrary to different groups according to their needs. Recognising that

digital exclusion is a significant issue for some people due to the cost of home broadband or mobile internet and because some people have never had the opportunity to learn digital skills, we will continue to provide free access to computers and Wi-Fi in libraries as well as developing our service to lend devices and provide support for people to use these at home. We will provide free training for people to use technology and the internet, so they are able to independently access vital information and services and participate in the benefits of the digital world, including our growing eLibrary. We will also develop our community information website, ESCIS, as a tool for social prescribing and a source of information about community events and activities.

We will also focus on outreach provision, working closely with other County Council services and partners to make sure that we reach directly the communities and individuals with the greatest needs. We will promote and deliver our offer more closely with other services in different settings (for example other service locations, community venues including Early Help settings and people's homes).

We will continue to provide a range of services through our Children and Young People's Literacy offer, and this will include literacy support and outreach work for pre-school and school age children and their families. We will work with schools and the Schools Learning and Effectiveness Service (SLES) to develop Homework Clubs and to provide study space to provide children and young people with access to resources and support that can help them recover lost education, gain confidence, study and revise, and we will run Code Clubs and other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) activities, helping children learn skills that could unlock a wide range of future career opportunities. In addition, we will support schools in areas with highest needs free of charge and continue to provide some charged services to all schools. We will also continue to provide teachers in East Sussex schools with a membership which allows them to borrow items on a long loan from libraries for use in the classroom.

We will enhance the role of libraries as cultural spaces within their communities, developing our Culture Offer with an expanded programme of free or paid events in libraries to support the wider cultural economy of the county. Working more closely with other cultural and heritage institutions in East Sussex we will promote libraries as spaces that can be used for the arts, covering activities such as creative writing workshops, book and poetry readings, exhibition areas, and venues for outreach by other cultural organisations.

We will provide a network of 17 library buildings in appropriate locations across the county according to need, ensuring that there remains a very high level of accessibility to a library within a reasonable journey time of 20-25 minutes by car or public transport. These 17 libraries are Battle, Bexhill, Crowborough, Eastbourne, Forest Row, Hailsham, Hampden Park, Hastings, Heathfield, Hollington, Lewes, Newhaven, Peacehaven, Rye, Seaford, Uckfield and Wadhurst. We will work with partners to make the best use of space within these buildings, which will result in some new services being offered in libraries.



We will continue to develop the Home Library Service for those who are unable to travel to libraries or use the eLibrary, working with partners to engage residents who would most benefit from accessing the service.

## Delivery of a needs-based library service

A needs-based library service means a library service where we prioritise our resources towards the achievement of outcomes that will best meet the needs of those who live, work and study in East Sussex.

**The table below summarises the needs identified during the development of the Libraries Strategic Committsioning Strategy which was launched in 2018. and has been updated where new data is available. The revised Needs Assessment can be found at Technical Appendix 1**

### **Reading, literacy and numeracy**

Children who are disadvantaged do worse at school than those from non-disadvantaged backgrounds.

In 2019, At the end of primary school (Key Stage 2) only 58.6% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard for reading, 65.5% for writing, and 57.5% for grammar, punctuation, and spelling, compared with 77.6%, 84.2%, and 78.5% respectively for non-disadvantaged pupils.

At GCSE (Key Stage 4) 39.6% of disadvantaged pupils achieved grade 4 or above in both English and maths, compared with 71.1% of non-disadvantaged pupils.

In 2019, about 28% of East Sussex state school pupils were disadvantaged at Key Stage 2 and 23% at Key Stage 4.

Parts of the county have an adult population with literacy and numeracy skills below a level which means they could not compare products and services for the best buy or work out a household budget.

Literacy and numeracy skills underpin success in all walks of life, and libraries have a key role to play in ensuring children, in particular, have the building-blocks for future academic and employment success, thereby improving people's prosperity, their health and their wellbeing. Young children's early communication and vocabulary skills are particularly important. In addition, the health and wellbeing benefits of reading for pleasure are evident for adults as well as children and young people.

The Library and Information Service has the potential to support the literacy needs of every child, although some children are likely to have higher needs than others, such as those living in households with low incomes, those with Special Educational Needs and those without English as a first language. Where there are low adult literacy rates

it is expected that this will create a need that can be positively met through access to library services.

## **Economic Development**

In 2020, 6.1% of the working age population (16–64-year-olds) were unemployed in the county compared to 4.6% in England and 3.9% in the South East. Hastings has the highest percentage at 5.6% of unemployment and Rother has the lowest percentage at 3.5%.

There are 23 areas of East Sussex ranked within the 10% most deprived areas of England in terms of levels of employment, including 17 in Hastings, 7 in Eastbourne and 3 in Rother.

The Library and Information Service can provide access to online information about job vacancies and training and skills development opportunities, and support individuals directly to develop skills such as applying for jobs and learning new literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. This can also boost self-confidence and preparedness for a job interview, increasing the chances of getting into or back into work.

Disability and long-term ill health are factors which can prevent people from obtaining a job when they want to work and being out of the workplace for long periods of time can have a further impact on people's skills, levels of confidence and mental health.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

13 areas of East Sussex are ranked within the 10% most deprived areas of England in terms of health deprivation and disability, including 1 in Hastings, 1 in Eastbourne and 1 in Rother.

The county has a higher percentage (25.9%) of residents aged 65 and over compared to England (18.4%). The highest percentage of residents aged 65 and over is in Rother and the lowest percentage is in Hastings.

Average life expectancy by borough or district varies by just under four years. Hastings has the lowest (79.8) and Lewes has the highest (83.5)

There are health and wellbeing needs which the Library and Information Service can meet by supporting community and individual resilience, health improvement and reducing health inequalities. These needs can be met through the provision of safe and inclusive spaces, quality assured self-help information and resource materials tailored for residents of all ages, as well as direct signposting to other services.

In particular, the Library and Information Service can provide resources and information to enable people to take greater ownership of their own health and

wellbeing, to be more resilient, increasingly independent, self-sufficient and resourceful, and thus better able to help themselves.

Research has identified the positive benefits of reading for mental health, as well as the positive correlation between literacy and a person's ability to access health information. Those in greatest need are people in poor mental or physical health or at risk of developing health problems, particularly people with a long-term health problem or disability.

The highest health deprivation levels and disability measures are concentrated in the coastal towns, either in central residential areas or large estates on the edge that often have other income, employment and social exclusion issues. There are some pockets of health deprivation in each of the three more rural districts, but usually associated with the mid-sized towns. One area with a relatively high percentage of residents with long term illness is east Bexhill. Other high levels are found in Eastbourne, Hastings, St. Leonards and Newhaven.

### **Digital Exclusion**

Information is increasingly moving to digital platforms and there continues to be a social divide between those who have easy access to the internet and those who are offline. On digital inclusion, the needs which have been identified are the ability to access and use the internet to get information about skills and employment opportunities, health and wellbeing information, and accessing the more competitive online marketplace for goods and services, which can help households on low incomes.

Behind these needs are the affordability of home or mobile internet provision, the lack of basic digital skills (which is linked to low levels of educational attainment and also to age) and, to a lesser extent, the availability of broadband technology.

There are 20 areas in the county that are ranked within the 10% most deprived areas of England in terms of household income. This includes 14 areas in Hastings, 3 in Eastbourne and 3 in Rother.

## **Vision and Strategic Outcomes**

We have carried out reviews of our Needs Assessment and Accessibility Analysis and there are no significant changes since 2018, therefore our Vision and Strategic Outcomes will remain unchanged. However, we are seeking to develop some of our existing services and launch new services to address gaps in our provision due to emerging and changing needs of our residents.

**We will provide a Library and Information Service that promotes reading and knowledge as a route to leading fulfilling lives. We will prioritise our resources and expertise to support the needs of residents and communities in East Sussex to achieve four key outcomes:**

**Improving child and adult literacy and numeracy.** We will provide a range of quality materials and personalised support for people's different needs, so they can enjoy the pleasure of reading as well as the better life chances that literacy and numeracy unlock for people.

**Supporting the economy.** We will provide training and guidance for people of all abilities seeking to learn and to work, so they are able to build skills and confidence in a supportive environment.

**Better health and wellbeing.** We will promote reading as a source of wellbeing, provide reliable information and services to promote good health, and support people to manage their own health and the health of those they care for.

**Increasing digital inclusion.** We will provide free access to computers and Wi-Fi, and paid access to printers and scanners, training for people to use technology and the internet, so they are able to independently access vital information and services and participate in the benefits of the digital world.

We will ensure that in working to deliver our Strategic Outcomes we will meet our statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for everyone who lives, works and studies in East Sussex. They also enable us to support the Council's four overarching priority outcomes of driving sustainable economic growth, keeping vulnerable people safe, helping people help themselves, and making best use of resources in the short and long term, as well as supporting delivery of the Libraries Connected Universal Library Offer which aims to connect communities, improve wellbeing and promote equality through learning, literacy and cultural activity

Each Strategic Outcome will be delivered through a range of different services, provided by the Library and Information Service according to evidence of need across the county as a whole and within specific communities.

As well as analysing new data and research, we have worked with external organisations and colleagues in Adult Social Care, Public Health and also Children's Services to identify emerging or changing needs, including those caused by the effects of the pandemic. In some cases, for example, pupil attainment, data is not yet available which reflects the changing needs. However, we feel it is important to address these needs in this updated Strategy to provide our residents with the support they require at this challenging time.

We have identified the following additional needs where the Library and Information Service can work with East Sussex County Council colleagues and external partners to provide support and will incorporate these into our current offers:

#### **Improving child and adult literacy and numeracy**

- We will support children to recover lost education, build their confidence and increase their social interaction by providing homework clubs with enrichment activities to support their physical and mental health



### **Supporting the economy**

- We will increase our services which support people into employment, targeting support for 16-24 year olds who are experiencing high levels of unemployment. We will provide access to training, skills and qualifications, as well as interview support
- We will work with East Sussex County Council colleagues and external partners to help job seekers by lending them devices and providing training so they can access websites and information to help with their job search and improve their skills

### **Better health and wellbeing**

- We will develop initiatives to encourage people, including our volunteers, to return to library buildings, building social interaction and helping to combat isolation
- We will work with colleagues to support programmes which build food security for individuals and communities. Food security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life
- We will support groups and individuals disproportionately affected by the pandemic and/or other issues including, but not restricted to, people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, people with dementia and learning difficulties, people in temporary accommodation, refugees and asylum seekers by working with partners to deliver appropriate services and activities
- We will work with partners to provide hygiene products to help combat period poverty
- We will support the work of the Family Focus team, working closely with key workers to support their initiatives such as anti-bullying and promoting the benefits of accessing library services to build confidence and improve resilience

### **Increasing digital inclusion**

- We will work to ensure vulnerable people have access to online services, including health services, by lending equipment as well as providing connectivity to the internet and training for those who need to improve their digital skills

## Transformation principles

In addition to the Vision and Strategic Outcomes we will continue to work according to three underlying principles:

- **Working together**

We will work together with other council services as 'One Council' and with partners outside of the Council, making the most of limited public resources to deliver shared goals and the County Council's priority outcomes.

- **Promoting use of libraries**

We will stimulate use of library services where there is need, with an increased focus on audience development and marketing so that as many people as possible who are able to benefit from the Library and Information Service know what is on offer and how to access it. We will develop a marketing strategy which includes a clear approach to use of social media to engage with hard to reach groups.

- **Increasing our capacity to add value to what we do**

We will continue to build close relationships with communities and other partners, developing new volunteering opportunities to deliver additional services that will support a wider range of needs. We will seek new external funding opportunities

## Our offers

### Improving child and adult literacy and numeracy

**Fiction and non-fiction reading materials for all ages and needs.** We will provide a wider range of quality materials and tailored support for people's different needs, so they can enjoy the pleasure of reading and the better life chances that literacy and numeracy unlock for people. We will ensure that our spending on stock is closely aligned to the Strategic Outcomes for this Strategy. We will maintain the proportion of our stock spending on children's fiction and non-fiction, to support child literacy and ensure we provide resources to support adults who experience difficulties with reading. We will also spend proportionally more of our stock fund on resources and information to enable people to take greater ownership of their own health and wellbeing, to be more resilient, increasingly independent, self-sufficient and resourceful.

We will provide free reservations so that people can reserve stock from across the whole catalogue and collect it at their local library, making the entire lending stock freely available to all residents. The choice of titles and websites available to download from the eLibrary, the online library service, will be increased and prioritised according to countywide needs.

**Children and Young People's Literacy and Numeracy offer.** We will work closely with other services for children and young people of all ages (including pre-school)

and in all settings, to encourage children and their families to use the library service. The offer comprises:

- **Literacy and numeracy support for pre-school children and their families.** We will continue to provide rhyming and storytelling activities in all libraries or community settings, prioritised according to local needs. This supports pre-school learning and development of speech and language, as well as supporting socialisation and participation in group activities. We will ensure staff and volunteers are trained appropriately to maximise the benefits of the sessions for families
- **Literacy and numeracy support for school age children and young people.** We will work with schools and other providers to improve children and young people's literacy, numeracy and personal development by promoting the library service, its resources and targeted activities, such as the Summer Reading Challenge. We will support projects to combat bullying and to promote inclusion
- **Outreach services for pre-school children and their families.** We will work with Early Help services to support family learning and development in areas of higher need, delivering services in children's centres and through health workers
- **Support for schools.** We will offer free teacher loans across the county as well as targeted, free services in areas of identified need. We will provide additional resources to support literacy and numeracy to all schools on a pay-as-you-go basis
- **Homework clubs in libraries.** We will deliver homework clubs aimed at 5-11 year olds in selected libraries. These will be targeted to those in need and designed to be accessible. They will either be staff or volunteer led and will provide a dedicated space and time for children to do their homework, be heard reading and catch up on their learning, with supervision and support. Children can, of course, use the library at any time for study or reading for pleasure. We will also offer enrichment activities to support wellbeing, such as creative writing
- **Study Clubs in libraries.** We will consult with older children and young people aged 14-18 on how we can best support their study and then co-design initiatives. We will offer meeting rooms in libraries which can be booked for independent study and we will deliver information literacy sessions in secondary schools to support students to find, evaluate, use and communicate information. Children and young people can, of course, use the library at any other time for study or revision

**Literacy and numeracy support for children and adults with disabilities.** We will support children and adults with disabilities and long term health conditions, such as visual impairments, to be confident using adapted reading materials and technology.

**Literacy and numeracy support for adults with low literacy and numeracy.** We will develop our Step into Reading programme at a minimum of 4 libraries across the county to help people to improve their reading. Step into Reading matches volunteers with people who would like to improve their reading at their own pace, perhaps to improve their job chances or to be able to support their children's learning. We will

seek referrals/signposting from other agencies and organisations who work in areas of higher need and who engage with those who would most benefit from this initiative.

**Home Library Service for isolated or vulnerable residents.** We will develop our free Home Library Service to improve engagement with vulnerable people who are lonely or isolated. The service is supported by volunteers who deliver books and other resources from the local library to people who cannot easily use a library due to disability or frailty or who are caring for someone who cannot be left. It provides invaluable social contact as well as supporting reading for wellbeing and pleasure.

## **Our offer for supporting the economy**

**Support to improve IT skills for work.** We will provide free online training resources to help people look for and secure jobs as well as improving their ICT skills. We will offer Job Pods, confidential spaces and support to use technology for job interviews.

**Space to work and study.** We will provide free space in all libraries for children and adults to study or work, with free access to computers, the internet and other library resources.

**Code Clubs for children.** We will provide Code Clubs in selected libraries. Our Code Clubs are part of a nationwide network of after-school coding clubs for children aged 8-12 years old. Using specially created Code Club materials, the sessions are designed to build confidence and encourage creativity in 3 different coding languages, helping children learn computing skills that could unlock a wide range of future career opportunities. We will broaden this offer to parents and explore sessions for adults. We will also offer other STEM activities to help children learn new skills and build their confidence.

**Support for young people 16-24.** We will provide support for young people aged 16-24 to improve their employment chances. This will include a wide range of activities to build their confidence, improve their literacy and numeracy, provide access to volunteering opportunities as well as promoting our health and wellbeing resources to support their physical and mental health.

**Development of our Culture Offer.** We will work closely with other cultural and heritage institutions in East Sussex to provide an expanded programme of free or paid events in libraries to support personal development and the wider cultural economy, with particular emphasis on local literature and the creative industries in the county. Wherever possible, we will seek external funding to deliver free events and activities. We will also promote libraries as spaces that can be used for the arts, covering activities such as creative writing workshops, book and poetry readings, exhibition areas, and venues for outreach by other cultural organisations.

We will promote events being run by community organisations in Brighton & Hove and East Sussex on our community information database, ESCIS.

**Learning Services.** We will offer online accredited courses for individuals to improve their skills and gain qualifications in English, Maths and ICT. We will improve our offer



by giving the option of accessing tutor support remotely so that learners have the flexibility to study at a centre or at home.

## **Our offer for better health and wellbeing**

**Fiction and non-fiction reading materials for all ages and needs.** We will provide these in all libraries to support the health and wellbeing benefits of reading for pleasure. Different formats and a choice of titles will be provided in each library prioritised according to local needs and we will continue to expand the range of titles on our eLibrary.

**Self-help materials and support for all ages and needs.** We will provide self-help materials online and in all libraries to support health and wellbeing, as well as signposting to other services, prioritised according to local needs.

**Health and wellbeing information for all ages and needs.** We will provide reliable sources of health information online and in all libraries with guidance to other services. We'll support health initiatives such as food security, working with partners to signpost residents to our resources.

**Physical and mental health support.** We will work with other services, such as Public Health, to increase the range of health initiatives offered within libraries such as health checks and smoking cessation clinics. These will be prioritised according to local needs and by the services providing them. We will work with partners, including Adult Social Care and Health, to provide resources to support positive mental health. We will work with charity organisations to provide free period products in libraries.

**Outreach for isolated or vulnerable residents.** We will develop our Home Library Service to provide a wide range of reading materials in appropriate formats delivered to isolated or vulnerable residents by volunteers to help combat loneliness.

## **Our offer for increasing digital inclusion**

**Access and support to use computers and Wi-Fi.** We will continue to provide free access to People's Network computers and Wi-Fi in all libraries. We will review usage of computers to ensure we have good access in all libraries and promote this offer more effectively.

**Access and support to access online services at home.** We will continue to develop and expand our new initiative launched last year to lend tablets and laptops with access to the internet to digitally excluded people. We will provide support to help people to access the online services they need for health information, job seeking, social contact etc.

**Support to use technology and the internet.** Computer Buddies volunteers will provide personalised support in libraries and community settings, prioritised according to local need. This will be expanded to offer support to people to use the eLibrary confidently.

**We will support a route to inclusion.** Those that wish to develop skills further can do so through free IT For You courses which will be provided at a number of libraries and Learning Services. These courses will have a focus on increasing employability.

## **Delivering the offers - how we will deliver library services**

We will continue to deliver our offers from our network of 17 library buildings, our eLibrary, our community information service ESCIS, website pages and through outreach activities in community settings.

In terms of our buildings, our refurbishment programme is providing the vital investment required to maintain the library buildings and ensure they are designed to best meet the needs of customers into the future. When undertaking refurbishments, we will review how the library is used by customers and the needs of the local community. Any work to refurbish library buildings or build new library buildings will be in line with the Council's target of achieving carbon neutrality. We will work with existing and new partners to connect and engage with those most in need to raise awareness of how we can support them.

We have identified changing and emerging needs due to the Covid-19 pandemic and have added new offers in support of these needs. We will work with Adult Social Care and Children's Services, as well as external organisations, to target and engage with those who would most benefit from our services, improving communication and marketing.

It has also become apparent in the Covid-19 pandemic that there remains a keen interest to help and connect with our communities through volunteering. Volunteers continue to play a valuable role in providing a rich and varied library service which is connected to the community.

Following successful bids for funding, we are trialling new projects in 2021/22 which are aimed at improving wellbeing, combatting isolation and improving employment chances for those most affected by the pandemic. These projects will inform our work going forward and are targeted to those most in need.

Projects include:

- Development of an existing tablet loan scheme established last year to help to combat digital exclusion. We will increase the number of tablets available, recruit and train more volunteers to support the project, and work with colleagues in Adult Social Care and Children's Services to set up a referral scheme for those most in need
- The expansion of our Step into Reading initiative, where volunteers are trained to help adults to improve their reading
- Homework clubs to help children to recover lost education and regain a sense of wellbeing through enrichment activities

- Support to help older children and young people to study effectively by providing study space, resources and information literacy sessions
- Development of the Home Library Service to help combat loneliness and isolation
- A new offer for young people aged 16-24 to build confidence, improve their health and wellbeing and help them increase their employment chances

We will trial new ways of working and delivering services and evaluate the outcomes for our residents. We will embed good practice into our business planning.

## **Accessing the offers – how residents can access library services**

Based on the evidence of need shown in our Needs Assessment, we will continue to provide a range of different ways to access our services and with an increasing focus on online provision and library services delivered in other settings (for example other service locations, community venues and people's homes). This enables us to meet a wider range of needs.

There are three key ways in which people can access the offers:

### **An enhanced eLibrary service**

We will continue to expand the range of online services and materials that are offered through the eLibrary, our online library service. We will actively promote the benefits of the eLibrary to different groups according to their needs in the following ways:

- Step by step video guides on our website, which will show users all of the different things that they can do with the eLibrary, from downloading eBooks and eMagazines, to searching the catalogue and reserving or renewing an item
- We will continue to include regular articles on the eLibrary and the resources it has available to users in our monthly e-newsletter to all library members who subscribe
- Our computer buddies and staff will be on hand within libraries to support any customers who would like a demonstration or help in accessing the eLibrary
- Outreach sessions will be delivered to engage those who are hard to reach

### **A focus on outreach**

We will work closely with other County Council services and partners to make sure that we reach communities and individuals with the greatest needs. We will promote and deliver our offer, working closely with other services in different settings including children's centres, schools, youth centres and community venues. We will develop our loan services to care homes which had to be suspended in 2020/21.

We will continue to develop our Home Library Service where volunteers deliver library services through outreach to people in their homes, according to their needs. We have initiated a project to examine the current model for the Home Library Service, and to recommend how it can be developed to engage with more people who would benefit

from access. The results of this piece of work will be acted upon to improve the quality and reach of the service.

IT for You at Home is a new initiative launched during 2020. Participants are lent a device with internet access and are supported to use online services from home. We are aiming to expand access to the project by procuring up to 1000 devices (tablets, chromebooks), building up our bank of trained volunteers and continuing to develop the referral system for key workers to put forward participants.

We will continue to offer schools a range of services:

## **Support for Schools**

### **Free services (for all schools)**

- We will provide teachers in East Sussex schools with a membership which allows them to borrow items on a long loan from libraries for use in the classroom. Teachers will be able to apply for a Teachers Library Membership on behalf of their school, enabling them to reserve items online from a special Schools Catalogue, both fiction and non-fiction, to support the curriculum and promote reading for pleasure. The Teachers Library Membership will allow 30-40 items to be borrowed at a time. Teachers will be able to pick up and return books to an East Sussex library of their choice.

## **Support for Schools**

### **Charged services (available to all schools)**

- Participation in an annual event to promote reading (Children's Book Award or Book Club)
- Stock selection and purchase on behalf of the school – our librarians will help schools to make the best of their budget by selecting a range of titles (non-fiction or fiction) for them; schools can benefit from their expertise and our discounts on stock purchase
- Advice on management of a school library - training for teachers/volunteers on running a school library
- Any other relevant training for teachers we can provide (bespoke services)

### **Free services (for primary and special schools in areas of need)**

- Our librarians will work with families, children and teachers in schools through an outreach programme to contribute to literacy and numeracy, targeting need and working in partnership with Children's Services. Activities could include introducing children to a range of books to encourage reading, and involvement with family learning, depending on the specific needs of the school.



- Our librarians will work closely with schools to ensure children, families and teachers can maximise use of public library resources, both in hard copy and online.
- Our free services will be targeted to areas of need and prioritised according to the needs of the school community and our capacity to support the requests we receive.
- These services will also be available to schools in all areas on a chargeable basis

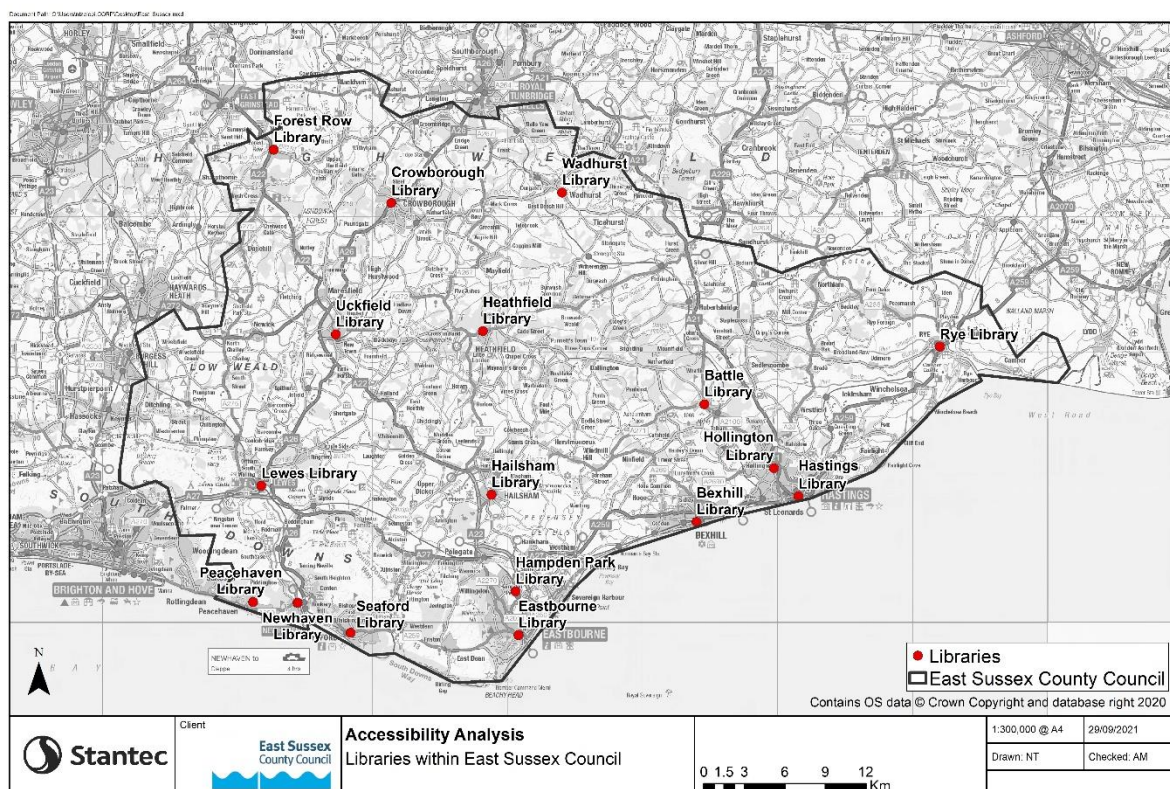
### **A network of library buildings**

We will continue to provide 17 libraries in appropriate locations across the county according to need and in order to maintain a high level of accessibility. Library opening hours will remain unchanged. In addition, we will continue to deliver outreach activities in community settings to engage with those most hard to reach groups and will continue to develop our online resources.

#### **Our network of library buildings:**

Battle  
Bexhill  
Crowborough  
Eastbourne  
Forest Row  
Hailsham  
Hampden Park  
Hastings  
Heathfield

Hollington  
Lewes  
Newhaven  
Peacehaven  
Rye  
Seaford  
Uckfield  
Wadhurst



East Sussex County Council has committed to a capital programme of expenditure for libraries until 2030. Each year we will work on projects to refurbish our libraries to ensure they are safe, in a good state of repair and that they meet the needs of our customers. It is estimated that for the 17 library buildings, this will cost around £2.5 million over the next five years or approximately £513,000 per year. This is in addition to the annual maintenance costs of around £241,000.

The Library Service will continue to assess space within our libraries to ensure they are used to their fullest potential. Since the implementation of the Strategy in 2018, the way customers use the library space continues to change. Visitors to libraries and the number of books borrowed from library buildings continue to decrease and use of online services continues to increase. The Library and Information Service will continue to identify whether library services could be delivered in the same locality in a more cost-effective way.

Operational bases for parking enforcement staff have been provided in Hastings, Eastbourne and Lewes libraries since July 2018, with the Library and Information Service delivering some of the functions of the three Parking Shops from these libraries. This joint venture enables parking services to be delivered at a lower cost due to the sharing of overheads and other operational costs, as well as generating income for the Library and information Service. We also let space in our buildings to a range of partners including the Citizens Advice in Uckfield Library and the NHS in Heathfield Library. The Service will continue to seek new partnerships to share accommodation with other organisations, in order to reduce costs or to deliver a better service in conjunction with other services, or both.

## **Community Library Membership**

We introduced a new Community Library Membership in 2018/19. This allows communities to borrow a range of items which can be made available locally to the community. The Community Library Membership requires someone in the community to apply for the Community Library Membership and to take a lead role to organise the collection and make it available. We will review this model as we have found there are barriers to usage for communities. It can prove difficult to keep track of the books on loan and we are finding that the books are not exchanged regularly, negating the advantage of being able to introduce fresh items into the collection. We will consult with community library members and introduce a new model which works better for them.

## **HMP Lewes**

The library in Lewes Prison is provided by the Library and Information Service as a traded service, which means that it is self-financing. We will continue to provide this service subject to any future negotiations with the prison authorities. It is recognised that the prison community does have specific needs which the library supports, but these are not assessed as part of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy.

## **Community and partner involvement**

### **Volunteering opportunities**

Our Library and Information Service is supported by over 400 volunteers who play a vital role in enabling us to deliver the full range of services we provide. Volunteering with the Library and Information Service is a way to meet new people, learn new skills and support the community. Roles include delivering our home library service, supporting our bookshop, children's activities, providing support for using computers and more. We train all volunteers in their specific roles and meet regularly with them to ensure all is going smoothly.

We will continue to develop existing and new volunteering opportunities to deliver the Strategy as well as looking at ways we can enhance the benefits of volunteering.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who is interested in volunteering with us, please follow the link below or ring 0345 6080196 for more information.

[Our roles | East Sussex County Council](#)

## **Equality assessment**

The Library and Information Service considers inclusivity of those with protected characteristics as a core element of its offer and strives to develop its offer with the evolving needs of its users. Actions were developed as part of the EQIA completed in 2018 to improve access to services for those with shared protected characteristics.

We have carried out a new assessment which builds upon those actions, many of which will continue, but also looks to ensure the Library and Information Service is

working effectively with local and national partners to ensure the Library and Information Service offer is relevant and suitable for its varied user-base. Whether it is working to ensure those from varying age groups have access to materials and information that will improve their lives or providing a wider range of language materials for those for whom English is an additional language, the Library and Information Service will strive to ensure the service is inclusive of all.

## Implementing and monitoring the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy

We will develop key performance indicators for the implementation of the updated Strategy as part of the business planning process for the Library and Information Service and through the Council's public reporting on the Council Plan and Portfolio Plans. These will enable the Council and members of the public to monitor the implementation of the Strategy and its delivery of the Vision and Strategic Outcomes.

## Supporting information

The updated edition of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is supported by a number of other documents.

There are two appendices to the updated Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy and three technical appendices.

- **Appendix 1. Review of implementation of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy from 2018-2021**
- **Appendix 2. Equality Impact Assessment.** This document determines the impact of the updated Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy on equalities
- **Technical Appendix 1. Needs assessment**
- **Technical Appendix 2. Accessibility Analysis**
- **Technical Appendix 3. Property Review**

Together these documents also fulfil the legal duty of the Council to produce an assessment of needs for the changes we are making, which demonstrates that, by implementing them, we will continue to meet our statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service.





**Produced by the Library and Information Service**

East Sussex County Council  
County Hall  
St Anne's Crescent  
Lewes BN7 1UE

Website: [eastsussex.gov.uk/libraries](http://eastsussex.gov.uk/libraries)

E-mail:

December 2021

**December 2021**

# **Review of the Implementation of East Sussex Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2018/19 to 2022/23**

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## Executive Summary

A Review of the Implementation of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy (referred to as the Strategy in this document) has been carried out to review progress on the implementation of the Strategy and evaluate the offers and services delivered by the Library and Information Service.

The Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy was launched in 2018 as part of a wider Libraries Transformation Programme designed to deliver a modern and sustainable Library and Information Service for East Sussex, based on current and future needs for the county. It was designed to address the challenges faced by the service, both in terms of less money, but also reducing demand for libraries. It also ensures that the Library and Information Service delivers offers and services that meet the needs of residents, particularly those who are most vulnerable. The current Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy covers the period 2018 to 2023.

Our Vision is to provide a Library and Information Service that promotes reading and knowledge as a route to leading fulfilling lives, prioritising our resources and expertise to support the needs of residents and communities in East Sussex to achieve four key outcomes:

- **improving child and adult literacy and numeracy:**  
we will provide a range of quality materials and personalised support for people's different needs, so they can enjoy the pleasure of reading as well as the better life chances that literacy and numeracy unlock for people. We will deliver a new Children and Young People's Literacy and Numeracy offer, working closely with other services for children and young people of all ages in all settings to encourage children and their families to use the library service
- **supporting the economy:**  
we will provide training and guidance for people of all abilities seeking to learn and to work, so they are able to build skills and confidence in a supportive environment
- **better health and wellbeing:**  
we will promote reading as a source of wellbeing, provide reliable information and services to promote good health, and support people to manage their own health and the health of those they care for
- **increasing digital inclusion:**  
we will provide free access to computers and Wi-Fi, and paid access to printers and scanners, training for people to use technology and the Internet, so they are able to independently access vital information and services and participate in the benefits of the digital world

The Review demonstrates that significant progress has been made in the delivery of offers that meet our four key outcomes since the launch of the Strategy including:

- increased support for our most vulnerable customers, including young people with mental health issues, people who need support to improve their literacy, isolated people and supported families
- increased borrowing of books by children and young people in 2019/20, which was higher than the previous two years, promoting a lifelong love of reading and supporting literacy
- the development and implementation of a new outreach offer focused on children and young people with the greatest need has supported vulnerable and isolated families to benefit from library services such as Rhymetimes where pre-school children can develop their speech and language
- an increased range of eBooks and eMagazines available online has resulted in a significant increase in usage; people who prefer to read eBooks and eMagazines can access them from home, 24 hours a day
- a focus on supporting people to improve their employment chances through informal and formal learning opportunities to gain confidence and qualifications has enabled jobseekers to find work or take a step closer to employment
- Partnerships and initiatives to support health and wellbeing have been developed with partners such as the NHS, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Hygiene Bank, a community organisation that helps provide hygiene products for those who need them
- the introduction of new services to support digital inclusion such as a loan scheme for devices and IT for You at Home, a telephone support service to help people to go online is supporting digitally and financially excluded people to go online to access the services they need such as applying for Universal Credit and accessing health information

We have also identified some gaps where we can develop provision of services. These will be addressed in the updated version of the Strategy:

- we will codesign our offer for young people to support their study to ensure we meet their needs, and promote the offer
- we will extend our code club provision for children
- we will expand our Step into Reading service to help adults to improve their reading and increase opportunities for learning new skills and gaining qualifications
- we will develop our Jobs Pod offer which provides confidential space, a computer and support for people with online job interviews
- we will develop and expand our initiative to provide free period products in libraries



- we will promote the free access to computers and wifi in our libraries to improve digital inclusion
- we will improve the promotion of our support for schools to increase take up of services
- we will further develop and enhance our IT for You offer, where people are supported by staff and volunteers to use computers to go online.

## **Realignment of Resources to Meet Need**

To ensure effective delivery of the Strategy, the Service realigned resources to meet need and introduced new ways of working:

- The Service has focussed on support for the most vulnerable people since the launch of the Strategy e.g. young people with mental health issues, people who need support to improve their literacy, isolated people and supported families
- There is an increase in our outreach offer to communities with higher need, for example, We are working closely with children's centres in areas of the highest need, targeting schools in areas of the highest need and supporting the literacy work of the Hastings Opportunity Area
- The work of the Librarian Team has been re-assigned according to specific needs. Targets for this Team are constantly reviewed to ensure focus on delivery of the four Key Strategic Outcomes
- We continue to seek additional external funding and sponsorship and have successfully bid for funding to deliver initiatives which support the delivery of our Strategic Outcomes. For example, we secured funding and equipment from the NHS, South East Local Enterprise Partnerships, Digital Skills Partnership and the Good Things Foundation to increase digital inclusion. As part of our new culture offer, we submitted a bid to achieve funding from Arts Council England to deliver a project for Key Stage 1 children, bringing them to libraries for a puppet show about using the library and encouraging them to return with their family
- Spending on stock and resources has been profiled to reflect the Strategy, for example spending on eBooks has been increased to expand our eLibrary offer

## **Capital Projects undertaken**

- In March 2018, we completed an extensive £9.5m refurbishment of Hastings Library enabling customers to access a wide range of services from four storeys of the library, creating a Learning Centre for adults taking qualification courses in English, Maths and ICT and bringing the children's library into the same building.
- Over the last four years we have invested over £1.27m in our library buildings to configure our libraries to provide the best possible space and facilities to deliver our strategic outcomes. This includes the complete refurbishment of Battle, Crowborough, Lewes, Eastbourne, Heathfield, Uckfield and Hampden Park libraries. We have modernised and extended the children and young people's areas in all seven libraries, created a large study space on the mezzanine of Lewes Library in which we ran Study Clubs for 16-19 year olds in 2019, and created a new Learning and Information Suite for adults taking qualification courses in English, Maths and ICT at Eastbourne Library.

## **Review of Activities supporting delivery of our Strategic Outcomes, 2018 -2021**

In the three years since the launch of the Strategy in 2018, we have developed and implemented a wide range of activities in line with our strategic outcomes as the section below demonstrates. Many activities had to be suspended from March 2021 until July 2021 but were reinstated as soon as possible following the lifting of government restrictions.

### **Our offer for improving child and adult literacy and numeracy:**

#### **Provision of quality reading material**

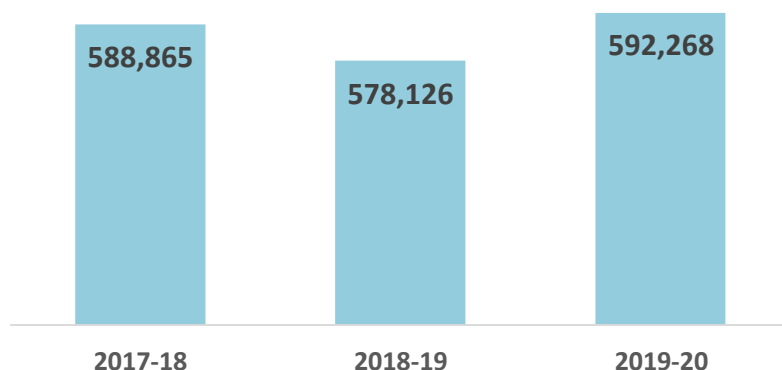
We have increased the percentage of spending on stock for children from 27% of the spend on lending stock in 2018/19 to 39% in 2020/21, and have continued to provide a wide range of reading material for adults and children since the launch of the Strategy.

Customer satisfaction with choice and condition of books increased between 2015 and 2018. In the national Public Library User Survey (PLUS) carried out in East Sussex libraries in November 2018, 77.7% of customers rated the choice of books as very good or good, compared to 77.1% in 2015 when the survey was previously carried out; 90.8% rated the physical condition of books as very good or good, compared to 88.7% in 2015.

Children's and family literacy are supported by a range of stock aimed at all abilities to encourage children of all ages to be find suitable reading materials. This stock is used to promote reading through a wide range of reading-based activities for children and families including the annual Summer Reading Challenge.

As a result of our offer for children and young people, we have seen an increase in the number of books borrowed by them in 2019/20, which was higher than the previous two years.

### Issues & renewals of children's stock



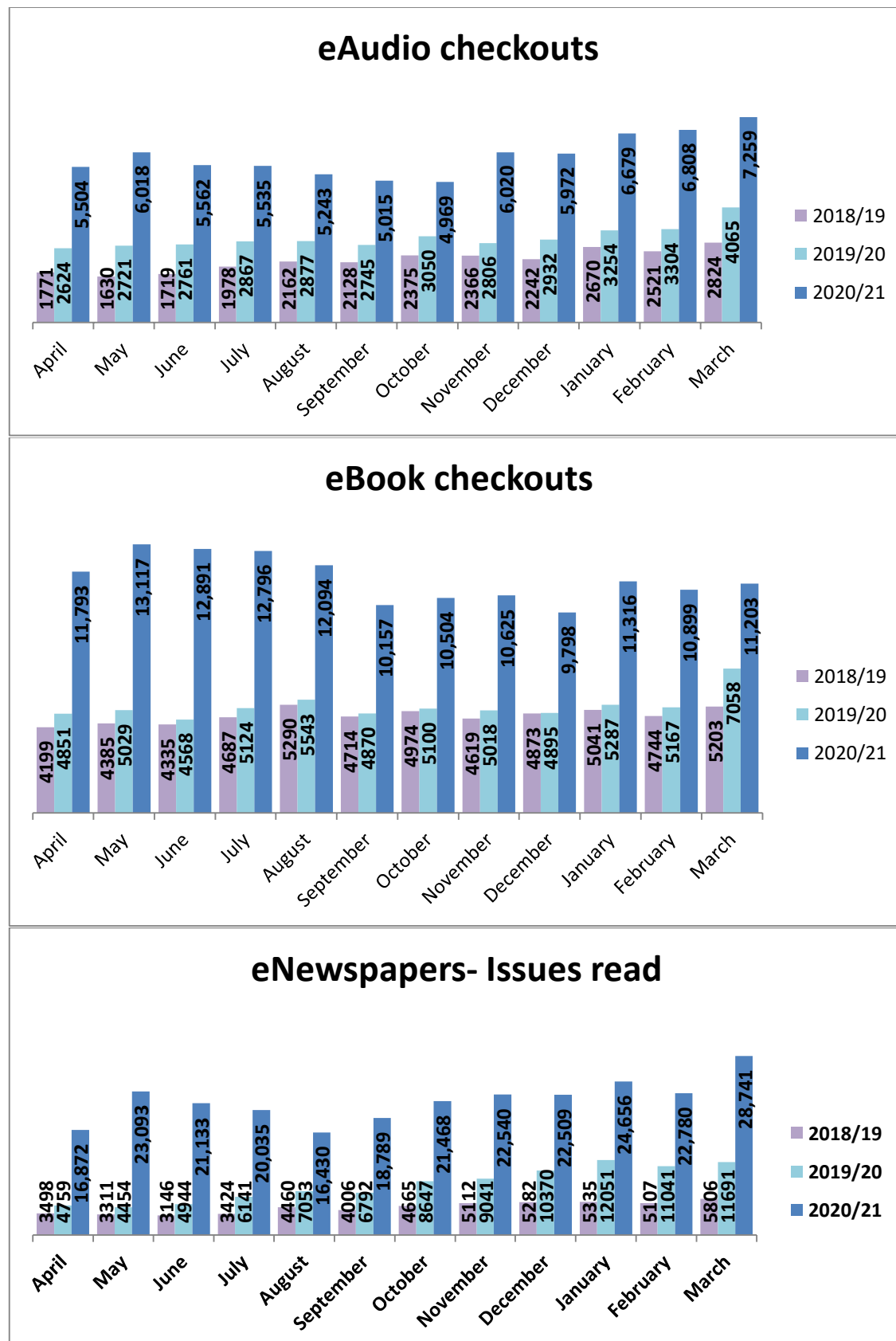
We have increased our stock to support the development of adult literacy by 400% in the period from 2018 to 2021. The stock has been used to support projects such as Step into Reading where volunteers assist people to develop reading skills in one to one sessions.

Wellbeing resources have been increased to 2,500 items in 2021 from 808 in 2018. These materials have been used to deliver Wellbeing boxes which were initially funded by external grant funding from Arts Council England and support families, young people and older people to improve their mental and physical health.

We have increased the choice and number of titles available from the eLibrary for both adults and children. In March 2021, there were 9,802 eBooks available, compared to 7,152 in March 2019 and 4,861 eAudiobooks compared to 1,962 in March 2019.

There has been a significant rise in the number of items checked out, including eAudiobooks, eBooks and eNewspapers.

The tables below show checkouts for the past three years, demonstrating the increase in usage since 2018 and the very significant increase in 2020/21 during the pandemic.



### Digital Reading Group

In 2020, we established a digital reading group which allows simultaneous download of an eBook by an unlimited number of borrowers, providing the opportunity for people

from different backgrounds and experiences to come together to read a book and feel a sense of community, reducing isolation. It supports reading for pleasure and wellbeing.

We give readers the opportunity to talk about the book in a shared space, the Library Facebook page, and to communicate directly with the author in an online interview. The first book enjoyed by our digital reading group, was checked out 1,038 times by 857 borrowers.

## Rhymetimes and Storytimes for children

We have worked to provide as many rhymetime and storytime sessions as possible to support speech and language development for pre-school children as well as providing opportunities for families to get together to share books and stories. As a result we have seen a significant increase in the number of participants since the launch of the Strategy. Sessions are provided by both staff and volunteers and are well received by the children and adults who attend. Children's centre staff work with us to engage families from our most deprived communities.

- Rhymetime participants increased from 10,469 sessions in 17/18, 14,842 in 18/19 to 16,111 in 2019/20
- Storytime participants increased from 1,837 in 17/18 to 2,004 in 2019/20

## Feedback from customers for Rhymetime at Hastings Library 1/06/2019



We asked both children and adults to write their feedback about the Rhymetime session they had just attended on speech bubbles, for display in the library.

Comments include:

- “excellent”
- “fantastic time, so energetic and enjoyable”
- Super amazing, I’m exhausted!”



## The Summer Reading Challenge

This is a national initiative organised by The Reading Agency and run locally by the Library and Information Service to encourage children to continue to read over the summer holidays, promoting a love of reading and reducing learning loss.

In 2019/20

- 5,543 children participated in the Challenge, compared to 4,800 the previous year
- 49 schools were visited by our Librarian Team to promote the Summer Reading Challenge, an increase of 10 schools from 2017/18. Schools in the areas of highest deprivation were prioritised for visits.
- 393 attendees took part in Summer Reading Challenge events, an increase from 60 attendees in 2017/18
- Increase in class visits from 32 in 2017/18 to 69 in 2019/20 (1,871 children)

In 2020/21 the Reading Agency ran the Summer Reading Challenge as an online initiative only.

In 2021/22, we resumed local delivery of the Summer Reading Challenge, including visits to schools and events in libraries over the school holidays.

- 4,860 children participated in the challenge
- 69 schools were visited by our Librarian Team, and 27 of these visits were virtual
- 540 attendees took part in Summer Reading Challenge events



## East Sussex Children's Book Award

This initiative was devised and is managed by the Library and Information Service, running from January to June each year. It encourages children to read books, share their views and be part of the process to choose the winner from a shortlist. Children in years 4, 5 and 6 take part in a variety of activities including the opportunity to meet authors and discuss their books. Schools can pay to take part and we encourage schools in areas of highest deprivation to participate by offering a number of free places.

In 2019/20:

- 36 schools took part
- 620 children attended author events
- 266 children voted for the winning book
- 130 children attended the final event where the winner was announced.

We captured Teachers' comments as part of the evaluation:

*"Exposure to some great new authors"*

*"Inspires the children to read books and encourages them to talk to each other about them."*

*"Getting children talking about their reading together. A sharing experience."*

*"Children read a wider variety of genres and authors. They enjoy sharing each other's ideas and opinions about books and love meeting the authors."*

*"Encouragement for children to read at home and increased discussion about the books that they are reading. "*

*"Language enrichment, reading for pleasure, discussions between readers, commitment to reading, the 'trickle-down' effect across the year group as books are recommended and picked up by other children who wouldn't normally choose them."*

*"A range of good quality books, resources for book club sessions and the children loved the competitions"*

*"Introducing children to good quality texts and giving them the opportunity to take part in a book club in which they can share their thoughts and feelings"*

*"Children and staff being introduced to new, quality texts and the children love to meet a 'real' author"*

*"The opportunity for excellent discussion/activities around books as well as participating in something beyond our own school."*

*"Raising awareness of reading. Meeting real authors."*

*"The children get to read different books, they get to meet an author as well as giving us ideas to buy more books for our school library."*

*"Introducing children to new authors, meeting real life authors and being able to ask questions"*

*"Promotes reading, all our children were excited about reading the book"*

In 2020/21, due to Covid-19 restrictions and school closures we ran the East Sussex Children's Book Club instead of our annual East Sussex Children's Book Award, aimed at children around 8–11 years old. We selected six highlighted titles and promoted them on our Facebook pages and in the children's reading area on our website [East Sussex Children's Book Award | East Sussex Libraries \(spydus.co.uk\)](https://www.spydus.co.uk/EASTSUSSEX/childrensbookclub.htm). This new approach allows any child to take part, either with their school or as an individual.

### **Between the Books Project**

A successful bid to Arts Council England for Funding enabled us to promote libraries to Key Stage 1 children and their teachers. The Between the Books Project was delivered in 2019/20. 890 Key Stage 1 children from 30 schools visited 16 of our 17 libraries to participate in a high quality, inspiring performance by "In the Bellows" who engaged both children and teachers with inventive puppetry and music.

The sessions were offered at no charge to schools and feedback was excellent.

- All teachers said the visit was excellent or very good.
- 100% of teachers agreed that the event was beneficial for their school to attend
- 100% of children said they wanted to visit the library again

### **Family Learning**

Approximately 1,000 participants a year take part in our Family Learning Courses which include Keeping up with the Children (Maths, English and English as an Additional Language), Get Ready for School, Employability, Money Matters, Healthy and Budget Cookery, Story Sacks, Parent and Child Signing, Family First Aid. The courses are designed in conjunction with colleagues in Children's Centres to support families, many of whom are vulnerable. Feedback from families is very positive across the range of courses.

Feedback for our Parent and Signing courses demonstrates the impact the course has for parents/carers and children:

*"My daughter who is deaf with cochlear implants is really picking up the signs quickly and using them, and it's helping my daughter with her frustration as normally she finds saying long sentences difficult".*

One of our Tutors said:

*"I had a little "rosy glow" moment, as one of the mums in the first session is a repeat customer. Apparently, I taught her 3 years ago when her eldest son was little and now she wants a refresher for her second baby boy. She said that it had really helped her eldest son, and he was speaking before many of his contemporaries, which she attributed to his signing abilities and his confidence with communication. She's a great ambassador for baby signing, and it was great that the other mums could hear her testimony."*

Feedback for our Family English, Maths and Language Courses shows their value for families:

*"I am home schooling my little boy at the moment due to his health issues and because he is extremely vulnerable in relation to Covid. The sessions have been absolutely amazing and have been extremely valuable for me..... I had no idea before these sessions what or how to teach my son and have just been muddling through! Ali (the tutor) is constantly giving new and exciting ideas and I feel like me and my son really need Ali in our lives for his learning to thrive!"*

We have delivered a joint action plan with children's centres including sessions in centres. 50 outreach sessions were delivered by Librarians at children's centres in areas of deprivation in 2019/20. The sessions introduce families to the importance of sharing books with young children to support speech and language development, encourage a love of reading and spend quality time together enjoying an activity.

### **Bookstart**

We have continued to develop Bookstart in East Sussex. Bookstart is a national bookgifting programme which was established in 1992 and is run by the reading charity BookTrust. The programme is funded by Arts Council England and the Welsh Government, as well as BookTrust's partners and donors.

Bookstart provides free books and resources to every local authority, who then work across public services to meet local needs. In East Sussex, the Library and Information Service manages and supports Bookstart. Children receive two packs containing books and an invitation to join the library, the first before they are twelve months old and the second when they are 3-4 years old. We work with our Health Visitor teams to gift the Baby packs and we send out the Treasure packs to slightly older children through our Early Years settings. Events and activities are organised in support of the scheme.

Bookstart packs are important in promoting a love of reading and encouraging families to visit libraries and they also help our Council teams build better relationships with each other and the community more broadly. The Book Corner programme which provides collections of books in childcare settings is one of the key ways we engage with some of our harder to reach families and is valued by nursery practitioners. We also work with Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability Services (ISEND), as well as EALS (English as an Additional Language) to ensure all children receive an appropriate pack. Dual language books and books for children with additional needs are supplied.

In 2019/20:

- **5,025** Bookstart baby packs were delivered to children under twelve months
- **5,210** Treasure packs were delivered to 3-4 year olds in East Sussex.

### **Support for schools**

As part of the implementation of the Strategy in 2018, we launched a new membership for teachers in primary and special schools, who can borrow up to 40 books for twelve weeks for their class from our special Teachers' Collection. Books are collected from a public library. Although we have promoted this service, take up has not been significant yet and we aim to improve promotion. In 2019/20, 27 teachers borrowed books. We aim to improve promotion and take up of this service.

### **Study clubs**

In 2019, study clubs (Study Zones) were piloted in two libraries during the GCSE and A Level exam periods. The rationale was to support students' literacy and attainment by providing access to library computers, Wi-Fi and resources during the crucial revision period. Weekly sessions on Wednesday afternoons (4.00pm – 7.00pm) were held in Hastings and Lewes Libraries, running from the beginning of May until the end of June.

The sessions were supported by Librarians and Volunteer Coordinators as part of their working hours and the initiative was promoted via local schools and colleges.

Student uptake was limited (35 young people) however we aim to relaunch this initiative again in 2021/22 in the light of changing need and with better promotional strategies.

### **Code Clubs for children**

Our Code Clubs are part of a nationwide network of after-school coding clubs for children aged 8–12 years old. Using specially created Code Club materials, the sessions are designed to build confidence and encourage creativity in 3 different

coding languages, helping children learn computing skills that could unlock a wide range of future career opportunities.

Code clubs were launched successfully in 2019 in 4 libraries – Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes and Battle. There were 64 children participating each week, supported by 13 volunteers. We aim to extend our code club provision.

### **Literacy and numeracy support for children and adults with disabilities**

To support people with dyslexia, visual impairment or other reading difficulties, we continue to develop our offer of eBooks, eMagazines and eNewspapers which some find easier to read as the font size and other settings can be adjusted. We also have eAudio books and books on CD. We provide books from a dyslexia specialist publisher for children, young people and adults.

ProDigi and Eye Pal Solo reading aids are available in Bexhill, Hastings and Eastbourne libraries. These machines support those who have difficulty with normal print. They have a text to speech function as well as tools to enlarge print and change font colour.

All computers for public use are equipped with Supernova V.I software to support people with visual impairment, as well as adapted keyboards. They are accessible to wheelchair users.

We work with a wide range of partners such as Mencap, Sussex Community Development Association (SCDA), the NHS and Care for the Carers to engage people with health issues and learning disabilities with our sessions on gaining digital skills to access the internet for information and online services, known as IT for You.

In June 2019, in conjunction with Discovery College, we ran a 6 week creative writing course for 13-20 year olds who were receiving support for mental health concerns from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

The partnership developed from a pilot course we delivered in 2018, which ran for three weeks with three participants and produced a piece of work for our Wellbeing Bag scheme. The course was designed to introduce people to the library as well as giving them the tools to communicate and express themselves with creative writing and enhance their social skills. We began with a focus group to set the themes for the sessions, which were then completed by six participants.

Of these:

- 5 became members of the library, and 1 took out the maximum number of 20 graphic novels at every session he attended
- 5 attended a final event at which some of the participants performed, displayed, or read their work aloud and gave feedback on the course to over 20 peers and their families

At the end of the course one participant's mother gave feedback to the team stating that her daughter had really enjoyed the course and had made "leaps in her confidence and ability to socialise with others". The participant's mother was very grateful for the



course and the positive impact it had had on her child. Another participant expressed interest in becoming a peer mentor.

### **Home Library Service for isolated or vulnerable residents**

In 2019/20, 143 people were served by our Home Library Service by a similar number of volunteers. More than a hundred others received a Home Library Service from our partner organisation, Bexhill Caring Community, who deliver books on our behalf as part of the services they provide for elderly and isolated people who are unable to leave their homes. During 2020 and early 2021, we were unable to deliver our usual scheme with volunteers and our staff visited approximately 50 people, taking them books and providing social contact for many who were isolated.

## **Our offer for supporting the economy**

### **Supporting people into employment**

In 2020, we launched Jobs Pod, a new initiative for people seeking a professional, supportive environment for taking online interviews. People seeking jobs can book a fully equipped, private space at Eastbourne and Hastings Libraries free of charge, with support to prepare for the interview and to use the software. We will continue to develop this initiative.

### **Space to work and study.**

We offer free access to over 200 computers across our 17 libraries and each library also has free WI-FI, available to anyone who joins the library.

Recent library refurbishments have included additional space for people to use their own devices wherever possible.

### **Support for adults with low literacy and numeracy**

In January 2020 East Sussex Library and Information Service initiated a pilot project to support adult reading. The 'Step into Reading' project offers one-to-one reading support for people aged over 16 in Hastings Library. The need for this provision was revealed by the numerous referrals from organisations for basic reading support for adults in East Sussex. During project initiation, there were no known schemes in East Sussex for these individuals to be referred to.

The pilot project is based in Hastings Library as low literacy skills are often linked to areas of high deprivation and our needs assessment demonstrated that Hastings has several wards with high levels of multiple deprivation. Volunteer mentors use a phonics-based workbook to support reading sessions with learners. Learners meet with the same mentor for one hour every week and have so far been referred by Hastings Job Centre and SCDA.

We recruited 5 reading mentors and ten prospective learners initially and before sessions had to be suspended last year, 6 learners had taken part in the project. After they had attended six sessions, four learners scored their reading ability as higher. One learner wanted to be able to support her children and grandchildren in reading, and gain confidence in reading. She progressed from reading two letter words after her fourth session to being able to read three letter words after her eighth. She said,

*“I want to tell everyone about it because it is brilliant. I was nervous before I came but the one-to-one sessions really helped”*

We will continue to develop and expand this initiative.

### **Learning opportunities for adults**

Our Learning Services Team support people to study online and achieve qualifications in ICT, Maths and English and to develop the skills they need to get into work or further education. Learners achieved over 150 qualifications between April 2018 and March 2020. People can self-refer. Agencies and organisations such as the Department for Work and Pensions also refer people to gain key skills and qualifications to build confidence and improve employment chances. Learners can study work from home or in Eastbourne or Hastings Libraries and are fully supported by a dedicated tutor. This means they can fit in learning with their everyday life, looking after the family or working full time. They can access their online courses 24 hours a day from wherever they are.

Liam, one of our learners said:

*“I attended the course in order to achieve a pass to progress to further studying at university. I hoped to gain a better understanding of maths in general & how I can use it to benefit my day to day life when dealing with mathematical problems. When beginning the functional skills course my general maths was very basic and I had very little understanding of how certain topics could benefit me. A few weeks into the course I started to see my mental maths pace increase, I was able to jump into questions rather than take time finding were to begin which immediately helped my confidence grow.*

*The course has allowed me to gain understanding of my weaknesses when it comes to exams and I have learnt how to overcome these obstacles. I have a great understanding of general maths.*

*The course has built confidence not only in maths but in myself. The tutor support throughout my learning has been outstanding, any issues or problems faced my tutor or somebody at the centre has been there for support. Working through online and offline worksheets has been a tough journey, however, I feel confident with the speed and pace of my work. I am confident with the language I use to explain my work and generally facing maths problems overall”*

### **Provision of online resources**

We have added new webpages, bringing together our offer to support people into employment by improving their skills and gaining qualifications, as well as providing business information. The offer includes free access to current copies of newspapers and magazines, business-related books and books to support job application, directories for company information and signposting to useful websites and resources such as careers advice.

[Employability | East Sussex Libraries \(spydus.co.uk\)](https://spydus.co.uk)

[Business and Jobs Information | East Sussex Libraries \(spydus.co.uk\)](https://spydus.co.uk)

### **A new Culture Offer**

We have engaged children and young people in cultural activities to support their health and wellbeing, as well as to promote library services which can improve their quality of life.

We have run creative writing sessions for young people in partnership with CAMHS to introduce young people to the library as well giving them the tools to communicate and express themselves with creative writing and enhance their social skills.

In 2019/20, we offered puppet shows to encourage Key Stage 1 children to visit the library with their family following a successful bid to Arts Council England for funding. The Between the Books Project saw 890 Key Stage 1 children from 30 schools visit 16 of our 17 libraries to participate in a high quality, inspiring performance by local arts group "In the Bellows" who engaged both children and teachers with inventive puppetry and music.

We are part of the partnership delivering the Everyday Creativity project. The project is funded by Public Health and provides support for groups who are finding Covid restrictions and impact particularly difficult. The project is funded by public health and aims to have a positive impact on the mental health of the groups participating by engaging them in creative activities delivered by local creative freelancers.

The Library and information Service is particularly engaged with the strand of the project to support people on furlough or unemployed, and will support other parts of the project by promoting and delivering our wide range of resources and services which support mental health and wellbeing e.g. Job Pods for confidential online job interviews, IT for You to use the internet to join in creative activities, eBooks to enjoy reading for pleasure.

We are also engaging online with authors on our website. We worked with a local author to promote online discussion about her book set in Eastbourne.

## **Our offer for better health and wellbeing**

### **Self-help materials and support for all ages and needs**

We have increased our stock of Wellbeing resources to 2,500 items in 2021 from 808 in 2018. These materials are used in Wellbeing Boxes for loan to families, young people and older people, and Wellbeing Bags available to young people on loan. They contain a range of books, leaflets and information. We also offer a collection of online tools to support mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.

### **Health and wellbeing information for all ages and needs**

We have developed and launched a wellbeing page for the website [Wellbeing | East Sussex County Council](#), a collection of online tools to support mental, physical and emotional wellbeing. We have also extended our range of books and eBooks to support health and wellbeing and curated easily accessed collections, both hard copy and eBooks, for customers to borrow.

**Reliable sources of health information online and in all libraries with guidance to other services.**

Since 2018, we have worked in partnership with Adult Social Care to develop ESCIS, our community information service, to be more accessible and to become a useful tool for social prescribing for health practitioners. There were over 440,000 website hits on ESCIS in 2019/20, connecting people with a wide range of community-based activities and support to improve their health and wellbeing. Over 7,500 organisations are listed. In 2020, we added two new categories to ESCIS, Coronavirus Support & Information and Virtual Events to ensure residents had access to vital information. In 2020-21 there were 6,807 page views of the Coronavirus support & Information page and 2,437 page views of virtual events.

### **Physical and mental health support.**

We have developed our partnership with the NHS to provide opportunities for people to have Health Checks in their library, in a welcoming environment. In 2019, 85 people had Health Checks in libraries over 17 sessions and smoking cessation clinics were delivered in Hastings Library.

We are working in partnership with the Hygiene Bank, a community initiative to give hygiene, personal care and household cleaning products to those who need them across the UK. We launched the Periodbank in January 2021 at Eastbourne and Hastings libraries. From January to March 2021, over 120 bags containing free, donated period products have been taken by members of the public. Staff in both libraries have received positive comments from library customers. As well as providing free products, we are asking the public for period product donations to keep the project going and placing donation bins in Eastbourne and Hastings Libraries. We will continue to develop and expand this initiative to more libraries, including the provision of continence products.

We provide library services on a traded basis for HMP Lewes and offer a range of initiatives to support mental health as well as literacy. In 2020/21 an initiative called "Against the Current" was delivered there as part of the Penned Up Festival, a literature festival created with, and for, prisoners which runs in a number of prisons. This unique initiative was aimed at offering prisoners, who were spending long periods locked in their cells with limited mental stimulation or educational opportunities due to the pandemic, a series of artistic challenges set by professional writers and artists and distributed to them through the prison library service. Over 9 weeks, a wide range of challenges was set covering poetry, non-fiction, conceptual art and TV/film reviews. Alongside this, prisoners were able to ask questions of well-known authors including Darren Shan, Kimberley Chambers and Courtia Newland.

Prisoner feedback was very positive:

*"During this difficult time of no education or work and virtual isolation it has helped keep my brain and creativity active. Something to look forward to every week. Penned Up was too good to stop!"*

We have also run a Prison Library debate club in HMP Lewes with groups of up to 20 men attending the weekly debate sessions. Subjects are selected from the daily newspapers and volunteers talked for 5 minutes for or against a motion. Questions were then taken from the audience and a vote passed before and after the debates to see who had 'won' the argument. Debate subjects vary and have included issues like 'Is there free speech?' and 'Should prisoners have the right to vote?'.

Feedback from attendees:

*"Thanks for the Debate Club and all the help you gave me" Prisoner*

*"...nice to be able to discuss my point of view in a constructive and open way where people respected my opinion and listened" Prisoner*

*"...healthy, constructive debate" Officer*

*"...debates were very well conducted and everyone that took part was respectful to their peers. It encouraged the men to talk about subjects from a different point of view and to engage in constructive conversation." Officer*

### Outreach for isolated or vulnerable residents

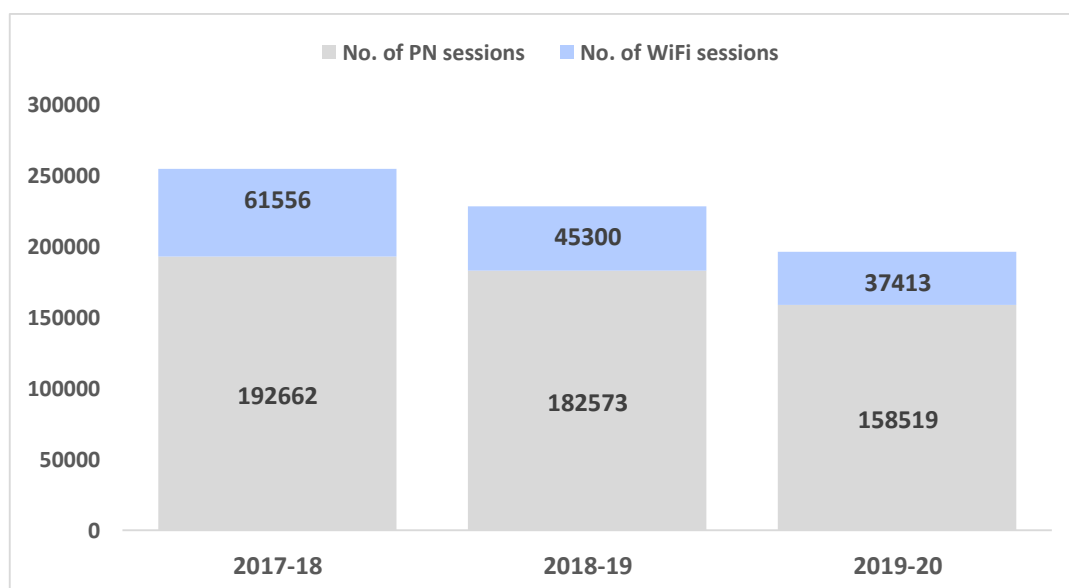
In 2019/20, 143 people were served by our Home Library Service by a similar number of volunteers. Over a hundred further people received a Home Library Service from our partner organisation, Bexhill Caring Community, who deliver books on our behalf as part of the services they provide for elderly and isolated people who are unable to leave their homes. During 2020 and early 2021, we were unable to deliver our usual scheme with volunteers and our staff visited approximately 50 people, taking them books and providing social contact for many who were isolated.

