Report to:	**Cabinet**
Date:	**27 June 2023**
By:	**Chief Executive**
Title of report:	**Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) – State of the County**
Purpose of report:	**To update Members on the issues which need to be taken into account in the priority and budget setting process for 2024/25 and beyond**

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Cabinet is recommended to:

i **note the evidence base on demographics (Appendix 1) and the national and local policy outlook (Appendix 2);**

ii **review the priority outcomes and delivery outcomes (Appendix 3) and agree these as the basis of the Council's business and financial planning, subject to the proposed amendments set out in paragraph 4;**

iii **agree officers update the Medium Term Financial Plan as the basis for financial planning when more information is available, as set out in paragraph 5;**

iv **agree officers update the Capital Strategy and programme (Appendix 4) as set out in paragraph 6; and**

v **receive reports on more detailed plans for 2024/25 and beyond in the autumn when there is greater certainty about future resources.**

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1. Background

1.1 The State of the County report is a key part of the Council's Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process, our integrated business and financial planning cycle. The report sets out an overview of the current context in preparation for more detailed planning for 2024/25 and beyond. In conjunction with our 2022/23 year end monitoring report, it reflects on our achievements over the last year, the challenges in the year ahead arising from both local and national factors and, in light of this, begins to refine our plans to guide our business planning and budget setting processes.

1.2 This report contains the normal elements included in the State of the County report: the demographic evidence base; the national and local policy outlook; and updates on the Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Programme. It provides our latest understanding of how we will need to continue to respond to the wide range of policy, demographic and financial drivers which influence the outlook for the Council in the short and longer term.

1.3 Uncertainty continues to define the context within which we are working. The challenging national economic environment, including the increased cost of living, continues to affect our residents, and to generate ongoing cost and resource pressures on the Council itself. The financial outlook for the Council remains unclear, with a further one year financial settlement anticipated for 2024/25 and any significant national reforms to local government funding unlikely before the next general election, which is expected in 2024. Many of our

major, demand-led, services are subject to significant national reforms, with associated service and financial risks, and there is a continuing pressing need to work towards addressing the impacts of climate change.

1.4 Within this uncertain national environment, we continue to experience increased demand for services locally, arising from demographic changes, increased need and the longer term impacts of Covid. There are also challenges securing the skilled workforce we need to respond to the pressures we face and to develop our services for the future. Taken together, these national and local factors make future service and financial planning very challenging. In this context, we will need to continue to take action proactively to prepare for the time ahead, to maximise our resilience as an organisation and to best manage growing demand for our services.

1.5 It therefore remains essential that we focus our resources, in partnership with others, in the most effective way to support our priorities and core service provision. The Council spends over £1bn gross each year (in the region of £500m net) on services for the county's residents and businesses. RPPR is the process through which we ensure our financial and other resources are aligned to delivery of our priority outcomes and that we are informed by a clear understanding of our effectiveness. This approach, additional short-term Government support, and many years of careful financial management have enabled us to maintain a secure financial position in recent years, providing service stability during a difficult time for the county. However, the financial outlook in the medium term remains very challenging, with a number of key risks which cannot yet be fully defined, creating an imperative to use the current window of opportunity to equip the council as best we can to meet the challenges ahead.

1.6 As well as our continued work locally on strategies to manage demand and maximise efficiency, the report sets out the ongoing need for proactive lobbying and communications to help ensure that the Government is aware of the needs of our county and the ongoing and urgent need for a sustainable funding regime that appropriately reflects local need. In particular we will highlight the need for service reforms, particularly those in children's services and adult social care, to be fully and sustainably funded if we are to maintain core services in the future in light of growing demand and stretched resources.

2. Current Position

2.1 The key role the County Council plays for the residents, communities and businesses of East Sussex continued to be evident over the past year as the county was impacted by a range of national and international factors. The need for our support has been intensified by the pressures on the cost of living, which disproportionately impact on the most vulnerable, and we have continued to work with partners and communities across the county to support those seeking refuge from the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and on the wider response to migration. Through our services, employment, purchasing and how we work in partnership with others the Council makes a significant contribution to quality of life for people across our county. Our assessments of the ongoing levels of need arising from recent developments continue to be refined and will influence our plans as we better understand the longer-term implications.

2.2 In developing our medium and longer term plans we will need to have regard to the broader context in which we will be working. The national policy environment continues to develop rapidly, with significant reforms brought forward by Government across a wide range of services. The national and local context includes:

- The challenging and uncertain national economic situation, current high levels of inflation and the increased cost of living, particularly high energy, fuel and food

prices. This environment is likely to continue to impact on the demand for our services as well as directly on the costs of providing services.

- The Government's economic and policy agenda, in particular the priorities outlined by the Prime Minister on the NHS, migration, economic growth and stabilising the economy, as well as the ongoing Levelling Up agenda and changes to arrangements for driving economic growth locally.

- Specific uncertainty over the future of local government funding. A planned funding review, covering the formula on which funding allocations to individual local authorities are based, now appears to be deferred beyond the next general election, and a further one year financial settlement is expected for 2024/25. In addition, major national reforms to Adult Social Care (ASC) and Children's Services (see below) carry considerable financial risks for local authorities.

- Challenges in the labour market, including the impact of significant workforce shortages in key sectors on our ability to recruit and retain staff, ongoing pay negotiations and the potential for industrial action, coupled with the need for our workforce to adapt to service reforms. Alongside this, rapidly developing advances in technology present potential new opportunities to support capacity and efficiency.

- The impact of Government reviews and reforms of public services – whilst major reforms to ASC charging (reported at State of the County 2022) have been postponed until 2025, other national reforms are being progressed, particularly in Children's Services. We are also continuing to respond to a range of significant national and local developments and pressures in health and social care and taking forward a range of work to manage demand and improve outcomes.

- The growing impact of climate change, the national and local commitments to achieve carbon neutrality, the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change, and the introduction of a range of new measures through the Environment Act including new duties in relation to food waste.

- Significant national policy developments related to planning, infrastructure, and transport and, locally, the mobilisation of our new highways contract and additional investment in highways, and taking forward our Bus Services Improvement Plan and refresh of our Local Transport Plan.

- The increasing need to respond to migration in light of global conflicts, increased numbers of people seeking asylum, including unaccompanied children, and new Government policy on immigration.

- Further development of positive work with our public and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) partners on financial inclusion and building community wellbeing and resilience, in response to the increased need in our communities and as part of our ongoing work to help people help themselves.

- The evolving nature and importance of our partnerships in harnessing the collective resources and assets available within the county for the benefit of our communities.

2.3 The local and national policy outlook at Appendix 2 sets out the latest thinking on these and other current issues, although plans will continue to develop over the summer as more information emerges.

2.4 Our relatively stable financial position for 2023/24 presents an opportunity to intensify our ongoing work to maximise organisational resilience, make best use of our resources, and to equip our services for future demands, given the significant challenges ahead. As part of this we will seek out further opportunities to benefit from advances in new technology, building on work already undertaken to introduce new digital and artificial intelligence approaches and systems which benefit both service delivery and capacity. For example, our 'digital by default' approach in Adult Social Care and the development of our universal digital offer in Children's Services. We will continue to assess our future workforce requirements and orient our recruitment, retention and organisational development strategies towards ensuring we have the diverse and skilled staff we will need. Work to rationalise and adapt our office estate in line with post-Covid needs will run alongside this. Our long-standing focus on demand management and preventative approaches will continue, supporting people and communities to be independent wherever possible, including through the introduction of Family Safeguarding, the further integration of community health and care services, and the development of community networks to bolster and link up existing local support. Proposed additional investment in the resilience of the roads which support the local economy and our communities is set out elsewhere on this agenda.

2.5 As part of our RPPR planning we will systematically consider any further actions which may reduce the need for support in the future or improve our ability to respond to new challenges. As always, our approach will be evidence-based, draw on best practice and use data and benchmarking to identify where we can improve and to ensure value for money.

2.6 This ongoing discipline will ensure the council is as resilient as possible for the future. However, fundamentally there remains a significant gap between the income we currently expect to receive in the coming years and the costs of providing core services, with significant additional risk arising from service reforms. Without further Government support or sustainable reform of local government finances we will not have the funding we need for the future. Further detail on the financial outlook is provided at paragraph 5.

2.7 In all our activities, and in planning for the future, the County Council continues to work to our guiding principles that:

- We are effective stewards of public money and deliver good value for money through strong integrated business planning;
- Our activities are transparent and we can be held to account;
- We operate as One Council and focus on agreed priority outcomes;
- We prioritise the investment available for front line service delivery and maximise the resources available, including work to secure sustainable national funding and partnerships with other organisations;
- We carry out all we do professionally and competently;
- We remain ambitious, optimistic and realistic about what can be achieved; and
- We strive to be a good employer and partner.

3. Demographic and Demand Changes and Financial Background

3.1 Appendix 1 sets out the key factors affecting the County in relation to demography, housing, deprivation, health, the environment and economy, and the impact these are having on demand for our services. Some challenges are shared by many of our residents, whilst some areas and communities are more impacted than others by particular issues. The main issues driving demand are:

- **Older People** - East Sussex remains ahead of the national ageing population trend. Proportionately we have high numbers of over 65s and over 85s which has an impact on the demand for services and the Council's finances. Rother has the second highest percentage of the population aged 65 years and over in the country.

- **Children and Young People** – we continue to see higher levels of demand for children's social care and more complex cases which together have resulted in a higher number of child protection cases. The number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) continues to increase.

- **Asylum seekers and refugees** – there has been a recent increase in the rate of people receiving asylum support within the county, particularly in our coastal communities. Unaccompanied asylum seeking children made up a quarter of those children who began to be looked after last year. The county also has a high number of Ukrainians who continue to be supported through our Homes for Ukraine programme, many of whom are living in Wealden.

- **Economy** - employment rates have increased over the last year as the economy recovers from the pandemic. However, the challenges that existed pre-pandemic relating to productivity and average wages for those employed within the county remain. The increases in utilities costs over the last year and the continued increased cost of living is expected to continue to impact on the growth of our economy.

- **Climate change –** CO2 emissions were falling in all sectors in East Sussex except transport before the pandemic. Although we had the lowest emissions of carbon dioxide per person of all the county council areas in England, further reductions will be needed.

4. Council Priority Outcomes

4.1 The Council's business and financial planning is underpinned by our four priority outcomes, which provide a clear focus for decisions about spending and savings and direct activity across the Council.

4.2 The current four priority outcomes are:

- Driving sustainable economic growth;
- Keeping vulnerable people safe;
- Helping people help themselves; and
- Making best use of resources now and for the future.

The priority outcome that the Council makes the "best use of resources now and for the future" is a test that is applied to all activities to ensure sustainability of our resources, both in terms of money and environmental assets. It ensures that the future impact of the choices we make about using resources is actively considered across all that we do, as well as the here and now.

4.3 The priority outcomes, and their subsidiary delivery outcomes, were reviewed and updated during 2022/23 with some amendments made to delivery outcomes to ensure they reflected the post-Covid environment. Recognising our continually evolving operating context, some specific further amendments to delivery outcomes are now proposed to ensure the priorities we are working to deliver, and the way we measure the performance of our activities and services, remain appropriate.

4.4 The current priority and delivery outcomes are attached at Appendix 3 (section a) and the following changes are proposed to delivery outcomes:

Helping people help themselves
Two changes are proposed to reflect the increasing importance of mutual support in people's networks and communities and work the Council is undertaking with partners to facilitate this:

- The most vulnerable get the support they need to maintain their independence, **supported by their social networks,** and this is provided at or as close to home as possible
- Through working well with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, individuals, families and communities are supported ~~to be independent and~~ to thrive.

Making best use of resources now and for the future
One change is proposed to reflect the increasing importance of planning for future workforce needs:

Delete:
- We are an employer of choice and support our staff to achieve and develop

To be replaced with:
- **We are an employer of choice and our staff are supported to achieve and develop, ensuring we have the workforce we need to deliver services both now and in the future**.

The proposed updated delivery outcomes, including the above amendments, are also shown at Appendix 3 (section b).

4.5 Cabinet is asked to review the current priority and delivery outcomes and agree them as the basis for future business and financial planning, subject to the amendments outlined in paragraph 4.4 above.

5. Medium Term Financial Plan

5.1 When the 2023/24 balanced budget was approved by Full Council on 7 February 2023, the deficit on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2025/26 was £40.672m. Updating the MTFP for normal factors (such as the latest inflation rates and an additional year), the position would have been a deficit budget position by 2026/27 of £55.499m. The MTFP position does not account for the impact of Adult Social Care reform, and if grant funding for social care, currently announced for two years, continues at the same level after 2024/25, the deficit would reduce by £28.2m:

Medium Term Financial Plan	**2024/25 £m**	**2025/26 £m**	**2026/27 £m**
Annual Budget Deficit / (Surplus)	**4.024**	**41.811**	**9.664**
Total Budget Deficit / (Surplus)	**4.024**	**45.835**	**55.499**

5.2 The current economic climate has meant the rate of inflation remains at levels not seen for several decades, which has led to an unprecedented level of financial uncertainty. At a national level, the Government funding that ESCC will receive between 2024/25 – 2026/27 is yet to be confirmed. While the provisional local government settlement in December 2022 included some indicative figures for two years of funding – notably for social care – the Local Government Financial Settlement was only a one-year settlement for 2023/24. We therefore await the provisional settlement for 2024/25, which will be in the late autumn of 2023.

5.3 To address pressures in the social care system, the Government announced grant funding as part of the Autumn Statement 2022 to support social care and hospital discharge, together with the continuation of the Services Grant and the delayed rollout of Adult Social Care charging reform from October 2023 to October 2025. While this will enable us to maintain a degree of financial stability for 2023/24, demand and costs will continue to grow, and there will be additional expectations arising from national reforms, bringing new and sustained financial and service pressures which will impact on our MTFP and ability to meet needs.

5.4 In 2022/23 Children's Services overspent against budget by £11.477m, with the largest pressures seen in Early Help and Social Care and Home to School Transport. Containing costs in Children's Services continues to be a significant challenge across the country, against the background of increased demand and complexity of needs emerging from the pandemic and acute supply side shortages. The department has developed a sustainability plan to improve outcomes for children, while reducing costs to the council. The MTFP contains significant increased investment in support of this plan, while the Senior Leadership Team continues to explore further mitigations and opportunities to save costs where possible.

5.5 The delay to the Fairer Funding Review has meant greater uncertainty about the shape of any long-term sustainable settlement for local authorities.

5.6 With all this uncertainty, it is not possible to present a draft MTFP to 2026/27. It is planned to work through the details required over the summer as more information becomes available and factor in the budget requirements for services. After this work, modelling will provide a set of balanced budget scenarios considering the local and national position that presents itself.

6. Capital Programme

6.1 The approved programme has now been updated to reflect the 2022/23 outturn and other approved variations, revising the gross programme down to £651.6m to 2032/33. The details are set out in Appendix 4, together with the revised programme.

6.2 The 10 year capital programme to 2032/33 and 20 year Capital Strategy 2023/24 to 2043/44 will be updated as part of the RPPR process over the autumn to add a year and to include consideration of the impact and management of inflation and supply chain issues, alongside any updates relating to Government funding and the risk metrics being developed as well as the procurement of the highways contract and other investment basic need.

7. Lobbying and Communications

7.1 Our strong local foundation of efficient and effective service delivery and careful financial management, coupled with additional short-term Government funding, has enabled us to provide another year of relative stability. We will continue to use this opportunity to develop our resilience and preparedness for challenges ahead and to ensure we are taking all possible steps to mitigate the increases in demand we expect to see in future years.

7.2 However, the medium term outlook remains highly challenging. We face a significant financial gap, the undefined impact of national reforms in major service areas and a lack of clarity on long-term funding arrangements. There are significant risks and uncertainties arising particularly from social care and SEND reforms, which makes planning for the future difficult. In the context of this ongoing uncertainty in our position, coupled with wider challenges in the economy and their impacts on our residents, our lobbying will continue to call for certainty of future funding for local government, and funding that is appropriately

reflective of local need and that fully reflects the impact of reforms. This will be paramount to ensuring we secure adequate resource to deliver what will be required to support East Sussex residents, communities and businesses with the core services they need, including opportunities to continue positive preventative work that could most effectively manage future demand for services.

7.3 We will continue to work with local MPs and local, regional and national partners to make this case.

8. Next Steps

8.1 Work will continue over the summer to refine our understanding of the medium term impacts on our services of national reforms, the evolving economic context, changing demand for services and the financial resources that will be available to us in the coming years. We will also consider any further steps we can take to support our future capacity. We will use our RPPR process to plan for the future as best we can in the context of a likely one year financial settlement once again.

8.2 We will report back to Members in the autumn with an updated assessment of our service demand and funding expectations to inform more detailed business and budget planning for 2024/25 and beyond.

8.3 Members will continue to be consulted on plans as they are developed through Cabinet, County Council, Scrutiny Committees, Whole Council Forums and specific engagement sessions throughout the 2023/24 Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources process.

BECKY SHAW
Chief Executive

Appendix 1

East Sussex
County Council

State of the County 2023

Focus on East Sussex

Version number 1

Publication date August 2023

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Summary

Population – East Sussex has an older age profile than nationally, with a significantly higher proportion of the population aged 65+ than both England and the South East. Rother has the second highest percentage of the population aged 65 years and over in the country.

Housing – house prices in East Sussex remain higher than the national average. The ratio of median house prices to median earnings is also higher than the ratio in both the South East and England. Rented housing makes up a significant proportion of the housing sector in East Sussex, and there were significant rises in the cost of private rented housing between 2018 and 2022.

Cost of living – cost of living challenges are a significant concern to people, with nine out of ten adults nationally reporting an increase in their cost of living in April 2023. The level of concern is affected by the level of deprivation people experience, with those in the most deprived areas more concerned than those in the least deprived areas.

Refugees and asylum seekers - there has been a recent increase in the rate of people receiving asylum support within the county, particularly in our coastal communities. The county also has a high number of Ukrainians who continue to be supported through our Homes for Ukraine programme, many of whom are living in Wealden.

Environment – emissions of carbon dioxide have continued to fall in East Sussex over recent years. Although we had the lowest emissions of carbon dioxide per person of all the county council areas in England, further reductions will be needed.

Economy – employment rates have increased over the last year as the economy recovers from the pandemic. However, the challenges that existed pre-pandemic relating to productivity and average wages for those employed within the county remain and the unemployment rate in the county remains higher than the regional and national averages. Youth unemployment remains higher than the overall rate,

although this has also fallen over the last year.

Community safety – neighbourhood crime rates in East Sussex are lower than the national average in all categories. There was an increase in neighbourhood crime in 2022/23 compared to the previous year. There was also a slight increase in recorded Public Place Serious Violent Crimes in 2022/23, although rates of serious violence in the county remain low.

Schools – a higher proportion of 2 year olds take up a place at an eligible early years provider in East Sussex than nationally, and more children achieve a good level of development at the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the levels of attainment at Key Stage 2, Progress 8 and Attainment 8 are lower than nationally.

Children – we continue to see higher levels of demand for children's social care and more complex cases which together have resulted in a higher number of child protection plans. The number of Looked After Children has also increased, 25% of those who became looked after last year were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. We have also continued to see increased demand for support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

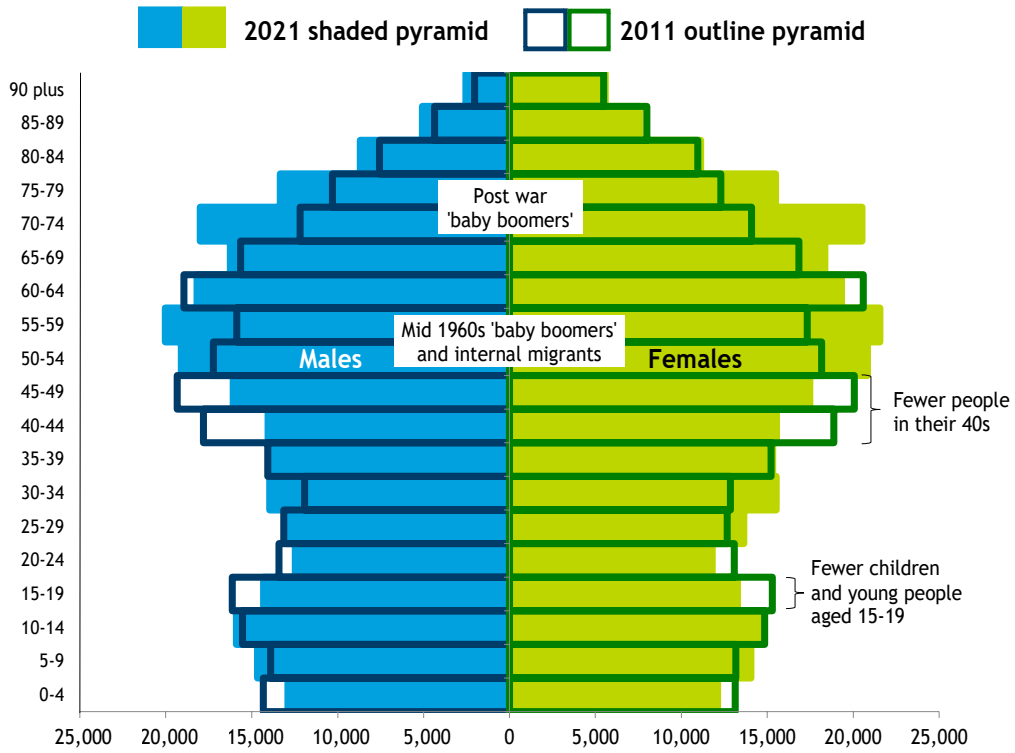
Health – East Sussex has a consistently higher life expectancy for both men and women than the national average. However, there is a gap in life expectancy between the most deprived and least deprived areas in the county. There is a slightly higher percentage of people who are overweight or obese in East Sussex compared to nationally, and smoking levels are also higher in some parts of the county.

Adults – the number of clients receiving long term support reduced in 2022/23. However, projections indicate that the number of people with dementia, and those with two or more health conditions will continue to increase in the coming years. A higher percentage of the population were providing unpaid care in 2021 in East Sussex than nationally.

Population

Age and sex

Census 2021 data estimated the population of East Sussex to be 545,800. Compared to England and the South East, East Sussex has a much older age profile. 26% of the population is comprised of people aged 65 or over, compared to 18% for England and 19% for the South East.

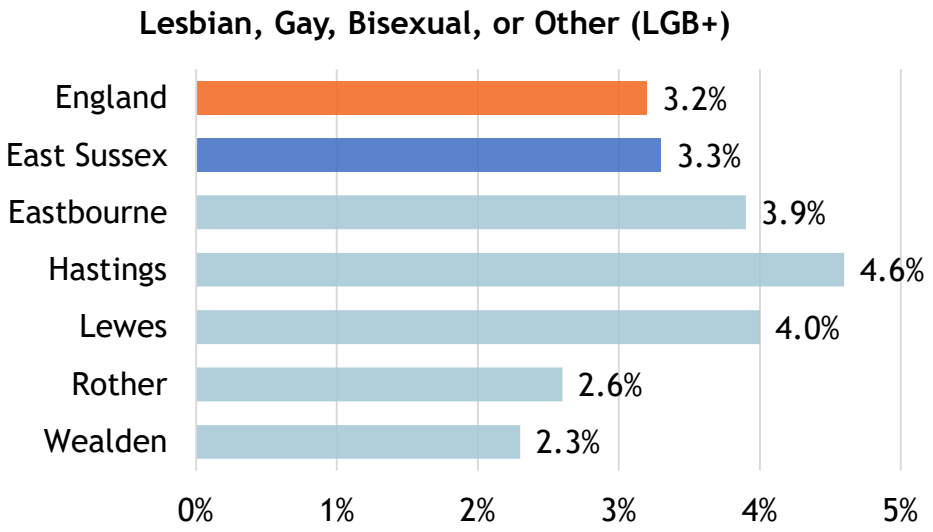


Source: Census 2021

52% of the county's population was estimated to be female and 48% male, similar to the national split. This ratio is the same as that seen in the 2011 Census, which estimated 48% of the population to be male and 52% to be female. For those aged 65 and above, it was estimated that 55% of the population was female and 45% male.

Sexual Orientation

The 2021 Census indicates that 3.3% of the East Sussex population identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other (LGB+). This is similar to the national average of 3.2%. Hastings had the highest percentage of people identifying as LGB+ at 4.6%.

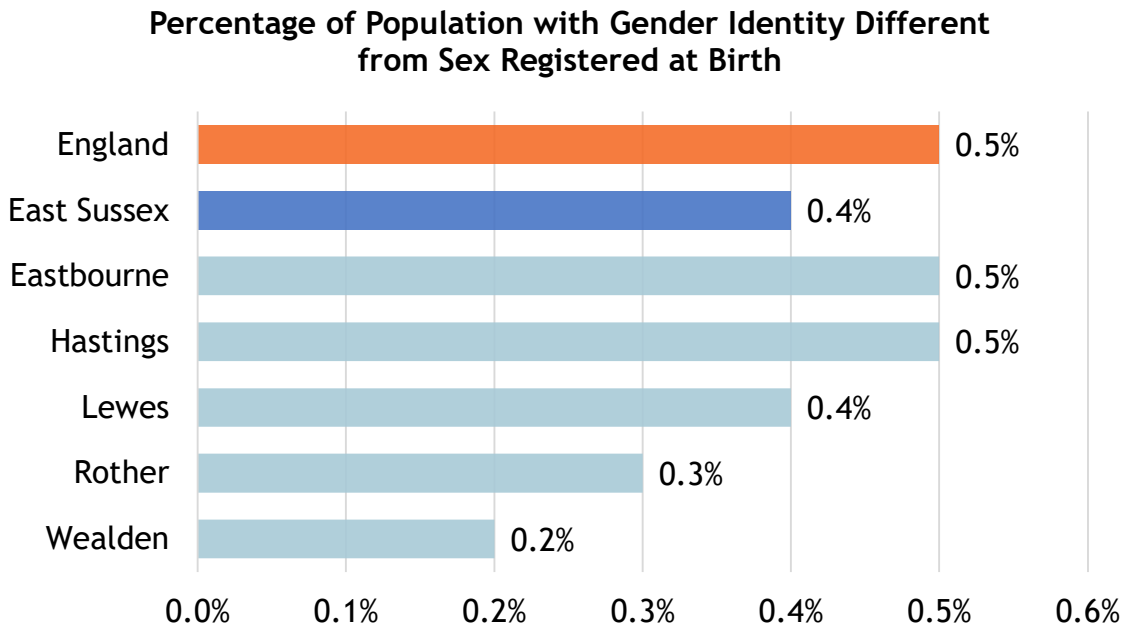


Note: A significant percentage of people across the county provided no response, therefore the percentage of people identifying as LBG+ could be either higher or lower than estimated.

Source: Census 2021

Gender identity

Gender identity was included in the national census questions for the first time in 2021. A significant percentage of people did not respond to this question, but this is still the best data we have on this topic. 0.4% of the East Sussex population recorded that their gender identity is different to their sex registered at birth. This equates to 1,640 people.



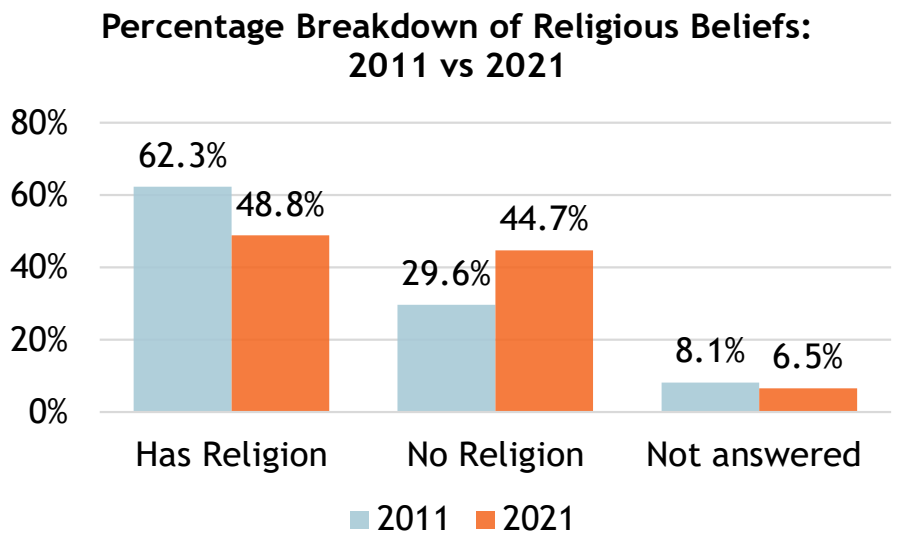
Note: A significant percentage of people across the county provided no response, therefore the percentage of people with a different gender identity to their sex registered at birth could be either higher or lower than shown.

Source: Census 2021

Religion

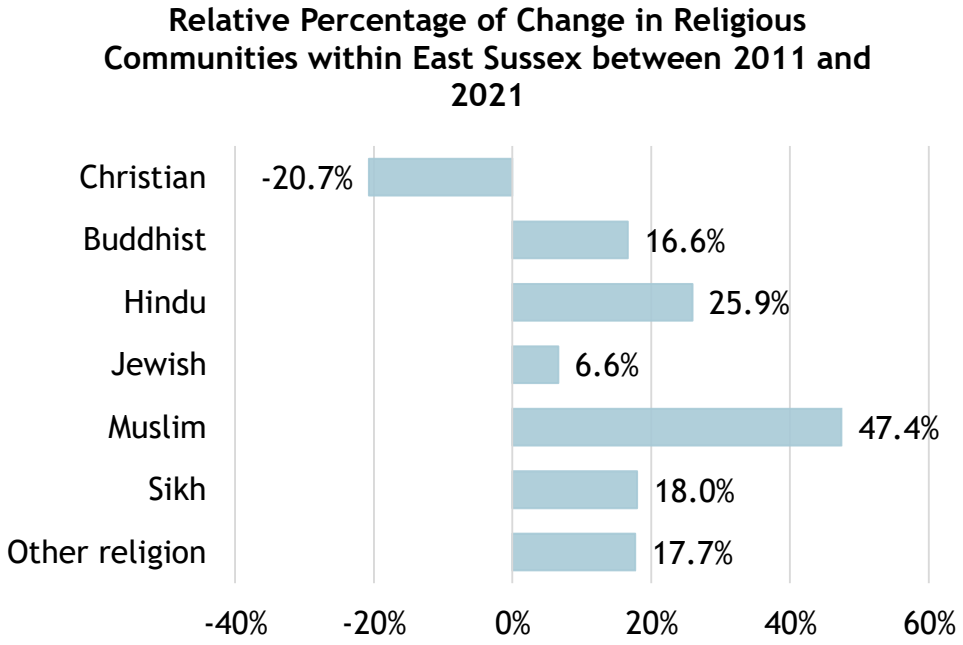
For the 2021 Census, 45.9% of the population in East Sussex stated their religion was Christian, 1.1% stated their religion was Islam, 0.5% as Buddhism and 0.3% as Hindu. 44.7% of the population stated as having no religion.

The percentage of people of people with a religious belief fell between 2011 and 2021, while the number of people who stated they had no religious beliefs grew.



Source: Census 2021

The percentage of the population in East Sussex who state their religion as Christian fell by 20.7% between 2011 and 2021, while the percentage for all other religious groups increased.



Source: Census 2021

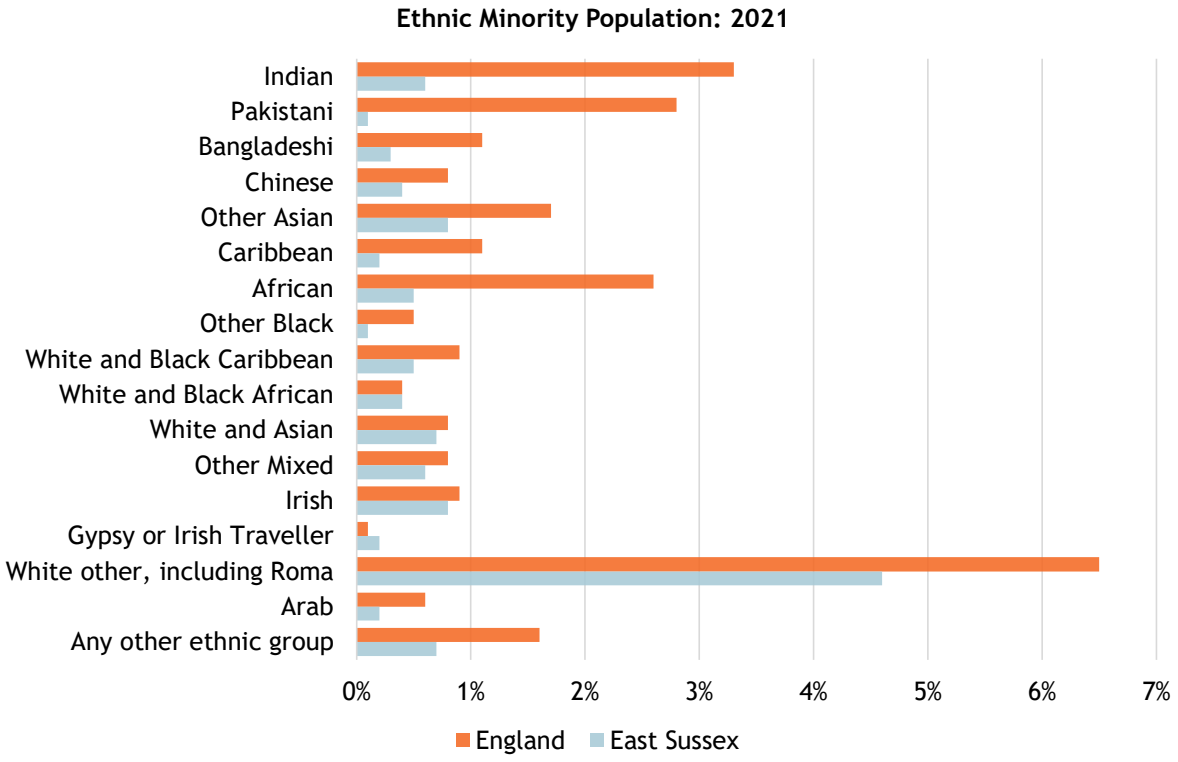
Marital status

Data from the 2021 Census shows that 31.9% of respondents from East Sussex were single, 46.8% of respondents were married or in a civil partnership, 2.3% of respondents were separated from their partners, 11.2% were divorced or had a civil partnership which was dissolved. The remaining 7.7% of respondents were widowed.

Source: Census 2021

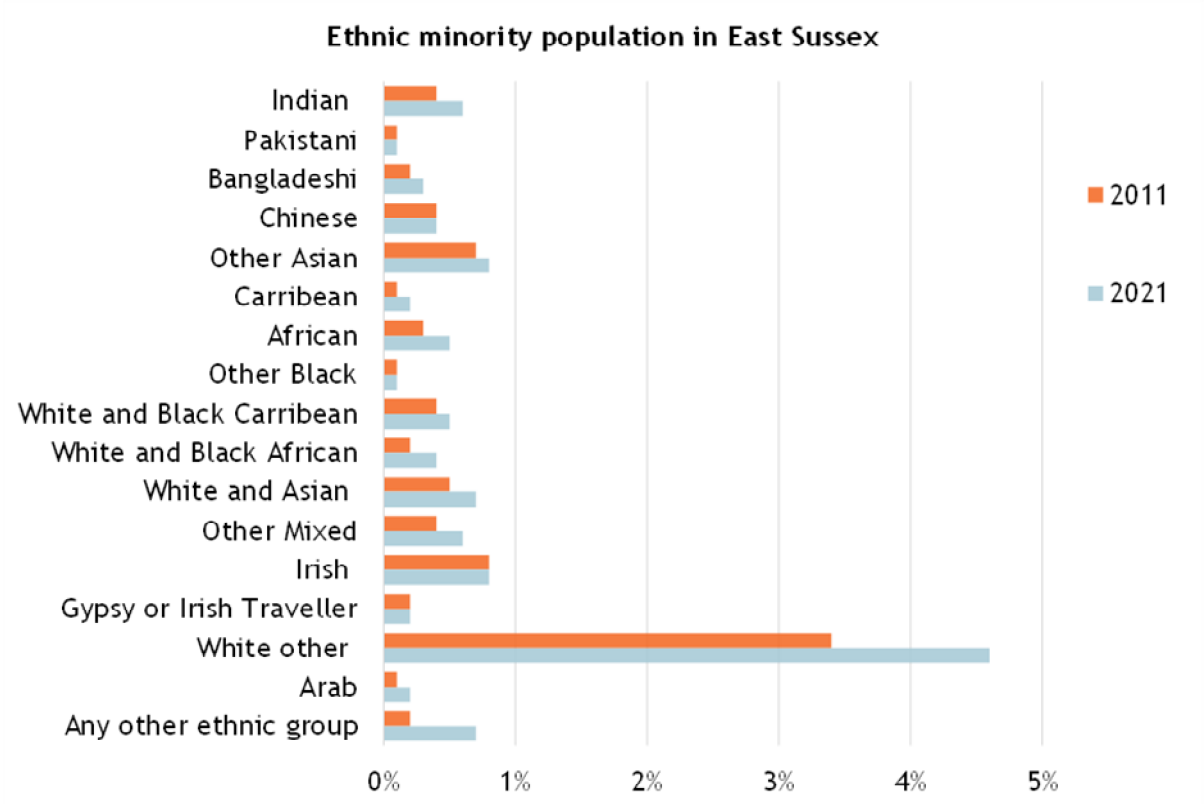
Ethnicity

The latest ethnicity data for the county is from the 2021 census. 93.9% of the county's population identified as White British, compared to the regional average of 86.3% and the national average of 81.0%. A higher percentage of the population in East Sussex identified as Gypsy or Irish Traveller than the national average (0.2% compared to 0.1%).



