

Independent review of the support needs of residents living at Kendal Court, Newhaven

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East Sussex Community Voice (ESCV) is an independent community interest company (CIC) specialising in community engagement and insight. It was created in 2013 to be the primary vehicle for delivering the Healthwatch contract in East Sussex. As a CIC, it has built in flexibility to include a wider remit beyond how people experience health and care services and how local communities support people’s overall health and social well-being (Wider Determinants of Health).

East Sussex Community Voice - Registered CIC: 08270069
ESCV delivers Healthwatch East Sussex and
commissions NHS Complaints Advocacy in East Sussex

Introduction

Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) commissioned ESCV to undertake an independent review of the support needs of residents placed at Kendal Court in Newhaven during October and December 2018. BHCC approached ESCV to carry out this study following a number of deaths at Kendal Court in the preceding months.

This review looks at how residents access services in and outside of their placing local authority and the extent to which living at Kendal Court [KC] has had an impact on their access to services.

Review Focus

The focus of this independent review is to gather as much information as possible about:

1. what support services residents need to access while living at Kendal Court
2. what services residents think they need
3. whether they can access them
4. what barriers residents experience in accessing services
5. the residents experience of living at Kendal Court [KC]
6. what works well for them living at Kendal Court and
7. what could be made better

The insight gleaned is intended

- to identify gaps in support provision
- to inform Brighton & Hove City Council work with partners
- to consider the support needs identified in in the resident survey
- to utilise local services in Newhaven and in Brighton & Hove

Background

Kendal Court is leased by BHCC for use as emergency or temporary accommodation for people who otherwise would be homeless.

The building is leased from a Landlord, Colgate and Gray. There are 54 bedsit flats in the building set out over three floors in five adjoining blocks; one block is women only. Up to 50 residents are placed by BHCC where those residents have family or personal connections to the city.

In March 2018, prior to the BHCC commission, ESCV became aware of vulnerable residents at Kendal Court through discussions at the Havens Community of Practice group meetings. GP surgeries in Newhaven reported a spike of people from Brighton & Hove presenting with mental health and complex needs who were living at KC. Sussex Community Development Foundation (SCDA) and the Locality Link worker reported that some Kendal Court residents were accessing local support services.

How we gathered the information

ESCV together with BHCC and in consultation with the landlord developed a survey to interview residents to ascertain the information outlined.

Eight skilled and experienced interviewers were deployed which included a mix of ESCV staff and trained volunteers. Interviews were conducted in pairs during visits where interviewers knocked on doors of the individual flats to invite residents to take part. An option to undertake telephone interviews was also offered and taken up by some residents. Interview rooms at three local community venues were booked as an option to meet the interviewers off-site.

The interviews took place over two weeks in October and again over two weeks in December 2018. A programme of face to face and telephone appointments were offered to residents over 18 days. BHCC Housing Support officers distributed information to all residents a few days before the start dates, offering interview appointments with ESCV and making them aware of the interview options available.

Who did we speak to?

At the start of phase one of the review, 4th October 2018, the status of the 50 flats leased by BHCC was:

- 1 vacant
- 2 reserved
- 47 occupied

However, the occupancy rate changed significantly over the survey timescale as residents moved in and out of the flats.

At the start of phase two of the review, 3rd December 2018, the status of the 50 flats was:

- 14 vacant
- 3 reserved
- 33 occupied

Over the whole survey period, the median occupancy rate was 40 flats. The occupancy rate at the end of the survey period, 12th December 2018, was also 40 flats.

Every attempt was made to access all the residents residing at Kendal Court on the sessions the interviewers visited. When residents were out or not answering, multiple attempts were made to call again. Cards were posted through doors encouraging residents to contact the interviewers visiting KC the following day or by telephone.

Over the two phases of this project in October and December 2018:

- A total of 29 residents were interviewed face to face or by telephone, 72.5% of the median occupancy rate of 40 flats
- Two residents were spoken to but unable to complete the questionnaire
- 5 residents refused

Despite multiple visits, some residents proved impossible to reach. Our findings show some residents coping well at KC while others are vulnerable individuals, some with multiple complex needs and struggling to engage with services.

The survey focused on access to statutory services which relies on the individuals' knowledge of these services. Many residents reported having experienced difficulties with relationships and trust with formal agencies, other residents, friends and family. As a consequence, some residents told us they, and non-responders they had spoken to, were reluctant to engage in the survey.