## Our offer for increasing digital inclusion

### Access to computers and Wi-Fi

We continue to work to support people who are digitally excluded; all 17 of our libraries offer free access to computers and Wi-Fi. We work with a range of partners and initiatives including Wealden District Council as part of their Street Learning Programme, Get Online Week, Ageing Well, Make A Noise in Libraries and Volunteer Week.

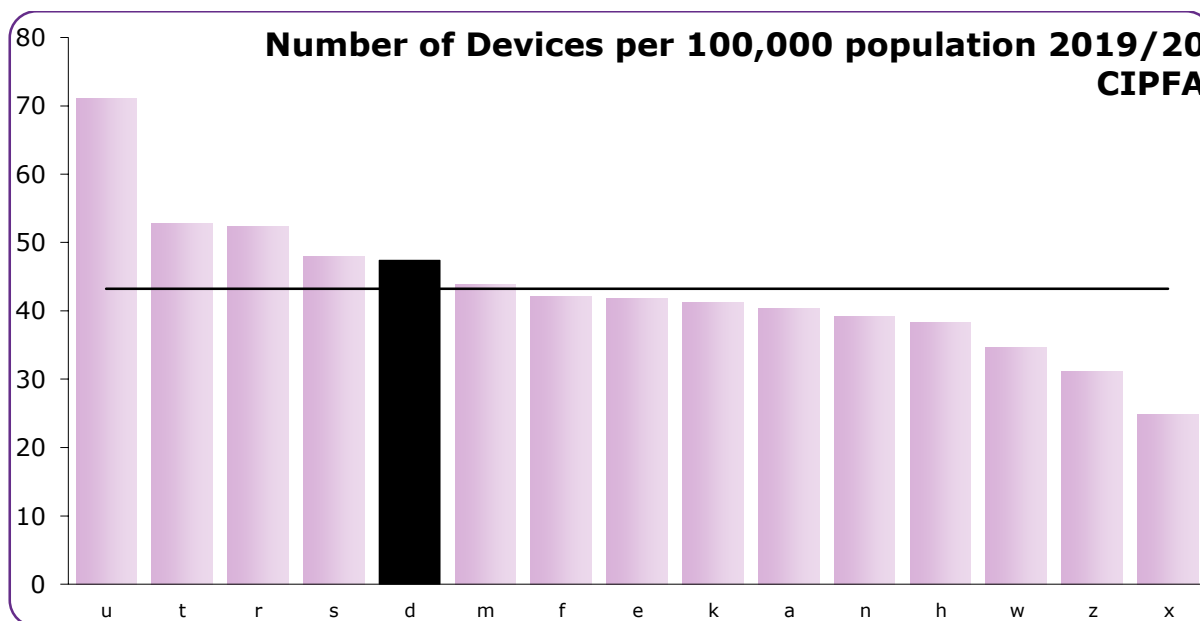
In 2019/20 there were 158,519 sessions by over 25,000 residents on our computers and 37,413 sessions by over 6,000 residents on our Wi-Fi, provided free at every library, a total of 195,932 sessions.





There is still significant need in East Sussex for free access to computers and the internet. On average, there are 3,812 sessions per week taking place in our libraries. We will increase promotion of this offer to help combat digital exclusion.

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) benchmarking shows we have good provision of computers, compared to our statistical neighbours.



### Support to use technology and the internet

In 2019/20, 1,995 people were supported in 10 libraries by 25 volunteers to improve their skills using computers and the internet through our successful IT for You initiative. We will continue to develop and extend this offer to support people to use online services.

In March 2020, we launched a new pilot initiative to lend tablets with a Sim for data to people who are isolated and need access to services, such as repeat prescription services, registering for Universal Credit and keeping in contact with friends and family. This service has operated on a referral basis from internal and external partners including Adult Social Care, Children's Services, DWP and Sussex Community Development Association. We ensure they can access NHS information and advice so they can keep up to date with the most recent, comprehensive guidance on keeping safe and finding financial support. This initiative has a high impact for participants, one of whom said, *"Being able to send and receive emails is keeping me up to date with hospital appointments as well as with friends and family, the world outside the windows. The tablet helps to reduce my loneliness."*

We continue to seek funding to support digital inclusion and have built up a bank of devices we can lend to vulnerable and disadvantaged people, securing funding/devices over the past six months from the Good Things Foundation, the South East Digital Skills Partnership (part of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership) and the Department for Work and Pensions (to support participants of European Social

Fund projects). We continue to work closely with colleagues in Adult Social Care and the Employability & Skills Team to identify people most in need, as well as taking referrals from other agencies and organisations such as Department for Work and Pensions. We are also working with East Sussex County Council Sensory Impairment Reablement Team, Eastbourne Blind Society and East Sussex Hearing Resource Centre to pilot the loan of tablets with adaptive peripheral equipment and apps.

At September 2021, we had supported over 120 people, many of whom have physical or mental health issues, including mobility issues. Many shielded during the pandemic and had no access to online services for information or social support.

We are funded by NHS Digital Skills to work in partnership to deliver new outreach projects and services to support digital inclusion in the community, delivering training in care homes, sheltered accommodation and other settings. The focus is helping people to go online to access health and wellbeing digital services such as the NHS App.

We partnered with the East Sussex Seniors' Association to celebrate the Ageing Well Festival 2020 (formerly Older Peoples' Day). Throughout September and October 2020 our IT for You at Home volunteers offered telephone support with essential online skills to help digitally excluded people over 50, who had a device but were not able to use it, to keep in touch with friends and family, use email, access the latest community and health information and more.

## **Accessing the offers**

As set out in the Strategy and based on the evidence of need, we have continued to provide a range of different ways to access our services, but with an increasing focus on online provision and library services delivered in other settings (for example other service locations, community venues and people's homes). This has enabled us to meet a wider range of needs.

Since the launch of the Strategy there has been significant development and improvement of our eLibrary website, as well as development to improve accessibility of our East Sussex County Council website pages. We have regularly promoted the eLibrary and other online resources in our monthly newsletter.

### **Space in library buildings**

We undertook a Property Assessment for all of our library buildings and were able to secure partnerships within the Council to locate or deliver other services in some libraries as part of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. There were further opportunities for partners to use space within other library buildings to provide services or for office accommodation. This would increase the potential of the library service to offer an increased range of services, delivering shared outcomes with partners and creating further savings.

Operational bases for parking enforcement staff have been provided in Hastings, Eastbourne and Lewes libraries from July 2018, with the Library and Information Service delivering some of the functions of the three Parking Shops from these libraries. This joint venture enables parking services to be delivered at a lower cost

due to the sharing of overheads and other operational costs, as well as generating income for the Library and information Service.

We have also let space in our buildings to a range of partners including Citizens Advice in Uckfield Library and the NHS in Heathfield Library.

## Achievement of identified savings

The implementation of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy delivered an estimated saving of £653,000 through a combination of shared efficiencies by co-locating library services with other County Council services, income generation, and the reduced provision of library buildings, the Mobile Library and other services. All identified savings were achieved.

Identified saving	Value of saving
Closure of buildings, including frontline staff	£172,000
Management savings associated with closures	£137,000
Income generation from buildings and building efficiencies	£171,000
Additional reduction in stock fund	£100,000
Cease Mobile Library provision, including staff costs	£73,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£653,000</b>

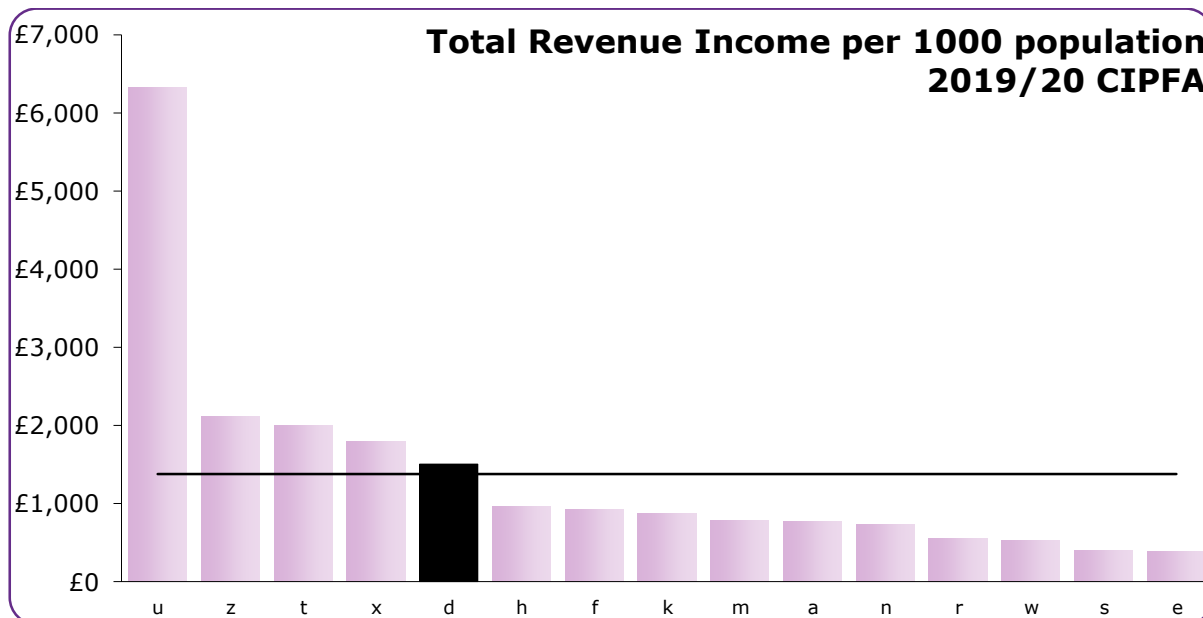
The closure of buildings, including frontline staff, was implemented in the financial year 2018/19 as planned, as were the management savings associated with the closures, the reduction to the stock fund and the cessation of mobile library provision. We also achieved the planned income from buildings and building efficiencies.

In 2018 we implemented the Parking Partnership at Lewes, Eastbourne and Hastings libraries, generating income for the Library and Information Service by providing back-office space for Parking Services staff and welfare facilities for Civil Enforcement Officers, and through delivery of some parking services such as purchase of parking permits by Library and information Service staff. In September 2020 civil parking enforcement was implemented in Rother District and whilst no office space is required, library staff now deliver some parking services from Battle, Bexhill and Rye Libraries.

We have subsequently let space in our buildings to a range of partners including Citizens Advice and the NHS, generating further income for the Library and Information Service. Citizens Advice have leased underused space in Uckfield Library and will provide free, independent, confidential advice on issues such as money, benefits, housing and employment from the library. People who come to the charity for support have access to library services such as free internet access and Wi-Fi, courses and advice, while library users can also benefit from having Citizens Advice

in the same building. This service will be offered when restrictions allow. We have also let underused space in Heathfield Library to the NHS.

We compare well for income generation per 1,000 population against our nearest statistical neighbours.



## Benchmarking

In November 2018, we carried out the Public Library User Survey (PLUS). This is a CIPFA survey carried out every three years to give a broad understanding of how customers rate Library Services. This took place before the end of the first year of delivery of the Strategy and provides useful insight.

Headline results, compared with results for 2015:

- 67% rated opening hours very good/good compared to 88% in 2015
- 88% rated the attractiveness of library inside very good/ good compared to 84%
- 94% rated customer care very good/good compared to 98%
- 78% rated the choice of books very good/good compared to 77%
- 91% rated the physical condition of books very good/good compared to 89%
- 91% rated their overall levels of satisfaction with libraries as very good/good compared to 92%

The Public Library User Survey also showed that nearly half (49%) of adult visitors to libraries in East Sussex are aged 65 and over. Almost two thirds (65%) of adult library users visited a library to borrow, return, renew or reserve a book. The next most common reason for visiting (23%) was to access the public computers or Wi-Fi. This compares to 74% and 19% respectively in 2015 when the last survey was conducted, demonstrating the increasing role of libraries for computer and internet access.

## **Benchmarking with comparable library services**

Each year we submit data to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) which allows us to benchmark our performance against other English authorities. In particular, we examine how our service costs and performance compare to our nearest statistical neighbours, which for 2019/20 data are Norfolk, West Sussex, Hampshire, Worcestershire, Somerset, Suffolk, North Yorkshire, Lancashire, Dorset, Devon, Warwickshire, East Sussex, Kent, Essex and Staffordshire. Nearest Neighbours are identified by CIPFA using a range of demographic and socio-economic indicators to help councils identify the most appropriate authorities to benchmark against and to drive improvement. We have used CIPFA data to inform this review.



### **Visits to libraries**

In 2017/18, there were 1,258,096 visits to our 17 libraries and in 2019/20 there were 1,020,804.

There is no single reason why visits to libraries nationally are decreasing and it is likely that a number of factors are influencing the trend including changes in customer behaviour, particularly channel shift from print to digital, increased competition with a wider range of leisure time options and the lack of a national marketing approach.

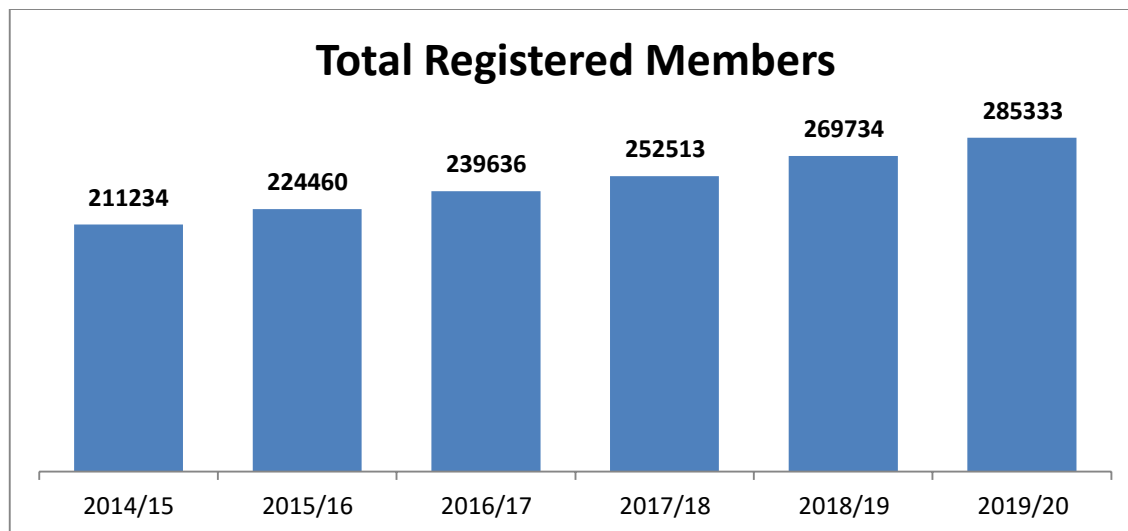
The decrease in library visits nationally was 5% between 2018/19 and 2019/20, whilst in East Sussex it was 7%. However, we carried out major refurbishments in three of our libraries in 2019/20 which required either complete closure of the building to allow work to be undertaken or part closure with a resulting reduction of service offer. The three libraries where we carried out improvements to facilities and decoration were Heathfield, Lewes and Eastbourne, which is our busiest library.

### **Membership**

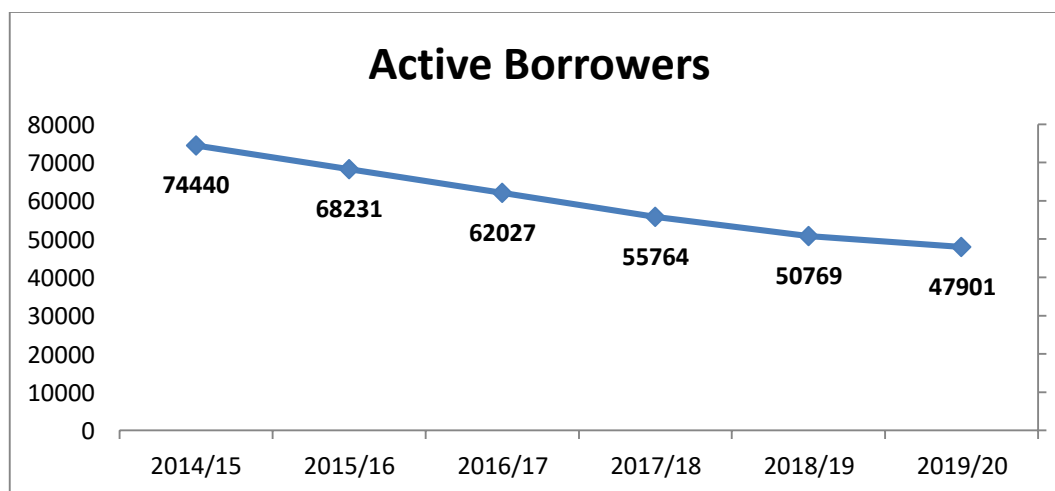
Membership of the Library and Information Service is free to everyone who lives, works and studies in East Sussex.

Registered members are customers with a current library membership. Customers have to re-register every two years to ensure their details are kept up to date. The increasing number of registered members shown in the chart below reflects customers who join the library to use computers and/or Wi-Fi or to use our eLibrary for eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines or other online resources which require sign in with a PIN.





Active members are customers who have borrowed an item over the previous 12 months. Although useful as a general indicator, this figure does **not** include people who use library services for other purposes, such as using library computers, borrowing eBooks only or visiting a library to consult resources without borrowing. The reduction in active members reflects the way the service is changing to provide more online services and resources, and that customers are moving to this offer.



## Equality Impact Analysis Template

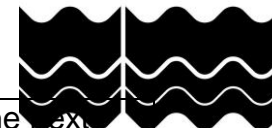
**Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA) (or Equality Impact Assessment) aims to make services and public policy better for all service-users and staff and supports value for money by getting council services right first time.**

We use EqIAs to enable us to consider all relevant information from an Equality requirements perspective when procuring or restructuring a service or introducing a new policy or strategy. This analysis of impacts is then reflected in the relevant action plan to get the best outcomes for the Council, its staff and service-users<sup>1</sup>.

EqIAs are used to analyse and assess how the Council's work might impact differently on different groups of people<sup>2</sup>. EqIAs help the Council to make good decisions for its service-users, staff and residents and provide evidence that those decision conform with the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010<sup>3</sup>.

This template sets out the steps you need to take to complete an EqIA for your project. Guidance for sections is in the endnotes. If you have any questions about your EqIA and/or how to complete this form, please use the contact details at the end of this form.

<b>Title of Project/Service/Policy<sup>4</sup></b>	Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy
<b>Team/Department<sup>5</sup></b>	Library Service
<b>Directorate</b>	Communities, Economy & Transport
<b>Provide a comprehensive description of your Project (Service/Policy, etc.) including its Purpose and Scope<sup>6</sup></b>	<p>The Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2018-23 is being updated to review progress and include changing/emerging needs and new information.</p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic and other issues have led to changing needs for many of our residents, including a greater need to access online services for work, shopping, socialising and of course for health information and access to health services to support both physical and mental health. There is a need for children and young people to catch up on their education and also for those who lost their jobs to be supported back into employment. Many people experienced isolation and loneliness and need to regain their confidence and community networks.</p>

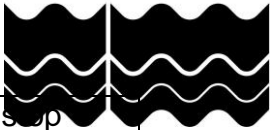


This updated Strategy will set out the path for the Library and Information Service for the next five years, taking into consideration the Service's ability to support residents' needs with access to services in libraries, online and through community outreach that support reading and literacy, health and wellbeing, economic recovery and digital inclusion. Significant progress has been made in the three years since the launch of the previous Strategy. The Service has reviewed this work and analysed how it can best support residents going forward, building on good practice and adding new service offers.

The Strategy has been developed using the 'strategic commissioning framework'. This ensures a clear understanding of 'need', before identifying the best way to meet it. It also sets out a clear rationale for the review and decision-making process. The assessment of local needs must demonstrate that the proposals meet the requirements of section 7 Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service. A number of Technical Appendices have been prepared which collectively and comprehensively assess needs within East Sussex and establish the type of service offer that is required to deliver the Strategic Outcomes and to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service. The Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy draws on the conclusions of each of these documents.

The Strategy presents proposals for a needs-based library service, which means a library service where we prioritise our resources towards the achievement of outcomes that will best meet the needs of those who live, work and study in East Sussex. In order to do that, we had to reassess what those needs are and in which communities (of both people and place) they are greatest. We needed to understand how people are using the Library and Information Service, how that is changing, and what impact it might have on what we do in future. For further information on the analysis undertaken please refer to Technical Appendix 1 of the Strategy– Needs Assessment.

This document provides a clear evidence-based review of needs, both met and unmet, that it is considered impact on the current and future provision of the Library and Information Service. Understanding need enables us to identify the outcomes which the Library and Information Service is well-placed to help achieve, either, or by working with others. We could then identify how well our current library service is able to achieve those outcomes, what things we should continue to do or do differently, whether there are completely new services and activities we



Appendix 3

	<p>should provide because they would help achieve the outcomes, and whether we should stop doing some things completely. We also needed to consider if there were better ways of providing this needs-based library service that would make it more likely to achieve its goals. This is the basis of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy.</p>
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## Initial assessment of whether your project requires an EqlA

When answering these questions, please keep in mind all legally protected equality characteristics (sex/gender, gender reassignment, religion or belief, age, disability, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity) of the people actually or potentially receiving and benefiting from the services or the policy.

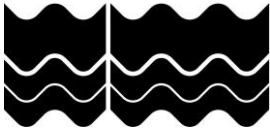
In particular consider whether there are any potential equality related barriers that people may experience when getting to know about, accessing or receiving the service or the policy to be introduced or changed.

Discuss the results of your Equality assessment with the Equality Lead for your department and agree whether improvements or changes need to be made to any aspect of your Project.

	Question	Yes	No	Don't Know
1	Is there evidence of different needs, experiences, issues or priorities on the basis of the equality characteristics (listed below) in relation to the service or policy/strategy area?	y		
2	Are there any proposed changes in the service/policy that may affect how services are run and/or used or the ways the policy will impact different groups?	y		
3	Are there any proposed changes in the service/policy that may affect service-users/staff/residents directly?	y		
4	Is there potential for, or evidence that, the service/policy may adversely affect inclusiveness or harm good relations between different groups of people?		n	
5	Is there any potential for, or evidence that any part of the service/aspects of the policy could have a direct or indirect discriminatory effect on service-users/staff/residents?		n	
6	Is there any stakeholder (Council staff, residents, trade unions, service-users, VCSE organisations) concerned about actual, potential, or perceived discrimination/unequal treatment in the service or the Policy on the basis of the equality characteristics set out above that may lead to taking legal action against the Council?		n	
7	Is there any evidence or indication of higher or lower uptake of the service by, or the impact of the policy on, people who share the equality characteristics set out above?	y		

If you have answered "YES" or "DON'T KNOW" to any of the questions above, then the completion of an EqlA is necessary.





Appendix 3

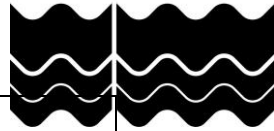
The need for an EqlA will depend on:

- How many questions you have answered “yes”, or “don’t know” to;
- The likelihood of the Council facing legal action in relation to the effects of service or the policy may have on groups sharing protected characteristics; and
- The likelihood of adverse publicity and reputational damage for the Council.

Low risk	Medium risk	High risk
x		

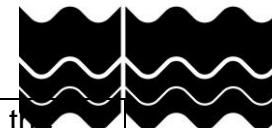
## 1. Update on previous EqlAs and outcomes of previous actions (if applicable)<sup>7</sup>

<b>What actions did you plan last time?</b> (List them from the previous EqlA)	<b>What improved as a result?</b> What outcomes have these actions achieved?	<b>What <u>further</u> actions do you need to take?</b> (add these to the Action Plan below)
<p>A detailed Needs Assessment has been undertaken which has identified areas of greatest needs in the county and a Gap Analysis has identified how the service could be enhanced or changed to best address these needs. For example, targeted outreach services for children and families in areas of need where this is currently not provided.</p>	<p>The Service has focussed on support for the most vulnerable people since the launch of the Strategy e.g., young people with mental health issues, people who need support to improve their literacy, isolated people and supported families.</p> <p>There is an increase in our outreach offer to communities with higher need, for example, we are working closely with children's centres in areas of the highest need, targeting schools in areas of the highest need and supporting the literacy work of the Hastings Opportunity Area.</p>	<p>We have updated the Needs Assessment and identified emerging/changing needs since the launch of the Strategy in 2018. We are incorporating new activities in the updated Strategy to address gaps in provision to meet these needs which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will support children to recover lost education, build their confidence and increase their social interaction by providing homework clubs with enrichment activities to support their physical and mental health</li> <li>• We will increase our services which support people into employment, targeting support for 18–24-year-olds who are experiencing high levels of unemployment. We will provide access to training, skills and qualifications, as well as interview support</li> </ul>



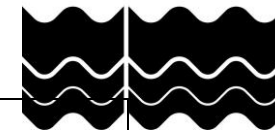
Appendix 3

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work with ESCC colleagues and external partners to help job seekers by lending them devices and providing training so they can access websites and information to help with their job search and improve their skills</li> <li>• We will develop initiatives to encourage people, including our volunteers, to return to library buildings, building social interaction and helping to combat isolation</li> <li>• We will work with colleagues to support programmes which build food security for individuals and communities. Food security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life</li> <li>• We will work with partners to provide hygiene products to help combat period poverty</li> </ul>
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# Appendix 3

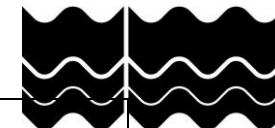
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will support the work of the Family Focus team, working closely with key workers to support their initiatives such as anti-bullying and promoting the benefits of accessing library services to build confidence and improve resilience</li> <li>• We will work to ensure vulnerable people have access to online services, including health services, by lending equipment as well as providing connectivity to the internet and training for those who need to improve their digital skills</li> </ul>
<p>In order to minimise any negative impact of the library closures and withdrawal of the Mobile Library service, the range of alternative provision available will be promoted at libraries and on the Mobile Library prior to the closures. Access to the Library and Information Service is not restricted to library buildings and the range of services offered through the library service will continue to be advertised via the County Council's website. We will also promote the service and what it can offer to specific groups via our outreach activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative provision was promoted on the mobile library and at libraries prior to closure</li> <li>• As set out in the Strategy and based on the evidence of need, we have continued to provide a range of different ways to access our services, but with an increasing focus on online provision and library services delivered in other settings (for example other service locations,</li> </ul>	<p>We will work closely with other County Council services and partners to make sure that we reach communities and individuals with the greatest needs. We will promote and deliver our offer, working closely with other services in different settings including children's centres, schools, youth centres and community venues.</p> <p>We will develop our loan services to care homes which had to be suspended in 2020/21.</p>



# Appendix 3

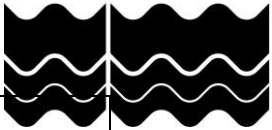
	<p>community venues and people's homes). This has enabled us to meet a wider range of needs. We have increased our outreach offer and worked closely with partners to engage with hard-to-reach groups e.g., children's centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since the launch of the Strategy there has been significant development and improvement of our eLibrary website, as well as development to improve accessibility of our East Sussex County Council website pages. We have regularly promoted the eLibrary and other online resources in our monthly newsletter.</li> </ul>	
Free internet access in libraries will continue in our network of 17 libraries and for those customers that lack the skills to use the eLibrary, we will continue to offer training in libraries led by staff and volunteers, as well as self-help training courses online. In addition, we will improve our promotion of the eLibrary and better promote how easy it is to use, including online videos on the Libraries	<p>We continue to provide free internet access and Wi-Fi in our network of 17 libraries. In 2019/20, 1,995 people were supported in 10 libraries by 25 volunteers to improve their skills using computers and the internet through our successful IT for You initiative.</p> <p>We launched IT for You at Home, a new initiative, last year. Participants are lent a</p>	We are aiming to expand access to the IT for You at Home project by procuring up to 1000 devices (tablets, chromebooks), building up our bank of trained volunteers and continuing to develop the referral system for key workers to put forward participants.





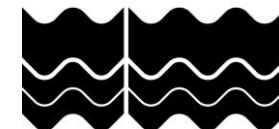
# Appendix 3

<p>website homepage, also advertised on our Facebook page and via posters in libraries, and via People's Network screens. Free bookmarks will also be available in libraries for customers to take away that give a step-by-step guide to using the eLibrary, with a link to the online video. We will also introduce online computer buddy support, whereby customers can remotely chat via the web with a volunteer to get advice on how to use the eLibrary.</p>	<p>device with internet access and are supported either by staff or by a volunteer to use online services from home either by phone or online. We continue to develop and promote our eLibrary and our online offer and have made improvements to the way information is presented on our website.</p> <p>We are funded by NHS Digital Skills to work in partnership to deliver new outreach projects and services to support digital inclusion in the community, delivering training in care homes, sheltered accommodation and other settings. The focus is helping people to go online to access health and wellbeing digital services such as the NHS App.</p>	
<p>The Home Library Service is a service whereby volunteers collect books and other materials from library buildings and drive them to the homes of eligible customers. The service currently has 186 volunteers who collect and distribute books and other lending materials to 159 library customers.</p> <p>All library customers who cannot get to a library due to ill-health, disability or caring responsibilities are eligible for the scheme and this will continue to be offered. To</p>	<p>We continue to offer the home library service to customers who cannot get to a library due to ill-health, disability or caring responsibilities.</p> <p>In 2020, staff delivered the home library instead of volunteers during lockdown periods.</p>	<p>We have initiated a project to examine the current model for the Home Library Service, and to recommend how it can be developed to engage with more people who would benefit from access. The results of this piece of work will be acted upon to improve the quality and reach of the service.</p> <p>We aim to encourage more people to volunteer by offering a range of training opportunities</p>



Appendix 3

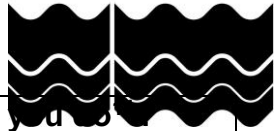
<p>ensure current recipients of this scheme can continue to access the service, we will continue to work with our existing volunteers to put in place reasonable measures to support them to continue to volunteer with us. If our existing volunteers are unable to continue to work with us, customers will be matched with other volunteers. It is anticipated that if the proposals are implemented, there may be an increase in requests for the Home Library Service among older customers that due to very limited mobility may be unable to travel further to an alternative library. Extension of the Home Library Service is reliant on volunteer capacity and we will continue to advertise with leaflets in libraries and on the East Sussex website.</p>		
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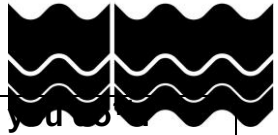
## 2. Review of information, equality analysis and potential actions

Consider the actual or potential impact of your project (service, or policy) against each of the equality characteristics.

Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know <sup>8</sup> ? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you <sup>9</sup> ? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean <sup>10</sup> ? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do <sup>11</sup> ? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advance equality of opportunity,</li> <li>• eliminate discrimination, and</li> <li>• foster good relations</li> </ul>
Age <sup>12</sup>	The highest number of responses to the 2018 consultation questionnaire came from those aged 65-74 (27%). This was to be expected as, according to results from earlier surveys of library customers, nearly half (45%) of regular adult visitors to libraries in East Sussex are aged 65 and over and half (50%) are retired.	<p>For some older residents, visiting the library and engaging with staff may be one of a few, if not the only, interaction during their day. The role of the service to provide an inclusive environment and provide services that encourages older residents to continue visiting is considered important by staff.</p> <p>Older residents have advised that the library service is one of few places they can receive the advice and assistance they require to access materials or</p>	Given that almost half of frequent users of libraries are aged 65 and over, those in this age category have the potential to be disproportionately affected by the changes to the service. However older people (aged 75+), that represent 19% of respondents, are likely to be most affected by the changes due to the increased likelihood of reduced mobility and therefore these people may find it harder to travel further to an alternative library either on foot, public transport or by car. Those aged	<p>The service will continue to provide materials for different age groups including graphic novels aimed at younger readers and large print books for older residents.</p> <p>Events, aimed at all or specific groups, will continue to be scheduled designed to encourage engagements with the LIS.</p> <p>The service is also committed to working with partners to provide training and support for all, including older residents, to be able to</p>

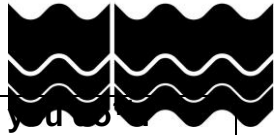


Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know <sup>8</sup> ? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you <sup>9</sup> ? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean <sup>10</sup> ? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
		<p>services that are solely available online.</p> <p>Young adults (16 – 24-year-olds) disproportionately underuse the library in terms of membership and access to services. Having sought feedback from younger stakeholders, they would like to see the LIS provide wider range of materials regarding mental health support as well materials relating to environmental concerns. This is an issue recognised nationally by library services.</p>	<p>75+ are also known to be less likely to use the internet, and therefore the eLibrary, due to a lack of skills. Age is a key factor in people's level of digital skills and therefore use of the internet.</p>	<p>use online materials, including the library's e-offer.</p> <p>The service's Audience Development Officer will continue to review local requirements regarding materials and information and work with partners and residents to develop the LIS' offer when gaps are identified.</p> <p>The LIS will also continue and develop the actions listed in Section 1 of this document to meet the needs of those from varying age groups.</p>

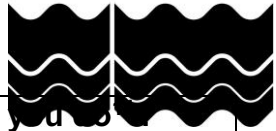


Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know <sup>8</sup> ? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you <sup>9</sup> ? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean <sup>10</sup> ? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
<b>Disability</b> <sup>13</sup>	The results of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy consultation, held in 2017, showed that 15% of respondents identified themselves as having a disability, compared to 20.3% of residents of East Sussex who have a long-term health condition or disability. The number of respondents with a disability is comparable to the response rate to the consultation on changes to opening hours conducted in 2016 (13.6%). Of library users in East Sussex, those with a disability use the library in greater proportion than their	Library staff have highlighted that some customers who have mobility issues have indicated accessing some buildings is difficult and enough to put some off from using the facilities.	The needs assessment has identified that there are health and wellbeing needs which the Library and Information Service can meet by supporting community and individual resilience, health improvement and reducing health inequalities through the provision of safe and inclusive spaces, quality assured self-help information and resource materials tailored for residents of all ages, as well as direct signposting to other services. More specifically for people with disabilities, our strategy builds on our existing services provided in libraries for those with disabilities and	The service will continue to work with Property Services to consider and/or address any building amendments required to provide or ease access to our buildings.  We will support children and adults with disabilities and long-term health conditions, such as visual impairments, to be confident using adapted reading materials and technology. The LIS will continue to establish partnerships with local groups in view of improving the experience of those with certain disabilities when using our service.

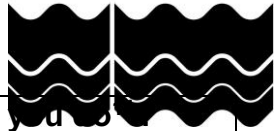




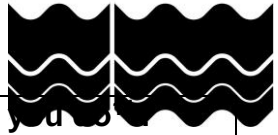
Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know <sup>8</sup> ? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you <sup>9</sup> ? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean <sup>10</sup> ? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
	actual numbers in the East Sussex population.		includes services for those with visual impairment, hearing impairment and learning disabilities.	With regard to stock and other materials, consideration will be given to provide materials for those with wide ranging disabilities.  Staff will continue to be encouraged to engage with training provided in relation to different disabilities in view of improving the customer experience for those with disabilities.
<b>Gender reassignment<sup>14</sup></b>	No data available from previous surveys. Any other ESCC source suitable?	No feedback received from service users or staff.	The LIS is committed to making trans-inclusive spaces. Given lack of current information, the service will explore this characteristic further.	The LIS will continue to work with local and national partners to ensure the service provides a welcoming environment for transgender and non-binary people. The service will also assess



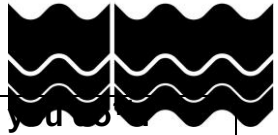
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				<p>how it can capture data from this community to support this work.</p> <p>The LIS will review the findings of the LGBTQ+ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment when published to gauge what improvements the service can make for those with this shared characteristic.</p> <p>The service will also review staff awareness of ESCC's policies related to violence and aggression as well as unreasonable customer behaviour to ensure libraries remain a safe space for those with this shared characteristic.</p>



Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know <sup>8</sup> ? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you <sup>9</sup> ? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean <sup>10</sup> ? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b> <sup>15</sup>	A monitoring question about pregnancy or maternity was not included in the 2017 consultation on the Libraries Strategy or 2018's PLUS survey as it is not considered to be relevant to library access.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for pregnant library users.	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage. However, this will be regularly reviewed.
<b>Race/ethnicity</b> <sup>16</sup> Including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers	The response rate from all white respondents to 2018's PULSE survey was 96%. This is identical to the most recent census data from 2011. These figures demonstrate that other ethnic groups are much less affected than those in the All-White category.  During the development of the Libraries Strategic	Feedback from schemes the LIS have initiated, including the work with Syrian refugees based at Hastings Library, has been overwhelmingly positive. The commitment and support from staff has been welcomed by partners and those participating in the schemes.  From analysis regarding English as an additional	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users from different ethnic backgrounds.	The service will continue to support and promote Black History Month. It is proposed that new dual-language rhyming/storytelling sessions for refugee families be included in the future offer at specific locations. Work to recruit volunteers in order for these sessions to run consistently is ongoing.

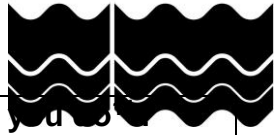


Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know <sup>8</sup> ? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you <sup>9</sup> ? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean <sup>10</sup> ? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
	Commissioning Strategy in 2018, a need was identified to support reading and literacy among refugee families in some communities. The service is aware of an increasing requirement to work with people of different races and ethnicities and have worked with local partners to ensure the LIS is available to support those from all backgrounds.	language, it is evident that the proportion of residents who use English as an additional language is higher in the urban centres of the county – Eastbourne and Hastings particularly.		<p>The LIS will continue to analyse countywide analysis in regard to EAL and whether any specific services or events in particular areas of East Sussex would benefit residents.</p> <p>A review of 2021 Census data will be completed, and consideration will be given to stock purchasing and partnership working pending the analysis.</p> <p>This will include a review of staff awareness of ESCC's policies related to violence and aggression as well as unreasonable customer behaviour.</p>

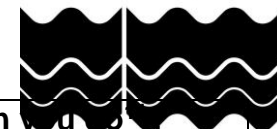


Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know <sup>8</sup> ? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you <sup>9</sup> ? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean <sup>10</sup> ? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Religion or belief <sup>17</sup>	From 2018's PULSE survey, 56% of those who stated a religion or faith indicated they were a Christian. The next most selected answer was 'No religion' which was selected by 38% of those who completed the survey.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users of different religions.	Staff will continue to promote an inclusive environment for people of all faiths and beliefs.  This will include a review of staff awareness of ESCC's policies related to violence and aggression as well as unreasonable customer behaviour.
Sex/Gender <sup>18</sup>	The results of the 2018 consultation showed that 68% of respondents were female. Similarly, data from other user surveys indicates that on average 62% of library users are female. Women therefore have the potential to be disproportionately affected by the changes to the service as they represent a higher	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users of different sex/gender.	The LIS will continue to promote national events including Men's Health Week and Women's History Month. Work will also continue with local groups to support specific work with both men and women.

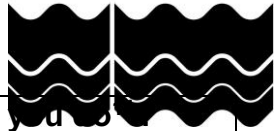




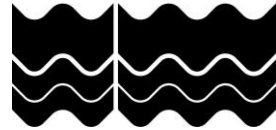
Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know <sup>8</sup> ? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you <sup>9</sup> ? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean <sup>10</sup> ? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
	number of our customers. It is also the case that, of library users in East Sussex, women use libraries in greater proportion to their actual numbers in the East Sussex population.			
Sexual orientation <sup>19</sup>	The statistics for current library users, collected in 2018, match the most recent census data for East Sussex.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users of different sexual orientations.	The LIS will continue to work with local partners to ensure a safe and accessible environment is open to the LGBTQ+ community. The service will also promote reading and online materials across the year and specifically during LGBT History Month.  The LIS will also review the findings of the LGBTQ+ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment when published to gauge what



<b>Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010</b>	<b>What do you know<sup>8</sup>?</b> Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	<b>What do people tell you<sup>9</sup>?</b> Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	<b>What does this mean<sup>10</sup>?</b> Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	<b>What can you do?</b> All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advance equality of opportunity,</li> <li>• eliminate discrimination, and</li> <li>• foster good relations</li> </ul>
				improvements the service can make for those with this shared characteristic.
<b>Marriage and civil partnership<sup>20</sup></b>	There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users of different relationship statuses including those married or in a civil partnership.	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage. However, this will be regularly reviewed.
<b>Impacts on community cohesion<sup>21</sup></b>	N/A	Staff have advised that events such as Rhymetime and Storytime have a positive effect in terms of community cohesion by presenting an opportunity for families to meet. The return of these events since the pausing of them during the pandemic		The LIS is very keen to be involved in schemes or events that will improve local community cohesion relating to any group. An example of this is the ongoing partnership the LIS has with Mencap in providing IT For You service.



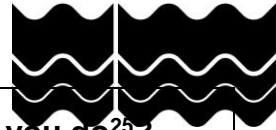
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		have been greeted very positively by families.		Staff will be consulted as to whether there are any existing community groups the service could work with closer.



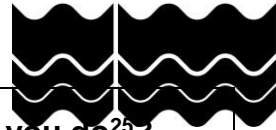
### Additional categories

(identified locally as potentially causing / worsening inequality)

Characteristic	What do you know <sup>22</sup> ?	What do people tell you <sup>23</sup> ?	What does this mean <sup>24</sup> ?	What can you do <sup>25</sup> ?
<b>Rurality<sup>26</sup></b>	27% of respondents to the 2018 consultation on our stated they lived in rural locations. This figure is comparable to the rurality of the county.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users who live in rural areas.	The LIS will continue to work with internal and external partners relating to broadband connectivity and usage across the county to ensure libraries in rural settings provide suitable and adequate services to local residents in relation to internet and computer access.
<b>Carers</b>	Results from 2017's public consultation showed that 36% of total respondents access the library service on behalf of somebody else, although these are not necessarily formal carers.  44% of these on behalf of a child under 16, 39% of these on behalf of an adult and 16% on behalf of an adult and a child.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users who access the library service on behalf of other people or consider themselves as a carer.	This LIS will continue to work with local and national partners, including Care for the Carers, in supporting schemes that assist those with this shared characteristic.



Characteristic	What do you know <sup>22</sup> ?	What do people tell you <sup>23</sup> ?	What does this mean <sup>24</sup> ?	What can you do <sup>25</sup> ?
<p><b>Other groups that may be differently affected</b> (including but not only: homeless people, substance users, care leavers – see end note)<sup>27</sup></p>	<p>No specific data about other groups available from previous surveys</p>	<p>Partners in health care and social services have identified the library services as important for the wellbeing of homeless and rough sleepers. The clients do not want to be identified but can be supported.</p> <p>They are a diverse range of ages and backgrounds.</p>	<p>The organisations working in this area see the creation of relaxed drop in areas as a way of supporting homeless and rough sleepers.</p> <p>Collections of books and materials would enhance the centres offer and help promote access to lifelong learning, wellbeing and information sources.</p>	<p>Identifying groups working in this area would help us share knowledge and experience. We can provide a range of materials including books and eResources, also sessions with their staff and customers.</p> <p>Staff guidance and training will help library teams develop skills that can be used to support customers affected by issues. This guidance and training will be informed by continuing partnerships with local groups.</p> <p>The centres will be an opportunity to project our learning services and IT for you offers.</p>



Characteristic	What do you know <sup>22</sup> ?	What do people tell you <sup>23</sup> ?	What does this mean <sup>24</sup> ?	What can you do <sup>25</sup> ?
<b>Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations<sup>28</sup></b> - include assessment of cumulative impacts (where a change in one service/policy/project may have an impact on another)				
<p>The LIS considers inclusivity of those with protected characteristics as a core element of its offer and strives to develop its offer with the evolving needs of its users. As highlighted in the EqlA completed in 2018, actions were developed (highlighted in Section 1) to improve access to services those with shared protected characteristics.</p> <p>This assessment builds upon those actions, many of which will continue, but also looks to ensure the LIS is working effectively with local and national partners to ensure the LIS' offer is relevant and suitable for the varied user-base it has. Whether it is working to ensure those from varying age groups have access to materials and information that will improve their lives or providing a wider range of language materials for those to who English is an additional language, the LIS will strive to ensure the service is inclusive of all.</p>				





### 3. List detailed data and/or community feedback that informed your EqIA

Source and type of data (e.g. research, or direct engagement (interviews), responses to questionnaires, etc.)	Date	Gaps in data	Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with? (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
PLUS survey	2018	This survey did not ask questions about all protected characteristics.	A service-specific assessment of 2021 Census data completed when the data is published in 2022.
Public Consultation – Libraries Strategy	2018	This survey did not ask questions about all protected characteristics.	A service-specific assessment of 2021 Census data completed when the data is published in 2022.
Consultation with LIS staff	Aug – Sep 2021	There were some protected characteristics that no verbatim, anecdotal feedback was provided about.	It was identified that staff did not regularly log issues, both positive and negative, regarding the use of LIS by people who share varying protected characteristics. From 2022, staff will be encouraged to forward details of how the service



#### 4. Prioritised Action Plan<sup>29</sup>

NB: These actions must now be transferred to service or business plans and monitored to ensure they achieve the outcomes identified.

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
<b>Sexual orientation</b> <b>Gender reassignment</b>  A lack of information regarding those who use the LIS and share the protected characteristics above highlights a risk the service	Analyse the findings of the LGBTQ+ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment by the management team.	The findings of this report will inform decisions to ensure the LIS is more inclusive for those who share these protected characteristics.	Management team review report, when complete, and agree actions based on findings (to be built into this EqIA, as needed).	2022 - 2027
<b>All protected characteristics</b>  The current Census data available for analysis is from 2011 and therefore could be considered out of date.	A review of Census data, when released in 2022, will be undertaken by the management team	A review of Census data will ensure the LIS' offer to residents meets the needs of local demographics and the service can develop areas of the service in line with changes relating to local demographics	Management team review analysis, when complete, and agree actions based on findings (to be built into this EqIA, as needed).	2022 - 2027
<b>Sexual orientation</b> <b>Gender reassignment</b> <b>Race/ethnicity</b> <b>Religion/belief</b>	A staff awareness campaign will be launched relating to both ESCC's Managing	Staff confidence when managing difficult situations with violence, aggressive or	All staff receive updates regarding relevant policies.	2022 - 2023



A lack of staff awareness regarding certain ESCC policies could limit degree of comfort and safety some of those with the protected characteristics above experience in library buildings.	Unreasonable Customer Behaviour and Violence and Aggression policies to ensure staff are best equipped to manage situations	unreasonable customers will improve. As a consequence, customers who share particular protected characteristics will have an improved experience when in library buildings or using LIS services and will feel more comfortable and safer.		
<b>Children and young people</b>	We will support children to recover lost education, build their confidence and increase their social interaction by providing homework clubs with enrichment activities to support their physical and mental health	Children will be supported to feel more confident and resilient, contributing to their wellbeing.  They will be supported to catch up on their education and will know the resources available to them in libraries and online library services which can help them.	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027
<b>Unemployed 18-24 year olds</b>	We will increase our services to support people into employment, targeting support for 18-24 year olds who are experiencing high levels of unemployment. We will	Employment chances for young people will be increased as they are more confident and have more skills	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027



	provide access to training, skills and qualifications, as well as interview support			
<b>Learners who need flexible approaches to studying</b>	We will improve our learning offer by giving learners the option of accessing tutor support remotely so that they have the flexibility they need to study at a library or at home.	People will be able to achieve the qualifications they need to improve their life chances, taking an approach that works best for them	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027
<b>People who are lonely or isolated</b>	We will develop initiatives to encourage people, including our volunteers, to return to library buildings, building social interaction and helping to combat isolation	People who are lonely or isolated will feel part of the community, make connections with others, build their confidence and resilience	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027
<b>People suffering from food insecurity</b>	We will work with colleagues to support programmes which build food security for individuals and communities. Food security means that all people, at all times, have	People will be supported to have improved food security	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027



	physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life			
<b>Families</b>	We will support the work of the Family Focus team, working closely with key workers to support their initiatives such as anti-bullying and promoting the benefits of accessing library services to improve resilience.	Families will be more resilient and will be confident about accessing the resources library services offer	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027
<b>Digitally excluded people</b>	We will work to ensure vulnerable people have access to online services, including health services, by lending equipment as well as providing connectivity to the internet and training for those who need to improve their digital skills	Digitally excluded people will have access to the online services they need for improved physical and mental wellbeing	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027
<b>(Add more rows as needed)</b>				

**EqlA sign-off:** (for the EqlA to be final an email must be sent from the relevant people agreeing it, or this section must be signed)

**Staff member competing Equality Impact Analysis:** Jack Pierce **Date:** 12/10/2021

**Directorate Management Team rep or Head of Service:** Natalie Anderson **Date:**

**Equality lead:** Sarah Tighe-Ford **Date:** 12/10/2021



## Guidance end-notes



<sup>1</sup> The following principles, drawn from case law, explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the Council must be aware of the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and ensure they comply with them appropriately in their daily work.
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering policy options and/or before a final decision is taken – not afterwards.
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral, rigorous part of your decision-making process and influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is further needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the Council is responsible for ensuring that any contracted services, which are provided on its behalf need also to comply with the same legal obligations under the Equality Act of 2010. You need, therefore, to ensure that the relevant contracts make these obligations clear to the supplier. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty. It applies when a policy or service is developed/agreed, and when it is implemented and reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** to prove that the Council has fulfilled its legal obligations under the Equality Act you must keep records of the process you follow and the impacts identified.

NB: Filling out this EqlA in itself does not meet the requirements of the Council's equality duty. All the requirements above must be fulfilled, or the EqlA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge. An EqlA therefore can provide evidence that the Council has taken practical steps comply with its equality duty and provide a record that to demonstrate that it has done so.

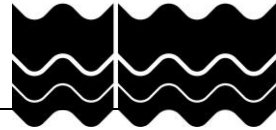
## <sup>2</sup> Our duties in the Equality Act 2010

As a public sector organisation, we have a legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to show that we have identified and considered the actual and potential impact of our activities on people who share any of the legally 'protected characteristics' (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership).

This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. The level of detail of this consideration will depend on the nature of your project, who it might affect, those groups' vulnerability, and the seriousness of any potential impacts it might have. We use this EqlA template to gather information and assess the impact of our project in these areas.

**The following are the duties in the Act. You must give 'due regard' (pay conscious attention) to the need to:**

- **avoid, reduce, minimise or eliminate any negative impact** (if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).
- **promote equality of opportunity.** This means the need to:



- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by equality groups
- Take steps to meet the needs of equality groups
- Encourage equality groups to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
- Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.** This means:
  - Tackle prejudice
  - Promote understanding

<sup>3</sup> **EqIAs are always proportionate** to:

- The nature of the service, or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The number of people affected
- The size of the likely impact
- The vulnerability of the people affected

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposed service or policy on a protected group (e.g. disabled people), the more thorough and demanding our process must be so that we comply with the Equality Act of 2010.

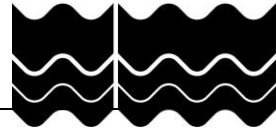
<sup>4</sup> **Title of EqIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing

<sup>5</sup> **Team/Department:** Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed

<sup>6</sup> **Focus of EqIA:** A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section. Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA)'

This section should explain what you are assessing:

- What are the main aims or purpose of the service, policy, strategy, practice, or function?
- Who implements, carries out or delivers the service, policy, strategy, practice, or function? Please state where this is more than one person/team/body and where other organisations deliver under procurement or partnership arrangements.
- How does it fit with other services?



- Who is affected by the service, policy, strategy, practice, or function, or by how it is delivered? Who are the external and internal service-users, groups, or communities?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for whom? Eg: what do you want to provide, what changes, or improvements, are required and what should the benefits be?
- What do existing or previous reviews of the service, policy, strategy, practice, or function indicate to you?
- What is the reason for the proposal, or change (financial, service scope, legal requirements, etc)? The Equality Act requires us to make these clear.

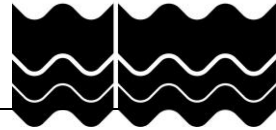
<sup>7</sup> **Previous actions:** If there is no previous EqIA, or this assessment is for a new service, then simply write 'not applicable'.

<sup>8</sup> **Data:** Make sure you have enough information to inform your EqIA.

- What data relevant to the impact on protected groups of the policy/decision/service is available?<sup>8</sup>
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (Eg: further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you already know about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each of the protected characteristics in turn. Eg: who uses the service? Who doesn't and why? Are there differences in outcomes? Why?
- Have there been any important demographic changes or trends locally? What might they mean for the service or function?
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any groups?
- Do any equality objectives already exist? What is current performance like against them?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people in the community, or particular groups / communities?

<sup>9</sup> **Engagement:** You must engage appropriately with those likely to be affected to fulfil the Council's duties under the Equality Act.

- What do people tell you about the services, the policy or the strategy?
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- What information or data will you need from communities?
- How should people be consulted? Consider:
  - (a) consult when proposals are still at a formative stage;
  - (b) explain what is proposed and why, to allow intelligent consideration and response;
  - (c) allow enough time for consultation;
  - (d) make sure what people tell you is properly considered in the final decision.
- Try to consult in ways that ensure all different perspectives can be captured and considered.
- Identify any gaps in who has been consulted and identify ways to address this.



<sup>10</sup> Your EqlA must get to grips fully and properly with actual and potential impacts.

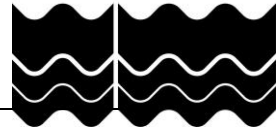
- The Council's obligations under the Equality Act of 2010 do not stop you taking decisions, or introducing well needed changes; however, they require that you take decisions and make changes conscientiously and deliberately confront the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects. Instead of "the policy is likely to disadvantage older women", say how many or what percentage are likely to be affected, how, and to what extent.
- Questions to ask when assessing impacts depend on the context. Examples:
  - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
  - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
  - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
  - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims
  - Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so, the plan must be modified.
  - Does the proposal advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If not, could it?

<sup>11</sup> Consider all three aims of the Act: removing barriers, and also identifying positive actions to be taken.

- Where you have identified impacts you must state what actions will be taken to remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts and maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
- Be specific and detailed and explain how far these actions are expected to address the negative impacts.
- If mitigating measures are contemplated, explain clearly what the measures are, and the extent to which they can be expected to reduce / remove the adverse effects identified.
- An EqlA which has attempted to airbrush the facts is an EqlA that is vulnerable to challenge.

<sup>12</sup> **Age:** People of all ages

<sup>13</sup> **Disability:** A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition includes: sensory impairments, impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects, progressive, organ specific, developmental, learning difficulties, mental health conditions and mental illnesses, produced by injury to the body or brain. Persons with cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV infection are all now deemed to be disabled persons from the point of diagnosis. Carers of disabled people are protected within the Act by association.



<sup>14</sup> **Gender Reassignment:** In the Act a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected

<sup>15</sup> **Pregnancy and Maternity:** Protection is during pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which the woman is entitled.

<sup>16</sup> **Race/Ethnicity:** This includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, and includes refugees and migrants, and Gypsies and Travellers. Refugees and migrants means people whose intention is to stay in the UK for at least twelve months (excluding visitors, short term students or tourists). This definition includes asylum seekers; voluntary and involuntary migrants; people who are undocumented; and the children of migrants, even if they were born in the UK.

<sup>17</sup> **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief.

<sup>18</sup> **Sex/Gender:** Both men and women are covered under the Act.

<sup>19</sup> **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people

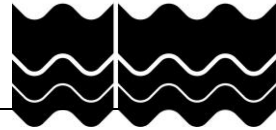
<sup>20</sup> **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** Only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

<sup>21</sup> **Community Cohesion:** potential impacts on how well people from different communities get on together. The council has a legal duty to foster good relations between groups of people who share different protected characteristics. Some actions or policies may have impacts – or perceived impacts – on how groups see one another or in terms of how the council's resources are seen to be allocated. There may also be opportunities to positively impact on good relations between groups.

<sup>22</sup> **Data:** Make sure you have enough information to inform your EqlA.

- What data relevant to the impact on protected groups of the policy/decision/service is available?<sup>22</sup>
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (Eg: further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you already know about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each of the protected characteristics in turn. Eg: who uses the service? Who doesn't and why? Are there differences in outcomes? Why?
- Have there been any important demographic changes or trends locally? What might they mean for the service or function?
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any groups?
- Do any equality objectives already exist? What is current performance like against them?





- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people in the community, or particular groups or communities?

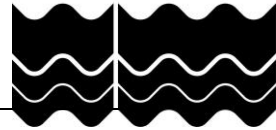
<sup>23</sup> **Engagement:** You must engage appropriately with those likely to be affected to fulfil the Council's duties under the Equality Act .

- What do people tell you about the services, the policy or the strategy?
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- What information or data will you need from communities?
- How should people be consulted? Consider:
  - (a) consult when proposals are still at a formative stage;
  - (b) explain what is proposed and why, to allow intelligent consideration and response;
  - (c) allow enough time for consultation;
  - (d) make sure what people tell you is properly considered in the final decision.
- Try to consult in ways that ensure all different perspectives can be captured and considered.
- Identify any gaps in who has been consulted and identify ways to address this.

<sup>24</sup> Your EqIA must get to grips fully and properly with actual and potential impacts.

- The Council's obligations under the Equality Act of 2010 do not stop you taking decisions, or introducing well needed changes; however, they require that take decisions and make changes conscientiously and deliberately confront the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects. Instead of "the policy is likely to disadvantage older women", say how many or what percentage are likely to be affected, how, and to what extent.
- Questions to ask when assessing impacts depend on the context. Examples:
  - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
  - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
  - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
  - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims
  - Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan must be modified.
  - Does the proposal advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If not, could it?

<sup>25</sup> Consider all three aims of the Act: removing barriers, and also identifying positive actions to be taken.



- Where you have identified impacts you must state what actions will be taken to remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts and maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
- Be specific and detailed and explain how far these actions are expected to address the negative impacts.
- If mitigating measures are contemplated, explain clearly what the measures are, and the extent to which they can be expected to reduce / remove the adverse effects identified.
- An EqlA which has attempted to airbrush the facts is an EqlA that is vulnerable to challenge.

<sup>26</sup> **Rurality:** deprivation is experienced differently between people living in rural and urban areas. In rural areas issues can include isolation, access to services (eg: GPs, pharmacies, libraries, schools), low income / part-time work, infrequent public transport, high transport costs, lack of affordable housing and higher fuel costs. Deprivation can also be more dispersed and less visible.

<sup>27</sup> **Other groups that may be differently affected:** this may vary by services, but examples include: homeless people, substance misusers, people experiencing domestic/sexual violence, looked after children or care leavers, current or former armed forces personnel (or their families), people on the Autistic spectrum etc.

<sup>28</sup> **Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations**

- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.
- Countervailing considerations: These may include the reasons behind the formulation of the policy, the benefits it is expected to deliver, budget reductions, the need to avert a graver crisis by introducing a policy now and not later, and so on. The weight of these factors in favour of implementing the policy must then be measured against the weight of any evidence as to the potential negative equality impacts of the policy.
- Are there any further recommendations? Is further engagement needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?

<sup>29</sup> **Action Planning:** The Council's obligation under the Equality Act of 2010 is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.

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**December 2021**

**Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy  
Technical Appendix 1  
Needs Assessment**



Prepared in conjunction with Stantec

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# 1 The Purpose of the Technical Appendix

## Introduction

- 1.1 The Needs Assessment is a key element of this updated Strategic Commissioning Strategy. It is essential to formally identify what contribution libraries can make to meeting the needs of East Sussex residents, and the extent to which they are currently meeting those needs, as well as to inform future strategies.
- 1.2 This is one of a number of documents, Technical Appendices (TA), which form the evidence base that supports the Updated Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. These documents are as follows:

Updated version of Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy		
Appendix 1 Review of implementation of Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy		
Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment.		
Technical Appendix 1 Needs Assessment	Technical Appendix 2 Accessibility Analysis	Technical Appendix 3 Property Review

- 1.3 The prime purpose of the Needs Assessment is therefore to provide a clear evidence-based review of needs, both met and unmet, that impact on the current and future provision of the Library and Information Service. It is developed in line with the Council's Strategic Commissioning Framework and reflects best practice in public sector service analysis. See section 2 for further details on the Strategic Commissioning approach.
- 1.4 This Technical Appendix has been produced in conjunction with Stantec. We also received support from East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) Performance, Research and Intelligence Team to provide and confirm elements of the data that supports this Needs Assessment.

## The Commissioning Themes

- 1.5 The work in this, and the other reports, that informs the evidence base for the Strategic Commissioning Strategy is undertaken in the context of four Commissioning Themes:
- Reading and literacy
  - Economic development



- Health and wellbeing
- Digital exclusion

- 1.6 These four Commissioning Themes have been developed to provide a framework for the assessment of needs that has been undertaken. Libraries support people in many different ways and a structure was needed that enabled us to effectively group the range of services libraries provide beyond reading and literacy. The four Commissioning Themes are considered to represent the key areas of community need that the Library and Information Service can meet or support.
- 1.7 The development of the four Commissioning Themes, and the assessment of needs, has been undertaken in the context of addressing the Council's statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, to provide a "comprehensive and efficient public Library Services for all persons desirous to make use thereof". The Council's statutory duty is also explained in detail in the Updated Strategy.
- 1.8 In addition, the focus of the Commissioning Themes, and the development of all aspects of the Strategic Commissioning Strategy, is in line with the Council's four overarching priority outcomes: driving economic growth; keeping vulnerable people safe; helping people help themselves; and making best use of resources in the short and long term.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.9 The four Commissioning Themes represent the important role that libraries play in society as a gateway for individuals of all ages to access information, support, knowledge and culture.
- 1.10 Literacy skills, whether traditional or digital, underpin success in all walks of life, and libraries have a key role to play in ensuring children in particular have the building-blocks for future academic and employment success. A 2011 research report by the Department for Education<sup>2</sup>, which is still referenced by the libraries sector, acknowledged the important role that libraries play in young children's early communication and vocabulary skills. The study found that school entry performance was highest among children who owned more books and made more frequent visits to a library.
- 1.11 In addition, the health and wellbeing benefits of reading for pleasure remain evident for adults as well as children and young people. Research shows that those individuals that choose to read for pleasure benefit from improved social capital, reduced symptoms of depression and dementia among adults and better parent-child communication<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.12 Beyond the traditional role of libraries to facilitate reading and literacy, the modern library service can provide information and support to individuals and businesses to help develop the economy, in line with the aims of the current

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/about/keydocuments/councilplan/priorities/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/181549/DFE-RR134.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/181549/DFE-RR134.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://readingagency.org.uk/news/The%20Impact%20of%20Reading%20for%20Pleasure%20and%20Empowerment.pdf>

East Sussex Growth Strategy<sup>4</sup> as well as the [Skills East Sussex Economic Recovery Plan](#). The Growth Strategy recognises the need to support individuals to improve their skills levels to meet the skills needs of business and support residents to reach their full potential. Libraries continue to provide access to online information about job vacancies, training and skills development opportunities, and support individuals directly to develop skills such as writing CVs and job applications, and learning new literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, in both formal and informal ways. Libraries provide facilities for people running small businesses or those considering setting one up. A range of online and hard copy information is available through the library, and they can be used as informal drop-in centres with free Wi-Fi and, in some cases, bookable meeting rooms.

- 1.13 Public libraries are neutral and safe spaces that can promote health and wellbeing, not only through reading for pleasure, but also through cultural events, as well as targeted self-help support for community and individual resilience. Research has identified the positive benefits of reading for mental health, as well as the positive correlation between literacy and a person's ability to access health information<sup>5</sup>.
- 1.14 Information is increasingly moving to digital platforms and there continues to be a social divide between those that have easy access to the internet and those that are offline, due to issues around affordability and digital skills. Libraries can help those that are digitally excluded gain access to information, apply for appropriate support and acquire digital skills leading to increased employability.
- 1.15 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has also informed this Needs Assessment and revision of the Strategy. The Covid pandemic led to changing needs for many of our residents, including a greater need to access online services for work, shopping, socialising and for health information and access to health services to support both physical and mental health. There is a need for children and young people to recover from lost education and lack of opportunities to socialise with their peers. Those who lost their jobs need support to build their employment chances and individuals and communities need to regain their confidence and community networks to combat isolation and loneliness.
- 1.16 When libraries were closed during lockdown, innovative new ways of working were set up to provide access to as many library services to as many customers as possible. A new loan scheme for tablets was set up to support digitally excluded, vulnerable people to access online services, a Select and Collect service was established to allow residents to request books for collection at the door of the library and we expanded and developed our online offer to provide access to more eBooks and other online resources. The service saw significant increases in digital membership and in the number of eBooks borrowed. Learners carrying out online courses to gain qualifications and participating in

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/planning/regeneration/growthstrategy>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Evidence\\_review\\_economic\\_contribution\\_libraries\\_2014.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Evidence_review_economic_contribution_libraries_2014.pdf)

Family Learning were supported by Tutors working remotely to ensure their studies could continue.

- 1.17 Revision of the Strategy allows the service to support the new, emerging needs of residents, building on the new ways of working developed in response to the pandemic.
- 1.18 Each Commissioning Theme, and the associated indicators of need, are described in more detail in section 3.

### **The Report**

- 1.19 In the following sections of this report the methodology is developed in the following stages:
  - Definition - the key terms used in the assessment, such as need, want, demand and supply, are defined;
  - Data - the data that are available to assess individual and community needs are considered;
  - Context and best practice - a review of what has been done elsewhere in assessing the impact of library services in meeting needs, as well as the use of needs assessment more generally in public service reviews;
  - Approach to analysis - a review of how needs can be analysed against each of the four Commissioning Themes that the Library and Information Service aims to address in East Sussex;
  - Identify key indicators – compile and consider the relevance of key indicators of need, and the likely impact of the Library and Information Service in meeting each need; and
  - Commentary - what do these indicators show across East Sussex, in terms of revealing areas of relatively high need and how might that influence the development of the strategic commissioning of libraries in East Sussex?