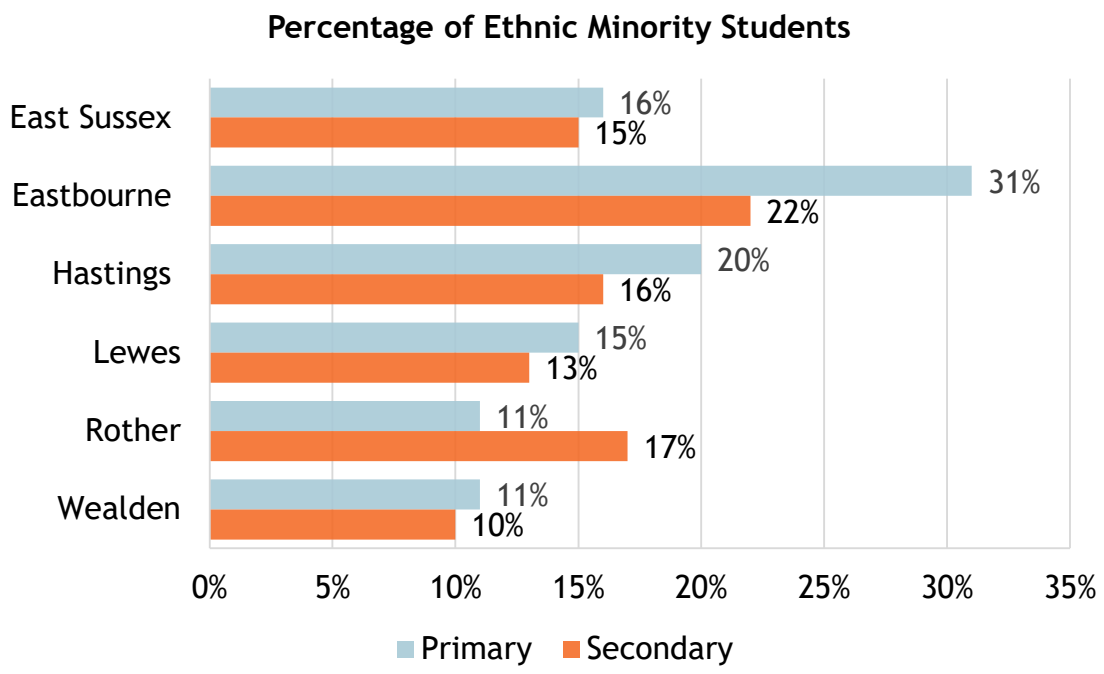
Source: Census 2021

Overall the percentage of the population in East Sussex in each ethnic minority group has either stayed the same or increased between 2011 and 2021.



Source: Census 2021

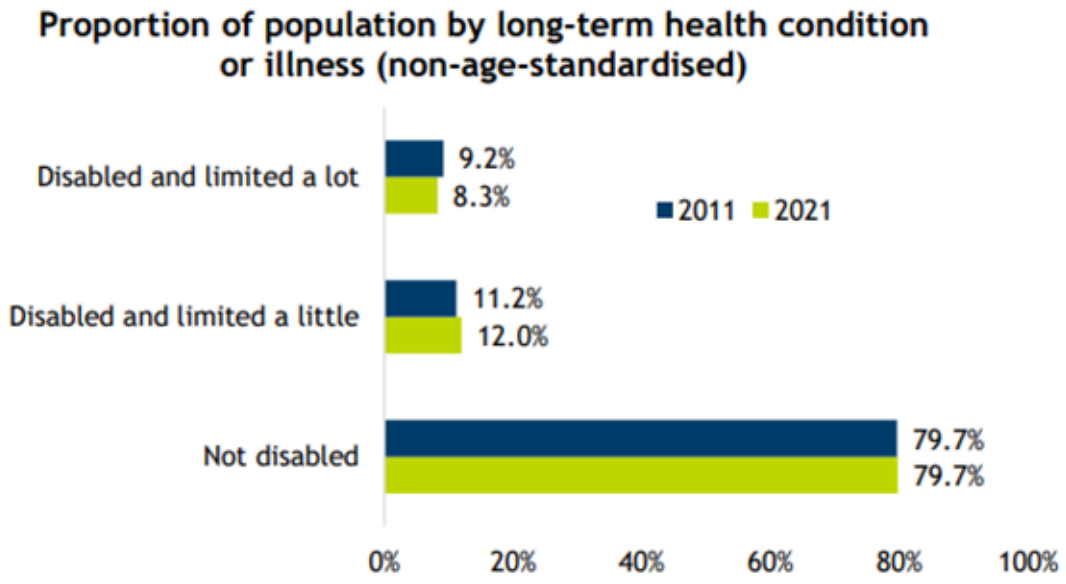
A higher percentage of pupils (15%) are from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared to the adult population. Overall, Eastbourne has the highest percentage of students from ethnic minority backgrounds for both primary (31%) and secondary (22%) schools.



Source: ESCC Schools Census January 2023

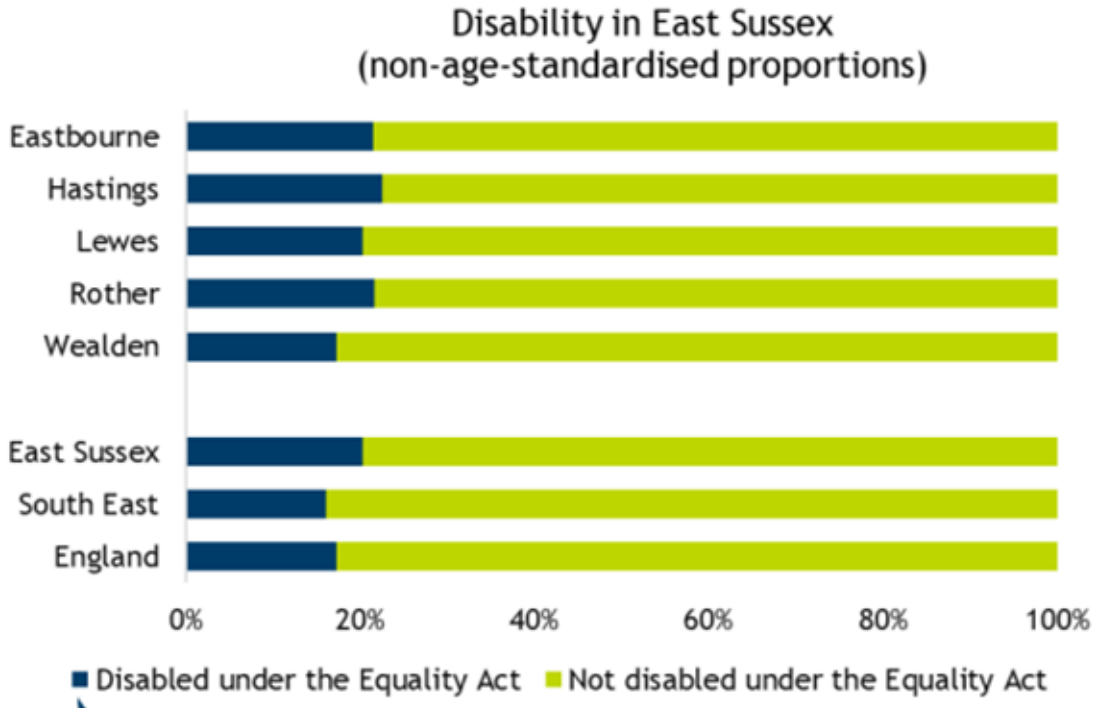
Disability

In the 2021 Census, the proportion of the East Sussex population that identified themselves as disabled was 20.3% (110,550). This is exactly the same as the proportion that identified as disabled in the 2011 Census (20.3%, 107,150).



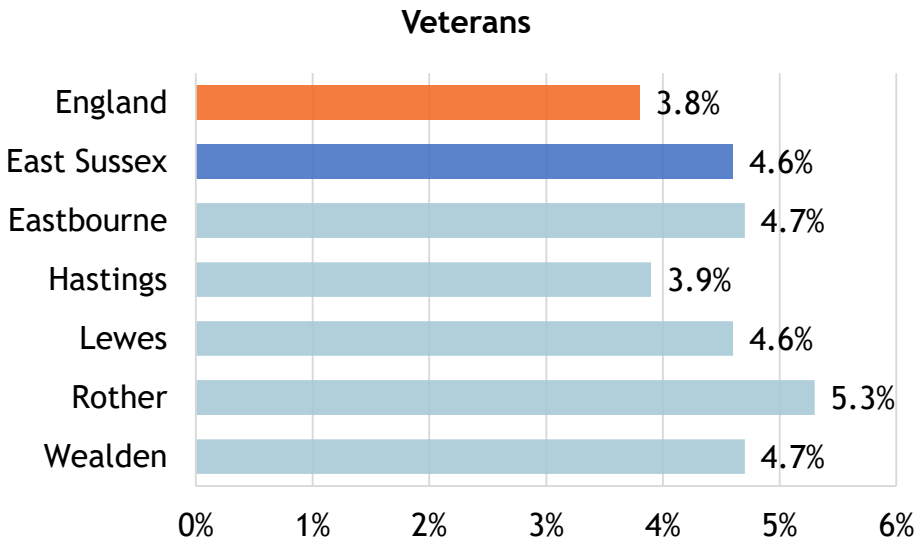
The percentage of people identifying themselves as disabled varied slightly across

the district and boroughs, but rates across the county were higher than the South East average.



Veterans

2021 Census data shows that 4.6% of the population in East Sussex were Veterans, compared to the national average of 3.8%. This equates to 21,200 Veterans living in East Sussex.



Pregnancy and maternity

The ONS births data provides an indication of the number of women in East Sussex who may be pregnant or on maternity.

Protected characteristic: Pregnancy and maternity	East Sussex	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden
Live births - 2021	4,549	883	909	781	634	1,342
Births per 1,000 females – 2020	15.7	16.8	19.6	15.0	13.2	14.6

Source: ONS

Population change

Based on the information currently available we estimate that around 550,400 people currently live in the county (ESCC 2023 interim projection). We expect that to increase to around 570,500 people in 2027, an increase of 3.6%.

We expect the increase in population to be driven by people moving into the county from elsewhere in the UK. Many of the people who choose to come to East Sussex are older adults, as a result the over 65 age group is growing faster than younger age groups. In 2027 we expect that just over half of our population will be aged 18-64 (53%), with over a quarter (29%) aged 65 and over.

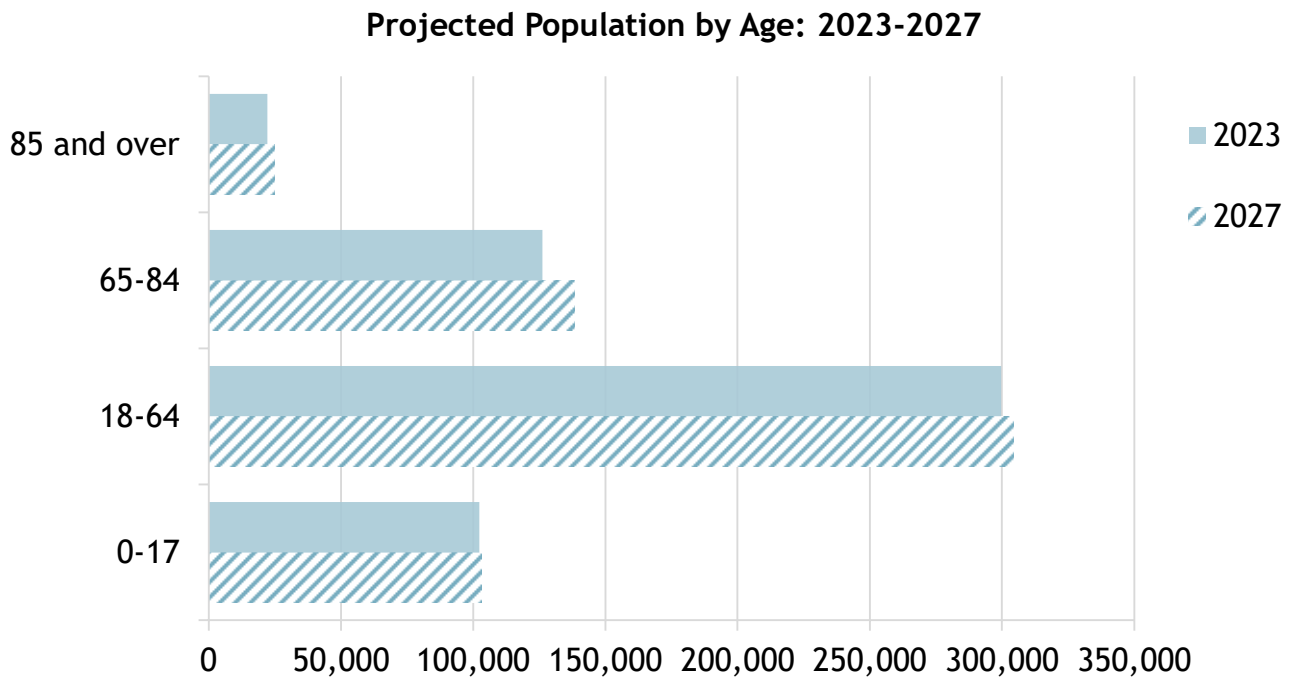
Between 2023 and 2027 we are expecting that there will be around 19,000 births in the county and around 26,000 deaths. This reflects the fact that we have a larger population of older adults in East Sussex. Over the same period, we are expecting around 136,900 people to move into the county, offset by around 111,900 people moving out of the county.

Overall, these changes mean that compared to 2023, we estimate that by 2027 there will be:

- An increase of 1.0% (1,000 people) in the number of children and young people.
- An increase of 1.5% (4,500 people) in the working age population.

• 9.8% more people aged 65-84 (11,900 people).

We also expect that 4.4% of people will be aged 85+, a proportion greater than the national average of 2.4% (Source: 2021 Census).



Note: Care should be taken when using the projected population figures. 2021 Census data indicates that the population of the county in March 2021 was considerably lower than the ONS' original mid-year estimate for June 2020. No re-based mid-year estimates for the period 2011-2020 have yet been released by the ONS, but we are expecting that the June 2020 population figure is likely to be substantially revised downwards. Therefore, the data above is based on Interim dwelling-led population projections which have been produced by ESCC using interim re-based mid-year estimates produced by the GLA's Demography Team, combined with the latest ONS 2021 mid-year estimate (which is based on Census 2021 population data). The interim projections will be revised when the official ONS revised mid-year estimates for 2011-2020 are released later this year.

Projected Population in 2027

Age Range	East Sussex	England
0-17	18.1%	20.7%
18-64	53.3%	58.9%
65-84	24.2%	17.6%
85+	4.4%	2.8%

Population Change: 2023-2027

Age Range	2023	2027	Actual change
0-17	102,300	103,300	+1,000
18-64	299,700	304,100	+4,500
65-84	126,200	138,200	+11,900
85+	22,200	24,900	+2,600
All people	550,400	570,500	+20,100

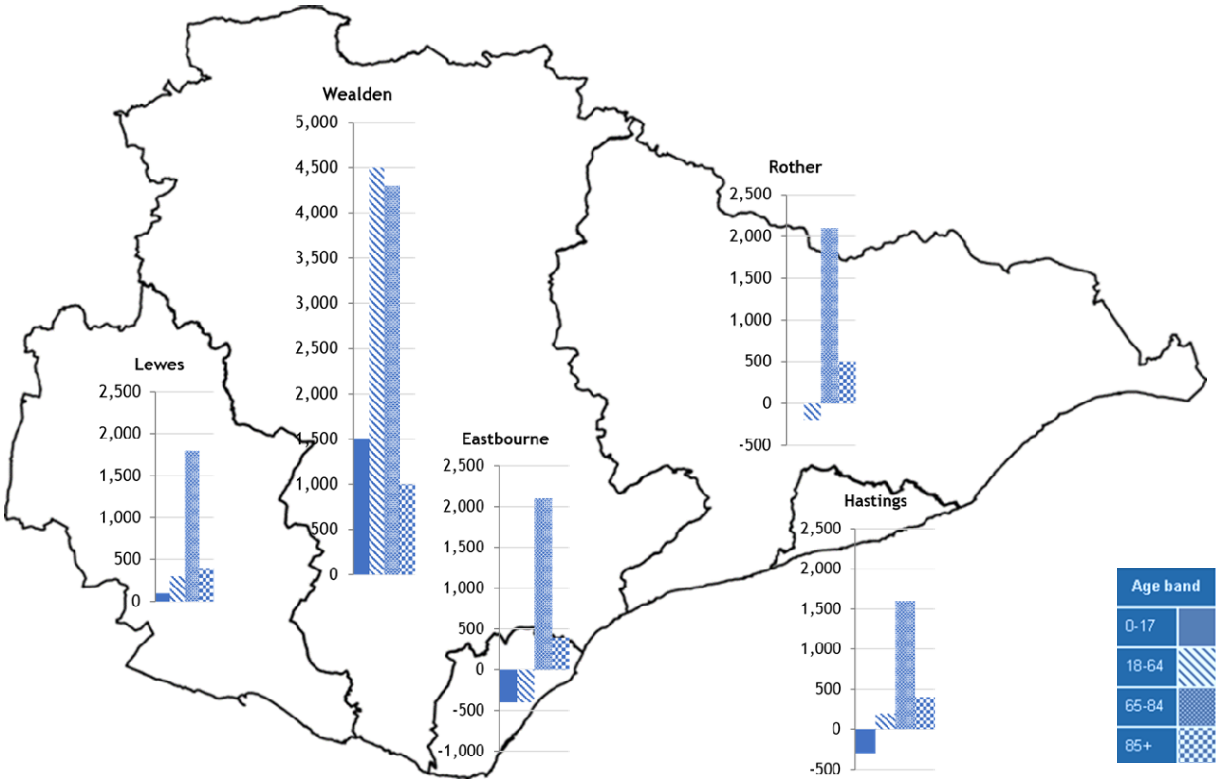
Source: ESCC data, ESCC interim population projections (dwelling led) April 2023. National Data, ONS trend-based projections, from 2020. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 100 and therefore may not sum.

District population change

We expect that how our population changes will be different in different parts of the county. By 2027 our interim projections suggest:

- An increase of 15% (1,000) more people aged 85+ in Wealden; the smallest increase will be in Eastbourne, 9% (400).
- 11% (4,300) more people aged 65-84 in Wealden, and 10% (2,100) more people in Eastbourne, Lewes will see an 8% (1,800) increase.
- Only Wealden is projected to see a significant increase in the working age population (18-64) of 5% (4,500).
- Eastbourne (down 0.7%, 400 people) and Rother (down 0.5%, 200) are projected to see falls in the working age population over this period.

District population change 2023 – 2027

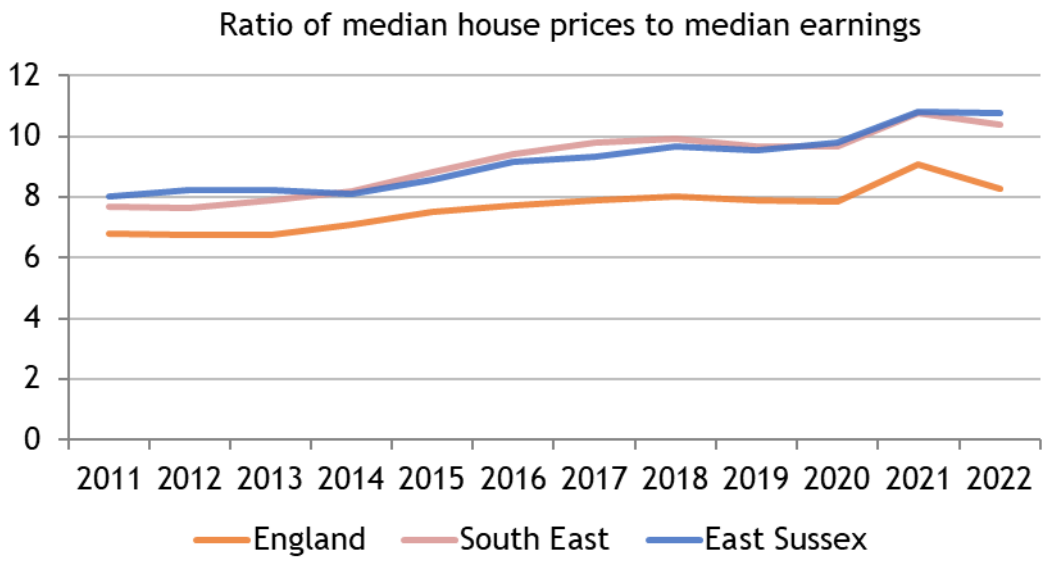


Housing

Housing affordability

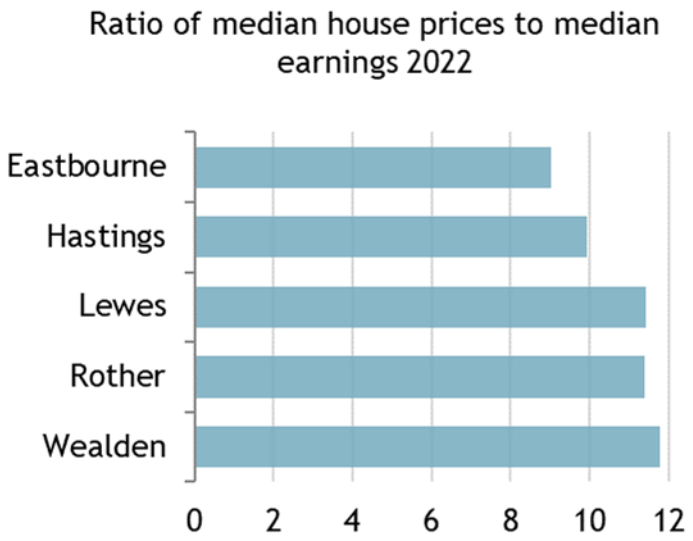
East Sussex is an attractive area to live, however this means that house prices are higher than the national average. In 2022 in East Sussex the average (median) house price was £335,000, 10.8 times the average annual earnings of residents, which were £31,145. In comparison the average house price in England was £275,000, 8.3 times average annual earnings, which were £33,208.

The average ratio of median house prices to median earnings in East Sussex is higher than for England and is now also slightly higher than the South East average.



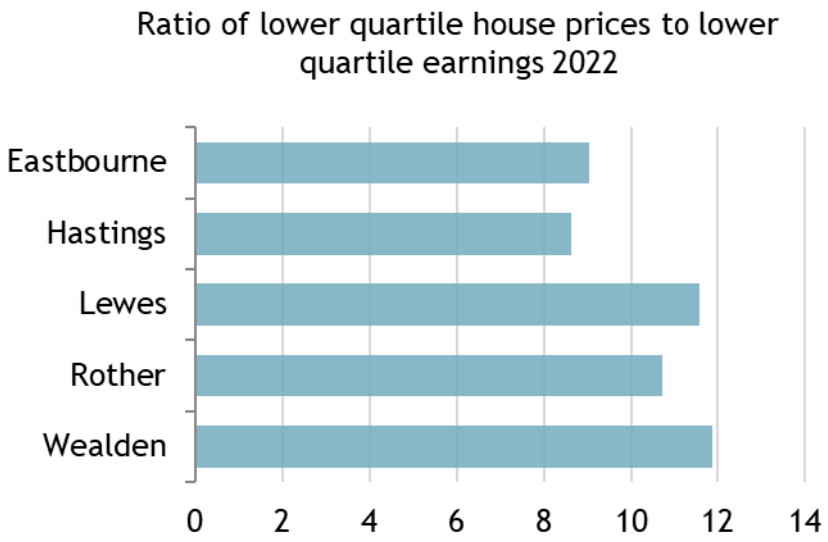
Source: ONS

The median average house prices were over 10 times the average annual earnings of residents in all East Sussex districts and boroughs except for Eastbourne and Hastings.



Source: ONS

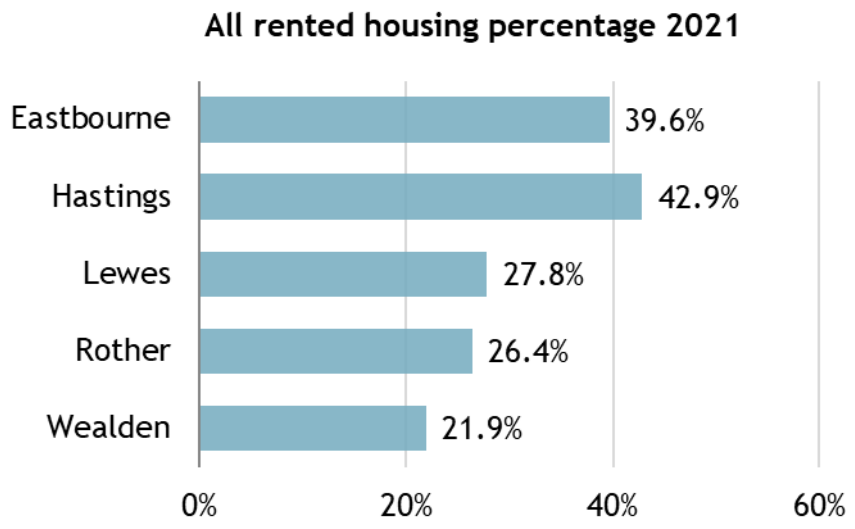
The same pattern can be seen when comparing the cost of some of the less expensive houses to the earnings of those on lower incomes. Lower quartile (25% least expensive) house prices were over 10 times lower quartile earnings in all districts and boroughs except Eastbourne and Hastings.



Source: ONS

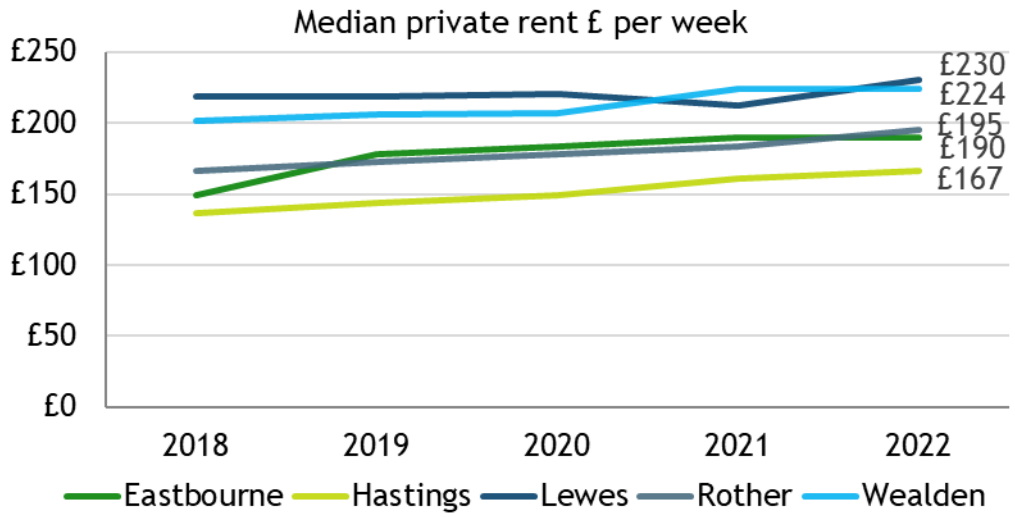
Rented housing is a significant sector in East Sussex, making up 21.9% of housing in

Wealden and 42.9% in Hastings.



Source: Census 2021.

The cost of private rented housing rose by up to 27% between 2018 and 2022. Average private rents range from £167 to £230 a week across districts.



Source: ONS/Valuation Office Agency

The Council's Children's Services Department have a duty to help children whose families face destitution. As some immigrant families with children have no recourse to public funds the Council provides assistance to prevent them from

becoming homeless. The total number of people assisted with accommodation over the last three years has fluctuated, but the number of households has been very consistent.

Year	Number of adults	Number of children	Total households
2020/21	23	40	22
2021/22	31	53	22
2022/23	21	34	21

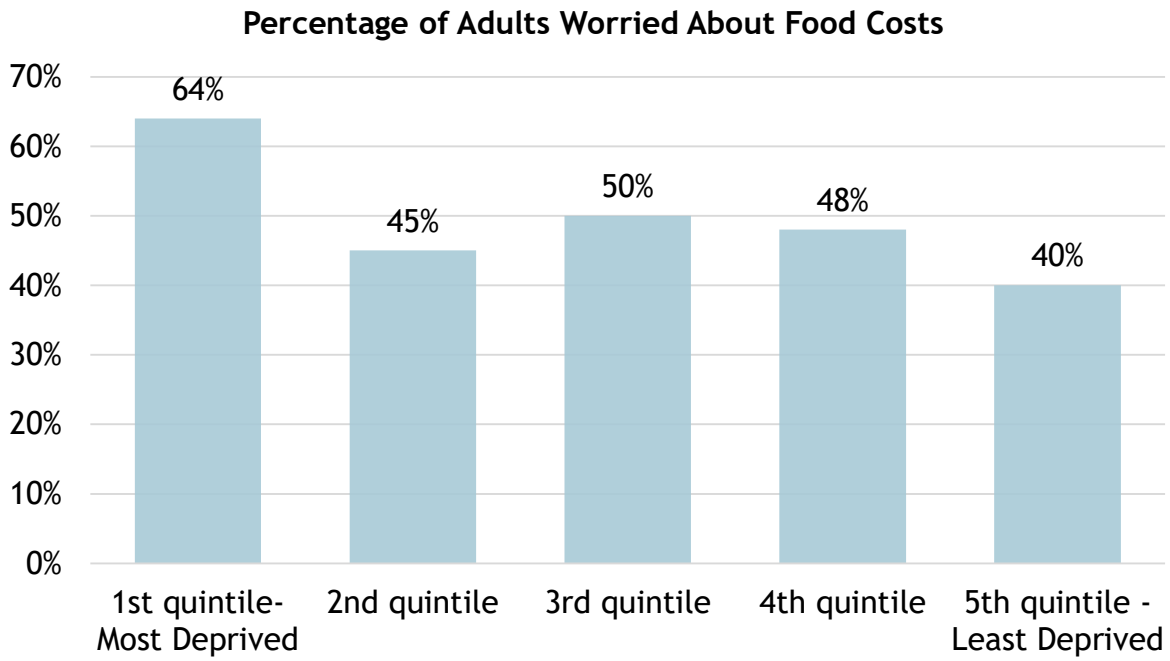
Source: ESCC Children's Services department

Cost of living

Nationally nine out of ten adults reported an increase in their cost of living in April 2023, with increases in the price of food, utility bills and fuel the most common reasons given (ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey).

Nationally people were most concerned about the cost of energy and the cost of food, with almost five out of ten people concerned about these in April 2023. The level of concern is affected by the level of deprivation people experience, with those living in the most deprived areas being more concerned about these factors than those living in the least deprived areas.

Proportion of all adults in England reporting that they were worried about the cost of food, by deprivation quintile.

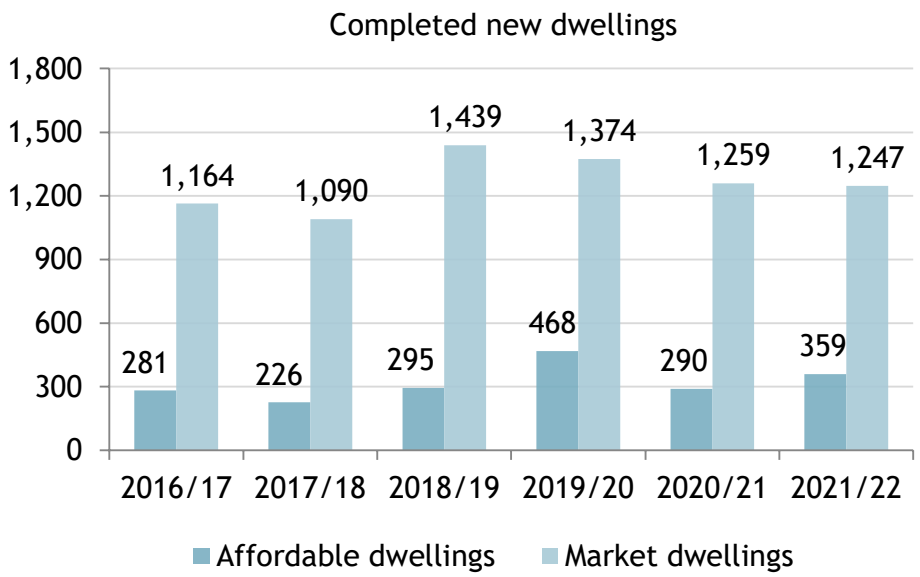


Note: Please note confidence intervals apply to this data, see Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, Office of National Statistics for further information.

Source: Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, Office of National Statistics.

Households and housing delivery

In 2021/22 1,606 new dwellings were completed, of these 350 (22.4%) were classed as affordable.



Source: ESCC Housing Monitoring Database, Lewes District Council housing monitoring system.

Households in temporary accommodation

There has been an increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation. Hastings had the second highest rate of households in temporary accommodation in the South East, behind Brighton and Hove in September 2022.

District/Borough	Number of households in temporary accommodation (31 December 2022)
Eastbourne	351
Hastings	524
Lewes	93
Rother	128
Wealden	39

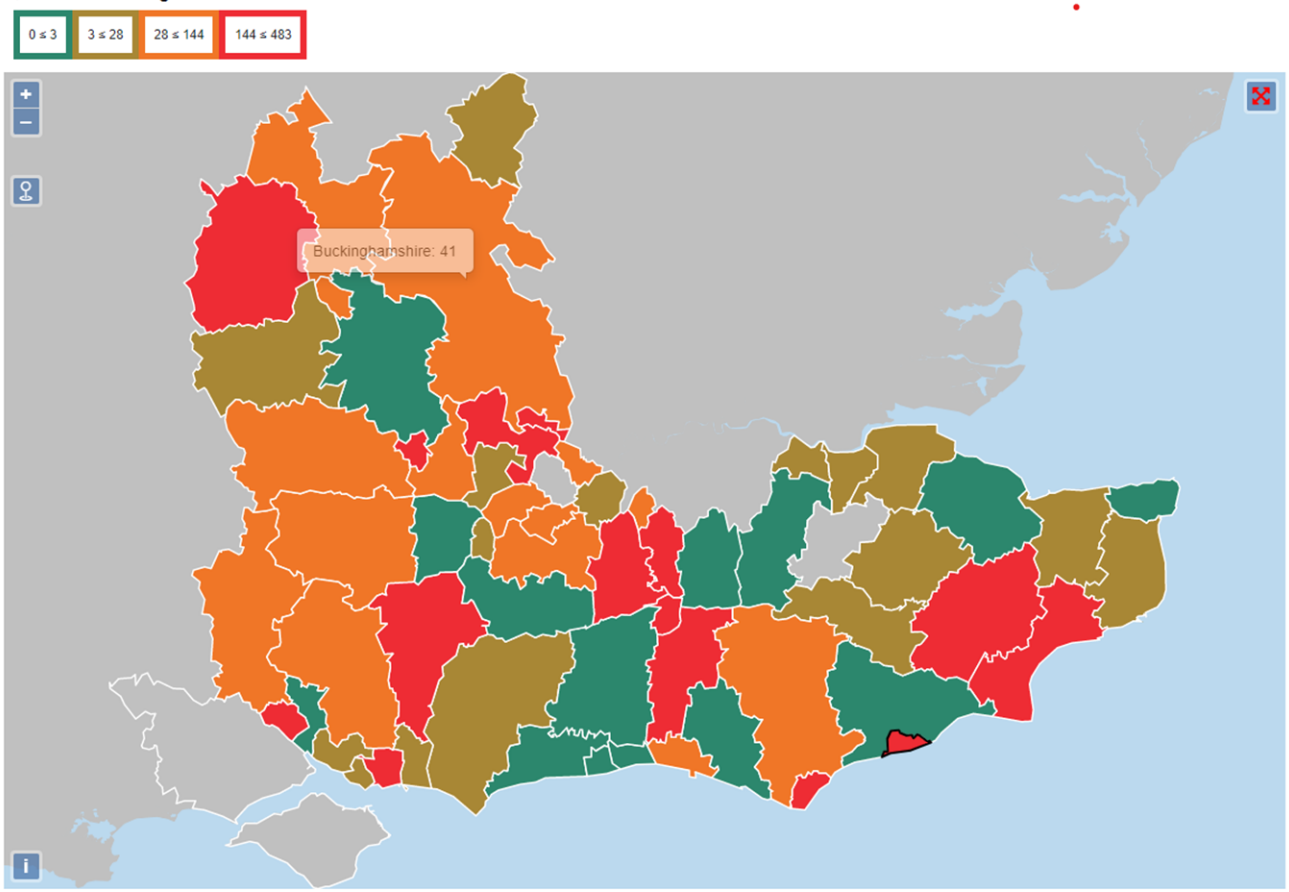
Refugees and asylum seekers

The number of people receiving asylum support from the Home Office across the South East increased last year. In East Sussex numbers increased in Eastbourne, Hastings and Wealden, however most of the people receiving asylum support in December 2022 were in Eastbourne and Hastings.