For many of the interviews, it was not possible to go systematically through the survey form and not every resident answered every question. Some did not want to answer specific questions or struggled to understand some questions, often due in part, to their poor mental health and/or under the influence of alcohol or substances at time of the interview.

Most of the residents interviewed presented as vulnerable due to their visible and sometimes complex health needs, frailty and/or chaotic lifestyle. It was therefore more appropriate to have a **conversation** with the residents covering as many of the survey questions as possible. Not all residents wanted the interviewers in their flat; in this case, surveys were held in the corridor.

However, many respondents were eager to talk to an independent person and shared uninvited details spontaneously. In a small number of cases this involved safeguarding disclosures, and this is discussed further in the Observations section of the report.

What people told us

This report covers the key questions from the survey (Appendix 1) under the following headings:

- Your Support Services
- Where and how you get to your support services
- Access and Information while living at Kendal Court
- Kendal Court: thinking of your stay here

Where the survey asked an **opinion** of the resident, their comments and relevant information given are extrapolated in the appropriate sections.

As part of the survey, all residents were invited to complete an Equality Opportunity Monitoring section at the end of the interview.

Survey: Residents and support services

This section of the survey aimed to capture:

- what health, care or housing support services residents are accessing
- identify any services they feel are not available to them
- how satisfied they are with their main service

29 surveys were completed. Not all respondents answered all the questions.
Direct quotes from residents are in italics.

| Q1: Residents who had used health, care or housing support within the last 6 months | |
|---|-----------|
| Used | 17 |
| Not used | 4 |
| Total responses | 21 |

| Q2: Residents registered with a GP | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Registered | 23 |
| Not registered | 3 |
| Where registered | 7 in Newhaven, 8 in Brighton, 1 out of county, 1 in Eastbourne |
| Total responses | 26 |

Whilst some residents have registered with a GP in Newhaven, others wanted to maintain existing links with their Brighton GP for continuity of care and support, as they envisaged or hoped to be rehoused in Brighton.

| Q3: Residents registered with a Dentist | |
|---|-----------|
| Registered | 5 |
| Not registered | 21 |
| Total responses | 26 |

| Q4: Services residents have used or are using | | |
|--|---|--------------------|
| Services | Currently using (ranked by response) | Have used services |
| Housing support | 11 | 7 |
| GP | 11 | 5 |
| Mental health services | 8 | 4 |
| Voluntary charity care | 8 | 2 |
| Hospital | 3 | 7 |
| Other community support e.g. district nursing | 3 | 2 |
| Drug & Alcohol services | 2 | 3 |
| Adult social care | 1 | 1 |
| Children's services | -- | 1 |
| Dentist | -- | 5 |
| Other | 3 | 2 |

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Q5: The main services people listed that they use | |
| Mental Health: | 9 responses |
| GP: | 5 responses |
| Other services: | 10 responses |
| Meals on wheels, Money advice, diabetic clinic, Adult Social Care, Housing Support, Keyworker & Homefinder | |

| | |
|--|---|
| Q6: Services residents want to use but can't now they are at KC | |
| Yes | 8 |
| No | 10 |
| Total responses | 18 |
| | 'Yes' examples given were dentist, mental health services, Adult Social Care and charities in Brighton. |

| | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| Q7: How satisfied individuals are with their main service | | |
| | | Reasons given |
| Very satisfied | 10 | <i>'after months of neglect the social worker has been outstanding and I can't thank them enough'</i> <i>'Welfare Rights team- very satisfied with'</i> |
| Satisfied | 3 | <i>'Housing support service; some individuals are very good!'</i> |
| Neither satisfied or unsatisfied | 1 | <i>'ASC = okay'</i> |
| Unsatisfied | 2 | <i>'There is no care and support, no follow up from housing support. I've no idea how housing support works'</i> |
| Very unsatisfied | 2 | <i>'Not happy – been referred out of mental health services'</i> <i>'Nothing from the housing support team'</i> |
| Total responses | 18 | |

High levels of satisfaction with main service were recorded, particularly GPs. Satisfaction with mental health and housing support services were more variable. Five residents identified more than one main service and others were unclear about services they are receiving or entitled to now they are at KC.