## 2 Definitions and Measurement

### Strategic Commissioning and Needs

- 2.1 East Sussex County Council has identified Strategic Commissioning as the approach and discipline which will underpin all the Council's business planning activity. It is about securing the best outcomes for East Sussex residents, by understanding need, matching supply with need and making the most effective use of all available resources.
- 2.2 Building a strong evidence base to assess local needs is essential during the initial phase of the Strategic Commissioning process, in order to understand the evolving needs of customers. The strategic commissioning approach recognises the requirement to meet needs at a strategic level for whole groups of customers, service users and populations. This assessment has therefore sought to understand both individual and community needs using the most appropriate ways of measuring these needs.

### Level of Need

- 2.3 To fully understand needs and their variability across the county it is necessary to identify at what level the evidence is gathered, whether from individuals, wards or parishes, or super output areas (these are the small geographical areas that census data are often presented in), and whether this is district or county wide. Invariably it is the relative differences, not the absolute values, between the level of needs identified that will help to inform decisions about allocating resources and making strategic choices in communities. Through the clear measurement of the levels of needs, it is possible to determine 'intervention levels' (which may be set nationally or locally) that can be used to target resources in areas where needs are greatest.
- 2.4 In the analysis undertaken for this Needs Assessment there was often very little variation across the whole county (and as a baseline it should be recognised that East Sussex compares favourably with many other local authority areas on a number of measures of need). However, for some indicators there were stark variations.
- 2.5 Therefore, in this assessment we have sought to identify when the variation in needs *is* significant in scale and scope, compared to where the variations are minimal across the county and therefore perhaps should be given less weight in prioritising resources to meet needs.
- 2.6 In assessing whether a level of need and the degree of variation across the county are relevant it is necessary to consider national guidance and policy, experience in East Sussex and elsewhere in setting intervention levels, and to an extent using common sense and reasonableness in determining points or levels where a need should be addressed. There are generally no national or

locally agreed formulae or tests that suggest that a specific percentage of need, for example, should be the cut off point for support or intervention by the Library and Information Service. This therefore places further dependence on the interpretation of the *Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964* requirement for the Council to provide a “comprehensive and efficient” library service and the 1964 Act does not set out a statutory measure of need.

- 2.7 This can be seen in the example of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and specifically the adult education, skills and training domain. As the IMD is ranking Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) across the whole of England, a low number indicates the highest level of deprivation and vice versa. Therefore it might be appropriate that the Library and Information Service’s resources should be focussed on the most deprived areas to have an impact on adult literacy and skills. In East Sussex the difference between the lowest 10% and the highest 10% is significant on this domain – the most deprived LSOA in East Sussex is in Hastings, ranked 147 out of 32,844 small areas (called Lower-layer Super Output Areas and each with an average of 1,500 residents each). The least deprived in East Sussex is an LSOA in Wealden ranked 32,075. Therefore, there remains a considerable disparity between the two parts of the county on this measure.
- 2.8 In seeking to understand at what level is a need of sufficient “importance” that it must be met, we have therefore sought to identify what is variously termed as minimum levels, cut-offs or floor standards. In most cases there are not uniformly agreed levels of need – where government, councils or professional advisors considered a need to be “significant” and requires an intervention.
- 2.9 The key issue with using any measure of need is where the cut off between most deprived and the average occurs – for example, should resources be allocated to the 10% or 25% most deprived areas? The assessment of needs utilised for this review has therefore developed figures which generally show the highest decile or quartile for each indicator to highlight where the concentration of need is potentially greatest.

### **Defining Needs**

- 2.10 It is important from the outset to be very clear on the definition of ‘needs’, as there can be confusion as to exactly what a ‘need’ is. Utilising the Council’s Strategic Commissioning Framework (May 2012) to understand need is central to this assessment. The framework identifies the key terms as follows:

*“There is a clear distinction between need, demand and supply. Need is what people could benefit from (that is an effective intervention or service), demand is what people ask for, supply is what is provided. Strategic Commissioning is about prioritising need over demand and supply”.*

- 2.11 In common usage and particularly where applied to consumer goods and services ‘needs’, ‘wants’ and ‘demands’ can sometimes be used interchangeably. The differences between the terms are as follows:

Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A need is 'inherent' and something which is required in order for a certain condition to be maintained or a desired state to be achieved</li> <li>■ In this review, beyond very basic human needs (clothing, food, safety, shelter), are the needs for health and wellbeing, income, information and literacy that typically identify as needs in developed societies</li> <li>■ Social needs, such as belonging and affection, as well as individual needs such as respect, knowledge, and self-expression also can be considered, even if not easily measured</li> </ul>
Want
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A want is typically a desire for a specific satisfier of need</li> <li>■ Wants can be influenced by advertising, fashion, peer pressure</li> </ul>
Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A demand is a want that has a component of both willingness and ability to pay</li> <li>■ Demands can be influenced by price, and the price of competitors</li> <li>■ Demand is most easily measured</li> </ul>
Supply
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The provision of a product or services that can satisfy the demand</li> <li>■ While efficient and effective suppliers should respond to needs and demand, the availability of a service also shapes demand, if not the underlying needs</li> </ul>

2.12 In this review we have used the definitions of need in the Council's own Strategic Commissioning Framework and other public sector assessment models to ensure that our selection of indicators is specifically relevant to addressing the need for public services.

2.13 There are many public sector examples of needs led assessments influencing policy, funding and delivery of public services. Councils, government departments and the NHS are embracing the rigorous evidence led approach that places a full understanding of need before demand and supply, particularly in health care and public health.

2.14 East Sussex County Council believes that assessing individual and community needs is a crucial step in the commissioning process. If the Council's



understanding of residents' needs is incomplete then the design and delivery of services is unlikely to fully meet their needs or achieve the required outcomes.

- 2.15 Therefore, in assessing the needs of individuals and communities in East Sussex, and how the Library and Information Service meets those needs, it is important not to focus on the demand (who is currently using the service) or the want (those who express a desire for a library) but on those specific needs that can be satisfied best through access to the Library and Information Service (the supply).

### **Measuring Needs**

- 2.16 This needs assessment focusses on using the best possible measurement of need and therefore it has to ensure that the indicators and measures utilised are credible and relevant. In so far as there is a requirement to measure needs, the focus will be on quantitative measures, but at the same time recognising that qualitative factors also have to be understood, even if there is not a simple measure for them that can be used to compare individual or community needs.
- 2.17 For this review the main sources of data are:
- Trustworthy - from recognised sources – government or council bodies, data agencies, representative organisations
  - Available - publicly available to all, either online or by request to agencies and organisations
  - Longitudinal - established measures with the ability to describe and review trends over time
  - Disaggregated – to assess variation in need between different geographical areas, at a sufficiently detailed local level
- 2.18 East Sussex County Council has a well-established and widely respected countywide database called East Sussex in Figures (ESIF)<sup>6</sup>. This online resource collates information and data from a wide range of sources, regularly updating and expanding the availability of information about the county and its communities. Data is collected under 12 key themes, such as access to services, economy, deprivation, health and transport. While not all themes and data sets are relevant to this review it provides a core information source from which to build this needs assessment.
- 2.19 The ESIF search function and the ability to select data by area has also proved invaluable in cross checking the data collected and the indicators of need being assessed for inclusion.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.eastsussexinfofigures.org.uk/webview/welcome.html>

- 2.20 The prime source of demographic information is the Office of National Statistics (ONS) 2011 Census<sup>7</sup>, as 2021's Census data is not due to be published until March 2022, and subsequent mid-year population estimates. With the significantly different levels of population density and composition between the rural and urban areas of the county this will be a key factor in assessing need in context.
- 2.21 The Index of Multiple Deprivation<sup>8</sup> (IMD), which is a combined indicator of the relative level of deprivation at a Lower-layer Super Output Area (LSOA) level, is useful in giving a view of the pockets of relative deprivation in the county. However, it combines indicators across seven domains, which are weighted to produce the prime IMD and not all are directly relevant to assessing need for the Library and Information Service – for example the level of crime or living environment deprivation. The most recent IMD is from 2019 and it has been used in this review as a sense check on the relative levels of deprivation identified within individual domains.
- 2.22 Both the ONS 2011 Census and the economic data in ESIF give a good indication of levels of unemployment, incomes and job availability, as well as a range of business growth, training and skills statistics. Other economic data are available, but care is needed to ensure that any business, skills or training needs identified are properly collected and analysed to ensure no selection bias influences the overall needs assessment.
- 2.23 Where necessary, specialist data sets have been used – for example information on internet use and broadband availability, which is a fast moving market indicator and therefore it is important to ensure that the most recent trends in use and availability are utilised.
- 2.24 In the review and selection of needs indicators the links to the Council's Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process were considered and specifically the assessment of the needs of protected characteristics. The selected information and data sets included in this needs assessment cover all individuals and communities in the county and in addition, a full EqIA has been undertaken to ensure the potential impact of those with protected characteristics are considered in all aspects of the strategic commissioning process.
- 2.25 To aid the understanding of the differences in needs between areas of the county it was useful to make use of a range of spatial analysis tools, such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS). This enables the visualisation of different levels of need on detailed maps, helping to illustrate sometimes complex data relationships. It is then possible to populate single or multiple 'layers' with data, showing all of the different variables of a community, to assist decision makers in understanding the balance between different data sets. It is particularly useful in understanding the physical access to services, education, employment and health, with its accurate distance measuring tools more reliable than plotting contours on maps.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

- 2.26 In the review of the indicators of need specific measures have been identified which can be demonstrated over a reasonable time period. This is important as it enables us to accommodate and consider trends and changes over time. In the review of the potential needs indicators, it was important to assess the 2011 Census and annual surveys, for example to determine whether values are properly representative, relative to both the trend over time and in relation to each discrete area in the county.
- 2.27 The strength and value of the assessment of need will be determined by the selection of the appropriate indicators of needs. There are, of course, considerable challenges which have to be addressed in testing each indicator before adopting it for the full assessment of relative needs across the county and then how that need can be met by the Library and Information Service. The key challenges include:
- scale – ensuring the scale and measurement is appropriate for the causal links we are seeking to identify
  - scope – ensuring the right focus, so for example not seeking to demonstrate the need for library services just through general indicators of deprivation
  - accuracy – having measures from trusted sources, that are statistically significant and can withstand external scrutiny
  - externalities - separating out external factors or influences that confuse the impact of the service on meeting specific types of need
- 2.28 Given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the updating of some data sources used to evidence the current Strategy, the service has also worked with internal and external partners to gauge emerging needs affecting residents of East Sussex.
- 2.29 Discussions were held with leading professionals in ESCC's Children's Services and Adult Social Care Services as well as support services including IT and Digital. Additionally, external partners such as the East Sussex Seniors Forum, Wealden Citizens Advice Bureau and local voluntary community services have provided feedback about emerging needs they have identified that the Library and Information Service may be able to assist with. The emerging needs identified by those service areas that it has been considered the Library and Information Service could assist in coming years are detailed below.

## 3 Gap Analysis and Emerging Needs

### Gap Analysis

- 3.1 A Review of the Implementation of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy (referred to as the Strategy in this document) has been carried out to review progress on the implementation of the Strategy and evaluate the offers and services delivered by the Library and Information Service.
- 3.2 The Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy was launched in 2018 as part of a wider Libraries Transformation Programme designed to deliver a modern and sustainable Library and Information Service for East Sussex, based on current and future needs for the county. It was designed to address the challenges faced by the service, both in terms of less money, but also reducing demand for libraries. The current Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy covers the period 2018 to 2023.
- 3.3. Our Vision is to provide a Library and Information Service that promotes reading and knowledge as a route to leading fulfilling lives, prioritising our resources and expertise to support the needs of residents and communities in East Sussex to achieve four key outcomes:
- **improving child and adult literacy and numeracy:**  
we will provide a range of quality materials and personalised support for people's different needs, so they can enjoy the pleasure of reading as well as the better life chances that literacy and numeracy unlock for people. We will deliver a new Children and Young People's Literacy and Numeracy offer, working closely with other services for children and young people of all ages in all settings to encourage children and their families to use the library service
  - **supporting the economy:**  
we will provide training and guidance for people of all abilities seeking to learn and to work, so they are able to build skills and confidence in a supportive environment
  - **better health and wellbeing:**  
we will promote reading as a source of wellbeing, provide reliable information and services to promote good health, and support people to manage their own health and the health of those they care for
  - **increasing digital inclusion:**  
we will provide free access to computers and Wi-Fi, and paid access to printers and scanners, training for people to use technology and the Internet, so they are able to independently access vital information and services and participate in the benefits of the digital world

3.4 The Review demonstrates that significant progress has been made in the delivery of offers that meet our four key outcomes since the launch of the Strategy including:

- an increase in the number of books borrowed by children and young people in 2019/20, which was higher than the previous two years
- the development of a new outreach offer focused on children and young people with the greatest need
- an increase in our range of eBooks and eMagazines available online and significant increase in usage
- a focus on supporting people to improve their employment chances through informal and formal learning opportunities to gain confidence and qualifications
- the development of partnerships and initiatives to support health and wellbeing with partners such as the NHS, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Hygiene Bank
- the development of new services to support digital inclusion such as a loan scheme for devices and IT for You at Home, a telephone support service to help people to go online

3.5 The Review of the Implementation of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy also identified some gaps where we aim to develop provision of services. These will be addressed in the updated version of the Strategy:

- we will improve the promotion of our support for schools to increase take up of services
- we will codesign our offer for young people to support their study to ensure we meet their needs, and promote the offer
- we will extend our code club provision for children
- we will expand our Step into Reading service to help adults to improve their reading
- we will develop our Jobs Pod offer which provides confidential space, a computer and support for people with online job interviews
- we will develop and expand our initiative to provide free period products in libraries
- we will promote the free access to computers and wifi in our libraries to improve digital inclusion
- we will continue to develop our IT for You offer, where people are supported by staff and volunteers to use computers to go online.

## **Emerging Needs**

3.6 We have worked closely with colleagues in Adult Social Care teams, Public Health and Children's Services as well as partner organisations to identify

emerging or changing needs which have emerged since the launch of the previous Strategy in 2018.

- 3.7 Many of these needs are due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. In some cases, for example, pupil attainment, data is not yet available which reflects the changing needs. However, we feel it is important to address these needs in the Updated Strategy to provide our residents as quickly as possible with the support they require at this challenging time. Vulnerable people may need support for a wide range of issues including digital exclusion, financial exclusion, food poverty, and physical and mental health issues.
- 3.8 We have identified the following emerging needs which align with our strategic outcomes. The Library and Information Service will work with ESCC colleagues and partners to provide support, adding initiatives into our current offers in the updated Strategy.

### **Improving child and adult literacy and numeracy**

- Children and young people need to recover lost education, build their confidence and increase their social interaction to support their physical and mental health

### **Supporting the economy**

- Young people aged 16-24 need support to improve their employment chances as this age range has been severely impacted in terms of job security, given their reliance upon sectors heavily impacted during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown such as hospitality. Increases in youth unemployment are particularly prevalent in areas of the country reliant upon tourism such as East Sussex
- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs need support to find the information they need to rebuild their businesses
- There is more need for financial and debt advice provided for people affected by furlough, loss of jobs etc

### **Better health and wellbeing**

- Loneliness and social isolation are affecting more people as social interaction has been curtailed
- It has been reported by colleagues that 16–24 year olds not being in work and being more at home is adding greater pressure to some families already in need
- Colleagues in Adult Social Care reported increased use of food banks with approximately 7,300 people in East Sussex using a foodbank each month. Foodbank usage increased by 168% during 2020, compared with 2019. There is a need to improve Food Security for individuals and communities. Food Security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life



- There is a need to support groups and individuals disproportionately affected by the pandemic and/or other issues including, but not restricted to, Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), carers, people with dementia and learning difficulties who are experiencing additional distress due to changing situations and routines, people in temporary accommodation, refugees and asylum seekers
- There is a need for free hygiene products to be provided to help combat period poverty
- Another emerging need identified by colleagues in Children's Services is that there is an increased volume of cyber-bullying experienced by children during the Covid-19 pandemic which is impacting on their mental health. Increased use of mobile devices and social media channels have led to an increase of bullying of children of varying ages and there is an increase in temporary and permanent exclusions of pupils from schools who have committed this type of bullying.

### **Increasing digital inclusion**

- Digital exclusion is affecting more people as a result of the pandemic, with information and services moving online during lockdowns. Financial exclusion is linked to digital inclusion as access to financial information and guidance is limited
- Housing applications and the maintenance of domestic bills are increasingly internet-only. This provides another obstacle to some families who are already vulnerable in that a proportion of families who require support from local authorities with housing do not have internet access to make applications nor maintain domestic bills once a tenancy begins.

## **Research**

3.9 We have researched recent reports and data sources to support the identification of emerging needs and inform the updated Strategy. Sources include:

- Libraries Connected

### [Libraries of Sanctuary resource pack](#)

Resources to support libraries do more to ensure they are open and welcoming to those seeking sanctuary. It provides guidance for libraries working towards accreditation as well as general information for all library services.

### [Value of Libraries](#)

[An Essential Part of Recovery](#)

Advocacy document setting out the key priorities for community recovery, and how libraries can contribute.

- Local Government Association

[Covid-19 Public Opinion Research](#)  
[Re-thinking Local](#)

- National Centre for Creative Health  
[Creative Health Inquiry Report 2017](#)
- East Sussex JSNA  
[Community Survey, East Sussex 2018](#)
- South East Local Enterprise Partnership  
[Skills Report, March 2021](#)
- British Red Cross  
[All-Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) on Loneliness](#)  
The APPG launched its first independent inquiry report making the case for a 'connected recovery'  
[Lonely and Left Behind: Tackling Loneliness at a Time of Crisis](#)
- Ken Chad Consulting  
[Community engagement solutions for public libraries](#)
- The Trussell Trust  
[Building the evidence on poverty, destitution, and food insecurity in the UK, 2021](#)
- What Works Centre for Wellbeing  
[How has Covid-19 and associated lockdown measures affected loneliness in the UK? \(2020\)](#)
- Mental Health Foundation  
[Wave 8 analysis](#)  
Analysis of the impact of Covid-19 lockdowns on the loneliness experienced by different groups
- Institute for Voluntary Action Research  
[The contribution and value of the VCSE in East Sussex](#)  
Analysis of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector groups support of residents during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## 4 The Needs Assessment

### Introduction – Measuring Need

- 4.1 The assessment of needs to be met in the county, their relative values and their spatial distribution, have been developed and will now be used as a foundation for the strategic commissioning of library services in East Sussex. Key indicators, grouped under the four Commissioning Themes, have been selected as the most appropriate to estimate the relative need for the Library and Information Service in East Sussex by neighbourhood, community and area.
- 4.2 Over 100 individual needs indicators were considered in detail for inclusion in the Needs Assessment (and many more on the ESIF database were considered but deemed not relevant to this review). The rationale and process for the reduction from a long list to a short list of indicators was based on the overall objectives, key factors and criteria identified in section 2. Throughout it was important to ensure that indicators selected are either already or potentially linked to the Library and Information Service, and that there is sufficient variation across the county to allow appropriate levels of intervention to be set. While the selection has to be in part subjective, based on current information and experience of similar needs assessments, it is considered that the range of key indicators selected offer the best view of the needs that the Library and Information Service should aim to be meeting in East Sussex.
- 4.3 It is important to highlight that in most cases, the Library and Information Service is not the primary provider of services to meet identified needs. The role of the Library and Information Service is largely indirect in support of other more targeted service providers. This assessment has considered how the identified needs vary across the county, and whether there are specific groups of people whose needs are currently not met.

### Assessment of Needs

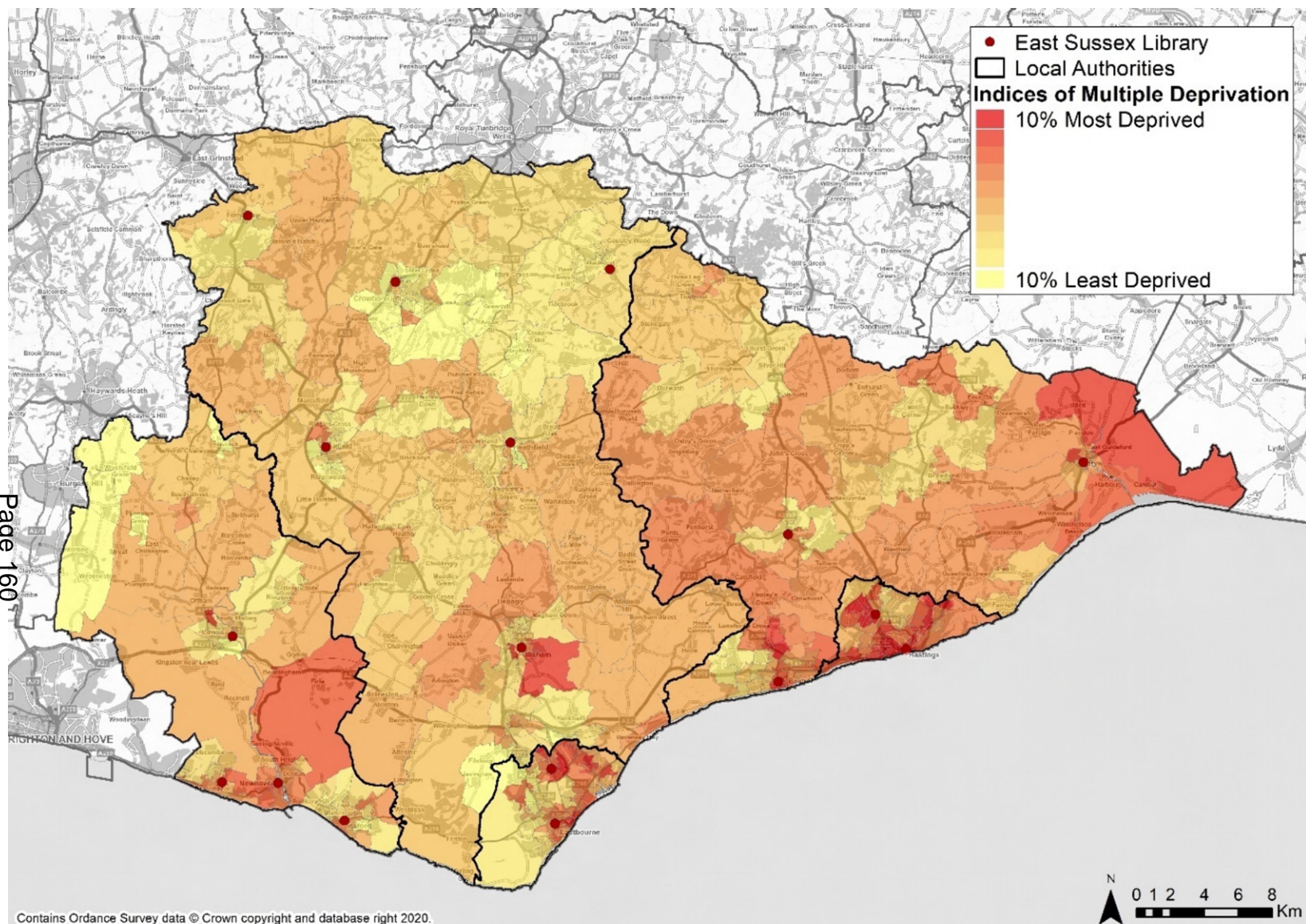
- 4.4 This section considers the key needs indicators identified under each of the four Commissioning Themes. The indicators per Commissioning Theme are set out in the tables below and for each indicator a definition is provided, considering the scale and scope of the measure. Each indicator has been mapped to assess the relative balance of need across the county and each set of data is considered in detail in the tables. The spatial relationship with each library is considered in more detail in the Technical Appendix 2, Accessibility Analysis.
- 4.5 Table 1 below shows the distribution of the population by age across the county. This shows that there is slight variation in the spread of different age groups across the county but not significant variation. There is not a clear picture that urban or rural areas have younger or older populations compared to each other.

- 4.6 The over-arching indicator of need is the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The English Indices of Deprivation are based on 37 separate indicators, organised across seven distinct domains of deprivation which are combined, using appropriate weights, to calculate the IMD. This is an overall measure of multiple deprivation experienced by people living in an area and is calculated for every Lower-layer Super Output Area (LSOA), or neighbourhood, in England. Every such neighbourhood is ranked according to its level of deprivation relative to that of other areas. It is important to recognise that not every person in a highly deprived area will themselves be deprived. Likewise, there will be some deprived people living in the least deprived areas.
- 4.7 The IMD results for East Sussex provide an overview of the relative deprivation within the county and are shown in map 1 below. 22 out of 329 LSOAs are amongst the most deprived 10% of LSOAs in England, 7% of all LSOAs in the county. 16 of these are in Hastings, four are in Eastbourne and two in Rother.

**Table 1: Population estimates, 2019**

Age group	East Sussex	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden
All ages	557,229	103,745	92,661	103,268	96,080	161,475
% of population	100	100	100	100	100	100
0-15	94,776	17,933	17,160	17,690	14,459	27,534
% of population	17	17.3	18.5	17.1	15	17.1
16-29	75,124	15,460	14,237	13,524	11,435	20,468
% of population	13.5	14.9	15.4	13.1	11.9	12.7
30-44	86,860	17,511	16,657	16,411	12,270	24,011
% of population	15.6	16.9	18	15.9	12.8	14.9
45-64	155,877	26,820	25,764	28,308	27,030	47,305
% of population	28	25.9	27.8	28	28.1	29.3
65 and over	144,592	24,838	18,843	26,685	30,886	42,157
% of population	25.9	25.1	20.3	25.8	32.1	26.1





# 1. Deprivation – overall

**Indicator**  
 IMD 2019

**Data source**  
 2019

## Description/Definition

The IMD is based on 37 separate indicators, organised across seven distinct domains of deprivation which are combined, using appropriate weights, to calculate the IMD. This is an overall measure of multiple deprivation experienced by people living in an area.

## Format

Shows information by decile.

## Reading and Literacy

- 4.8 At the core of the Library and Information Service has been its traditional role in enabling and encouraging literacy for the whole population, and in doing so, supporting the education sector which has the prime responsibility for literacy. While other roles have developed, for much of the population the levels of literacy will be seen as a key indicator of need for an effective library service. If literacy is low, for any age group, then the expectation remains that maintaining or improving access to a library service will have a positive impact in improving literacy rates. It is also the case that basic literacy skills are required in order to access and benefit from those other offers around information and skills.
- 4.9 For young people, the assumption with this theme is that the Library and Information Service has the potential to support the literacy needs of every child, hence the requirement to base the analysis on all children living in East Sussex. However, some children are likely to have higher needs than others, such as those living in poverty, those with Special Educational Needs and those without English as a first language. Throughout this analysis the service's impact on literacy is seen as complementary and in addition to the education sector, whether provided through school, colleges or universities.
- 4.10 The Library and Information Service can potentially help raise adult literacy levels in a similar way as the formal adult education sector. Therefore, where there are low adult literacy rates (often linked with other indicators of deprivation) it is expected that this will create a need that can be positively met through access to library services. The indicators selected are:

Needs to be addressed	Indicator	Fig.	Comments
Children and young people living in poverty are likely to have a need for support to improve their literacy	East Sussex Schools Census. School pupils entitled to free school meals	2	Overall numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals have increased since 2018 due to widening of eligibility. Of those with such entitlement, the highest concentrations remain in parts of Hastings but all parts of the county saw increases of those entitled, particularly during the country's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
Children and young people with low educational attainment have greatest need for support to improve their literacy	Index of Deprivation 2019, Education, skills and training domain – Children and young people sub-domain	3a to 3c	Although there is a concentration in the main urban areas, high levels of education deprivation (the 10% most deprived) are also located in areas of smaller towns such as Hailsham and Newhaven and in communities in otherwise rural areas in all districts – for example to the east of Rye in Camber.
	Children achieving Good Levels of Development (GLD) at the end of the Early Years	4	The data shows that across the county a high percentage of children are achieving GLD at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (Age 5). In all districts the % of children achieving GLD is above



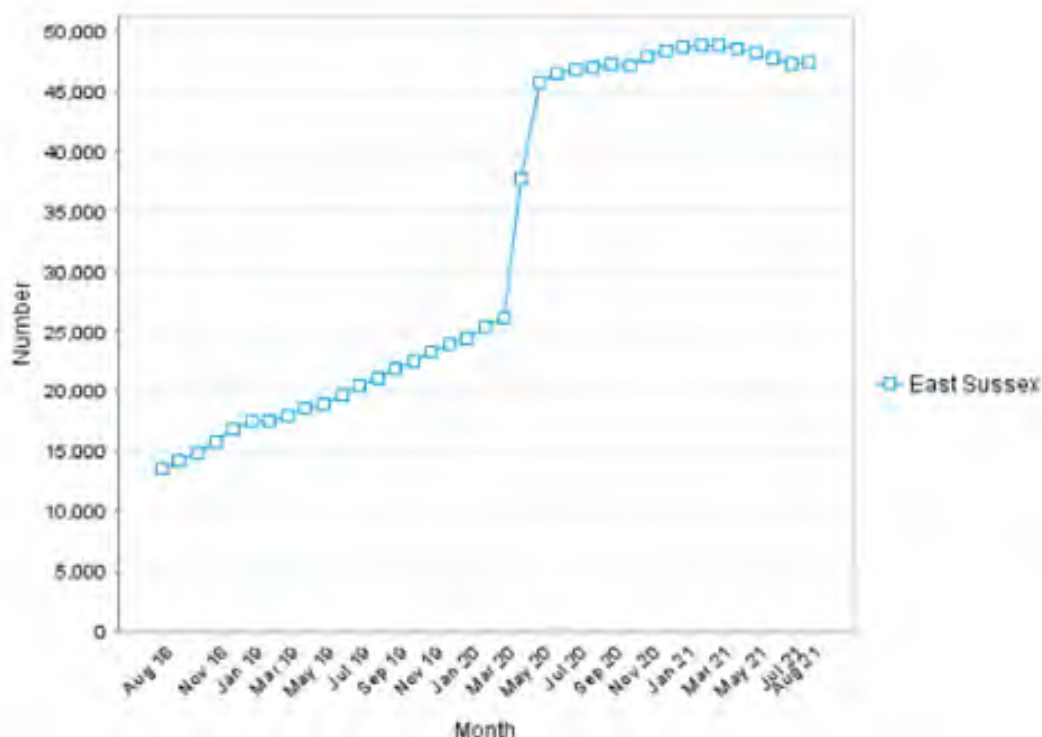
Needs to be addressed	Indicator	Fig.	Comments
	Foundation Stage (2019)		the national of 72%. However, 34% of LSOAs within the county report lower than this level.
	Pupils under-achieving at Key Stage 2 (2019)	5	In the districts of Hastings (66.5%) and Rother (66.3%), the % of pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths was above the national of 65.3%. The other were all below – Wealden (63.7%), Lewes (59.4%) and Eastbourne (57.3%)
	Pupils under-achieving at Key Stage 4 (2019)	6	Data for KS4 (Ages 14-16) represents pupils not getting grades 4 or above in both English and Maths. Nationally, 63.6% of pupils achieved this in 2019. Only Wealden (71.3%) achieved above this in East Sussex. Lewes (65.9%) and Rother (65.3%) achieved marginally below national with Eastbourne (59.4%) and Hastings (51.2%) further below national.
	Key Stage 5 – Average Points per Entry for A Level results (2019)	7	Data for attainment at KS5 (Ages 16-18) shows little variation across the county. Due to data limitations, we don't have access to student level data for FE Colleges, only those who attended a 6 <sup>th</sup> form as part of a state funded school. Points awarded at A-Level range from 10 (grade E) up to 60 (grade A*)
Children without English as a first language are likely to have particular literacy challenges	East Sussex Schools Census. School pupils without English as a first language	8	The absolute number data demonstrate that there are in fact very few pupils in the county that do not have English as their first language and those that do are in communities in main inner urban centres, and have access to the facilities of the larger main libraries in each town – Bexhill, Crowborough, Eastbourne and Hastings. As these are shown as percentages to demonstrate the variation across the county (and they are very low absolute numbers) the impact of this need in determining library service provision should be recognised, but not be overstated.
Adults with low literacy skills, including some adults whose first language is not English, need targeted support	Skills for Life survey data. Estimates of the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) in England living in households with defined skill levels in	9a to 9e	On the plot for percentage of population at Level 1 Skill Level (equivalent to GCSE grades 1-3) there is very little variation across the county, as the total range is between 25% and 35%. The rural east of Rother, parts of Wealden and some of the urban areas score higher than the rest of the county.

Needs to be addressed	Indicator	Fig.	Comments
	literacy and numeracy		<p>The percentage of population at Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE grades 4 – 9) or above shows more variation across the county, with rural Wealden, Lewes and Rother having higher percentages than parts of the larger urban areas.</p> <p>The highest prevalence of adults at lower Entry Levels (EL1 to EL3) are located mainly in the coastal towns of Newhaven, Eastbourne, Bexhill and Hastings, as well as Hailsham and the far east of the county in Rye and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Entry Level 1 is the national school curriculum equivalent for attainment at age 5-7, Entry level 2 is the equivalent for attainment at age 7-9 and Entry level 3 is the equivalent for attainment at age 9-11.</p>
	Index of Deprivation 2019, Education, skills and training domain – by super output area. Adult skills sub-domain	10a to 10c	This measure, a proxy for adult literacy, is consistently focussed on delineating an urban/rural split, with high levels of adult skills deprivation reported in the largest urban areas and much lower levels in the rural parts of the county.
Children and adults with disabilities may face additional barriers to accessing reading and literacy and may require targeted support	Residents with a limiting long-term illness or disability	15	<p>The highest prevalence is shown in Rother (23%) and lowest in Wealden (18%).</p> <p>Levels of long term illness and disability are higher in East Sussex than elsewhere in the South East, but this data set includes illnesses and disabilities that are related to old age which may account for this. However, this data is from 2011's Census so percentages may have altered in the decade since these figures were captured.</p>

## Economic Development

- 4.11 This theme supports the delivery of the East Sussex Growth Strategy by helping to tackle unemployment and exclusion. The focus here is primarily on disadvantaged groups – particularly on adults with a skills deficit. In addition, the library has a role to play to support young people by providing access to resources and study space to support higher educational attainment and skills development. The assessment of this theme has been supported by the production of the [Economic Updates](#) produced by Team East Sussex.
- 4.12 The Covid-19 pandemic has led to an unprecedented increase in the number of people claiming unemployment benefits including JobSeekers Allowance (JSA) and Universal Credit (UC), as the image below highlights. This was a consequence of their income reducing and people being unable to work or have

reduced hours because their workplaces were restricted or closed (such as in the hospitality industry) or they were isolating, shielding, or living with someone vulnerable and so unable to work. While some people were drawing some salary because they have been furloughed under the Government's income support scheme, many made claims for benefits.



- 4.13 In this theme it is suggested that the library service, through its function as a provider of information and training, potentially has a direct impact on adults of working age, and an additional impact on adults with poor literacy, numeracy and IT skills, on those claiming out of work benefits, and those who live in areas with high deprivation.
- 4.14 The target group for libraries is therefore more likely to be those seeking work but struggling to find it because of, for instance, poor literacy and numeracy skills, poor CV writing and interview techniques and because they lack information about availability of suitable jobs.
- 4.15 Under this theme, the Library and Information Service can also support the cultural offer of the county, in line with the East Sussex Cultural Strategy 2013-2023, including support to the creative and digital sector, which is one of the five priority growth sectors identified by Skills East Sussex, the Employment and Skills Partnership Board.
- 4.16 Libraries offer informal workspace and Wi-Fi which can be used for a number of purposes, including business start-ups including the creative and digital sector. There is a potential existing and future role of the Library and Information Service to support new businesses, however there are not strong indicators of this need. Potential need for this provision may be reflected, for example, by business registration and survival rates across the county. The role of the library service to directly support business start-ups through the provision of reference materials has reduced over time as most information is now available online,

rather than in paper format. However, the Library and Information Service provides online access to these resources for those who do not have internet access. The indicators selected are:

Needs to be addressed	Indicator	Fig.	Comments
Adults with low qualifications or low levels of skills may need support to learn new skills that will help them in job seeking and access to information	Skills for Life survey data. Estimates of the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) in England living in households with defined skill levels in ICT and numeracy	9a to 9e	<p>Entry Level 1 is the national school curriculum equivalent for attainment at age 5-7, Entry level 2 is the equivalent for attainment at age 7-9 and Entry level 3 is the equivalent for attainment at age 9-11.</p> <p>The highest prevalence of adults at these low Entry Levels (EL1 to EL3) are located mainly in the coastal towns of Newhaven, Eastbourne, Bexhill and Hastings, as well as Hailsham and the far east of the county in Rye and surrounding areas.</p> <p>On the plot for percentage of population at Level 1 Skill Level (equivalent to GCSE grades D-G) there is very little variation across the county, as the total range is between 25% and 35%. The rural east of Rother, parts of Wealden and some of the urban areas score higher than the rest of the county.</p> <p>The percentage of population at L2 (equivalent to GCSE grades 4 - 9) or above Skill Level shows more variation across the county, with rural Wealden, Lewes and Rother having higher percentages than parts of the larger urban areas.</p>
	ID 2019, Education, skills and training domain – adult skills (proxy for adult literacy)	10a to 10c	This measure, a proxy for adult literacy, is consistently focussed on delineating an urban/rural split, with high levels of adult skills deprivation reported in the largest urban areas and very low levels elsewhere in the rural parts of the county.
Those people who are not working , including those who are unemployed sick or disabled, or have caring responsibilities, may need support applying for out of work benefits or gaining new skills	ID 2019, Employment domains	11a to 11c	The ID measure for the most deprived areas for income and employment includes both urban and rural areas. Some largely rural LSOAs – for example around Rye and within Newhaven are scoring similar levels as their nearby town centres as they are mixed rural and urban communities. The north of the county is generally less deprived, both in towns and in rural areas. The highest income and employment deprivation is found in the large seaside towns.

Needs to be addressed	Indicator	Fig.	Comments
Entrepreneurs and business start-ups may need access to information and informal work space to develop their business	New business registration rate, by district	12	In East Sussex the absolute numbers of new business registrations are highest in Wealden followed by Lewes and Rother. Hastings has the lowest level of new company start-ups at less than half of those seen in Wealden in 2018 and 2019 combined.
	New business survival rate, by district	13	One year survival rates can demonstrate not just the innate entrepreneurial skills of those setting up businesses but also the availability or otherwise of business support and information. Again, this indicator is based on district level data, and the range is only between 87% and 91%. The data shows that Rother businesses are more likely to survive than businesses elsewhere in the county.

## Health and Wellbeing

- 4.17 Libraries have a direct role to play in supporting community and individual resilience, health improvement and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities through the provision of safe and inclusive spaces, quality assured self-help information and resource materials tailored for residents of all ages. Libraries also play an important role in boosting health literacy in that a person's skills, knowledge and understanding about how to find and use information can enable them to act to support and improve their own health and wellbeing.
- 4.18 A selection of libraries in East Sussex also offer specific self-help schemes such as Shelf Health and Reminiscence Boxes, as well as signposting to more targeted health and wellbeing services provided by the Council through Adult Social Care and Health and Children's Services departments, and those provided by external partners including the NHS and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations.
- 4.19 Libraries can help to build on the resources and strengths in individuals and communities, supporting and encouraging people to develop new skills and confidence and encouraging people to take greater ownership of their own health and wellbeing, to be more resilient, increasingly independent, self-sufficient and resourceful, and thus better able to help themselves.
- 4.20 This theme covers both the role of the Library and Information Service in supporting people who are in poor health (either physically or mentally), as well as those at risk of health inequalities or becoming unwell. In addition to the services provided in static libraries, the Library and Information Service also provides support for vulnerable people by providing books and other resources through the Home Library Service for those who are homebound due to frailty, or disability.
- 4.21 This theme also recognises the wider impact that libraries can have on supporting the general wellbeing of communities by providing fiction and non-

fiction materials for reading for pleasure and access to cultural experiences. The indicators selected are:

Needs to be addressed	Indicator	Fig.	Comments
Those in poor mental or physical health or at risk of developing health problems may need signposting and targeted support	Index of Deprivation 2019, Index of Multiple Deprivation – Health Deprivation and Disability domain	14a to 14c	The highest health deprivation outcomes and disability measures are concentrated in the coastal towns, either in central residential areas or large estates on the edge that often have other income, employment and social exclusion issues. There are some pockets of health deprivation in each of the three more rural districts, but usually associated with the mid-sized towns.
Those with a long-term health problem or disability may need support to access library services and signposting to other services.	Residents with a limiting long-term illness (one that limits day to day activities and has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months)	15	One area with a relatively high percentage of residents with long term illness is Bexhill, with between 36% and 40% identified - other high levels are found in Eastbourne, Hastings/St. Leonards and Newhaven. The lowest percentages are found in the rural north of the county and parts of the South Downs.
	GP reported prevalence of smoking, percentage of persons aged 15 years and over.	16	The prevalence of smoking is recognised to be a strong indicator of future health needs. The highest prevalence of smoking for people over 15 years old is in Hastings, with most rural areas having lower than average smoking levels. In public health terms, smokers hoping to give up may seek information at libraries, as well as surgeries and hospitals, but it is also an indicator of potential limiting health concerns later in life.
Different areas in the county experience different levels of life expectancy based largely on health inequality and therefore there is a greater role for libraries to support people in those communities	Life Expectancy	17	Typically, life expectancy is over 75 across the county. However, two wards in Hastings have average life expectations below this.

## Digital Exclusion

- 4.22 Increasingly, residents require access to the internet to access government services and information, as well as to carry out transactions as part of their everyday life, such as banking and utility payments. However, it is recognised that not all households in East Sussex have access to the internet due to a number of factors including affordability and lack of basic digital skills.



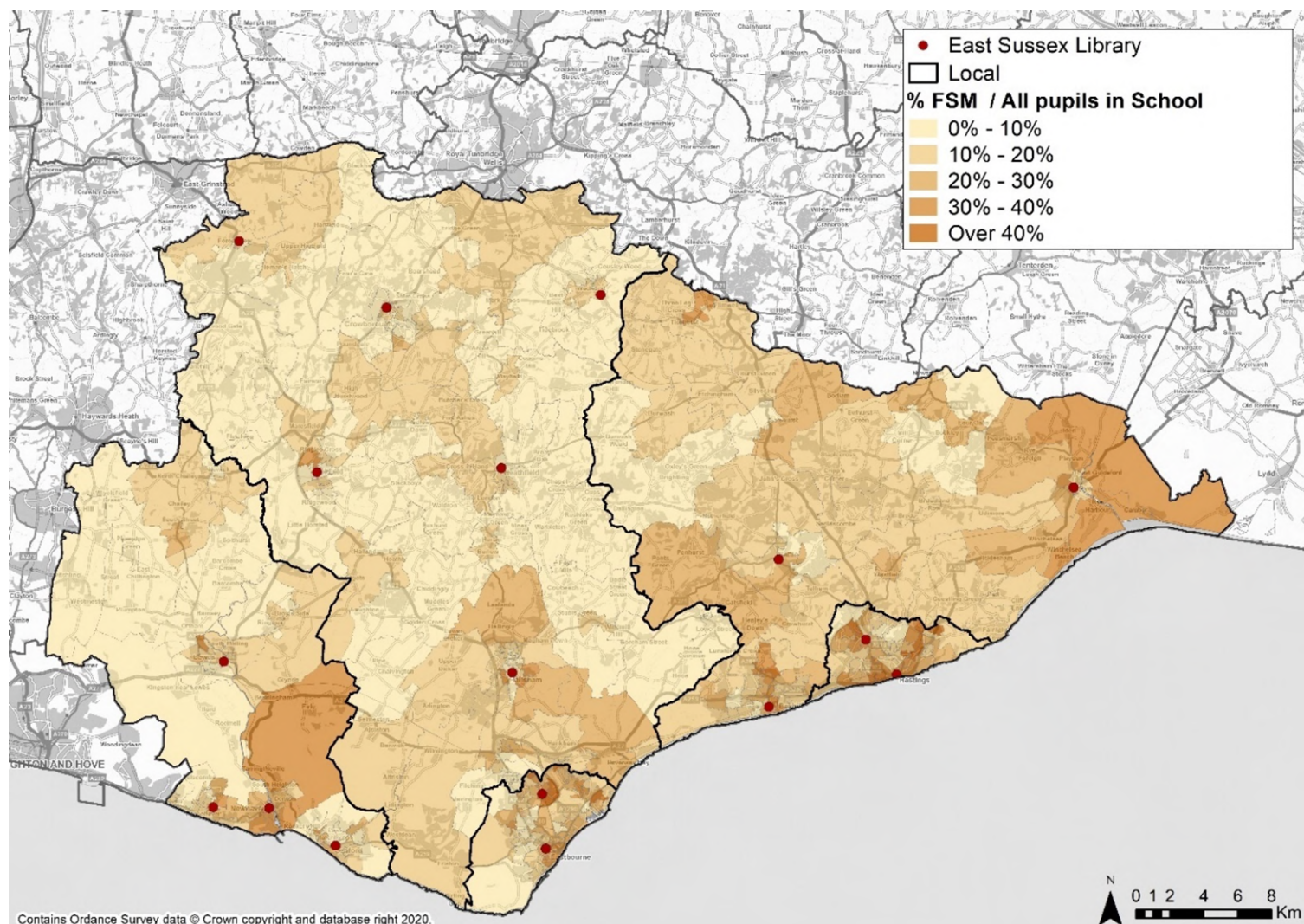
- 4.23 This theme is mainly about improving access to information online and supporting those who are digitally excluded to carry out online transactions through fixed and mobile broadband technology. The benefits of being able to access and use the internet include the ability to access information about skills and employment opportunities, and access to health and wellbeing information, as described earlier in this Needs Assessment.
- 4.24 There are also financial benefits arising from the ability to 'shop around' for cheaper utility packages such as gas, electricity and telephone, as well as other services like car insurance online. There is an opportunity, therefore, to address income and other areas of inequality. For example, in its final report<sup>9</sup> into the investigation of energy markets the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) noted in 2016 that those who have low incomes, have low qualifications, are living in rented accommodation or who are above 65 are less likely to shop around for better energy deals. 35% of those whose household incomes were above £36,000 had switched supplier in the previous three years, compared with 20% of those whose household incomes were below £18,000. Similarly, 32% of those with degree level qualifications had switched in the previous three years compared with 18% of those with no qualifications.
- 4.25 There will be residents who cannot access the internet at home because they choose not to, cannot afford to or for some other reason such as being in temporary accommodation. There will also be those who can benefit from training, support and advice in libraries on how to get the most from their computers and other devices. The assumption here is that libraries can provide support for those without facilities of their own, or with a skills deficit; the focus is therefore likely to be on disadvantaged groups and the elderly.
- 4.26 In addition, there may be residents that are digitally excluded due to lack of infrastructure, although to a much lesser extent. The Government's subsidised better broadband scheme, launched in December 2015 which ran to the end of 2019, has ensured residents and businesses have access to at least 2mbps. This, together with continuing private sector investment in both fixed and mobile broadband, suggests that digital exclusion due to lack of infrastructure will continue to decrease in the coming years.
- 4.27 The majority of digital transactions do not need high speeds and can be carried out via "first generation" broadband, however the Council's 'eSussex' project is currently funding the rollout of superfast broadband to improve connectivity to those who choose to use it in areas where it would not otherwise be commercially provided. The indicators selected are:

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<sup>9</sup> <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5773de34e5274a0da3000113/final-report-energy-market-investigation.pdf>

Needs to be addressed	Indicator	Fig.	Comments
Those with no or low qualification and skills are likely to need training to gain basic IT skills (using the internet, emailing, word processing, spreadsheet use) and support accessing information online	Skills for Life survey data. Estimates of the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) in England living in households with defined skill levels in ICT	9a to 9e	<p>There is a link between low levels of education and low digital skills.</p> <p>The data shows that adults with the lowest skills levels (Entry Levels 1-3) are located mainly in the coastal towns of Newhaven, Eastbourne, Bexhill and Hastings, as well as Hailsham and the far east of the county in Rye and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Entry Level 1 is the national school curriculum equivalent for attainment at age 5-7, Entry level 2 is the equivalent for attainment at age 7-9 and Entry level 3 is the equivalent for attainment at age 9-11.</p>
	ID 2019, Education, skills and training domain – adult skills (proxy for adult IT skills)	10a to 10c	This measure, a proxy for adult IT skills, is consistently focussed on delineating an urban/rural split, with high levels of adult skills deprivation reported in the largest urban areas and very low levels of deprivation elsewhere in rural parts of Lewes, Rother and Wealden.
People who do not have access to the internet due to affordability are likely to need access to online services	Digital exclusion heat map	18	As this data set is district and borough based it shows very little variation across the county, and masks areas of deprivation where digital exclusion due to affordability is likely, for example in areas of Hastings.
	ID 2019, Employment and Income domains	11a to 11c	<p>Despite technology and broadband becoming more affordable, cost is still a barrier for some residents on low incomes who remain digitally excluded. In general, internet use shows little variance across the different demographic segments, although penetration amongst DE social grade respondents is lower than other residents. (East Sussex Residents' Survey: June 2021).</p> <p>The ID measure for the most deprived areas for employment includes both urban and rural areas. However, some largely rural LSOAs – for example around Rye (including Camber) and within Newhaven - are scoring similar levels as their nearby town centres as they are mixed rural and urban communities. The north of the county is generally less deprived, both in towns and in rural areas. The highest income and employment deprivation is found in the large seaside towns.</p>

	Households in fuel poverty, 2019 - super output areas	19	<p>This dataset shows that the areas of the county with highest levels of fuel poverty are in areas of Hastings and Rother.</p> <p>The dataset uses the Low Income High Cost (LIHC) indicator. Under this definition a household is considered to be fuel poor where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- They have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level)</li> <li>- Were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.</li> </ul>
Those aged over 75 years may lack basic IT skills	Population estimates by age (75 and Over)	20	<p>The likelihood of digital exclusion increases significantly among those aged 75 and over.</p> <p>The map illustrates the percentage population numbers aged 75 and over. The highest concentrations of adults aged 75 and over are in the main urban areas and some mid-sized towns.</p>



## 2. Deprivation - Children and Young People

### Indicator

East Sussex Schools Census.  
 School pupils entitled to free school meals – by super output areas.

### Data source

2021

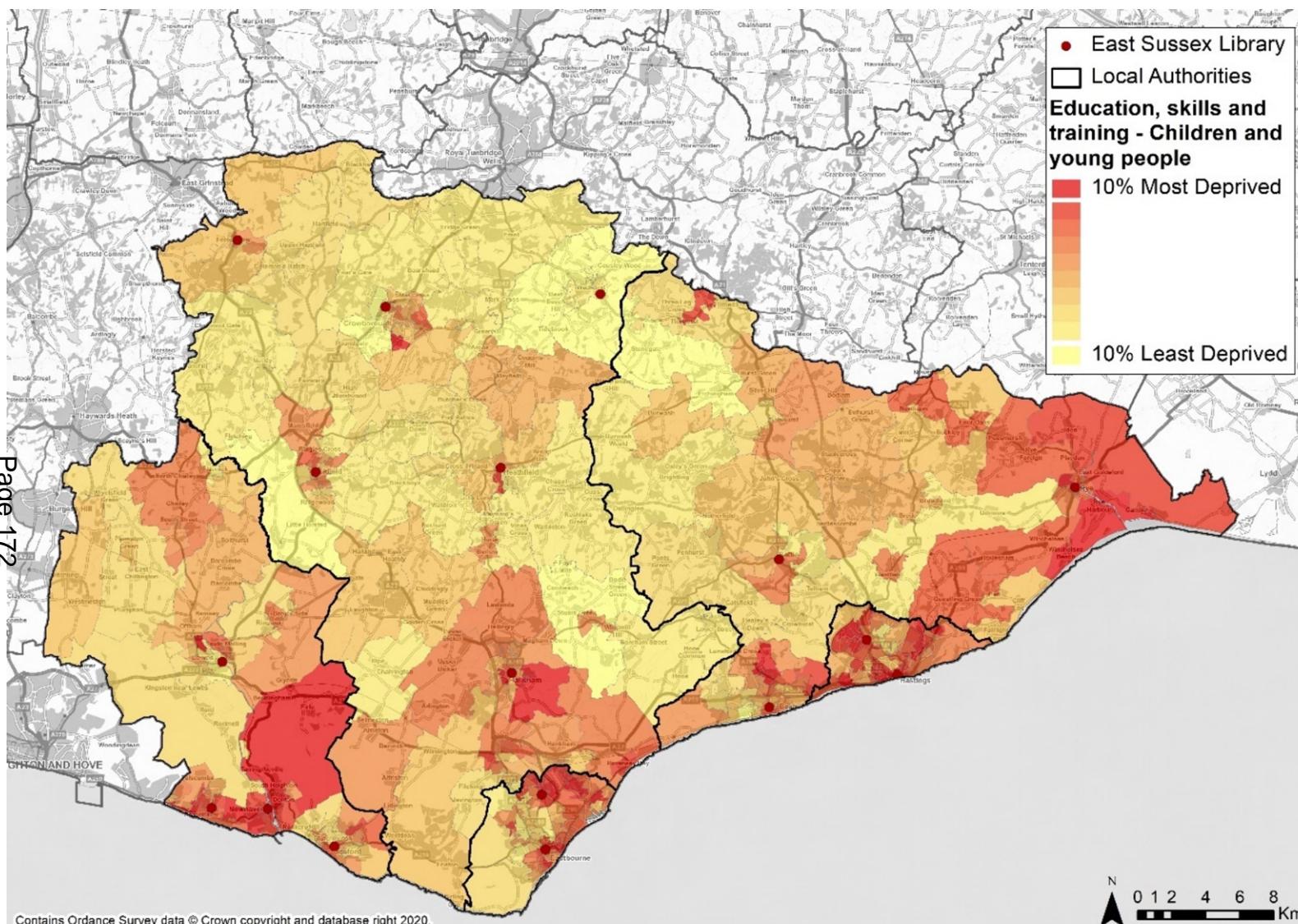
### Description/Definition

This dataset provides details about the number of pupils who attend schools maintained by East Sussex county Council. Data for children attending academies in the county are included in geographical datasets (district, ward, SOA), included for all school level data. The information is presented according to where pupils live. Pupils may not live in the same area as where they go to school and some pupils attending East Sussex schools live outside the county

### Format

Shows pupils entitled to free school meals who are resident in each super output area as a percentage of all school pupils in East Sussex.





### 3a. Deprivation - Children and Young People

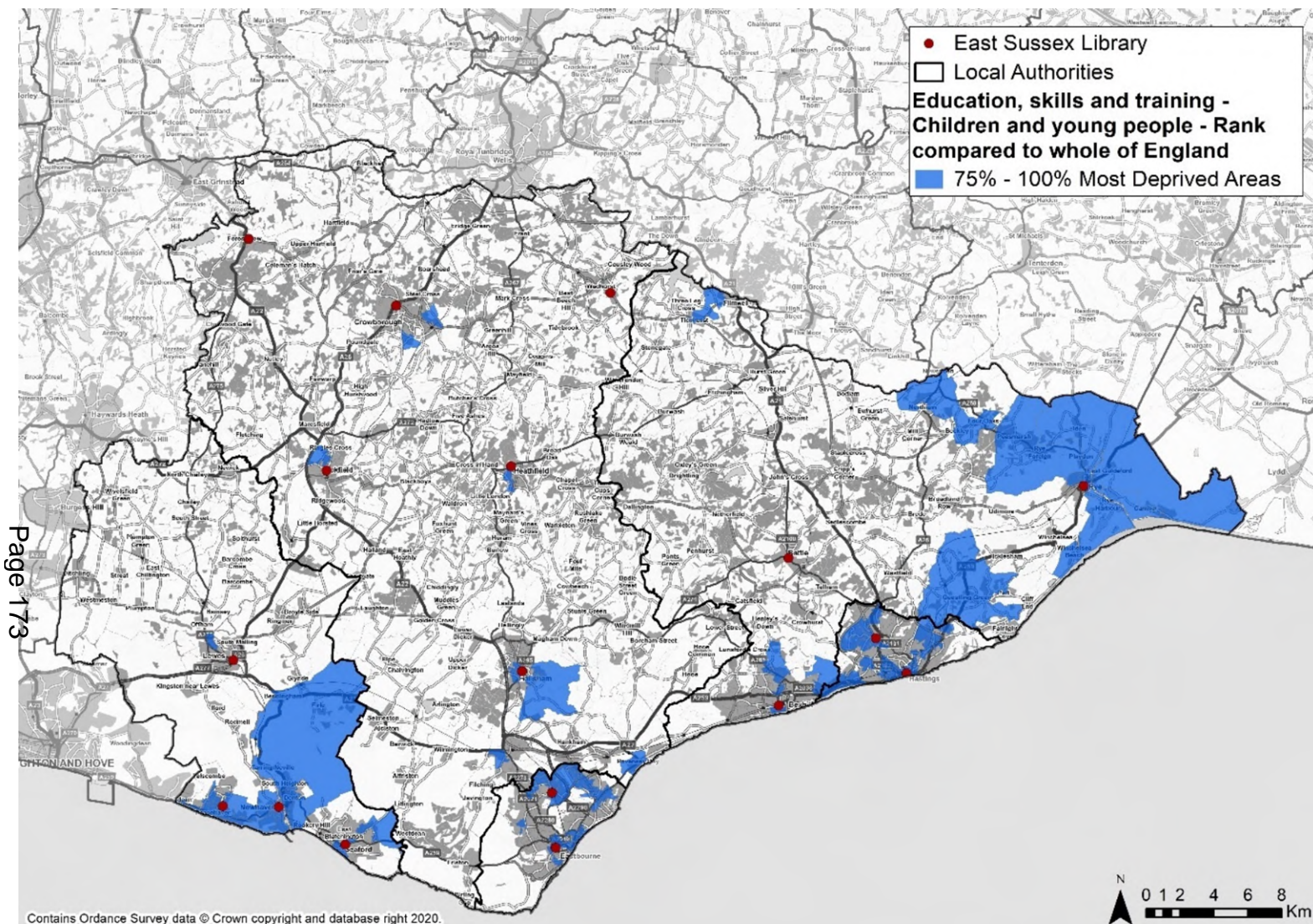
**Indicator**  
 ID 2019, Education, skills and training domain – by super output area. Children and young people sub-domain.

**Data source**  
 2019

**Description/Definition**  
 The 'Children and young people' sub-domain is made up of five indicators relating to education attainment (at Key Stages 2 and 4), secondary school absence and the proportions not staying in education (above the age 16) and those not entering higher education

**Format**  
 Shows information by decile – most deprived areas score 1, least deprived score 10 based on national ranking out of 32,844 observations.





### 3c. Deprivation - Children and Young People

#### Indicator

ID 2019, Education, skills and training domain – by super output area. Children and young people sub-domain.

#### Data source

2019

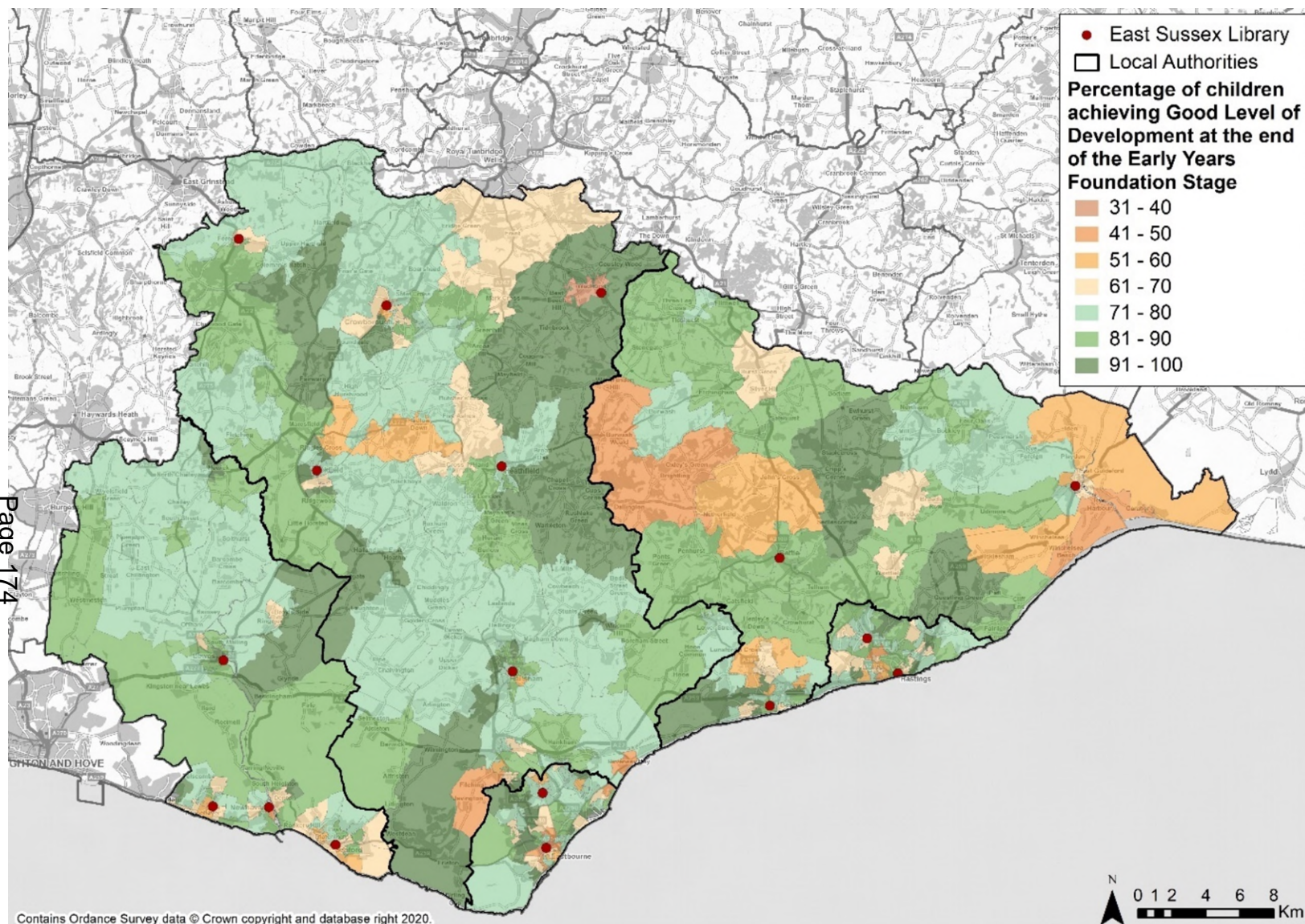
#### Description/Definition

The 'Children and young people' sub-domain is made up of five indicators relating to education attainment (at Key Stages 2 and 4), secondary school absence and the proportions not staying in education (above the age 16) and those not entering higher education

#### Format

Shows information for the most deprived decile, compared to the whole of England.





#### 4. Good Level of Development

##### Indicator

Early Years Foundation Stage – achievement of Good Level of Development

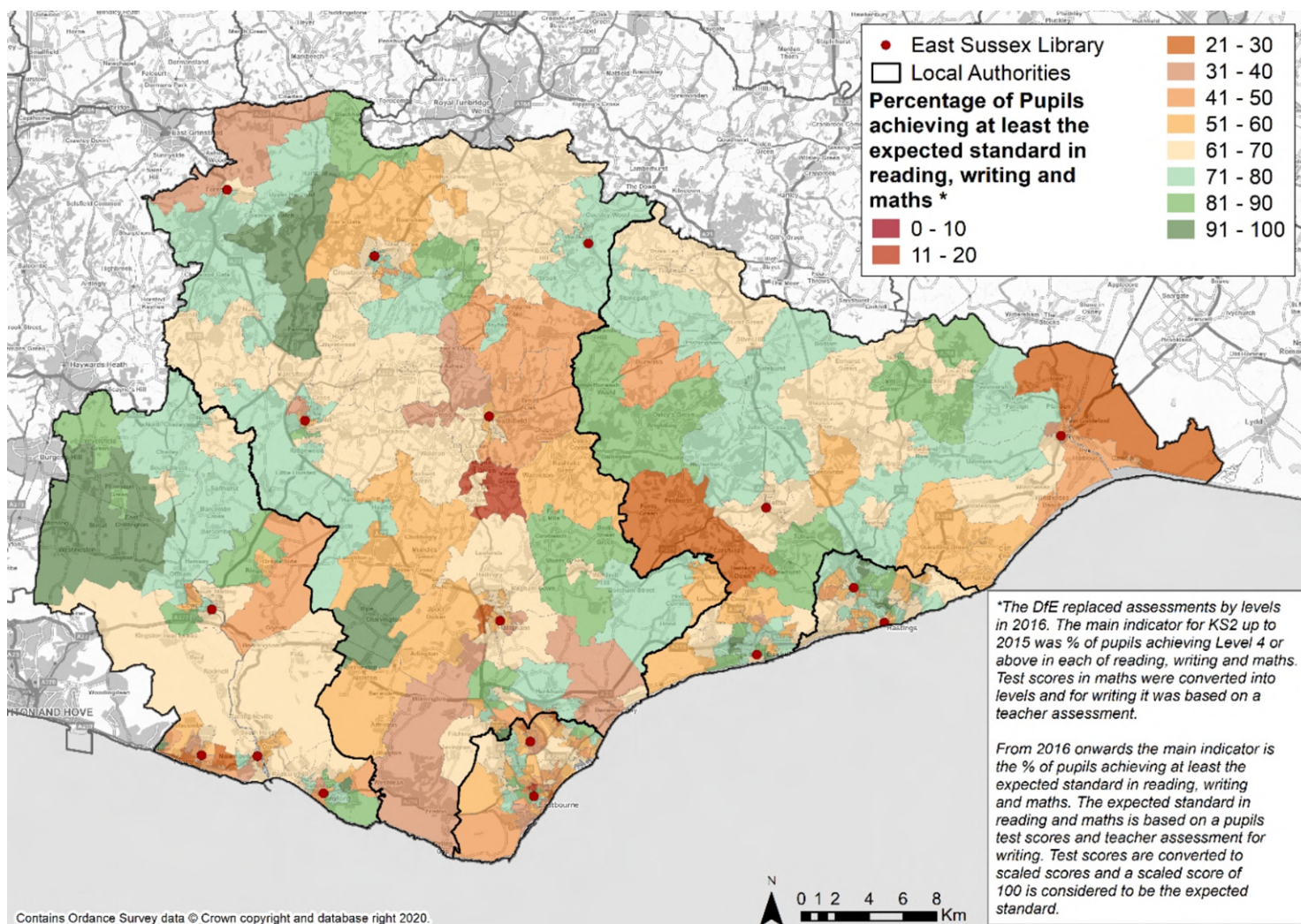
##### Data Source

2019

##### Description/Definition

Early Years Foundation Stage – Ages 0-5  
 This dataset provides details of the percentage of children achieving Good Level of Development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (Age 5).