This has a greater impact on some of our communities due to the use of multiple sites in a small area to accommodate asylum seekers. The Government is currently exploring the use of larger sites to reduce the use of hotels and other private accommodation. As part of this there are Government proposals to house up to 1,200 asylum seekers at the Northeye site in Bexhill by December 2023.

No. of people receiving local authority section 4, 95 or 98 support (per 100,000 people) (Q4 (Oct-Dec) 2022) for All single tier and district local authorities in South East

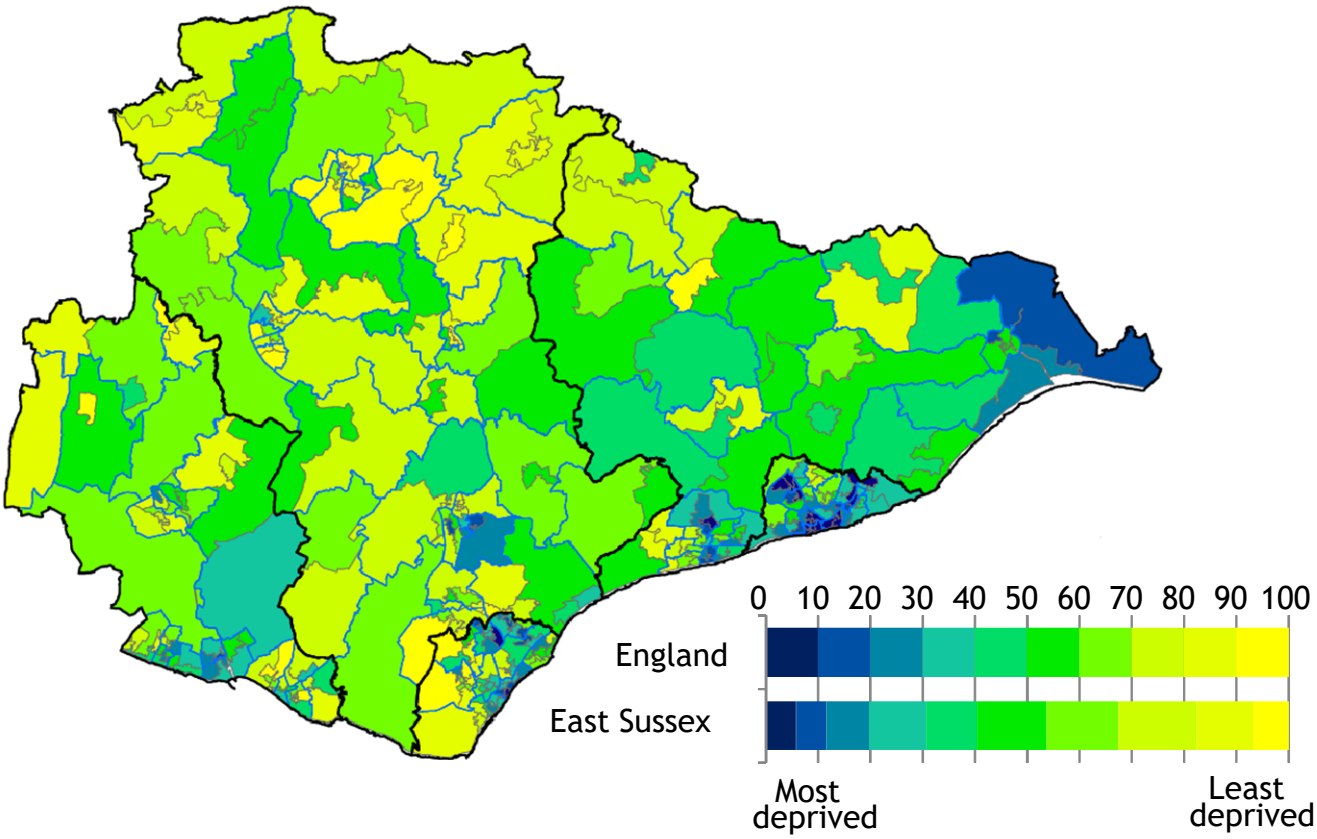
Quartiles for All single tier and district local authorities in South East



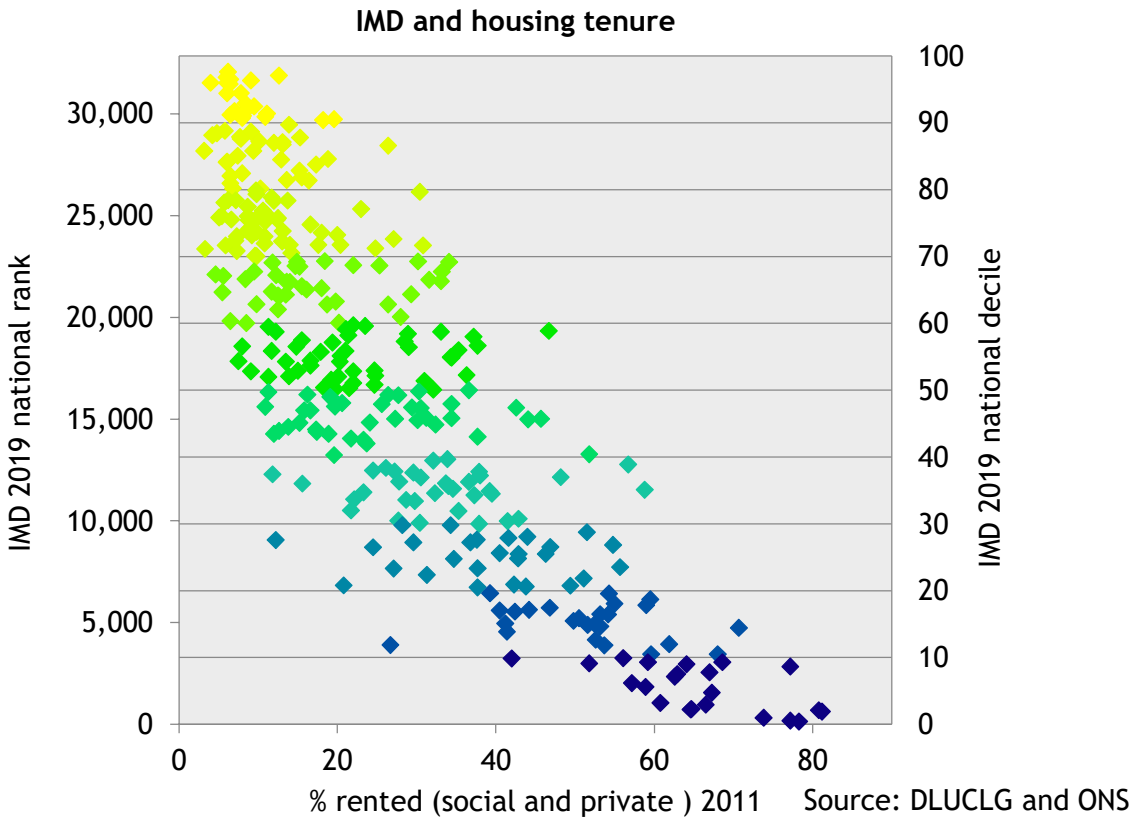
Source:
Calculated by LG Inform

Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 measures relative deprivation for small areas in England. It takes into account a number of factors including health, access to services, environment, crime and housing, however income and employment have the greatest effect on the deprivation score given to an area. The map shows how deprived individual parts of the county are compared to the national average.



The IMD is calculated for small areas called LSOAs, as shown on the map, each of which have approximately 1,500 residents. In East Sussex there are 329 LSOAs, 22 are in the most deprived 10% nationally. 16 of these are in Hastings, four in Eastbourne, and two in Rother. 21 LSOAs are in the least deprived 10%, 13 are in Wealden, six in Lewes, and two in Eastbourne.



Areas of high deprivation correlate with some areas of predominately rented housing. This includes concentrations of social rented properties (up to 70%) and private rented properties (up to 68%), and both (up to 81%). Measures of deprivation include the indoor living environment, and in these areas, more properties (excluding social housing) may be in poor condition or without central heating, leading to higher heating costs and other negative outcomes.

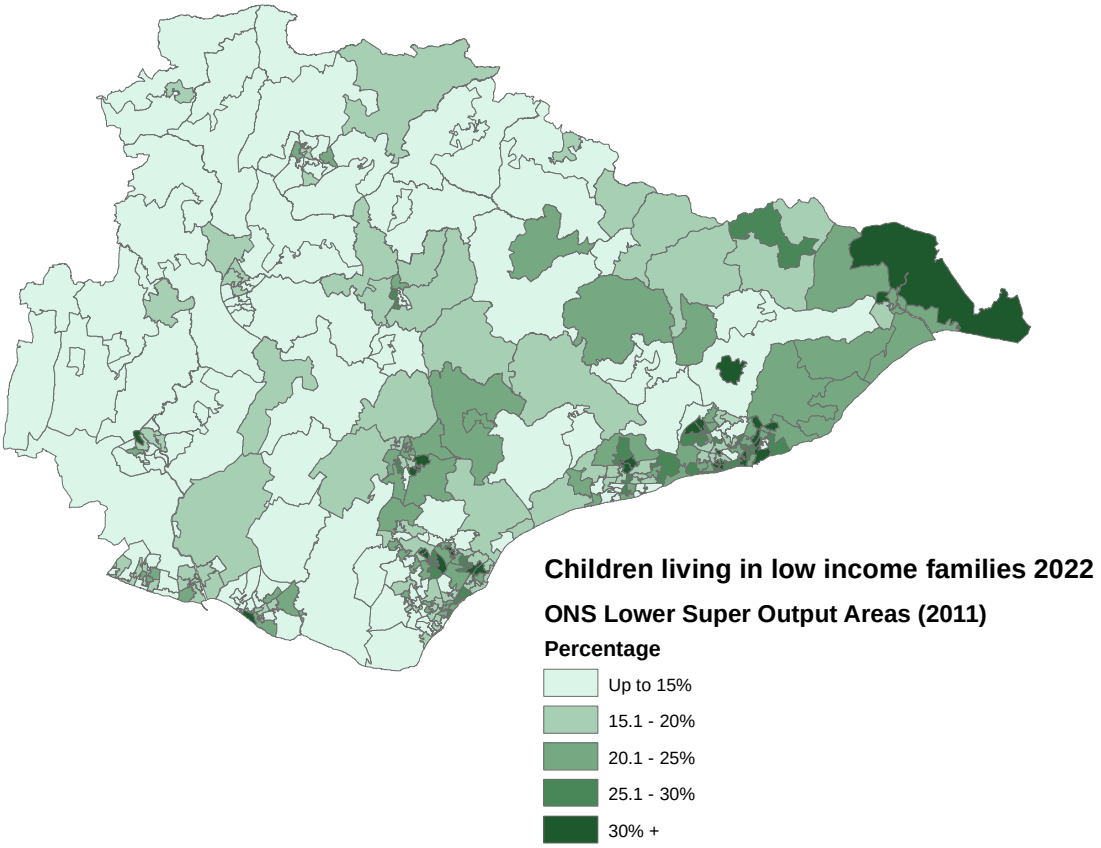
People living in more deprived areas are often facing multiple challenges and therefore may be more likely to access Council and other public services. However, it is important to note that the IMD is based on averages across an area, so it is possible to have people with low levels of deprivation in an area classified as being more deprived and vice versa.

The relationship between multiple deprivation, low income and poor-quality housing means it can be hard to change relative deprivation for people living in an area of predominantly low-cost housing without addressing housing quality.

Some of the data that the IMD is based on is now several years old. However, the

latest child poverty data, relating to children living in families with relative low-income, shows a similar pattern in income deprivation across the county.

In 2021/22, there were 20,910 children in East Sussex living in families with relative low-income, which was 18.6% of all children and young people aged 0-19. This is a slightly lower rate than the national average of 19.8%. 87% of all children in relative low-income families in East Sussex were in working families. This compares to the national picture, where 71% of children in relative low-income families were in working families. Only 13% of East Sussex children in low-income families were in families where no-one was in work.



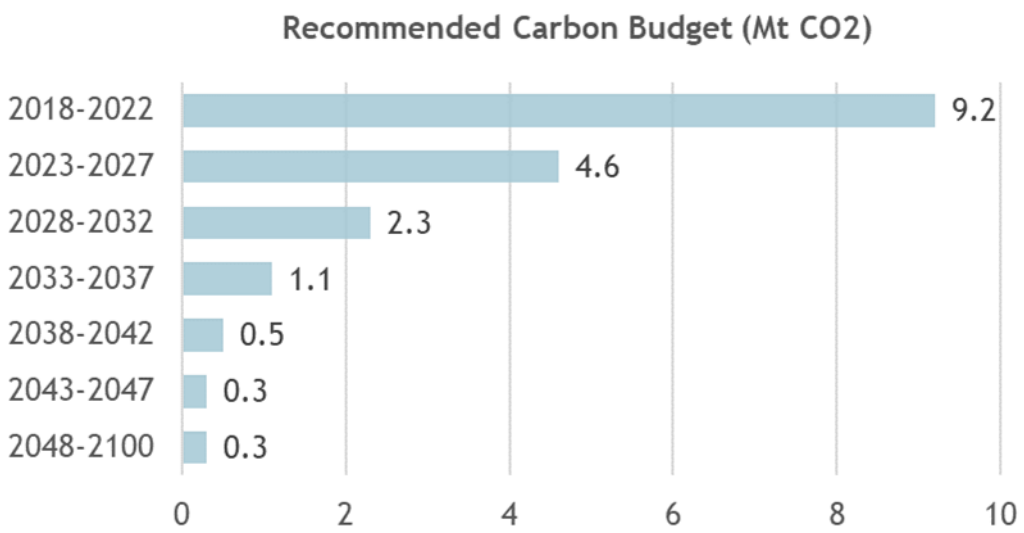
23.5% of East Sussex pupils are known to be eligible for Free School Meals (January 2023). The latest England figure is 22.5% (January 2022).

Environment

The Cumulative CO_{2e} emissions budget

Emissions of the main greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide (CO_2), in East Sussex fell by 45% between 2005 and 2020, while the population grew by about 8%. This excludes emissions that occur outside the area due to demand for goods and services that are consumed in the county. This reduction is similar to the decrease seen nationally and driven by the same changes (e.g. the switch from coal to gas and renewables to generate electricity).

The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change has calculated the emissions reductions necessary for East Sussex (and other local authority areas) to make a fair contribution towards keeping the increase in global average temperature below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. This requires cutting emissions from the county area by an average of about 13% per year, which roughly equates to halving total emissions every 5 years.

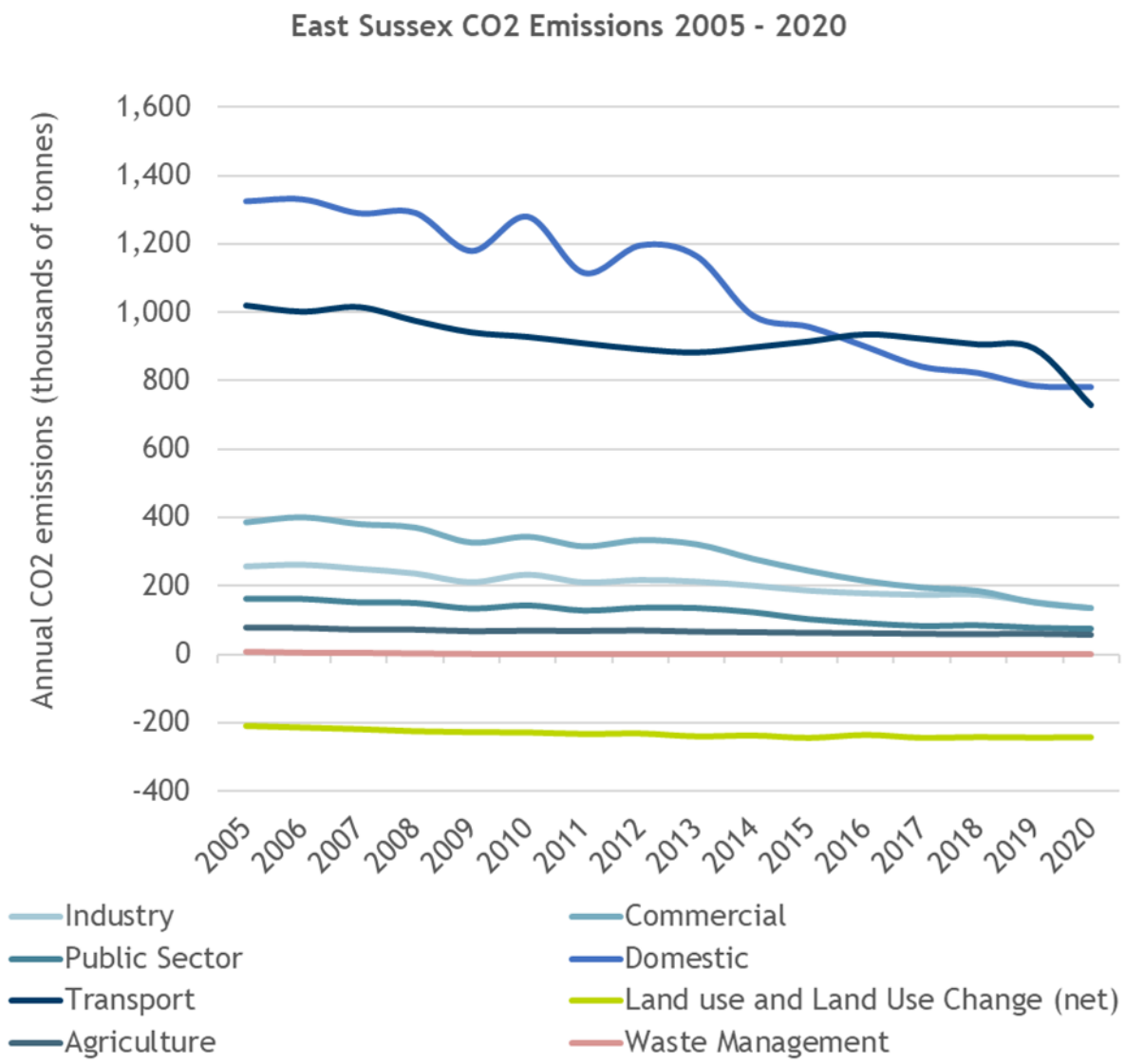


Source: Tyndall Centre for Climate Change, 2022.

Emissions from domestic properties and transport are the greatest contributors to overall emissions across the county. Domestic emissions fell by 41% between 2005 and 2020. Transport emissions fell as a slower pace, with a sharp fall seen in 2020

due to pandemic related travel restrictions.

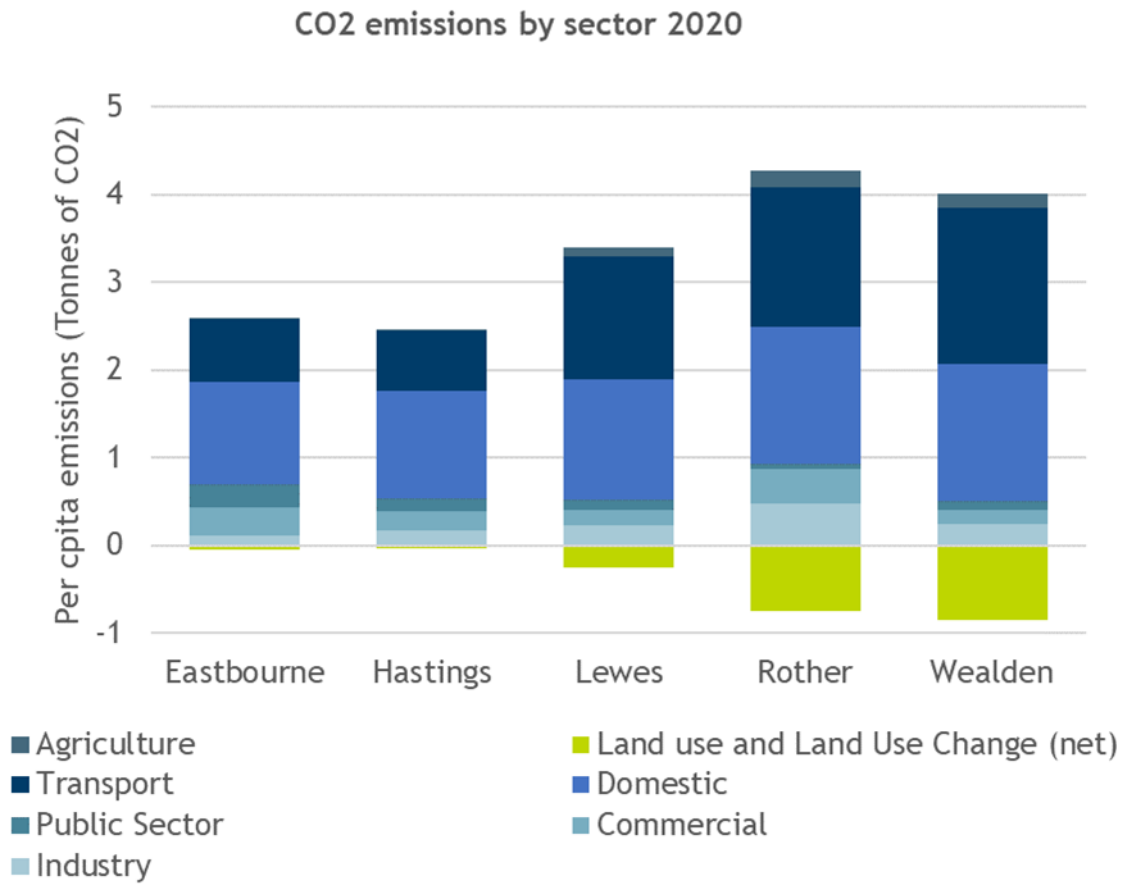
Land use (and land use changes) both absorb and emit carbon, however on an overall (net) basis carbon emissions from land use in East Sussex are negative. Carbon is absorbed by forests and grasslands, while carbon losses occur on existing cropland and when natural land (e.g. grassland) is converted to croplands or settlements. Lewes, Rother and Wealden all have significant (net) negative land use emissions, whilst land use emissions in the urban boroughs of Eastbourne and Hastings are negligible.



Source: BEIS

Domestic emissions make up a larger share of emissions in the county's two urban

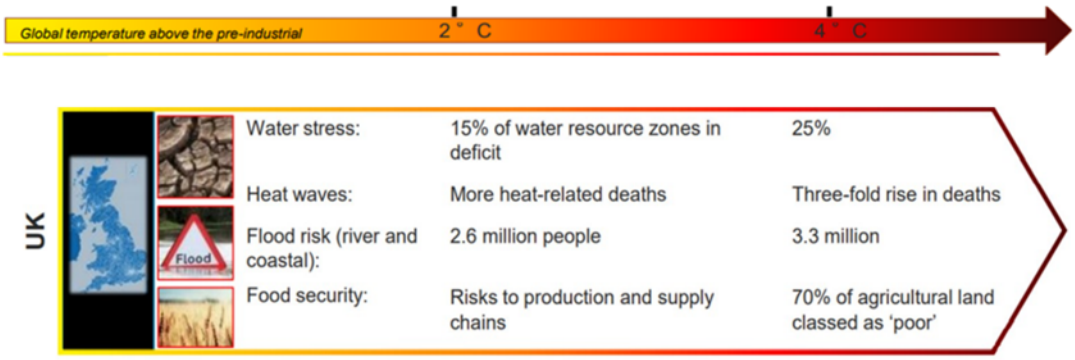
areas, Eastbourne and Hastings than the three more rural areas; whilst transport emissions are lower. This is due to the smaller road networks in the urban areas, and smaller, higher density housing. Per capita domestic emissions are higher in the rural areas, as houses tend to be larger, and many properties use higher carbon forms of heating such as oil and coal.



Source: BEIS

Climate adaptation

Even if global warming can be limited to 1.5°C, significant additional investment will be needed in measures to adapt to the effects of climate change that are already locked in due to past emissions of greenhouse gases.

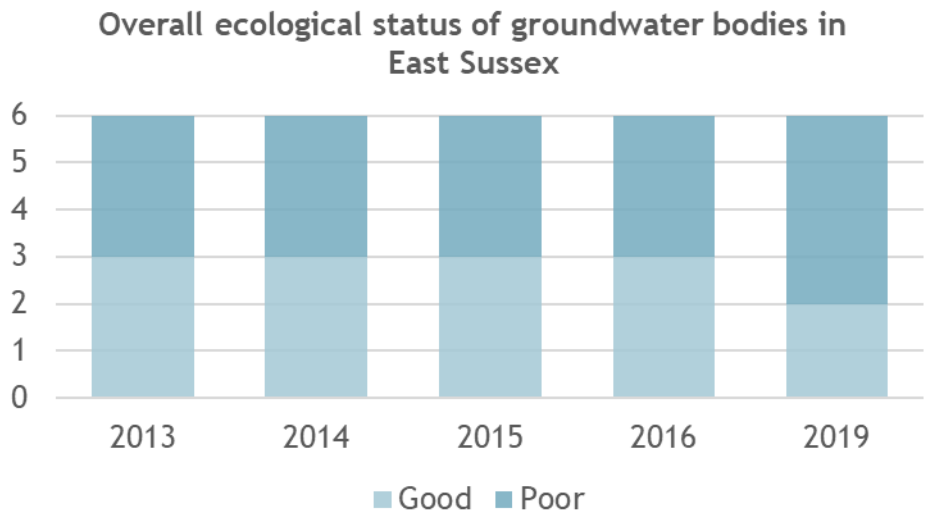


Source: Met Office

UK Met Office predictions of the effects of climate change in East Sussex include hotter and drier summers, milder and wetter winters, more droughts, more flooding, and more intense and frequent storms. This is predicted to lead to an increase in heat-related deaths, particularly amongst the elderly, damage to essential infrastructure, increased cost of food, disruption to supply chains and service provision, greater coastal erosion, and impact on coastal habitats.

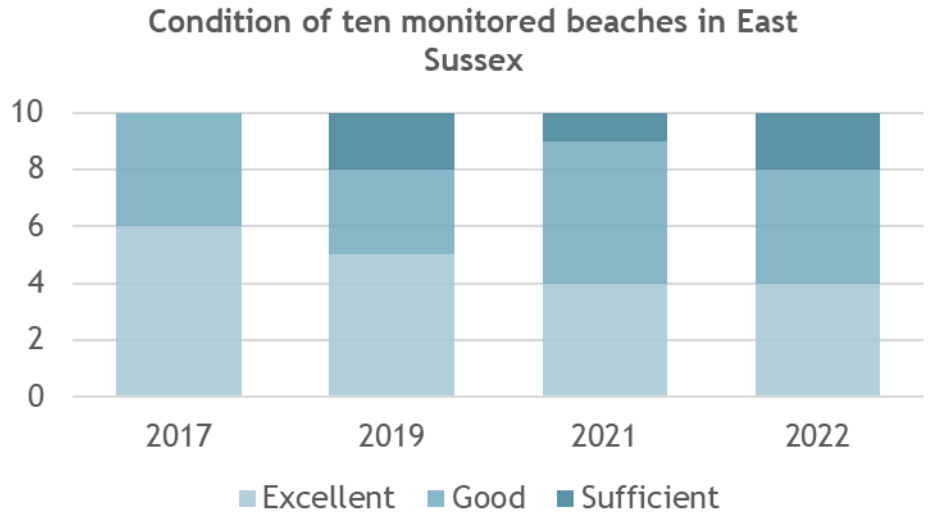
Water quality

Water pollution is mostly caused by land management practices (e.g., agricultural run-off), wastewater treatment plants, and urban and highway run-off. The most recent data available for groundwater bodies is for 2019. The quality of water bodies in East Sussex has deteriorated slightly in recent years. The number of groundwater bodies in East Sussex rated as good reduced from three to two between 2016 and 2019. The quality of some ground waters, which provide about 70% of drinking water, have deteriorated due to rising nitrate levels, mostly due to historic farming practices.



Source: Environment Agency

The quality of bathing waters has also decreased in recent years. Between 2017 and 2022, the number of monitored beaches rated excellent fell from six to four, whilst the number rated sufficient grew from zero to two.



Source: Environment Agency

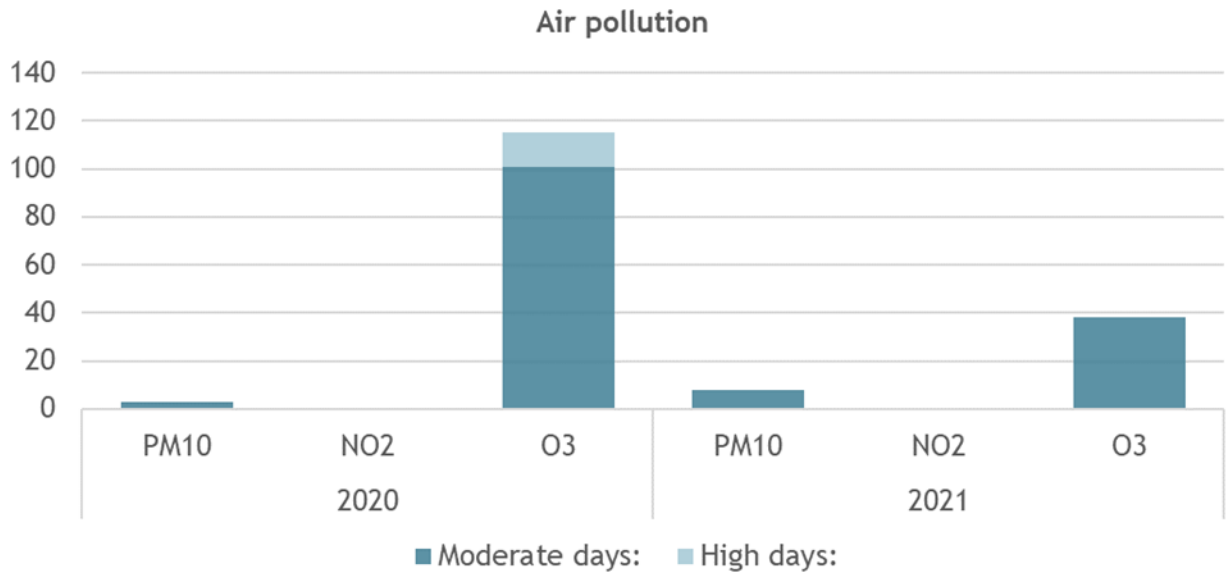
Air quality

Poor air quality has an impact on both human health and the natural environment. The concentration of pollutants in the air is affected by emissions, and also factors such as building layout and weather conditions. In East Sussex, there are three

main pollutants of concern:

- Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). The main sources of NO_2 are road vehicles and domestic combustion.
- Particulates (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$). The main sources of particulates are road vehicles and solid fuel combustion.
- Ozone (O_3). Ozone is a secondary pollutant, created by other pollutant gases reacting in sunlight. It is a long-lived pollutant and tends to be a problem in urban background and rural locations, rather than at roadsides.

In Sussex, air quality is monitored by a small network of automatic monitoring stations. Ozone is the primary pollutant of concern in East Sussex, monitored at five sites. In 2020 there were 115 days where ozone was 'moderate' or 'high', falling to 38 in 2021 – this is for 'monitor days', e.g., if all five monitors recorded moderate ozone on the same calendar day, it would be counted as 5 days. The difference between the two years is largely due to weather conditions.



There are two Air Quality Management Areas in East Sussex. These have both been declared for nitrogen dioxide by Lewes District Council: one in Lewes town centre, and one in central Newhaven. These are areas where local monitoring suggests that legal air quality limits are unlikely to be achieved.

Designated sites and reserves

East Sussex has a rich natural environment, with over two thirds of the county covered by one or more environmental designations. The table shows how much of the county is covered by which type of designation.

Designated sites and reserves		Area (ha)
International	Ramsar	6442.36
	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	7192.92
	Special Protection Area (SPA)	5546.39
National	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	87979.64
	National Nature Reserve (NNR)	320.86
	National Park	24364.93
	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	15379.81
Local	Country Park	692.27
	Local Geological Site (LGS)	765.52
	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	1434.67
	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	9429.68
	Notable Road Verge	24.35
Reserve/ Property	Environmental Stewardship Agreement	31592.2
	National Trust	1839.31
	RSPB Reserve	276.12
	Sussex Wildlife Trust Reserve	1118.38
	Woodland Trust	483.53

Source: Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre

Habitats

The key habitats in East Sussex are grassland, arable farmland and woodland.

Habitat	% of East Sussex
Water bodies	1.5%
Arable	22.7%
Grassland	40.0%
Heathland	0.9%
Intertidal	0.7%
Coastal	0.4%
Built up Areas and Gardens	9.1%

Habitat	% of East Sussex
Woodland	19.9%
Other	4.8%

Ecology

Protected Areas

Over half of the county is designated for its landscape value, either as part of a National Park or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are 65 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), covering about 8% of the county, which recognises and protects their biological and or geological value. About half of these SSSIs are additionally designated as being internationally important for biodiversity, either as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Directive, a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the Birds Directive, or a Ramsar site (an internally important wetland site).

There are 26 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), four National Nature Reserves (NNRs) – considered to be the "jewel in the crown" of SSSIs, and 285 Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs). About a third of the county supports priority habitats, which are identified as being of principal importance for conservation.

Condition

About three quarters of the SSSIs are in favourable or favourable recovering condition and the rest have either been partially destroyed or are in unfavourable condition. About half of the LWS are currently known to be in positive conservation management.

Assets at Risk

Sussex Nature Partnership Natural Capital Investment Strategy 2019 identifies priority habitats as being at high risk, because they:

a) Are not adequately protected under existing mechanisms.
b) Are fragile or vulnerable and/or already highly fragmented.
c) May be of particular significance in a Sussex context.

d) Are irreplaceable or not easily recreated (either on-site or elsewhere) if destroyed.

The priority habitats are:

- Lowland heath – particularly significant in East Sussex, notably at Ashdown Forest, due to small amounts present in the south of England, the fragmentation of the habitat type (especially outside Ashdown Forest) and provides a range of benefits, notably clean water.
- Mudflats and saltmarsh – these habitats provide a range of benefits yet are under increasing pressure from climate change, development, and construction of hard sea defences. The national picture is one of medium risk, but the East Sussex context (with high levels of coastal squeeze) increases the risk to these habitats and the benefits they provide. There are small amounts at Newhaven Tide Mills, Cuckmere Estuary and Rye Harbour.
- Vegetated shingle – a globally restricted and internationally important habitat, for which East Sussex is a stronghold in the UK, mostly at Rye Harbour.
- Reedbed, fen and grazing marsh – small and highly fragmented areas remain in East Sussex, notably at Pevensey, yet they have the potential to provide a wide range of benefits, particularly flood risk mitigation in flood plains and provision of clean water.
- Floodplain woodlands – a fragmentated habitat type which plays a very important role in floodplain function.
- Species rich grassland – highly fragmented and those areas outside formal designated areas have little/no protection from further loss. These areas are a priority for loss to development.