Some residents were confused as to the name and location of their service or indicated they were no longer accessing services since they had moved out of the Brighton area and believed that they were therefore no longer eligible for the service.

Survey: Where residents go to access their main support service

This section looks at

- where residents go to access their main service
- how they normally travel
- if access to travel affects their ability to access service(s) they need

| Q8: Where residents go to receive their main support service | |
|--|-----------|
| Newhaven | 4 |
| Lewes | 1 |
| Brighton and Hove | 9 |
| Other | 5 |
| Total responses | 19 |

| Q9: Mode of travel to support services | |
|--|-----------|
| Walk | 3 |
| Bus | 8 |
| Car | 1 |
| Train | 5 |
| Other | 3 |
| Total responses | 20 |

Two residents have a bus pass.

One resident does not travel and their social worker visits them at KC.

| Q10: If access to transport affected the resident's ability to get to services they needed | |
|--|-----------|
| Not at all | 3 |
| A little bit | 1 |
| Not really | 5 |
| Quite a lot | 4 |
| It is a problem | 3 |
| Total responses | 16 |

A recurring theme was the cost of travelling to Brighton to access support services: this included friends and family networks.

'It's expensive to travel to Brighton, so I try to have appointments on the days that I work'

'I currently fall through the gap in terms of service boundaries'

To meet the criteria for free transport passes, residents require medical evidence of entitlement. Residents have to prioritise their income to allow for travel costs to and from Brighton.

| Q11: Any other reasons why you cannot get to a service you need? | |
|--|-----------|
| Yes | 6 |
| No | 4 |
| Total responses | 10 |

Four residents felt they were not able to access local mental health services.
 Three residents could not access laundry services.
 Two residents felt anxiety when they travelled on buses to Brighton.
 Two residents were unable to register with a local dentist due to a closed list.
 One resident with mental health issues did not want to access a local service where
 Two residents could not access Brighton only services (RISE and Lighthouse)
 One resident struggled to make a GP appointment

Survey: Access and Information

This section looks at residents' experiences at Kendal Court:

- whether residents can access the right care and support when they need it
- whether they have a choice about where they receive their service
- how safe they feel
- any barriers they encounter to receiving services

| Q12: Experience of living at Kendal Court | | | | | |
|--|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| Statements | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Total |
| I can access the right care and support when needed | 1 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 18 |
| It is easy to access information about my main service | 3 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| I understand the information I am given | 1 | 11 | 1 | 2 | 15 |
| I have a choice about where I receive my service | 0 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 12 |
| I feel safe | 2 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 24 |
| I feel lonely | 5 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 21 |

Some residents accessing multiple services both agreed and disagreed with some of the statements above. In these cases, we recorded their overall experience.

| Q13: Where residents disagreed with the statements above, they were asked to outline why that was | |
|---|--|
| I can access the right care and support when needed | <p>A resident with complex mental health issues and previous substance misuse receives ongoing support from Brighton Crisis Mental Health team but is lonely and isolated. Most of their friendship networks are in Brighton.</p> <p><i>'It does not make sense for me to be stuck out here'</i></p> |
| It is easy to access information about my main service | <p>Some residents feel they have been left at Kendal Court and are not clear whether their MH and other support in Brighton would be transferred to Newhaven.</p> <p>Four residents commented on the lack of housing support.</p> <p><i>'I have a housing officer, but difficult to see him'</i></p> <p><i>'Housing Officer disinterested'</i></p> <p>One resident was aware of the housing officer as they had left our survey form under the door but reported that they had no contact.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | A resident trying to take control over their life felt the BHCC website housing section is difficult to navigate and they struggled |
| I understand the information I am given | <i>'No information given – I never feel safe'.</i> This question was not well understood but several residents commented upon the lack of information provided on arrival at Kendal Court |
| I have a choice about where I receive my service | A resident with complex health issues was given 2 days' notice of their move to Kendal Court and was offered no other choice. Another resident spoke about the very short notice to take up the offer of temporary accommodation - or lose it. One resident going through gender reassignment with all their specialist treatment and support systems provided in Brighton. They said it did not make sense for them to be placed in Newhaven. |
| I feel safe | 11 of the 24 respondents said they did feel safe at Kendal Court but most of the comments were from the 13 who felt unsafe. <i>'I really don't feel safe. Most of the people who live here are single and some have behaviours which I am not comfortable to let my child be around. I don't like it!'</i> <i>'Don't feel safe anywhere – paranoia (MH) I want to be alone'.</i> <i>'I suppose so - in comparison to being on the streets'</i> <i>'I don't feel safe because the access code to enter the external door never changes and can then be used by people once they have left or passed on to others.'</i> <i>'Border line safe – level of aggression here, I'm not well a lot of the time, I can't get help out of hours.'</i> <i>I'm scared to talk to people here...lots of verbal abuse. I am at risk, but also pose a risk to others because of my poor mental health if I am pushed. I go to Brighton where I feel safe when I can, stay over in B&B to feel clean'.</i> A number of residents suggested spy holes and security chains should be on individual front doors to make people feel safer. |
| I feel lonely | <i>'I have been on the waiting list for counselling for a long time due to abuse, bereavement and domestic violence issues and I am concerned that moving here will now mean I have to start again. I still struggle with my MH having been sectioned several times and have no family support for this. I feel that no one is listening'</i> <i>'I feel quite isolated as there are no communal meeting areas in the building and it's located in an area of very few public amenities. Most of the people I know live in Brighton.'</i> Three residents reported not wanting to see or socialise with the |