## 5. Education, Learning and Skills – Key stage 2

### Indicator

Pupils under-achieving at Key Stage 2 – by super output area

### Data source

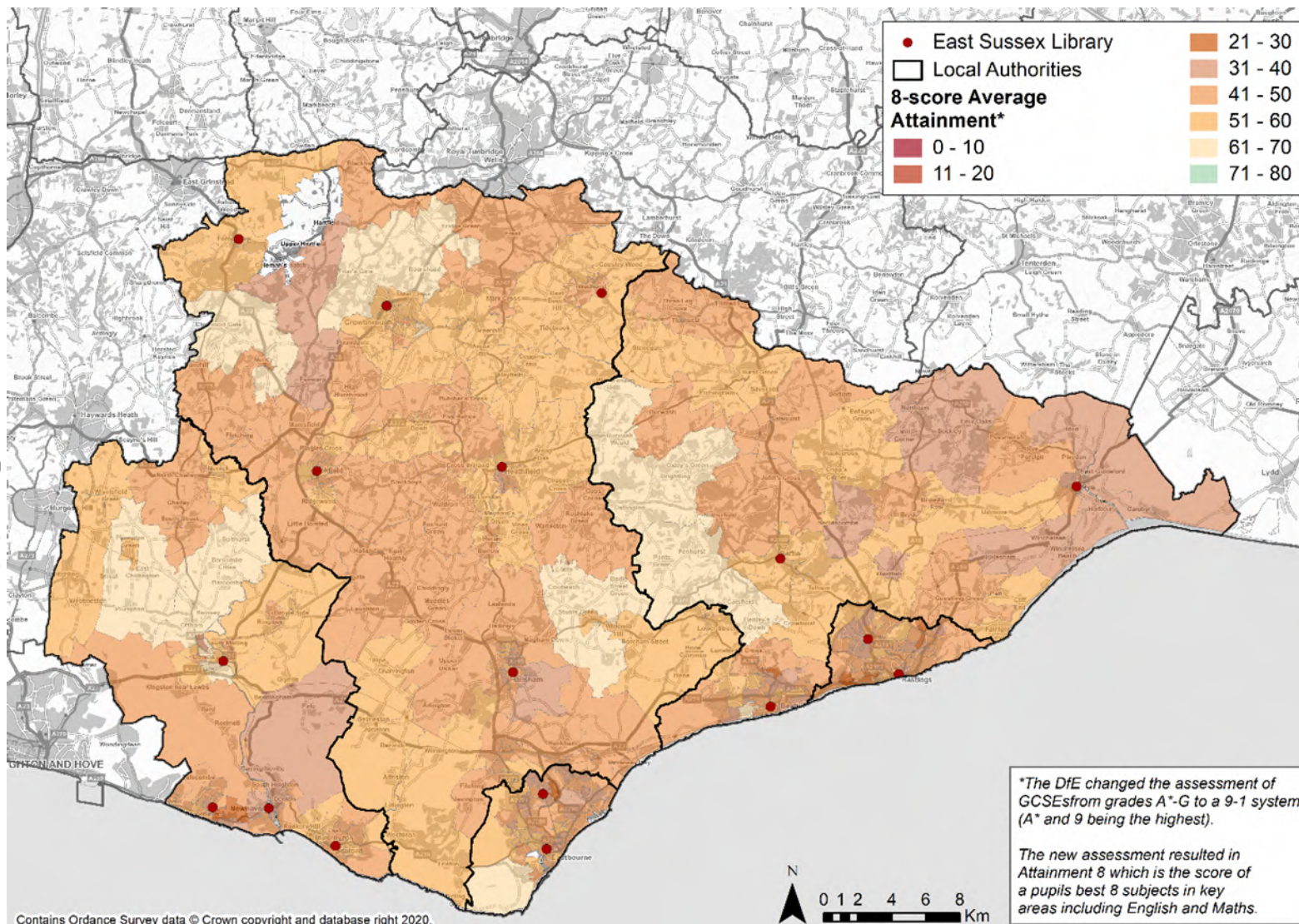
2019

### Description/Definition

The National Curriculum covers learning for all children aged 5-16 in state schools and it is divided into four Key Stages that children are taken through during their school life. Targets defined in the National Curriculum are assessed at the end of each Key Stage. Key Stage 2 - Ages 7-11 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6)

At the age of 11, when children leave primary school, they are expected to have achieved at least the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths.





## 6. Education, Learning and Skills – Key stage 4

### Indicator

Pupils under-achieving at Key Stage 4 – by super output area.

### Data source

2019

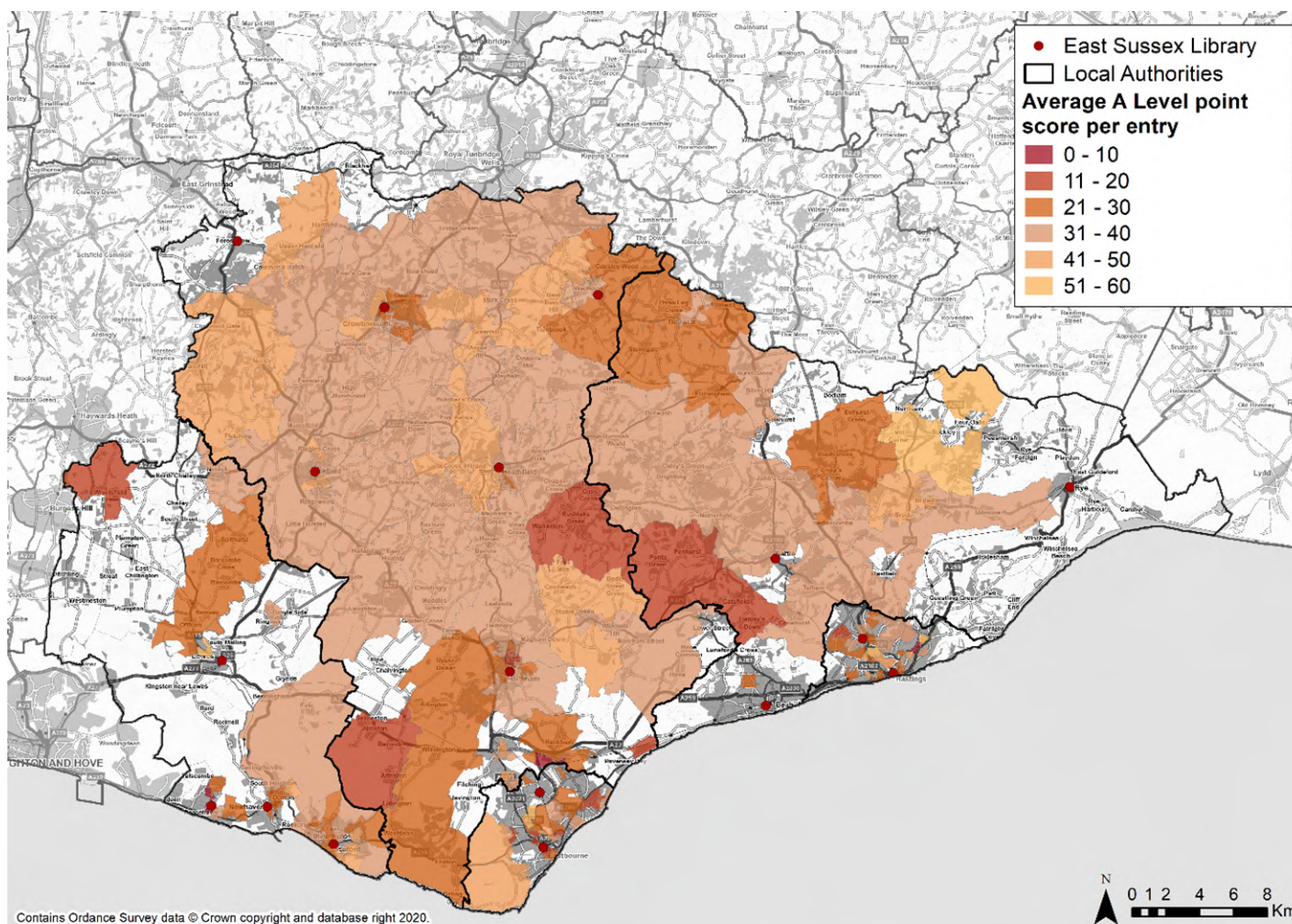
### Description/Definition

The National Curriculum covers learning for all children aged 5-16 in state schools and it is divided into four Key Stages that children are taken through during their school life. Targets defined in the National Curriculum are assessed at the end of each Key Stage.

Key Stage 4 - Ages 14-16 (Years 10 and 11)

This dataset shows the achievement of pupils at GCSE by assessing a pupil's best eight subjects in key areas including English and Maths





## 7. Education, Learning and Skills – Key stage 5

### Indicator

Key Stage 5 – Average Points per Entry for A Level results

### Data source

2019

### Description/Definition

Key Stage 5 – Ages 16-18

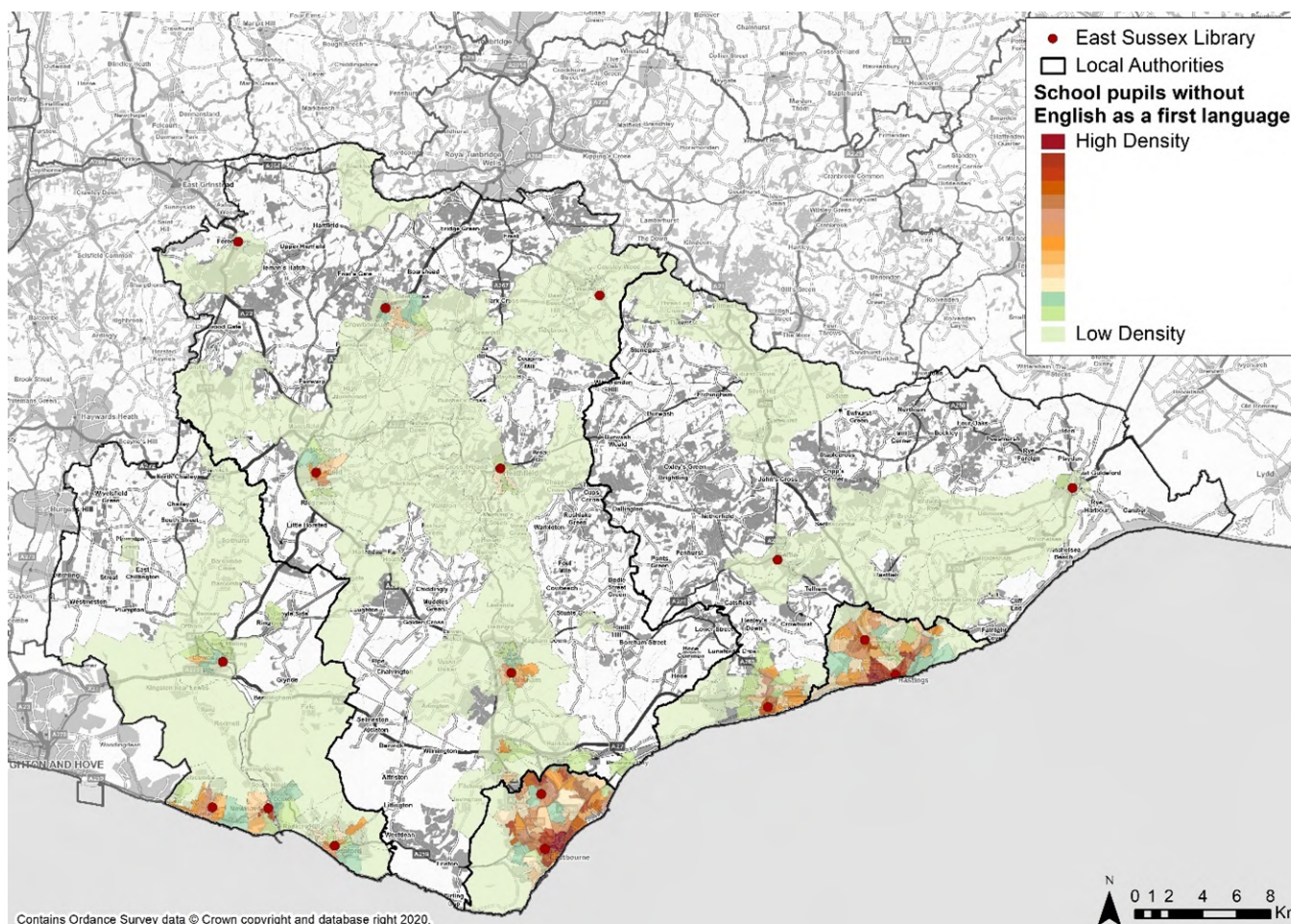
This dataset provides details of the average points per student at A-Level, using the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) point scoring system.

The average point score per student provides a measure of the average number of A level equivalent studied and the grades achieved. The more qualifications undertaken by a student and the higher the grades achieved, the higher the average point score per student. However, the average point score per examination gives an indication of the average A level grade achieved by students at an institution.

60 points is the equivalent to A-Level grade A\* and 10 points is the equivalent to A-Level grade E.

(Source: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk))





## 8. Education, Learning and Skills – English First Language

### Indicator

East Sussex Schools Census. School pupils without English as a first language in 2020/21 – by super output areas.

### Data source

2020/21

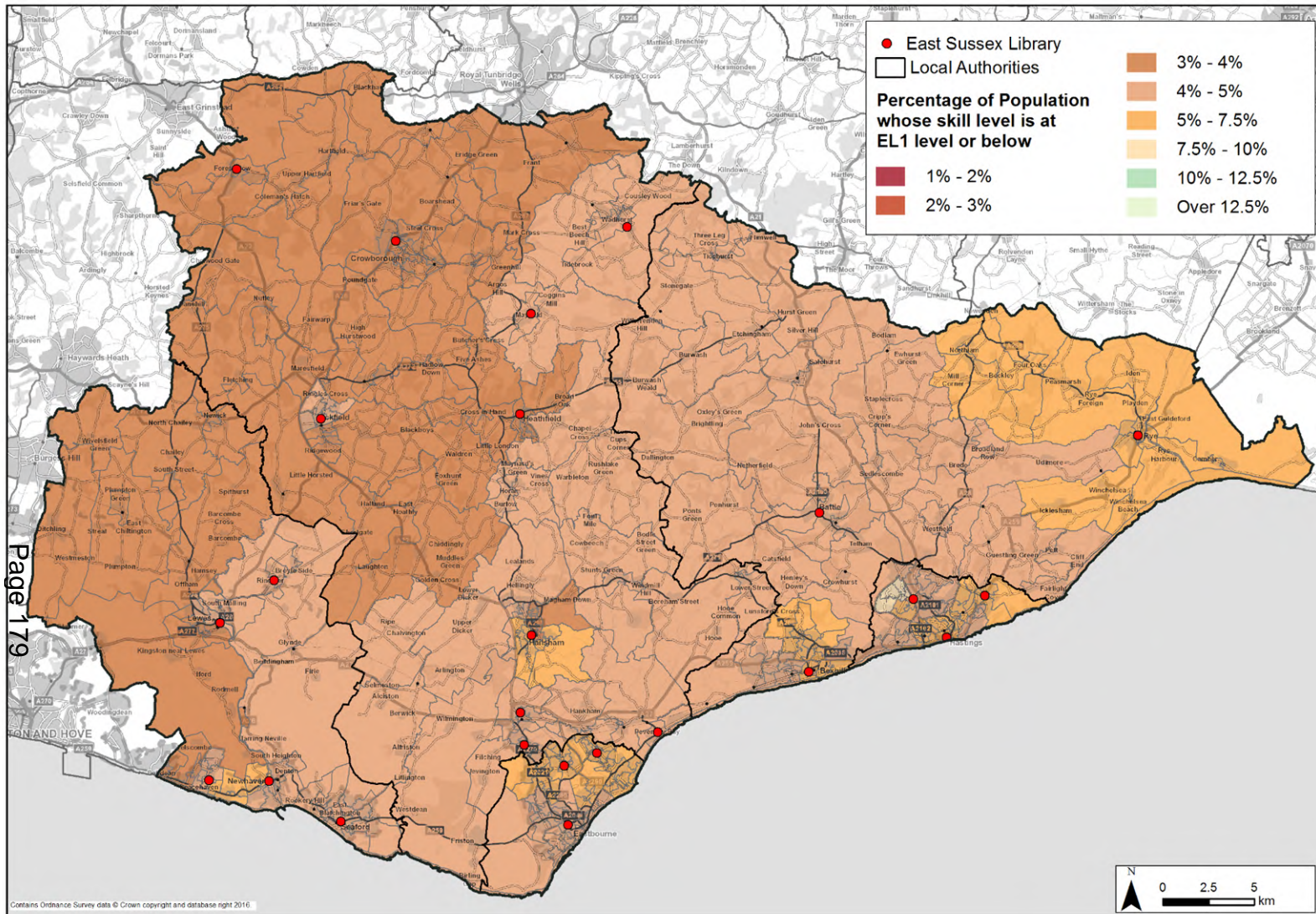
### Description/Definition

This dataset provides details about the number of pupils who attend schools maintained by East Sussex County Council. Data for children attending academies in the county are included in geographical datasets (district, ward, SOA) and with the exception of Ringmer Community College, included for all school level data. The information is presented according to where pupils live. Pupils may not live in the same area as where they go to school and some pupils attending East Sussex schools live outside the county.

### Format

Data available by numbers of children in state funded schools. Around 6% of children living in East Sussex do not have English as a first language – it is as high as 12% in Eastbourne but falls to 2.5% in Wealden.





## 9a. Skill Level – Entry Level 1

### Indicator

Adult literacy and numeracy levels

### Data source

Skills for Life survey data. Estimates of the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) in England living in households with defined skill levels, 2011

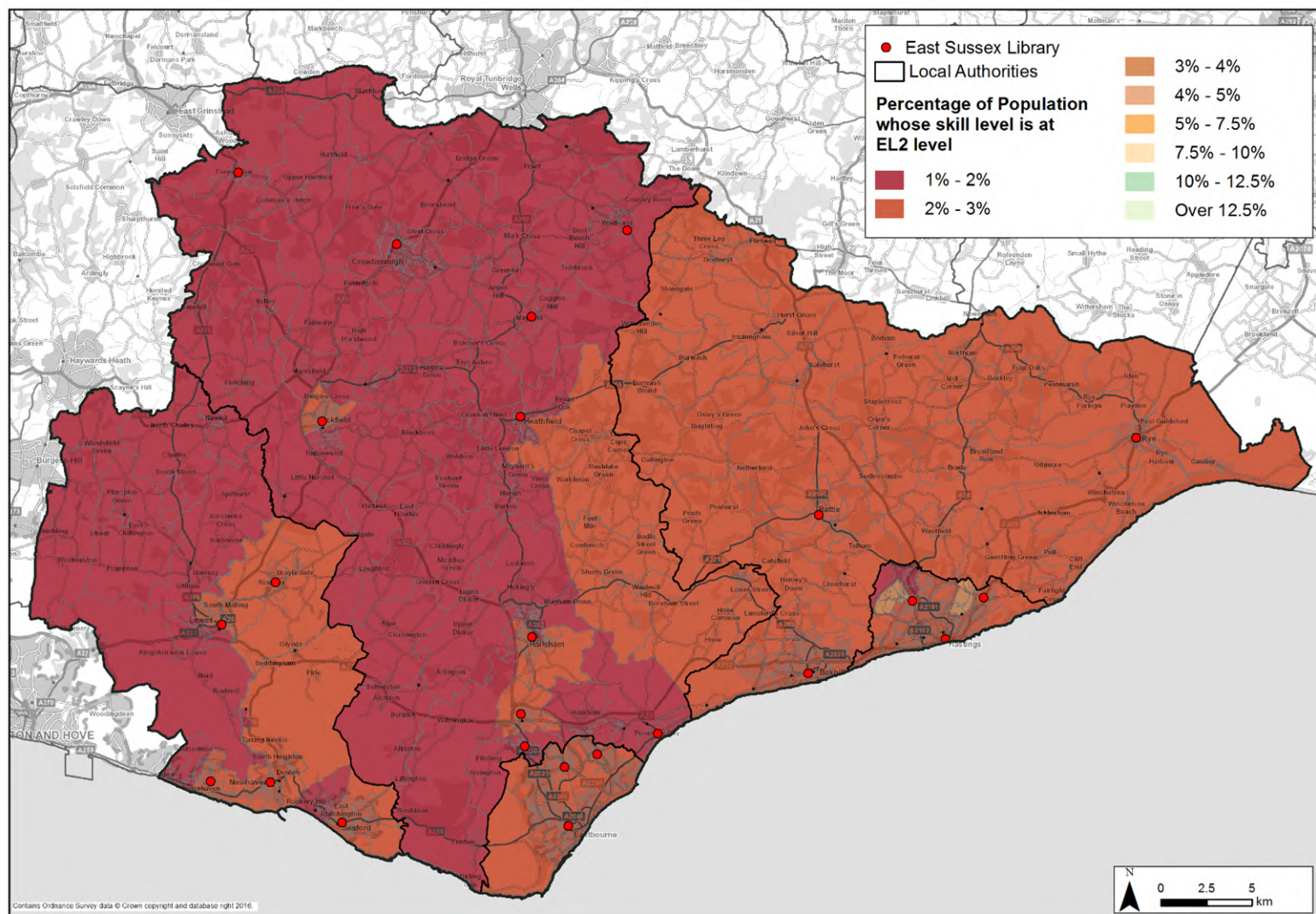
### Description/Definition

Indicator estimates the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) living in households with defined skill levels in literacy and numeracy. Small area estimation modelling methods have been applied to the 2011 Skills for Life survey data in order to generate local level area estimates. Entry Level 1 is the national school curriculum equivalent for attainment at age 5-7. Adults below Entry Level 1 may not be able to write short messages to family or select floor numbers in lifts. Adults with ICT Entry Level 1 skills are able to get information from an ICT-based source and follow recommended safe practices.

### Format

Shows estimates of literacy and numeracy levels by ward.





## 9b. Skill Level – Entry Level 2

### Indicator

Adult literacy and numeracy levels

### Data source

Skills for Life survey data. Estimates of the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) in England living in households with defined skill levels, 2011.

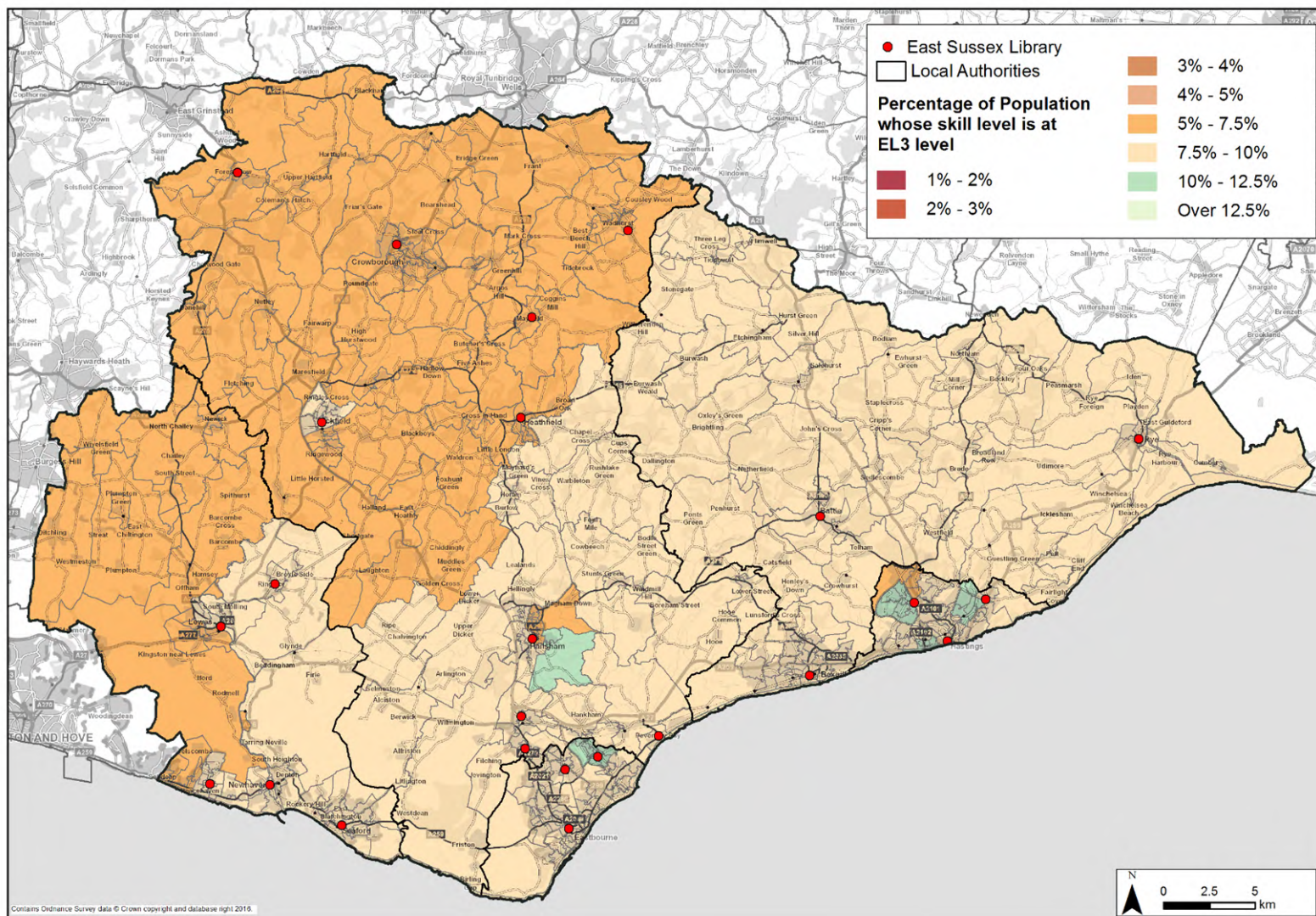
### Description/Definition

Indicator estimates the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) living in households with defined skill levels in literacy and numeracy. Small area estimation modelling methods have been applied to the 2011 Skills for Life survey data in order to generate local level area estimates. Entry Level 2 is the national school curriculum equivalent for attainment at age 7-9. Adults with below Entry Level 2 may not be able to describe a child's symptoms to a doctor or use a cash point to withdraw cash. Adults with ICT Entry Level 2 skills are able to use ICT to communicate, as well as enter and edit small amounts of information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience.

### Format

Shows estimates of literacy and numeracy levels by ward.





### 9c. Skill Level – Entry Level 3

#### Indicator

Adult literacy and numeracy levels

#### Data source

Skills for Life survey data. Estimates of the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) in England living in households with defined skill levels, 2011.

#### Description/Definition

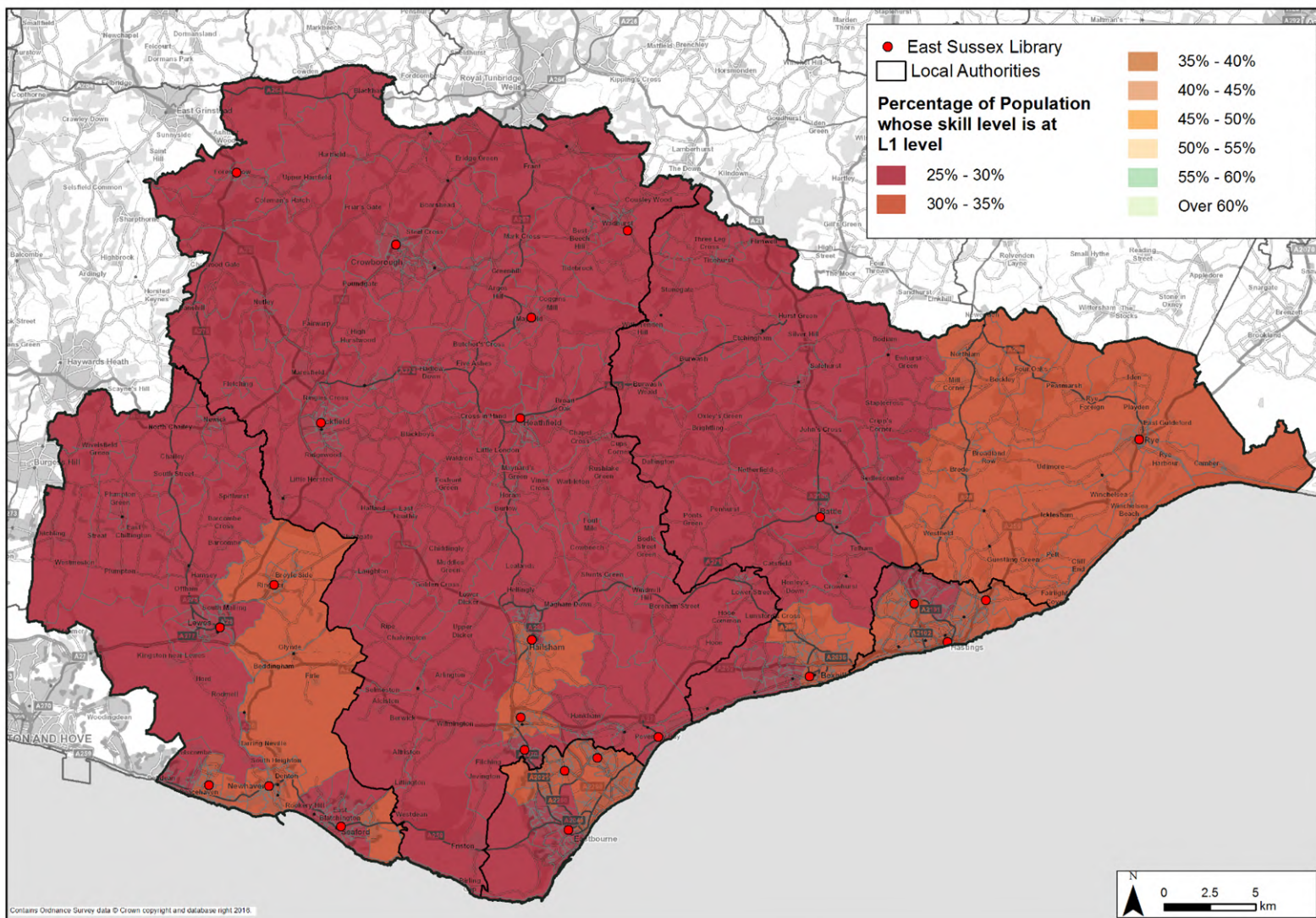
Indicator estimates the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) living in households with defined skill levels in literacy and numeracy. Small area estimation modelling methods have been applied to the 2011 Skills for Life survey data in order to generate local level area estimates.

Entry Level 3 is the national school curriculum equivalent for attainment at age 9-11. Adults with skills below Entry Level 3 may not be able to understand price labels on pre-packaged food or pay household bills. Adults with ICT Entry Level 3 skills are able to interact with and use an ICT system to meet needs, as well as present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience.

#### Format

Shows estimates of literacy and numeracy levels by ward.





## 9d. Skill Level – Level 1

**Indicator**

Adult literacy and numeracy levels

**Data source**

Skills for Life survey data. Estimates of the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) in England living in households with defined skill levels, 2011

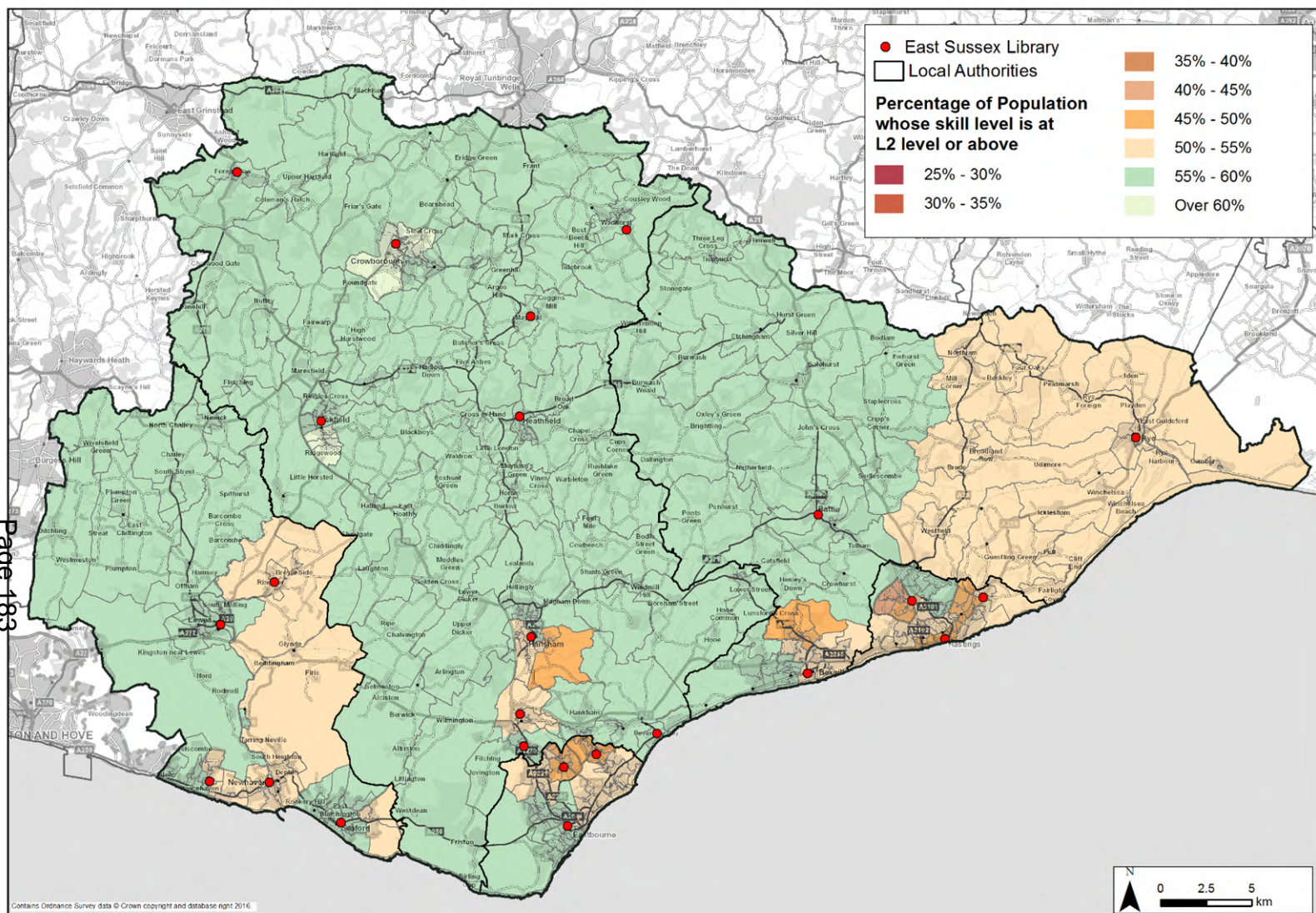
**Description/Definition**

Indicator estimates the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) living in households with defined skill levels in literacy and numeracy. Small area estimation modelling methods have been applied to the 2011 Skills for Life survey data in order to generate local level area estimates. Level 1 is equivalent to GCSE grades D-G. Adults with skills below Level 1 may not be able to read bus or train timetables or check the pay and deductions on a wage slip. Adults with ICT Level 1 skills are able to select and use a variety of appropriate sources of information, as well as enter, organise, develop format and bring together information to suit content and purpose.

**Format**

Shows estimates of literacy and numeracy levels by ward.





## 9e. Skill Level 2

### Indicator

Adult literacy and numeracy levels

### Data source

Skills for Life survey data. Estimates of the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) in England living in households with defined skill levels, 2011

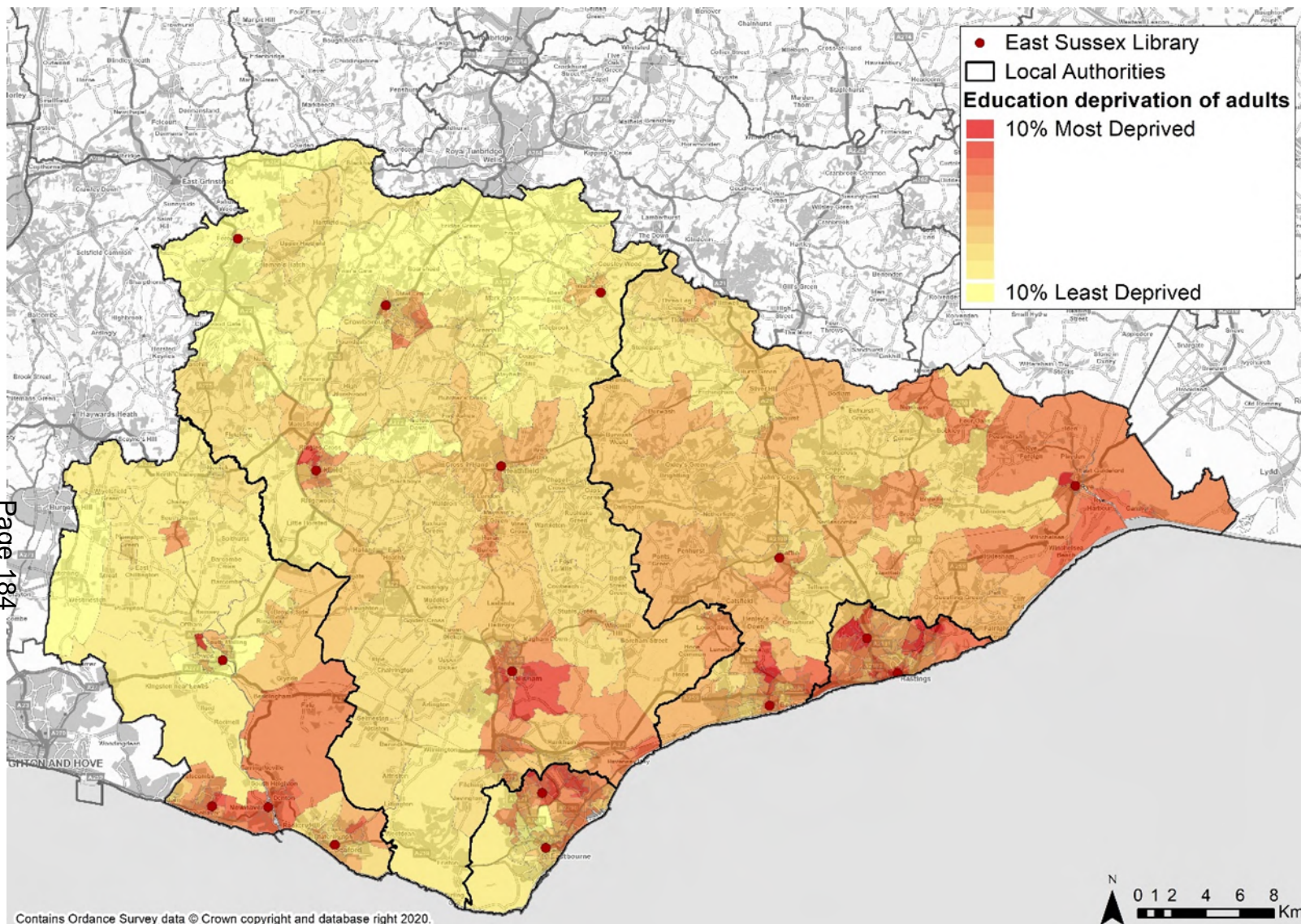
### Description/Definition

Indicator estimates the number and proportion of adults (aged 16-64 years old) living in households with defined skill levels in literacy and numeracy. Small area estimation modelling methods have been applied to the 2011 Skills for Life survey data in order to generate local level area estimates. Level 2 is equivalent to GCSE grades 4 - 9. Adults with skills below Level 2 may not be able to compare products and services for the best buy, or work out a household budget. Adults with ICT Level 2 skills are able to use a variety of appropriate sources of information and evaluate its fitness for purpose, as well as evaluate and use different methods of organising and presenting information, taking into account fitness for purpose and audience.

### Format

Shows estimates of literacy and numeracy levels by ward.





## 10a. Education deprivation of adults

### Indicator

ID 2019, Education, skills and training domain – by super output area. Adult skills sub-domain

### Data source

2019

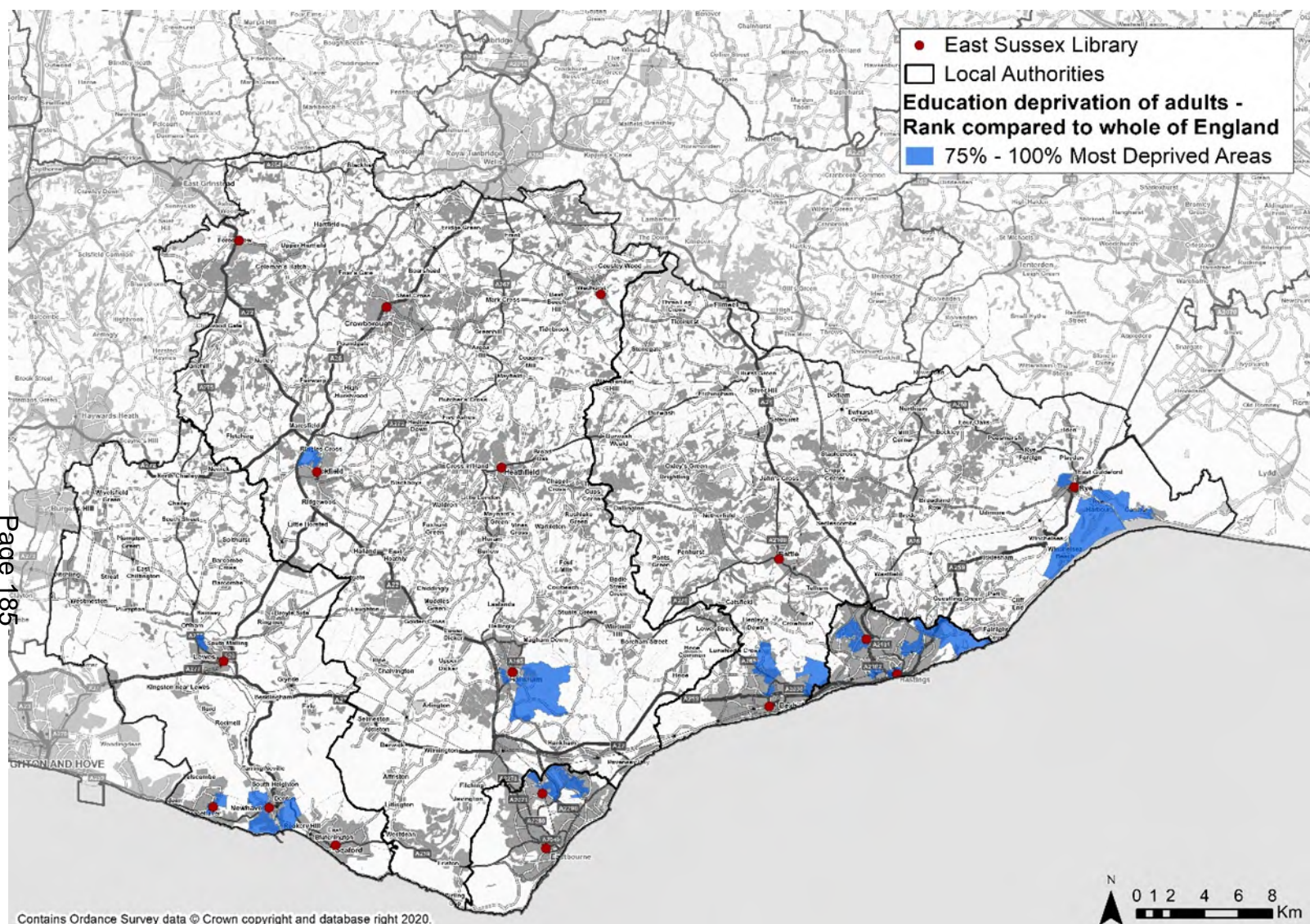
### Description/Definition

This dataset shows the results from the Indices of Deprivation 2019 (ID 2019) for the Education, skills and training domain. It is one of the seven separate domains that are brought together to form the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD 2019).

The 'Adult skills' sub-domain is based on two indicators:

- the proportion of women aged 25-59 and men aged 25-64 with no or low qualifications; and
- The proportions of these who cannot speak English well or at all.





## 10b. Education deprivation of adults

### Indicator

ID 2019, Education, skills and training domain – by super output area. Adult skills sub-domain

### Data source

2019

### Description/Definition

This dataset shows the results from the Indices of Deprivation 2019 (ID 2019) for the Education, skills and training domain. It is one of the seven separate domains that are brought together to form the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD 2019).

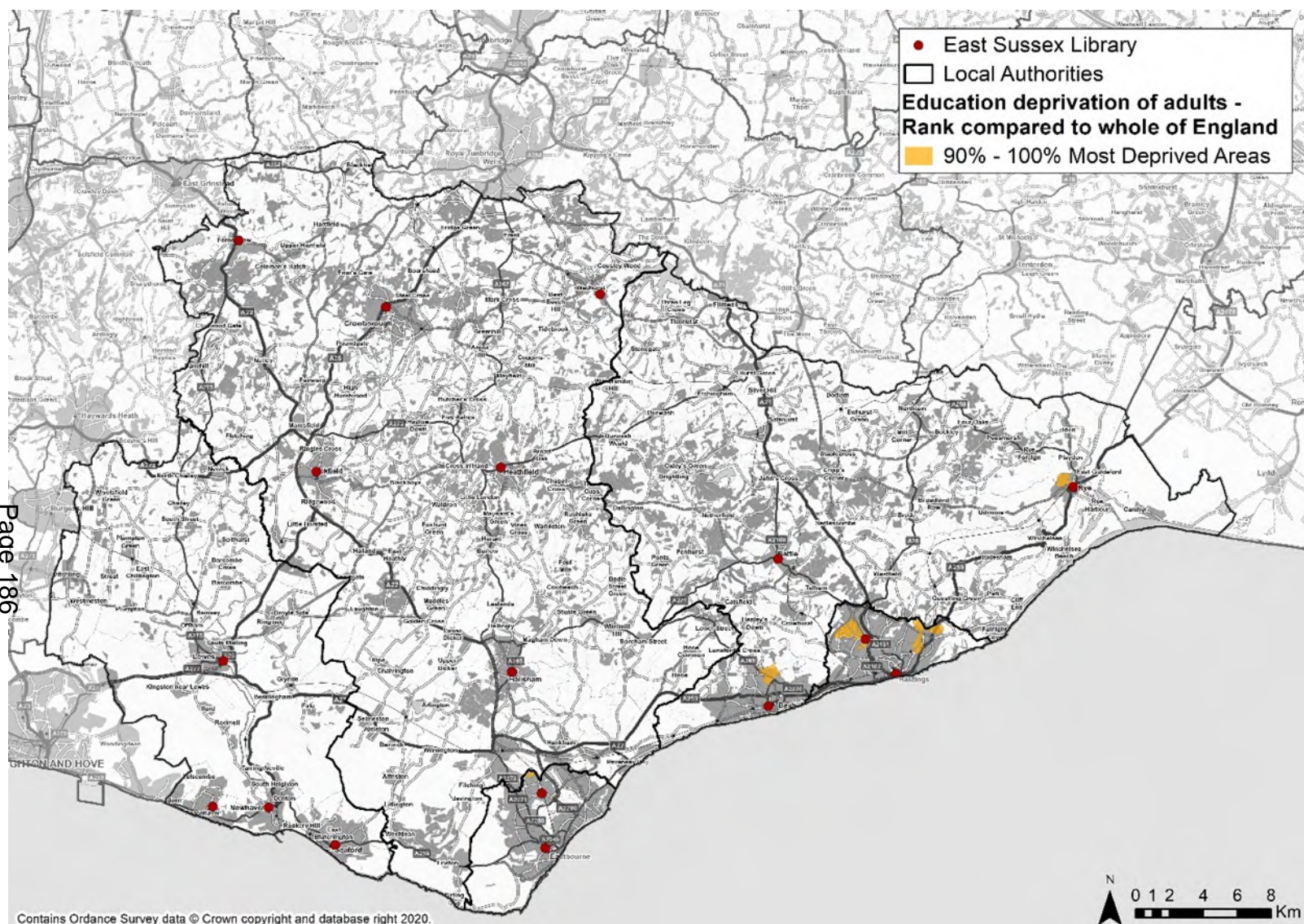
The 'Adult skills' sub-domain is based on two indicators:

- the proportion of women aged 25-59 and men aged 25-64 with no or low qualifications; and
- The proportions of these who cannot speak English well or at all.

### Format

Shows information for the most deprived quartile, compared to the whole of England.





### 10c. Education deprivation of adults

#### Indicator

ID 2019, Education, skills and training domain – by super output area. Adult skills sub-domain

#### Data source

2019

#### Description/Definition

This dataset shows the results from the Indices of Deprivation 2019 (ID 2019) for the Education, skills and training domain. It is one of the seven separate domains that are brought together to form the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD 2019).

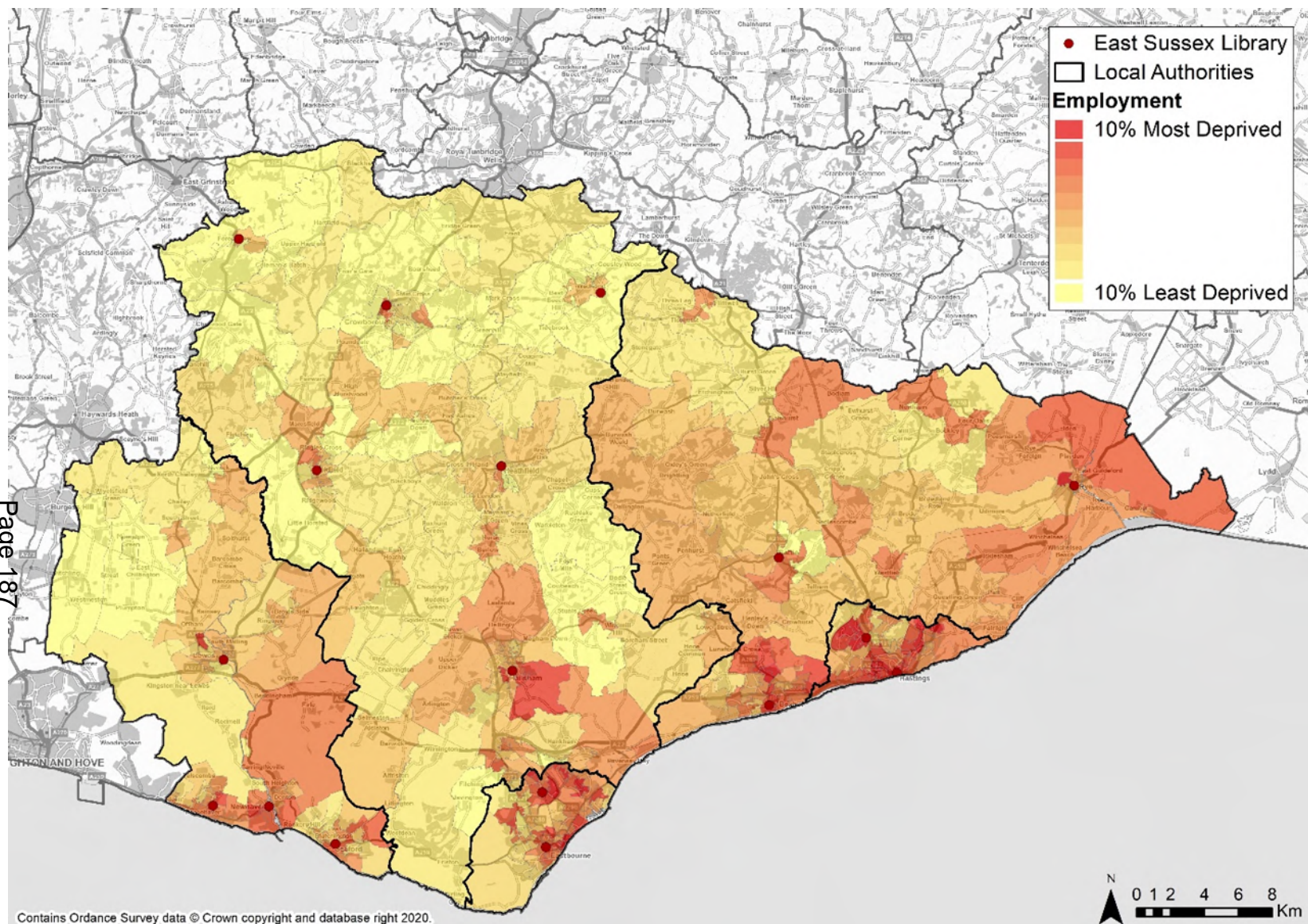
The 'Adult skills' sub-domain is based on two indicators:

- the proportion of women aged 25-59 and men aged 25-64 with no or low qualifications; and
- The proportions of these who cannot speak English well or at all.

#### Format

Shows information for the most deprived decile, compared to the whole of England.





### 11a. Deprivation –Employment

#### Indicator

ID 2019, Employment domain – by super output area.

#### Data source

2019

#### Description/Definition

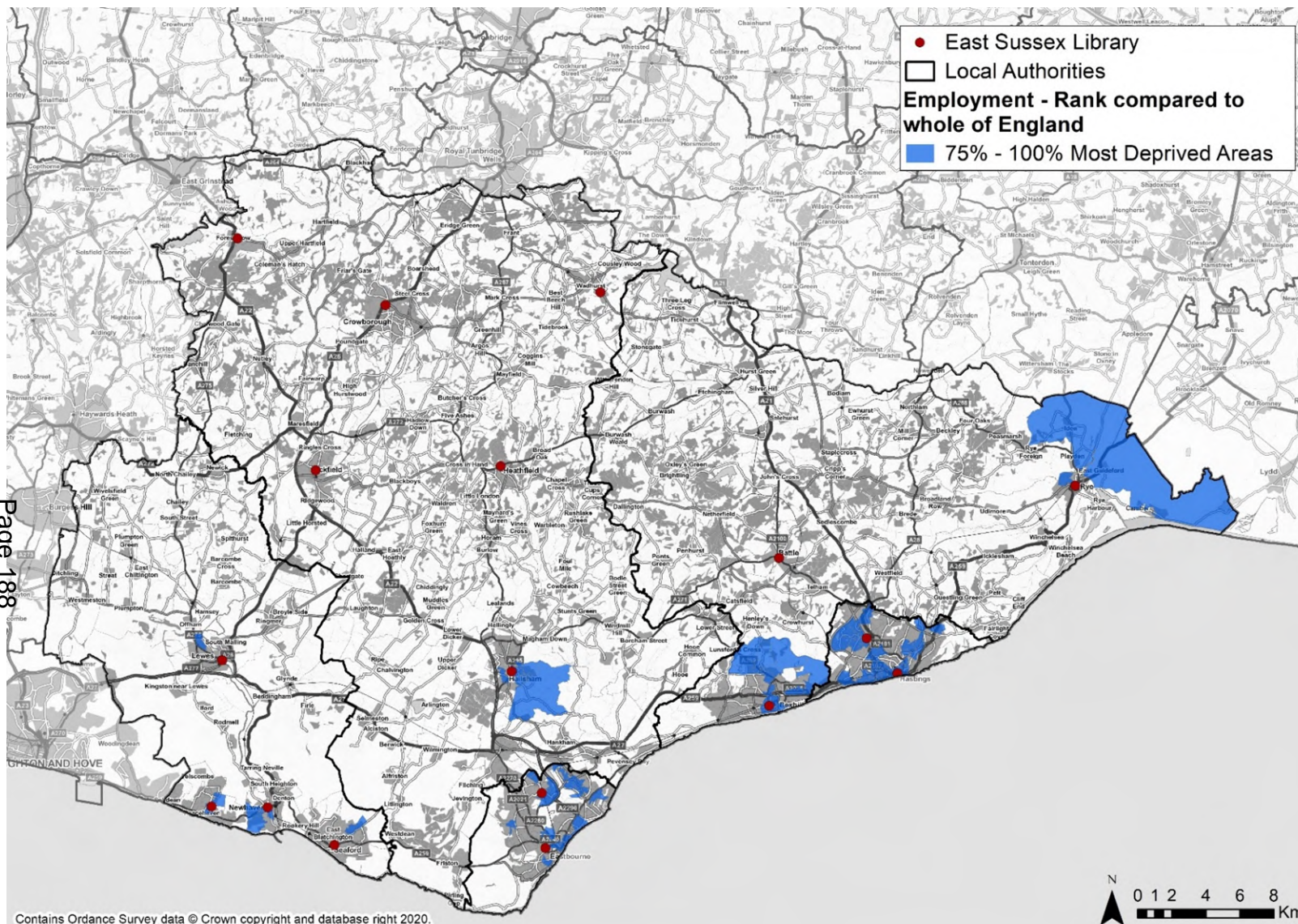
The Employment Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. This includes people who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities. The indicators used are:

- Claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (both contribution-based and income-based), women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Employment and Support Allowance (both contribution-based and income-based), women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Incapacity Benefit, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Severe Disablement Allowance, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Carer's Allowance, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64.

#### Format

Data is presented by super-output area. The total number listed as excluded from the labour market in East Sussex is 35,500. The rate is highest in Hastings (19%) and lowest in Wealden (7%).





## 11b. Deprivation – Employment

### Indicator

ID 2019, Employment domain – by super output area.

### Data source

2019

### Description/Definition

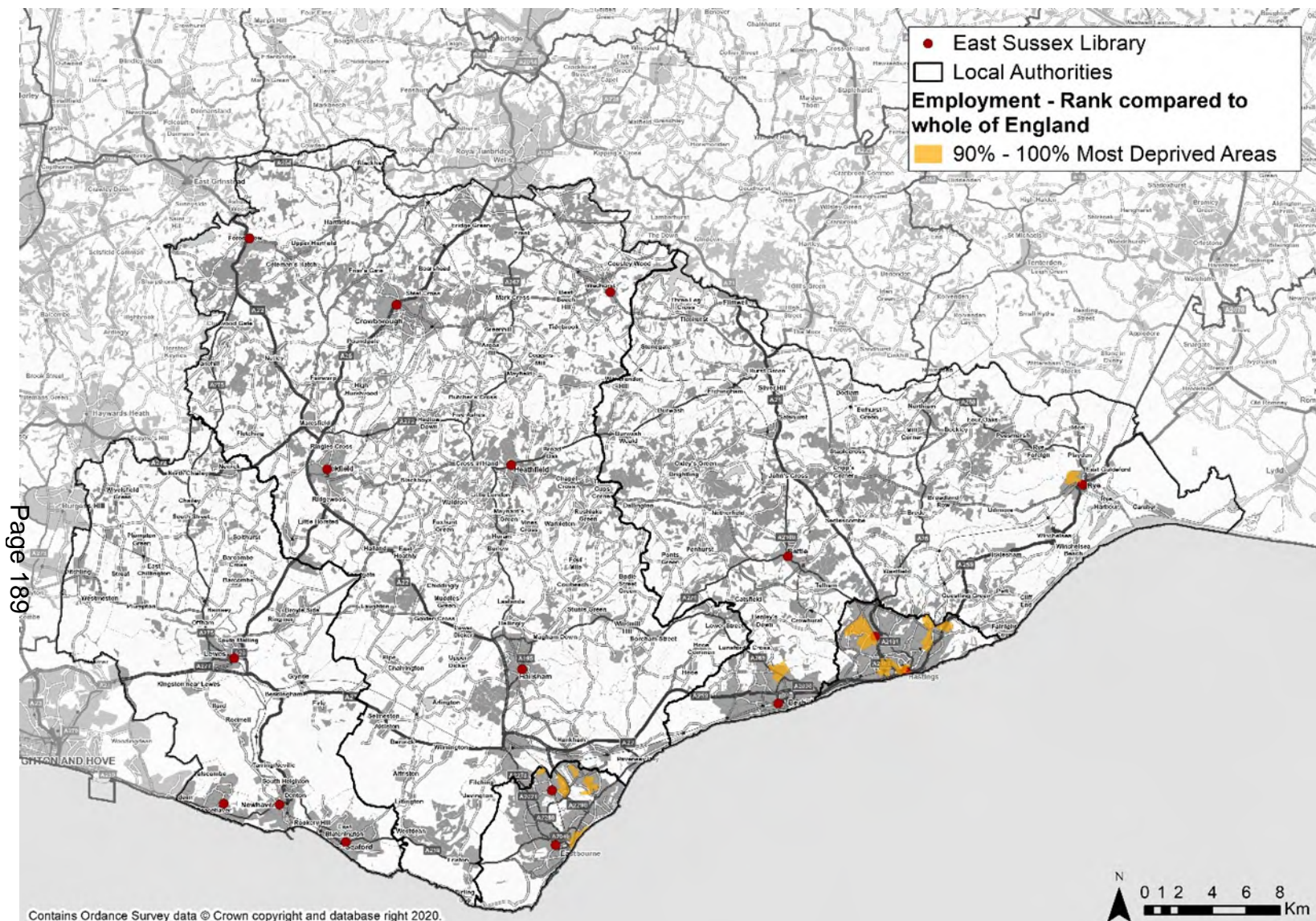
The Employment Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. This includes people who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities. The indicators used are:

- Claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (both contribution-based and income-based), women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Employment and Support Allowance (both contribution-based and income-based), women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Incapacity Benefit, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Severe Disablement Allowance, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Carer's Allowance, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64.

### Format

Data shows most deprived quartile.





## 11c. Deprivation –Employment

### Indicator

ID 2019, Employment domain – by super output area. Most deprived decile.

### Data source

2019

### Description/Definition

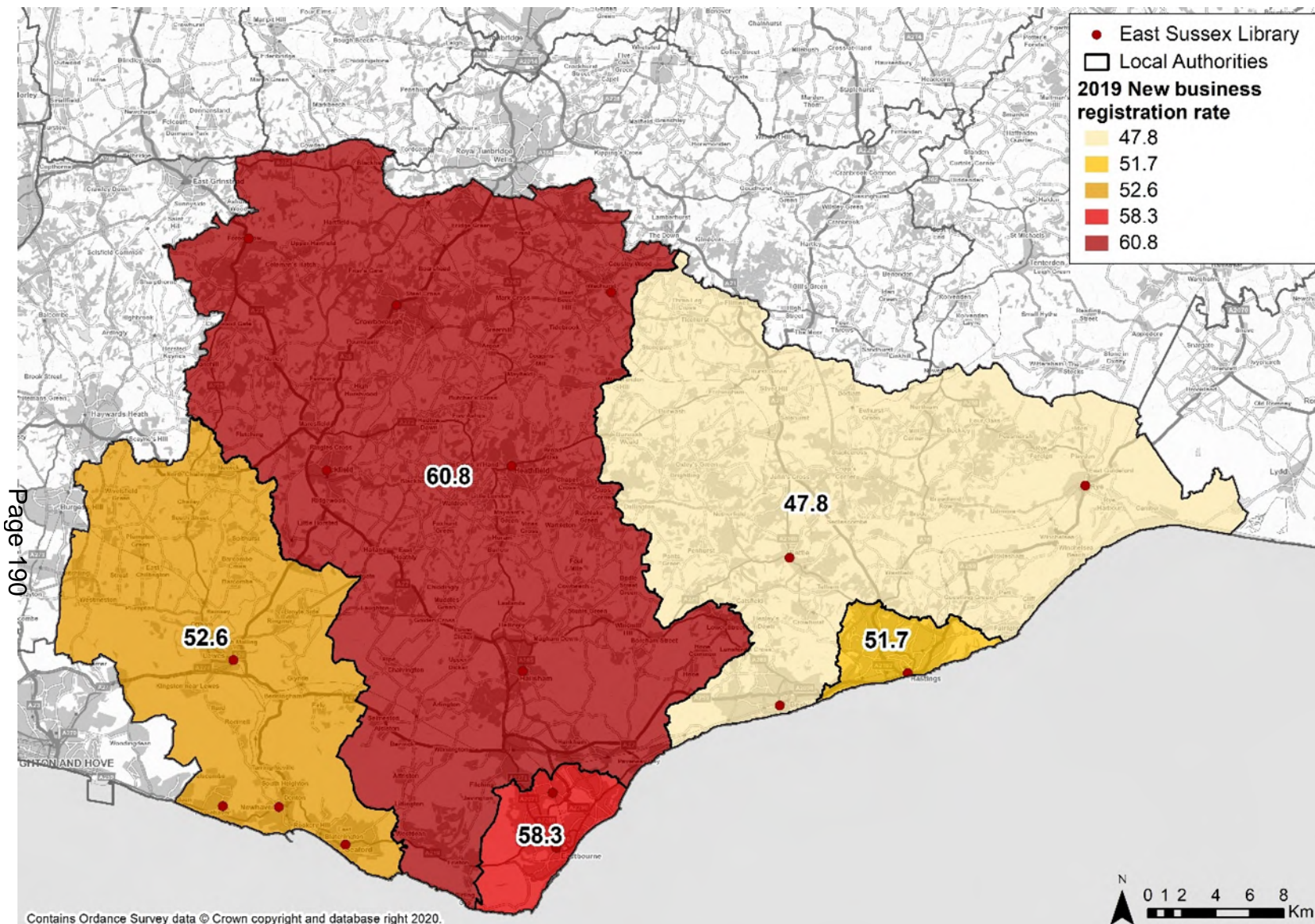
The Employment Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. This includes people who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities. The indicators used are:

- Claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance (both contribution-based and income-based), women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Employment and Support Allowance (both contribution-based and income-based), women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Incapacity Benefit, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Severe Disablement Allowance, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64
- Claimants of Carer's Allowance, women aged 18 to 59 and men aged 18 to 64.

### Format

Data shows most deprived decile.