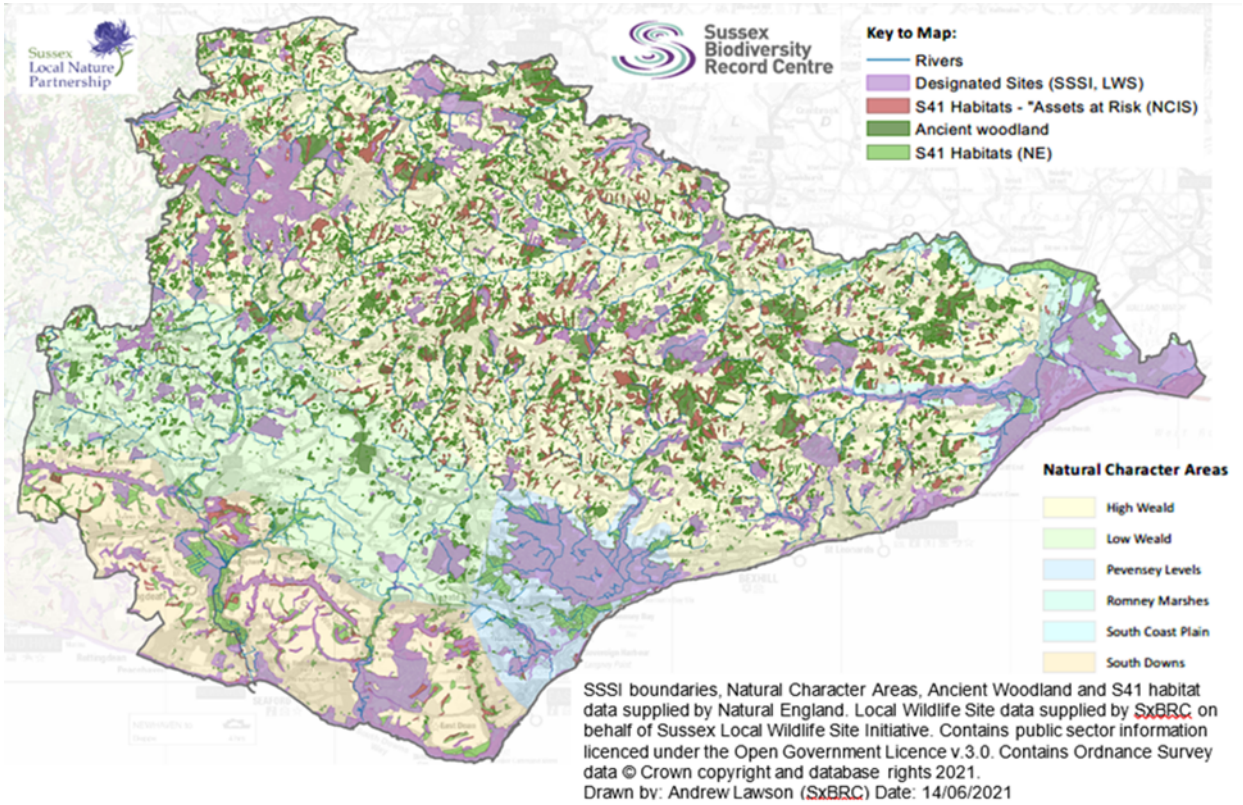
Marine Conservation Zones

There are two Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) off East Sussex, with two other offshore sites under consideration. Designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, MCZs protect areas that are important to conserve the diversity of national rare, threatened, and representative habitats and species. These are Beachy Head West which stretches along coastline from Brighton Marina to Beachy

Head, with a gap at Newhaven and Beachy Head East which contains two marine Sites of Nature Conservation Importance: the Royal Sovereign Shoals and the Horse of Willingdon Reef. This large inshore area runs to Hastings, out to just beyond six nautical miles from the coast at its furthest points.

Nature Recovery Network Mapping

The map below shows the fragmented state of the most important species rich habitats that are to be conserved under section 41 of the National Environment and Rural Communities Act.



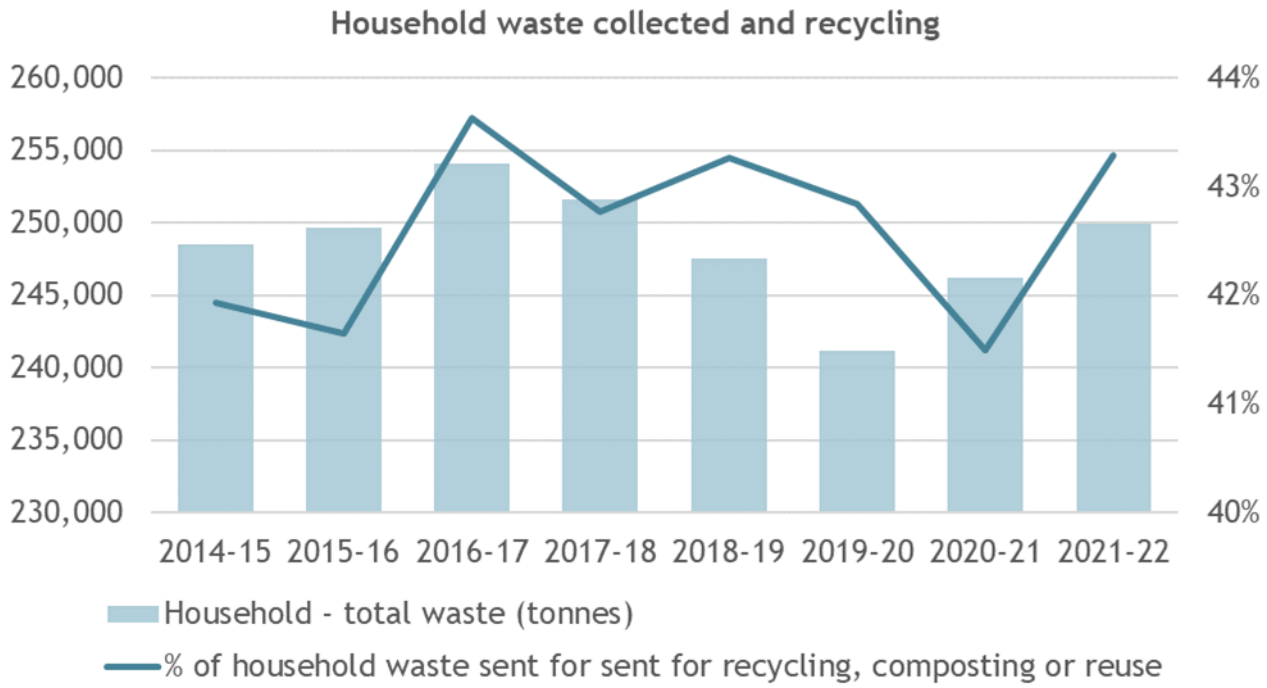
Local Nature Recovery Strategies

The Council has been appointed as a provisional Responsible Authority to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for East Sussex and Brighton & Hove, under the Environment Act 2021. Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a new system of spatial strategies for nature. They are designed to work closely alongside other measures in the Act and will help support delivery of mandatory biodiversity net gain, provide a focus for a strengthened duty on all public authorities to conserve

and enhance biodiversity, and will underpin a national Nature Recovery Network.

Waste

The overall quantity of household waste collected has risen since 2019/20. This is thought to be due to changes in working patterns, with more people working from home. The recycling rate fell slightly during the first year of the pandemic - mainly due to the impact on waste management procedures – but has now recovered.



Source: Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

In 2021/22 East Sussex sent 0.6% of all waste collected to landfill. This was the third lowest amongst authorities who operate similar services to us, and the lowest of any county council. 43% of waste was recycled or reused, whilst 55% was sent for energy recovery. Note these figures differ slightly to the chart above due to additional waste collected (non-household waste) and stockpiling at waste management facilities. Our Energy Recovery Facility supplies power for over 25,000 homes.

Source: Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Flooding

The tables below show the number of residential and non-residential properties identified as at risk of flooding between 2016 and 2026. The data shows that the majority of the flood risk is concentrated in the highly populated coastal towns, and in settlements situated in the flood plains of the rivers Ouse, Cuckmere and Rother.

	Residential Properties at Risk
Settlement	2016-2026 Assessment
Eastbourne	Greater than 1,000
Seaford	500 to 1,000
Newhaven	50 to 150
Peacehaven	150 to 500
Lewes	50 to 150
Hailsham	150 to 500
Bexhill	500 to 1,000
Battle	50 to 150
Hastings	Greater than 1,000
Rye	Fewer than 50
Heathfield	50 to 150
Crowborough	50 to 150
Uckfield	Fewer than 50
Forest Row	Fewer that 50

Note: A comparison of residential properties at risk from a 1 in 30 year surface water flood event (3% chance in any given year) between 2016-2026 Assessments of

Local Flood Risk. Source: ESCC Flood Risk Strategy

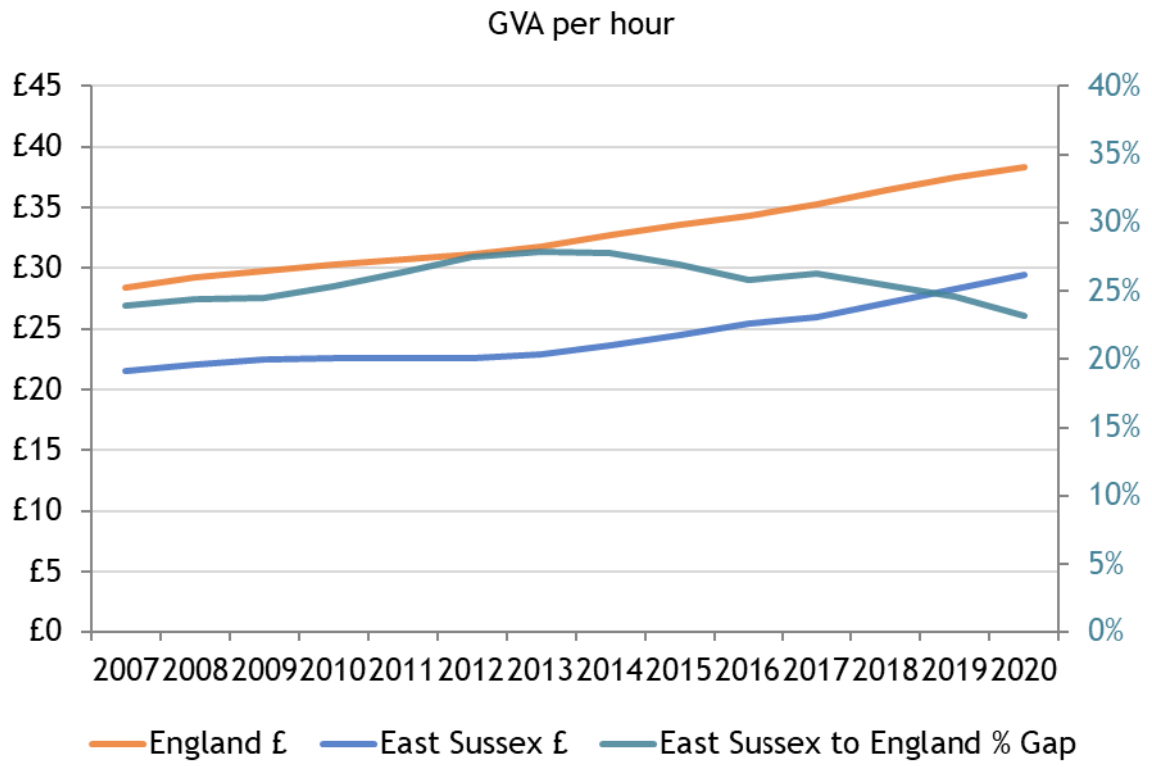
	Non-Residential Properties at Risk
Settlement	2016-2026 Assessment
Eastbourne	Greater than 200
Seaford	25 to 50
Newhaven	Fewer than 25
Peacehaven	Fewer than 25
Lewes	Fewer than 25
Hailsham	25 to 50
Bexhill	25 to 50
Battle	Fewer than 25
Hastings	Greater than 200
Rye	Fewer than 25
Heathfield	Fewer than 25
Crowborough	Fewer than 25
Uckfield	Fewer than 25
Forest Row	Fewer than 25

Note: A comparison of non-residential properties at risk from a 1 in 30 year surface water flood event (3% chance in any given year) between 2016-2026 Assessments of Local Flood Risk. Source: ESCC Flood Risk Strategy.

Economy

GVA per hour

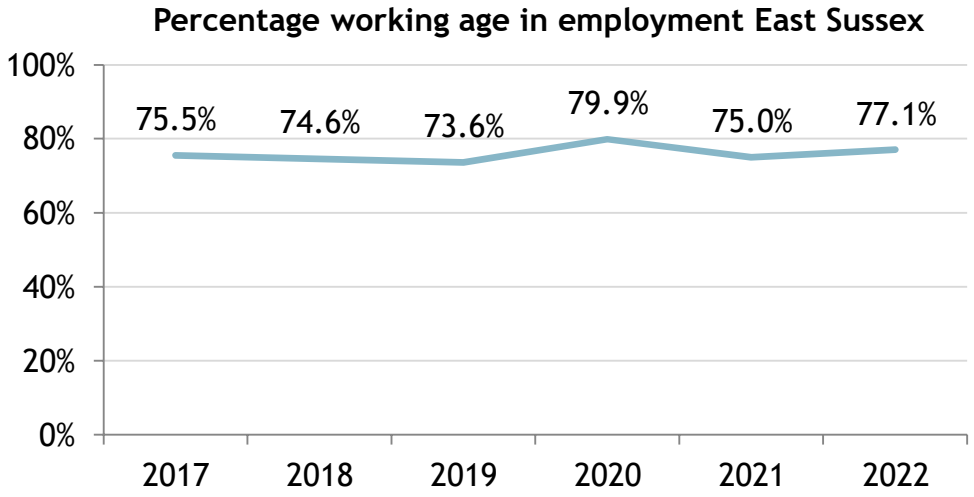
Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour is used to assess the productivity of an area. It measures the value of goods or services produced in an area per hour worked in that area. GVA per hour for East Sussex in 2020 was £29.41, 23.2% below the England level of £38.29.



Source: ONS

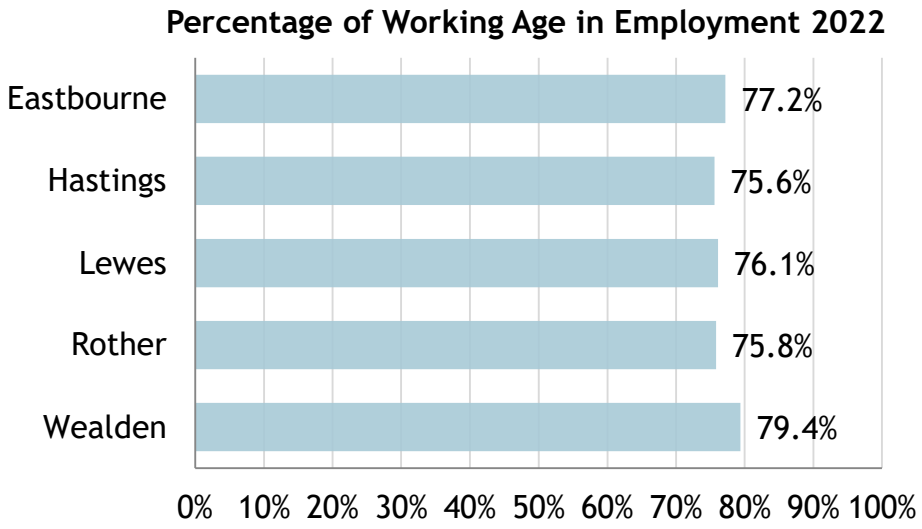
Employment

77.1% of the East Sussex working age population (age 16-64) were in employment between January – December 2022 (up from 75.0% in 2021). This was higher than the national average of 75.4% but below the average across the South East of 78.1%.



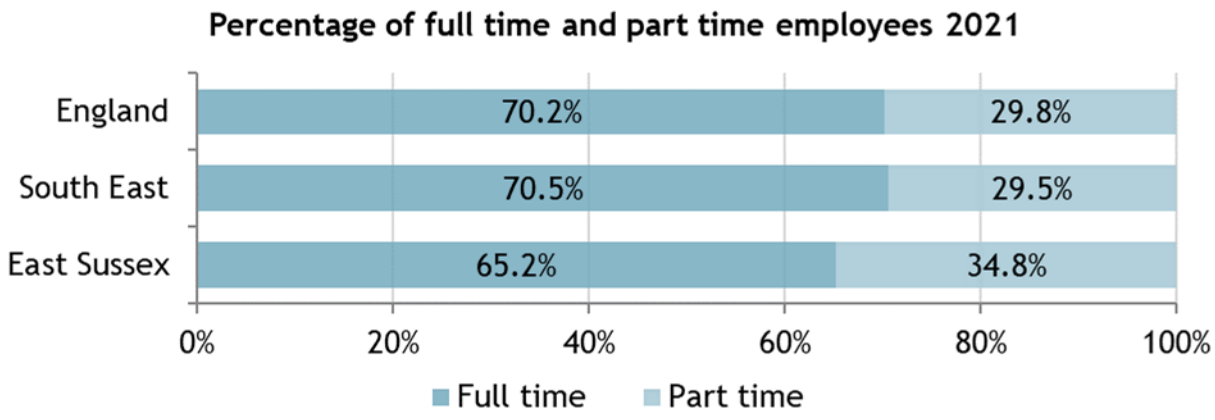
Sources: Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey, NOMIS/ONS

Wealden experienced a surge of almost five percentage points since 2021, giving it the highest rate of employment at 79.4%. Meanwhile, Hastings had the lowest at 75.6% following a dip of four percentage points compared to the previous year.



Sources: Annual National Survey/Labour Force Survey, NOMIS/ONS

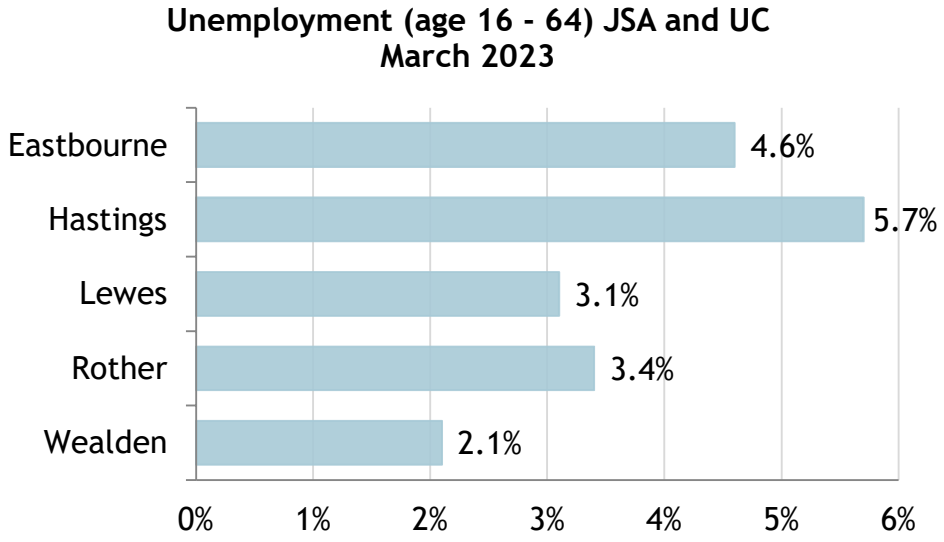
A higher proportion of people work part time in East Sussex (34.8%) than in the South East (29.5%) or England (29.8%).



Sources: Census 2021

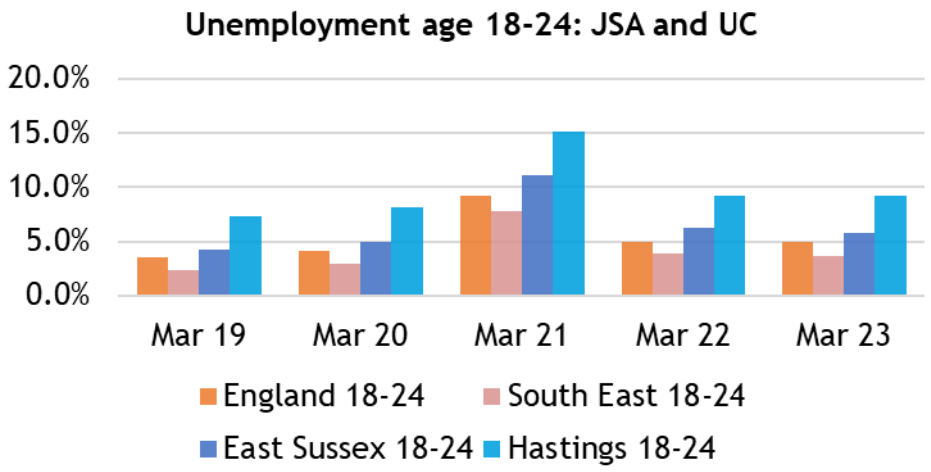
Unemployment

The unemployment rate for March 2023 was 3.6% for East Sussex, slightly lower than the national average of 3.8%, but above the regional average of 2.9%. Hastings had the highest rate of the districts and boroughs at 5.7%.

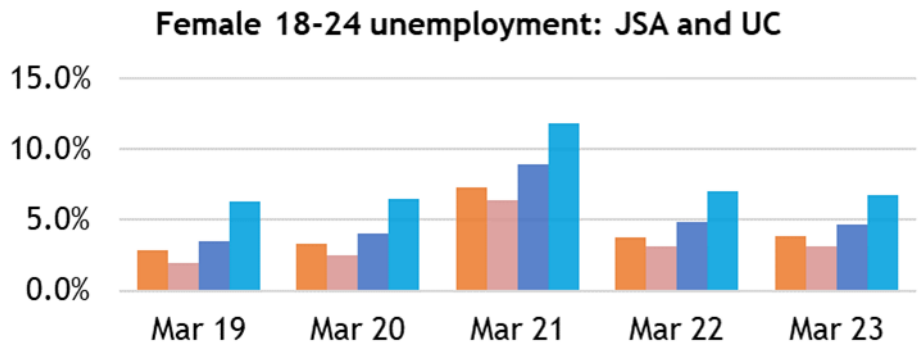


Source: Office for National Statistics/NOMIS - claimants of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or Universal Credit (UC) who are searching for work age 16 – 64

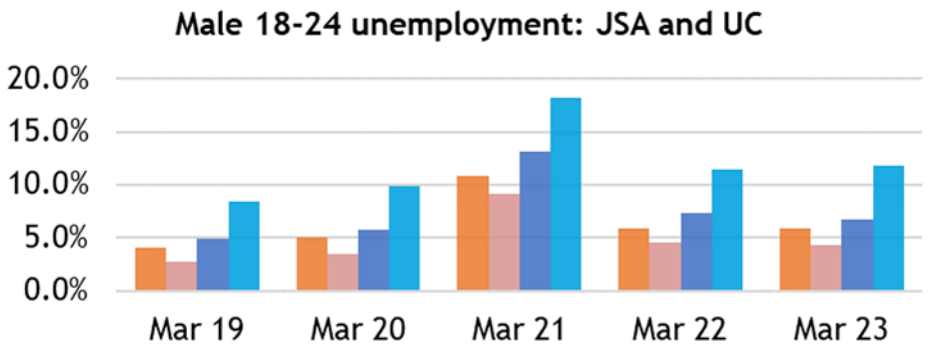
Youth unemployment (age 18-24) is normally higher than the overall rate and this trend is greater at time of economic stress. At March 2022 youth unemployment for East Sussex was 6.2%, whilst the England rate was 4.9%. Hastings had the highest district and borough rate at 9.2%. Rates in East Sussex fell for March 2023 to 5.8%, compared to 4.9% nationally. Youth unemployment in Hastings remained higher than the county average at 9.2%.



Within this female unemployment is usually lower than male unemployment. For example, in March 2023 female youth unemployment for Hastings was 6.8%, male 11.8%.



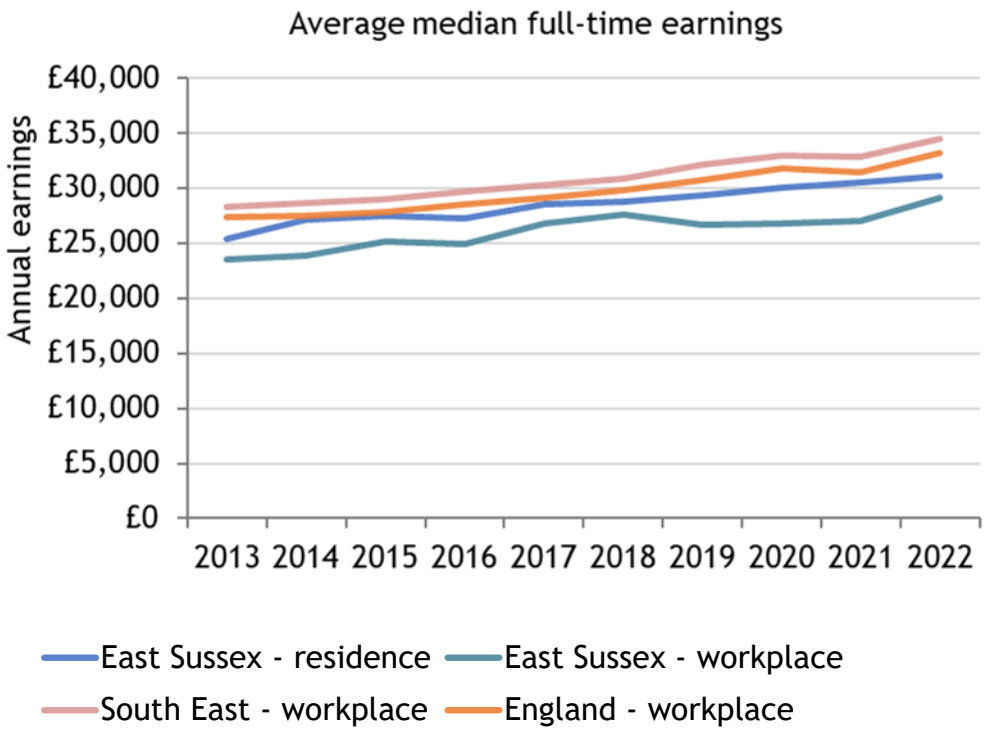
More males are usually economically active meaning the unemployment rate results in relatively more unemployed males than the same rate for females. 610 young people were unemployed in Hastings in March 2023, 215 were female and 395 were male.



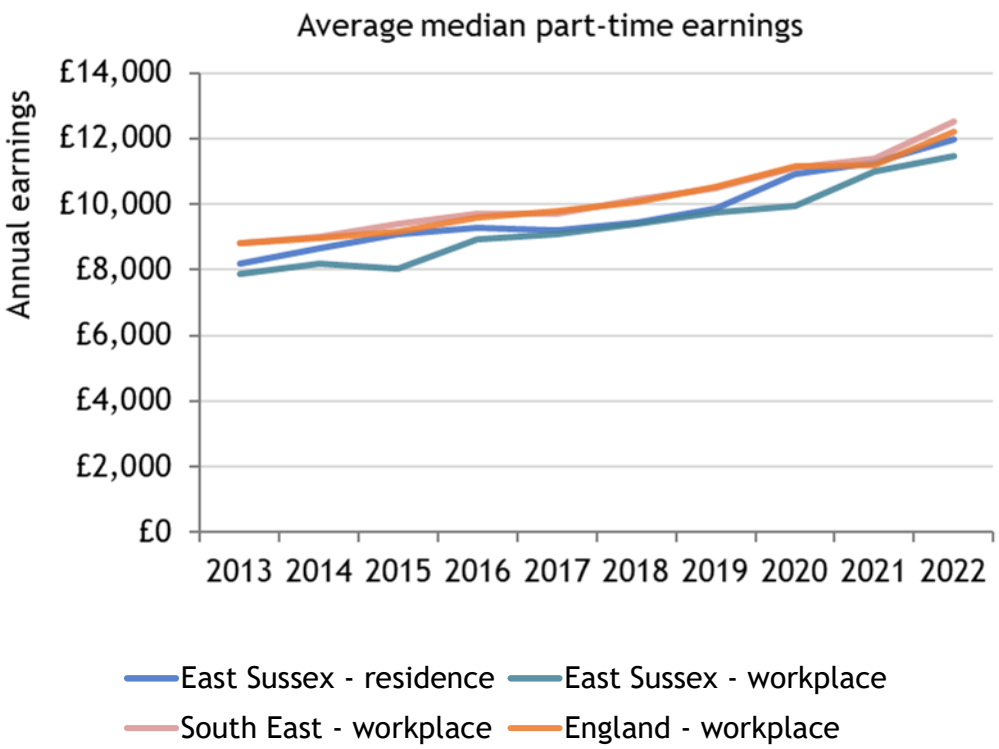
Source all: Office for National Statistics/NOMIS

Earnings

Residence based earnings are close to the England average workplace earnings for both full and part-time employees. However, for full-time employees in East Sussex, workplace earnings are lower than the rates in the South East and England. Residence based earnings are those of people living within East Sussex, some of whom have workplaces outside East Sussex; workplace earnings are those of people whose workplace is within East Sussex.



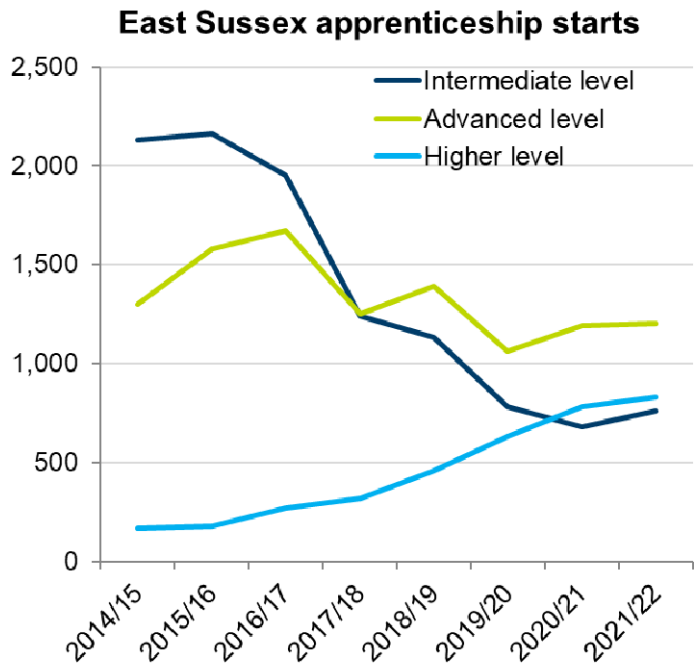
Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Office for National Statistics



Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Office for National Statistics.

Skills

There were 13,780 apprenticeship starts in East Sussex between 2017 and 2022. Apprenticeship starts in East Sussex in 2021/22 were up 5% on the previous year. Higher level apprenticeship starts in 2021/22 rose by 6%



Source: Department for Education further education data library, apprenticeships

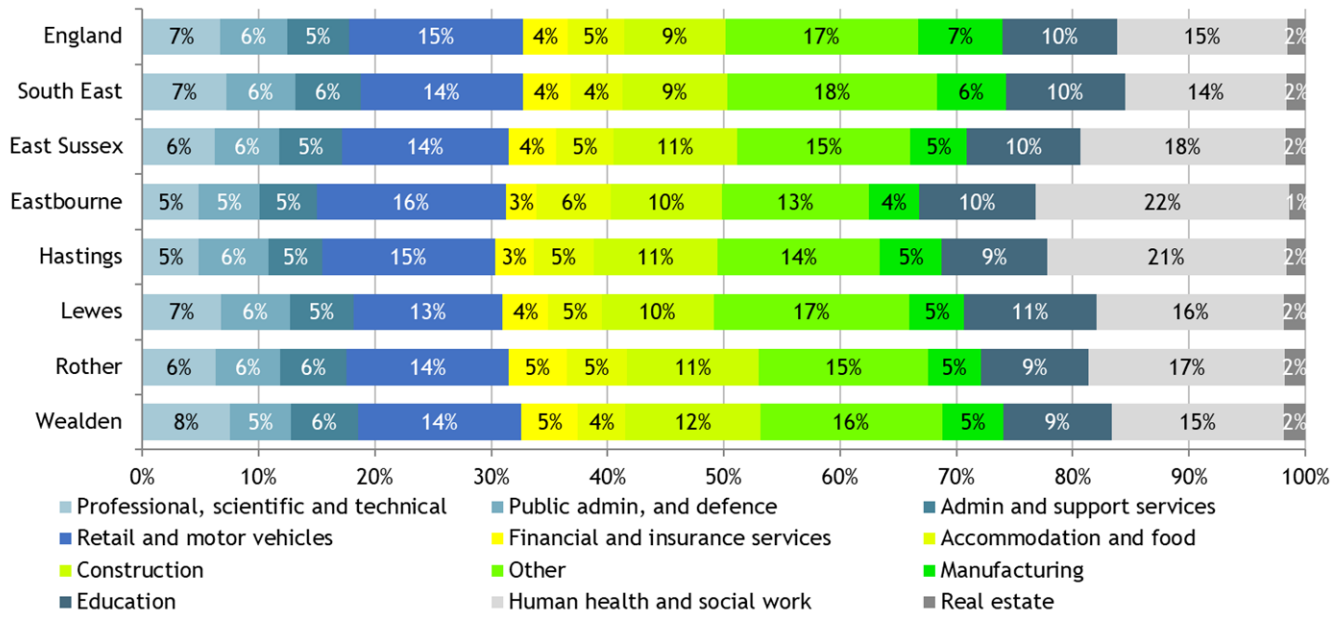
Qualification levels across the county are broadly in line with the regional and national averages. Both Lewes and Wealden have a significantly higher proportion of better qualified people compared to the rest of districts and boroughs in the county.

	Qualifications of working age population 2021 (16-64)					
	None	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4+	Other
Eastbourne	12.2%	11.6%	16.7%	20.6%	32.2%	6.7%
Hastings	14.1%	11.9%	17.4%	19.8%	30.6%	6.2%
Lewes	9.2%	10.7%	16.5%	20.4%	37.4%	5.7%
Rother	11.0%	11.7%	17.5%	21.1%	32.6%	6.1%
Wealden	8.1%	10.5%	17.9%	22.1%	35.3%	6.0%
East Sussex	10.6%	11.2%	17.2%	21.0%	33.8%	6.1%
SE region	10.0%	9.9%	15.3%	20.1%	38.8%	5.9%
England	12.4%	9.9%	14.8%	19.5%	37.1%	6.3%

Source: Census 2021

Employment by industry

Across East Sussex as a whole the proportion of people employed in different industries is broadly similar to the national picture. We have a higher proportion of people employed in human health and social work and a lower proportion employed in professional, scientific and technical, and manufacturing than the national average. However, employment by industry varies significantly across the county. It is interesting to note that the proportion of people employed within the Accommodation and Food industry reduced by half in Rother compared to 2020 (from 10% to 5%), possibly linked to the impacts of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic.

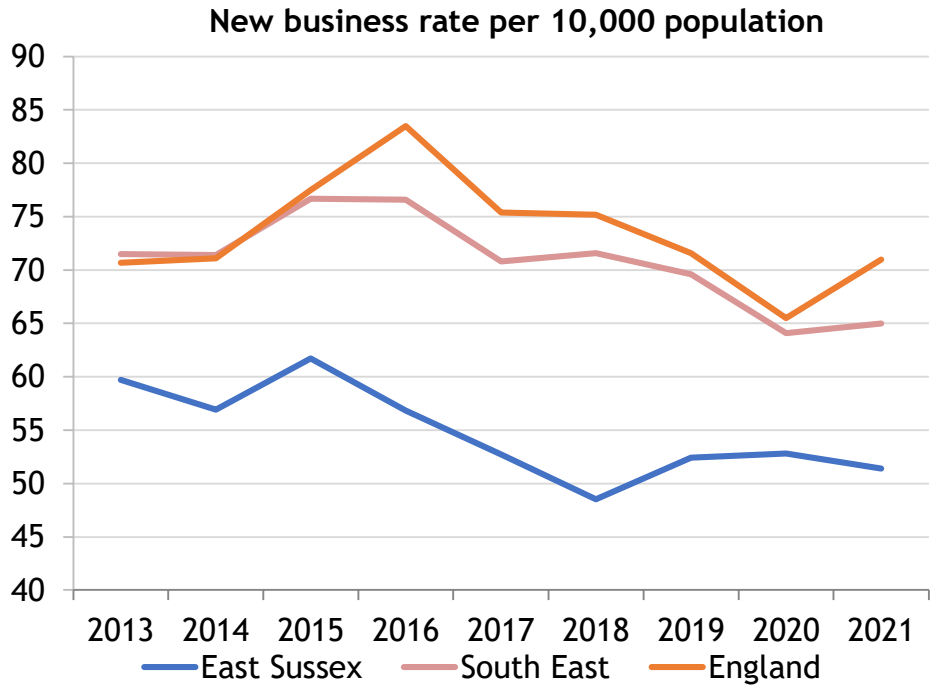


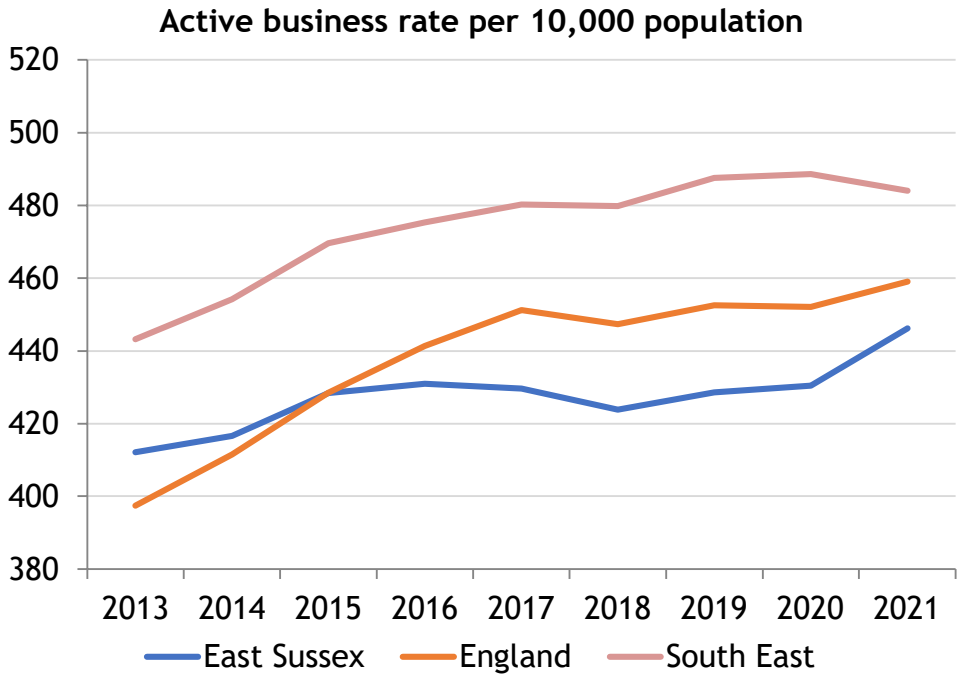
Other includes- Arts, Entertainment and other; Agriculture energy and water, Transportation and storage; and Information and communication.