| | |
|--|---|
| | other residents in KC. Two residents said they would like a communal area at KC to socialise in. Three residents said they preferred to keep to themselves. |
|--|---|

Interviewers had concerns about the impact on residents who were vulnerable with multiple and complex needs who had become isolated with limited access to support services and social networks. This is outlined in the Observations section.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Q14: Have residents encountered barriers to receiving services since being at Kendal Court? | |
| No | 7 |
| Yes | 9 |
| Total responses | 16 |

| | |
|--|---|
| If Yes, the following reasons were given | <p><i>'I've been told that my social care package will only kick in once rehoused back in Brighton'.</i></p> <p>A resident said their anxiety meant they had not explored the area and it prevented them from making an appointment</p> <p>A resident reported they were referred out of the BHCC mental health team since coming to KC</p> |
|--|---|

Three residents claimed that if they severed links to their existing services, they would lose their preferred place of residency.

Two residents thought that as KC is out of the placing authority boundary, services are unwilling to provide the on-going support they need. This can result in residents feeling a sense of abandonment and during five interviews residents described 'being dumped' at Kendal Court.

| | |
|---|--|
| Q15: What has worked well for residents at Kendal Court? | |
| Factors that residents reported have worked well are in bold type. Comments given by residents are in <i>italics</i> | |
| <i>'The building is a big improvement on my previous temporary accommodation which was very damp and uncared for – broken locks etc'.</i> | |
| <i>'I was assigned a ground floor room due to my health issues and the view of a garden has kept me sane'.</i> | |
| <i>'It's ok so far, recently moved in'</i> | |
| A young resident who had never experienced living anywhere but on the streets said KC was positive because of the one-to-one support from a charitable agency support worker who had supported their move into KC by finding furniture and providing ongoing support. <i>'Really good to have St Mungo's worker helping me'</i> | |
| One appreciated his independence and own facilities having been in a hostel in Eastbourne where you signed in and out and shared a kitchen and bathroom. | |
| A new resident was happy to be here, having been on the street for some time. | |

| |
|--|
| <i>'Pleased to get somewhere!'</i> |
| <i>'Settling in and sorting a GP out; will stay in Newhaven for all services. Need appointment with MH team'</i> |
| A resident who wanted to move as far away from Brighton and Sussex as possible, organised themselves with KC internet access and researched available accommodation in their preferred area. |
| The seven residents registered with a Newhaven GP all said they valued them highly and no resident reported bad GP care regardless of location. |
| <i>'Accommodation is not the problem, people are eg. drug addicts, needles lying around, 2 drug overdose deaths'</i> |
| <i>'Accommodation ok – people are the problem'</i> |
| Three residents spoke about accessing the ' Food Bank ' service in Newhaven . Through conversations with other residents, respondents learnt of the Food Bank and we have learnt it is used frequently. Informal support received is valuable to wellbeing at KC. |
| A respondent liked the idea of not having support, and no one checking on them . |
| "Nothing" had worked well was recorded for four residents |