## 12. Economy, jobs and prosperity - New Business Registration Rate

### Indicator

Economy, jobs and prosperity

### Data source

New business registration rate, by district/borough, 2019

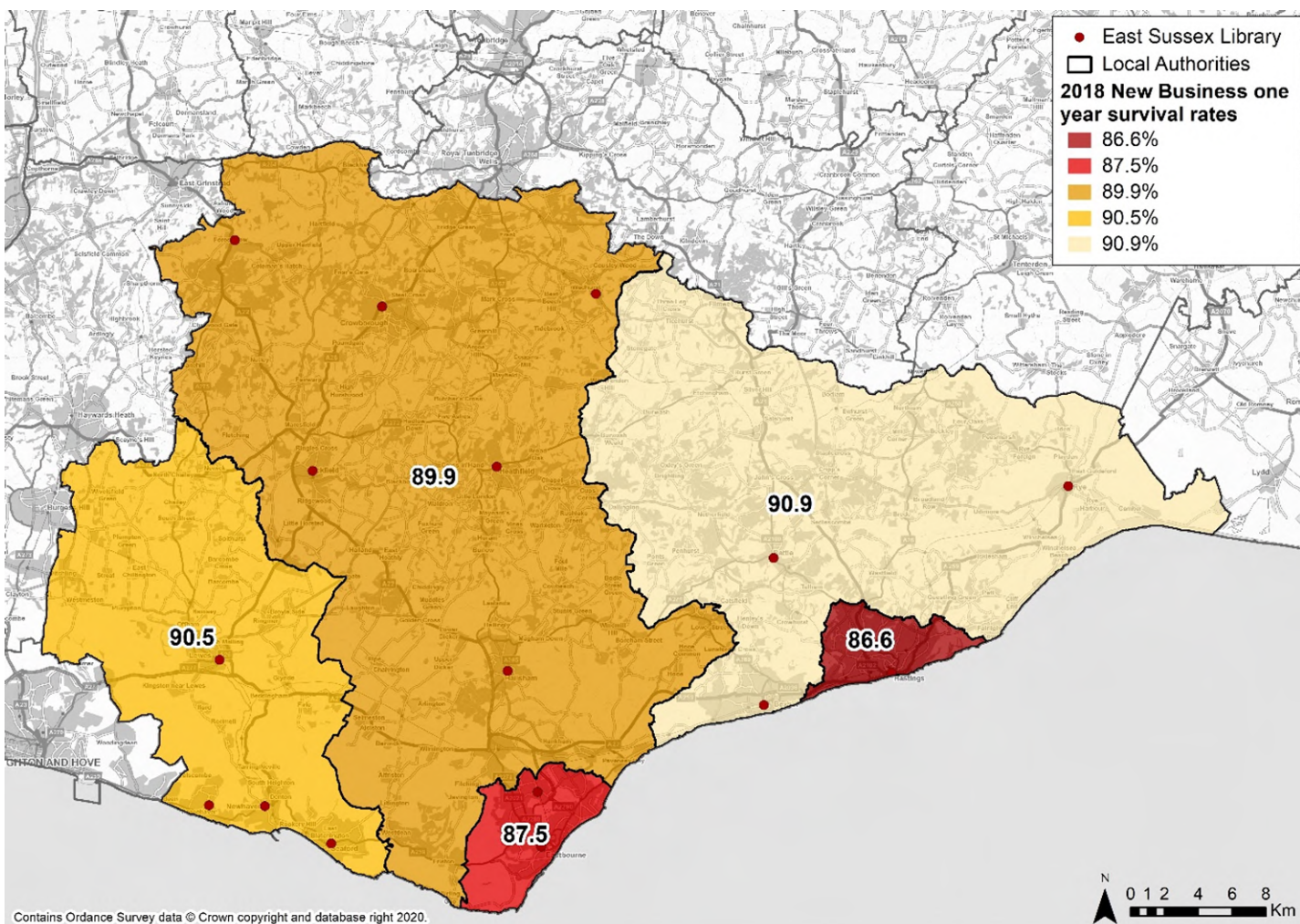
### Description/Definition

New business registration rate which is the rate of new business registrations per 10,000 people aged 16 and over.

### Format

Data is presented at District level





### 13. Economy, jobs and prosperity – New Business Survival Rate

#### Indicator

Business survival rates

#### Data source

New business survival rate, by district, 2018

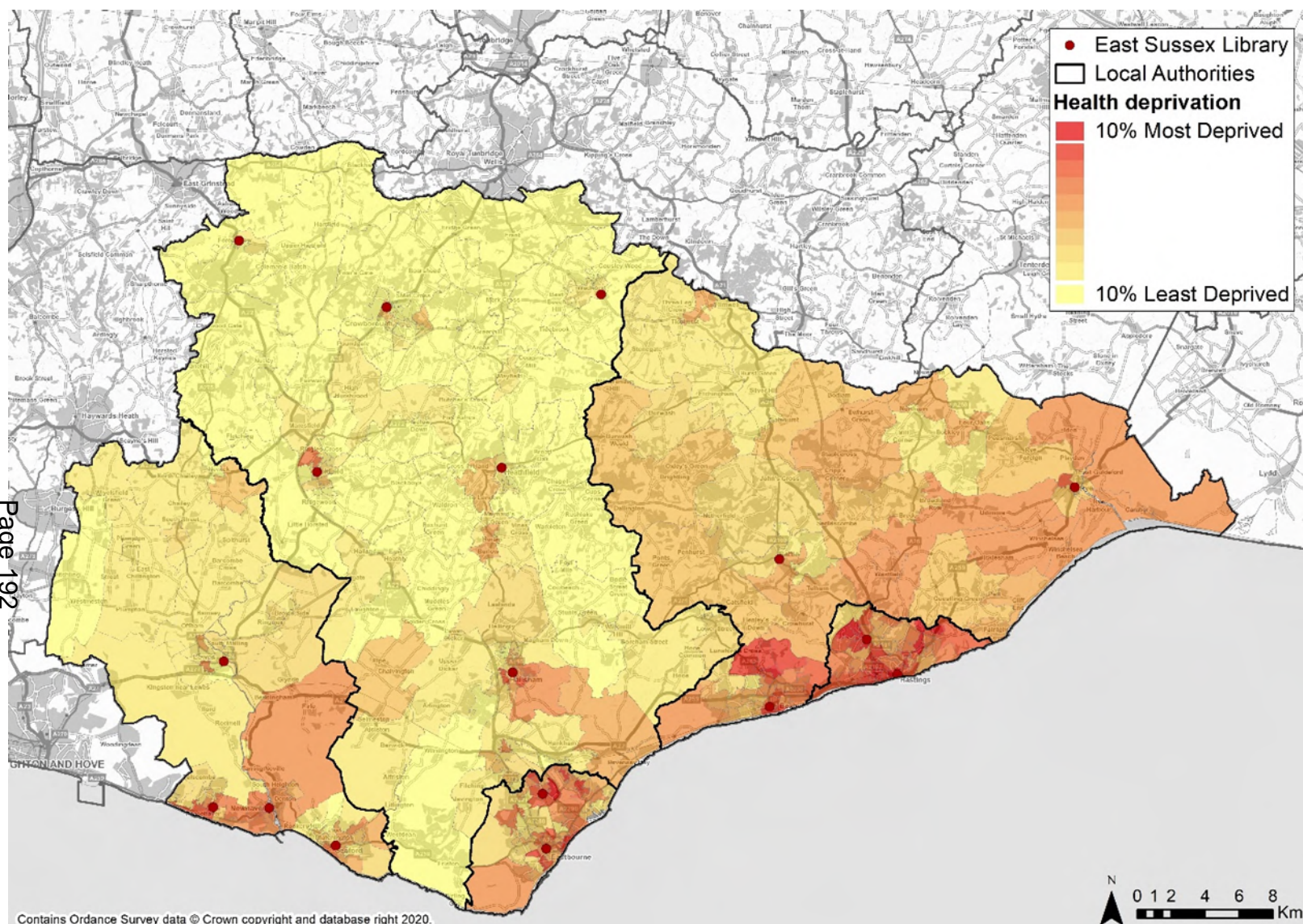
#### Description/Definition

Shows enterprise births, deaths and survival rates for a five-year period, up to 2018.

#### Format

Data is presented at District level





#### 14a. Deprivation – Health Deprivation

##### Indicator

ID 2019, Index of Multiple Deprivation – by super output area. Health Deprivation and Disability domain

##### Data source

2019

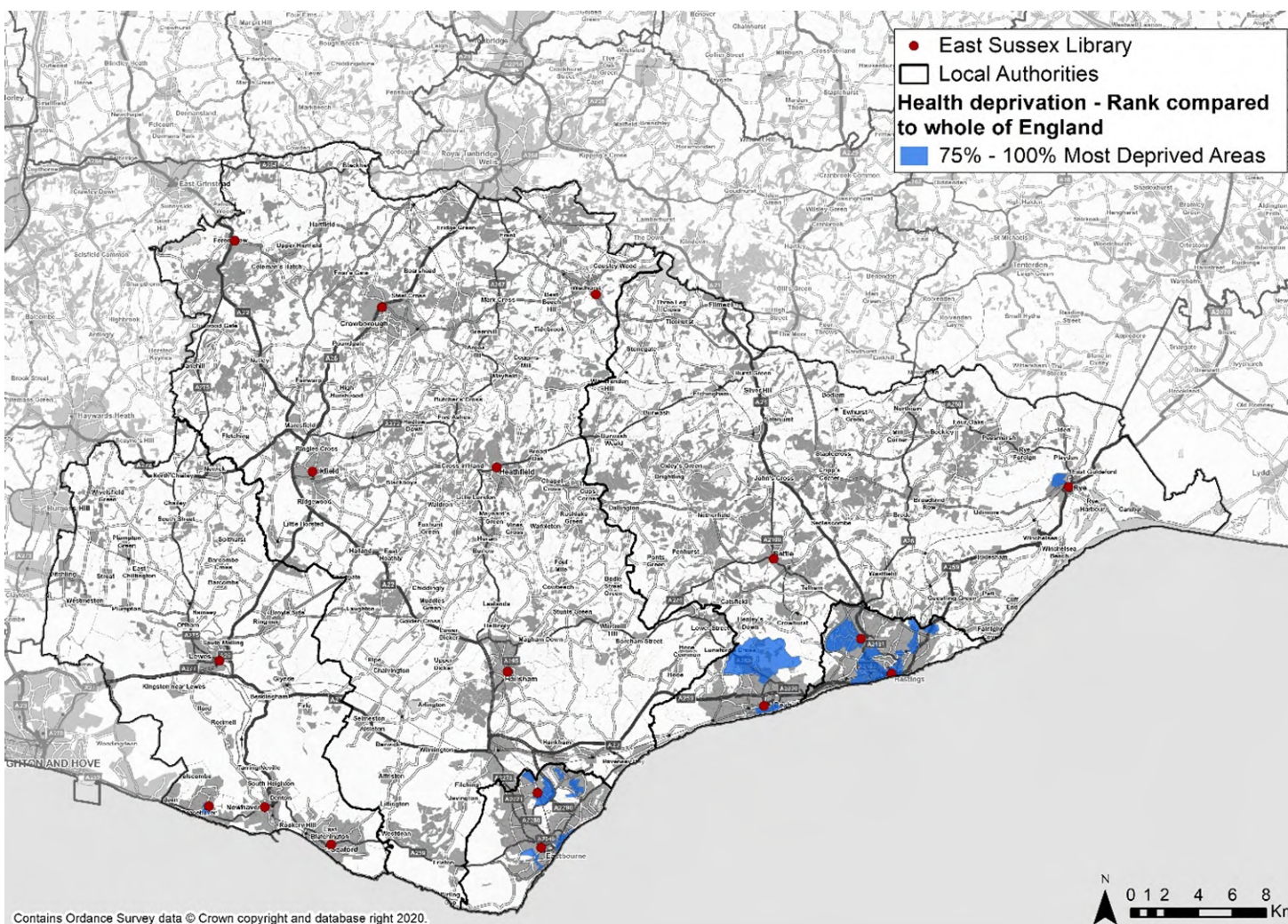
##### Description/Definition

The Health Deprivation and Disability Domain measure the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. The domain measures morbidity, disability and premature mortality but not aspects of behaviour or environment that may be predictive of future health deprivation.

##### Format

Ranks each super output area according to health deprivation – deprived areas score low; least deprived areas score high





## 14b. Deprivation – Health Deprivation

### Indicator

ID 2019, Index of Multiple Deprivation – by super output area. Health Deprivation and Disability domain

### Data source

2019

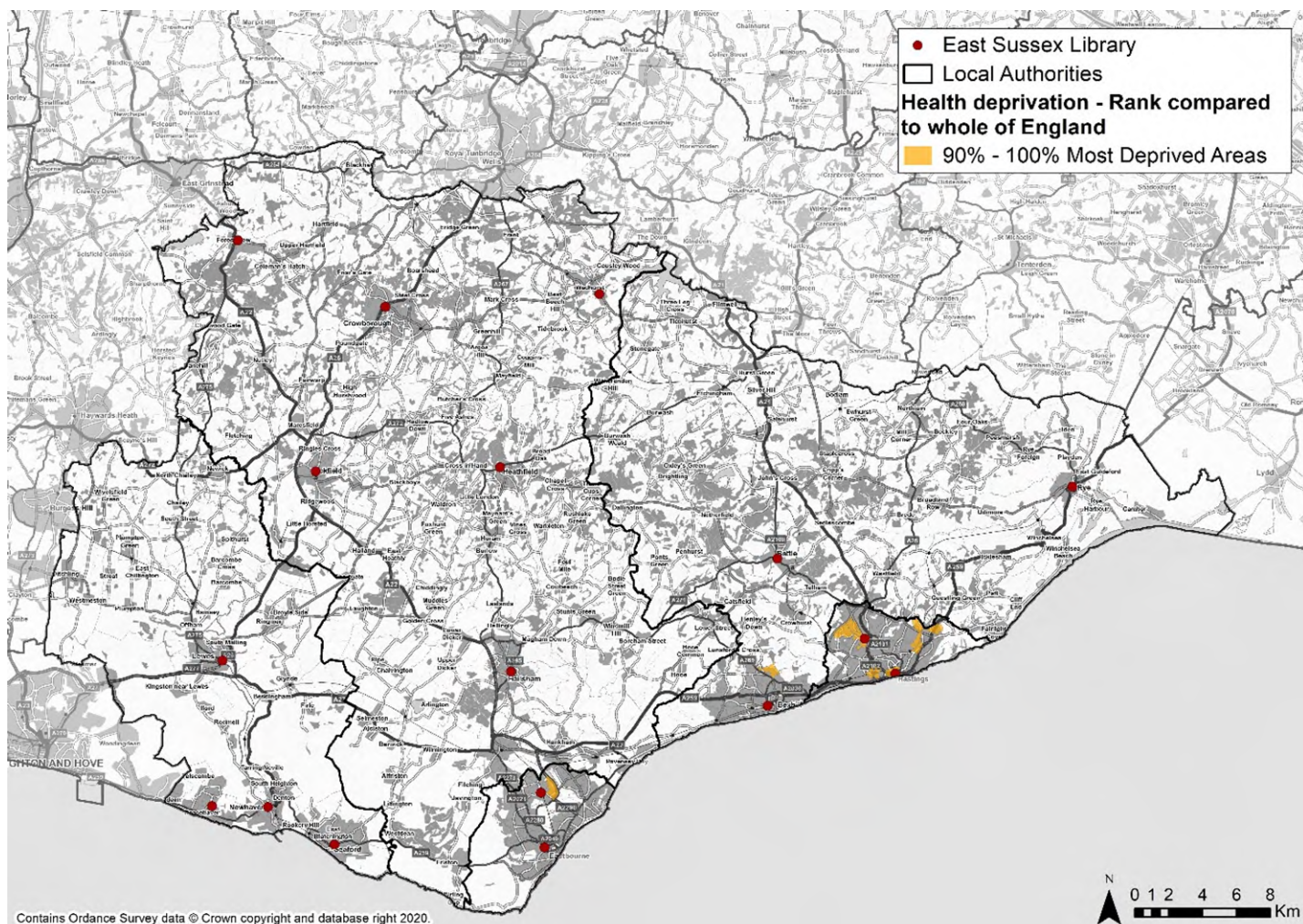
### Description/Definition

The Health Deprivation and Disability Domain measure the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. The domain measures morbidity, disability and premature mortality but not aspects of behaviour or environment that may be predictive of future health deprivation.

### Format

Ranks each super output area according to health deprivation – shows most deprived quartile.





#### 14c. Deprivation – Health Deprivation

##### Indicator

ID 2019, Index of Multiple Deprivation – by super output area. Health Deprivation and Disability domain

##### Data source

2019

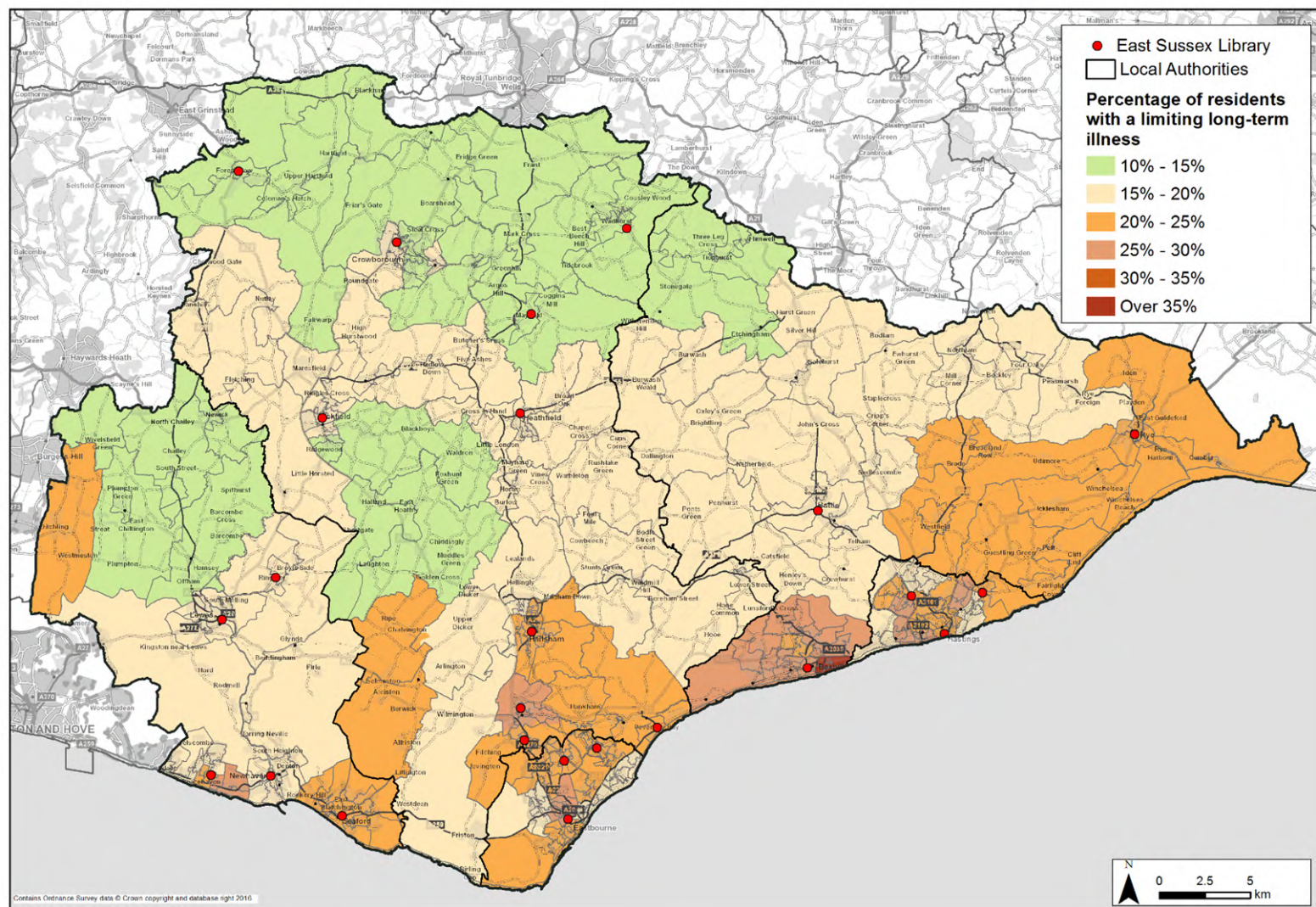
##### Description/Definition

The Health Deprivation and Disability Domain measure the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. The domain measures morbidity, disability and premature mortality but not aspects of behaviour or environment that may be predictive of future health deprivation.

##### Format

Ranks each super output area according to health deprivation – shows most deprived decile





## 15. Health and wellbeing – Long Term Illness

### Indicator

Residents with a limiting long-term illness in 2011 – by super output area

### Data source

2011 census

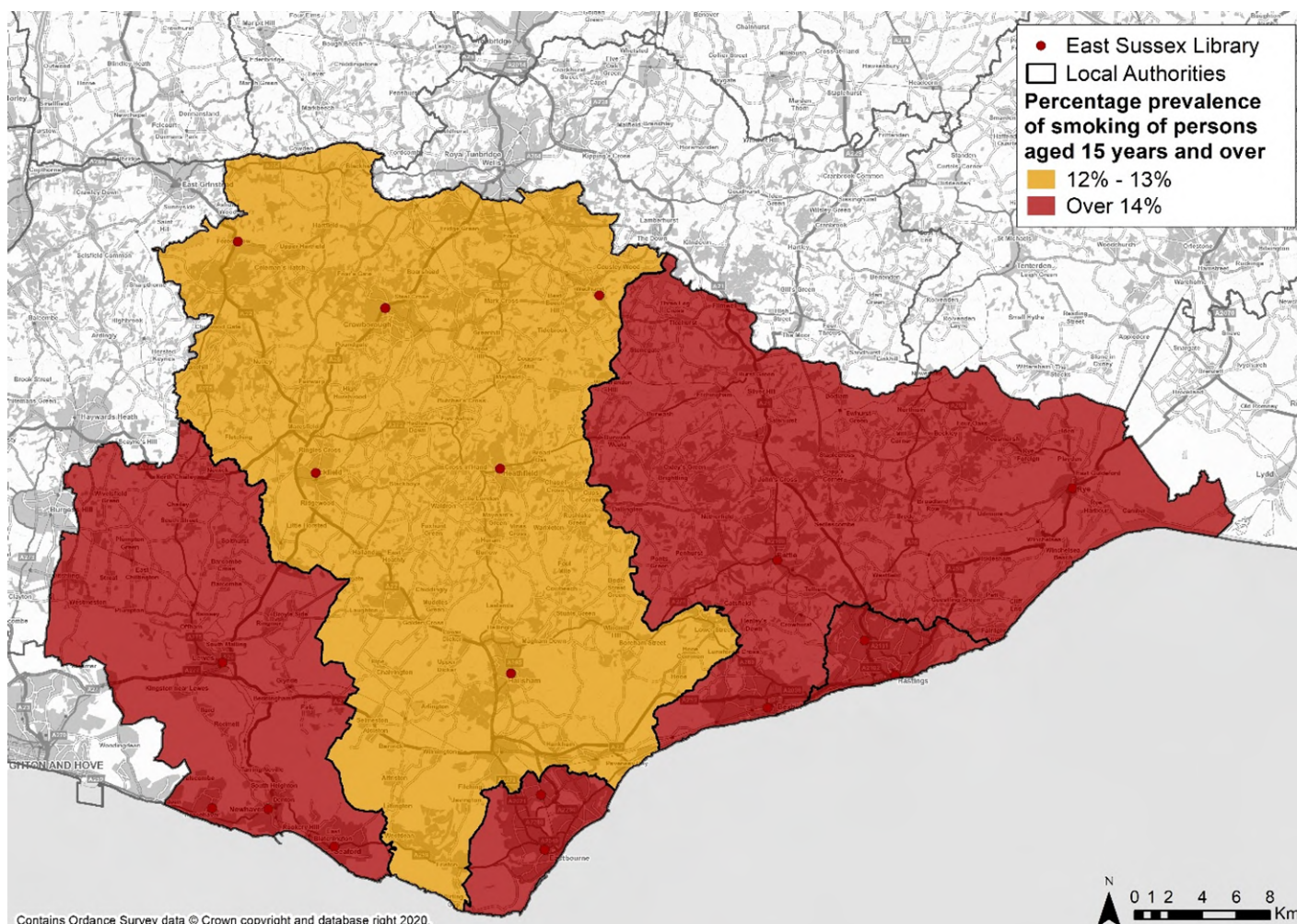
### Description/Definition

A long-term health problem or disability is one that limits a person's day-to-day activities, and has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. It includes problems that are related to old age.

### Format

Proportions are available by super output area. The proportion of residents living in East Sussex with a long-term health problem or disability is higher than the regional average (20% compared to 16% - probably because of the link to old age). It is highest in Rother (23%) and lowest in Wealden (18%).





## 16. Health and wellbeing - Smokers

### Indicator

GP reported prevalence of smoking, percentage of persons aged 15 years and over at 31st March 2015 – by ward.

### Data source

2019/20

Public Health Data Scorecard

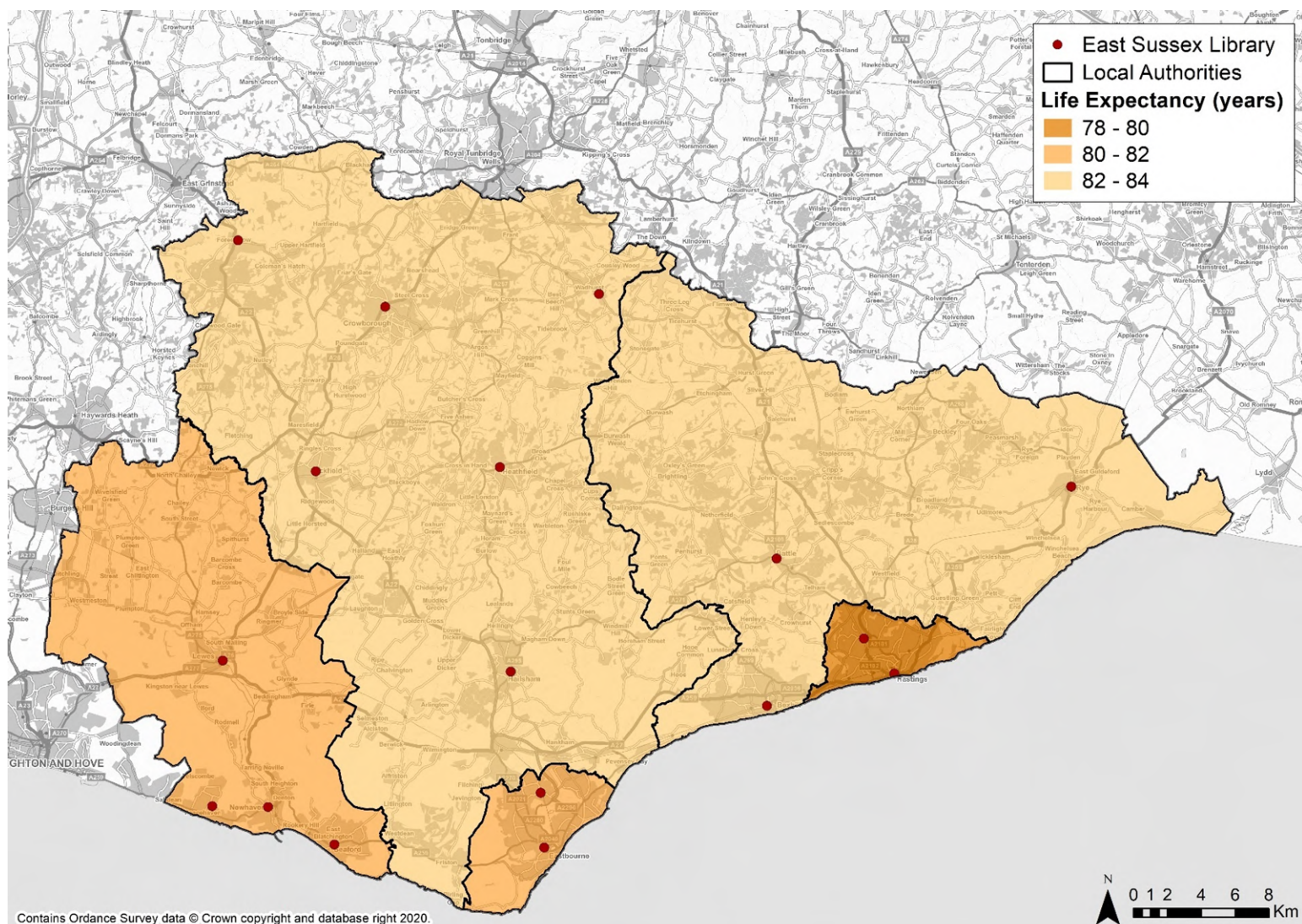
### Description/Definition

The number of people aged 15 or over reported by GPs to be smokers. This is an indicator of future problems relating to current behaviour and lifestyles.

### Format

Data is available at district and borough level.





**17. Health and wellbeing – Life Expectancy**

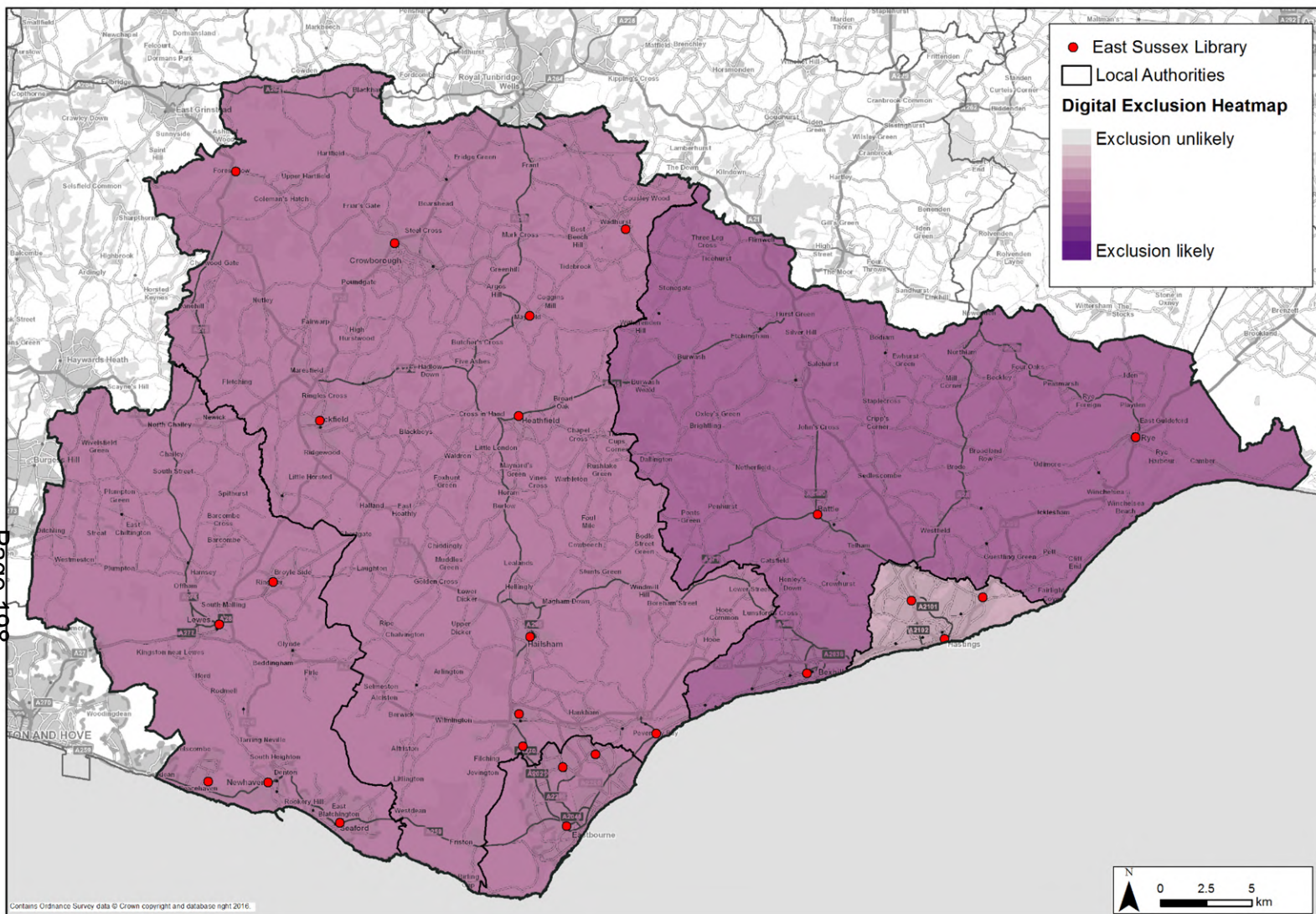
**Indicator**  
 JSNAA, Mortality, Life-expectancy at birth - by ward

**Data source**  
 2017-2019

**Description/Definition**  
 Life expectancy at birth is an estimate of the average number of years a new-born baby would survive if he or she experienced the age-specific mortality rates for a particular area in the given time period throughout his or her life. The figure reflects mortality among those living in an area in each time period, rather than mortality among those born in that area. It is not, therefore, the number of years a baby born in the area at a particular time might be expected to live, both because the death rates of the area are likely to change in the future and because many of those born in the area will live elsewhere for at least some part of their lives.

**Format**  
 Life expectancy data is available at ward level. Across East Sussex the average life expectancy at birth is 82. It varies by ward within districts but is lowest in Hastings and is highest in Lewes. Within East Sussex it varies from a low of 75.6 in one ward to a high of 89 in another.





## 18. Doteveryone – Digital Exclusion

### Indicator

The Digital Exclusion Heatmap

### Data source

2015

### Description/Definition

IMD type multiple indicator for digital exclusion. Eight different metrics have been used to calculate the overall likelihood of exclusion. Four of these are digital metrics (combined infrastructure, access, Basic Digital Skills and Basic Digital Skills used), which have been aggregated to provide a combined digital indicator. Four are social metrics (age, education, income and health), which have been aggregated to create a combined social indicator.

These combined indicators have been further aggregated using a formula designed by the London School of Economics and Political Science to provide a single measure of predicted overall exclusion from a digital United Kingdom.

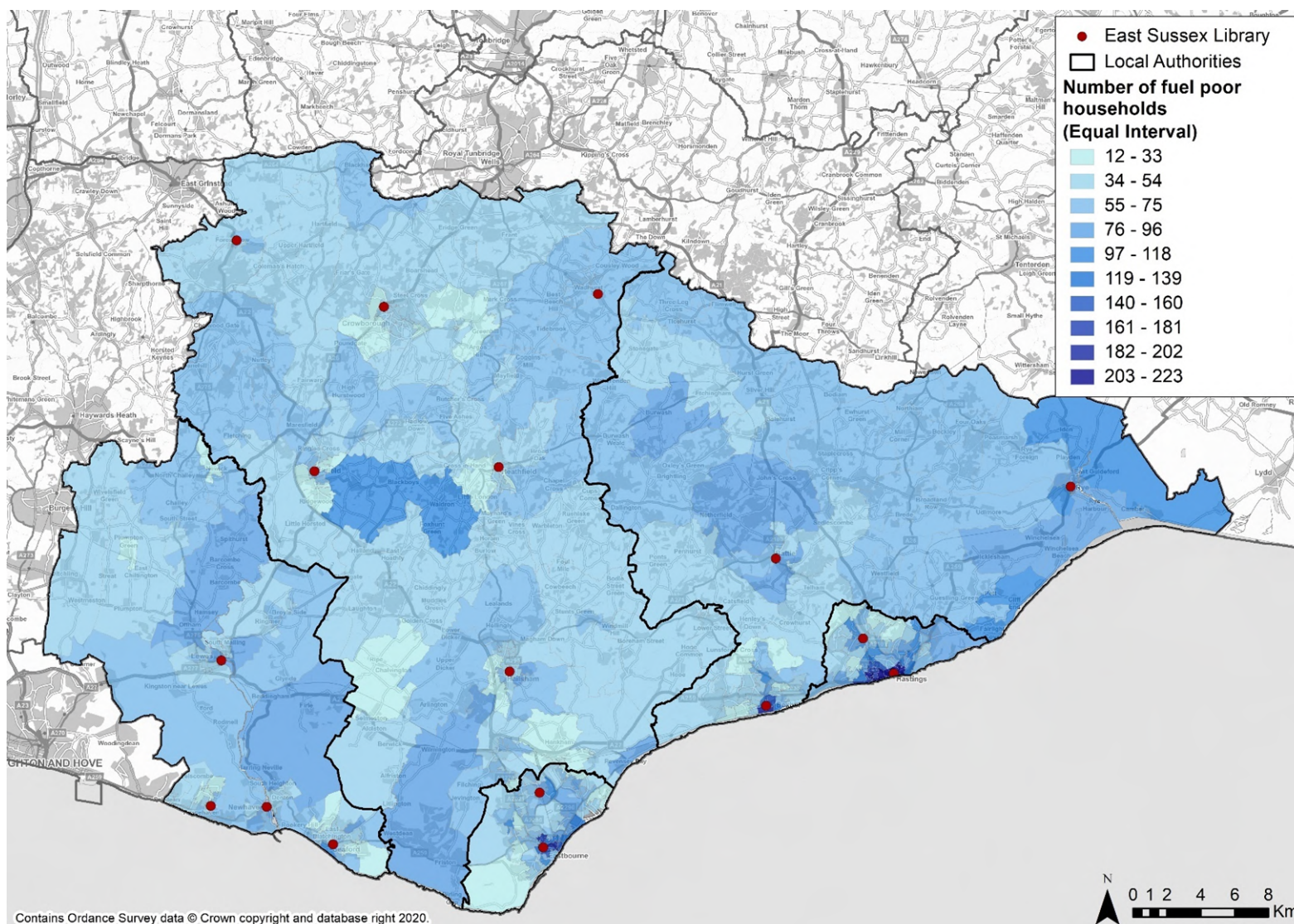
Source:

<https://doteveryone.org.uk/resources/heatmap/>

### Format

District





## 19. Households in fuel poverty,

### Indicator

Number of fuel poor households

### Data source

2019

### Description/Definition

This dataset shows the estimated number and percentage of households living in fuel poverty, meaning that they find it difficult to afford sufficient fuel to maintain a satisfactory heating regime (usually 21°C for the main living area, and 18°C for other occupied rooms).

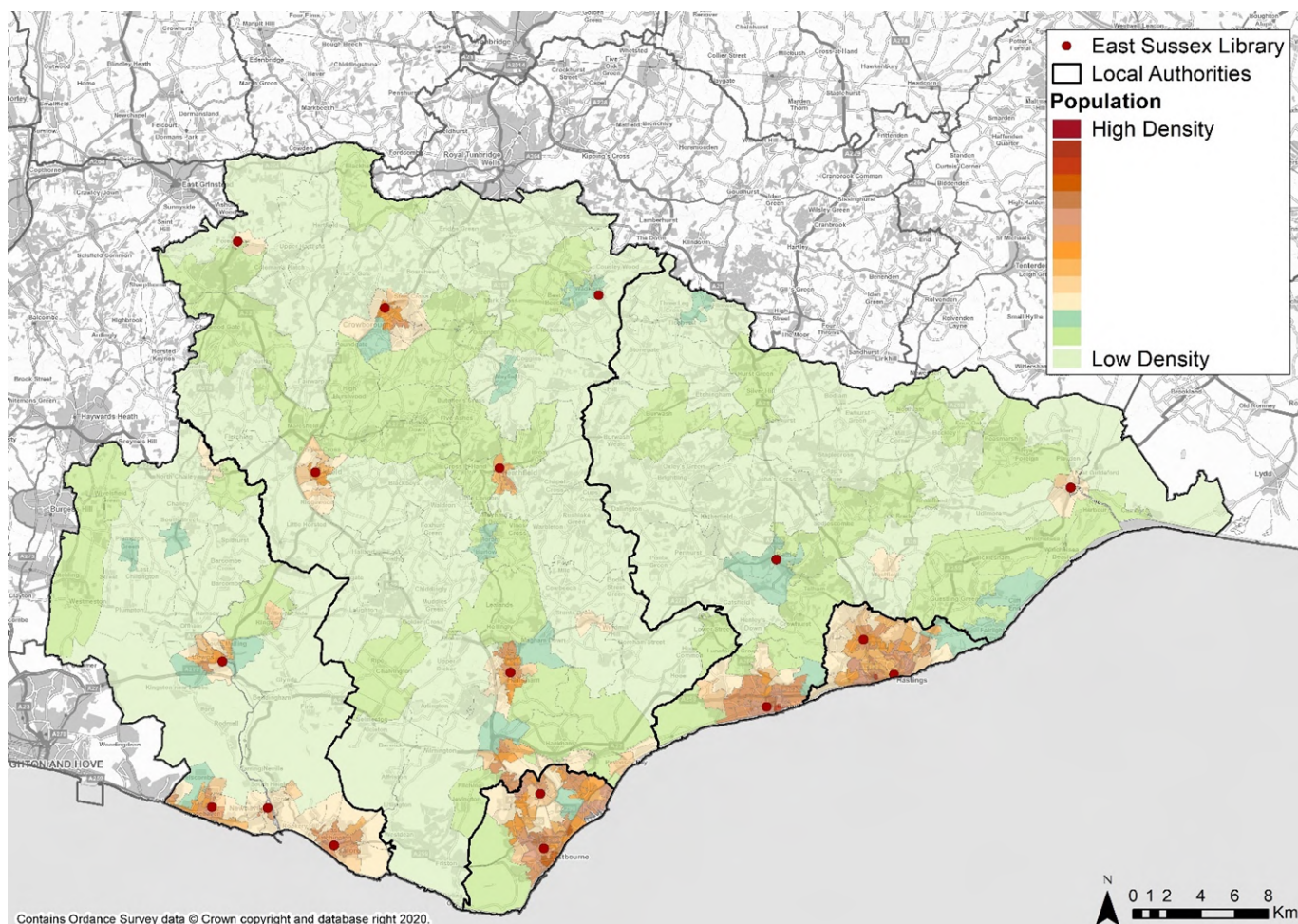
This dataset uses the Low Income High Cost (LIHC) indicator. Under this definition a household is considered to be fuel poor where:

- They have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level)
- Were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

### Format

Super output areas





## 20. Population - 65 and Over

### Indicator

Population estimates by age and gender by super-output area

### Data source

ONS 2019

### Description/Definition

Data are available by broad and detailed (mostly 5-year) age groups and single year of age for all geographies from 2012 onwards. The mid-year population estimates are produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) by ageing on the population of the previous year and by adjustments to reflect actual counts of births, deaths and migration during the year.

### Format

Shows numerical information by super-output area.

## 5 Results

### Results

- 5.1 Having selected the key indicators, in the four key Commissioning Themes, overall the review has identified that the highest needs are in the following geographical areas:
- Parts of Hastings
  - Parts of Eastbourne
  - Areas within some mid-sized towns, such as Hailsham and Uckfield
  - Some rural locations including areas close to towns such as Rye
- 5.2 The initial analysis may indicate that, in identifying need, especially when linked with indicators of deprivation, a clear urban versus rural split develops. However, when considered at a more granular level, at ONS Lower Super Output Areas rather than at parish, ward or district level, relative differences in need can be identified at a neighbourhood level. This is important, as assuming a rural district has lower needs under, for example, the literacy measures can mask pockets of significant need in rural areas. In some towns areas of high deprivation can be adjacent to areas of significant wealth and lower needs, as seen in both Eastbourne and Hastings.
- 5.3 It is worth pointing out that there are some limitations to the data presented in this report. The indicators are fixed in time, often based on ten-year-old census data and therefore patterns of need may have changed in subsequent years – our review suggests this is not a major risk but is to be noted. Secondly, even within LSOAs and very local data sets there could be considerable differences between individual needs and the benefits that access to the library service may bring to a community as a whole – therefore when making any decisions about future provision it has to be accepted there will be ‘exceptions to the rule’ where individuals will feel that their specific needs cannot be met locally.

The results of this Needs Assessment will be used in the next stage of the Strategic Commissioning process to analyse existing gaps in current service provision in order to deliver a relevant libraries service offer that will enable the County Council to prioritise needs with the resources it has available.

### Benchmarking

- 5.4 It was noted in section 2.22 that “it should be recognised that East Sussex compares favourably with many other local authority areas on a number of measures of need”. This view has been developed through an independent benchmarking of East Sussex districts and the county against South East England and national comparators on the needs indicators selected.
- 5.5 In Appendix A the relative values of needs indicators are considered against benchmarks, with commentary on the relative East Sussex performance against the averages.

## Future Trends

- 5.6 The indicators of need identified are providing a baseline for the current library service, but it is important also to assess the trends and changes that will impact on the needs of individuals and areas in East Sussex. These include the national and local changes driven by government spending decisions, improved physical and digital accessibility through technology change, and the social changes brought about by changing attitudes and values.
- 5.7 The Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy will set the direction of the Library and Information Service for the next five years. The following factors may influence needs and the shape of the Library and Information Service during this period:
- Demographics – The State of the County 2020 stated that the population of East Sussex will grow by 3.4% by 2024. This increase will include varying increases among demographics. It is projected there will be a 2.2% increase in young people, a 1.4% in those of working age and an 8.3% increase of those aged 65 and over. By 2024, it is projected that 4.3% of people in East Sussex will be aged 85+, a greater proportion than England (2.7%). The ONS project that this will rank East Sussex as ranked 2nd in England for the highest proportion of population 85+.
  - Employment – The county's workforce projections is anticipated to increase from 259,831 in 2022, to 266,650 in 2027 and to 269,277 in 2032<sup>10</sup>.
  - Health and wellbeing - It is difficult to predict how people's attitudes to their health and behaviour will change over time and therefore the impact on public services generally considered to be operating outside the healthcare sector. Current trends suggest a growing socio-economic divide as those who are better off take on board health messages and adopt healthier lifestyles and those from more disadvantaged backgrounds do not.
  - Digital - The landscape for the UK media consumer is substantially different to what it was just 5 years ago. In 2020, over 96% of households had internet access in the UK<sup>11</sup>, an increase of seven per cent from 2016. Data for Great Britain shows that the internet was used daily or almost daily by 89% of adults (46.6 million) in 2020, compared with 87% (45.1 million) in 2019 and 35% (16.2 million) in 2006<sup>12</sup>. In 2019, 84% of adults had used the

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<sup>10</sup>

<http://www.eastsussexinfofigures.org.uk/webview/index.jsp?catalog=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.eastsussexinfofigures.org.uk%3A80%2Fobj%2FCatalog%2FCatalog54&submode=catalog&mode=documentation&top=yes>

<sup>11</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2020>

<sup>12</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2020>

internet 'on the go' using a mobile phone or smartphone up from 70% in 2016 and 66% in 2015. The advancement of smartphones, mobile data coverage and social media, to name but a few examples have all proliferated and changed the way we consume media. As smartphones become ever more embedded in our lives, there will be new opportunities and challenges for the public sector, including the East Sussex Library and Information Service. This trend of increased digital access and use for a wider range of activities is expected to continue.



## 6 Conclusions

### Key findings

- 6.1 The Needs Assessment is a key element of the Strategic Commissioning Strategy. Its prime purpose is to provide a clear evidence-based review of needs, both met and unmet, that impact on the current and future provision of the Library and Information Service. If the Council's understanding of residents' needs is incomplete then the design and delivery of services is unlikely to fully meet their needs or achieve the required outcomes.
- 6.2 There is a clear distinction between the need and the demand for services. Need is what people could benefit from (that is an effective intervention or service); demand is what people ask for. Strategic Commissioning is about prioritising need over demand and supply. This Needs Assessment, together with the other Technical Appendices, provides an evidence base which enables the Council, through the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, to prioritise its resources for library services towards the achievement of outcomes that will best meet the needs of those who live, work and study in East Sussex.
- 6.3 The Needs Assessment is framed around four Commissioning Themes, which reflect the Council's four overarching priority outcomes: driving economic growth; keeping vulnerable people safe; helping people help themselves; and making best use of resources. The Commissioning Themes are considered to represent the key areas of community need that the Library and Information Service may be best placed to meet or contribute towards, in support of the Council's priority outcomes. These are:
- Reading and literacy
  - Economic development
  - Health and wellbeing
  - Digital exclusion
- 6.4 The process of undertaking a needs assessment is not an exact science. The Council has a duty under the *Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964* to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" library service, but the Act does not set out a statutory measure of need and there are no national guidelines that spell out what is or is not a need in terms of library services. It is also important to highlight that, in most cases, the Library and Information Service is not the primary provider of services to meet identified needs. The role of the Library and Information Service is largely indirect in support of other more targeted service providers.
- 6.5 The Needs Assessment has considered a wide range of potential indicators of needs, clustered around each Commissioning Theme that may be addressed by the Library and Information Service. These have been refined to select the indicators which best illustrate need and which are based on robust, publicly available data at a sufficiently detailed scale that meaningful evidence can be gathered at a local level across the county. The Needs Assessment has considered how the identified needs vary across the county, and whether there are specific groups of people whose needs are currently not met. Invariably it is

the relative differences, not the absolute values, between the level of needs identified that are of most use in identifying areas to target resources where needs are greatest.

- 6.6 East Sussex generally compares favourably with many other local authority areas on a number of measures of need. In the analysis undertaken for the Needs Assessment there was, for most indicators, little variation across the whole county. However, for some indicators there were stark variations. The Needs Assessment has sought to identify when the variation in needs is significant in scale and scope, compared to where the variations are minimal across the county. Where there are significant variations between parts of the county (in particular for indicators related to deprivation, ageing and health) the variations can reflect very localised pockets of need, even within each of the main urban areas.
- 6.7 The over-arching indicator of need is the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. The highest deprivation levels are seen in parts of Hastings and the Lower super output area covering Iden and Camber in Rother. There are also relatively high levels of deprivation in parts of Bexhill, Eastbourne, Newhaven, and Hailsham. However, it is important to recognise that not every person in a highly deprived area will themselves be deprived. Likewise, there will be some deprived people living in the least deprived areas.
- 6.8 In terms of the findings of the Needs Assessment under each Commissioning Theme, deprivation, skills and educational attainment and income play a key role.
- 6.9 Literacy skills underpin success in all walks of life, and libraries have a key role to play in ensuring children in particular have the building-blocks for future academic and employment success, thereby improving people's prosperity, their health and their wellbeing. Young children's early communication and vocabulary skills are particularly important. In addition, the health and wellbeing benefits of reading for pleasure are evident for adults as well as children and young people.
- 6.10 On reading and literacy, the Library and Information Service has the potential to support the literacy needs of every child, although some children are likely to have higher needs than others, such as those living in households with low incomes, those with Special Educational Needs and those without English as a first language. Where there are low adult literacy rates (often linked with other indicators of deprivation) it is expected that this will create a need that can be positively met through access to library services. The areas of the county where literacy needs are greatest are parts of Crowborough, Hailsham, Hastings, Newhaven and Rye.
- 6.11 The modern library service can provide information and support to individuals and businesses to help develop the economy. Economic performance in East Sussex has lagged behind the regional and national average, with a skills deficit being a contributory factor. For economic development, the need is primarily for people seeking work but struggling to find it because of, for instance, low levels of qualifications, poor literacy and numeracy skills, poor CV writing and interview techniques, and a lack of information about availability of suitable jobs.

Disability and long-term ill health are factors which can prevent people from obtaining a job when they want to work, and being out of the workplace for long periods of time can have a further impact on people's skills, levels of confidence and mental health.

- 6.12 The Library and Information Service can provide access to online information about job vacancies and training and skills development opportunities, and support individuals directly to develop skills such as applying for jobs and learning new literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. This can also boost self-confidence and preparedness for a job interview, increasing the chances of getting into or back into work. Indicators of deprivation and adult skills levels suggest that the greatest needs are in parts of Bexhill, Eastbourne, Hastings, Newhaven and St. Leonards.
- 6.13 There are health and wellbeing needs which the Library and Information Service can meet by supporting community and individual resilience, health improvement and reducing health inequalities through the provision of safe and inclusive spaces, quality assured self-help information and resource materials tailored for residents of all ages, as well as direct signposting to other services. In particular, the Library and Information Service can provide resources and information to enable people to take greater ownership of their own health and wellbeing, to be more resilient, increasingly independent, self-sufficient and resourceful, and thus better able to help themselves.
- 6.14 Research has identified the positive benefits of reading for mental health, as well as the positive correlation between literacy and a person's ability to access health information. Those in greatest need are people in poor mental or physical health or at risk of developing health problems, particularly people with a long-term health problem or disability. The highest health deprivation levels and disability measures are concentrated in the coastal towns, either in central residential areas or large estates on the edge that often have other income, employment and social exclusion issues. There are some pockets of health deprivation in each of the three more rural districts, but usually associated with the mid-sized towns. One town with a relatively high percentage of residents with long term illness is Bexhill. Other high levels are found in Eastbourne, Hastings Newhaven and St. Leonards.
- 6.15 Information is increasingly moving to digital platforms and there continues to be a social divide between those who have easy access to the internet and those who are still offline. On digital inclusion, the needs which have been identified are the ability to access and use the internet to access information about skills and employment opportunities, health and wellbeing information, and accessing the more competitive online market place for goods and services, which can help households on low incomes.
- 6.16 Behind these needs are the affordability of home or mobile internet provision, the lack of basic digital skills (which is linked to low levels of educational attainment and also to age), and to a lesser extent, the availability of broadband technology. The data show that adults with the lowest skills levels are located mainly in the coastal towns of Bexhill, Eastbourne, Hastings and Newhaven as well as Hailsham and the far east of the county in Rye and surrounding areas.

- 6.17 The Library and Information Service has worked closely with colleagues in Adult Social Care, Public Health and Children's Services as well as partner organisations to identify emerging or changing needs which have emerged since the launch of the previous Strategy in 2018. The Library and Information Service has also reviewed recent research to support the identification of emerging needs.
- 6.18 Many of these needs are due to the effects of the pandemic. In some cases, for example, pupil attainment, data is not yet available which reflects the changing needs. However, we feel it is important to address these needs in the Updated Strategy to provide our residents as quickly as possible with the support they require at this challenging time. Vulnerable people may need support for a wide range of issues including digital exclusion, financial exclusion, food poverty, and physical and mental health issues.
- 6.19 The updated Strategy will include additional offers to meet emerging needs, as well as continuing to support the needs previously identified.
- 6.20 The indicators of need identified in this Needs Assessment provide a baseline upon which to develop the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, which will set the direction of the Library and Information Service for the next five years. The Needs Assessment considers these changes and has concluded that, for the duration of the Strategic Commissioning Strategy, changes in population, employment and economic activity, health and digital technology are unlikely to have a significant impact on its findings and overall conclusions.



## Appendix A Benchmarking

### District level analyses by indicator

**Fig 1 index of multiple deprivation**

Data is presented only at super output area level and is not available at a district level

**Fig 2 population estimates by age (2019)**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	South East	England	Notes
% Population 0-15	17.3	18.5	17.1	15	17.1	17.0	19.2	19.2	In all districts the percentage of children 0-15 is below the average for the South East and England
% Population 65+	25.1	20.3	25.8	32.1	26.1	25.9	19.5	18.3	In all districts the percentage of people 65 or older is higher than the south east and England average. The highest percentage is in Rother, which has one of the highest percentages of 65+ residents in England
% estimated 2028 Population 65+	28.4	21.6	29	35.9	29.2	N/A	N/A	20.7	
	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q1	Q1				It is predicted that by 2028 Rother district will have the third highest % of older people of any district in England (only the % in West Somerset and North Norfolk will be higher). The proportion of those aged 65+ will also be upper quartile for Wealden, Lewes and Eastbourne districts. Hastings will remain above the England average as well, but below the average in the south east.

### Fig 3a to 3c index of deprivation – education skills and training domain - children and young people sub-domain

Figures on this sub-domain are not readily available by district, but are available for the full education, skills and training domain. The five East Sussex districts have been ranked across the 326 districts in England – these include district councils, metropolitan districts, London boroughs and unitary councils. The quartiles are therefore:

- Q1 authorities numbers 1-81;
- Q2 authorities numbers 82-163;
- Q3 authorities numbers 164-245; and
- Q4 authorities numbers 246-326.

East Sussex County Council has been ranked within the 152 upper tier authorities in England – these include County Councils, metropolitan districts, London boroughs and unitary councils. In this case the quartiles are Q1 authorities 1-37, Q2 authorities 38-76, Q3 authorities 77-114 and Q4 authorities 115-152. In this analysis, those authorities with the lowest numbers are the authorities deemed to have the greatest need (shaded red). Those with the highest numbers are the authorities with the least need (shaded green).

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	Notes
Education, skills and training	97	23	150	151	230	97	
Ranking of 326 for each district, ranking of 152 for East Sussex							
	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q2	Q3	Q3	Hastings is in the most deprived quartile and also in the most deprived <b>decile</b> in England on this measure.

### Fig 4 Pupils entitled to free school meals

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	Notes
Pupils entitled to free school meals as % of East Sussex school population	23.5%	33.0%	17.6%	20.1%	13.0%	20.5%	The highest percentage of children in school who are entitled to free school meals is in Hastings and the lowest percentages are in Lewes and Wealden.

**Fig 5 Pupils without English as their first language**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	England	Notes
% without English as a first language	12.1	8.6	4.5	4.0	2.5	6.1	1 in 5 (20.9%) primary 1 in 6 (17.2%) secondary	The highest percentage of children in school without English as a first language is in Eastbourne, where about 1 in 8 children do not have English as a first language. But this is not normally a significant issue in East Sussex

**Fig 6 Pupils under-achieving at KS2**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	Notes
% under-achieving at KS2 (% of pupils not achieving expected standard based on school location and residency)	42.7	33.5	40.6	33.7	36.3	37.3	In 2015, under the old system of levels, Hastings had the highest proportion of pupils not achieving the expected standard (RWM L4+). In 2019, it has the lowest proportion of pupils not achieving the expected standard (RWM).

**Fig 7 Pupils under-achieving at KS4**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	Notes
% under-achieving at KS4 – grade 4 or above in English & Maths	40.6	48.8	34.1	34.7	28.7	36.3	In 2015, under the old grading system, Eastbourne (45.5%), Hastings (48%), Lewes (42.5%), Rother (41.1%) and Wealden (34%) of pupils did not achieve grades A*-C in English and Maths. Whilst the % compared to 2019 remains largely unchanged in Hastings, the other have improved by around 5% or more in this time.

**Fig 9a to 9e Skills for life survey data - literacy**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	Notes
% estimate of adults below Entry Level 1 for reading	5.1	5.6	4.4	4.9	4.0		These figures may be out of date, as the data used is from 2011. Might now be reasonably expected that these percentages will have fallen.

**Fig 9a to 9e Skills for life survey data – numeracy and ICT**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	Notes
% estimate of adults not at Entry Level 1 for numeracy	6.5	7.3	5.4	5.9	4.9		
% estimate of adults not at basic levels for ICT /email competence	36.6	39.4	34.5	37.4	33.4		These figures may be out of date, as the data used is from 2011. Might now be reasonably expected that these percentages will have fallen.

**Fig 10a to 10c index of deprivation – Education skills and training domain, adult skills sub-domain**

Figures are not readily available by district, but have been presented at figure 3 for the full education skills and training domain.



**Fig 11a to 11c index of deprivation – employment deprivation domain**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	Notes
Employment deprivation	77	12	164	105	255	77	
Ranking of 326 for each district, ranking of 152 for East Sussex							
	Q1	Q1	Q3	Q2	Q4	Q3	On the employment deprivation indicator, Hastings is in the bottom quartile and also in the most deprived decile (there are only seven more deprived districts in the country than Hastings on this measure). Eastbourne also features in the most deprived quartile of authorities.

**Figures 12 and 13 (new business registrations and business survival rates)**

This data has been presented by district in the main report.

**Figure 14a to 14c Index of Multiple Deprivation – Health Deprivation and Disability domain**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	Notes
Health deprivation	125	46	199	151	286	98	
Ranking of 326 for each district, rank of 152 for East Sussex							
	Q2	Q1	Q3	Q3	Q4	Q3	On this indicator although Hastings is in the quartile of highest need, it is not in the most deprived decile. Wealden (which is in the quartile of lowest need) is approaching being in the least deprived decile of authorities on this measure.

**Figure 15 – residents with a long-term limiting illness**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	South East	England	Notes
% Population with a long-term limiting illness	21.0	22.1	19.5	23.4	17.5	20.3	15.7	17.9	These figures suggest high levels of long term illness and disability compared with the rest of the South East, but these could be largely age-related

**Figure 16 – GP reported incidence of smoking**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	South East	England	Notes
% Population 15 or over who are smoking	16.6	22.7	15.0	14.5	12.9	16		16.5	Smoking rates are highest in Hastings and Eastbourne, and lowest in Rother

**Figure 17 – Life expectancy at birth**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	South East	England	Notes
Life expectancy at birth - years	81.7	79.8	83.5	82.1	83.2	82.2			
males	79.1	78.0	80.9	80.6	81.4	80.2	80.8	79.8	
females	83.4	81.8	85.1	84.0	84.9	84.0	84.3	83.4	
	Q3	Q1	Q4	Q3	Q4				Life expectancy is in the lowest quartile for Hastings. Elsewhere it is similar to or better than the national average.

**Figure 18 – Household composition - single one person households aged 65+**

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden	East Sussex	South East	England	Notes
% households with a single occupier aged 65+	17.2	13.1	16.2	19.8	15.3	16.2	12.7	12.4	This shows the high proportion of single (65+) person households in every district compared with England – particularly in Rother.



# **Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy**

## **Updated edition**

### **Technical Appendix 2**

### **Accessibility Analysis**



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## 1 Purpose of the Technical Appendix

### Background

- 1.1 Stantec was commissioned by East Sussex County Council to prepare an accessibility analysis of the Council's Library and Information Service. This analysis is an update of the work previously undertaken three years ago, in 2018, with the scope to identify any differences in library accessibility due to updated public transport networks and timetables or changed traffic and highway conditions. The analysis also considers the catchment population numbers within each time band for each transport mode and reports any changes from the previous analysis.
- 1.2. This appendix:
- outlines the methodology used in the analysis, which is identical to the previous accessibility analysis undertaken in 2018
  - includes plots of journey times to East Sussex Council libraries, by walking, public transport and driving in 10-minute time bands
  - quantifies the resident population within each time band.
- 1.3 The accessibility analysis involves a network of 17 libraries as follows:
- Battle
  - Bexhill
  - Crowborough
  - Eastbourne
  - Forest Row
  - Hailsham
  - Hampden Park
  - Hastings
  - Heathfield
  - Hollington
  - Lewes
  - Newhaven
  - Peacehaven
  - Rye
  - Seaford
  - Uckfield
  - Wadhurst
- 1.4 This is one of a number of documents, Technical Appendices (TA), which form the evidence base that supports the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. These documents are as follows:

Updated version of Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy		
Appendix 1 Review of implementation of Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy		
Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment.		
Technical Appendix 1 Needs Assessment	Technical Appendix 2 Accessibility Analysis	Technical Appendix 3 Property Review

- 1.5 The Accessibility Analysis is part of a body of evidence that has been developed to enable the Council to draft and implement its updated Strategic Commissioning Strategy for the Library and Information Service.

## Methodology

- 1.6 This Technical Appendix has therefore been produced in conjunction with Stantec.
- 1.7 The methodology adopted for the analysis has been first to calculate current travel times to access library services in East Sussex by car, public transport and walking. These have been calculated using accessibility and GIS software, and the results are shown in chapter 2. This provides a picture of the current accessibility of libraries in the county.
- 1.8 In chapter 4, the travel times identified in chapter 3 have been applied to the libraries within East Sussex and then accessibility and GIS mapping software have been used to map accessibility according to these travel times to all libraries within the county. As the opening hours of East Sussex libraries are generally within the daytime period of 10am to 5pm (apart from those libraries which open until 6pm on a Thursday), the travel times presented show average car journey times during off-peak hours, calculated using accessibility and GIS software.
- 1.9 For public transport the mapped journey times are derived from published bus and rail timetables at points of both 2019 and 2020 and are based on travel between 10:00 and 14:00 on a weekday.
- 1.10 Chapter 4 presents data held by the Council on the home locations of both registered and active users of the Library and Information Service and the libraries that they visit. This information shows the geographical spread of the libraries that people in the county use in relation to their home postcode. This is supported by data highlighted in Appendix A and Appendix B.

## Appendix 5

- 1.11 Chapter 5 provides an analysis of a range of data which has been used to assess the accessibility of the Library and Information Service's digital services. This analysis has included the examination of a number of indicators of accessibility and affordability of broadband, including income, poverty levels, skills and access to infrastructure.
- 1.12 Finally, conclusions are presented in chapter 6.



## 2 Current Transport Accessibility

- 2.1 Travel times for driving, public transport and walking have been calculated and presented using specialist accessibility and GIS software. The specific methodologies for each mode of transport are described in turn below.

### Driving

- 2.2 The car travel times are based on actual observed average car journey times between 10:00 and 16:00 on a weekday. The data source is “HERE” data, previously known as Navteq. Stantec advised that due to the pandemic, 2020 HERE data is considered to be unreliable so did not use it in this analysis. Although the data used is slightly older, they believe it is more representative of ‘normal’ traffic conditions.
- 2.3 “HERE” travel times are based on billions of multiple-year vehicle speed observations, gathered using GPS and Bluetooth signals from in-vehicle sat-nav devices and mobile phones. Data is gathered for the time taken to travel across each link in the highway network and to pass through each junction; a link is a section of road between two junctions. Each analysis is based only on roads that are traversable by car and includes information on restricted junctions, overpasses and underpasses so that connections between roads are only made at viable junctions.
- 2.4 The data is then averaged for 15-minute time intervals throughout the day and a combined off-peak average, known as the “core road speed timing” is then produced. This is based on all observations between 10:00 and 16:00 on all weekdays over a five-year period and thus includes, for example, schooldays and school holidays, good weather and bad, light and heavy traffic conditions, and all other situations that can affect driving speeds. The core road speed timing has been used to prepare the plots in this report.
- 2.5 To calculate travel time between two points, HERE adds up the average times for each link and junction that would be involved in making the journey and then presents the total.
- 2.6 To derive the 10-minute travel time-band isochrones shown in the figures below, the HERE data has been analysed using TRACC accessibility software to plot the distances that can be traversed. As stated above, this is based on the average of actual observed trips made between 1000 and 1600 on a weekday.

- 2.7 We believe that HERE data is the best and most appropriate analysis to derive average off-peak car travel times as it is based on a massive dataset of actual observations and is consistent with the accessibility analysis conducted for the original accessibility work. HERE is owned by Audi, BMW and Daimler and is supported by Microsoft and Nokia who are both former owners of the company. The data is the standard used across the transport industry and is used within all ESRI, Citilab and Mapinfo inhouse isochronal analysis tools.