Source: Census 2021

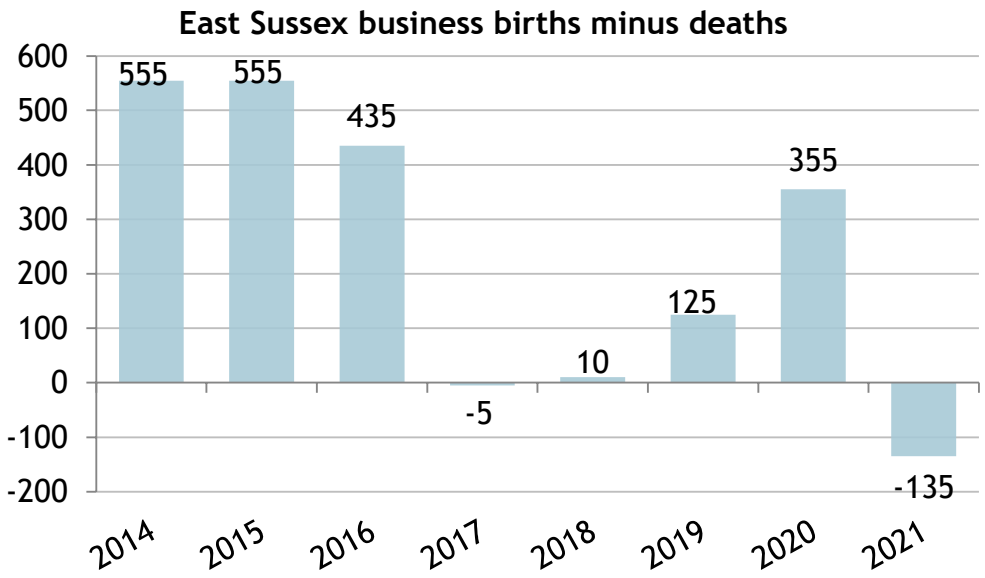
Businesses

The information on business registrations and closures dates to the time of the pandemic. In 2021 there were 2,385 business starts and 2,520 business closures. The East Sussex new business registration rate per 10,000 people decreased between 2020 and 2021 to 51.4. The highest rate was in Wealden at 55.9, whilst the lowest was in Lewes at 47.1.





The data shows that there was a small net loss in businesses in 2021, which was a difficult year for businesses across the country due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

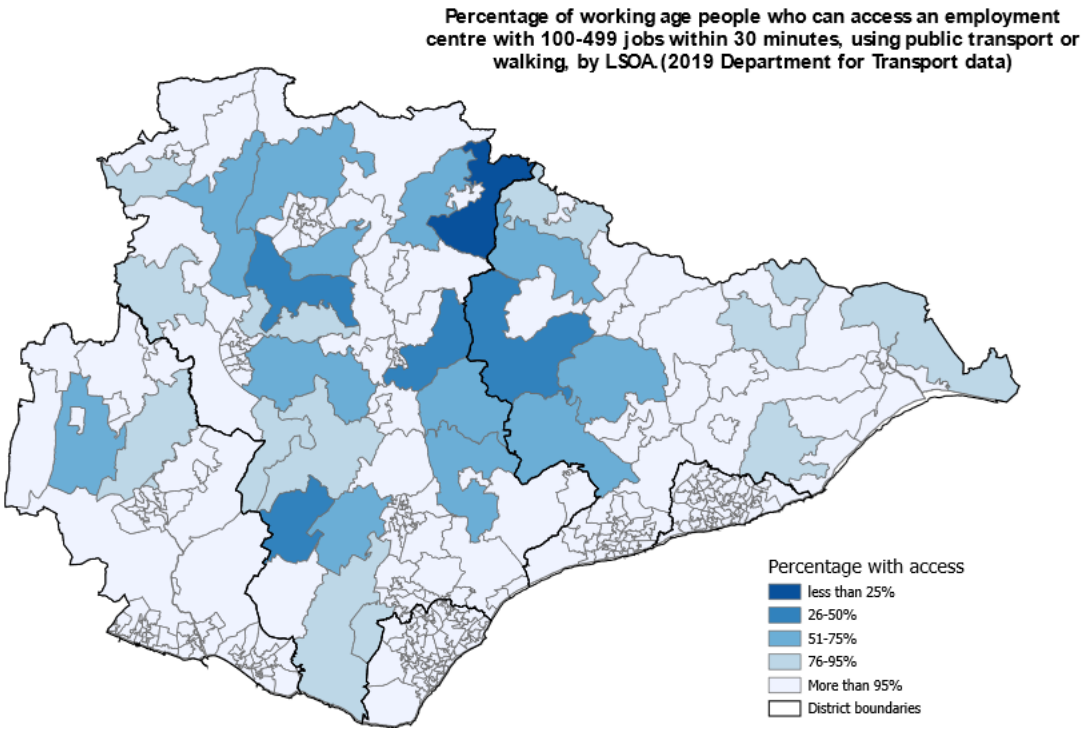


Source for all: ONS Business Demography

Infrastructure

The latest Department for Transport data from 2019 shows there was good access to services by car. However, accessing services by public transport or walking can be more challenging in rural areas.

Access to employment centres (100-499 jobs) within 30 minutes by public transport/walking.



This table details the projects which will improve the infrastructure in East Sussex in the coming years.

Key		
Local Growth Fund	Other Funds	
Area	Project	Value
Countywide	Infrastructure at business sites	£1.7m
Countywide	Walking and cycling improvements	£20.7m
Countywide	Developing EV infrastructure provision across the county	Awaiting Bid Outcome
Countywide	Broadband - Superfast coverage (>30 Mbps) 98% Ultrafast coverage (>100Mbps) 32%	£32m
Countywide	Bus priority measures	£18.5m
Countywide	Potential A259 Major Road Network Improvements	N/A
Countywide	Exceat Bridge Levelling Up Fund	£7.9m
Countywide	A27 improvements	£75.0m
Countywide	Potential A27 offline solution	N/A
Countywide	Lewes to Newhaven rail signalling improvements	£18.0m
Countywide	A22 junction improvement package	£46.5m
Countywide	Blackfriars road infrastructure	£8.7m

Key		
Local Growth Fund	Other Funds	
Area	Project	Value
Countywide	Centres of Digital Excellence across Sussex	£2.3m
Countywide	Greener Sussex land management & Decarbonisation Academies	£7.2m
Countywide	Agri-Food Centre for training, education and skills development	£4.4m
Bexhill	North Bexhill Access Road	£18.6m
Bexhill	Bexhill Enterprise Park North	£1.9m
Bexhill	Bexhill Enterprise Park Development	£46.0m
Eastbourne	Eastbourne Town Centre Movement and Access Package (Terminus Road)	£11.3m
Eastbourne	Eastbourne and South Wealden walking and cycling package	£6.6m
Eastbourne	Hailsham, Polegate and Eastbourne Movement and Access Corridor	£2.1m
Eastbourne	Devonshire Park - redevelopment to maximise conference and tourist markets	£54.0m
Eastbourne	Bedfordwell Road - site preparation for housing development	£1.2m
Eastbourne	Levelling Up Fund	£19.9m
Hastings	Bexhill and Hastings Movement and Access Package	£9.0m
Hastings	Potential HS1 rail extension (also to Bexhill and Eastbourne)	N/A
Hastings	Town Deal	£24.3m
Hastings	The Observer Building, Hastings (Phase 2)	£2.2m
Lewes	North Street Quarter	N/A
Lewes	Seven Sisters Country Park Visitor Infrastructure Uplift	£0.3m
Newhaven	Newhaven Flood Defences	£17.0m
Newhaven	Newhaven Port Access Road	£23.0m
Newhaven	Newhaven Port - new border infrastructure	£6.2m
Newhaven	Future High Streets	£5.0m
Newhaven	Town Deal	£19.3m
Newhaven	Levelling Up Fund	£12.7m
Newhaven	UTC Maritime & Sustainable Technology Hub	£1.3m

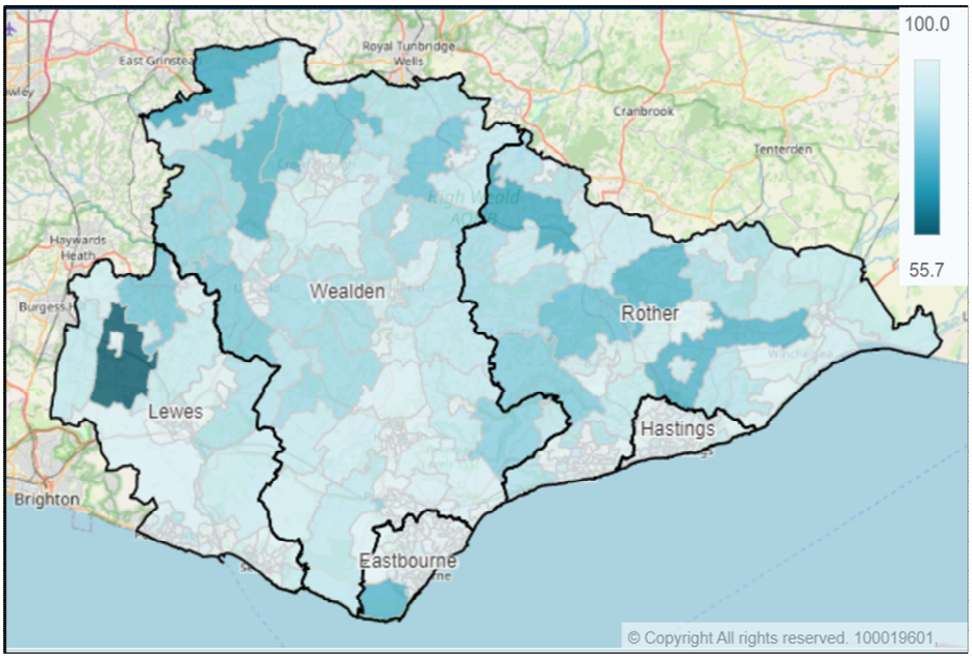
Key		
Local Growth Fund	Other Funds	
Area	Project	Value
Rother	Levelling Up Fund	£19.2m
Rye	Rye Harbour Nature Reserve Discovery Centre	£0.9m
Uckfield	Bus station improvements	£0.5m
Uckfield	Potential Movement and Access Corridor improvements	£0.8m

N/A = Not Allocated at present

Demand for commercial units is strong, however, there is recognition that there is less new workspace being made available to meet that need across the county. As well as improvements in physical infrastructure there is also ongoing work to improve digital connectivity.

Broadband

Over 98% of East Sussex premises had access to superfast broadband in 2022, with 53% having access to Gigabit capable broadband. 0.45% of properties have less than the Legal Universal Service Obligation (at least 10Mbps).

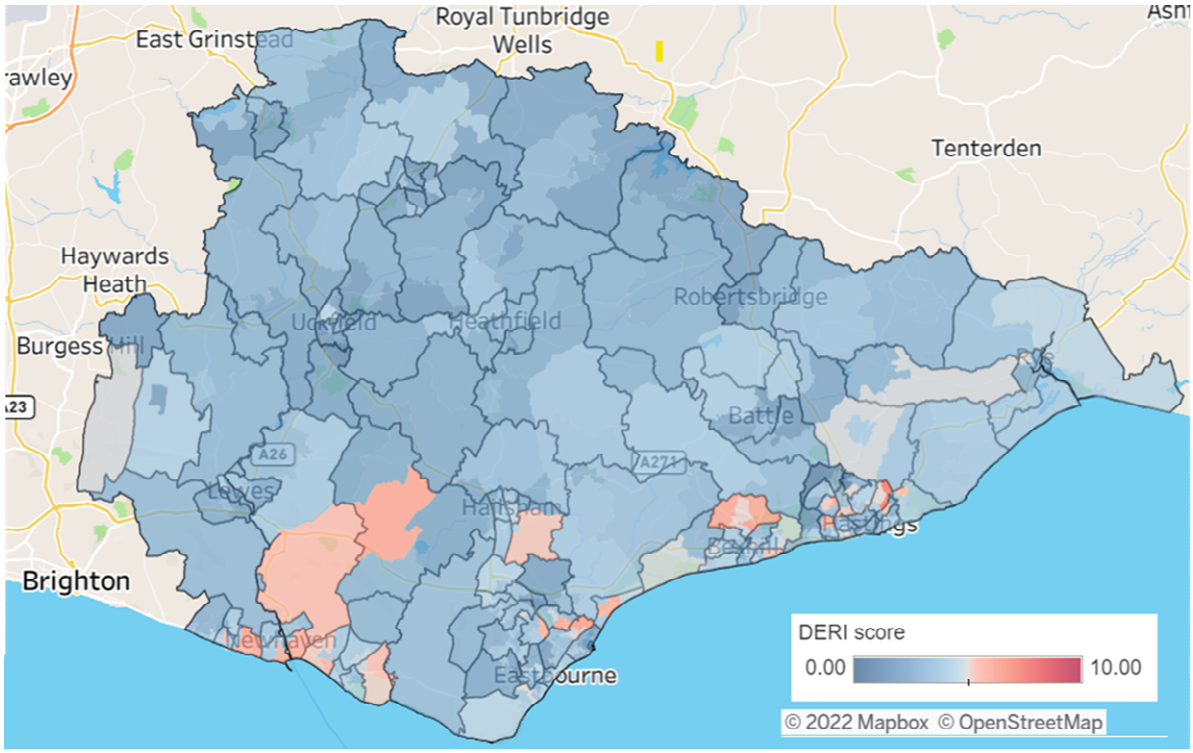


Source: Ofcom fixed broadband coverage data (2021) shown for LSOAs.

Digital Inclusion

As more businesses and services use digital channels to engage with residents those people who are digitally excluded are likely to face increasing challenges. Access to broadband is one part of being able to access digital services. People also need to have the necessary skills and confidence to use digital services, as well as being able to afford the devices and data connections needed for these.

A digital exclusion risk index has been developed by the Greater Manchester Office of Data Analytics that shows where people at higher risk of digital exclusion live. This index is based on a range of data including data on population, relative deprivation and broadband coverage. Areas where people have a higher risk of digital exclusion have a higher score, for East Sussex the areas with the highest risk of digital exclusion scores are in the south of the county. It should be noted that the index includes the proportion of population aged over 65 as one of the risk factors due to national research indicating lower digital skill levels in this age group. We have a large population of over 65s in East Sussex, many of whom will have strong digital skills.



Source: Digital Exclusion Risk Index (Greater Manchester Office of Data Analytics)

Civil Society

Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and volunteering

We have a diverse range of VCSE organisations working at every level, neighbourhood, town/parish, and district/borough, there are over 3,000 not-for-profit groups and organisations providing activities and support to residents and communities that bring about positive change and improve people's lives.

Some of the organisations the Council funded or supported during 2022:

Source: ESCC VCSE Team.

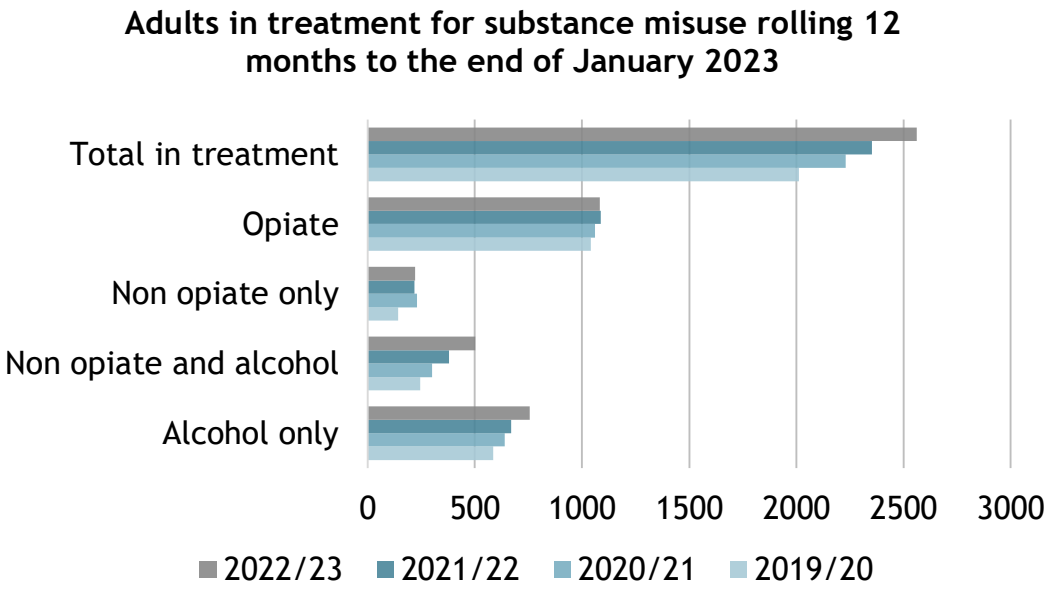
A quarter of the population volunteer at least once a month in East Sussex, giving their time to local causes, groups, and communities that aim to make communities a better place where helping people themselves is part of everyday life. The sense of community that volunteering brings enables people to feel connected and that they are making a positive difference.

Community Safety

Drug and alcohol-related harm

The number of East Sussex adults in substance misuse treatment in the 12 months to the end of January 2023 increased by 8.88% to 2,562, compared to the 12 months to the end of January 2022. This is notable when compared to the national data which saw an overall 0.33% decrease in the number of adults in treatment year on year. Of these 19.63% (503) were in treatment for use of alcohol and non-opiates, this is an increase of 32.72% on the previous year, and 106.15% on the 12 months to 31st January 2020. Nationally, the increase between the 12 months to the end of January 2023 from the end of January 2022 was 2.9%.

The proportion in treatment for opiate use dropped to 42.27% from 46.24% in the previous year while the number in treatment for opiate use dropped slightly from 1,088 to 1,083 individuals. The number of adults in treatment solely for alcohol use increased 13.0% year on year, compared to a 1.12% increase nationally.



Source: National Drug Treatment Monitoring System

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and

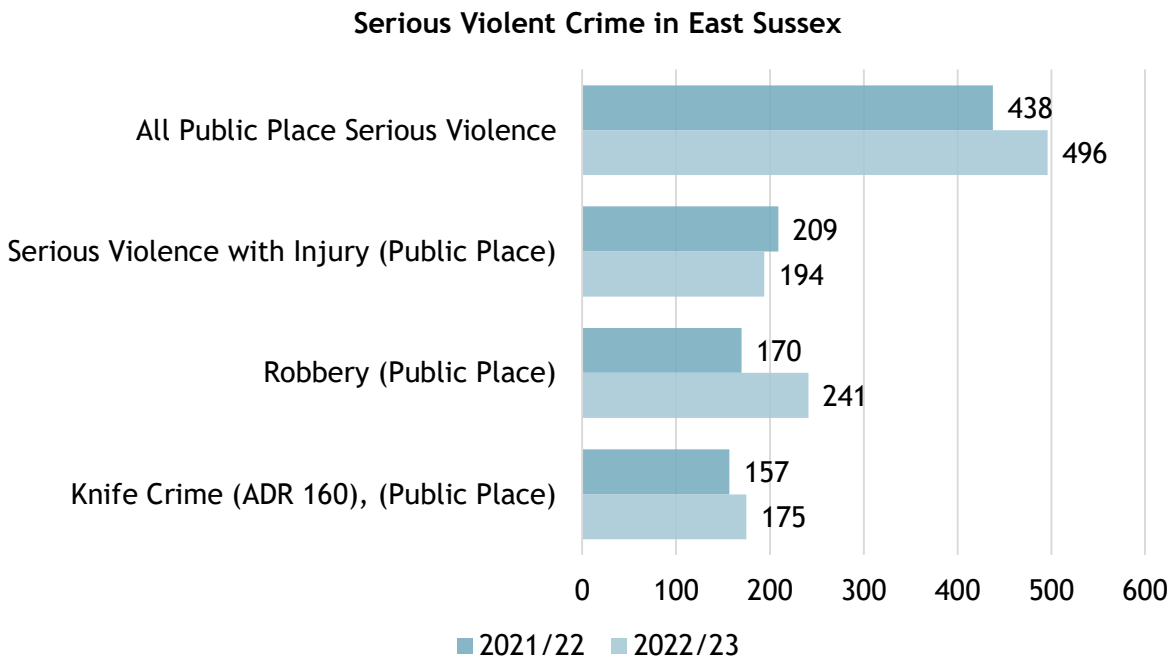
referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. Nationally in 2022, the NRM received 16,938 referrals of potential victims of modern slavery, which represents a 33% increase in referrals compared to 2021 (12,706). 2022 recorded the highest number of annual referrals since the NRM began in 2009. Of all referrals nationally, 52% (8,854) were for potential victims who claimed exploitation as adults whilst 41% (7,019) claimed exploitation as children, and for the remaining cases the age at exploitation was unknown. 80% of potential child victims referred to the NRM in 2022 were male (5,607) and 20% were female (1,978) and the most common form of exploitation reported for potential child victims was criminal exploitation. UK nationals represented the second highest nationality referred to the NRM. Of all the UK nationals referred, 80% were potential child victims.

In East Sussex, two adults and nine minors (child 17 or under) who were potential victims of modern slavery and human trafficking were referred by the authority through the NRM in 2022, compared to two adults and ten minors in 2021 (Source: National Referral Mechanism statistics).

Serious Violence

Serious Violence is one of the areas that is under increasing national scrutiny. We have an active focus on this through our partnership working, however rates of serious violence in East Sussex are low.

In 2022/23, there were 496 Public Place Serious Violent Crimes in East Sussex. This was an increase of 13.2% compared to the previous year (438). The highest percentage increase has been for Robberies (41.8%). There has been a decrease of 7.2% in Serious Violence with Injury and an increase in Knife Crime of 11.5%.



Source: ESCC Adult Social Care and Health Department

Child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation

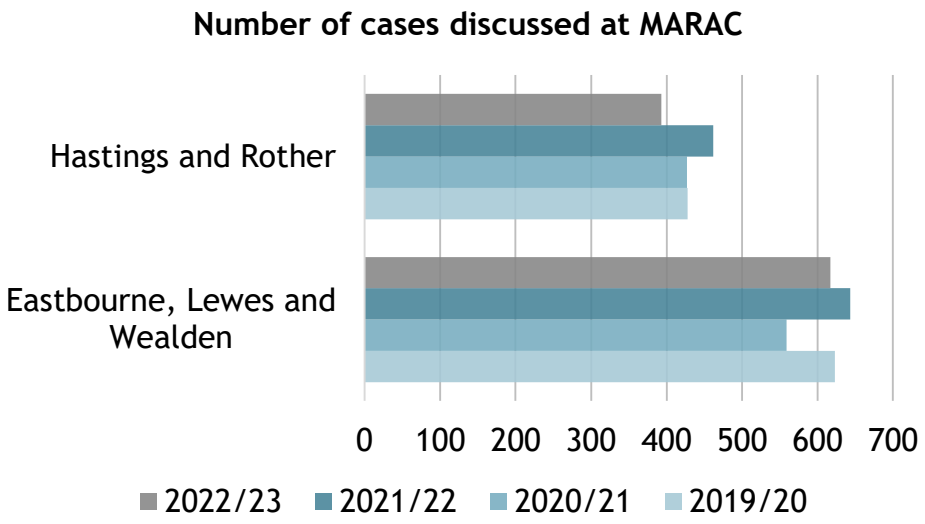
Between April 2022 and January 2023, 33 East Sussex children were experiencing either criminal or sexual exploitation or both. This is in line with the number of children experiencing exploitation in the same period the previous year.

Three quarters of children experiencing exploitation were male and 85% were aged 15 or older. These children receive support from the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) group. 21 children were removed from MACE during the year due to a lowering of their risk level, the average time it took for a child to be removed from MACE was just under six months.

Domestic violence and abuse

During 2022, nationally there was a 2% increase in referrals into Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) compared to 2021. The MARACs are meetings where the highest risk domestic abuse cases are discussed. In East Sussex there was a 4% decrease for the Eastbourne, Lewes and Wealden (ELW) MARAC, and an

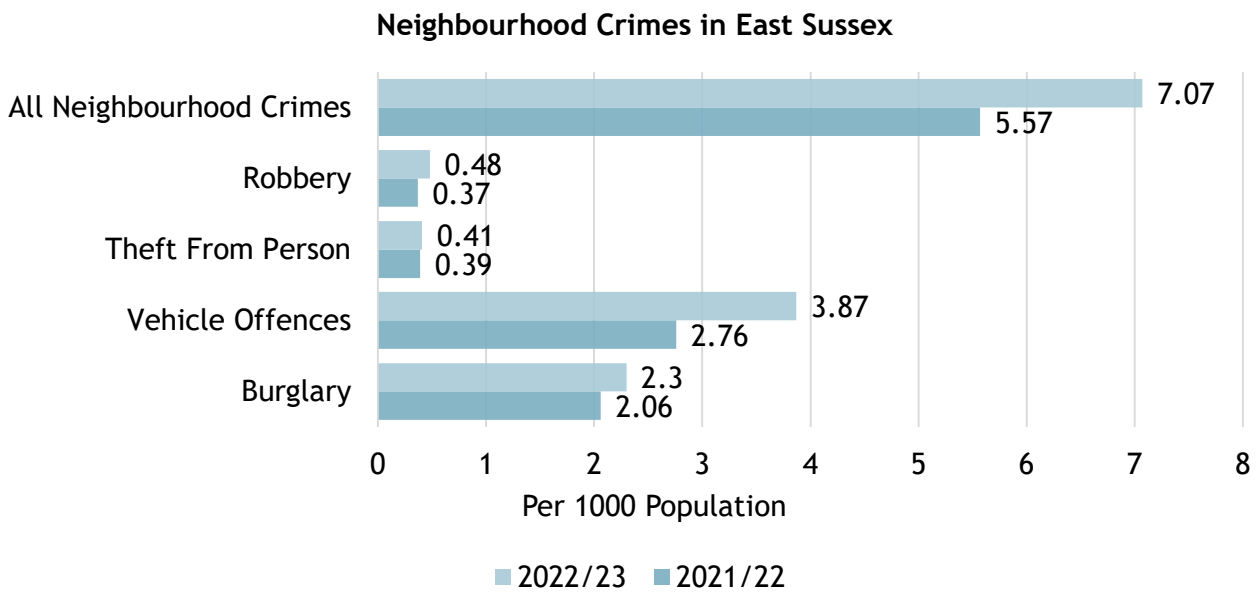
15% decrease for Hastings and Rother (HR) MARAC. This is the first time there has been a decrease in referrals to a MARAC in East Sussex since 2015, aside from the impact of national lockdowns which saw a 3% decrease in referrals to HR MARAC in 2020. However, East Sussex has a historically high number of referrals into MARAC and both ELW and HR remain over the recommended number of 40 cases per 10,000 population.



Source: ESCC Adult Social Care and Health Department

Neighbourhood Crime

Neighbourhood crime includes burglary, vehicle offenses, theft from person and robbery. In total, neighbourhood crimes in East Sussex increased by 27% in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22, with the biggest increase observed for vehicle offenses with an increase of 40.5%. However, neighbourhood crime rates in East Sussex are lower than the national average across all categories.



Source: ESCC Adult Social Care and Health Department

Road Safety

The rate of people being killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions in East Sussex has historically been higher than the average for England. For the three-year period 2017-2019 (the latest period not impacted by the national lockdowns) the average rate of people killed or seriously injured for East Sussex was 68.1 per 100,000 population compared to 43.2 in England. Note that standard road safety reporting is based on a three-year reporting period. 2017-2019 has been used as this is the last period not affected by COVID-19.

Although East Sussex has had higher rates of people killed or seriously injured than the national average and many other areas, direct comparisons between rates are uncertain due to both methods of data collection and recording across police forces, and the differences in road networks and infrastructure.

The number of people killed or seriously injured in East Sussex has fluctuated in recent years. Please note the 2020 and 2021 figures were affected by COVID-19 restrictions/lockdowns. The figures also include crashes on the Strategic Road Network which is managed by National Highways.

Number of people killed or seriously injured in East Sussex

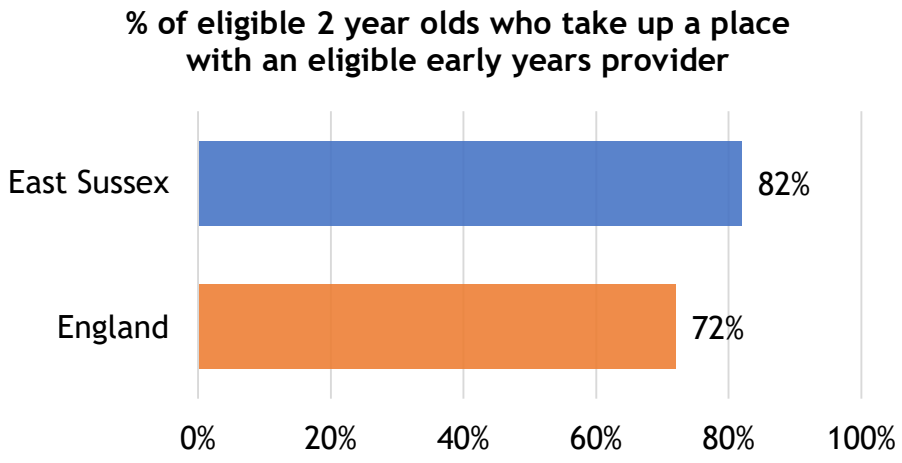
Year	Seriously injured	Fatalities	Total
2022	374	20	394
2021	321	18	339
2020	278	17	295
2019	395	14	409
2018	334	21	355
2017	344	26	370
2016	358	24	382

Source: Sussex Safer Roads Partnership

Schools

Early Years

East Sussex received 1,598 applications for a funded place for eligible 2-year-olds in the spring 2023 funding period. Of these, 275 children were not eligible to receive funding. 82% (1,085) of the remaining 1,323 eligible children have accessed a place with an early year's provider, compared to the national average of 72%.



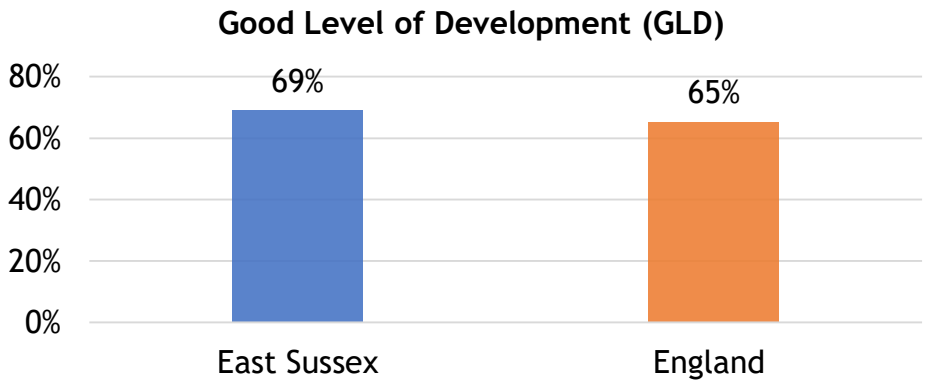
Source: ESCC Children's Services

Attainment

Academic Year 21/22

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Early Years Good Level of Development is achieving the expected standard for: communication and language; physical development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy and mathematics.



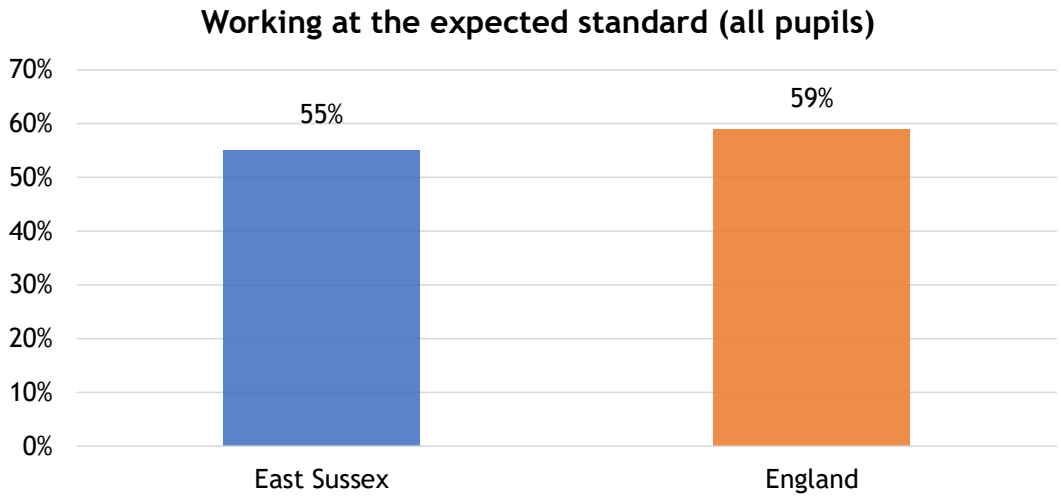
Source: ESCC Children's Services

The percentage point gap between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) achieving a good level of development and their peers is -16.5. The national average gap for this cohort for 2022 is -19.6.

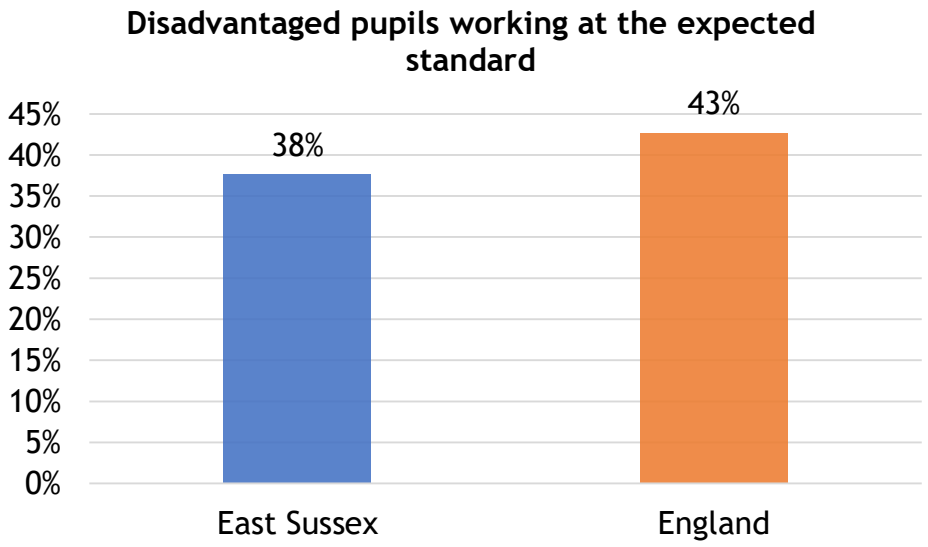
Key Stage 2 Attainment

Key Stage 2: Reading, writing and mathematics.

The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined at Key Stage 2.