| |
|---|
| Q16: What could be made better at Kendal Court? |
| This question prompted the most responses from residents. Factors that residents reported that could be better are in bold type, resident comments are in <i>italics</i> . |
| [1] Travel pass for Kendal Court residents Seven residents travelling to Brighton complained of the high travel costs to access the services they required as they were largely outside of Newhaven. These residents also sought the support and company of family and friends outside of KC as key to their wellbeing. Two residents said that a travel pass would alleviate much anxiety and financial hardship in accessing their support and care services in Brighton. |
| [2] Information for new residents A minority of residents reported arriving at KC with little or no social, healthcare or housing support in place. Most residents were unfamiliar with the area when moving in, having their networks, support and connections in the Brighton area. There was no formal signposting to local services and support, they had to find out from other residents or the caretaker. Eight residents have developed links with local community groups and agencies in Newhaven that offer support which mitigates the risks of isolation and deprivation. Some of these residents would have liked better access to services/resources that are available in Newhaven and two residents mentioned positive support they received from a charity and the food bank. |
| [3] Improvements to the fabric of the building. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>'Heating system is inadequate, and the windows don't close properly'</i>; One resident reporting they frequently had bugs and creepy crawlies dropping on their face whilst they were sleeping at night. |

- ‘There have also been **leaks** in the winter and **mould**’.
- ‘There is no adequate insulation, noise passes through walls and my clothes get damp’
- ‘**Banisters** fitted to all stairwells.’
- ‘No-one ever cleans the communal stairways, there is always dust and cobwebs’
- ‘Having a **TV Ariel** in the room would make a huge difference to my daily living. Helping me keep connected with the outside world.’
- ‘Offering **recycling** facilities, providing **storage** space.’
- Two residents spoke about **Fire Alarms** repeatedly being set off, often at night. A resident raised concerns about fire procedures as living on the top floor they would find it hard to escape. Several residents were observed smoking in their flats, some vulnerable with mobility issues or high alcohol and drug users.
- ‘A **central area for residents to meet**, a laundry and outside usable space’ would improve the Kendal Court resident's welfare and integration.
- Three residents spoke about ‘management’ issues with the property which added to their already low mood and poor mental health.

[4] Improvement to the security system.

The majority of residents do not feel safe (see Q.12) and other residents said the block can be very noisy with regular altercations.

None of the front doors have spy holes or security chains fitted. The numbered key pads to gain access from outdoors can be accessed by other people aware of the combination.

*‘I don’t feel safe here with a child. People are often drunk and arguing. I don’t feel I can trust people here. There is no proper **emergency contact** available’.*

‘I don’t feel safe at night or weekends when there is no caretaker here’

[5] Improving the relationship with local residents and services

Vulnerable people out of their preferred place of residency have an impact on the local networks.

Four residents and the caretaker reported violent incidents and arguments involving residents, including an altercation at the pub nearby where the Landlord refuses to have KC residents.

In the immediate vicinity, the neighbouring nursery commented to interviewers that they have found ‘used needles’ in the play area for children and that two residents are suspected of acting inappropriately towards young children (reported to the Police).

‘The immediate area is also quite run down, and I do worry that we are vulnerable here. But part of my homeless application moving on is that I accept this placement.’

‘When you tell shopkeepers, local people and taxi drivers you live at Kendal Court they look down on you’

[6] Basic items provided in the flat on tenancy

Most residents spoke of receiving little or no support to move in. Some had very few personal possessions, including minimum essentials for preparing and eating food, no bedding and pillows.

A mother with a toddler had not been told there were no laundry facilities in the building or in Newhaven.

We met a new resident who came with three bags of possessions but no food, bedding, bed, pots and pans, having just come from a drug rehab unit.

Interviewers observed some comfortable and warm flats, but others were sparse, neglected and malodorous. One resident's flat was chaotic, and they are currently sleeping on the floor as the bed was too uncomfortable.

'When I was moved here with my toddler there was no bed for him, I had to sort one through my family in Brighton'

[7] Having access to laundry facilities.

Most respondents referred to the lack of laundering facilities. This ranged from the practical barriers to the impact it had on them trying to re-organise their lives.

'Currently I have no choice but to take a bus to and from Seaford to use public facilities there. This makes me feel that the council have no regard for me, that I am almost a non-person not entitled to the dignity of being able to wash my clothes at home. It makes me angry and frustrated adding to my depleting sense of self-worth.'

'Providing communal facilities such as laundry.'