### **Public Transport**

- 2.8 The public transport travel times shown in the figures are derived from published bus and rail timetables as at second quarter of 2019 and fourth quarter of 2020 in order to capture the regular timetables (2019) pre-Covid and the temporary Covid timetables (2020). While services have been gradually returning to pre-Covid patterns, this is not necessarily guaranteed for every service.
- 2.9 Travel times are based on travel between 10:00 and 14:00 on a weekday. For simplicity travel times are shown as 0-10, 10-20, 20-30. However, the three catchments are non-overlapping, as follows: 0-10, 10.01-20, 20.01-30 minutes.
- 2.10 Where a public transport journey involves changing buses or trains, or changing between bus and train, an interchange penalty of 5 minutes has been included.
- 2.11 To complete the total door to door journey time, a walk speed of 5 km per hour has been applied from each bus stop or rail station. The total distance that can be travelled by public transport and walking in each 10-minute travel time-band has then been plotted.

### **Walking**

- 2.12 Similarly, for walking-only travel times, a walk speed of 5 km per hour has been used and applied to the HERE road network, with public rights of way from Landmark, and digitized from local authority maps.

Figure 2.1 Car Travel Times to Libraries in East Sussex

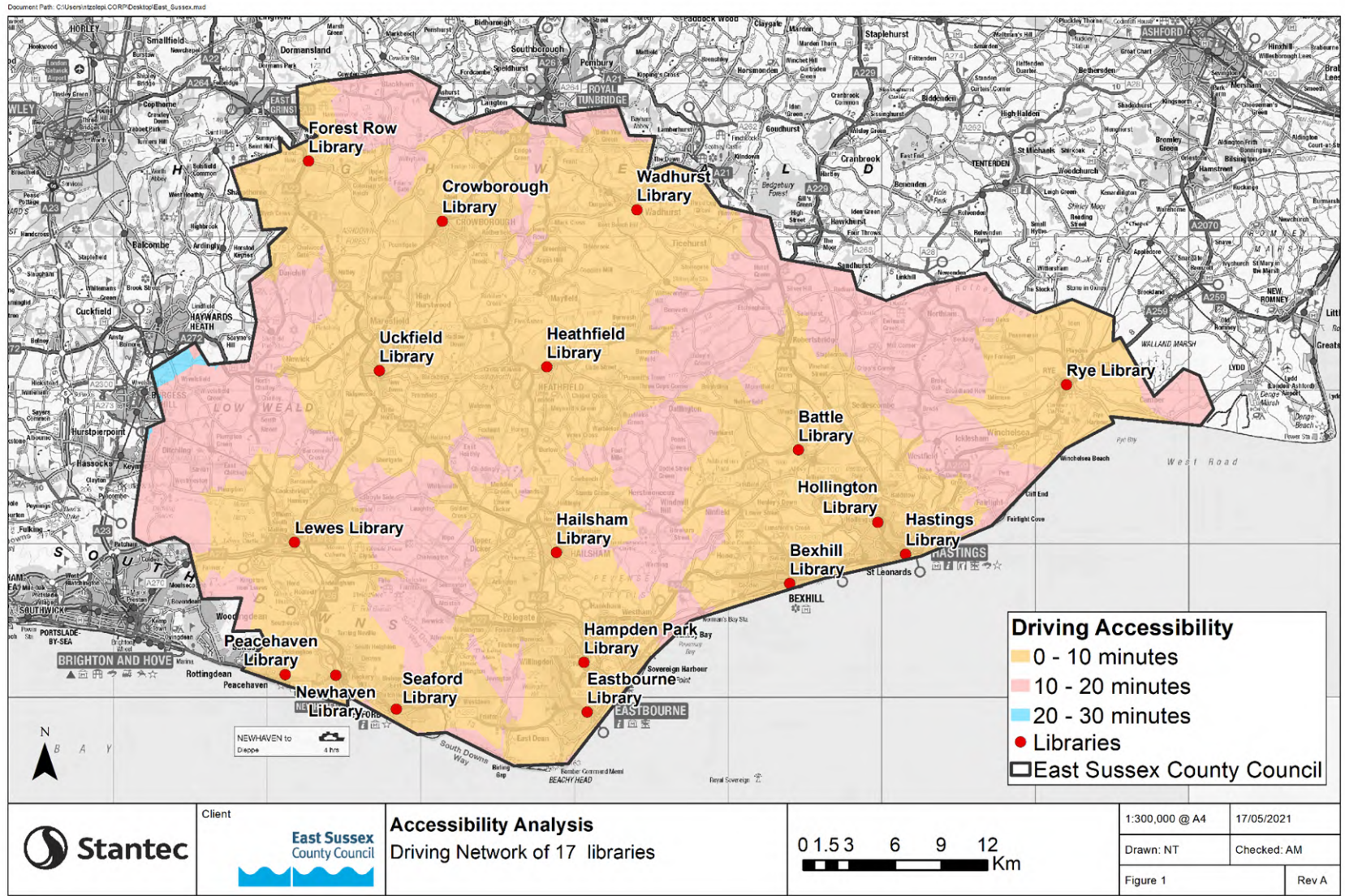




Figure 2.2a Public Transport Travel Times to Libraries in East Sussex (2019)

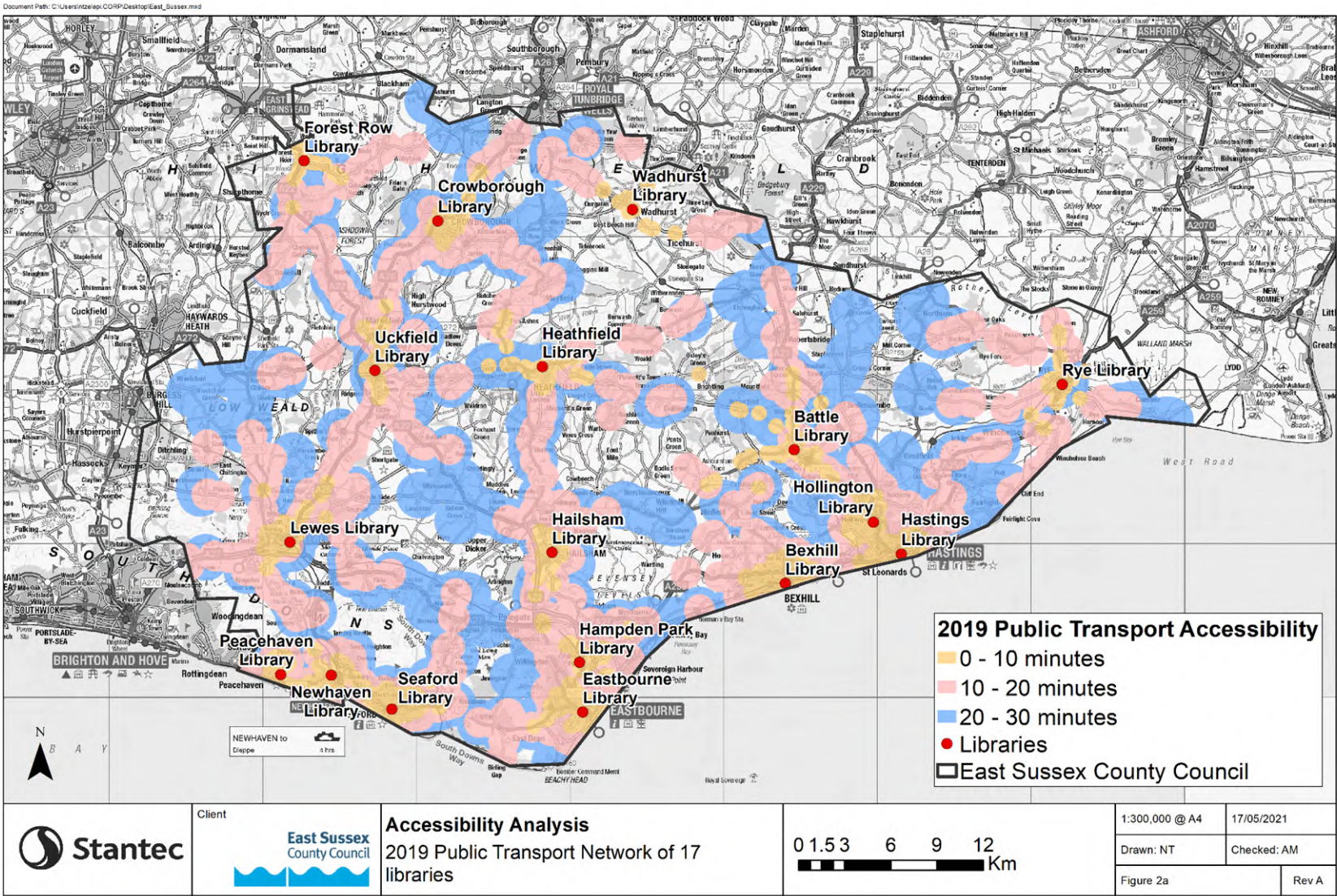




Figure 2.2b Public Transport Travel Times to Libraries in East Sussex (2020)

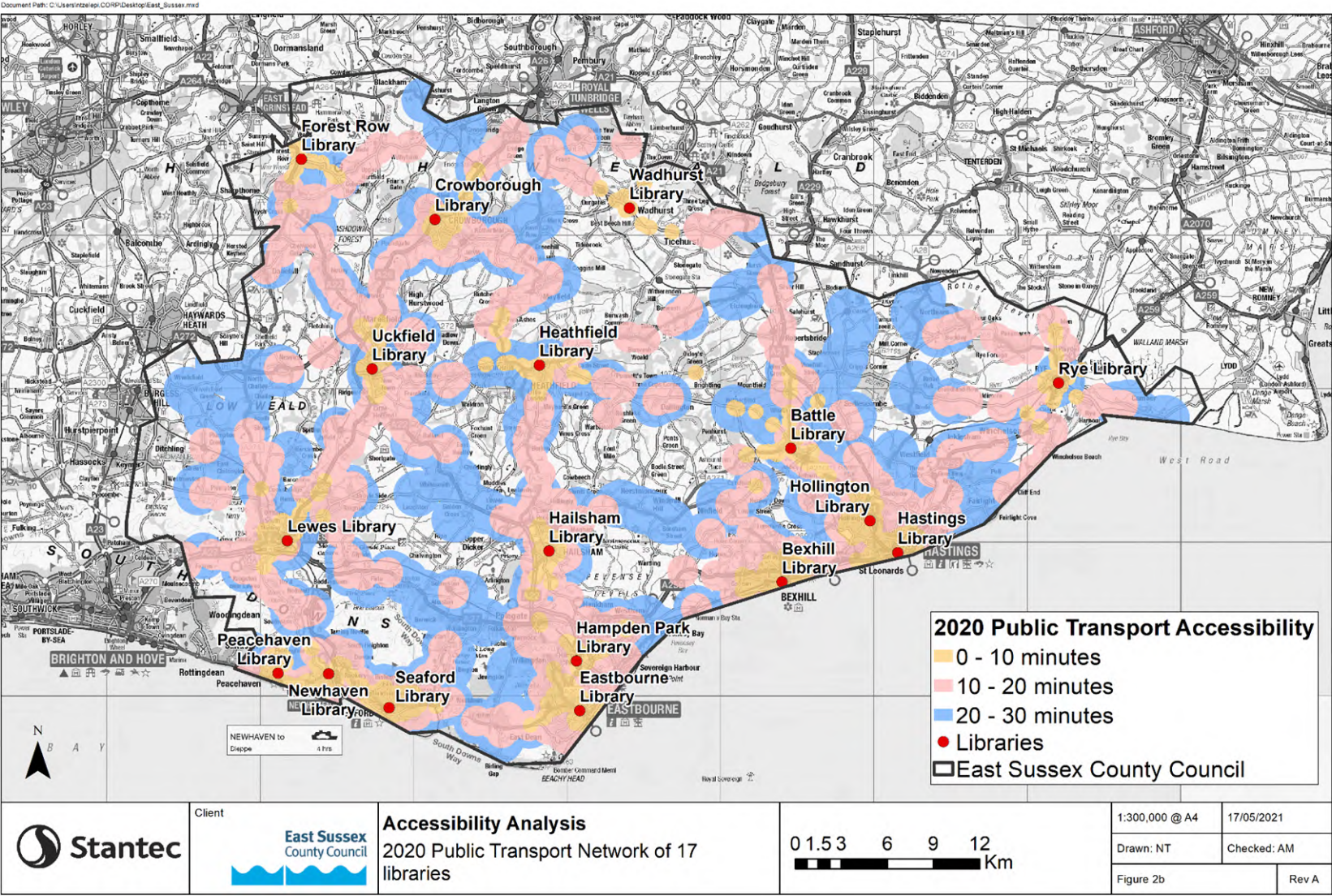
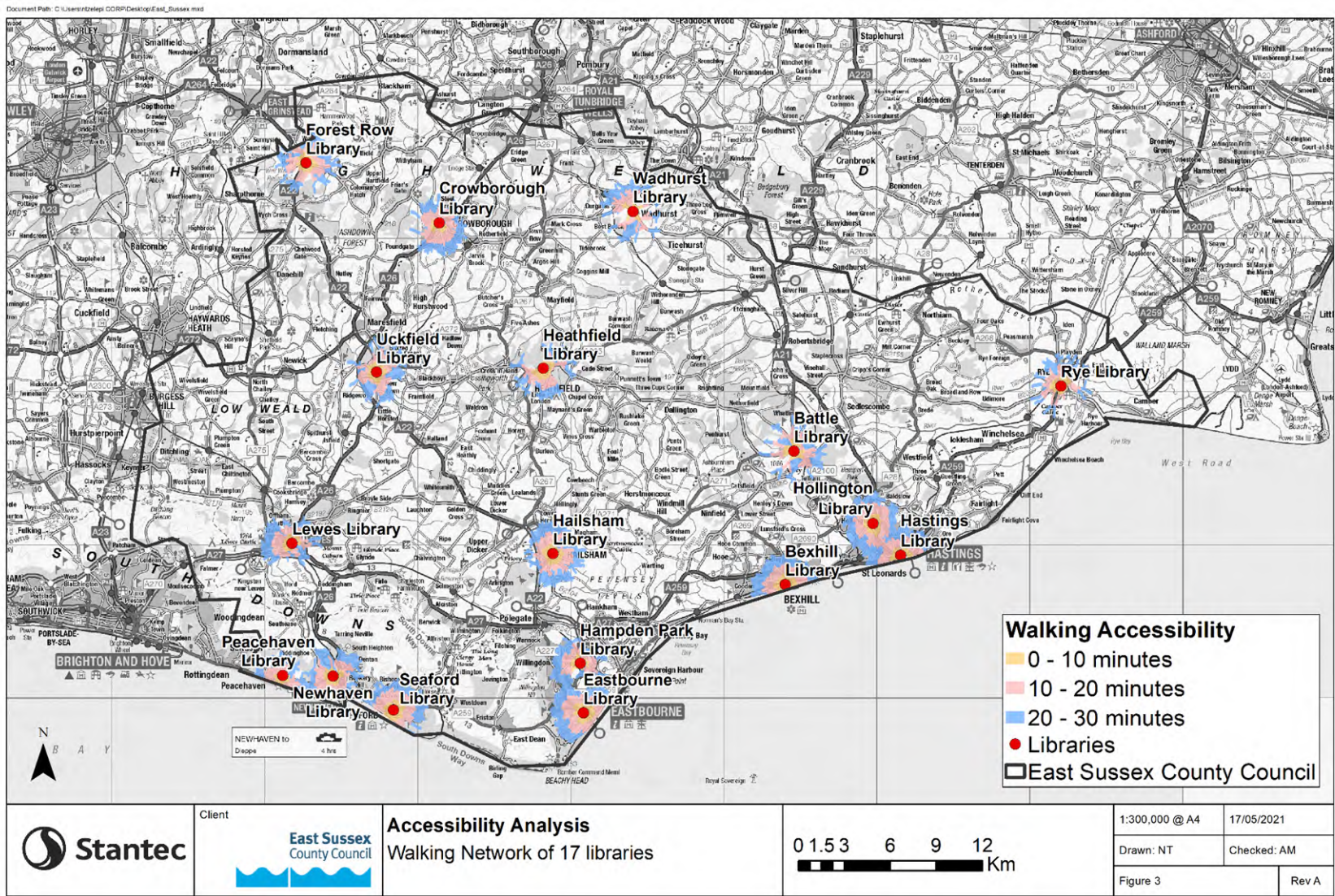


Figure 2.3 Walking Travel Times to Libraries in East Sussex

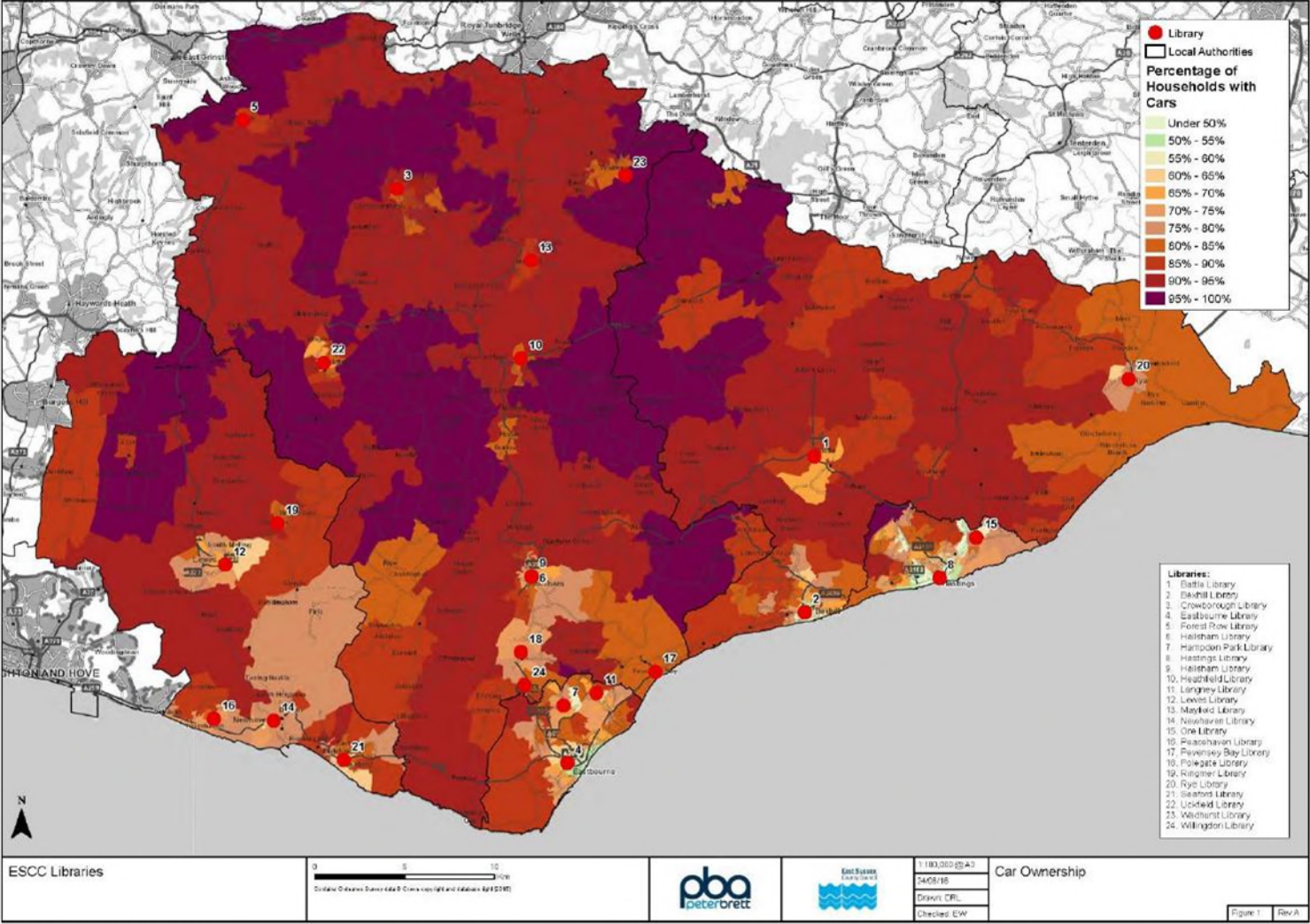






Appendix 5  
Car Ownership

Figure 2.4 Car Ownership in East Sussex



## Appendix 5

- 2.14 As Figure 2.4 shows, car ownership is generally very high across East Sussex, with a county average of 78% of households owning one or more cars. This compares to 74% on average in England and Wales. There are considerable variations within the county, however, with high car ownership in rural areas; 87% of households own one or more cars in Wealden for example, as do 81% of households in Rother.
- 2.15 In contrast, car ownership is lower in coastal areas, at 71% in Eastbourne and 66% in Hastings. There are pockets in Hastings where fewer than half of households own a car (Castle ward, 47% and Central St Leonards, 44%). While Lewes district as a whole has above average car ownership (79%), this figure falls substantially in some of the housing estates of Lewes, Newhaven and Peacehaven, and in central Seaford.



## 3 Travel Time Parameters in East Sussex

### Introduction

- 3.1 In this chapter, the travel time parameters identified in the previous chapter are applied to the East Sussex library network, to build a picture of the catchment areas within a reasonable travel time of each library.
- 3.2 The results of the analysis for car travel time catchments for the current library network are shown in Figure 2.1. Figures 2.2a to 2.3 show the equivalent public transport and walking travel time catchments.
- 3.3 The methodology used to determine these plots is set out in the next section.

### Methodology

#### Car

- 3.4 The car travel times shown in the figures are based on actual observed average car journey times between 10:00 and 16:00 on a weekday. The data source is “HERE” data, previously known as Navteq.
- 3.5 “HERE” travel times are based on billions of multiple-year vehicle speed observations gathered using GPS and Bluetooth signals from in-vehicle sat-nav devices and mobile phones. Data is gathered for the time taken to travel across each link in the highway network and to pass through each junction; a link is a section of road between two junctions. Each analysis is based only on roads that are traversable by car and includes information on restricted junctions, overpasses and underpasses so that connections between roads are only made at viable junctions.
- 3.6 The data is then averaged for 15-minute time intervals throughout the day and a combined off-peak average, known as the “core road speed timing” is also produced. This is based on all observations between 10:00 and 16:00 on all weekdays over a five-year period and thus includes, for example, school days and school holidays, good weather and bad, light and heavy traffic conditions, and all other situations that can affect driving speeds. The core road speed timing has been used to prepare the plots in this chapter.
- 3.7 To calculate travel time between two points, HERE adds up the average times for each link and junction that would be involved in making the journey and then presents the total.
- 3.8 To derive the 10, 20 and 30-minute travel time contours shown in the figures the HERE data have been analysed using TRACC accessibility software to plot the distances that can be traversed. As stated above, this is based on the average of actual observed trips made between 10:00 and 16:00 on a weekday.

- 3.9 We believe that HERE data is the best and most appropriate analysis to derive average off-peak car travel times as it is based on a massive dataset of actual observations. HERE is owned by Audi, BMW and Daimler and is supported by Microsoft and Nokia who are both former owners of the company. The data is the standard used across the transport industry and is used within all ESRI, Citilab and Mapinfo inhouse isochronal analysis tools.3.10

### **Public Transport**

- 3.10 The public transport travel times shown in the figures are derived from published bus and rail timetables as at second quarter of 2019 and fourth quarter of 2020 in order to capture the regular timetables (2019) pre-Covid and the temporary Covid timetables (2020). While services have been gradually returning to pre-Covid patterns, this is not necessarily guaranteed for every service. Travel times are based on travel between 10:00 and 14:00 on a weekday.
- 3.11 Where a public transport journey involves changing buses or trains, or changing between bus and train, an interchange penalty of five minutes has been included.
- 3.12 To complete the total door to door journey time, a walk speed of five kilometres per hour has been applied from each bus stop or rail station. The total distance that can be travelled by public transport and walking in each 10- minute travel time-band has then been plotted.

### **Population accessibility to East Sussex libraries**

- 3.13 Using the accessibility data which have been mapped above, the percentage of the population of East Sussex within a 10-, 20- and 30-minute drive of one of the 17 East Sussex libraries has been calculated. The same calculations have been undertaken for public transport journey time. The results are shown in Tables 3.1 and 3.2.
- 3.14 Table 3.1 shows that 90% of the population of East Sussex currently live within a 10-minute car journey time of one of the 17 East Sussex libraries. This increases to 98% of the population for car journey times up to 20 minutes. No-one in East Sussex, according to our calculations, currently has a journey time by car in excess of 30 minutes to get to one of the 17 East Sussex libraries.
- 3.16 For public transport, using 2019's public transport timetables as the basis for this analysis, 60% of the population of the county lives within a 10-minute journey time of an East Sussex library. This figure rises to 92% for journey times up to 20 minutes, and just over 97% of the population of the county lives within a journey time of 30 minutes by public transport to one of the 17 East Sussex libraries.
- 3.17 Table 3.1 shows that 15% of the population of the county lives within a 10-minute walk of an East Sussex library. This figure rises to 40% for walking times up to 20 minutes and 58% within a 30 minutes' walk of a library. According to our calculations, 41% of the population of East Sussex has a journey time by foot of in excess of 30 minutes. Our calculations are based on a presumed walking speed of 5km per hour. It is acknowledged that speeds vary, especially for some older people and people with limited mobility.
- 3.18 Table 3.2 provides a comparison of data available in 2018, when the current Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy was published, and more recently updated data of access to library branches by driving, public transport and walking

**Table 3.1 Percentage of East Sussex population within different journey times of an East Sussex library**

	minutes	0-10	10-20	20-30
Driving	population	502,879	45,236	6,862
	cumulative population	502,879	548,235	555,097
	cumulative population %	90%	98%	100%
Public Transport 2019 network	population	333,503	177,471	32,109
	cumulative population	333,503	510,974	543,083
	cumulative population %	60%	92%	97%
Public Transport 2020 network	population	331,863	181,870	29,350
	cumulative population	331,683	513,733	543,083
	cumulative population %	59%	92%	97%
Walking	population	84,380	140,531	100,004
	cumulative population	84,830	224,911	324,915
	cumulative population %	15%	40%	58%
<b>Total East Sussex population 2019</b>		<b>555,097</b>		



**Table 3.2 Percentage of East Sussex population within different journey times of an East Sussex library compared to 2018 analysis**

		Public Transport			Driving			Walking		
		0-10	10-20	20-30	0-10	10-20	20-30	0-10	10-20	20-30
Proportion of residents within journey time	Previous analysis, <b>2011</b> Population	45%	86%	95%	91%	99%	100%	12%	38%	58%
	Current analysis, <b>2019</b> Population				90%	98%	100%	15%	40%	58%
		Public Transport Network 2019								
		60%	92%	97%						
		Public Transport Network 2019								
	59%	92%	97%							

## 4 Current travel to Library Service

### Introduction

- 4.1 The figures in the previous chapter show the theoretical catchment areas for the Library and Information Service based on observed and actual journey times. It is interesting to note, however, that people's actual behaviour is more varied and that some users travel greater distances and access libraries that are not the nearest to their home address. This chapter therefore considers current actual use of the Library Service. The data source is "HERE" data, previously known as Navteq.
- 4.2 The analysis considers both "registered" and "active" users of the service. Registered users are those residents who either joined the Library and Information Service in the last two years or existing users who have reactivated their library membership after expiry at two years. Active users are a sub-set of registered users, consisting of those people who have borrowed an item at least once in the past twelve months. This does not include members who only use computers or other library services apart from borrowing.
- 4.3 The analysis is based on anonymised data.

### Geographic Distribution of Users

- 4.4 Maps showing the home address distribution of registered users of each library are contained in Appendix A and of active users in Appendix B. Some of the notable results are:
  - Main libraries have a not unexpectedly wide distribution of both registered and active users. Both Eastbourne and Hastings have active users resident in each other's towns, and Lewes has a catchment extending to the border with West Sussex as well as into Eastbourne and Hailsham
  - Suburban libraries in Eastbourne and Hastings attract active users from the other major coastal town, e.g., Hampden Park with users resident in Bexhill and Hastings, and Hollington with users in Eastbourne
  - Considerable overlap in catchment of users in Newhaven, Peacehaven and Seaford including active users resident in Bexhill and Hailsham
  - Hailsham and Heathfield libraries have a wide spread of users throughout much of the county and both have active users in the other towns
  - A number of other libraries have instances of users based some distance from the library, e.g., Battle Library with registered users in Ticehurst and Wadhurst, Bexhill library with registered and active users in Hailsham and Seaford, and Uckfield library with active users in Lewes, Hailsham, Wadhurst

## Appendix 5

4.5 This analysis shows that it is not simply distance and travel time that is the sole determinant of users' choice of library and clearly there are also other factors in play. While there is no definitive research that quantifies the impact of these other factors, some likely influences are:

- Work location – it may be more convenient for some people to visit a library near their place of work, rather than near their home
- Trip linking – some people may combine a visit to the library with a trip for another purpose, such as shopping or leisure activity
- The availability of a public transport route may make a library which is further away more accessible than a geographically closer one
- Family location – some people may spend time at a family member's home, visiting, child minding or caring and may prefer to visit a nearby library
- Personal preference

## 5 eLibrary Service Accessibility

### Introduction

- 5.1 In addition to the physical libraries provided by the Council and outreach services such as the home library service, the eLibrary service provides another means of accessing library services via the internet, 24 hours per day. The eLibrary offer includes the ability to access the library catalogue, reserve items and renew loans, and download eBooks, eAudiobooks and an extensive range of eMagazines, as well as accessing online reference materials.
- 5.2 Part of the Library and Information Service's information offer is the ECSIS website, which is a news and information portal for East Sussex and Brighton and Hove residents, funded by both authorities. Over 7,500 organisations are listed and the information is easily navigable. It is a signposting service and is regularly updated, and also includes an events listing facility. The eLibrary and ESCIS can be accessed at home via a broadband connection, or 'on the go' via a mobile device.
- 5.3 Use of the internet has grown rapidly in recent years. The Needs Assessment describes the increase in household and mobile internet access in Great Britain. In 2020, over 96% of households had internet access in the UK<sup>1</sup>, an increase of seven per cent from 2016. Data for Great Britain shows that the internet was used daily or almost daily by 89% of adults (46.6 million) in 2020, compared with 87% (45.1 million) in 2019 and 35% (16.2 million) in 2006<sup>2</sup>. In 2019, 84% of adults had used the internet 'on the go' using a mobile phone or smartphone up from 70% in 2016 and 66% in 2015.
- 5.4 Despite the high proportion of residents who are now online, it is recognised that barriers do still exist for some residents, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access these digital services, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet, doing things like downloading apps and electronic content. To a limited extent, access to broadband infrastructure also plays a part, though this is much less of an issue now that all the county has broadband coverage. This analysis has considered these three factors and builds on the findings of the Needs Assessment.
- 5.5 Information on internet access at a household or individual level is not publicly available. For the purposes of this assessment of understanding how accessible the eLibrary's digital services are to residents of East Sussex, we have selected a number of indicators that are likely to most closely represent people's ability to afford a home broadband connection or a mobile data package and the necessary device to connect to the internet. We have also selected indicators of adult skills levels and the age of the population, as both are likely to be factors

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0026/26648/uk\\_telecoms.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0026/26648/uk_telecoms.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2016>



## Appendix 5

which have a bearing on whether people know how to use the internet and the technology to access it.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2016>

<sup>7</sup> East Sussex Annual Resident's Survey, East Sussex County Council, 2017

## Affordability

- 5.6 Figure 5.1 shows the most deprived areas of East Sussex, based on a measure of the proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. Those areas highlighted on the map are ranked within the 25% most deprived areas of England and Wales.
- 5.7 The areas of highest deprivation highlighted in Figure 6.1 suggest where residents may be less able to access our digital services due to affordability. They are located in proximity to the main towns of Rye, Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Newhaven, Peacehaven, Lewes and Hailsham, where residents have access to library buildings and public access computers.

## Digital skills

- 5.8 This analysis has assessed those who may be less able to access our digital services due to a skills deficit, for example due to low levels of literacy. The data presented in Figure 6.2 show those areas of the county where education deprivation among adults is ranked within the 25% most deprived areas of England and Wales.
- 5.9 Many of these areas coincide with the areas of income and employment deprivation shown in Figure 6.1, namely areas around Rye, Hastings and Eastbourne. Some residents in these areas may lack the basic digital skills required to access our eLibrary services independently and may require access to a library building to use the resources available. Staff in libraries can help people access the resources they need, and both staff and computer buddy volunteers in libraries can help people who lack digital skills to get online.
- 5.10 Age is a factor in people's level of digital skills and therefore of use of the internet. According to the Office for National Statistics survey *Internet users in the UK: 2016*<sup>8</sup> the proportion of those aged 75 years and over who are recent (within last three months) internet users nearly doubled since 2013, from 29%, to 54% in 2020.
- 5.11 However, the proportion of those aged 75 years and over who are recent internet users (ie. Previous three months) nearly doubled since 2013, from 29%, to 54% in 2020. The proportion of adults aged 75 years and over who had never used the internet decreased from 57% in 2016 to 39% in 2020.
- 5.12 Figure 6.3 shows the distribution of the population of East Sussex aged over 65. This indicates areas of the county where people may be less able to access our digital services because they do not use the internet. It can be seen that the highest density of population aged 65 and over is around the coastal towns of Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Seaford and Peacehaven. There are also higher

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2016#recent-internet-use-is-on-the-increase-for-those-aged-65-and-over>

concentrations of residents aged 65 and over in and around the towns of Crowborough, Heathfield, Uckfield, Hailsham and Lewes.

### **Digital infrastructure**

- 5.13 The Government's subsidised better broadband scheme, launched in December 2015 which ran to 2019, has ensured residents and businesses nationally have access to at least 2mbps. This, together with continuing private sector investment in both fixed and mobile broadband, suggests that digital exclusion due to lack of infrastructure will continue to decrease in the coming years.
- 5.14 The majority of digital transactions do not need high speeds and can be carried out via "first generation" broadband, however the Council's 'eSussex' project has previously funded the rollout of superfast broadband to improve connectivity to those who chose to use it in areas where it would not otherwise be commercially provided.
- 5.15 In a recent survey of East Sussex residents carried out in early 2021, 85% of users access the internet via a mobile phone, with tablet computers (70%) being the next most used devices, well ahead of desktop or laptop computers (50%). The increased use of mobile devices has improved access to our digital services on the go.

Figure 5.1 Deprivation – Income and Employment

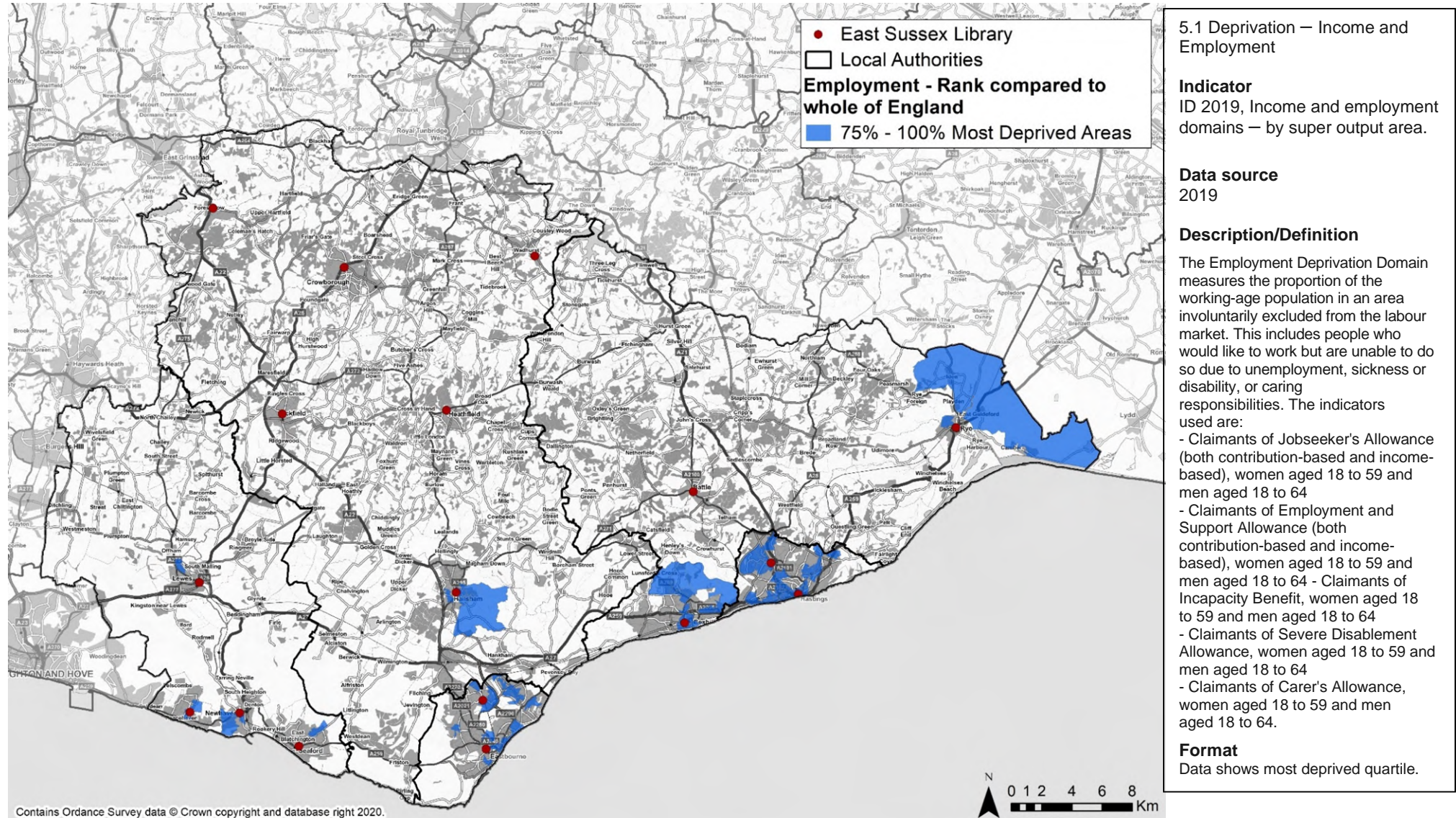
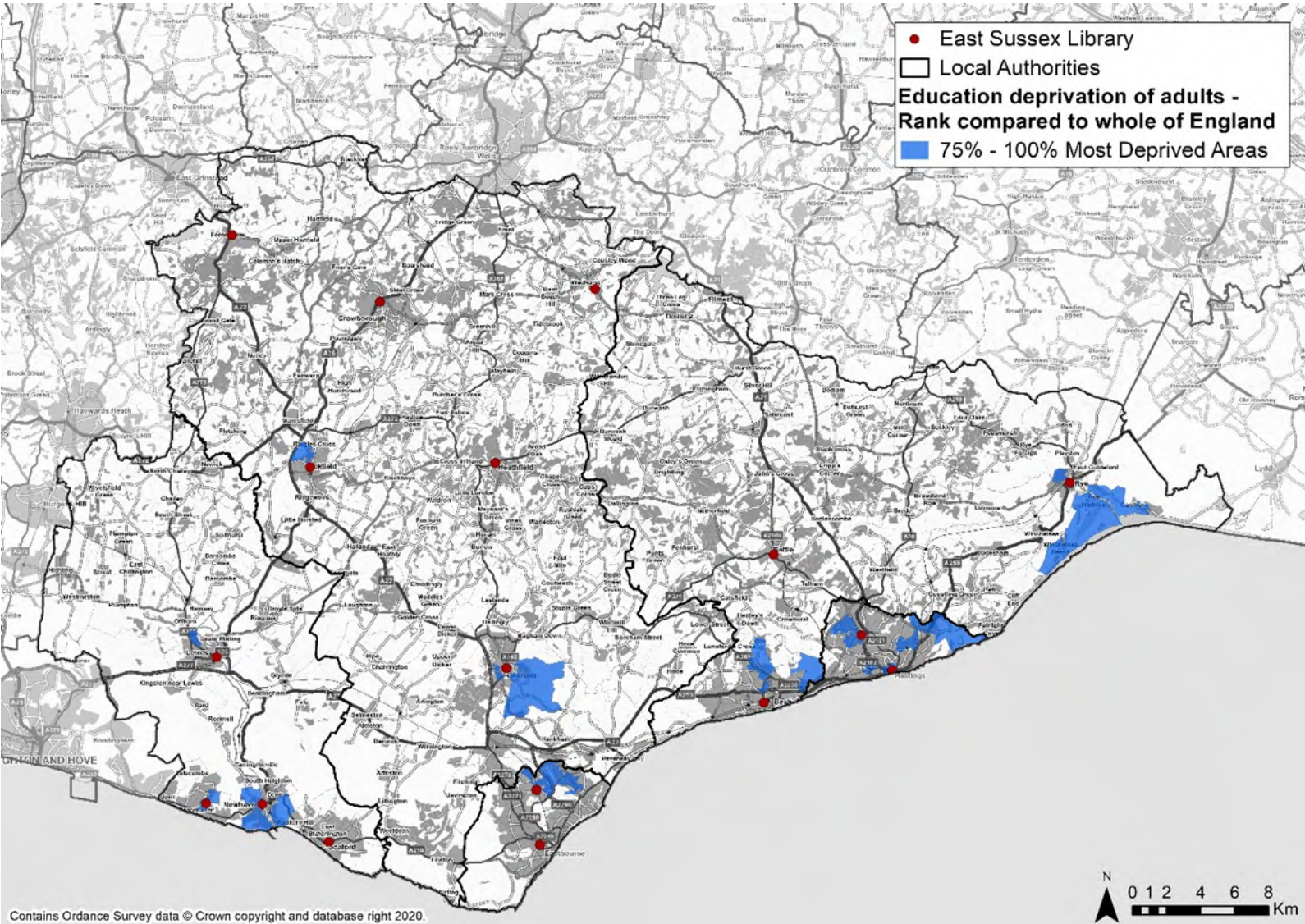




Fig 5.2 Education deprivation of adults



5.2 Education deprivation of adults

**Indicator**  
ID 2019, Education, skills and training domain — by super output area. Adult skills sub-domain

**Data source**  
2019

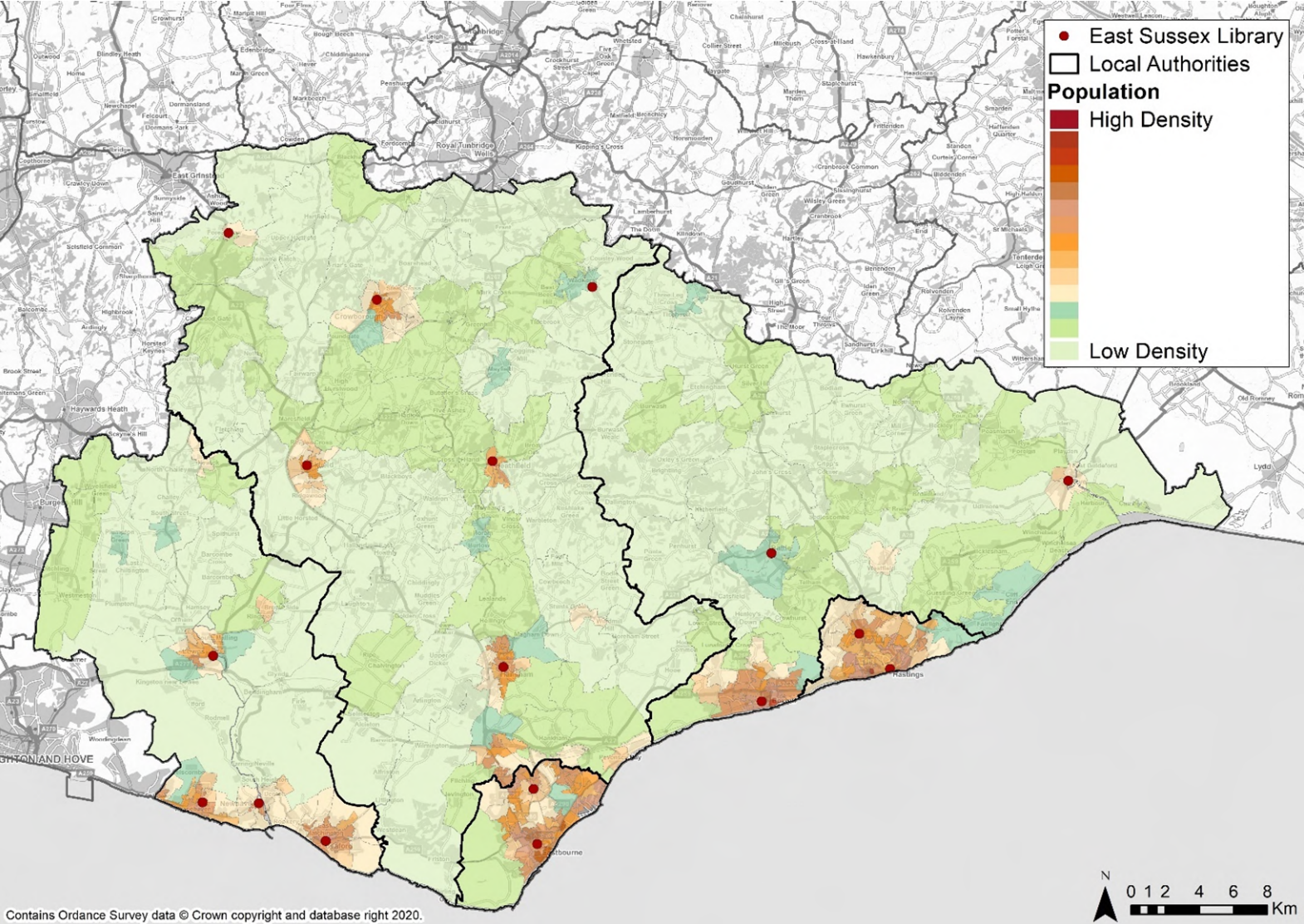
**Description/Definition**  
This dataset shows the results from the Indices of Deprivation 2015 (ID 2015) for the Education, skills and training domain. It is one of the seven separate domains that are brought together to form the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD 2015). The 'Adult skills' sub-domain is based on two indicators:

- the proportion of women aged 25-59 and men aged 25-64 with no or low qualifications; and
- The proportions of these who cannot speak English well or at all.

**Format**  
Shows information for the most deprived quartile, compared to the whole of England and Wales.



Fig 5.3 Distribution of population aged 65 and over



5.3 Population - 65 and Over

**Indicator**

Population estimates by age and gender by super-output area

**Data source**

ONS 2019

**Description/Definition**

Data are available by broad and detailed (mostly 5-year) age groups and single year of age for all geographies from 2012 onwards. The mid-year population estimates are produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) by ageing on the population of the previous year and by adjustments to reflect actual counts of births, deaths and migration during the year.

**Format**

Shows numerical information by super-output area.

## 6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The Library and Information Service comprises the physical infrastructure that people can use (i.e., library buildings and the services available within them), the digital services that people can access online without having to visit the library, such as reserving and renewing items, downloading eBooks and eMagazines, and accessing online reference materials and information resources, and outreach services such as the home library service.
- 6.2 The prime purpose of the Accessibility Analysis is three-fold:
- a. To determine reasonable travel time parameters for the majority of residents to access library services and analyse the proportion of the population within the county who have access to a library within these parameters
  - b. To understand how residents currently travel to/access the Library and Information Service.
  - c. To determine the accessibility of the East Sussex Library and Information Service in terms of the ability of residents to access its digital services.
- 6.3 The findings of the Accessibility Analysis, combined with the findings of the Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis will enable the County Council to identify the needs-based library provision (both physical and digital) required to deliver the identified Strategic Outcomes and meet the Council's statutory duty to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" service.

### Transport Access

- 6.4 For the current library service provision, accessibility software has been used to identify the areas within a 10-, 20- and 30-minute travel time of each library by car, public transport and walking.
- 6.5 Published research has also been reviewed to establish how long people typically spend travelling to access library services. There is limited data available that is specifically related to travel patterns associated with library visiting. However, the National Travel Survey shows that the majority of trip purposes have travel times in the range 17 to 24 minutes and the overall all-purpose average is 24 minutes. The category of "personal business" specifically includes visits to libraries. The average trip duration for personal business is 20 minutes. This research suggests that reasonable travel time parameters for the majority of residents to access library services is 20 to 25 minutes by car or public transport.
- 6.6 Accessibility mapping software shows that, although East Sussex is a rural county, the Library and Information Service has very high levels of physical accessibility to libraries. Everyone in East Sussex lives within a 30-minute drive of either one of the 17 libraries.

- 6.7 Car ownership is generally very high across the county, with a county average of 78% of households owning one or more cars. It is recognised however that car ownership varies considerably across the county, with high car ownership in rural areas (88% of households own one or more cars in Wealden for example, as do 81% of households in Rother) and lower levels of car ownership in coastal areas (71% in Eastbourne and 67% in Hastings). There are pockets in Hastings where fewer than half of households own a car (Castle ward, 47% and Central St Leonards, 44%).
- 6.8 In terms of access to libraries, the identified areas of low car ownership are compensated by having regular bus or train services and/or being in central locations where walking distances to local libraries are relatively short. Overall, across the county 92% of the population lives within a 20-minute journey time by public transport of an East Sussex library. This figure rises to 98% of the population for journey times of up to 30 minutes.
- 6.9 An analysis of where East Sussex library users live, and which libraries they use, shows that users do not necessarily visit their nearest library. For example, the main libraries in both Eastbourne and Hastings have active users resident in the other towns and the suburban libraries in the two towns attract active users from the other one such as Hampden Park with users resident in Bexhill and Hastings and Hollington with users in Eastbourne.
- 6.10 This shows that there are other factors apart from travel time that influence decisions on which library to visit, and there may be a range of reasons behind this. It may be more convenient for some people to visit a library near their place of work, rather than near their home, and some people may combine a visit to the library with a trip for another purpose, such as shopping or leisure activity. Other reasons may include personal preference – more modern, better appointed or larger libraries with more facilities may appeal to some people, and the availability of a public transport route may make a library which is further away more accessible than a geographically closer one.
- 6.11 Accessibility to the Library and Information Service's digital services is also very high. This provides another means of accessing library services away from our library buildings via the internet, 24 hours per day. Data for Great Britain shows that the internet was used daily or almost daily by 89% of adults (46.6 million) in 2020, compared with 87% (45.1 million) in 2019 and 35% (16.2 million) in 2006<sup>3</sup>. In 2019, 84% of adults had used the internet 'on the go' using a mobile phone or smartphone up from 70% in 2016 and 66% in 2015. A 2021 survey of East Sussex residents showed that 96% of them use the internet. This is consistent with the national picture.

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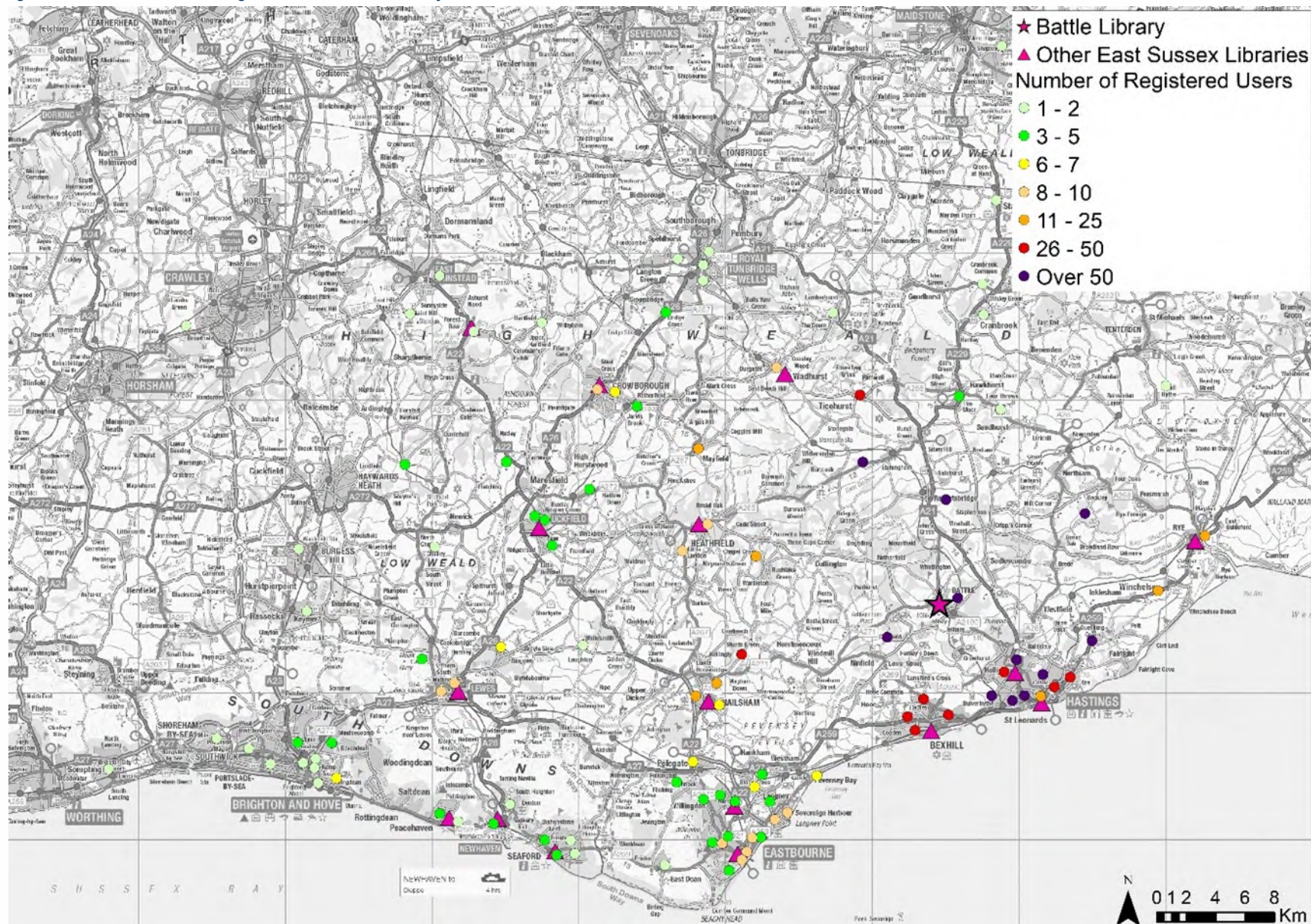
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2016>



- 6.12 There is little evidence that digital infrastructure remains a barrier for getting online in East Sussex, as all of the county now has broadband access. However, barriers do still exist for some residents, including a combination of the affordability of devices and broadband or mobile data packages to access the digital services provided, as well as a lack of skills or confidence to use devices and navigate around the internet. Age is a key factor in people's level of digital skills and therefore use of the internet. Whilst 86% of people nationally aged 65-74 had used the internet in the past three months in a 2020 survey, this figure was only 54% for people aged 75 and over.
- 6.13 Based on income levels, the Accessibility Analysis shows that residents in a small number of areas of East Sussex, in proximity to the main towns of Rye, Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Newhaven, Peacehaven, Lewes and Hailsham, may be less able to access the Library and Information Service's digital services due to the affordability of broadband and mobile data packages and the costs of devices.
- 6.14 The areas of the county where people's age is likely to be a factor which creates a barrier to eLibrary accessibility because they are less likely to use the internet is geographically slightly wider, and is around the coastal towns of Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Seaford and Peacehaven. Areas around the towns of Crowborough, Heathfield, Uckfield, Hailsham and Lewes are also included.
- 6.15 In these areas people are more likely to rely on access to a library building to use the resources available. Staff in libraries can help people access the resources they need, and both staff and computer buddies' volunteers in libraries can help people who lack digital skills to get online and help narrow the digital divide.

## Appendix A Home distribution of Registered Users

Figure A1: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Battle Library





## Appendix 5

Figure A2: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Bexhill Library

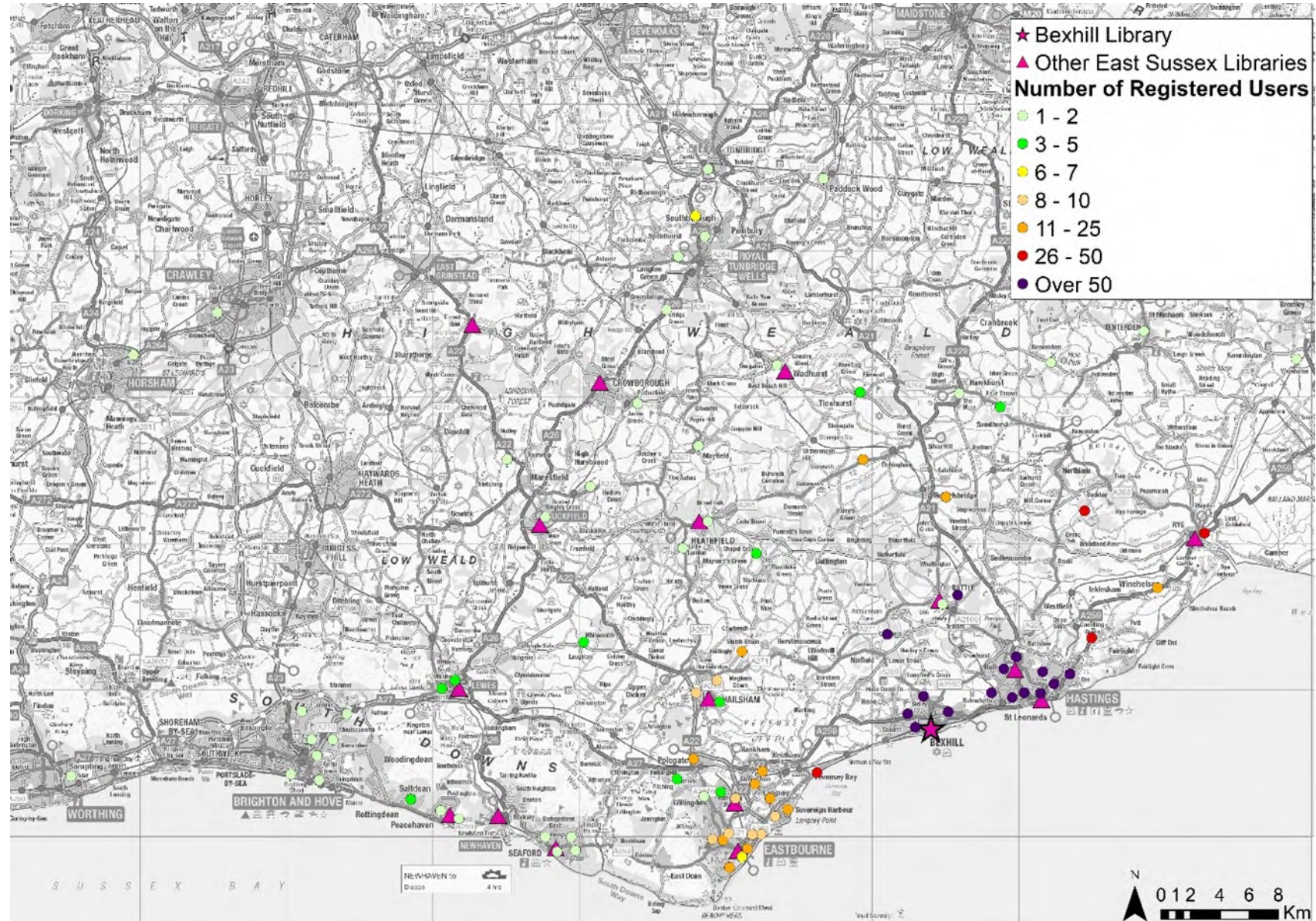




Figure A3: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Crowborough Library

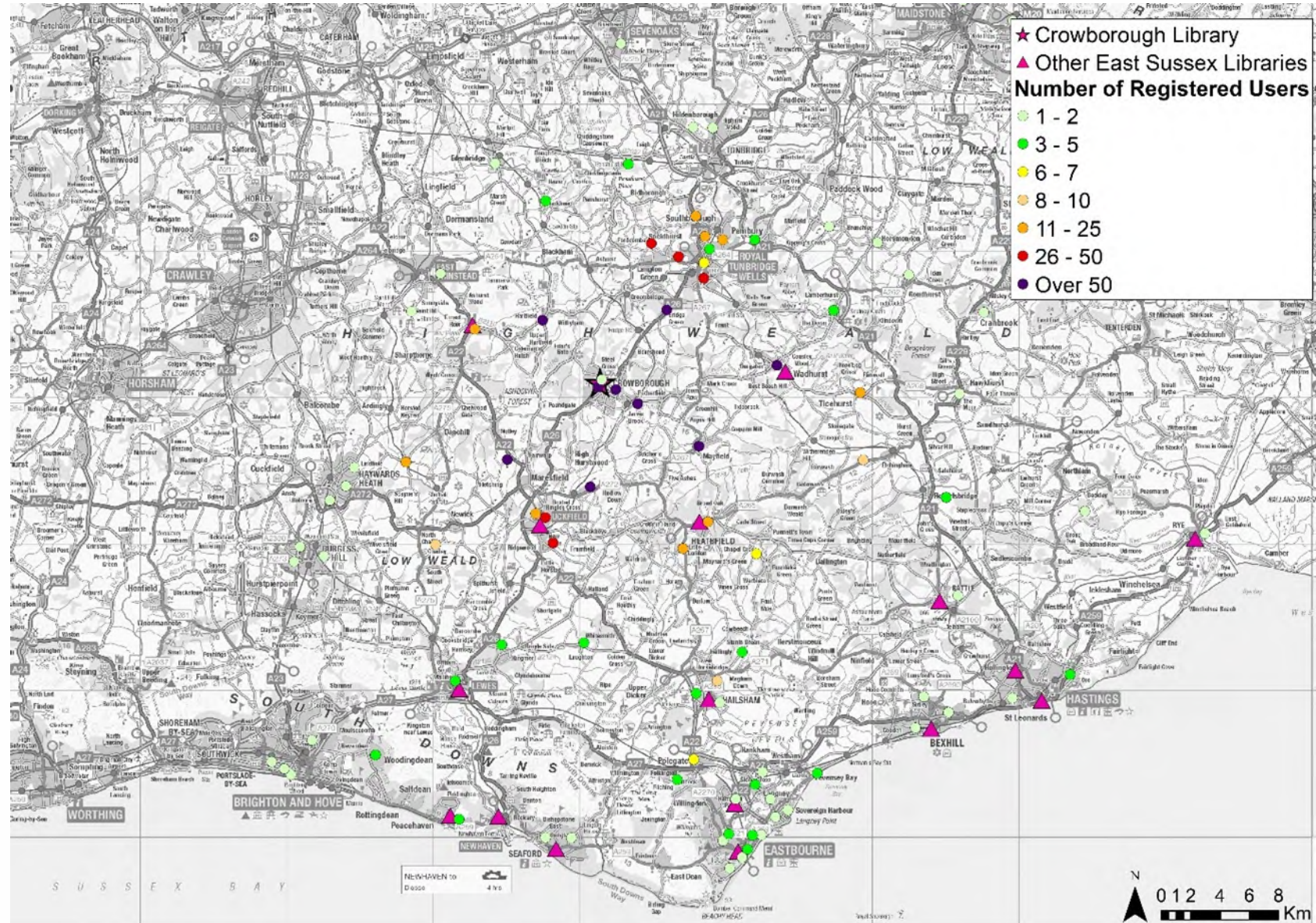
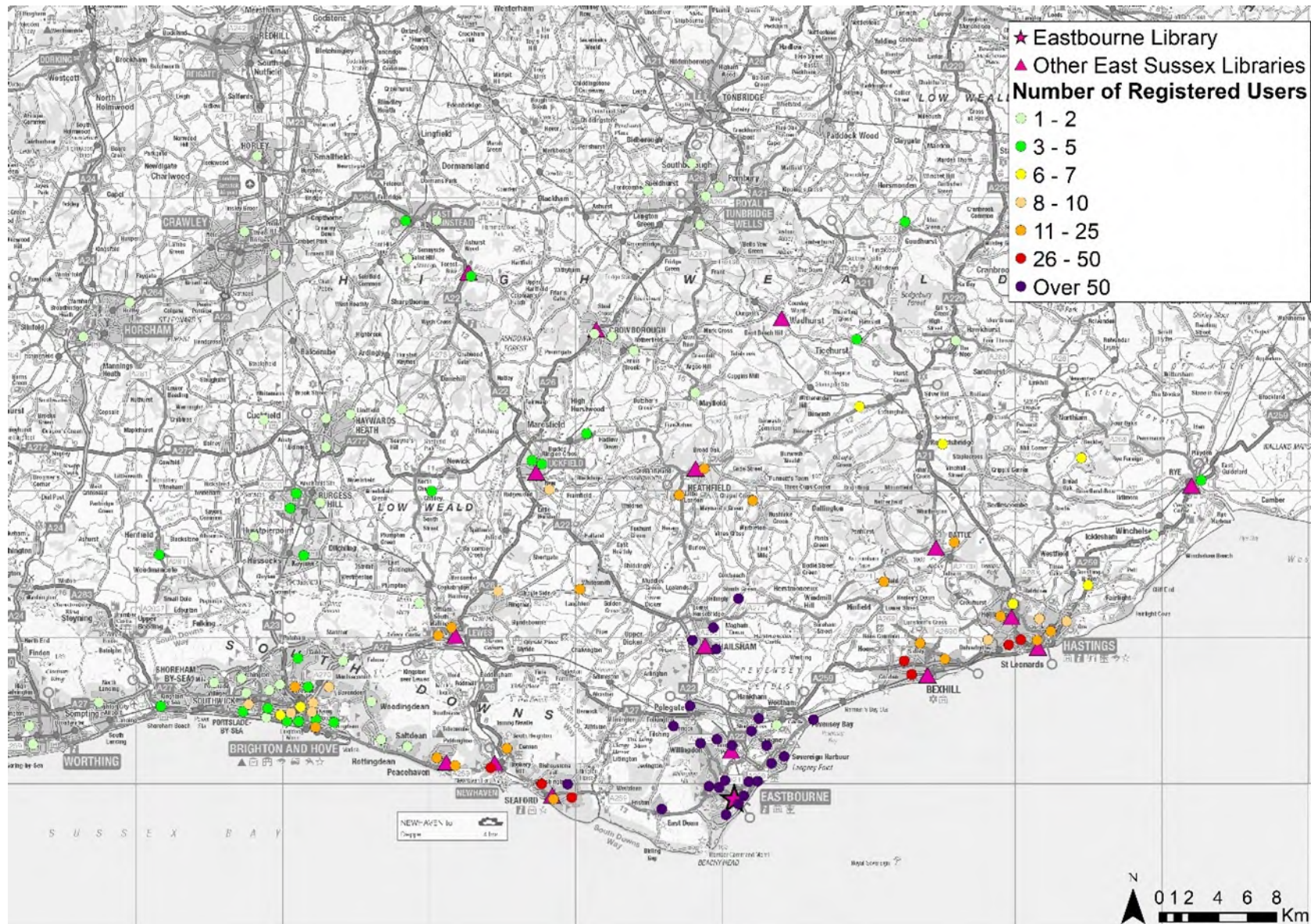