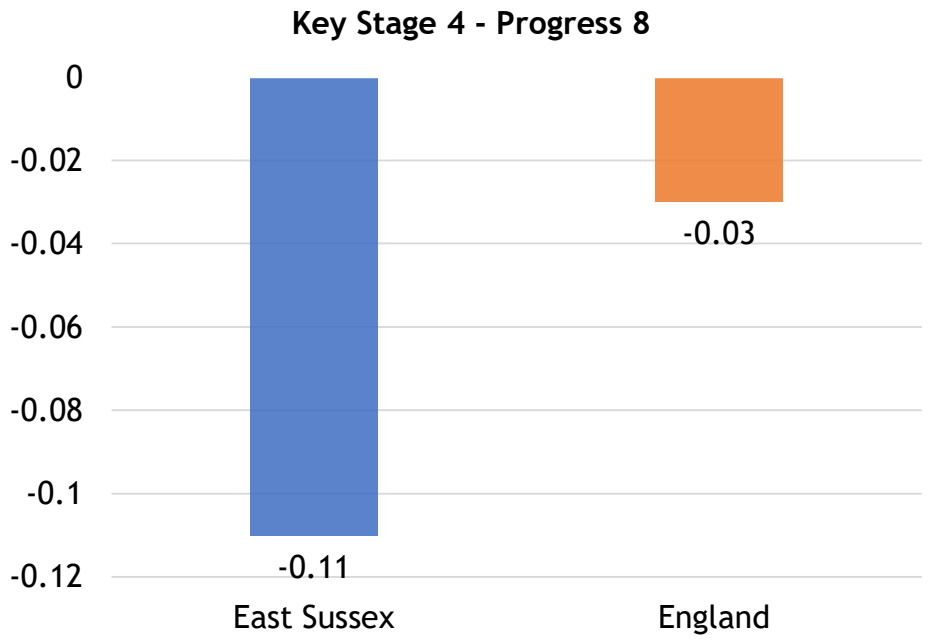
Source: ESCC Children's Services



Source: ESCC Children's Services

Key Stage 4: Progress 8

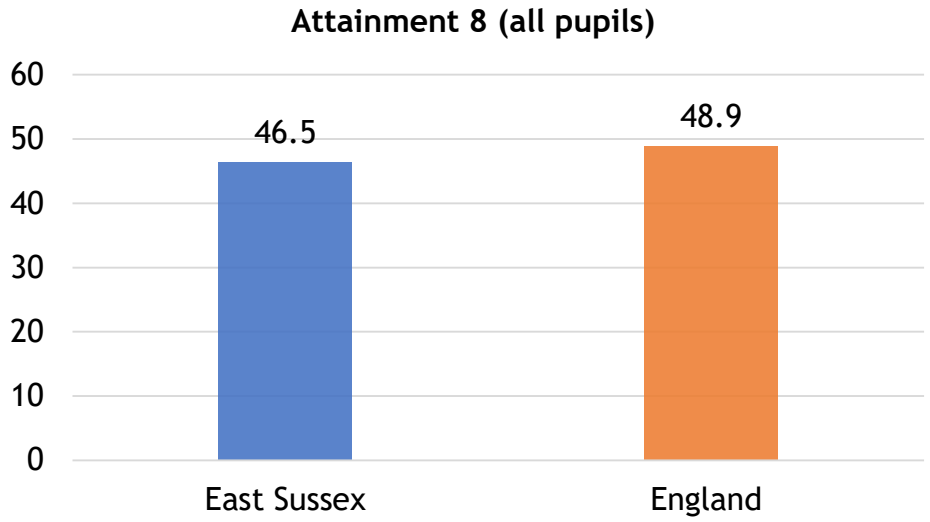
Progress 8 is a measure of students' progress across the Attainment 8 subjects from the end of primary school (Key Stage 2) to the end of secondary school (Key Stage 4). Scores for East Sussex are below national.



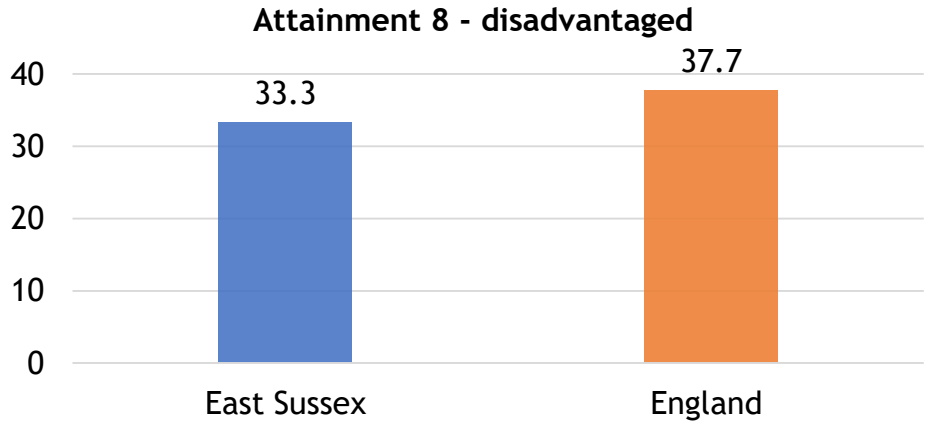
Source: ESCC Children's Services

Key Stage 4: Attainment 8

Attainment 8 is the students' average achievement across eight subjects: English, mathematics, three English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects (from sciences, computer science, geography, history and languages), and three further subjects, from the range of EBacc subjects, or any other GCSE or approved, high-value arts, academic, or vocational qualifications.



Source: ESCC Children's Services



Source: ESCC Children's Services

Attendance

The pandemic has had a significant adverse impact on school attendance, with

both nationally and locally, the proportion of children persistently absent from school, defined as missing more than 10% of sessions, doubling. The Government has published new attendance guidance to clarify responsibilities for local authorities, schools, parents and carers. By September 2023, the expectation is that all councils should strengthen their oversight of attendance through regular individual dialogue with all schools, and provide whole family early help support, free of any charge, to schools and all families of children whose attendance is less than 50%.

Absence as of 31st March 2023:

School type	Persistent Absence (%)	Overall Absence (%)
East Sussex Primary Schools*	18.96	6.38
East Sussex Secondary Schools*	30.41	10.36
East Sussex Special Schools*	44.81	15.67
East Sussex schools overall*	24.29	8.24
FFT National Primary Schools**	20.0	6.3
FFT National Secondary Schools**	27.0	9.2

* Please note that this local data is unverified and does not include schools that do not use SIMS for recording attendance. Persistent absence is the number of pupils with attendance of 90% or lower, expressed as a percentage of pupils on the roll. Overall absence is the total number of sessions missed as a percentage of the total number of possible sessions available.

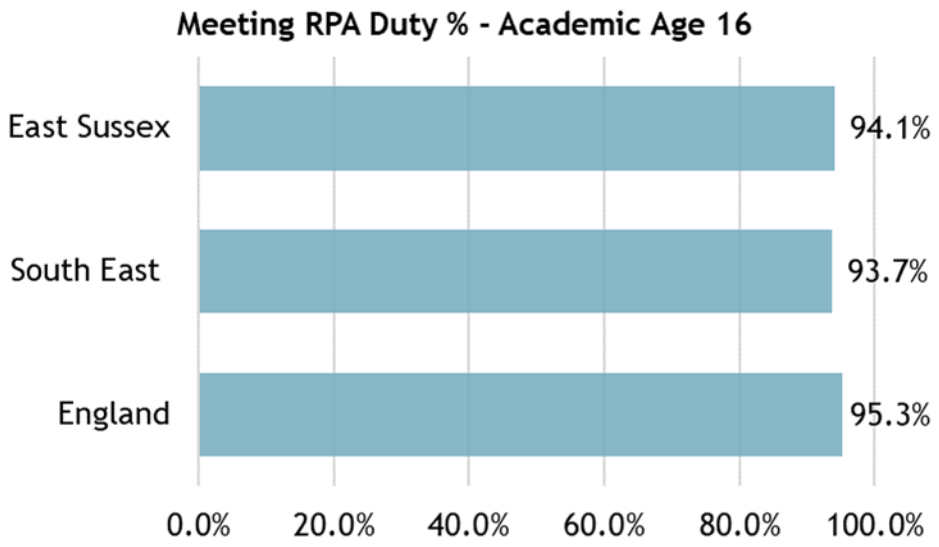
** The Fisher Family Trust (FFT) Attendance Tracker provides a national figure, it is based on the approximately 9,500 schools that participate. This is out of about 22,000 schools and so the FFT national figure needs to be seen in that context.

East Sussex has high levels of suspension and exclusion, and these are rising further in line with national trends. School leaders are experiencing increased levels and complexity of need in their school populations and the demand for support services remains high.

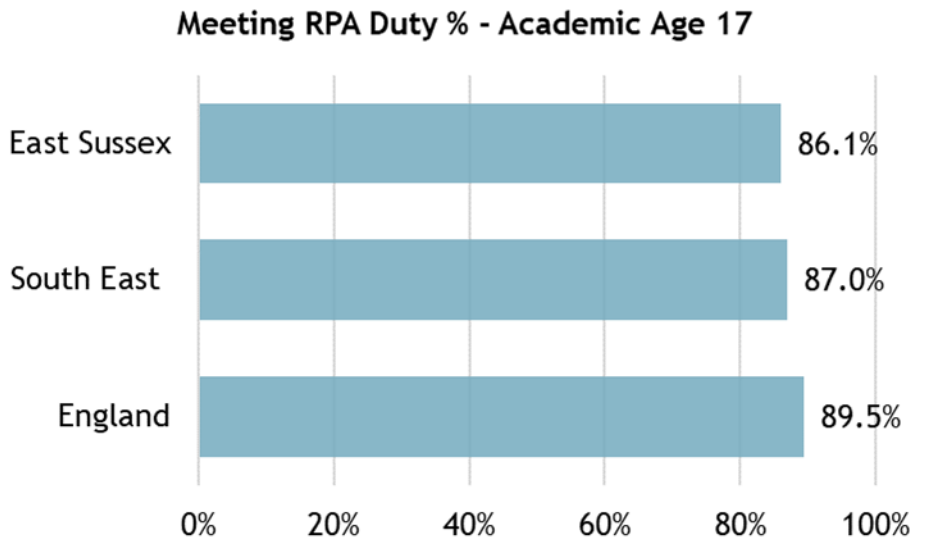
Academic Year 2021-22	
The percentage of exclusions in **primary** schools per school population in that year:	
(i) Fixed term	1.81%
(ii) Permanent	0.04%
The percentage of exclusions in **secondary** schools per school population in that year:	
(i) Fixed term	19.19%
(ii) Permanent	0.06%

Young people in education, employment and training

94.1% of young people at academic age 16 (year 12) and 86.1% age 17 (year 13) were participating in education, training, or employment with training under the Raising the Participation Age (RPA) Duty in quarter 4. However, 96.4% of 16 years old and 93.6.% of 17 year olds were participating in some form of education, training or employment – this includes those in employment without DfE regulated training, or part-time/temporary employment. The number of 16- and 17-year-olds who were not in education, employment or training was 4.1%, below pre-COVID levels of 4.4% Jan 2020. There are concerns about the impact of the further reduction in the vocational/work-based learning offer for young people, with the national Traineeship programme ceasing from summer 2023, as well as European Social Fund not in education, training or employment (NEET) provision.



Source: ESCC Children's Services



Source: ESCC Children's Services

School places

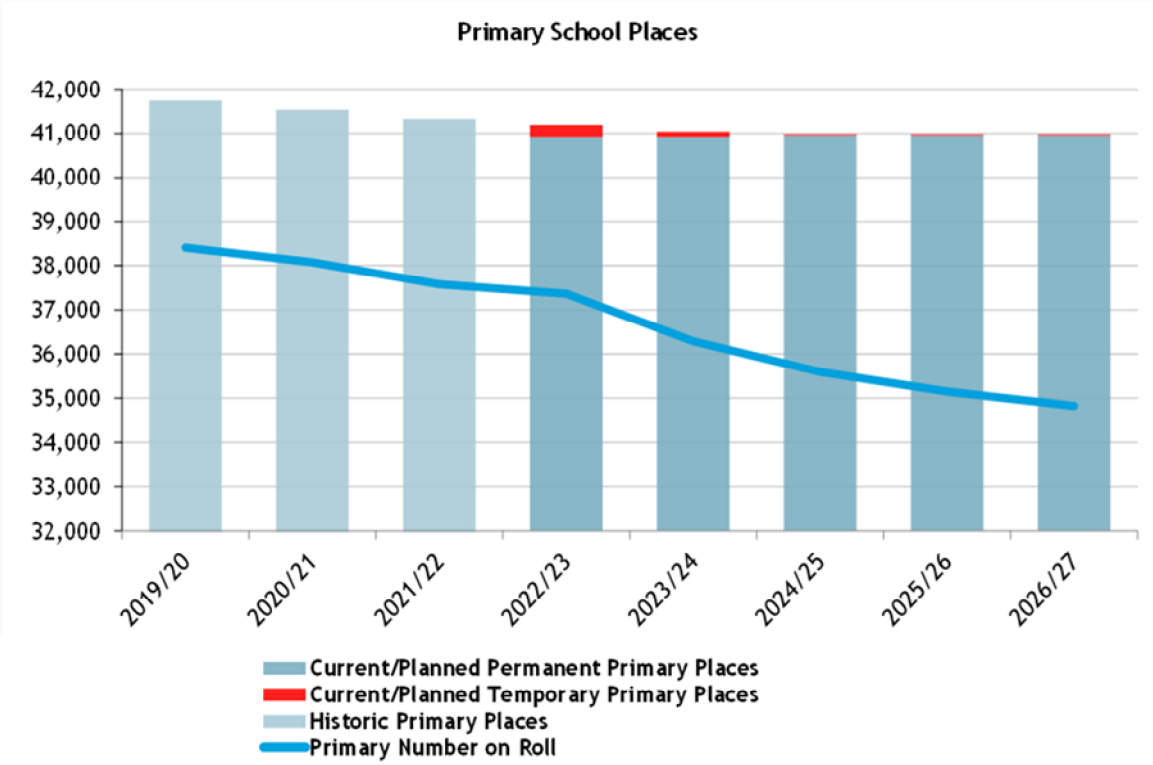
Although our overall population of under 18s is expected to increase slightly over the period 2023 – 2027, the highest rate of growth is expected in those aged 16 – 17, with an expected fall in numbers of children aged 4 – 10.

Age/year	2023	2026	% change 2023-2026	2027	2031	% change 2027-2031
0-3	19,650	20,150	2.5%	20,180	20,840	3.3%
4-10	39,190	38,870	-0.8%	38,770	39,390	1.6%
11-15	31,180	31,390	0.7%	31,160	30,600	-1.8%
16-17	12,280	12,870	4.8%	13,190	12,890	-2.3%

Source: ESCC population projections by age. Interim - April 2023, LDS-based, dwelling-led, numbers rounded to 10

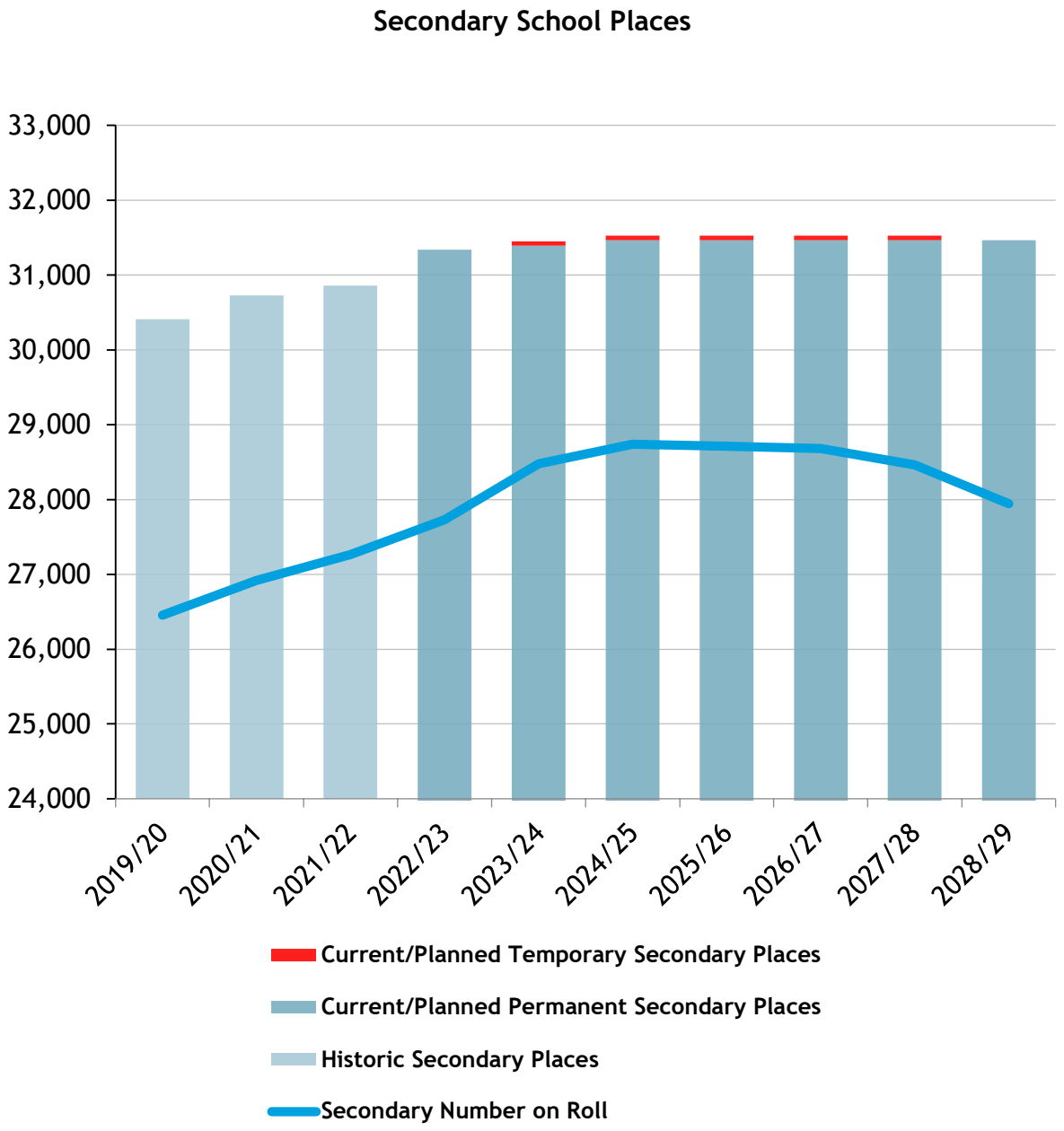
Note: Care should be taken when using the projected population figures above. Due to ONS revised mid-year population estimates not currently being available these are interim projections based on dwelling-led population projections. Please see the note under the Population section for further details.

The total numbers of pupils in primary schools peaked in 2018/19 and are now in decline. As a result the temporary additional capacity in schools that was put in place to accommodate the peak will be removed, leading to a net reduction in capacity of 240 places, between 2022/23 and 2026/27.



Source: ESCC Pupil Forecasting Model, May 2023

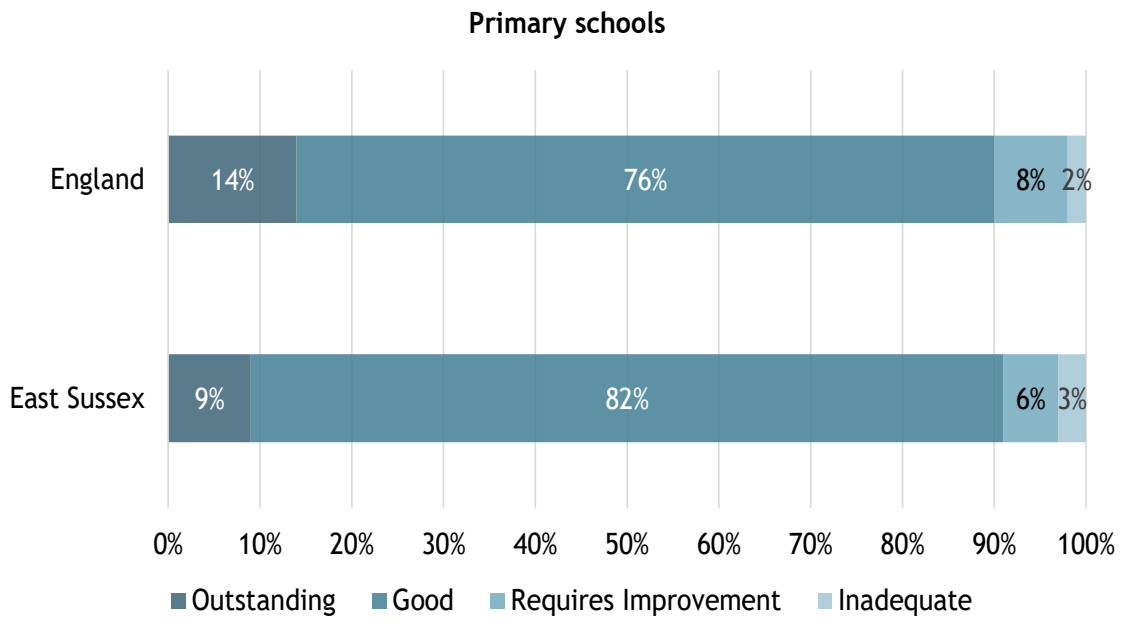
In contrast, secondary pupil numbers are expected to continue to increase and peak around 2024/25. 605 additional permanent places and 60 additional temporary places will be added between 2022/23 and 2024/25 to meet forecast demand in local areas.

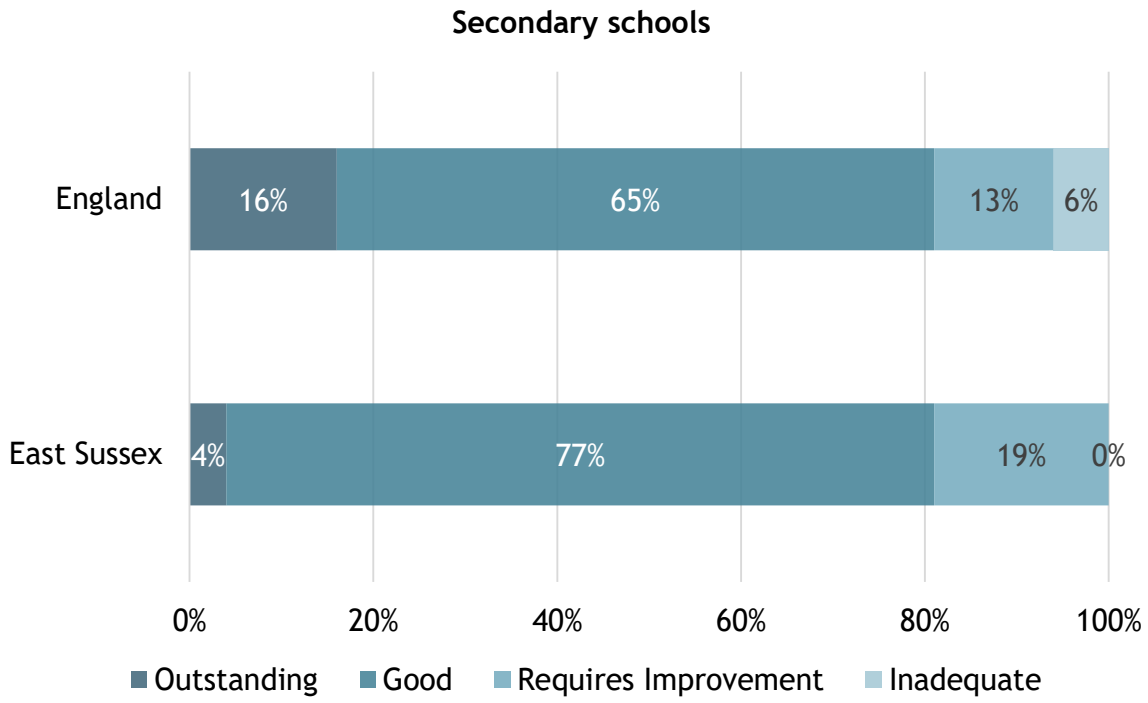


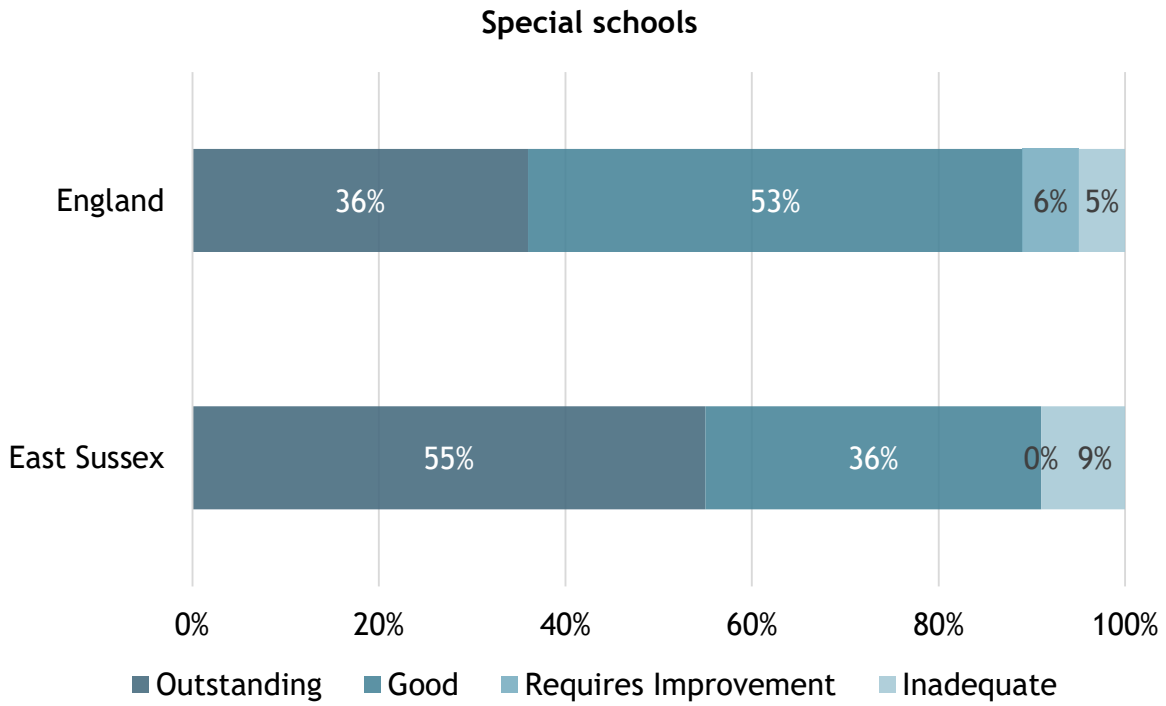
Source: ESCC Pupil Forecasting Model, May 2023

State funded schools, percentage overall effectiveness Ofsted 2021

The majority of schools in East Sussex are outstanding or good as assessed by Ofsted.






Special schools
England
36%
53%
6%
5%
East Sussex
55%
36%
0%
9%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
Outstanding
Good
Requires Improvement
Inadequate

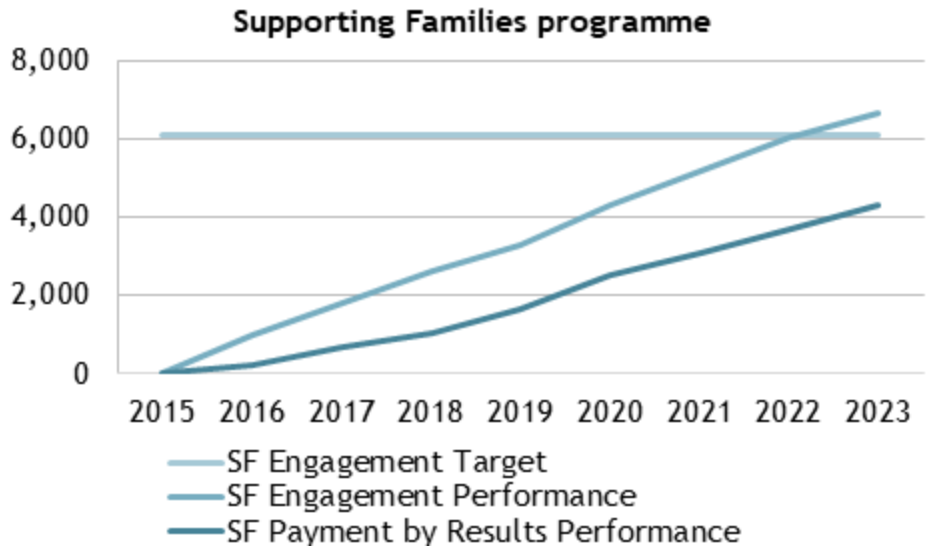
Children

Supporting Families

Our Supporting Families programme supports vulnerable families who are facing multiple challenges to achieve better outcomes. The key outcomes for the programme are:

- Getting a good education.
- Good early years development.
- Improved mental and physical health.
- Promoting recovery and reducing harm from substance use.
- Improved family relationships.
- Children safe from abuse and exploitation.
- Crime prevention and tackling crime.
- Safe from domestic abuse.
- Secure housing.
- Financial stability.

We receive payment from Government for each family that we help to achieve significant and sustained progress across each of the outcomes where they need support. By the end of 2022/23, 6,633 families had received or were receiving support and 4,276 had achieved Payment by Results outcomes.

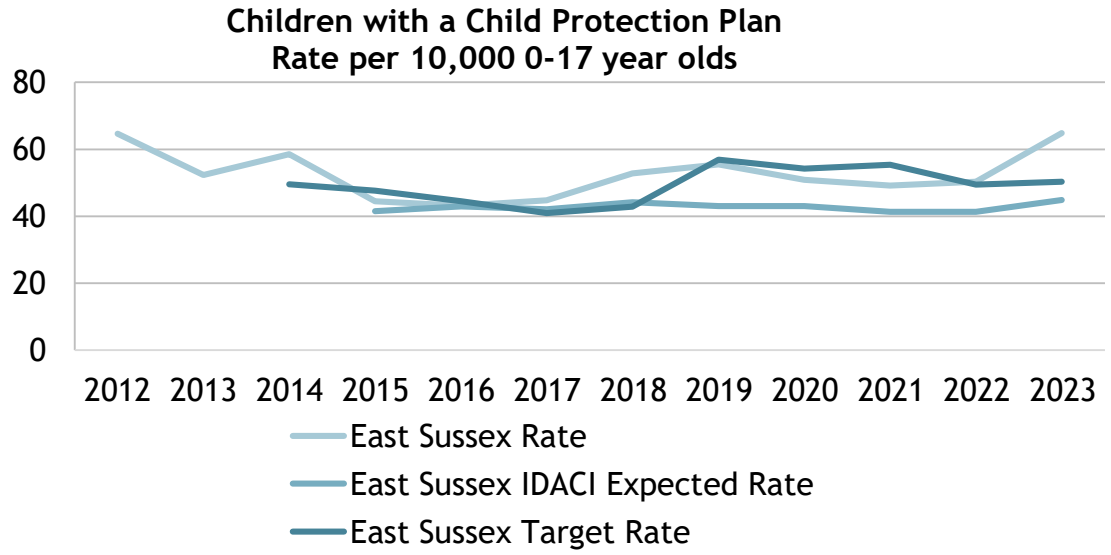


Source: ESCC Children's Services

Child Protection (CP) Plans

At the end of March 2023, the number of children with CP plans was 691, a rate of 64.8 per 10,000 children. This is above the expected rate benchmarked for child deprivation; the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI).

This increase reflects the significantly higher levels of demand and complexity seen over the past four years due to the pandemic, the impact of cost-of-living pressures and an increase in child and adult mental health concerns. We have a continued emphasis on enabling children to live safely at home where possible, resulting in relatively lower rates of looked after children.

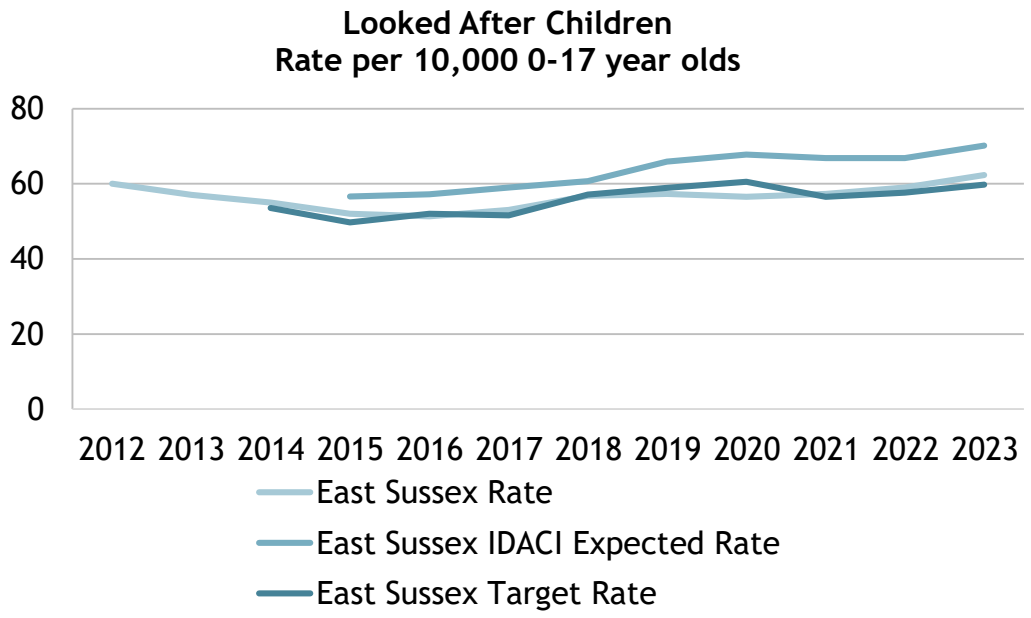


Source: ESCC Children's Services

Looked After Children

At the end of March 2023, the number of LAC was 664, a rate of 62.3 per 10,000 children. Of the 664 children, 73 are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC), this group represented 25% of our new entrants to care in 2022-23.

Our strategy of using Early Help, Child in Need and CP plans to help families to stay together has enabled us to have a rate of Looked After Children (LAC) which is below the expected rate benchmarked for child deprivation.



Source: ESCC Children's Services

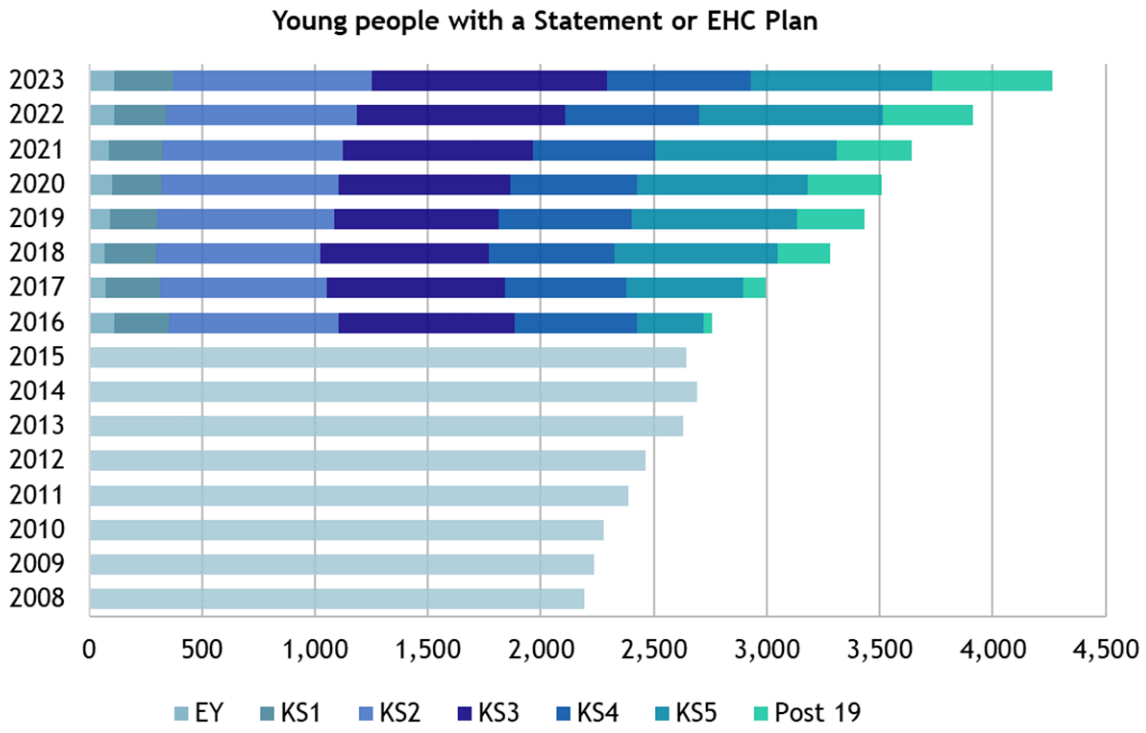
Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

In line with the national picture, East Sussex continues to see significant increases in demands for statutory assessments and specialist provision for children and young people with SEND.

Over 40% of all children and young people aged 0-25 with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in East Sussex are placed in special schools which is over three percentage points higher than the England average. 47.8% of all new EHCPs were placed in mainstream schools, compared to 66.9% nationally. Council funded high-cost placements at Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools have increased significantly since 2015 and account for 9.8% of all EHCPs – greater than the England average of 6.1%.

EHCPs of SEND maintained by the Council increased by 87% from 2010 (2,280) to 2023 (4,266). Most of the increase since 2015 has been in the Key Stage 5 and Post 19 groups; this is predominantly due to young people retaining EHCPs Post-16.

The number of school-aged pupils with an EHCP is forecast to rise in East Sussex by 11.8% over the next three years, having increased by 11.6% in the last three years.