[8] An improved system for residents accessing electricity

Eight people mentioned the system of paying for electricity. This must be done through the caretaker who they pay to top up their meter through a key system. He is only available Monday to Friday, 9am- 5pm.

Three residents reported arriving at Kendal Court with no money to purchase electricity, one at the weekend when it was not possible to purchase electricity.

'The way you have to pay for electricity is inhumane and degrading. There is no facility to top up if you run out when the caretaker is not here; most people here don't prioritise checking they have enough electric! They don't check the electric meter reading to see when they are about to run out.'

Residents are not clear if there is any system in place for accessing emergency tokens out of the caretakers normal working hours, but one resident reported he had never been able to access them.

The existing system is costly for residents, increasing their risk of fuel poverty. Three residents asked interviewers to look into how much they were charged for electricity.

[9] Kendal Court is not a place for children

During the survey period, there were two potentially vulnerable children in residence

with single mothers as the lone carer. Their homeless status warrants a Safeguarding alert.

To escape an abusive relationship, a young mother with a toddler was placed in KC with no other choice offered. She feels unsafe and is anxious about other residents' activity and noise at night. She has witnessed several distressing events KC with the current mix of residents. There are no facilities for children and she has concerns with winter approaching. She works 2 days in Brighton and is unaware of local children's services in Newhaven or of local health visitors, though is registered with a local GP. She is eager to be housed in Brighton where she has family support mechanisms.

'I'm scared to talk to people here...lots of verbal abuse.'

'This is not a suitable environment for children to be placed'

Two residents with children were vulnerable themselves due to their visible and complex health needs.

'I really don't feel safe. Most of the people who live here are single and some have behaviours which I am not comfortable to let my child be around. I don't like it!'

[10] A key worker or advocate located at Kendal Court

The survey conversations repeatedly indicated the need of some residents to secure better access to their existing services, or have additional support, in a timely and efficient manner.

Three residents expressed concerns about local drug and alcohol services, including how they could access services from KC. Two residents currently go to Brighton and one to Eastbourne for their support.

Moving out of their area, residents were sometimes unclear who, when or where their support would come from. Three residents indicated they had a key worker who coordinated their support. An additional four residents asked interviewers for help in getting further support.

'somebody to help me such as a social worker'

[11] Emergency Contact

Residents said they want access to someone in an emergency when the caretaker is not on site. If something goes wrong out of hours, they have no one to contact in an emergency.

'If you call the BHCC number out of hours, they tell you that they have no access to keys to the building and the caretaker does not answer calls outside of 9–5 on weekdays.'

Even when the caretaker is available, he is not trained as a support worker to deal with residents with complex health and social support needs. The caretaker takes high levels of responsibility and in doing so is taking personal risks.

[13] Improve the reputation of KC as a ‘dumping ground’.

There is a sense from some residents that individuals are dumped at KC and forgotten. The four deaths at KC over the year was mentioned by most residents interviewed.

One resident indicated that during a subsequent council inspection, a further body was allegedly discovered. This reinforced the reputation that you are forgotten at KC. He felt the removal of the deceased and clearing of the resident's flats by the authority was conducted insensitively and was degrading and disrespectful to the deceased and existing residents.

*‘Improve **welfare checks** on the residents in flats from the housing department. I was left quite traumatised in the summer being blamed for the presence of flies and a very unpleasant smell in the block. And it was only when a visitor lifted my vinyl flooring to find maggots from the decomposing body of a fellow resident in the room next door. Where was the care for that person?’ Who checked on him over the months? People are unsafe because they are isolated.’*

Another distressed vulnerable resident said he had little ‘official’ support. His mother lives in Brighton and does his washing. He spoke openly about ‘doing something stupid’ because of loss and isolation he is experiencing and his history of mental illness.

A very frail elderly gentlemen has been in KC over two years with no support services with evidence of severe self-neglect and vulnerable to potential financial abuse. He said he received no regular support and had not seen a GP for over four years. He wanted a social worker to help sort things out, including daily living. He stated he was lonely.

[14] Ensuring the suitability of the resident to Kendal Court.

There is evidence in residents' feedback that their care and support needs are considered prior to being offered a placement at Kendal Court. The suitability of the accommodation featured more positively in these cases..

We heard examples of where some residents have positive experiences living at Kendal Court. These were more able residents who are planning their next steps, developing relationships, securing access to the internet and are proactive about finding longer-term accommodation.