Figure A4: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Eastbourne Library





**Figure A5: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Forest Row Library**

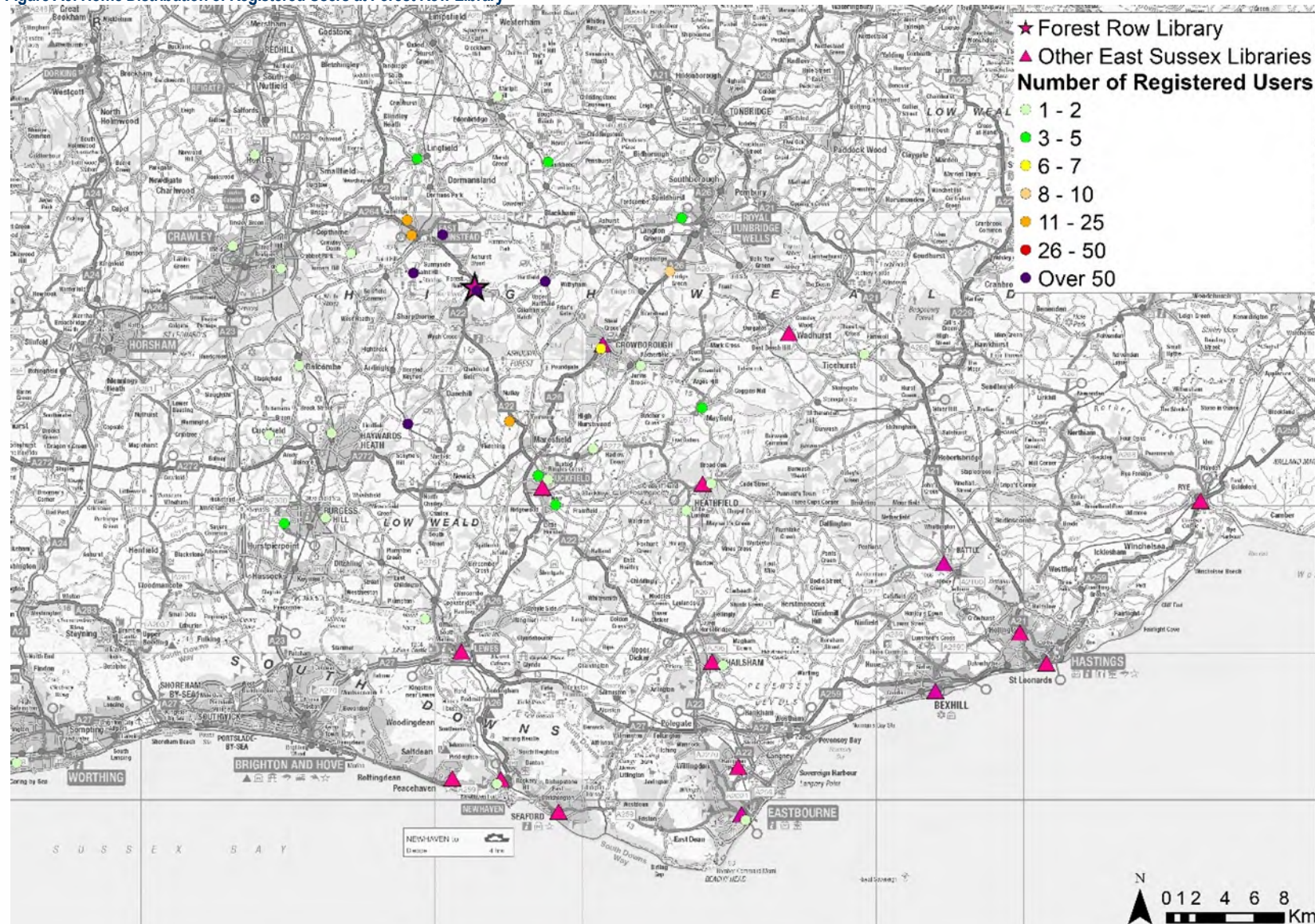




Figure A6: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Hailsham Library

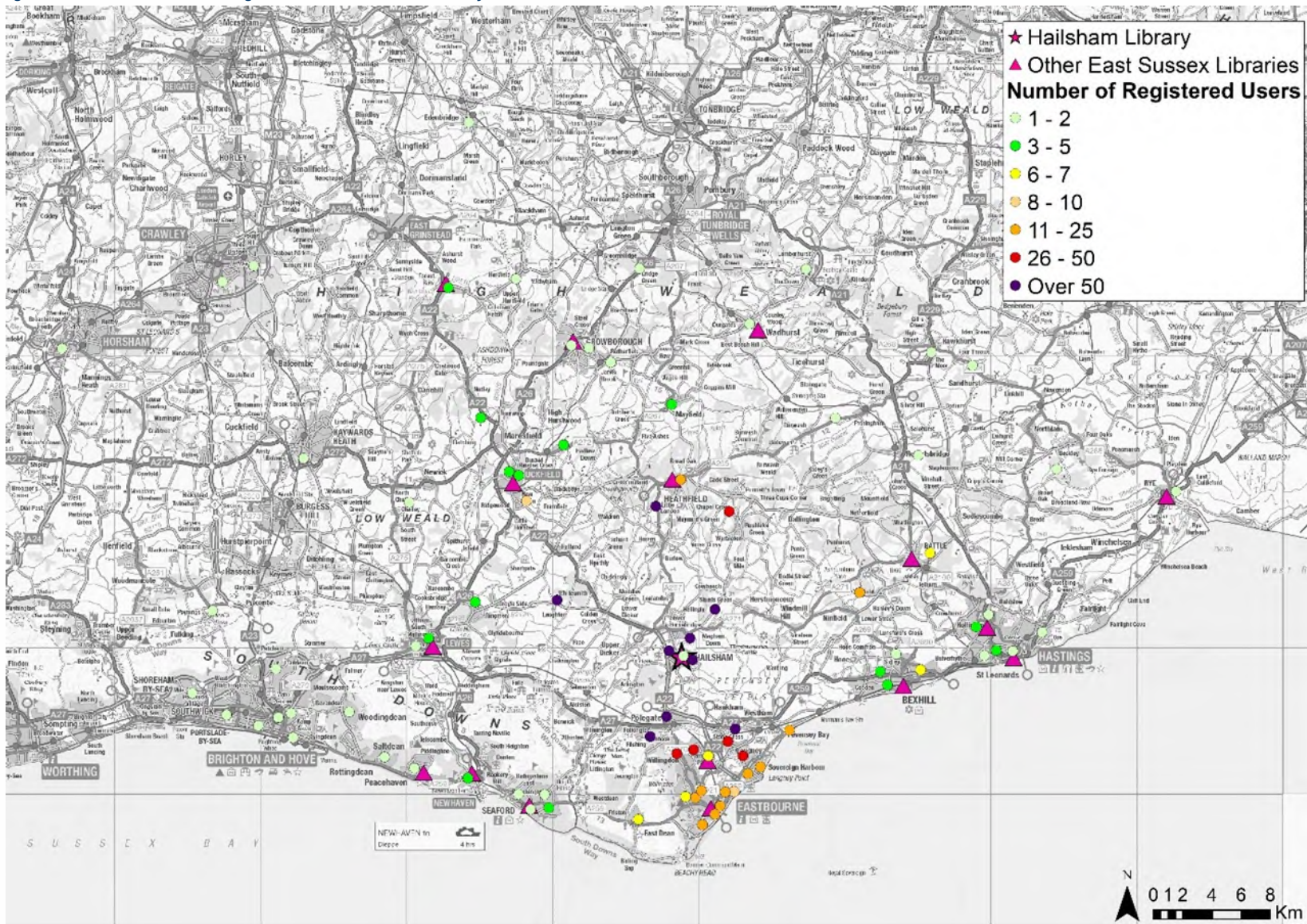
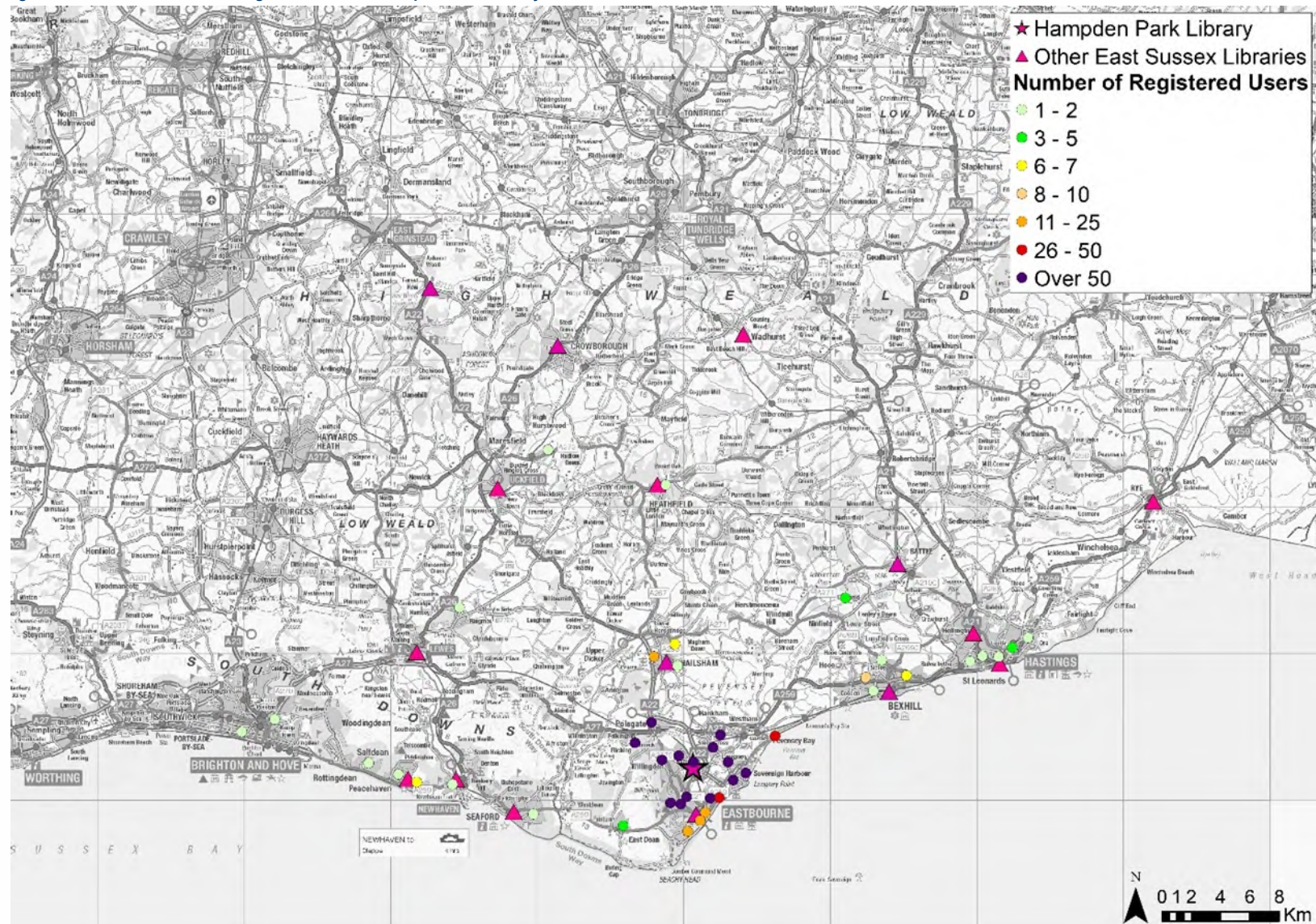




Figure A7: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Hampden Park Library





## Appendix 5

Figure A8: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Hastings Library

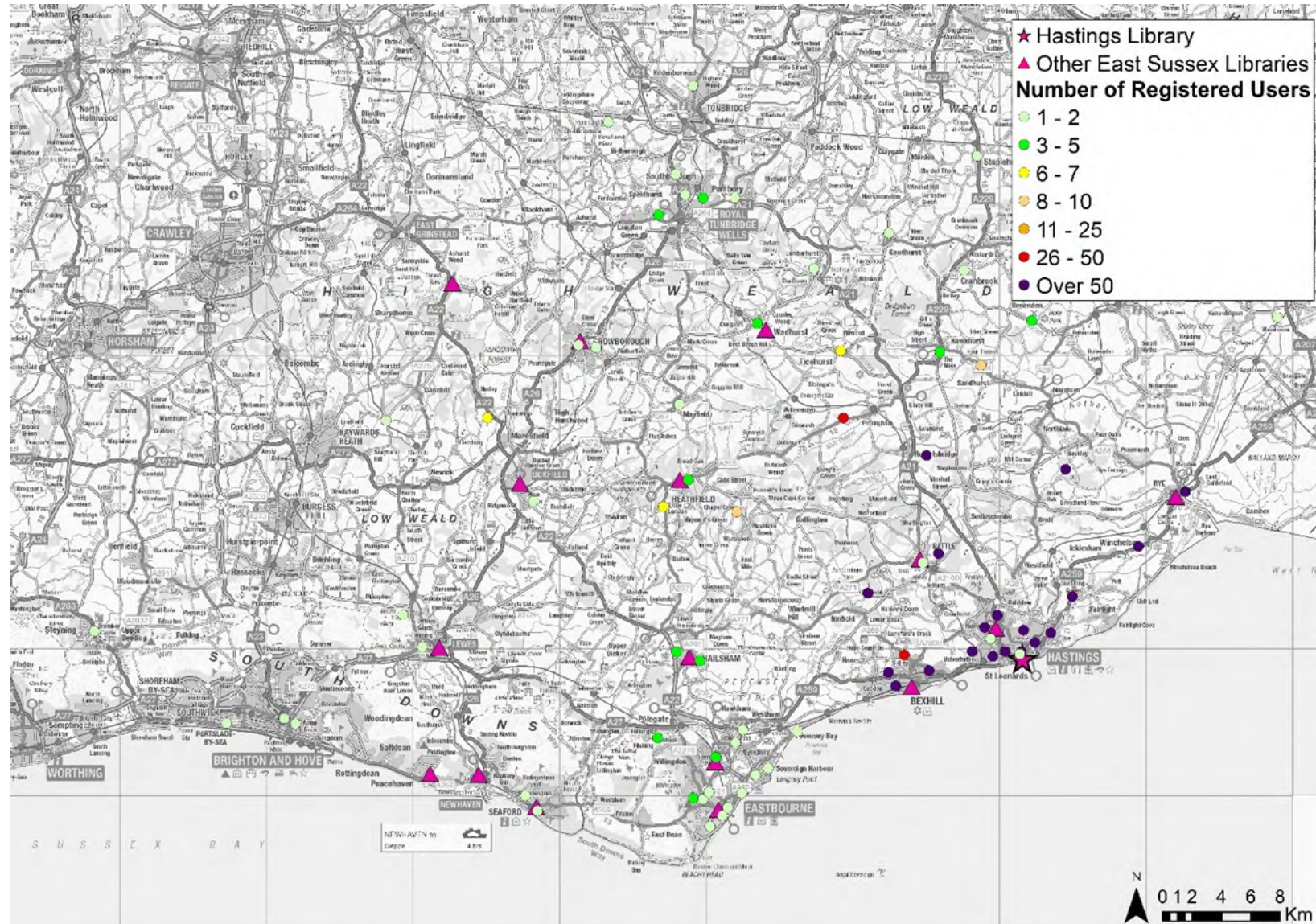
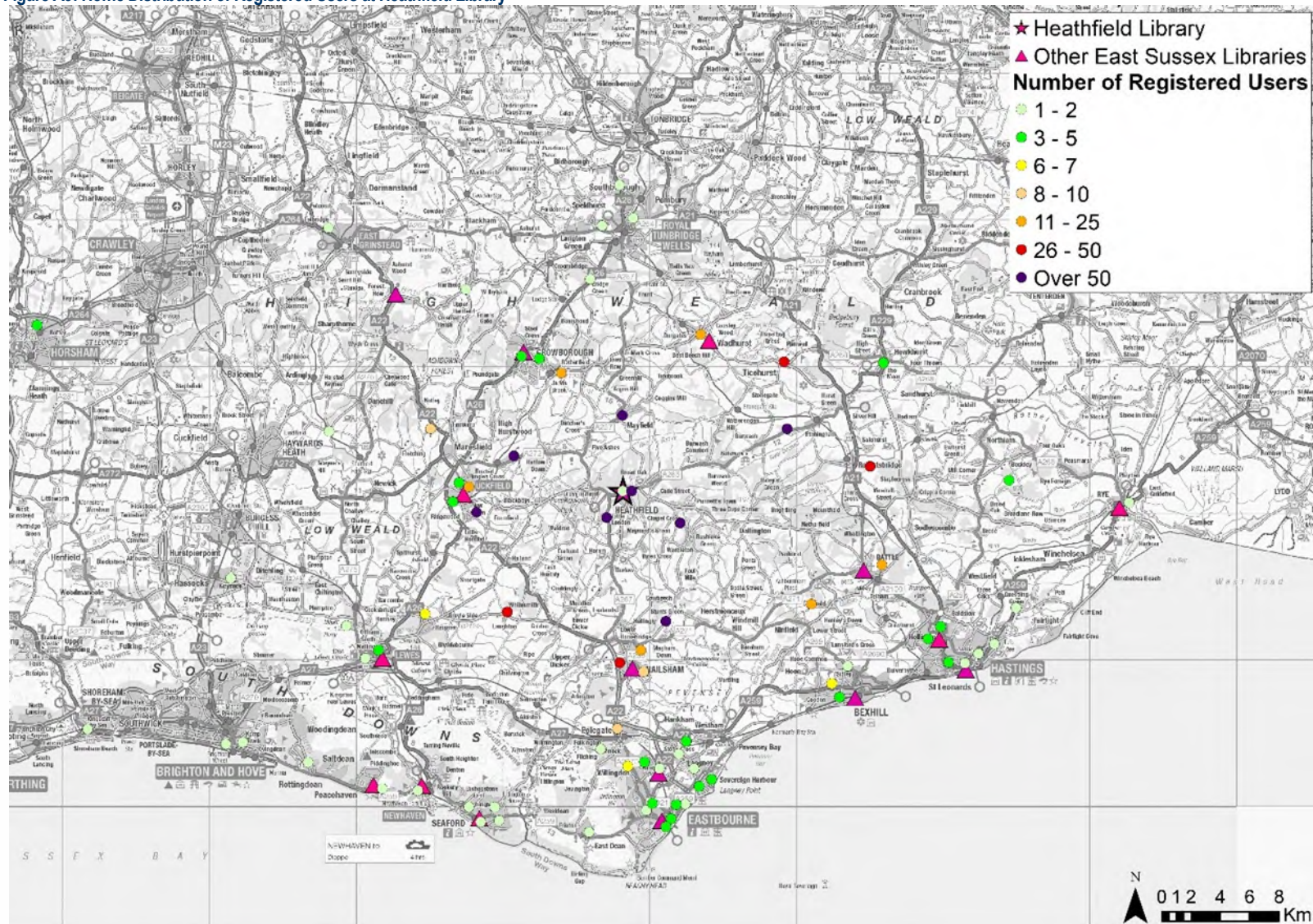




Figure A9: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Heathfield Library





## Appendix 5

Figure A10: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Hollington Library

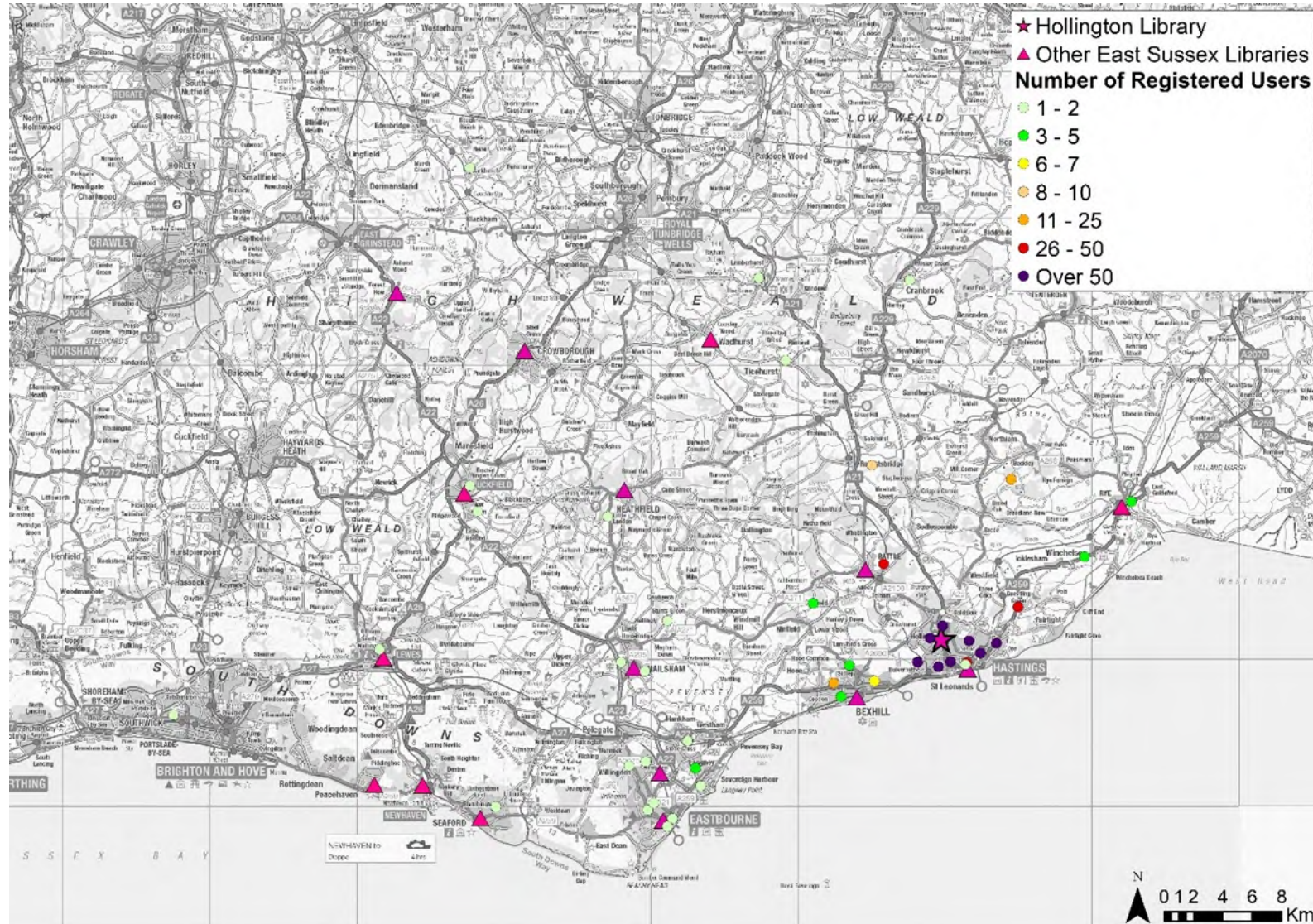
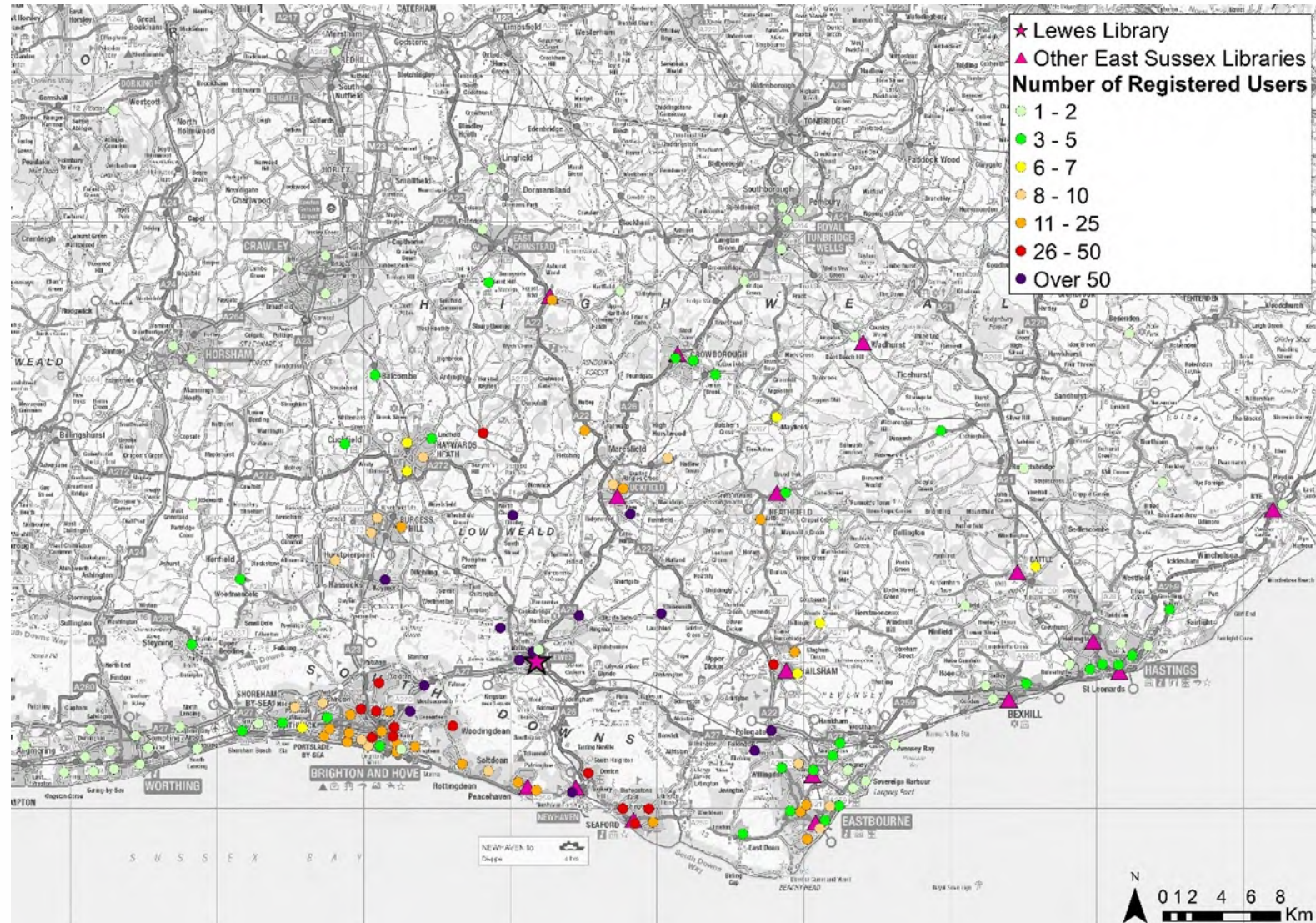




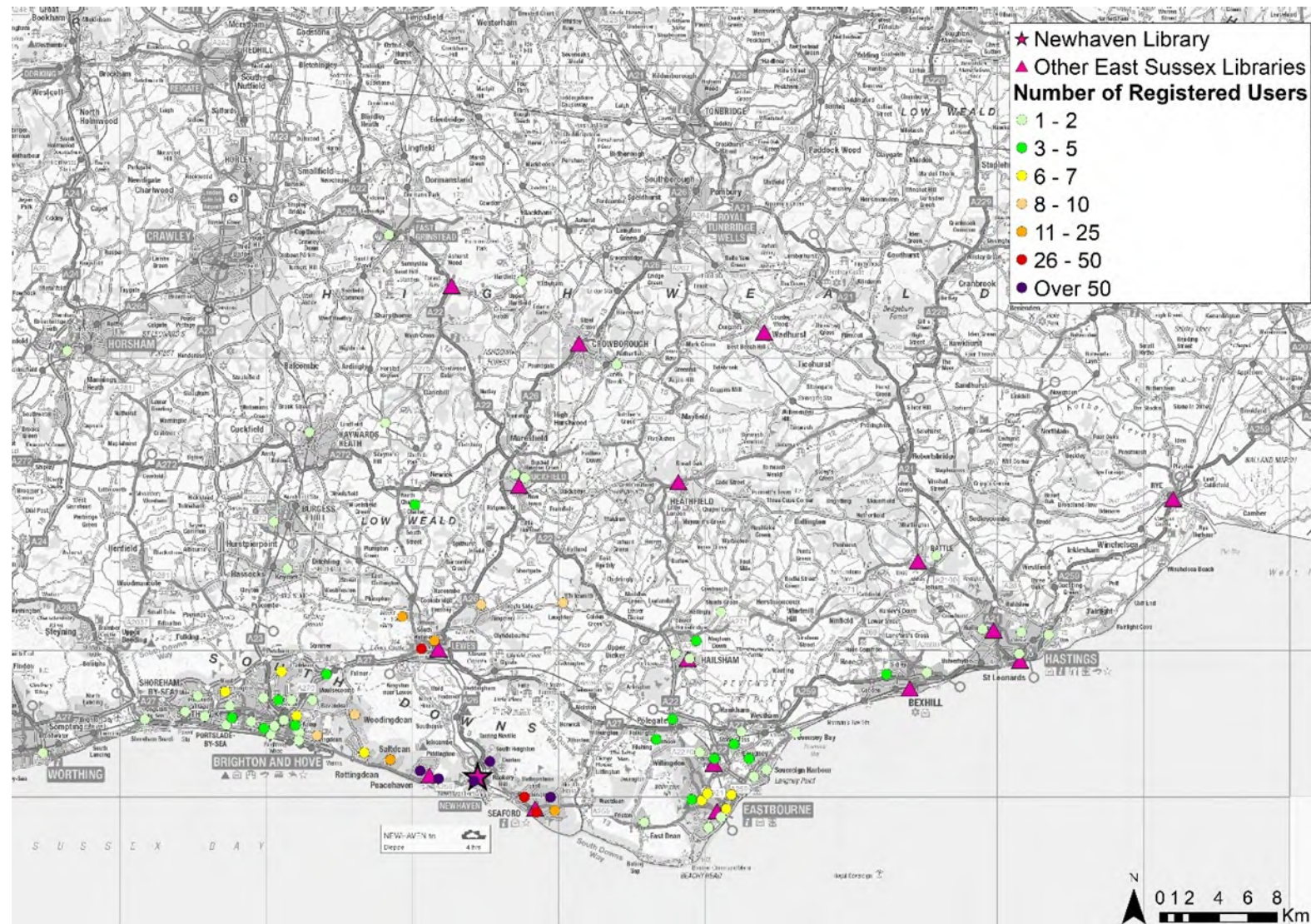
Figure A11: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Lewes Library





## Appendix 5

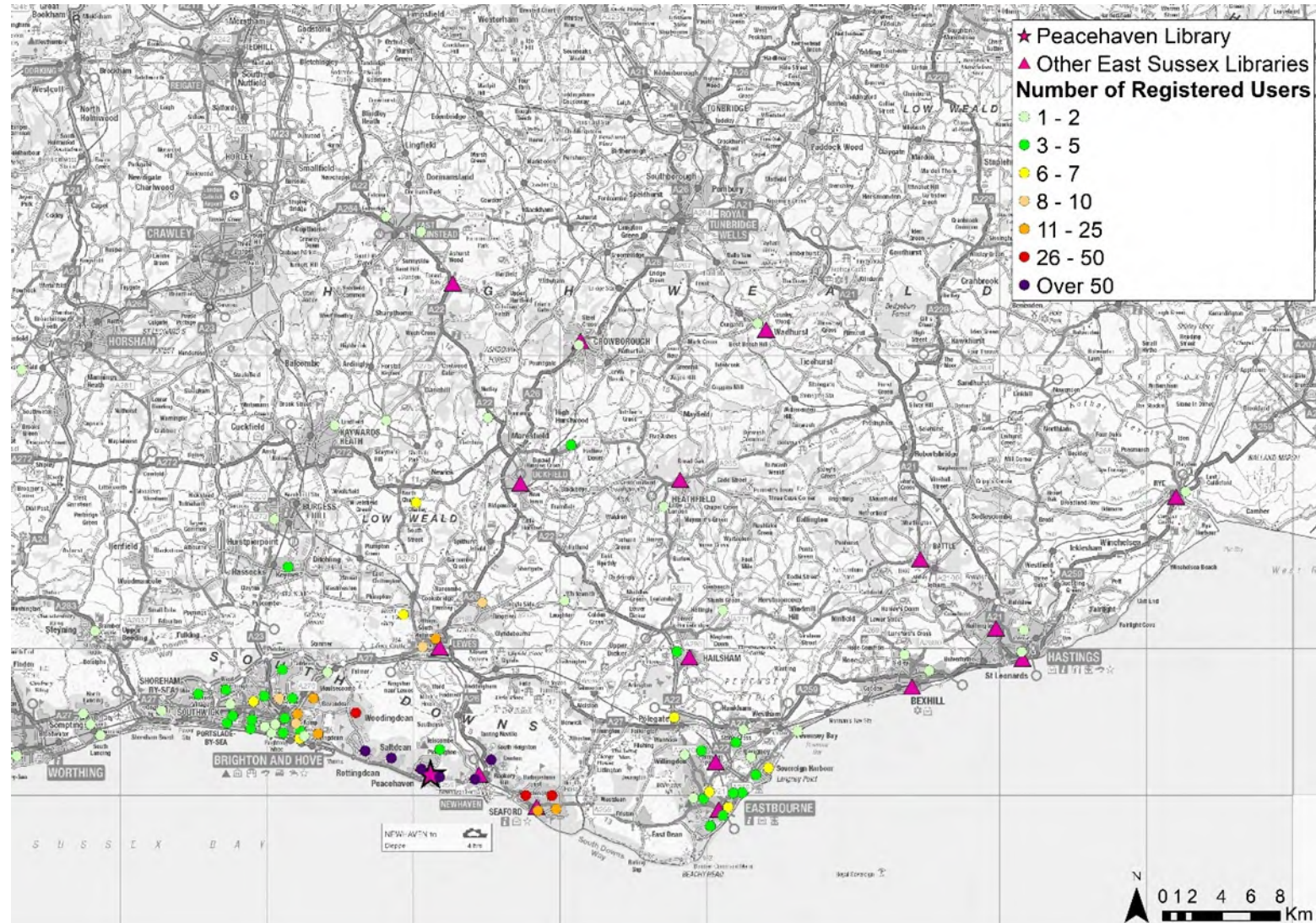
Figure A12: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Newhaven Library





## Appendix 5

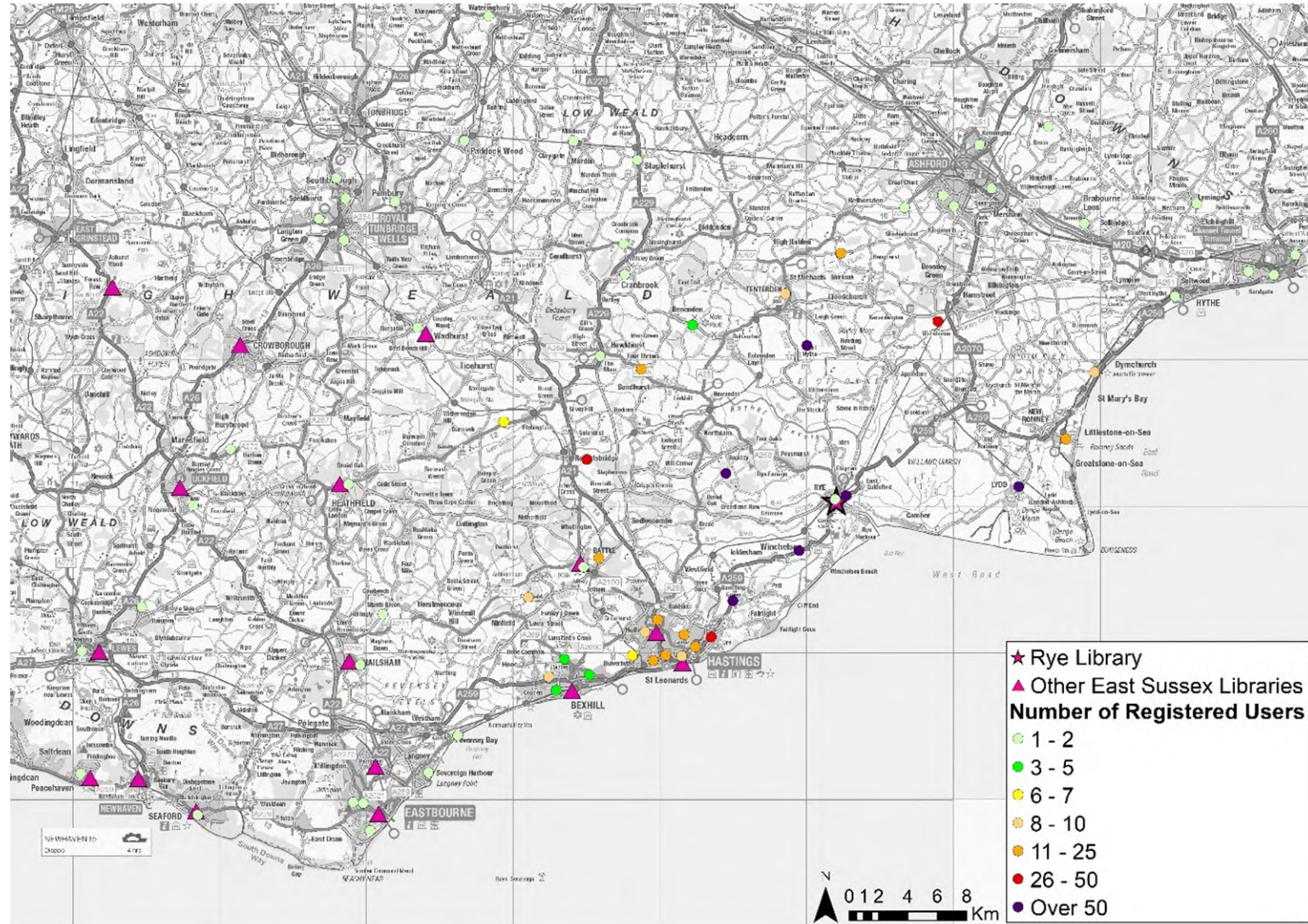
Figure A13: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Peacehaven Library





## Appendix 5

Figure A14: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Rye Library





## Appendix 5

Figure A15: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Seaford Library

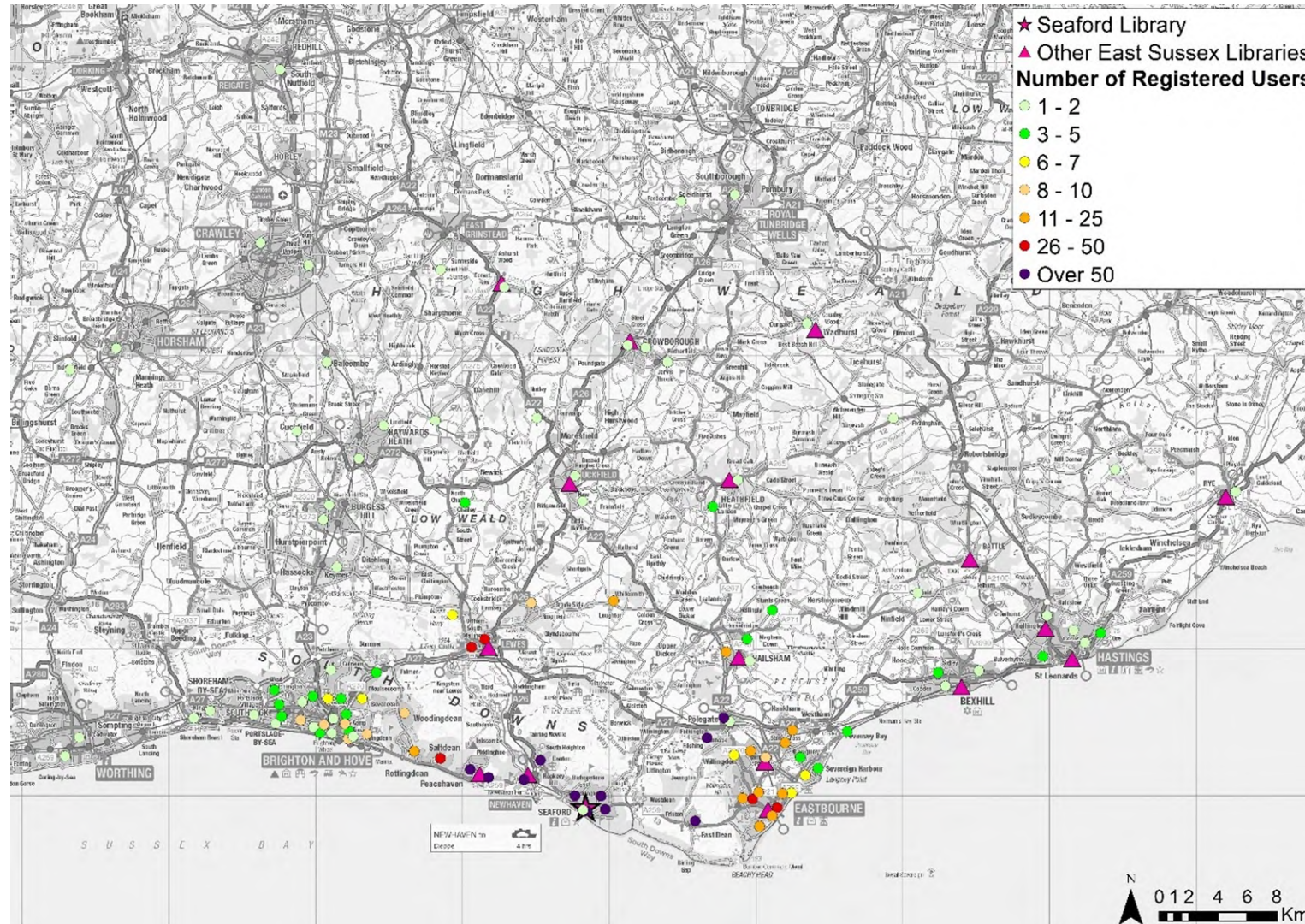




Figure A16: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Uckfield Library

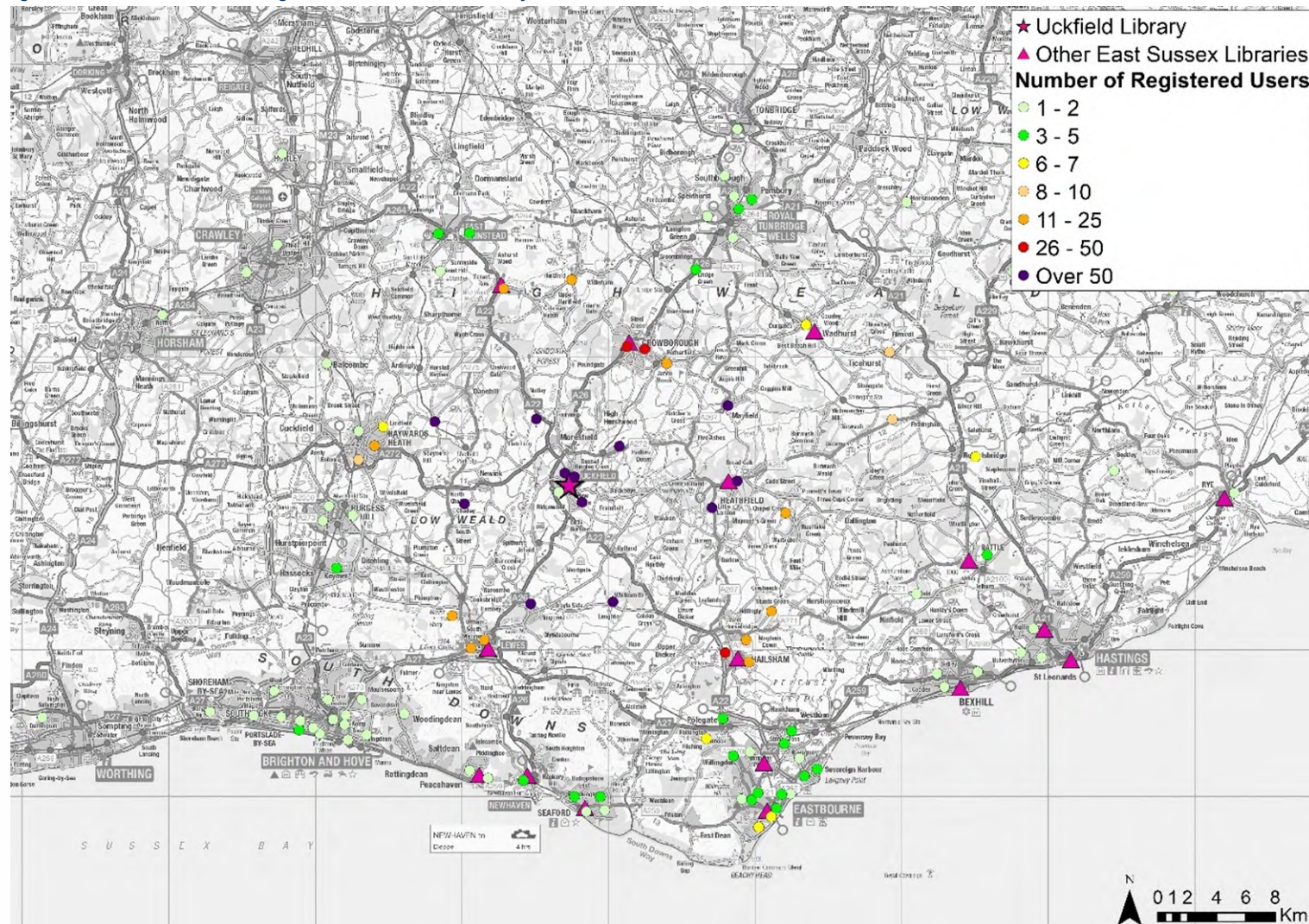
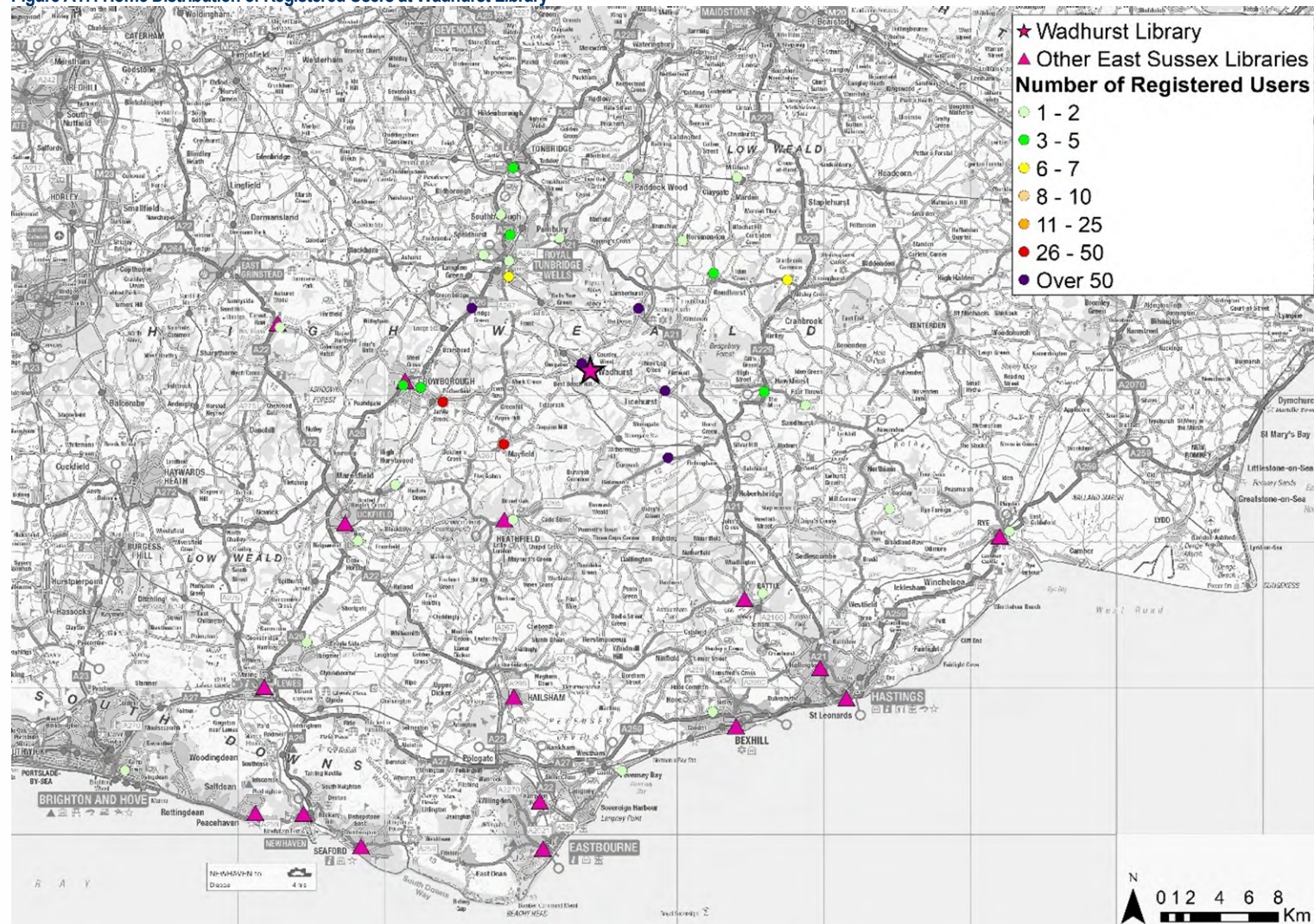




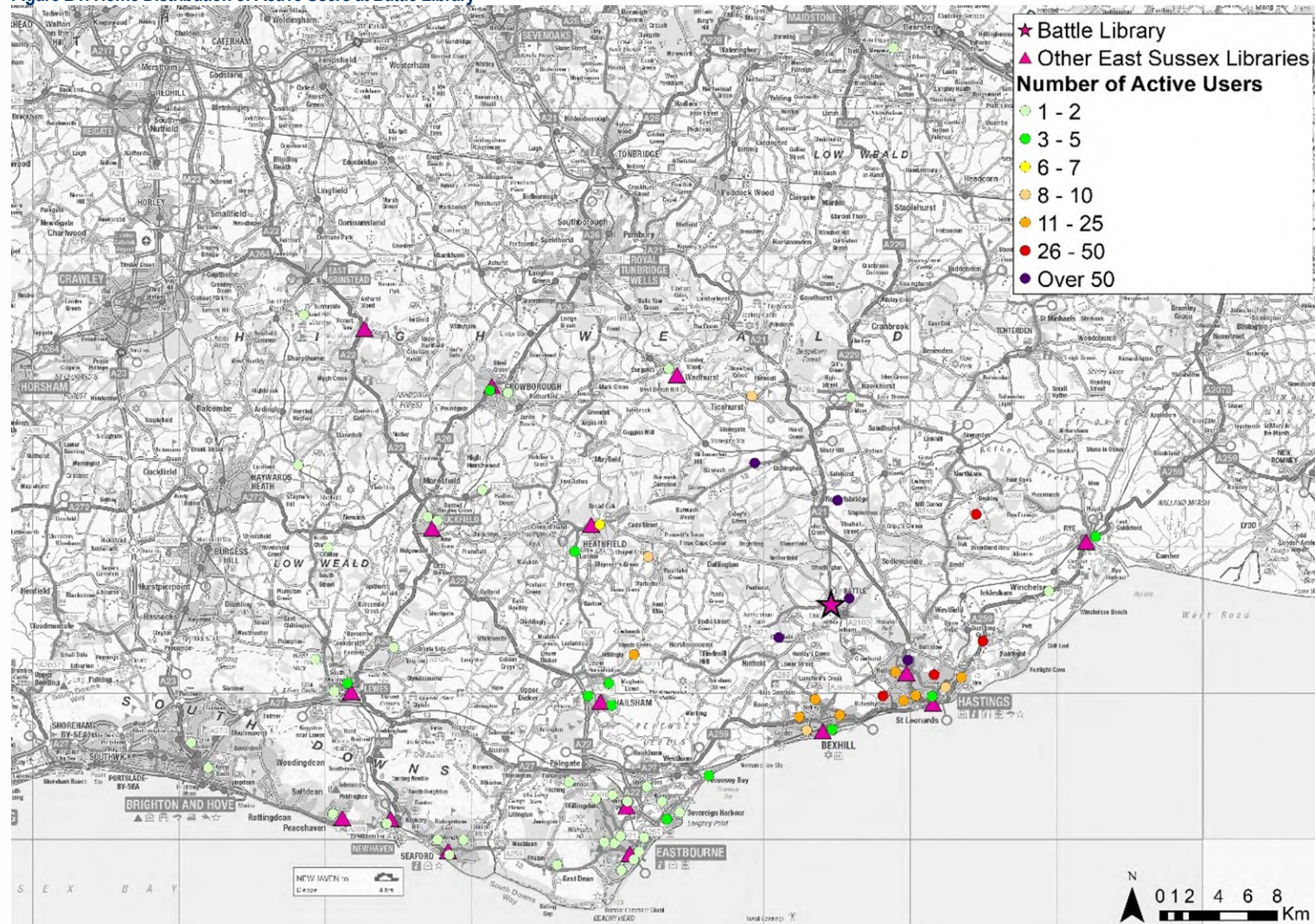
Figure A17: Home Distribution of Registered Users at Wadhurst Library



## Appendix B Home distribution of Active Users



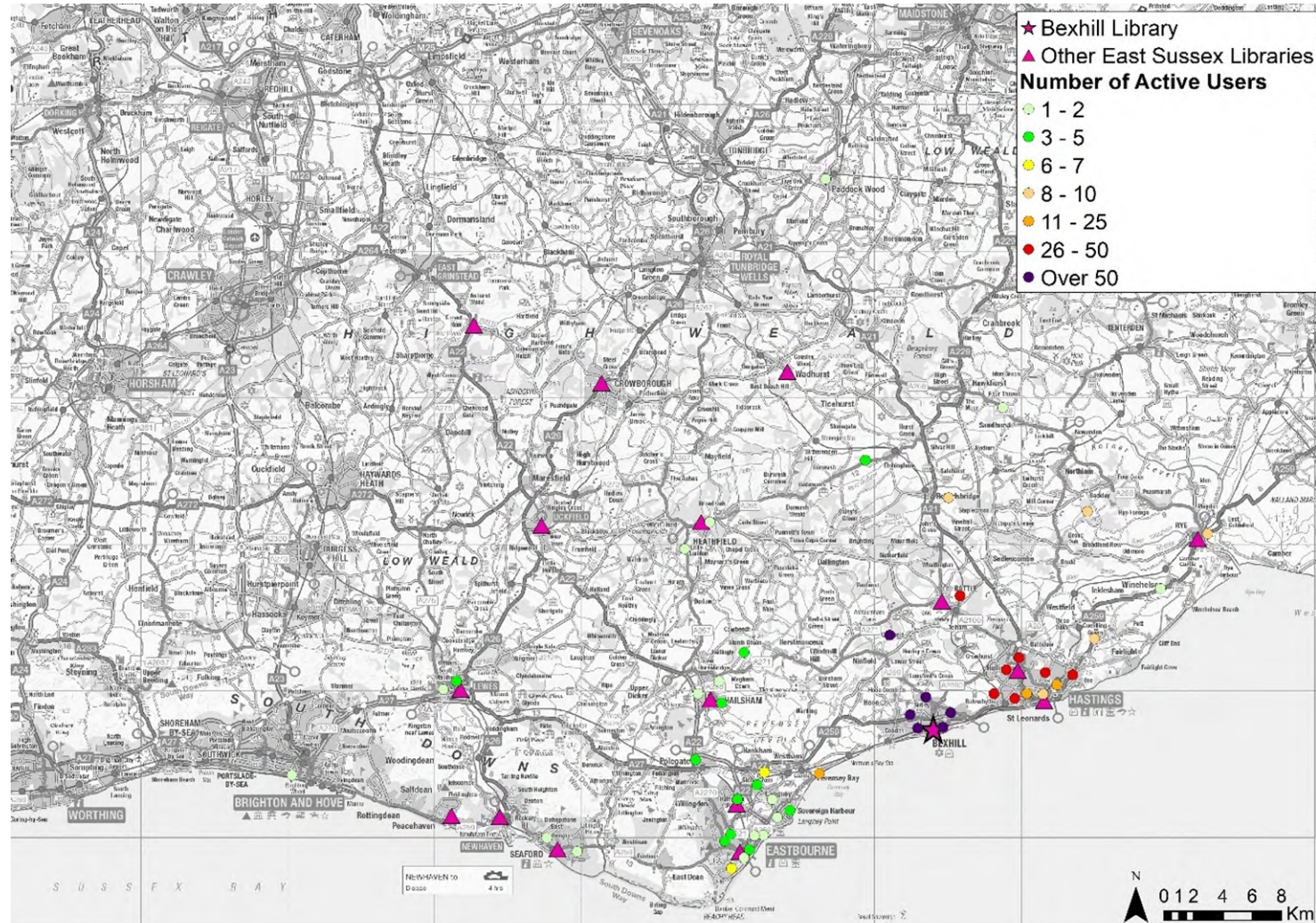
Figure B1: Home Distribution of Active Users at Battle Library