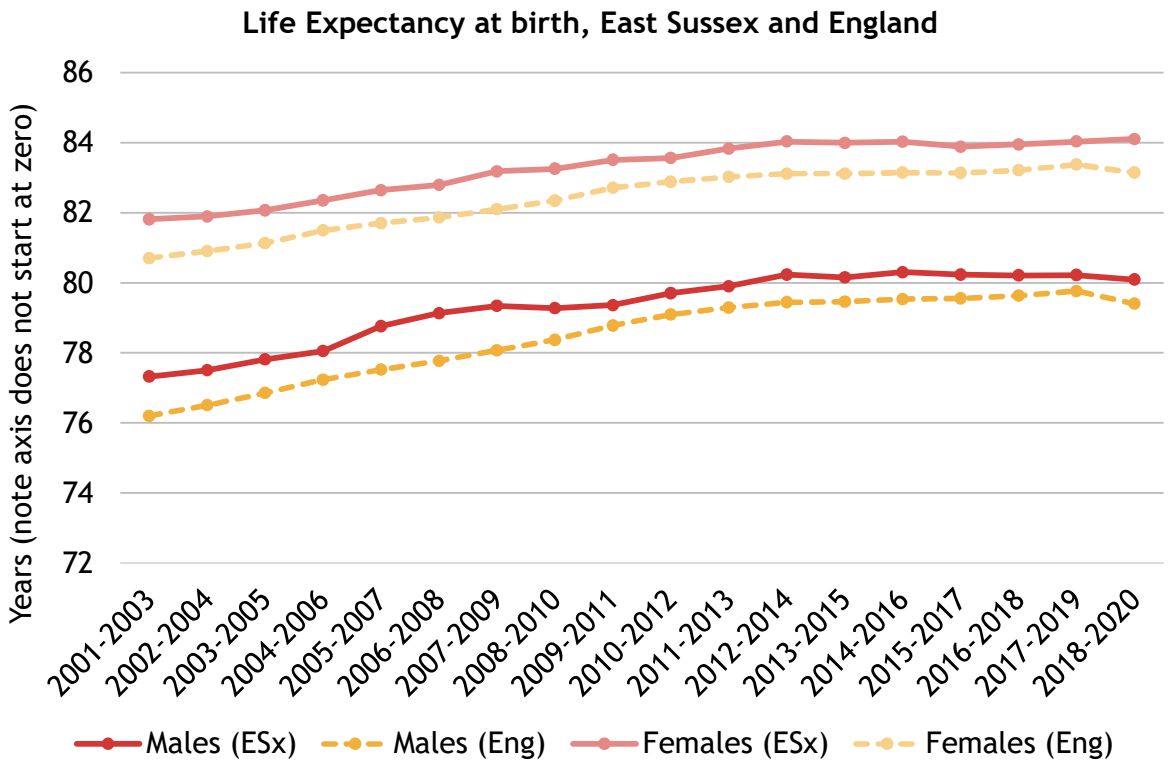
Source: ESCC Children's Social Care Department

Note: Until Sep-14 a Statement of SEN could remain in place until the young person reached the age of 19. Since the SEND reforms were introduced from Sep-14 EHCPS can remain in place until the young person reaches the age of 25.
Source: ESCC Children's Services

Health

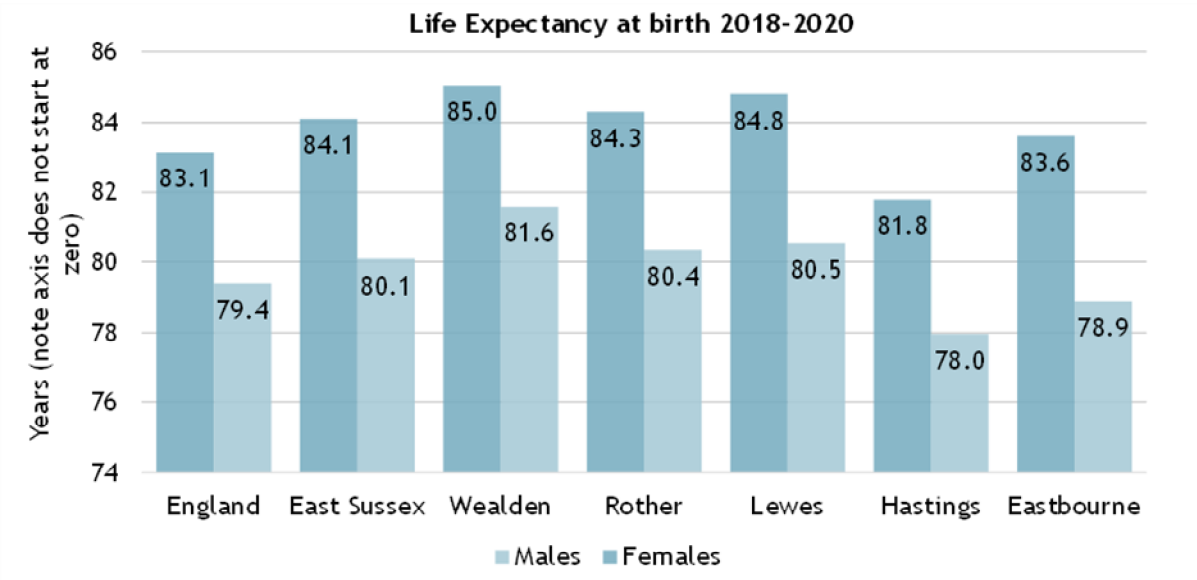
Life expectancy at birth

Life expectancy at birth is an estimate of the average number of years that a person born can expect to live. East Sussex has consistently had a higher life expectancy for both men and women than the national average. Life expectancy has generally increased gradually since the early 2000s, however this increase has plateaued, or begun to reduce, in recent years.



Source: ONS

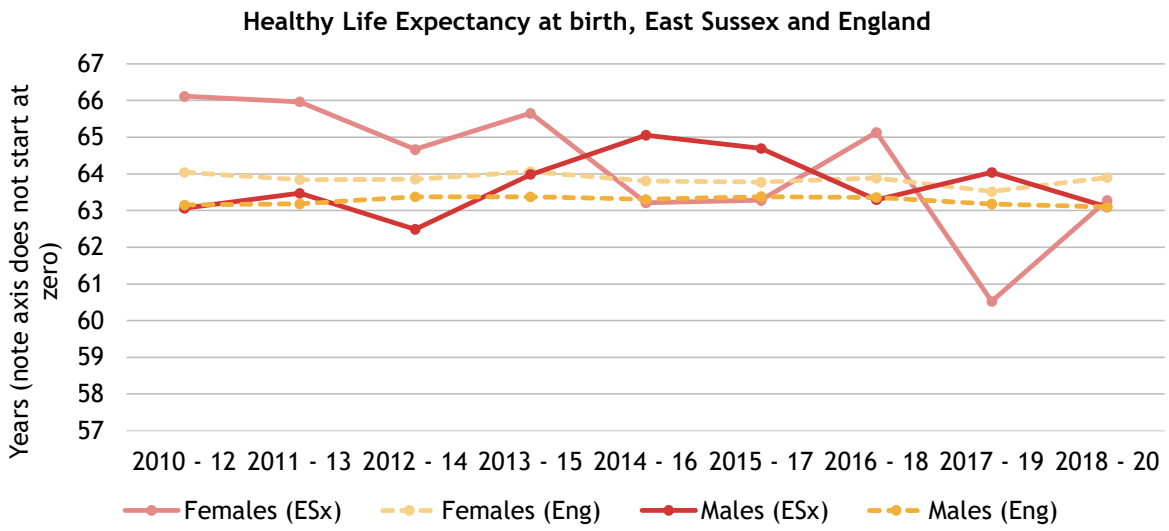
Wealden has the highest levels of life expectancy at birth for both men and women in the county. The lowest levels are in Hastings.



Source: ONS

Healthy Life Expectancy

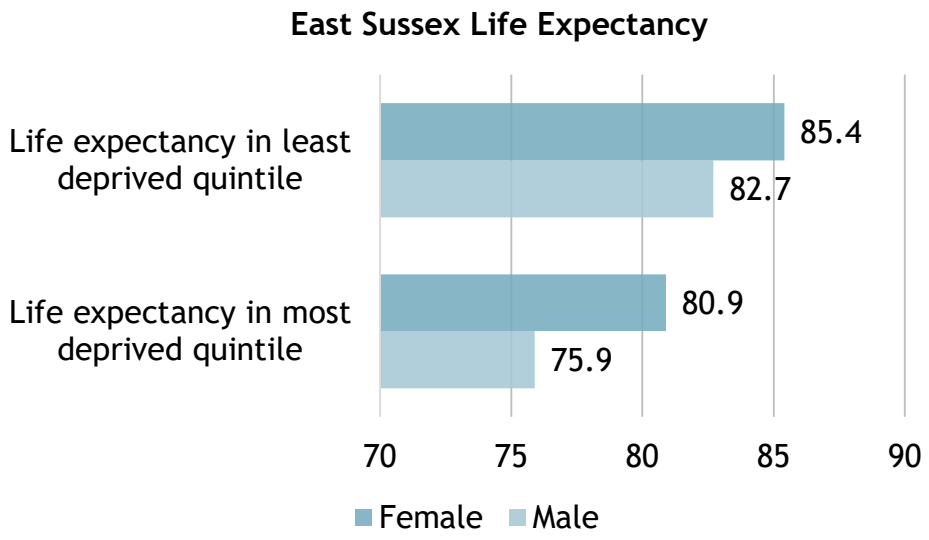
Healthy life expectancy is an estimate of the number of years lived in 'very good' or 'good' general health, based on how individuals perceive their general health. Healthy life expectancy figures in East Sussex have fluctuated significantly in recent periods. This is most likely due to the small sample size of the survey (Annual Population Survey) rather than actual changes in healthy life expectancy within the population.



Source: ONS

Deprivation and Life Expectancy

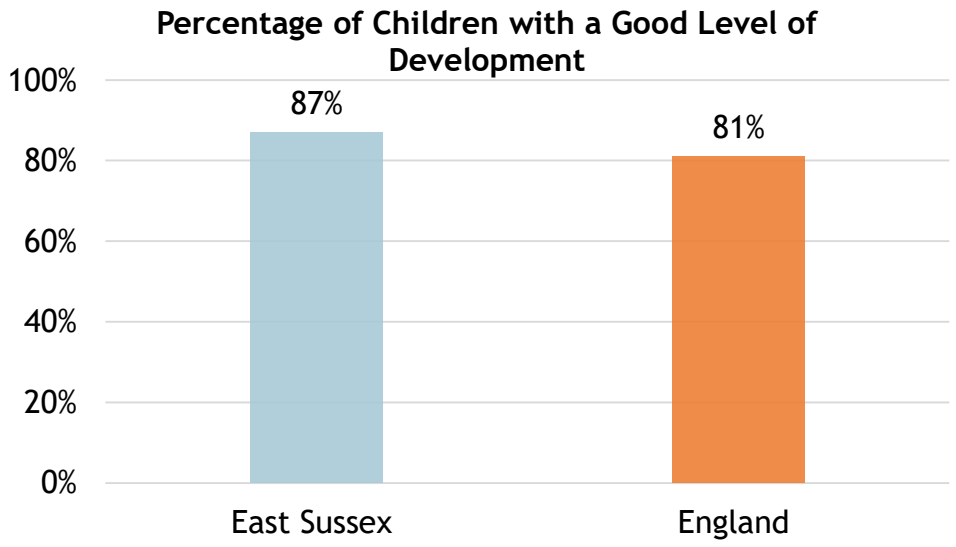
There is a gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas of East Sussex, with the biggest causes of death associated with these gaps being circulatory diseases, cancers, and respiratory diseases. Therefore, people in more deprived areas are dying from these causes, on average, at a younger age than in the least deprived areas. For females, this gap amounts to 4.5 years, while for males it is 6.8 years.



Source: Segment Tool (phe.gov.uk)

Child Development

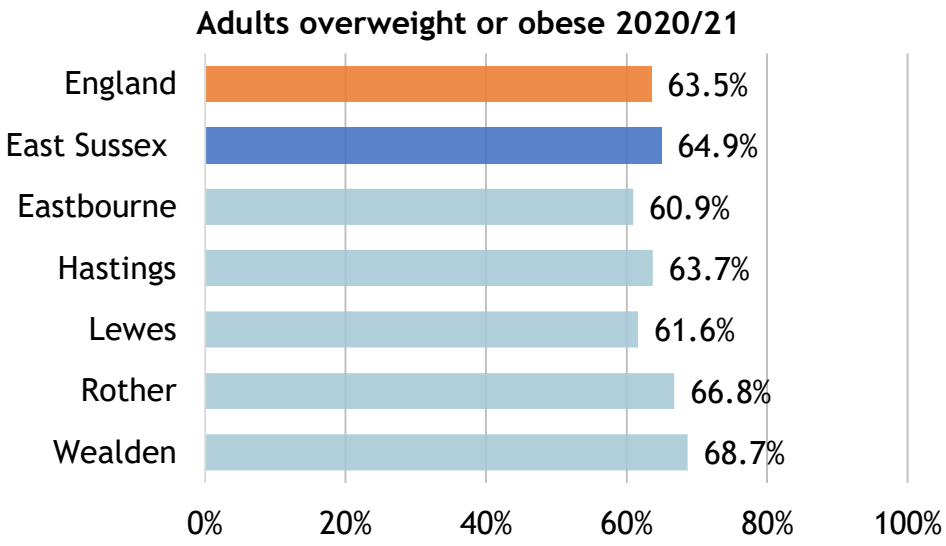
In 2021, 87% of 2-2 ½ year old children within East Sussex are achieving a good level of development, compared to the national average of 81%



Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Excess Weight

Wealden has the highest percentage of adults overweight or obese in East Sussex in 2020/21, at 69%. The lowest percentage in the county was Eastbourne, 61%

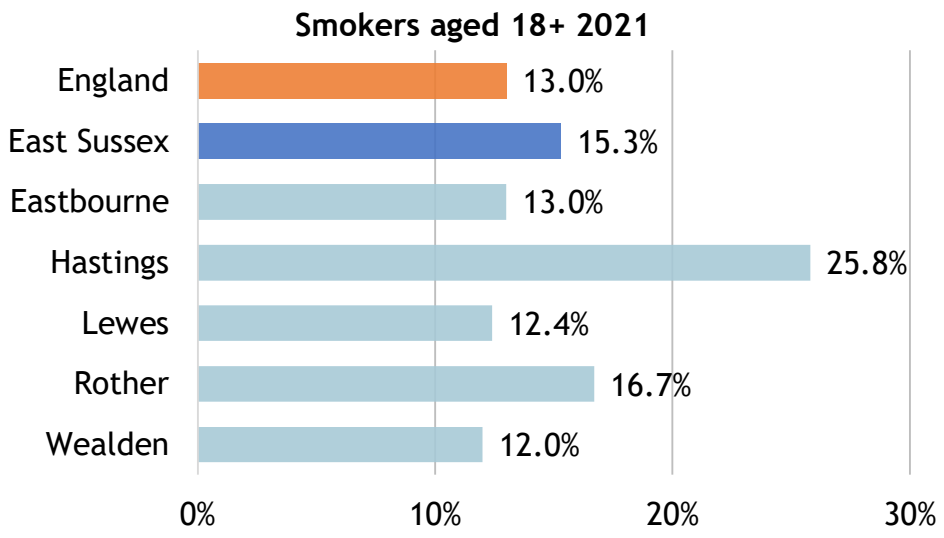


Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Prevalence of Smokers

Hastings has the highest prevalence of smoking in East Sussex in 2021 at almost

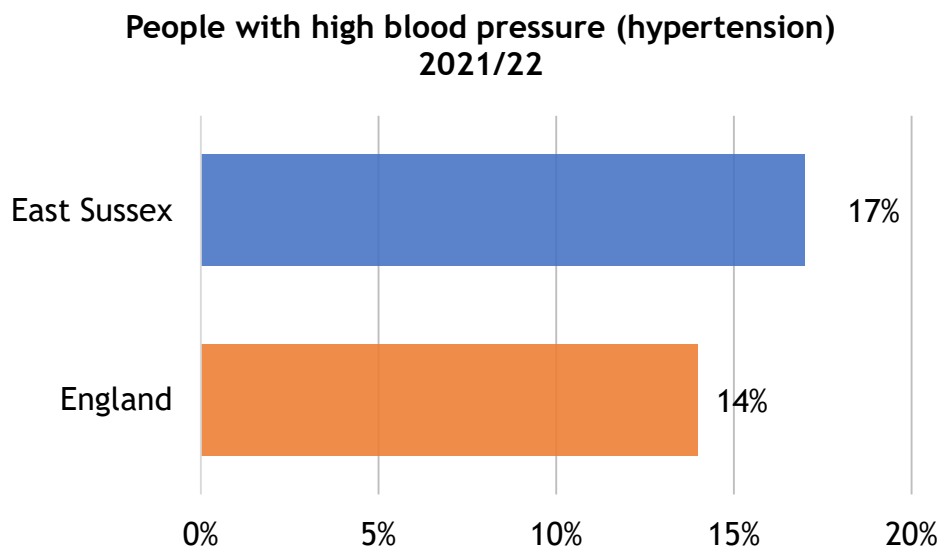
26%. The lowest prevalence is at Wealden with 12%.



Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Prevalence of Hypertension

East Sussex has a higher prevalence of diagnosed high blood pressure compared to England.



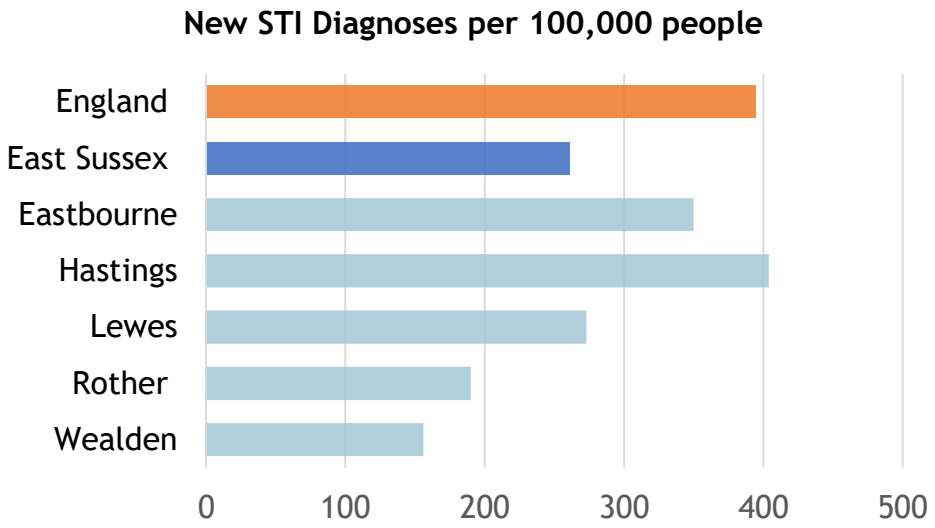
Public Health Outcomes Framework

Physical Activity

Almost 70% of people in East Sussex did 150 or more minutes of physical activity per week in 2020/21. Almost 20% did less than 30 minutes per week with the remaining 11% falling in between these categories (source: Public Health Outcomes Framework).

Sexual Health

East Sussex has fewer new Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) diagnoses per 100,000 population compared to England. Within the county rates are lower than for England except in Hastings which is similar to the national rate.



Note: This data does not include diagnoses of Chlamydia and only represents people aged 25 or younger. Source: UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)

Mental health

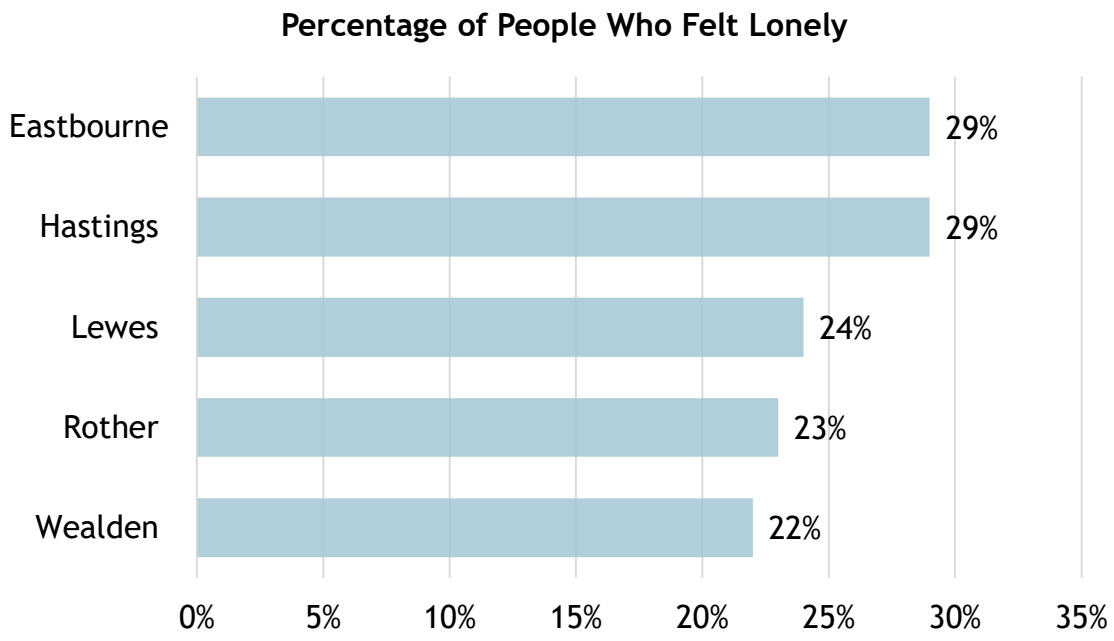
It is estimated that 1 in 6 people will have a mental health condition at any one time. Latest survey figures show a slightly higher percentage of adults in East Sussex reported high anxiety and low satisfaction with life compared to the national average.

Indicator (persons aged 16+ years)	East Sussex	England
Self reported low satisfaction with life	5.4%	4.4%
Self reported low worthwhile score	3.3%	3.4%
Self reported low happiness score	7.4%	7.7%
Self-reported high anxiety score	26.0%	22.3%

Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Loneliness

For East Sussex, 25% respondents reported feeling lonely often (5%) or some of the time (20%), with feelings of loneliness not changing markedly from the 2015 (24%) and 2017 (25%) East Sussex Community Surveys.



Note: Percentages are derived by combining the number of people who answered as feeling lonely often and some of the time. Source: East Sussex Community Survey 2019

Data from the 2019 survey shows that feelings of loneliness are more prevalent among groups who are more likely to spend more time at home (e.g. due to mobility issues) workless residents (56% vs. 20% of those in work); those in poor health (55% vs. 18% of those in good health); those with a disability (44% vs. 19% of

those without); single person households (38%) and single parents (47% vs. 25% overall). Other groups who are more likely to feel lonely include: social tenants (46%) and private renters (39% vs. 20% of owner occupiers); People with no qualifications (34% vs. 25% overall) and women (26% vs. 24% of men). At District level, those in Hastings and Eastbourne are more likely than average to feel lonely often or some of the time (both 29% vs. 25% overall). These Districts are more likely to be comprised of the groups listed above. Those living in Rother and Wealden are more likely to say they hardly ever/never feel this way (77% and 78% respectively).

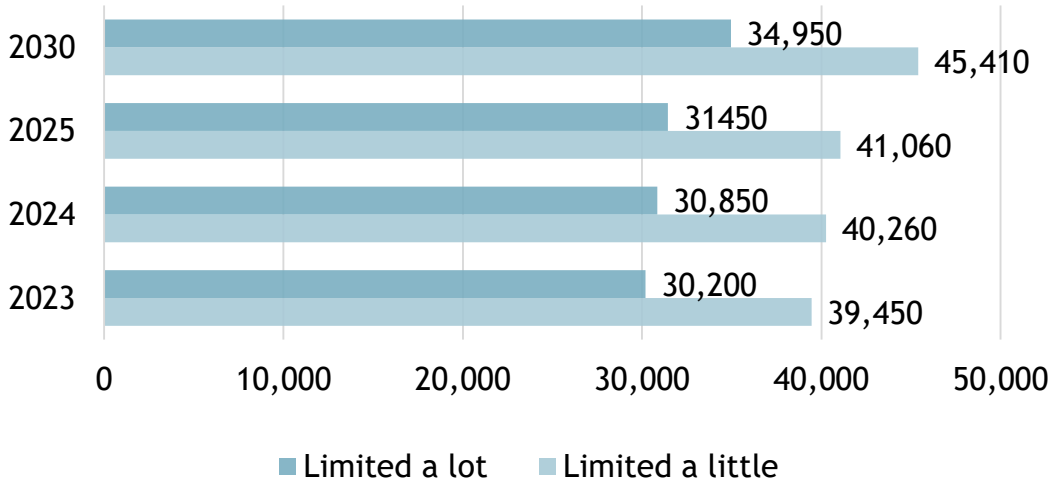
Adults

Long Term Illness

It is estimated that in 2023 there are 69,650 older people (age 65+) in East Sussex who are living with a long-term illness which limits their day-to-day activities. 39,450 of these people are 'limited a little' in their day-to-day activities, while the other 30,200 are 'limited a lot'.

These figures are projected to rise to an estimated 80,360 older people living with a long-term illness which limits their day-to-day activities in 2030, an increase of 15.4% compared to 2023. 45,410 of these people are projected to be 'limited a little' (up 15.1% compared to 2023), and the other 34,950 are projected to be 'limited a lot' (up 15.8% compared to 2023).

Older people (age 65+) with a limiting long term illness projections

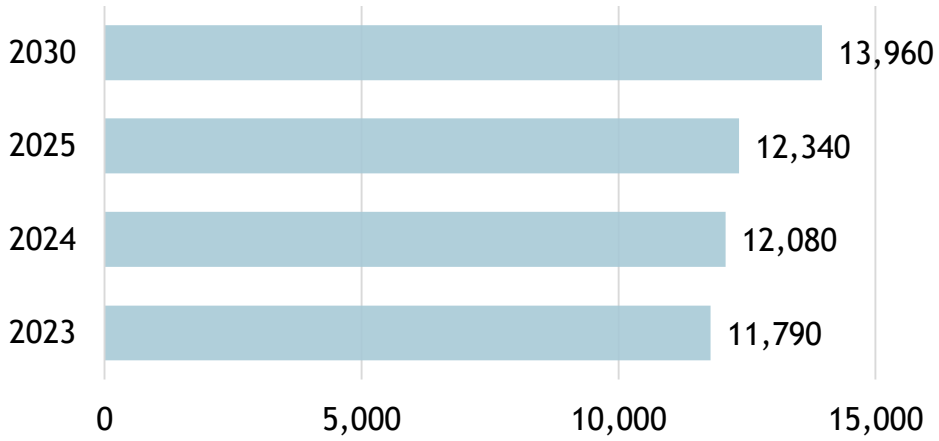


Source: POPPI. Note: The figures from POPPI are based on population projections produced before the latest population figures from the 2021 Census were available.

Dementia Projections

13,960 older people (age 65+) are projected to have dementia by 2030, an increase of 18.4% from 2023.

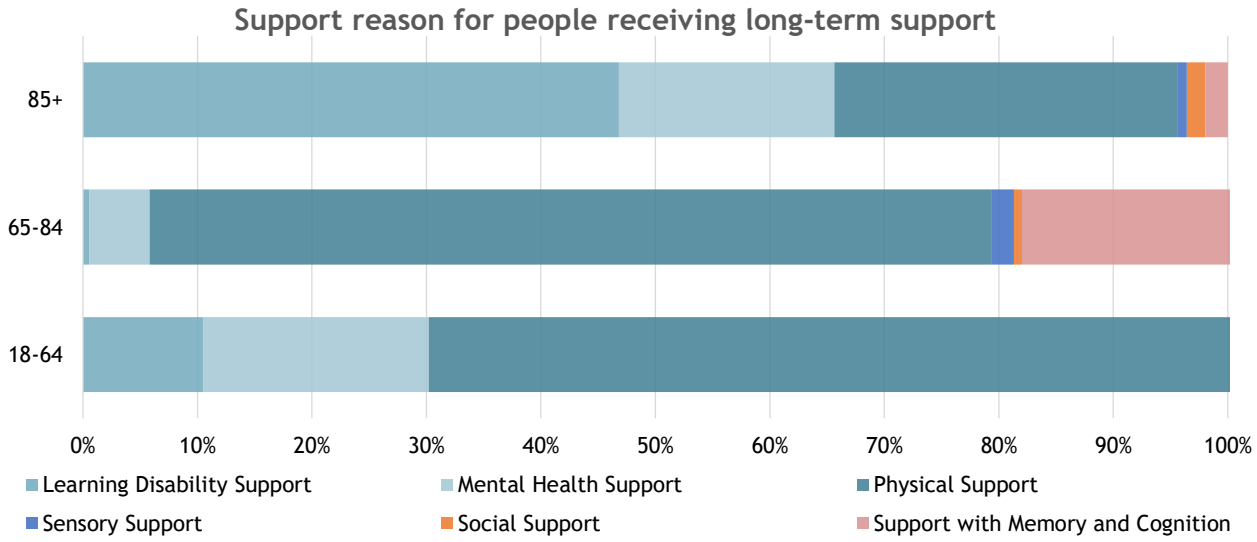
Older people (age 65+) with dementia projections



Source: POPPI. Note: The figures from POPPI are based on population projections produced before the latest population figures from the 2021 Census were available.

Reasons for Support

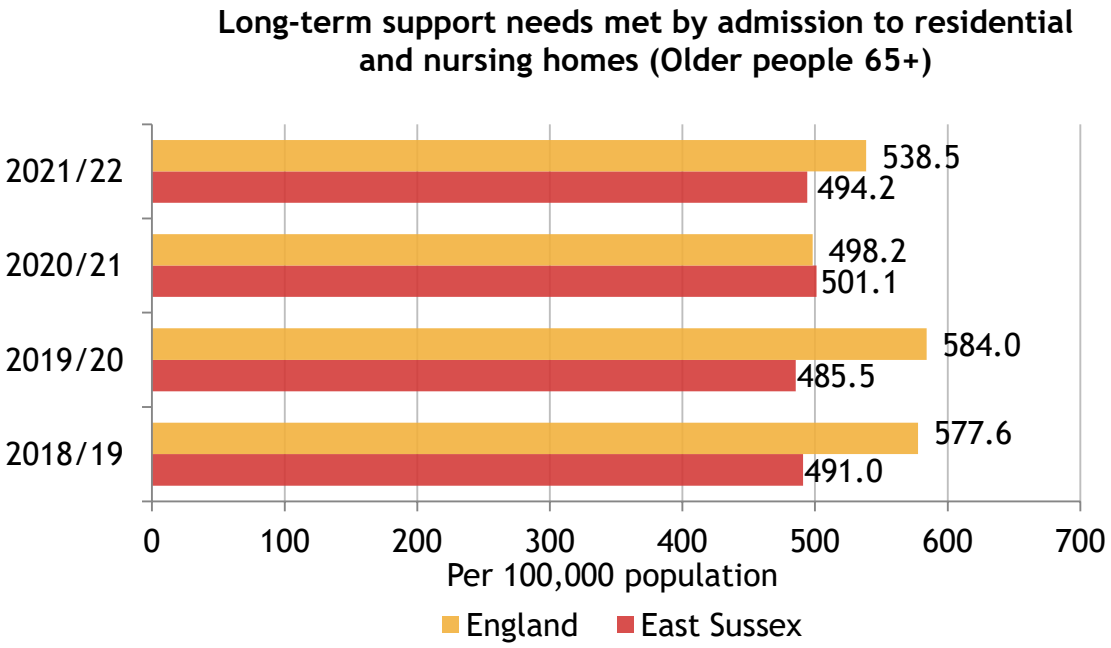
The percentage of people receiving long term support due to Learning Disability Support and Mental Health Support reduces as you move up the age ranges, whilst the percentage of people needing support for Physical Support, Sensory Support and Support with Memory and Cognition increases.



Source: East Sussex SALT Return

Community care and promoting independence

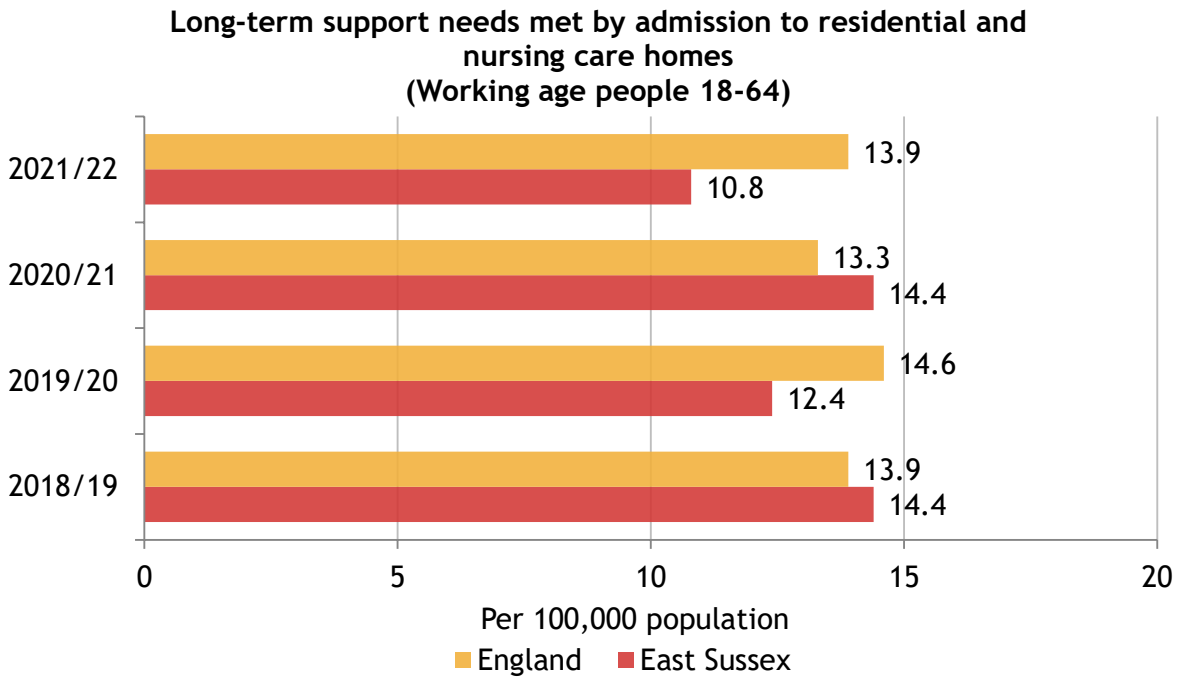
Permanent admissions of older people (age 65+) per 100,000 population slightly decreased in East Sussex in 2021/22.



Source: NHS Digital Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework data ASCOF 2A2

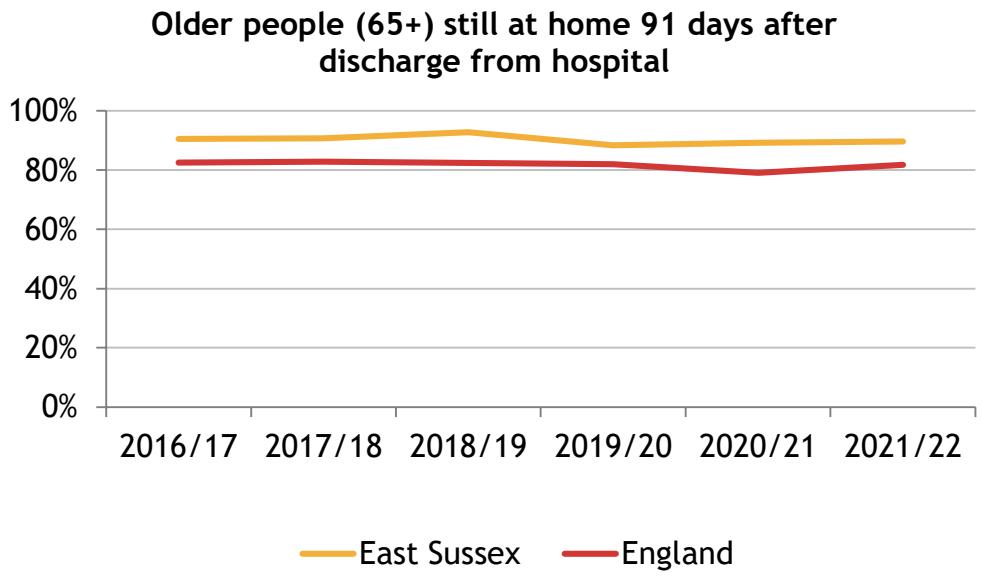
Permanent admissions of working age people (18-64) to long term residential care

decreased in East Sussex in 2021/22 were below the national rate by over 3%.



Source: NHS Digital Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework data ASCOF 2A1

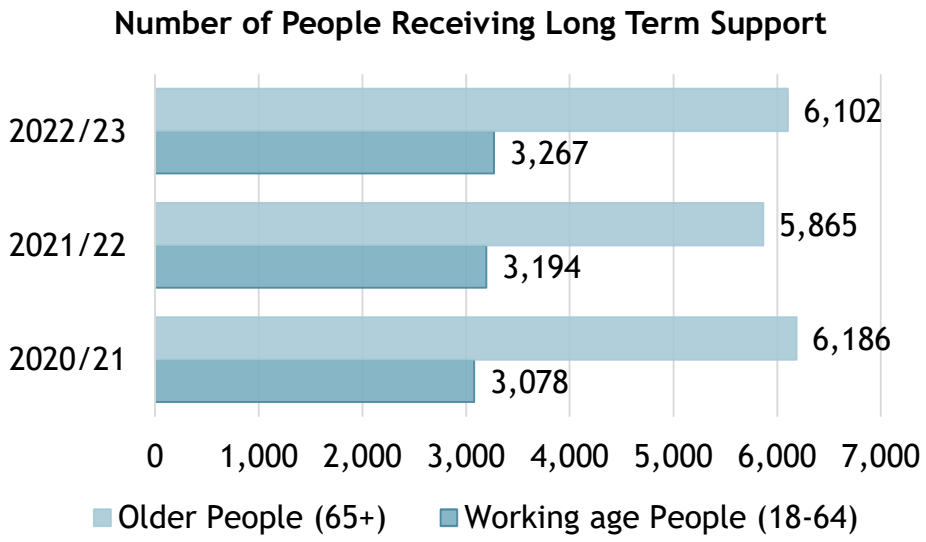
The proportion of older people (age 65+) still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services increased in 2021/22 to 89.7% and remains significantly above the national figure of 81.8%.