It was difficult to conclude that all individuals are consistently offered or have access to the right support services. Residents reported being placed without any or an inadequate assessment of need or support from a dedicated worker. Two residents had difficulties accessing their first-floor accommodation due to their mobility disabilities.

A resident with a physical disability and limited mobility had been at KC for well over 2 years. He said BHCC had sent information about other possible places, but none were suitable because of his disability. He felt he was wasting his time going to look at these places. He felt isolated and sometimes suicidal.

One resident reported that being placed at KC from Brighton now meant that they had difficulty providing support for their father who lived in a residential home in Portslade.

'Accommodation is not the problem, people are! e.g. drug addicts, needles lying around, 2 drug overdose deaths'

The survey identified unsupported marginalised individuals with multiple complex needs being co-located. At least three residents had drug and alcohol issues, with at least one being on methadone.

A resident described the situation as a *'ticking time bomb'*, arising from *'difficult geographical location and a toxic mix of residents'*.

| Q17: How long residents had been at Kendal court | |
|--|----|
| less than 2 weeks | 4 |
| 2-4 weeks | 5 |
| 4-7 weeks | -- |
| 2-5 months | 4 |
| 6-12 months | 6 |
| 13-18 months | 2 |
| +2 years | 2 |

Equality Monitoring Overview

Respondents were invited to provide some equality monitoring information at the end of their conversation. This information was voluntary and where responses were given these are shown in the tables below.

| Are you? | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Male | 12 |
| Female | 3 |
| Total responses | 15 |

| Age Range | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| 25-34 | 4 |
| 35-44 | 4 |
| 45-54 | 1 |
| 55-64 | 2 |
| 65-74 | 0 |
| 75 and over | 1 |
| Total Responses | 12 |

| Ethnicity | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| White British / White Irish | 10 |
| Indian | 1 |
| Black African / Caribbean | 1 |
| Total Responses | 12 |

| Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability as set out in the Equality Act 2010? | |
|---|-----------|
| Yes, a lot | 8 |
| Yes, a little | 3 |
| No | 1 |
| Total responses | 12 |

Where responses were positive that a person did find their activities limited the following reasons were given.

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Mental Health Condition | 8 |
| Physical Impairment | 2 |
| Sensory Impairment | 1 |
| Other (*) | 1 |
| (*) related to HIV & Dyslexia | |

Observations

Duty of Care

The interviewers were selected because of their considerable experience with vulnerable people, including homeless individuals, in social and healthcare settings. Nevertheless, their observations of the wellbeing, mental health and everyday functioning of a significant number of residents was difficult and challenging.

During the survey conversations, unsolicited, some residents readily spoke of unmet needs and potential risk. As part of their Duty of Care, interviewers shared these disclosures with the ESCV survey manager and director.

Potential and actual safeguarding issues, for both children and adults, were apparent on most occasions KC was visited. These included self-harm, potential financial abuse and neglect. These residents needed to be more fully assessed for risk whilst at KC. Two appeared to have no link with key workers, agencies or family, increasing their vulnerability and risk.

Most unease involved residents who disclosed substance and alcohol misuse, multiple needs and mental illness. We interviewed two residents who are particularly isolated, vulnerable and who cannot self-refer. As a consequence, a small number of concerns were escalated to BHCC housing officer regarding specific residents or general issues. Assurances were sought that the relevant support services provided by BHCC were alerted to the situation.

Interestingly, interviewers noted that residents surveyed in December, the later cohort, appeared to have a more positive attitude to living in KC, were more eager to engage with interviewers [some requested to complete a telephone survey] and appeared to be more in control of their lives. This may be due to their recent arrival, the on-site familiarity and trust of the survey and interviewers, or changes to the way that residents are allocated to KC.

Caretaker

The caretaker was invaluable to interviewers. He offered the survey team helpful direction and valuable information about accessing residents for interviews.

Though untrained, his experience and close daily links means he acts as the go-between for BHCC housing and the residents. Though not his role, as a concerned citizen, he frequently alerts support services, including the police and ambulance, for the safety of the residents.

For many residents, especially new ones, he is the only contact that they had to helping them access their electricity, furniture and directions to secure food and other support. A frequent comment was the fact that a recognised and regular face on the site made residents feel safer and less isolated.