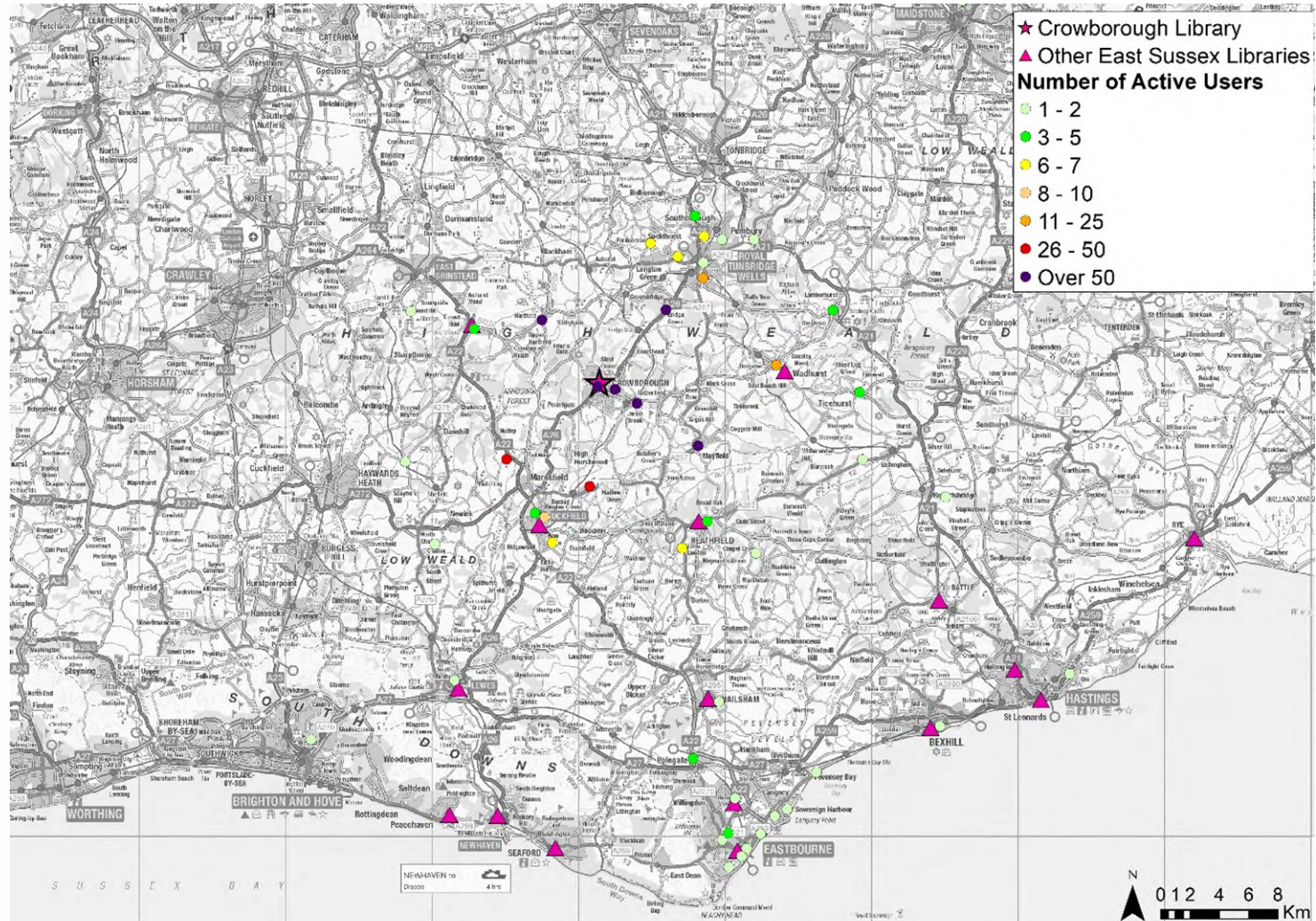
## Appendix 5

Figure B2: Home Distribution of Active Users at Bexhill Library





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## Appendix 5

Figure B4: Home Distribution of Active Users at Eastbourne Library

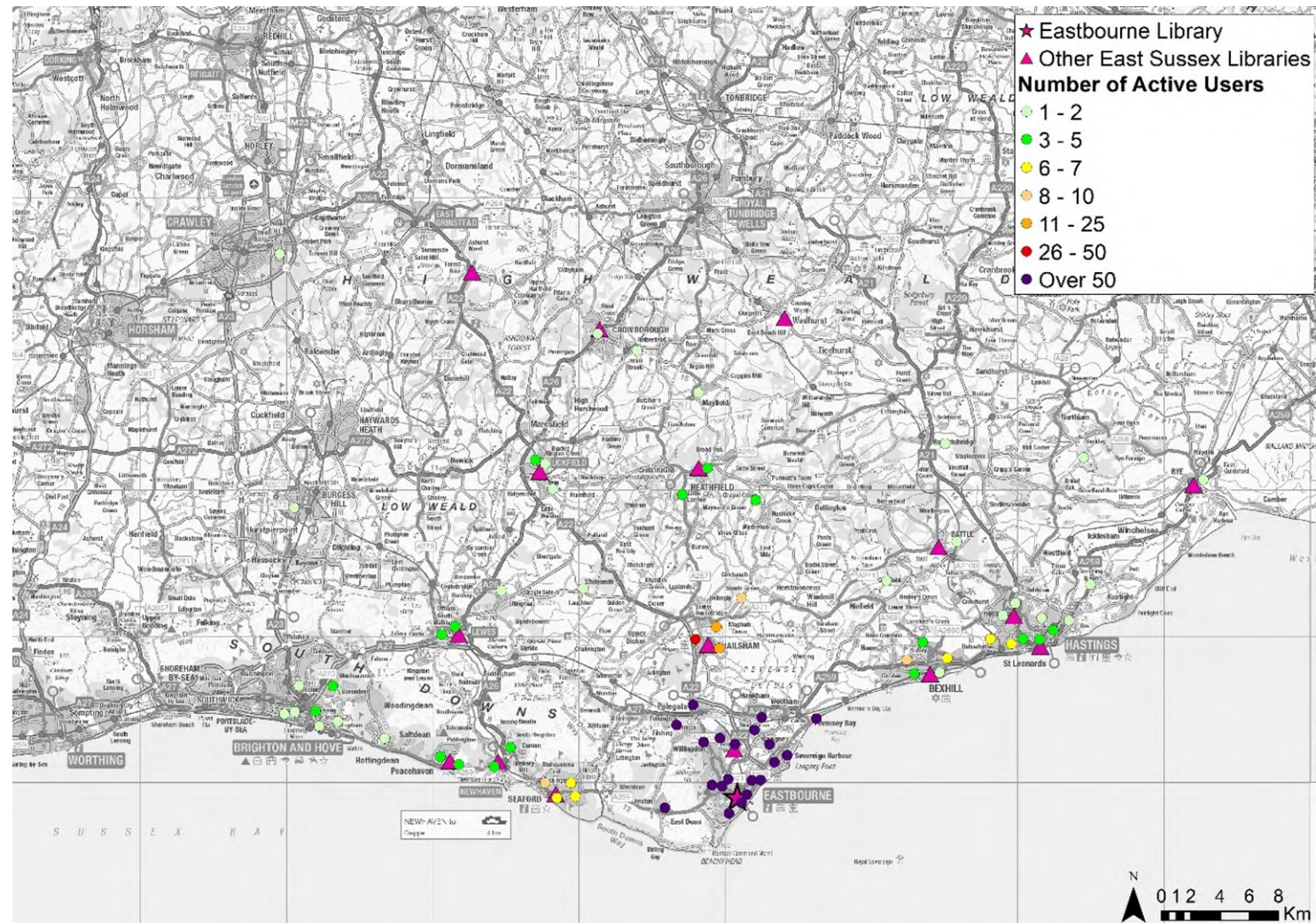




Figure B5: Home Distribution of Active Users at Forest Row Library

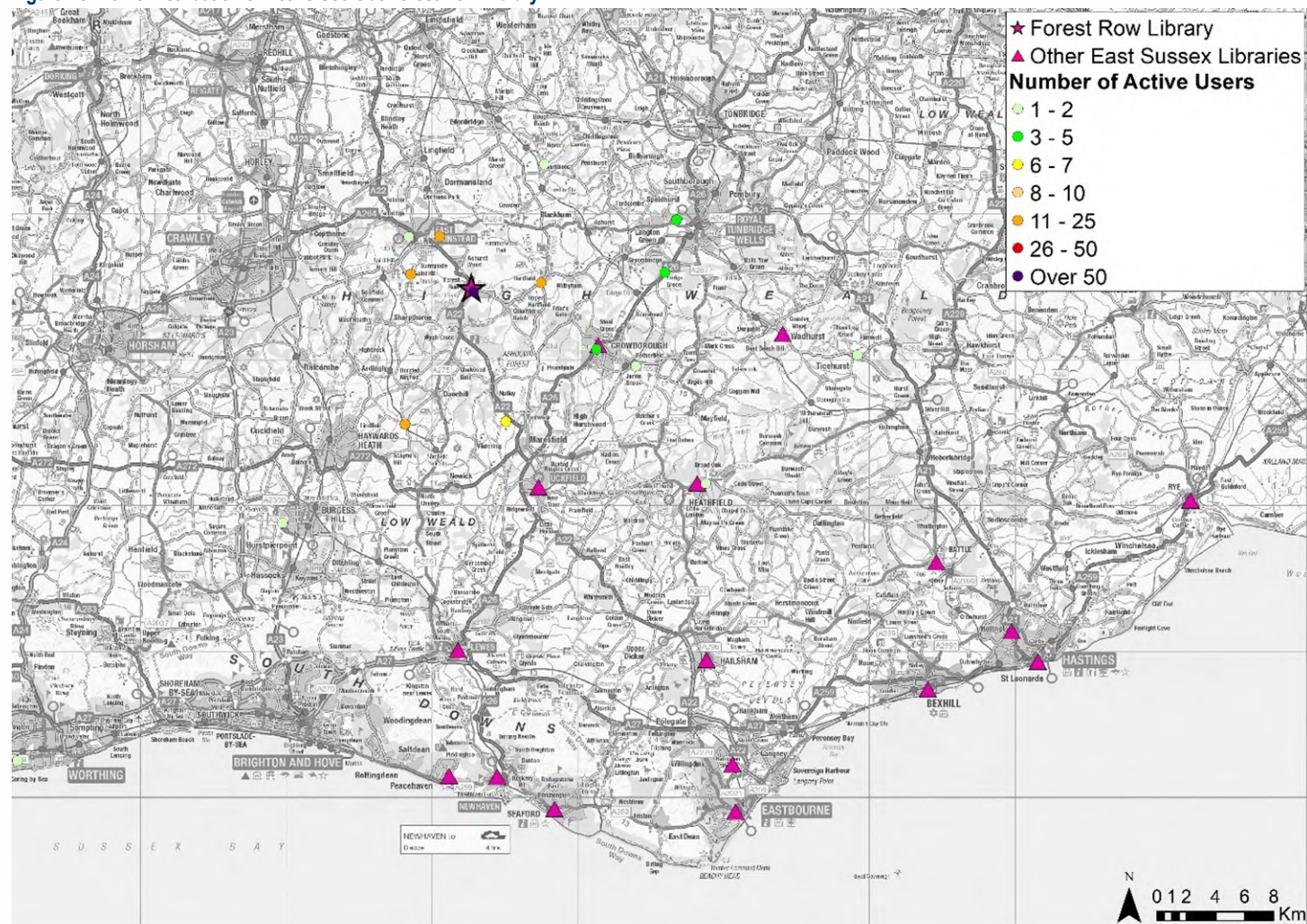




Figure B6: Home Distribution of Active Users at Hailsham Library

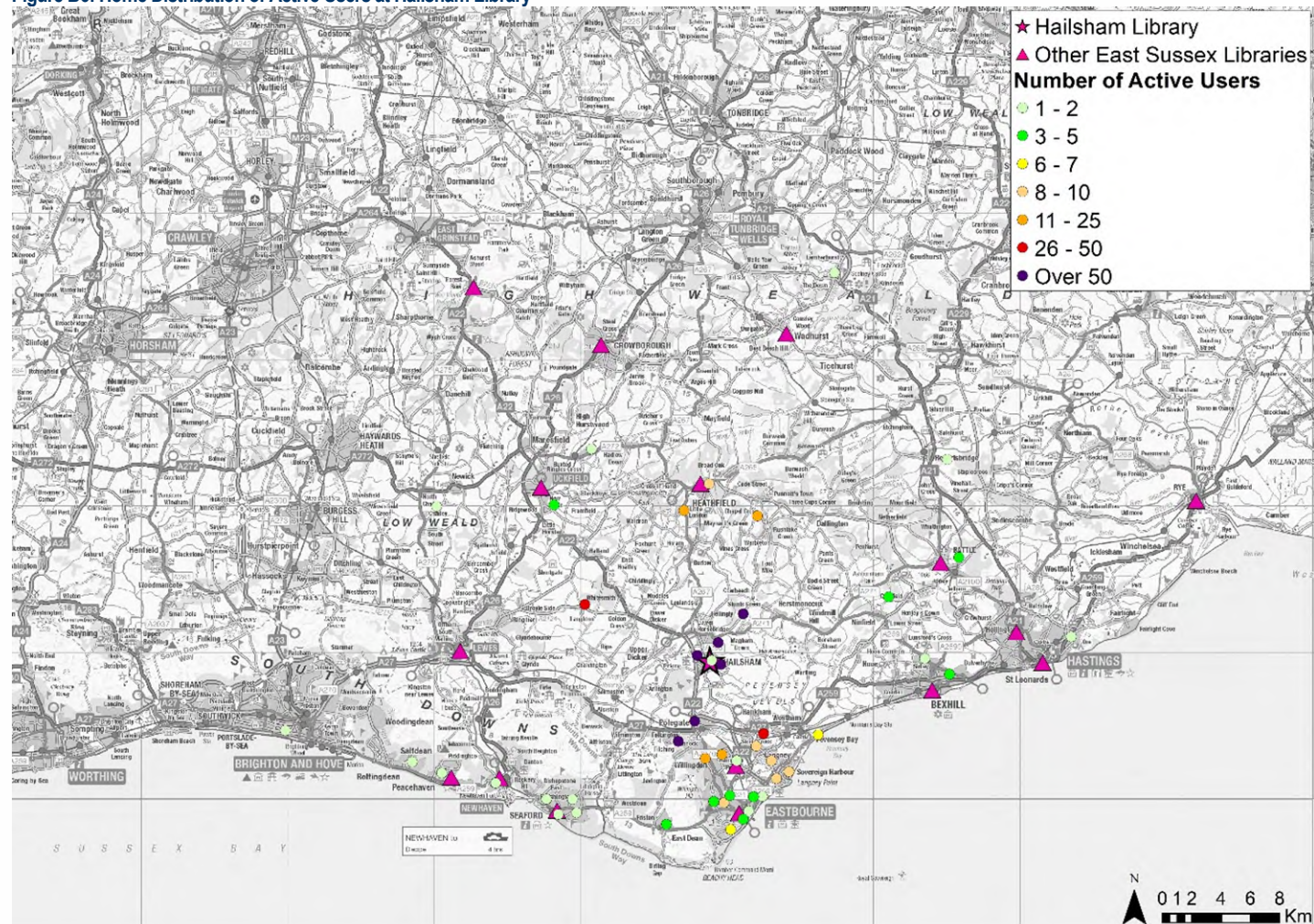
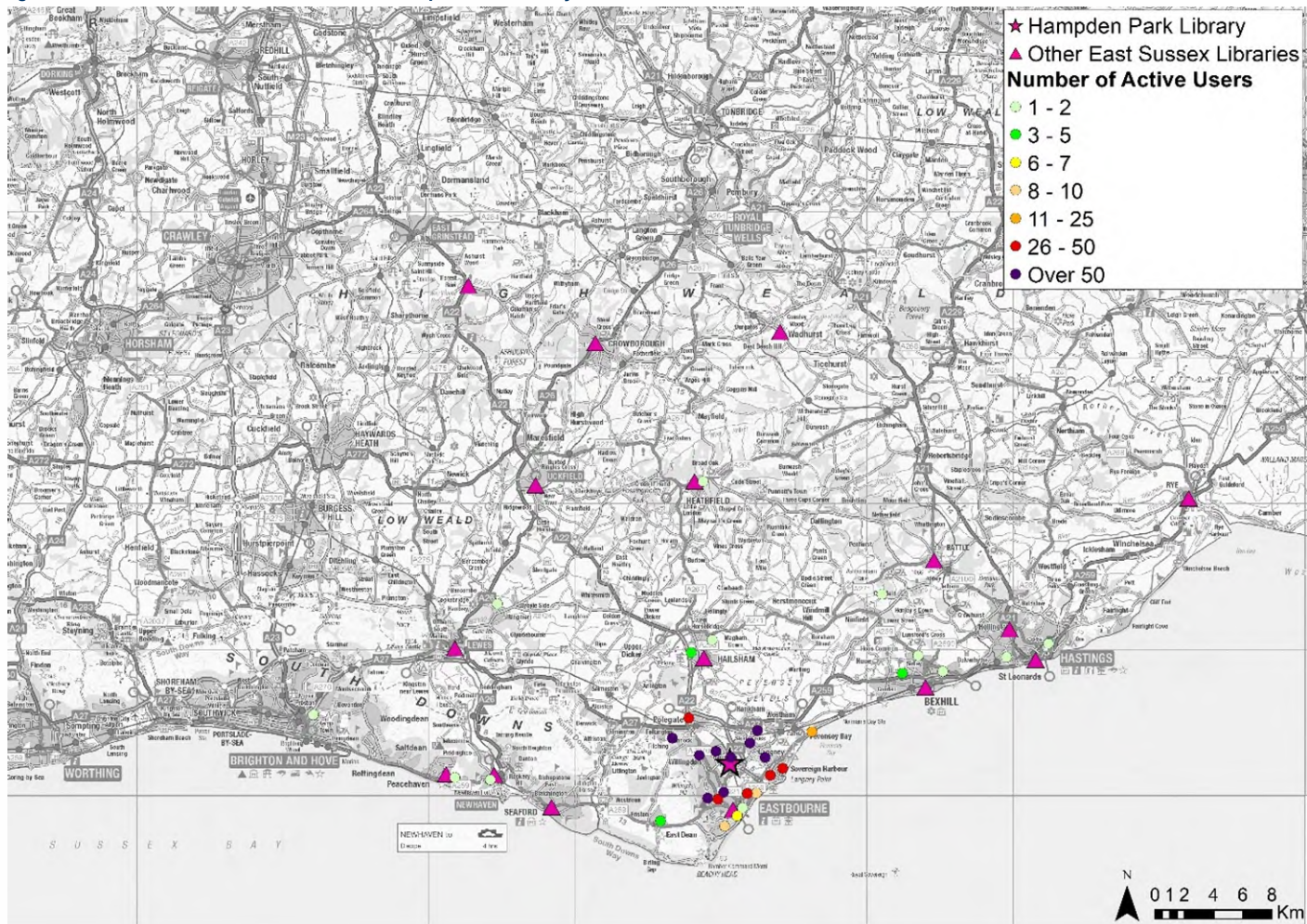




Figure B7: Home Distribution of Active Users at Hampden Park Library





## Appendix 5

Figure B8: Home Distribution of Active Users at Hastings Library

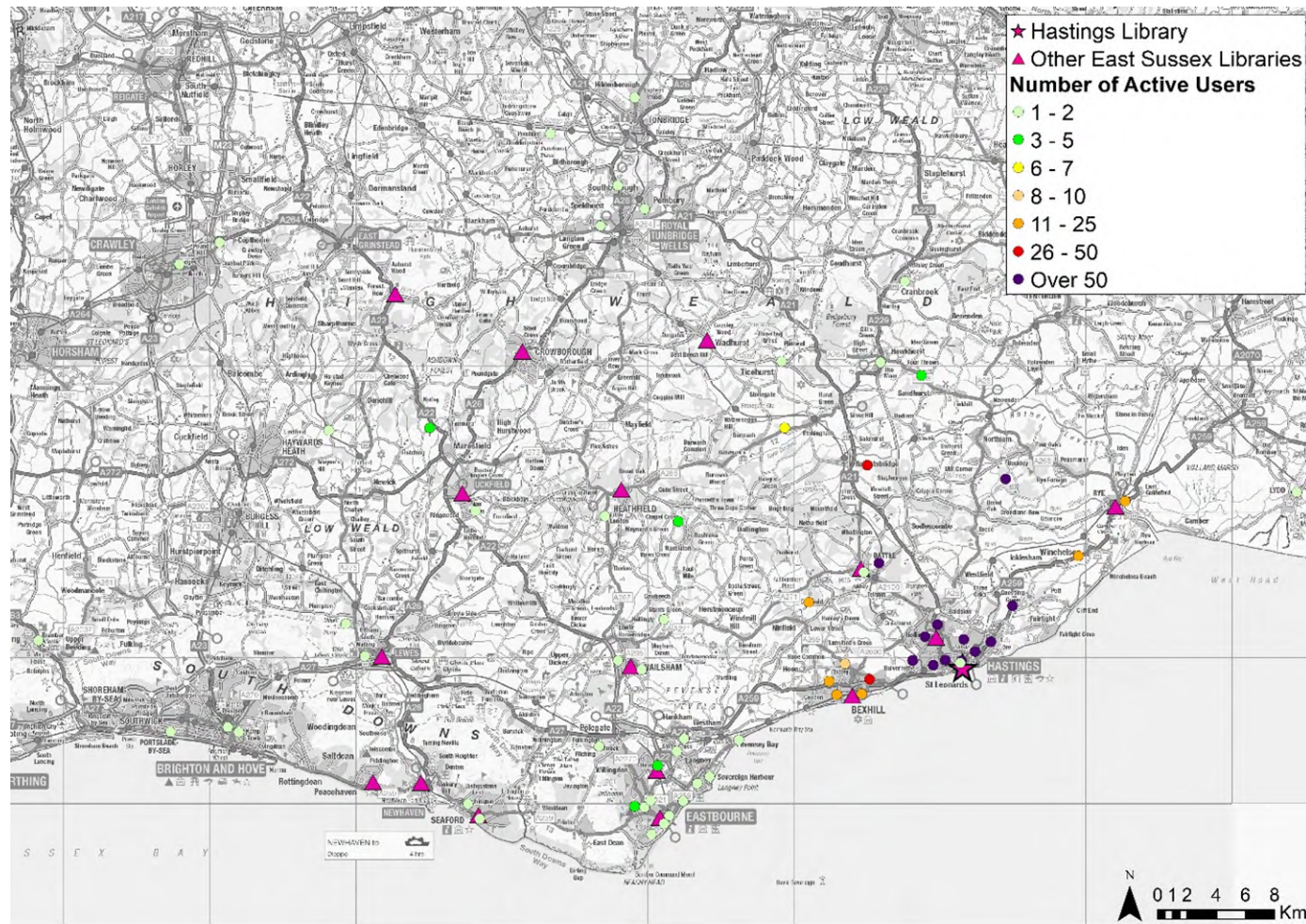
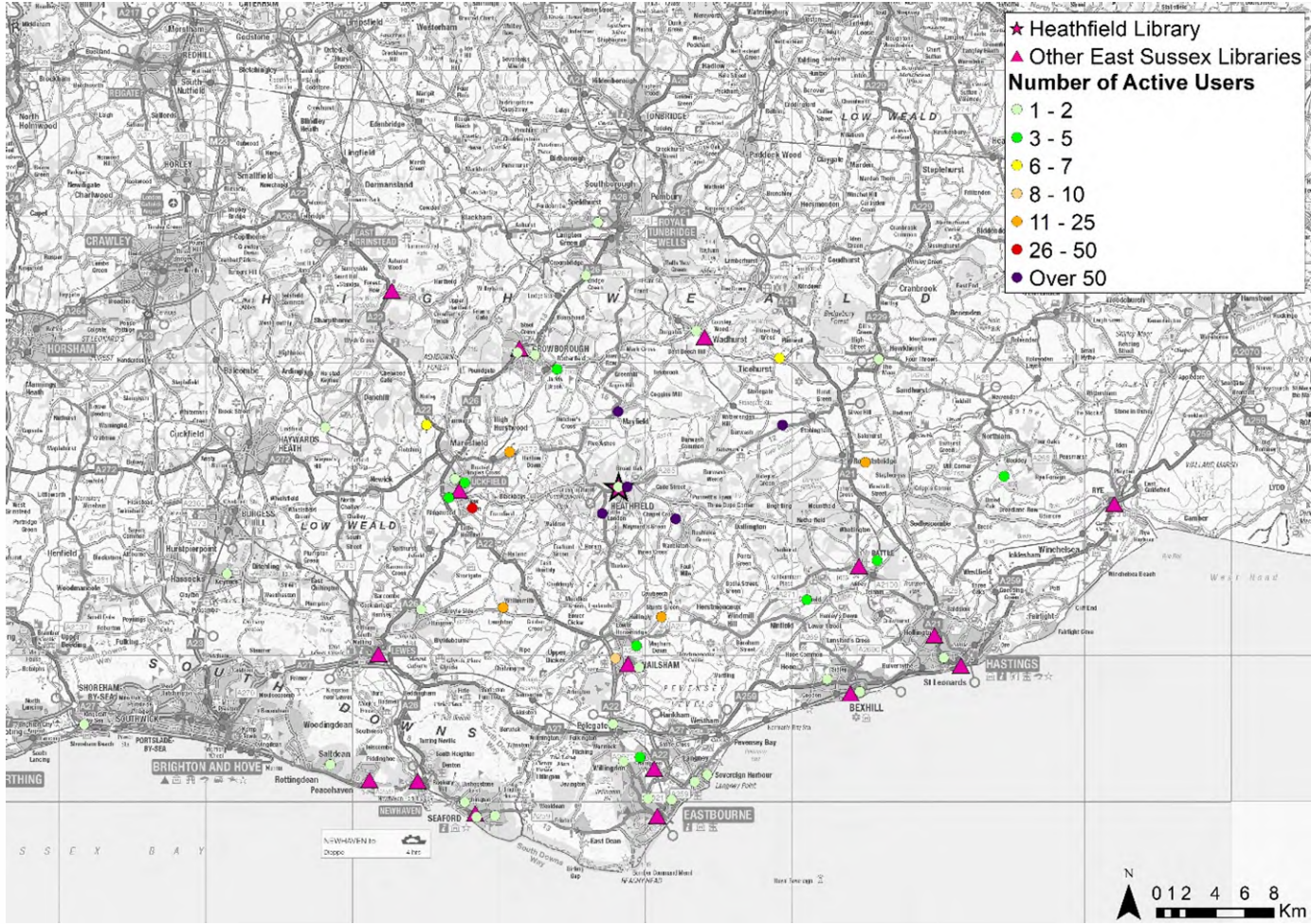




Figure B9: Home Distribution of Active Users at Heathfield Library





## Appendix 5

Figure B10: Home Distribution of Active Users at Hollington Library

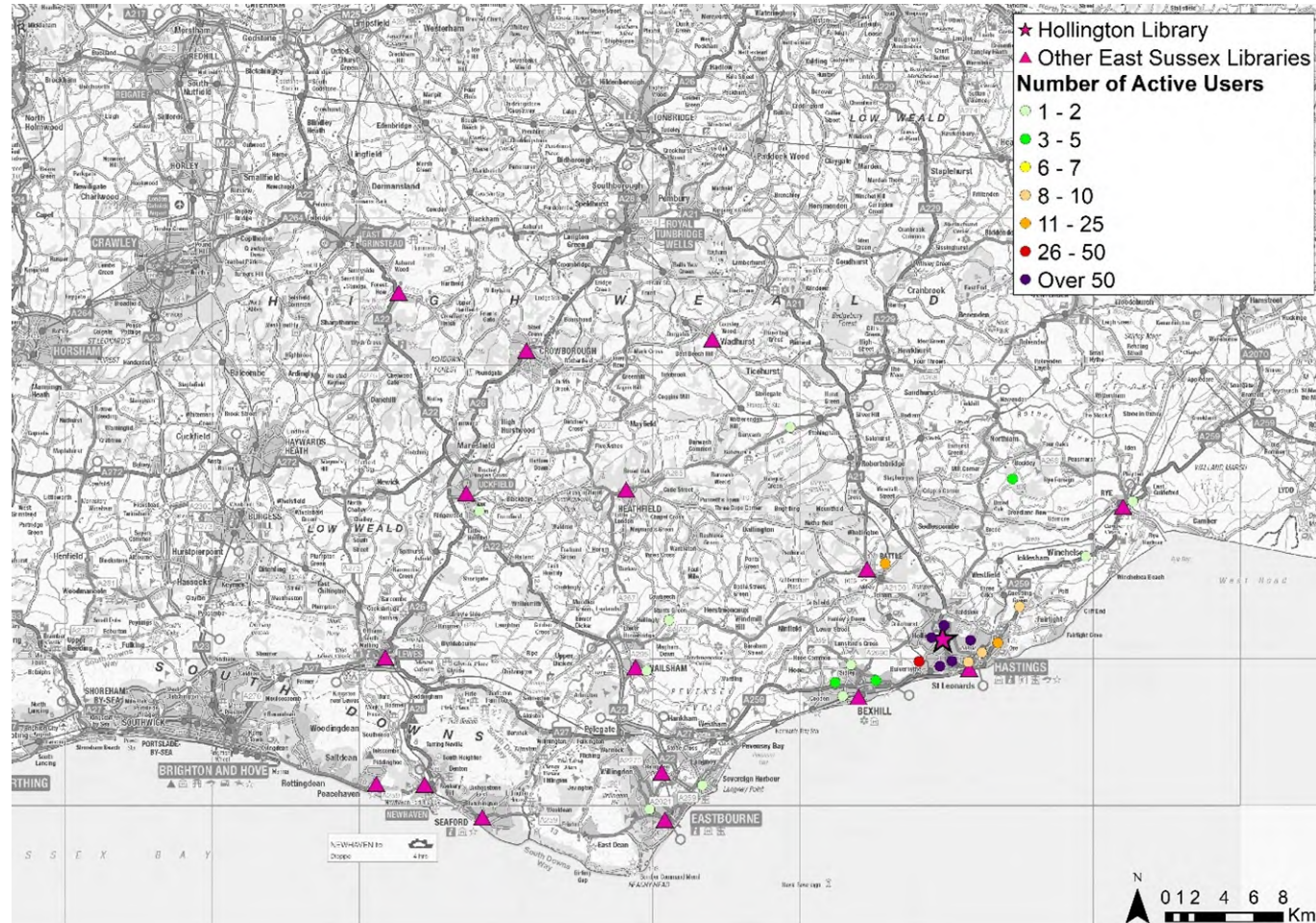
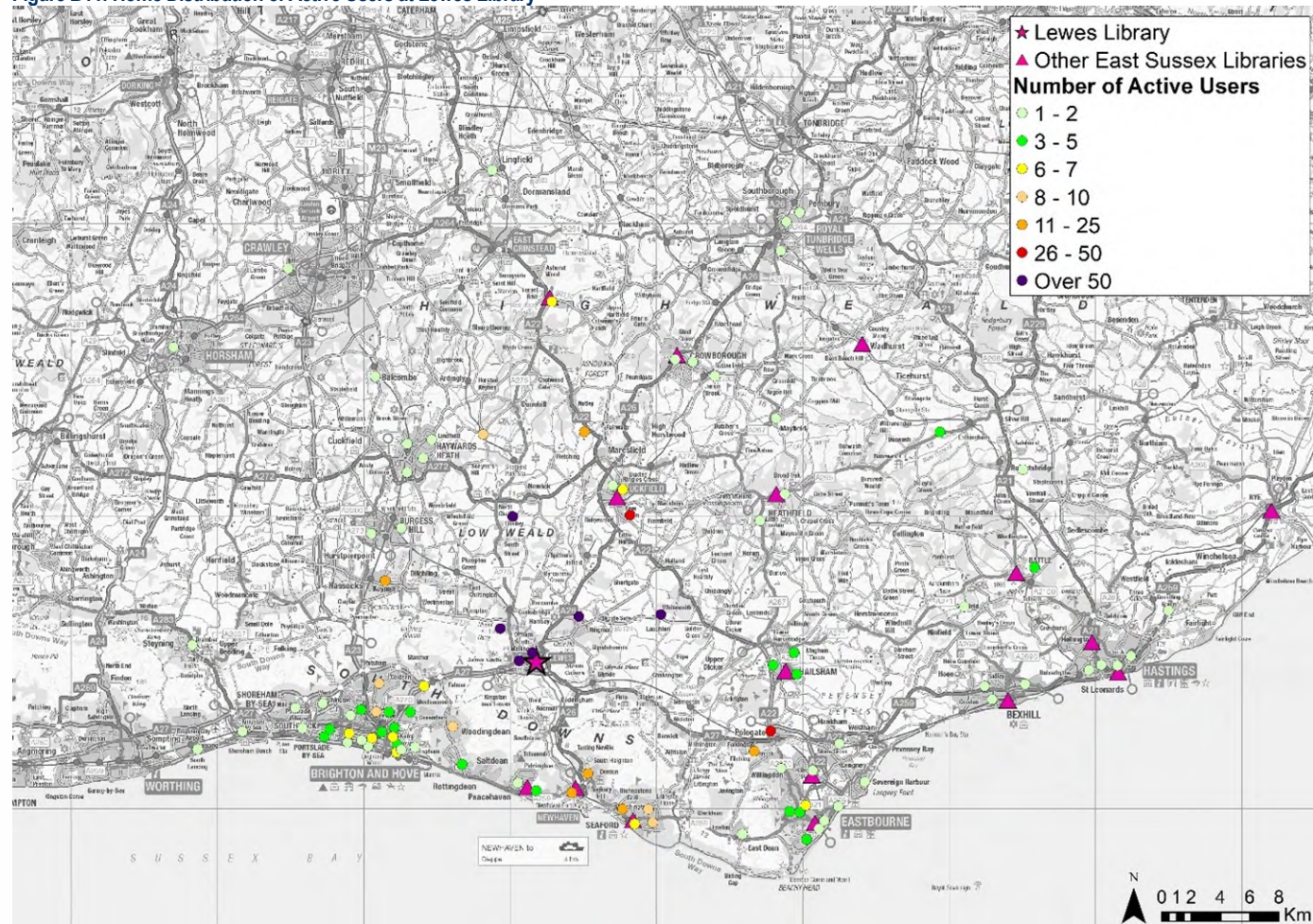




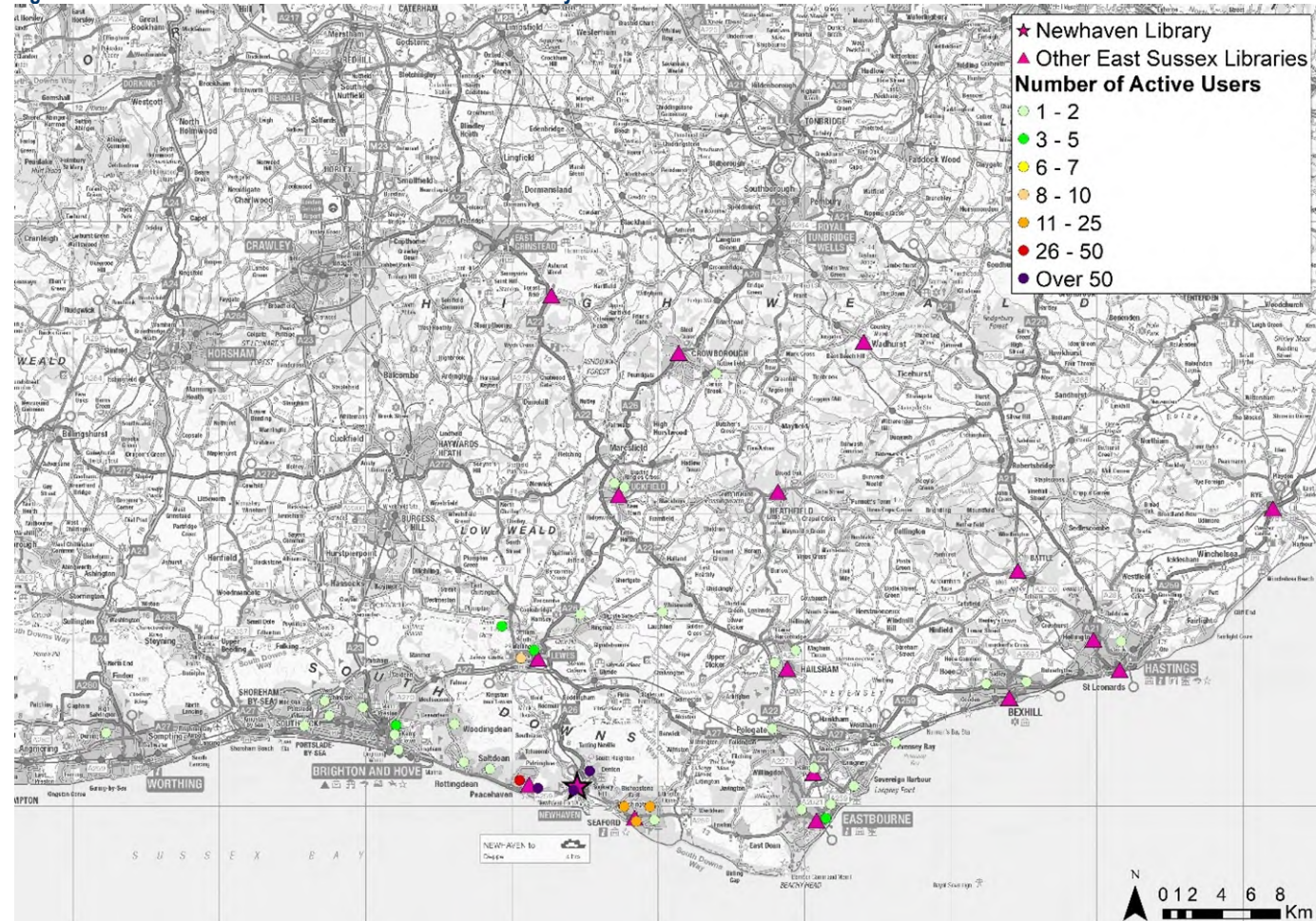
Figure B11: Home Distribution of Active Users at Lewes Library





## Appendix 5

Figure B12: Home Distribution of Active Users at Newhaven Library





## Appendix 5

Figure B13: Home Distribution of Active Users at Peacehaven Library

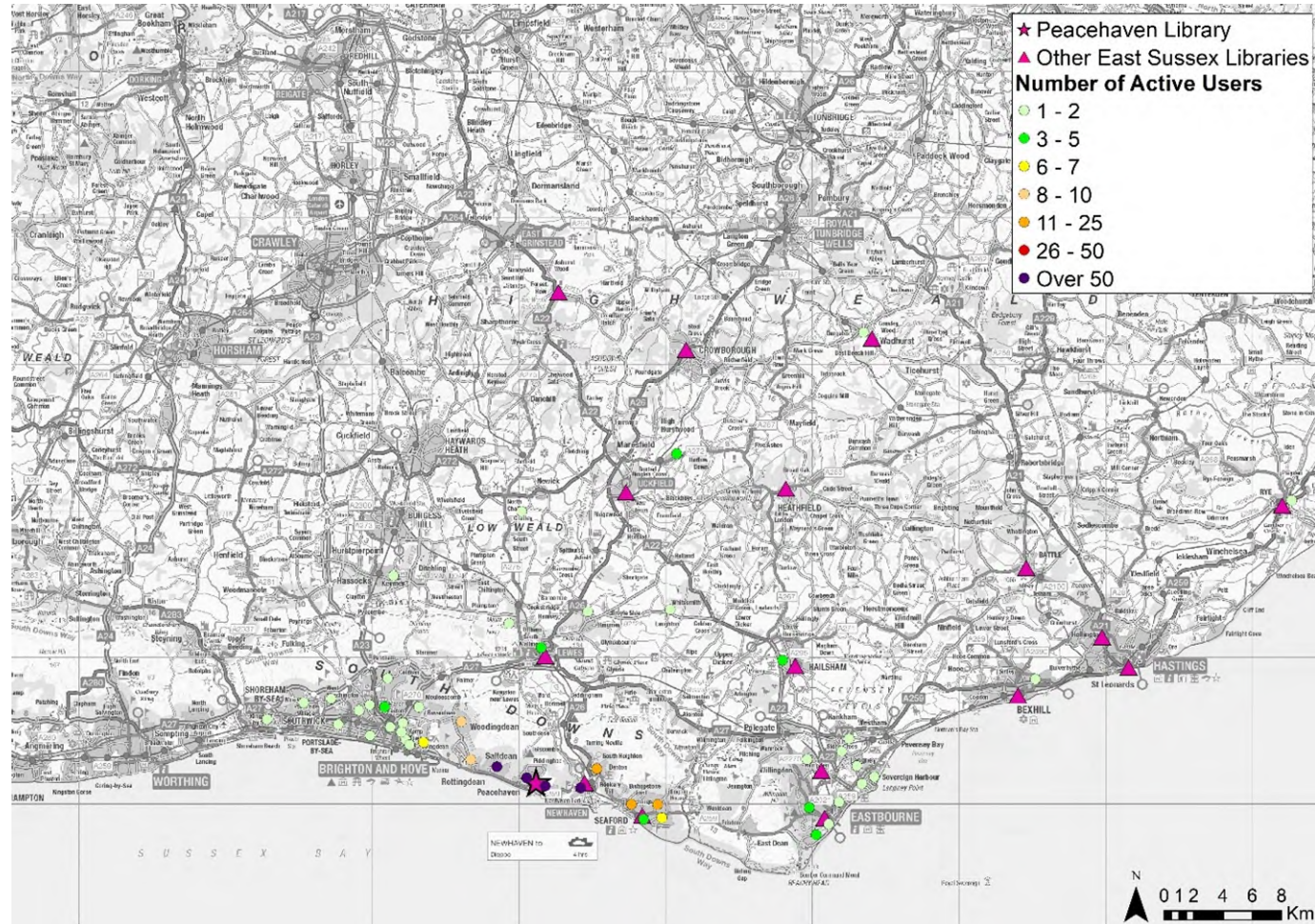
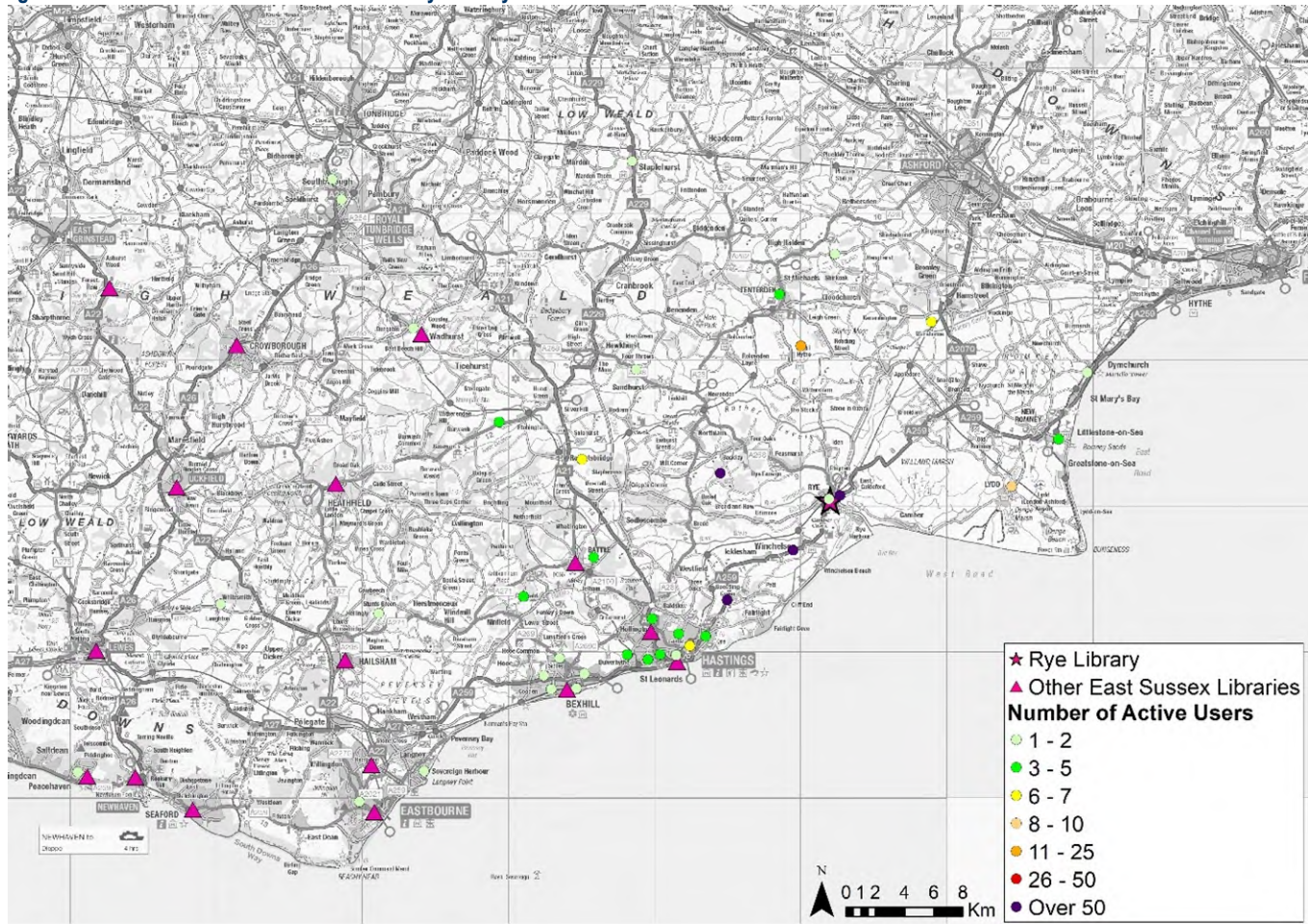




Figure B14: Home Distribution of Active Users at Rye Library





## Appendix 5

Figure B15: Home Distribution of Active Users at Seaford Library

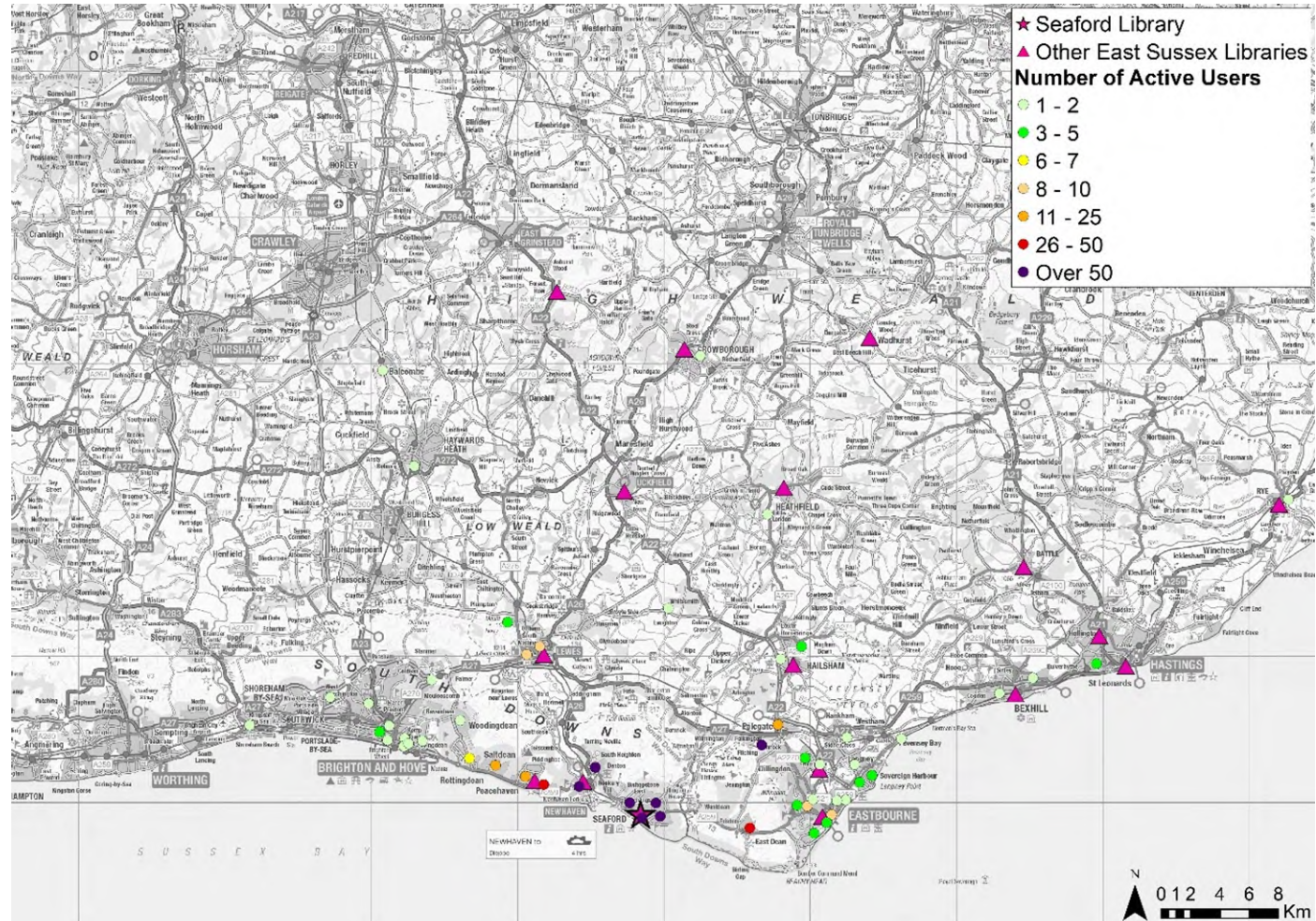
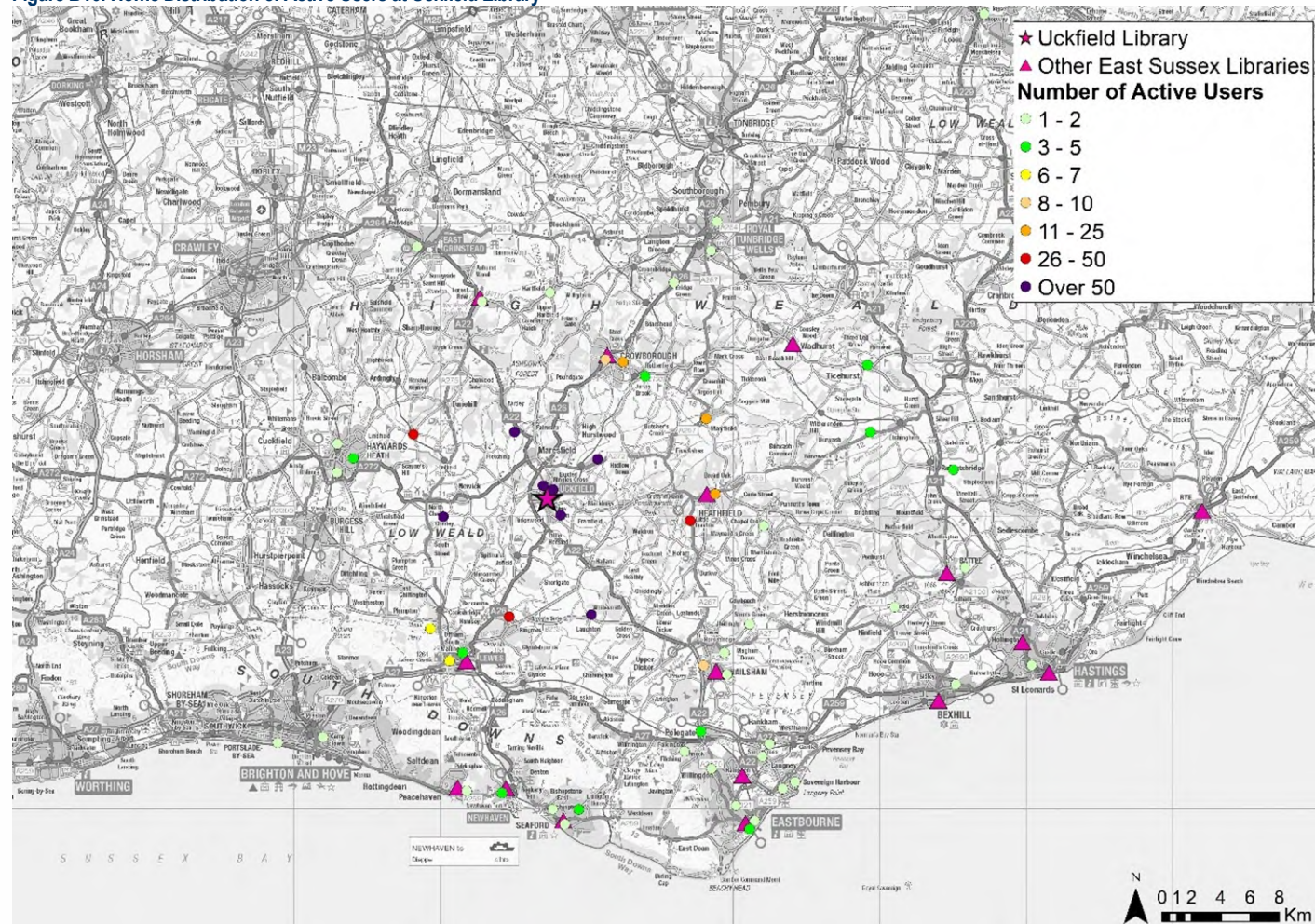


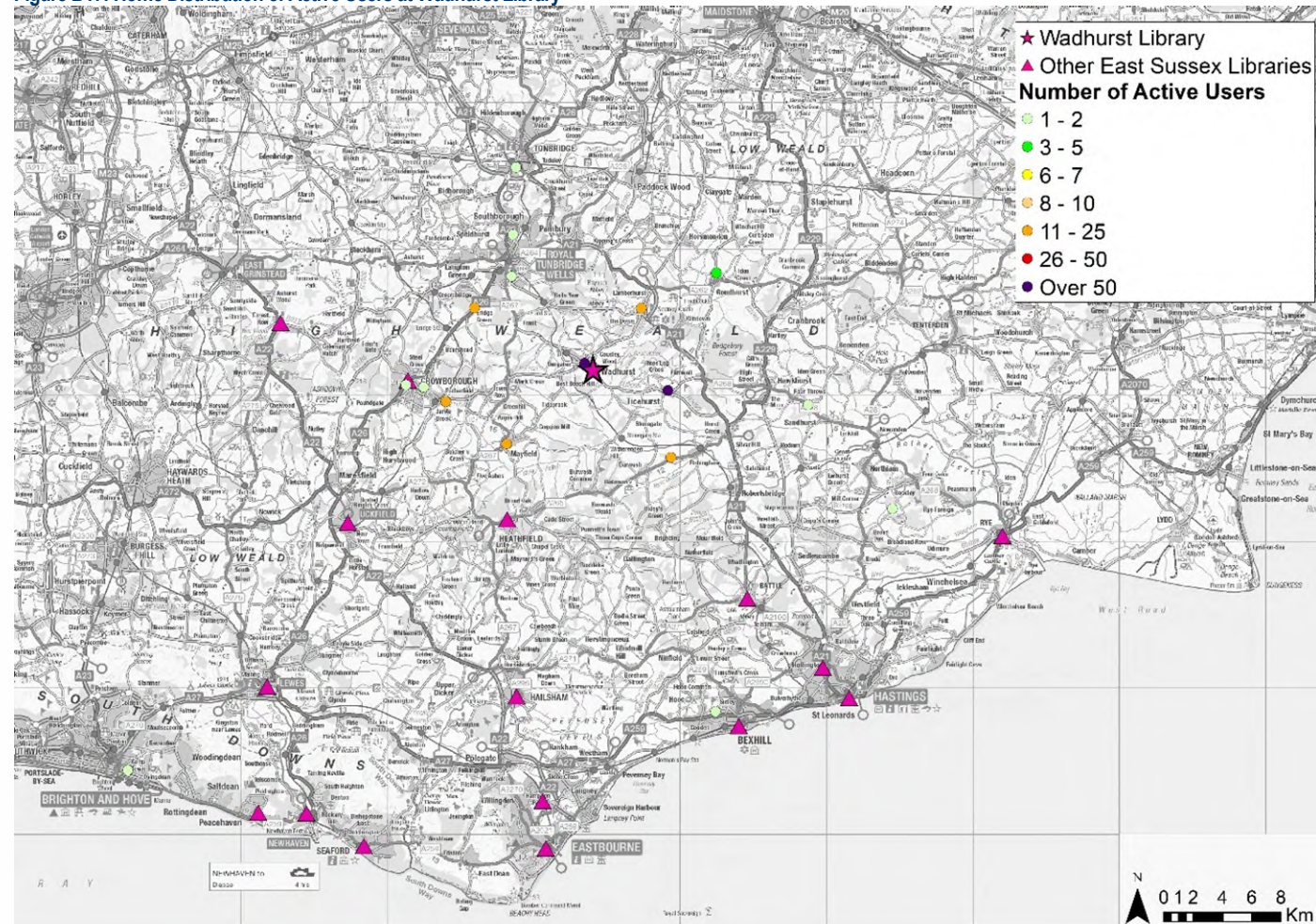


Figure B16: Home Distribution of Active Users at Uckfield Library





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**December 2021**

## **Update of Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy**

### **Technical Appendix 3**

### **Property Assessment**



# Contents

1.	Purpose of the Technical Appendix	2
2.	Building Information	4
3.	Review of library properties	9
4.	Conclusions	13

# 1 Purpose of the Technical Appendix

## Introduction

- 1.1 This Technical Appendix sets out the current properties from which the East Sussex Library and Information Service delivers its functions and reviews the effectiveness of existing library buildings, in order to ascertain how the current buildings should be used to support delivery of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy and how these assets can best be used by the wider community.
- 1.2 This is one of a number of documents, Technical Appendices (TA), which form the evidence base that supports the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. These documents are as follows:

Updated version of Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy		
Appendix 1 Review of implementation of Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy		
Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment.		
Technical Appendix 1 Needs Assessment	Technical Appendix 2 Accessibility Analysis	Technical Appendix 3 Property Review

- 1.3 The purpose is to:
- provide an overview of the buildings from which the Library and Information Service operates
  - set out the running and upkeep costs of these buildings
  - review the efficiency of the current library estate and identify where there are opportunities to deliver the service in a more cost-effective way and/or deliver a better service in conjunction with other services.
  - identify whether there is scope to release space for joint working or for activities that could generate income for the Library and Information Service or to deliver services on behalf of someone else as a source of income generation.

- confirm that we will work with Property Services to work towards the Council's target of achieving carbon neutrality from activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050.

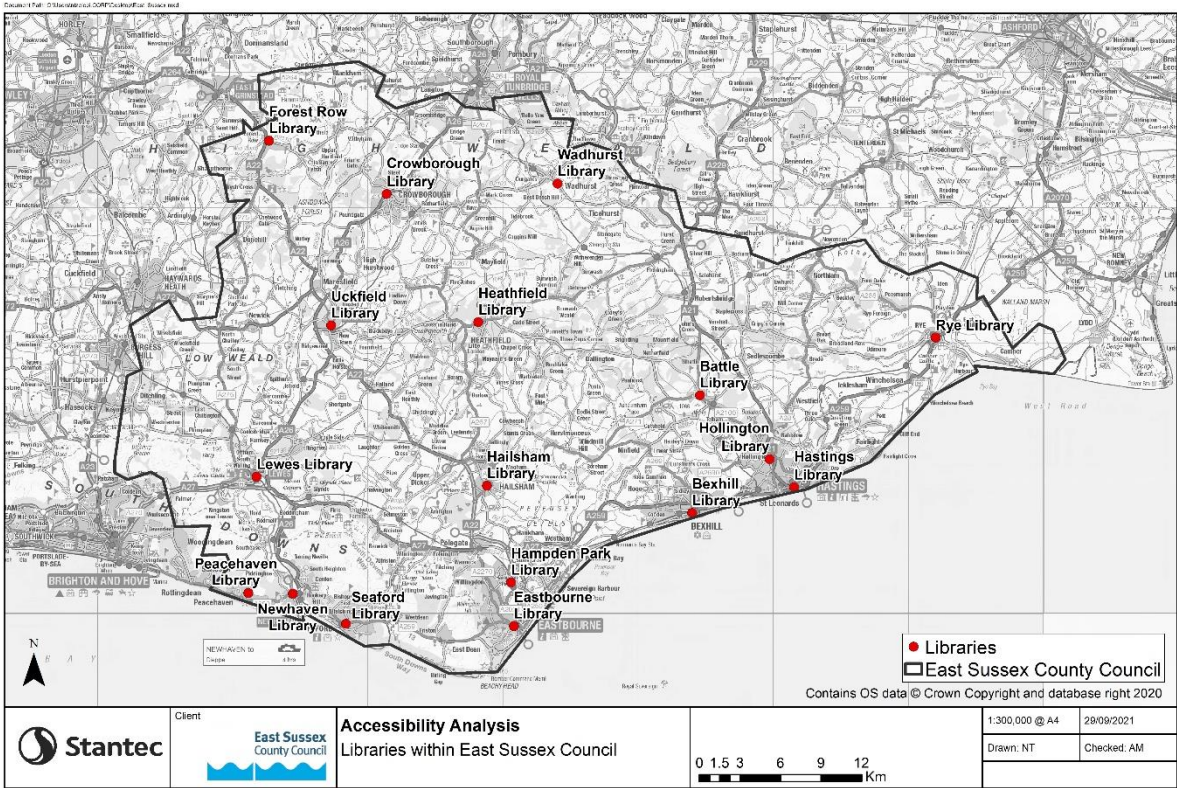


## 2 Building information

### Introduction

- 2.1 The East Sussex Library and Information Service currently has a network of 17 public library buildings. In 2019/20 over 1 million visits took place in these buildings. In addition to the services provided by the Library and Information Service some of our libraries offer services delivered by, or in partnership with, other organisations. The location of the 17 libraries can be seen in Figure 1.
- 2.2 The County Council owns 12 of the 17 libraries freehold. The remaining 5 libraries are leased. A list of the East Sussex libraries, with their freehold/leasehold status is provided in Annex 1 to this Technical Appendix.
- 2.3 The Library and Information Service also leases Ropemaker Park, a modern warehouse unit located in Hailsham, which is the central storage and distribution point for library stock and base for some library service staff, including Librarians and Bibliographic Services. Ropemaker Park is also the County Council's records centre and provides office space to some other County Council services.

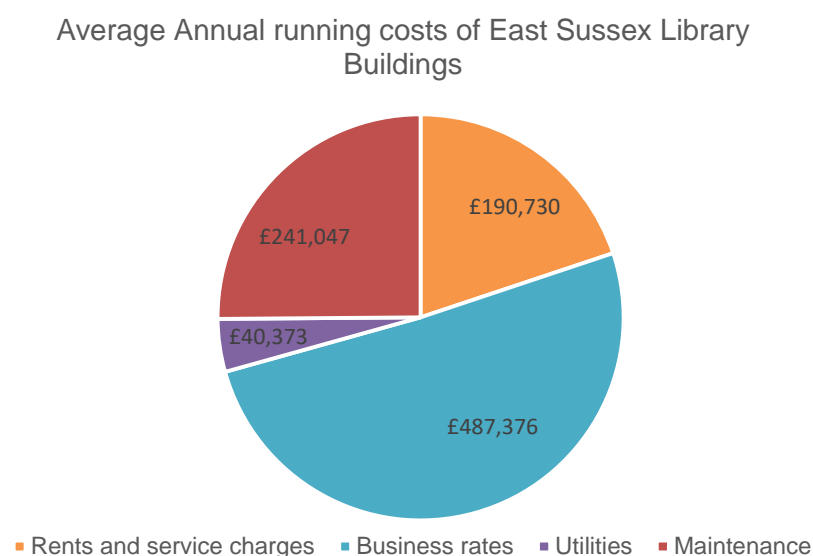
Figure 1: Map of East Sussex library service buildings



## Running costs of Library and Information Services buildings

- 2.4 The total running cost of our buildings, excluding Ropemaker Park, is approximately £959,000 per year. This excludes staffing costs and any income which each library generates from fees and fines, and the costs of refurbishment, new furniture etc., which is detailed separately in the next section. A breakdown of the building costs for the Library and Information Service as a whole can be seen in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Average annual running costs of East Sussex Library Buildings**



## Capital expenditure on libraries

- 2.5 With over 1 million visitors annually, wear and tear on library buildings, furniture and fittings is inevitable, and can cost a considerable amount of money over a number of years. Worn and damaged items can quickly pose a risk to the health and safety of customers and staff or become damaged beyond economic repair.
- 2.6 Of the £959,000 annual running costs of the Library and Information Service's buildings, there is expenditure each year of £241,000 on repair and maintenance. This covers both small repairs such as fixing leaks to much larger scale repairs such as replacing old windows and re-roofing areas of the building. This figure also includes residual servicing costs for libraries that have now closed which were paid in the period 2018/19-2020/21.
- 2.7 On top of this annual maintenance expenditure, the County Council has spent approximately £12.1 million over the last decade on major refurbishment of East Sussex library buildings. This investment in library buildings, as opposed to the paying for the annual running costs, is known as 'capital expenditure'.

- 2.8 East Sussex County Council has committed a capital program of expenditure for libraries until 2030. Each year we work on projects for our libraries to ensure they are safe, in a good state of repair and that they meet the needs of our customers. It is estimated that for the 17 library buildings the service currently operates from this will cost around £2.6 million over the next five years or approximately £513,000 per year. This is in addition to the annual maintenance costs of around £241,000.
- 2.9 The above estimate is based on items associated with general building maintenance and items frequently replaced during a building's lifetime. This includes:
- Repair and replacement of CCTV, security and personal safety items as they fail or become obsolete and beyond economic repair.
  - Replacement of worn and damaged floor coverings and furniture including desks, trolleys, map cabinets etc.
  - Changes to signage, both internal and external to reflect changes in service delivery and opening times.
  - Dilapidations and lease responsibilities arising from any library buildings currently leased or rented.
  - Repair and replacement of equipment specific to the library service such as self-service kiosks and security gates
  - Repair and replacement of furniture needed to respond to statutory requirements for public and staff, such as Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant desks, chairs and adapted technology.



## 3 Review of library properties

### **Opportunities for partnership working or delivering commissioned services**

- 3.1 Library buildings are spaces from which a range of different services are provided to the public, in addition to the core library functions. The range of ways in which the Library and Information Service currently works with partners is described in more detail in Appendix 1 Review of the implementation of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. This section of the Technical Appendix looks at the different ways in which we use library properties in order to meet local needs, looking particularly at the cost effectiveness of the current buildings and opportunities to increase income or share the costs of running them.

### **Making better use of libraries when they are closed**

- 3.2 All of the libraries in East Sussex are closed for periods of time, for example on one or more mornings, afternoons or whole days per week. Many libraries also have movable shelving and furniture which enable the layout to be changed for a few hours to accommodate a wide range of different uses.
- 3.3 Libraries offer opportunities for community groups, voluntary sector organisations, the private sector and other parts of the public sector (including other parts of the County Council) to make more use of these spaces when the Library and Information Service is not using a building to deliver its services. The service welcomes any enquiry for use of its space, subject to government guidelines (Covid-19), any applicable planning permissions, or lease conditions of each building. During the last five years the Library and Information Service has worked with a number of partners to help to reduce financial pressures on the service whilst maximising the use of the spaces available to support local groups or services. This income is directly reinvested into the service to allow teams to continue to deliver services to meet local needs or used to mitigate budget pressures.

### **Library capacity**

- 3.4 During the implementation of the strategy in 2018, it became apparent that shorter individual bookings of the meeting rooms do not always make best use of the library assets.
- 3.5 Libraries have instead explored and entered into longer term leases of parts of the buildings to ensure the sustainability of the arrangement, obtaining longer term income to the service. This means that office spaces, meeting rooms and other available space in the libraries are used continuously, ensuring the sustainability of the space and the income that a particular partnership brings.

- 3.6 Additionally, there are still a number of meeting rooms which are available in two libraries within the county. They are primarily hired on an hourly or session basis (morning, afternoon or full day) although there is the potential to hire the space on a weekly, monthly or other agreed duration period. Meeting rooms can be hired when the library is closed, by prior arrangement. The meeting rooms have a variety of facilities and are located as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Current meeting room provision in library buildings**

Library	Meeting Room detail	Facilities
Newhaven	Meeting Room 1 @ 6m <sup>2</sup>	Wi-Fi, toilets, power, DDA compliant, hearing loop
	Meeting Room 2 @ 6 m <sup>2</sup>	
	Meeting Rooms 1 and 2 can be joined together	
Eastbourne	The Grove room @ 30m <sup>2</sup>	Wi-Fi, toilets, power, DDA compliant, interactive screen, hearing loop
	The Ivy room @ 8m <sup>2</sup>	
	The Grove and Ivy rooms can be joined together	

- 3.7 From 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2020, meeting rooms at Newhaven and Eastbourne libraries generated approximately £5,000 of income. The global pandemic meant that no income was collected in 2020-21 as libraries closed intermittently throughout the year following national lockdown guidance. The Library and Information Service will continue to review the meeting rooms spaces during this next phase of the strategy to ensure that the spaces are being used in the best possible way, maximising income generation opportunities for the service. Typically, rooms are booked for a wide range of uses including business meetings, health programmes, language courses, training, and individual use.
- 3.8 In Newhaven, where the meeting rooms are in the main library space, consideration will also be given to opening them up to library customers, for example for use as study spaces or areas where customers can access library Wi-Fi using their own devices.

### **Opportunities to release library space for alternative use**

- 3.9 Since the implementation of the Strategy in 2018, it has become apparent that the way customers use the library space continues to change. Visitors to libraries and the number of books borrowed from library buildings continue to decrease and use of online services continues to increase.

The Library and Information Service will continue to assess space within our libraries to ensure they are used to their fullest potential. The LIS has worked with other agencies to lease library space:

- Heathfield
- Uckfield
- Eastbourne
- Bexhill
- Hastings
- Lewes
- Rye
- Seaford

Agencies such as the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), National Health Service (NHS) and East Sussex County Council's parking enforcement staff have all leased space within these libraries. The service is committed to continue to seek out new partnership opportunities to ensure that each of the library buildings are being used in the most efficient way possible.

- 3.10 This continuous review of our buildings, space and partnership opportunities means that rental income can be generated and used either as a saving or to be reinvested within the service. Partners have actively helped offset running costs of libraries, whilst reducing property revenue expenditure for themselves at the same time. The service has an overarching view of space available, so we will continue to assess and seek out opportunities to utilise these in the best way possible.
- 3.11 As a result of continued partnerships and leases of library space, we have generated approximately £300,000 per annum which has been used directly to support the service in a sustained, pragmatic way.

### **Further efficiencies**

- 3.12 As identified above, the reduced footfall in libraries and the decline in the number of issues means that libraries need less space than previously required. There is no current evidence to suggest that this trend will stop or reverse in future. With rising rents and business rates, the Library and Information Service will need to continue to identify whether library services could be delivered in the same locality in a more cost-effective way.
- 3.13 In addition to considering the release of space within library buildings as an opportunity for the Library and Information Service to share costs or generate a rental income, there may also, in future, be the potential for library services to be delivered from different locations, in order to reduce costs or to deliver a better service in conjunction with other services, or both. We will monitor how the global pandemic changes the requirements of the service, and aim to adapt to meet the needs of the community. For example, we will assess whether an increase of study spaces would provide adults and young people a safe, comfortable environment in which to work or study.

- 3.14 The County Council continues to work with SPACES partners. SPACES (Strategic Property Asset Collaboration in East Sussex) aims to identify and realise opportunities for co-location and collaboration between community and voluntary sector partners. Partners include East Sussex County Council, the borough and district councils in the county, the emergency services, representatives from the voluntary and community sector, the NHS and some central government services such as the Department for Work and Pensions. We will continue this dialogue to identify any prospective opportunities that may present as employers across all sectors review their space required for teams, the location of offices and the delivery model of their services.
- 3.15 East Sussex County Council has committed to become a carbon-neutral council as soon as possible and by 2050 at the latest. We will work with Property Services to continue to ensure buildings are as energy efficient as possible. We will seek opportunities to improve energy efficiency for library buildings whenever possible.



## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1 The East Sussex Library and Information Service has a network of 17 public library buildings, which host around 1 million visits annually. Many libraries also offer services delivered by, or in partnership with, other organisations. The County Council owns 12 of the 17 libraries, and the remainder are leased from landlords. The Library and Information Service also leases Ropemaker Park in Hailsham, which is the central storage and distribution point for library stock and base for some staff. Ropemaker Park is also the County Council's records centre.
- 4.2 The total running cost of the Library and Information Service buildings, excluding Ropemaker Park, is approximately £959,000 per year, excluding staffing costs, refurbishment costs and income. Around £487,000 is spent on business rates, £241,000 on maintenance and £191,000 on rents and service charges. Utility costs make up the remainder of around £40,000 per year.
- 4.3 With 1 million visitors annually, wear and tear on library buildings, furniture and fittings is inevitable. Worn and damaged items can quickly pose a risk to the health and safety of customers and staff or become damaged beyond economic repair. In the past decade the County Council has spent approximately £12.1 million on major refurbishment of East Sussex library buildings.
- 4.4 East Sussex County Council has committed a capital program of expenditure for libraries until 2030. Each year we work on projects for our libraries to ensure they are safe, in a good state of repair and that they meet the needs of our customers. It is estimated that for the 17 library buildings the service currently operates from will cost around £2.5 million over the next five years or approximately £513,000 per year. This is in addition to the annual maintenance costs of around £241,000.
- 4.5 All of the libraries in East Sussex are closed for periods of time, for example on one or more mornings, afternoons or whole days per week and many have movable shelving and furniture which enable the layout to be changed to accommodate a wide range of different potential uses.
- 4.6 This continuous review of our buildings, space and partnership opportunities means that rental income can be generated and used either as a saving or to be reinvested within the service. Partners have actively helped offset running costs of libraries, whilst reducing property revenue expenditure for themselves at the same time. The service has an overarching view of space available, so we will continue to assess and seek out opportunities to utilise these in the best way possible.
- 4.7 Meeting rooms are available for public hire by individuals, small businesses, charities, local organisations, service providers, partners and private enterprises in two libraries. We will continue to monitor these spaces to ensure we are maximising the opportunity with these resources.

- 4.9 With decreasing visits and issues of items, there are also opportunities to release space within libraries for other organisations to use, so that costs can be shared and a rental income generated for the Library and Information Service.
- 4.10 As a result of continued efforts to maximise the opportunity for leases and medium term rentals with local partners and other East Sussex County Council teams, the Library and Information Service will generate approximately £300,000 per year through a combination of efficiencies and the rental of library space.
- 4.11 The Library and Information Service will continue to identify whether library services could be delivered in the same locality in a more cost-effective way. The Service will also continue to seek out new partnerships to share accommodation with other organisations, in order to reduce costs or to deliver a better service in conjunction with other services, or both.

## Annex 1      Freehold/Leasehold status of East Sussex libraries

Library	Ownership
Battle	Freehold
Bexhill	Freehold
Crowborough	Leased
Eastbourne	Freehold
Forest Row	Leased
Hailsham	Freehold
Hampden Park	Freehold
Hastings	Freehold
Heathfield	Freehold
Hollington	Freehold
Lewes	Freehold
Newhaven	Freehold
Peacehaven	Leased
Rye	Leased
Seaford	Freehold
Uckfield	Freehold
Wadhurst	Leased

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