Living at Kendal Court

Overall, of the residents that responded, it appeared that there were an equal number of residents that were reasonably happy or unhappy to be living at KC. A number reported having positive experiences, especially where they had 'been on the street' previously. More experienced users of emergency housing and homelessness said they appreciated the individual privacy of their flats and not having to share facilities.

Interviewers observed at first hand that many flats were comfortable, reasonably furnished and were light, dry and warm. These were also the flats that were clean and well kept. Residents that reported they liked their flats were more likely to have made them homely. Where residents had been there for some time, all had a TV.

Satisfaction with KC did not necessarily correlate with whether residents were happy with their location out of Brighton. A young mother who desperately wanted to be in Brighton had made a comfortable home for her and her child in KC. She was 'sitting it out' to get rehoused in Brighton.

Although all of the residents in KC are vulnerable and in need of support by virtue of their placement in emergency housing by BHCC, many respondents indicated their life was made worse and more difficult by being placed at KC. These residents appeared to be long term users of a more complex mix of health and social care services plus charity and community support. Many are isolated from friends and family by being placed in Newhaven, sometimes leading to social isolation, deteriorating mental health and escalating their need for services.

Conclusions

Selection of Kendal Court residents

We heard residents who had positive experiences of living at Kendal Court. Many were glad to have moved to Newhaven and be out of Brighton. They saw Kendal Court as a 'new start' to organising their lives. Residents that reported a positive view were mainly individuals who organised themselves, could prioritise and self-managed their day to day routines.

A greater ratio of residents that would be better suited to living here may possibly reduce the problems and reputation of KC. Residents with a multiplicity of complex health and social care needs, particularly mental health, already have challenges that mean any placement would be difficult for them. Improved selection may well benefit residents, BHCC and the Newhaven community.

Isolation from support services and poor daily living facilities were more often mentioned as a failing, not the flats themselves.

Laundry facilities

Difficult access to laundry facilities is a major barrier to residents organising and regulating their lives. Having no facilities at KC or even in Newhaven mitigates the safe care aspired to and encouraged in most of this resident group. Virtually all residents felt being clean and dignified improves confidence and self-worth.

Out-of-Hours Contact

The lack of an out-of-hours emergency contact was a common concern for residents, the caretaker himself and interviewers.

Having a caretaker is a key component to the experience of those who were positive about living at KC. The present incumbent has no training or support for the role and position he often finds himself in.

Additional support whilst at Kendal Court

With the current mixed calibre of residents, additional support was reported consistently as being needed. A majority of residents wanted more holistic guidance and clear signposting to relevant services and additional support to attend meetings and appointments.

Information should be given to all new residents, and a copy on display in each flat and main stairway. This would include contact details for local services such as GPs, dentists, mental health, food bank, laundry facilities etc.

It may be safer and achieve better outcomes to have advocacy services available to support KC residents and for more vulnerable residents to be assigned a case worker. Vulnerable residents who have a key worker or support from friends and family networks appeared to have better experiences of living in Kendal Court; they are more resilient in coping with the travelling to and from Brighton to maintain access their preferred services and services only available there.

With difficult and expensive journeys to their fractured support services, living at KC often means there are more barriers to residents trying to manage their lives.

Safeguarding

Potential and actual Safeguarding issues were apparent on most occasions KC was visited by the experienced interviewers.

Inadequate assessment of needs and inappropriate placement of some residents mean they become vulnerable and at risk by their very allocation to KC.

To meet the multi-agency safeguarding expectations, it appears vulnerable residents should have a more robust appraisal of their care and support needs **prior** to considering a placement at KC.

Safety

Getting residents to participate in the survey was extremely difficult but not surprising in this client group. We believe some residents chose not to answer their door. Residents and interviewers consider spy holes and security chains on the doors would reduce a reluctance to answer callers and help residents feel safer in their flats at all times.

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ESCV would like to acknowledge the support of all those concerned in producing this report. Most of all we would like to thank the residents of Kendal Court for sharing their personal experiences with us. We would like to thank ESCV volunteers and staff for their help with all aspects of this project.

The caretaker and owner of Kendal Court enabled us free access at all times and were indispensable to the smooth running of our interview schedule. Officers at BHCC helped facilitate our interview schedule with residents and Sussex Community Development Association helped us access some residents through their services in Newhaven.

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