Source: NHS Digital Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework ASCOF 2B1

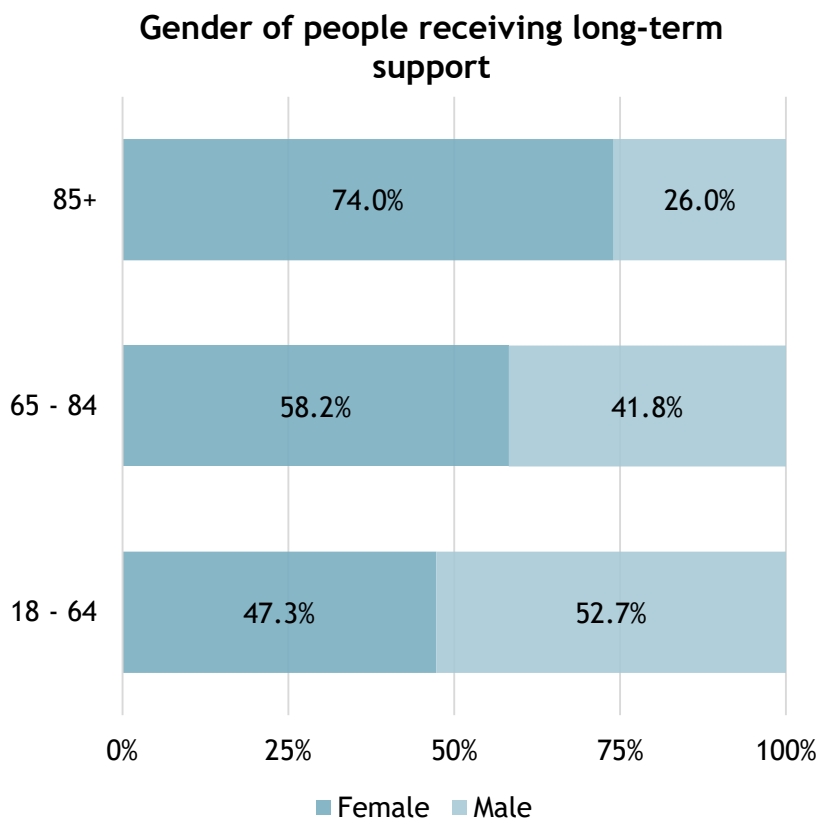
People receiving long term support

The total number of clients receiving Long Term support has increased by 3.3% in 2022/23 to 9,369.



Source: East Sussex SALT Return

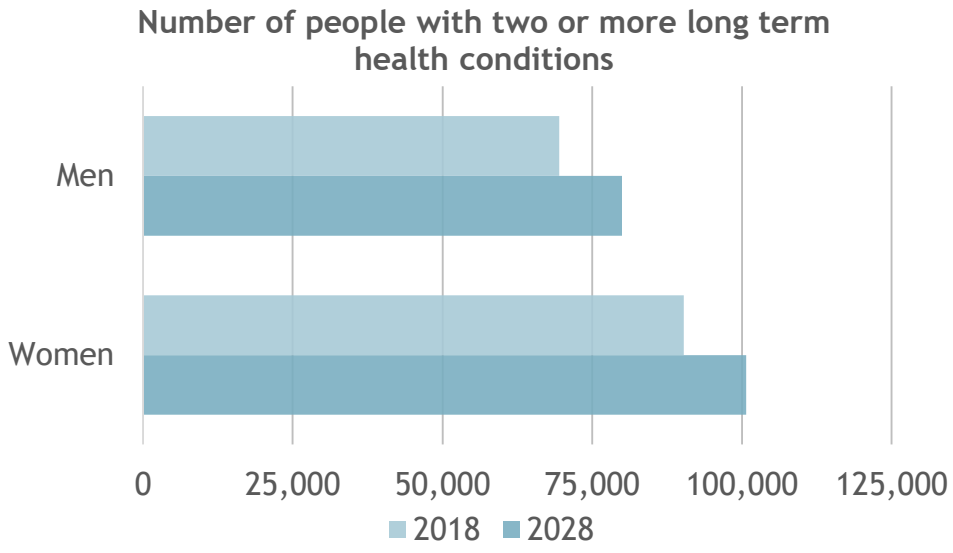
The percentage of females receiving long term support is higher than the number of males for older people, especially those above the age of 85. However, the percentage of males receiving long term support is slightly higher than females for the working age population.



Source: East Sussex SALT Returns

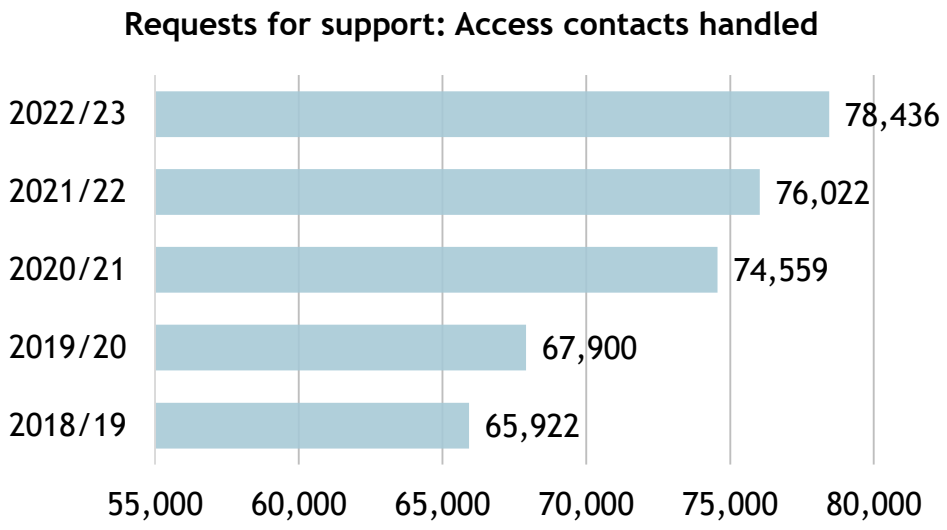
Complex needs

By 2028, around 20,000 more people in East Sussex will be living with two or more of these conditions, when compared with the needs of our population in 2018.



Access contacts

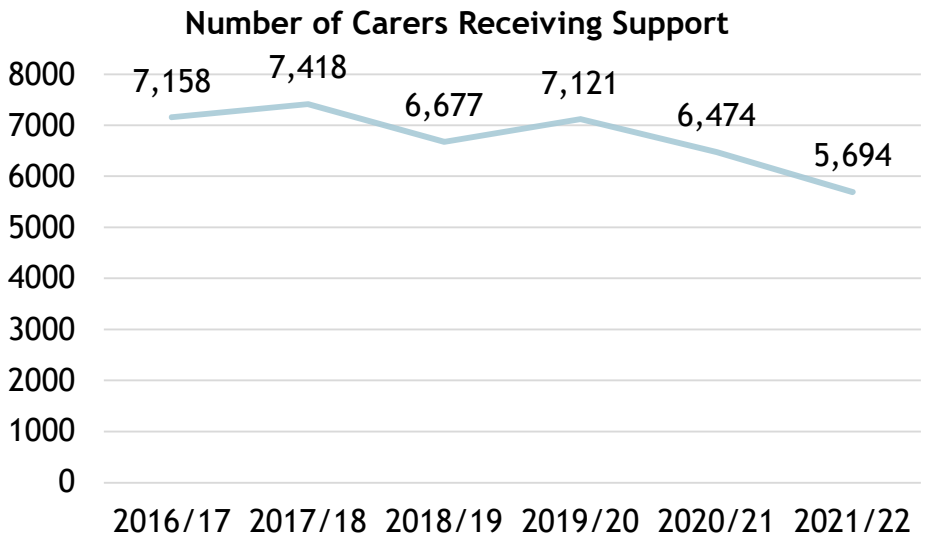
The Access team in Health and Social Care Connect (HSCC) handled 78,436 contacts in 2022/23, an increase of 2,414 (3%) compared to 2021/22.



Source: East Sussex Health and Social Care Connect (HSCC)

Carers receiving support

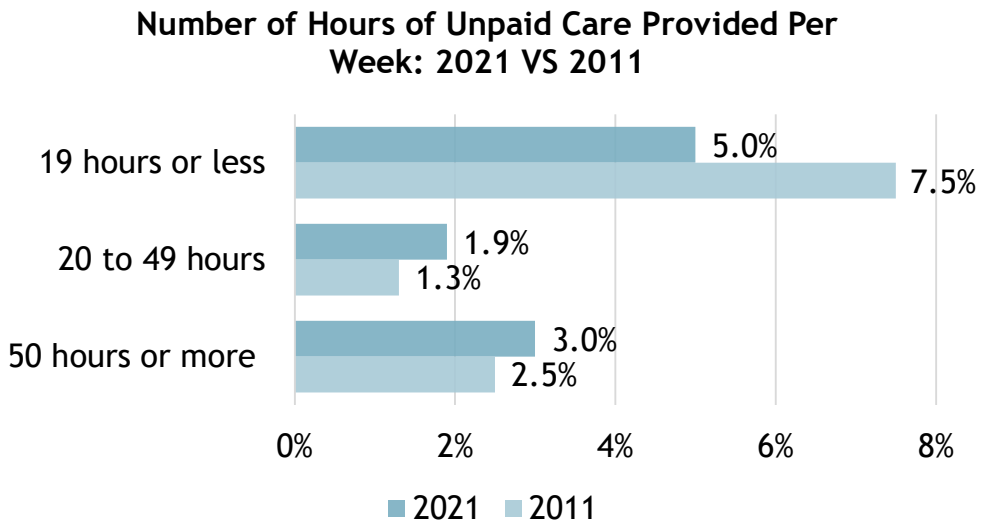
The total number of carers receiving support in East Sussex has decreased by 11.5% in 2021/22. This decrease is partially attributable to the impact of the pandemic, during which carers were less likely to contact Adult Social Care for help, and partially due to an increase in the number of carers being supported by Care for the Carers, a charity providing help, support, guidance and information to carers in East Sussex.



Source: East Sussex SALT Return

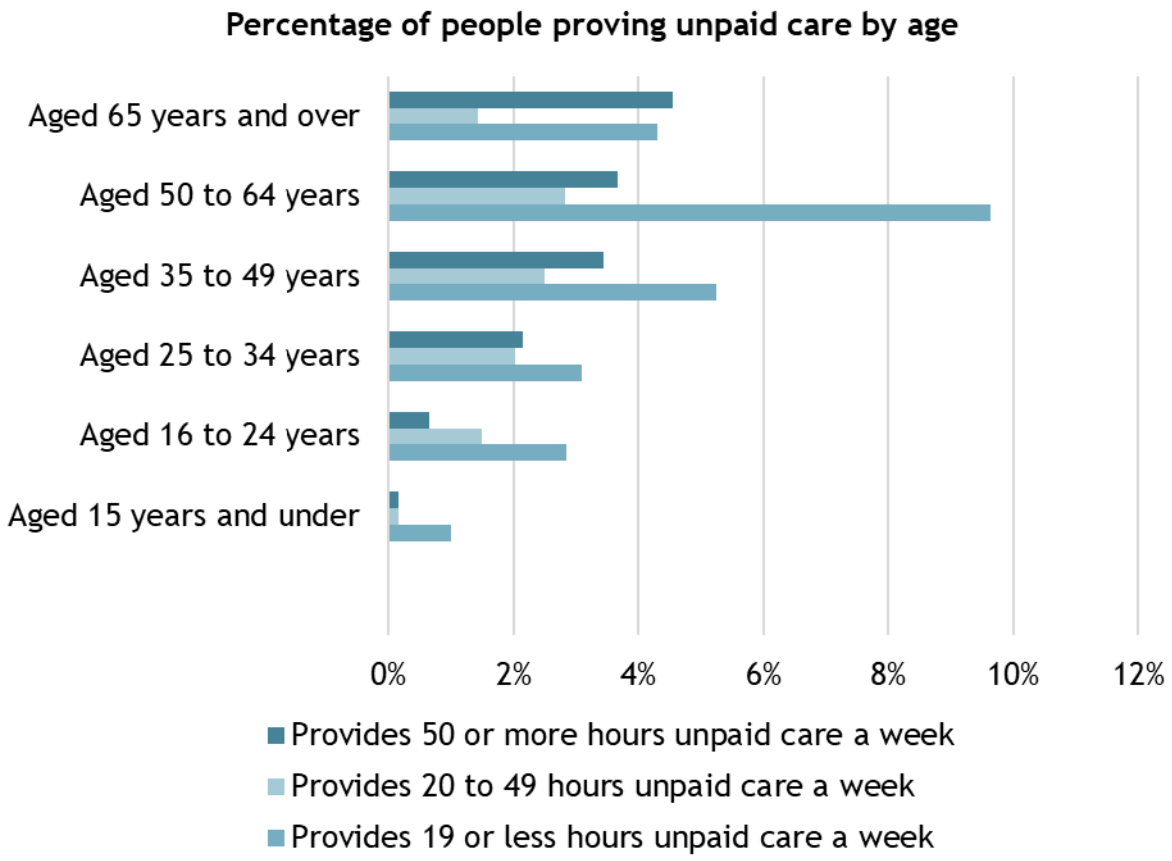
Unpaid Carers

Data from the 2021 Census suggests that 9.9% of the population in East Sussex provides any form of unpaid care, compared to the national average of 8.8%. Compared to the 2011 census however, the proportion of unpaid carers has decreased by 1.8 percentage points within East Sussex. Furthermore, the proportion of people providing 19 hours or less of unpaid care a week decreased from 7.5% in 2011 to 5.0% in 2021, those providing 20 to 49 hours of unpaid care increased from 1.3% to 1.9% and those providing 50 or more hours of unpaid care increased from 2.5% to 3.0%.



Note: Percentages are representative of the population aged 5 years or above.
Source: ONS

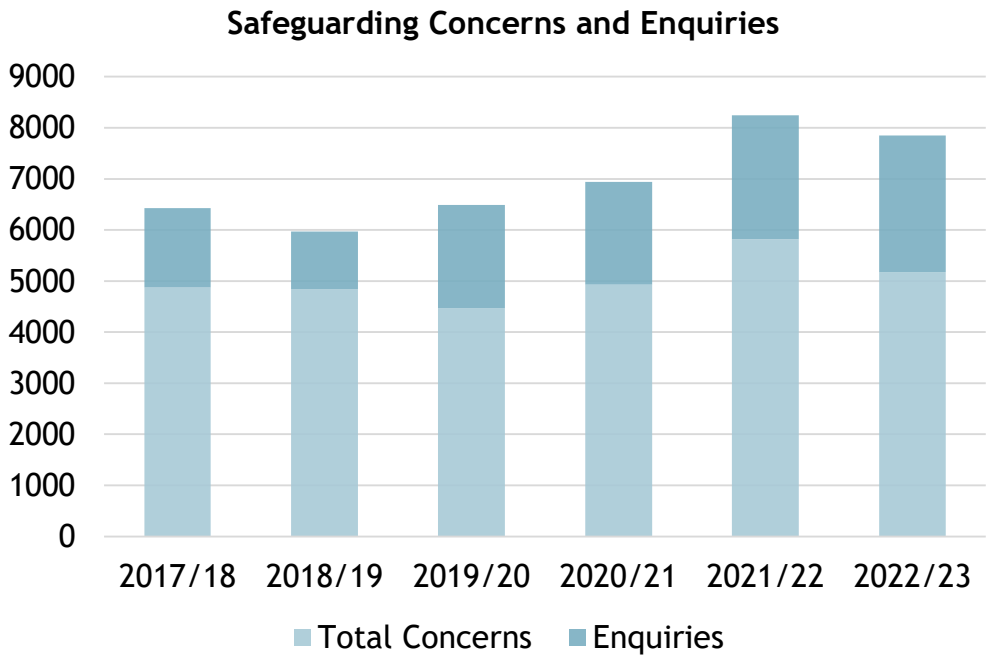
The percentage of people providing unpaid care varies by age. 16.1% of those aged 50 to 64 provided some unpaid care a week, with the majority providing 19 or less hours unpaid care a week. Although the percentage of those aged 65 and over providing unpaid care is lower, people in this age group were more likely to be providing 50 or more hours unpaid care a week.



Note: Percentages are representative of the population aged 5 years or above.
Source: ONS

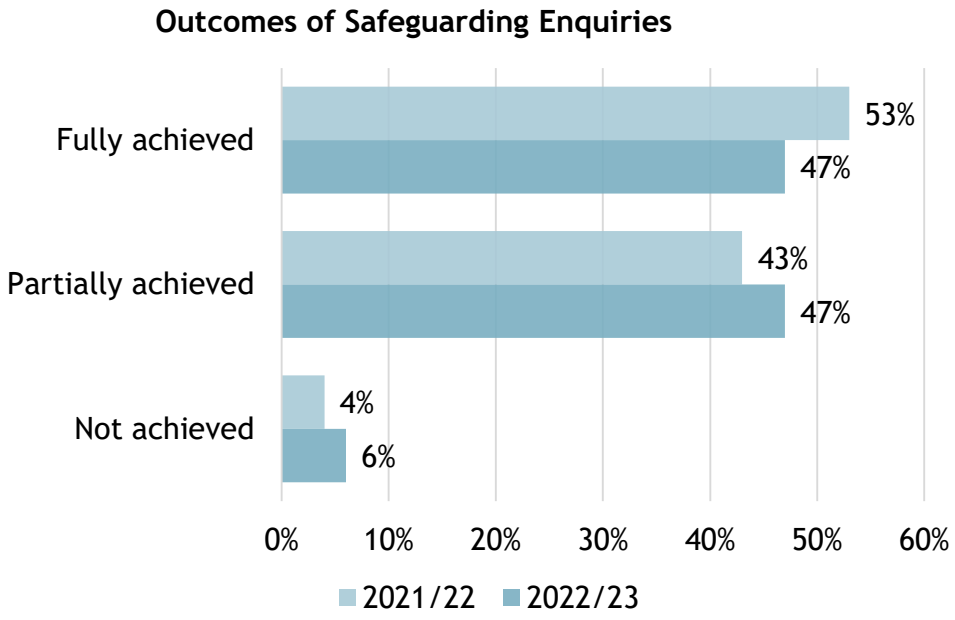
Safeguarding

The total number of safeguarding enquiries that commenced in 2022/23 was 2,680, an increase of 10.4% compared to 2,428 enquiries in 2021/22. The total number of safeguarding concerns received in 2022/23 was 5,171, a decrease of 11.1% compared to 5,819 in 2021/22.



Source: East Sussex Adult Social Care and Health

In 2022/23, there was a decrease of six percentage points in the number of safeguarding enquiries fully achieved compared to the previous year. Furthermore, an increase of four percentage points was noted for enquiries which were partially achieved.



Source: East Sussex Adult Social Care and Health

Data

We use a wide range of data to help us understand the context for our plans and the impact we are having through our work and in partnership. A selection of this data is listed below. Years are financial (April-March) or academic (September-August) unless otherwise stated.

Key: CY – calendar year (January-December), NA – data not available.

Measure	**2020/21 Outturn**	**2021/22 Outturn**	**2021/22 England**
Annual gross full-time earnings, median average (residence based)	£30,949	£31,145	£33,208
Percentage of working age population (16-64 year olds) in employment	75.0%	77.1%	75.4%
People claiming unemployment benefits (JSA and Universal Credit) percentage of population 16-64 year olds at March	4.1%	3.6% (2023)	3.8% (2023)
New business registration rate per 10,000 people over 16 (CY)	55.9 (2020)	51.4	71
Percentage of working age residents (16-64 year olds) with a level 4 or higher qualification (HNC, HND, degree etc.) (CY)	N/A	33.8%	37.1%
Percentage of working age residents (16-64 year olds) with no qualifications or qualified only to NVQ1 (CY)	N/A	10.6%	12.4%
Average Attainment 8 score per pupil state funded secondary schools (assessment/calculated grade)	45.3 2018/19	46.5	48.7
Average Progress 8 score for state funded secondary schools	-0.06 2018/19	-0.11	-0.03

Measure	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22 Outturn	2021/22 England
Percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-5 pass in English and maths GCSEs (assessment/calculated grade)	49.3	46.3%	46.8%
Average point score (APS) per entry for level A levels (age 16-18)	39.26	36.19	38.87
Attainment of A level students (age 16-18) average point score (APS) per entry, best 3	38.73	34.81	39.01
Attainment of A level students (age 16-18) % achieving grades AAB or better at A level, of which at least two are in facilitation subjects	20.2%	12.3%	23.2%
Rate per 10,000 (aged 0-17 population) of Looked After Children	57	61	70
Rate per 10,000 (aged 0-17 population) of children with a Child Protection Plan	49.2	50.1	42.1
Percentage of children who ceased to be looked after adopted during the year ending 31 March	16%	8%	10%
Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children aged 0-14 years, rate per 10,000 resident population	99.8	107.6	84.3
Percentage of children aged 4-5 years with excess weight (overweight or obese) LA by postcode of child	23.0% 2019/20	19.8%	20.3%
Percentage of children aged 10-11 years with excess weight (overweight or obese) LA by postcode of child	32.0% 2019/20	32.8%	34.0%
Percentage of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese	62.6% 2019/20	64.9%	63.5%
Proportion of people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital	89.2%	89.7%	81.8%

Measure	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22 Outturn	2021/22 England
Long-term support needs of younger adults (aged 18-64) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population per year	14.4	10.8	13.9
Long-term support needs of older adults (aged 65 and over) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population per year	501.1	494.2	538.5
Proportion of older people aged 65 and over who received reablement services following discharge from hospital	2.0%	1.6%	2.8%
The outcome of short-term services: sequel to service: proportion of people who received short-term services during the year, where no further request was made for ongoing support or support of a lower level	89.0%	93.7%	77.6%
Emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65 and over per 100,000	2,314	2,523	2,100
Suicide rate per 100,000 of population, three-year average	12.7 (2018-20)	12.1 (2019 - 2021)	10.4 (2019 - 2021)
Number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads (CY)	339 (2021)	374	N/A
New houses built, total completed / total affordable	1,549/ 290	1,606 / 350	N/A

Appendix 2

National and Local Policy Outlook 2023

1. Introduction and Contents

1.1 This appendix provides an overview of the key developments in the national and local context that will influence and inform our future service and financial planning through the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process for the 2024/25 financial year and beyond. It also provides an update on work to deliver the County Council's local priorities and summarises key strategic challenges for our services.

1.2 Recent developments in national policy and the Council's broader operating context have been significant and continue to evolve. In a speech delivered in January 2023, the Prime Minister outlined his Government's five main priorities, which were: halving inflation, growing the economy by creating better paid jobs, reducing national debt, cutting NHS waiting lists, and passing new laws to prevent small boat crossings and to remove anyone entering the country illegally. In addition to these priorities, the 'Levelling Up' agenda remains central to Government policy, aiming to address geographic disparities between places and regions in the UK. With a general election expected to be held at some point in 2024 (and no later than January 2025), there is uncertainty about the general direction of Government policy beyond this time and whether there is sufficient time for Government to implement all the reforms it intends to in the lifespan of the current Parliament. A King's Speech, expected in autumn 2023, will set out the planned legislative programme.

1.3 Within this broad policy agenda, Government is progressing a number of specific public service reforms that will affect the way we deliver Council services in future, each with associated risks and implications that we must understand, assess and respond to. These include: reforms to ensure the sustainability of Adult Social Care (ASC); the recently published national review of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs); proposed reforms to the children's social care system and market; changes to the to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) system; planning reforms being progressed in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill; the intended integration of Local Enterprise Partnership functions into local government; and a range of reforms continuing to emerge from the Environment Act 2021. Further information on these reforms and what they mean for East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is set out below.

1.4 Locally, significant work is taking place, as an organisation and with our partners, to respond to national developments, to progress our local priorities and to prepare for future challenges. Detail on this work is set out below, particularly in sections on our work with communities, to deliver transport improvements, to protect the environment and tackle climate change, and to drive sustainable economic growth.

1.5 This appendix has been written to be easily navigable to specific sections for future reference (using the below contents list), as well as providing a comprehensive single overview of developments. It includes information on:

Section 2 – Overall Context (pages 3-7)

- The national economic outlook (pg 3)
- Levelling Up – including devolution and the Office for Local Government (pg 4)
- Updated inspection regime (pg 6)
- Local Government finance outlook (pg 6)

Section 3 – Adult Social Care and Public Health (pages 7-12)

- Health and social care integration – including the Hewitt Review of Integrated Care Systems, local developments and hospital discharge (pg 7)
- National Adult Social Care reform - next steps (pg 10)
- Adult Social Care data (pg 10)
- ESCC Adult Social Care Strategy (pg 10)
- Market Sustainability (pg 11)
- Adult Social Care workforce challenges (pg 11)
- Local Public Health priorities – including health protection, recovery and renewal, creative health and suicide prevention (pg 11)

Section 4 – Children's Services (pages 13-17)

- National reforms to children's social care (pg 13)
- Service demand (pg 14)
- Local service developments – including Early Intervention, Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme and Family Safeguarding (pg 15)
- SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (pg 15)
- Schools policy (pg 16)
- Education recovery and supporting attainment (pg 16)
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing in schools (pg 17)
- Home to school transport (pg 17)

Section 5 – Migration (pages 17-20)

- Asylum dispersal – including full dispersal, streamlined asylum process, Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and the National Transfer Scheme (pg 18)
- Refugee resettlement schemes – including Afghan resettlement schemes, visa schemes, Ukraine refugee response (pg 19)
- Future local support (pg 20)

Section 6 – Communities (pages 20-24)

- Financial Inclusion and Household Support Fund (pg 20)
- Community networks (pg 21)
- Community safety – including Community Safety Partnerships, anti social behaviour, Serious Violence Duty, modern slavery, human trafficking and preventing violent extremism, Violence Against Women and Girls, and drug and alcohol treatment work (pg 21)
- Trading Standards (pg 23)
- Local resilience arrangements (pg 23)
- National planning reforms - including infrastructure funding arrangements (pg 23)

Section 7 – Highways and Transport (pages 24-28)

- Highways maintenance (pg 24)
- Bus Service Improvement Plan (pg 25)
- Refresh of the Local Transport Plan (pg 25)
- Transport decarbonisation (pg 25)
- Active travel (pg 26)
- National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy local e-vehicle charging (pg 26)
- Road safety (pg 26)
- Transport for the South East Strategic Investment Plan (pg 27)
- Exceat Bridge replacement (pg 27)
- National Highways Programmes – A27 and A21 (pg 27)
- Rail developments (pg 28)

Section 8 – Economy (pages 28-31)

- Supporting the local economy – including new economic growth strategy (pg 28)
- Local Enterprise Partnerships (pg 29)
- National economic investment programmes – including UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Multiply programme and Levelling Up Fund (pg 29)
- Local work on, and national reforms to, skills provision (pg 30)
- Culture and tourism (pg 31)

Section 9 – Environment and Climate Change (pages 31-34)

- Climate change national policy context – including the 'Mission Zero' Independent Review of Government Net Zero Policy (pg 31)
- Local action on climate change (pg 32)
- Environment Act impacts - including Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Biodiversity, Environmental Improvement Plan and waste (pg 33)
- Flood risk management (pg 34)

Section 10 – Supporting Services (pages 34-37)

- The Modernising Back Office Systems programme (pg 35)
- Workforce challenges (pg 35)
- Property Asset Management (pg 36)
- Procurement Bill (pg 36)
- National audit issues (pg 36)
- Digital development (pg 37)

2. Overall Context

2.1 The following section provides an overview of the overall economic, fiscal and policy context the County Council is operating and planning within, and details of new arrangements for assessing the performance of local authority services.

National economic outlook

2.2 The national economic outlook remains uncertain. In its March 2023 economic forecast, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) set out that the near-term economic downturn was expected to be shorter and shallower, medium-term output to be higher and the budget deficit lower, than at its previous forecast in November 2023. The International Monetary Fund has upgraded its forecasts for UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP), now projecting growth of 0.4% in 2023 and 1.0% in 2024. Wholesale gas prices have more than halved over the past six months and are expected to fall further, and the OBR now predicts that Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation will fall sharply to 2.9% by the end of the year. However, despite these positive developments, the economy still faces significant challenges. Inflation remains high, with CPI at 8.7% in the 12 months leading up to April 2023, which represented the first time the rate fell below 10% since August 2022. Inflation continues to fall by less than expected as falling gas prices are offset by rises in food prices, which on average are 19.1% higher than in April 2022. Inflation levels continue to be impacted by global supply chain issues, worsened by the ongoing war in Ukraine. In response to high inflation the Bank of England raised interest rates by a further 0.25 percentage points in May to 4.5%, with further rises considered likely.

2.3 High levels of inflation are driving historic falls in real household disposable income which, in March 2023, the OBR predicted would fall by a cumulative 5.7% over the two financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24, resulting in the increased cost of living being experienced by residents and businesses. In light of these pressures, the Government has announced a number of measures to support people with the rising cost of living. This includes £1bn to facilitate the extension of the Household Support Fund (to 31 March 2024);

additional payments of £900 paid to those on means-tested benefits, £300 to pensioner households and £150 to people on disability benefits; keeping the triple lock on state pensions; increasing the National Living Wage to £10.42 for over 23s from April 2023 and raising benefits payments by 10.1% in April, in line with inflation.

2.4 Further support was announced at the Spring Budget on 15 March 2023. These measures included extending the Energy Price Guarantee for an additional three months (April to June 2023), extending the temporary 5p fuel duty cut for an additional 12 months (until March 2024) and cancelling the planned increase in line with inflation for 2023-24, £100m to support charities and community organisations helping vulnerable people, and over £60m to support public swimming pools in England with rising energy costs.

2.5 Alongside this, the Government announced measures to help grow the UK economy to support higher paid jobs, increase living standards and strengthen public finances, including:

- Introducing a Universal Support programme to match people with disabilities and long-term sickness with jobs and provide support and training to help them succeed.
- Increasing Work Coach support and work search requirements for those claiming Universal Credit and strengthening support for claimants who are carers of children.
- Abolishing the Lifetime Allowance charge on private pensions.
- Expanding childcare support to help parents return to the workforce, including plans to provide 30 hours a week of free childcare for 38 weeks a year, for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months to 3 years and funding to substantially uplift the hourly rate paid to providers to deliver the existing free hours offers in England.
- Creating 12 Investment Zones across the UK to drive business investment and Levelling Up, each backed with £80m over five years including generous tax incentives.

2.6 Data on the East Sussex economy, cost of living and labour market are set out in Appendix 1 – Focus on East Sussex. Output of the East Sussex economy remains below the national average; Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour in East Sussex (a measure of the goods or services produced in an area per hour worked in that area) was 23.2% below the England level in 2020 (£29.41 per hour, against £38.29 per hour in England). The unemployment rate for March 2023 was 3.6% for East Sussex, slightly lower than the national average of 3.8%, but above the regional average of 2.9%. The number of people claiming unemployment related benefits was down 14.2% since March 2022, but still remains 23.8% higher than in March 2020, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. In March 2023, the youth unemployment rate (those 18-24 claiming unemployment benefits) was 5.8%, which was slightly lower than in March 2022 (6.2%), but still higher than the England rate of 4.9%, and above pre-pandemic levels. Further information on the national labour market picture and recruitment and retention challenges this presents for ESCC are set out at 10.5-10.8.

Levelling Up

2.7 The Levelling Up agenda, which aims to address disparities across the UK in economic prosperity and general standards of health and quality of life, remains important to the UK Government's agenda.

2.8 To help deliver on this agenda, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill is being progressed through Parliament and aims to make provision for the setting of national Levelling Up missions and reporting on progress in delivering them. It is currently at the committee stage in the House of Lords. The Bill contains a number of key reforms, including: a system of brownfield-first development; the introduction of Spatial Development Strategies; reduced 'top down' housing targets; streamlining the local plan process; the new Infrastructure Levy, and measures to deliver on plans for increased devolution.

2.9 To support the Levelling Up agenda, the Government has made funding available to local authorities through a number of competitive bidding streams (discussed in more detail in the economy section of this appendix). This includes the second round of the Levelling Up Fund, which has been released and included funding for Rother District Council, with a third round due to follow. An additional £211m has been announced for 16 regeneration projects across England (none in East Sussex).

2.10 Twenty areas have also been invited to form Levelling Up Partnerships with the Government, including Hastings and Rother. Areas selected were based on analysis in the Levelling Up White Paper which considered places in England against four key metrics: the percentage of adults with Level 3+ qualifications; Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour worked; median gross weekly pay; and healthy life expectancy. These partnerships are intended to deliver £400m in Government funding to drive 'bespoke, place-based regeneration' and build on previous partnerships between the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Blackpool, Grimsby in north-east Lincolnshire, and Blyth in Northumberland.

Devolution

2.11 The Government has maintained its commitment to agreeing a devolution deal with any area of the country that wants one by 2030. To that end, so far six deals have been published outlining the details of agreements between DLUHC and areas named within the nine County Deal pilot devolution areas announced in the Levelling Up White Paper. None of the deals have yet been ratified, and all are subject to a public consultation, agreement through the relevant councils' governance process, as well as parliamentary approval of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

2.12 Deals that have been published to date are largely at Level 3 of the devolution framework set out in the Levelling Up White Paper, which involves adopting a directly elected mayor or leader. The Government continues to prioritise negotiations with areas pursuing deals of this kind. In addition to these deals, the Government has announced two 'trailblazer' deeper devolution deals with the combined authorities of Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. These are set to serve as the blueprint for deeper devolution across the rest of England and, if agreed, intend to transfer additional powers and funding to help local leaders deliver on their priorities. Each will get new funding settlements agreed at the next Spending Review, to invest in local priorities.

2.13 To support current and future devolution arrangements, DLUHC recently published the first edition of the English Devolution Accountability Framework, which will form part of the broader Local Government Accountability Framework. It sets out how those who lead or work for institutions with devolved powers will be held accountable in between public elections. The framework is structured around three key forms of accountability: local scrutiny/checks and balances; accountability to the public and accountability to the UK Government. It will also establish a new scrutiny protocol to embed a sustained culture of scrutiny into these institutions.

2.14 An announcement on the next wave of deals is awaited. ESCC will continue to monitor how these deals progress to better understand the opportunities and risks associated with them.

Office for Local Government

2.15 In June 2022, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced the creation of a new body: the Office for Local Government (Oflog). This followed plans outlined in the Levelling Up White Paper to introduce a new independent data body to improve transparency of local government performance. In January 2023, Lord Morse was appointed as Interim Chair of Oflog.

2.16 This new body will assemble, analyse, and publish data relating to local government performance with the aim of increasing transparency, fostering accountability and using data to improve local government performance and to help identify problems at an earlier stage. It will form a part of the broader Local Government Accountability Framework, which will continue to develop throughout 2023. The first phase of Oflog's development will focus on four policy areas: adult social care, adult skills, waste management and reserves. A policy document will be published imminently to provide further information on the development of Oflog.

Updated inspection regime

2.17 Over the last year there have been a number of changes to inspection regimes for local authority provided services. This includes new powers for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to assess local authority Adult Social Care (ASC) services on how they are discharging their duties under the Care Act 2014. Up to 25 councils will be assessed in 2023/24 with a target of all ASC departments being assessed within two years. Each ASC department will receive a rating, with the timing of individual authorities' inspections currently unknown. In anticipation of the new inspection process, we are making preparations, using the CQC assessment framework as a useful way to identify our strengths and areas for development.

2.18 Additionally, in November 2022, Ofsted and CQC launched a new joint framework for inspecting provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) which took effect from January 2023. The new regime focuses on the effectiveness of a local area partnership's arrangements and whether these are delivering improved outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND. It will also include an evaluation of commissioning and oversight arrangements for children and young people in alternative provision, something the previous regime did not do. The new regime does not use the standard Ofsted grading system, and areas will instead receive one of three possible broader ratings.

2.19 ESCC can expect to receive inspections under these and ongoing regimes, including a local area SEND inspection and a joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) for Children's Services in 2023, and an ASC inspection within the next two years. In addition, we also expect there to be an inspection of our youth justice service in 2023.

Local government finance outlook

2.20 The outlook for local government funding remains unclear. Funding that ESCC will receive from central Government between 2024/25 – 2026/27 is yet to be confirmed and, while the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2022 included some indicative figures for two years of funding (notably for social care), the Local Government Financial Settlement was only a one-year settlement for 2023/24.

2.21 The 2022 Autumn Statement announced several measures to support social care and hospital discharge, including the continuation of the Services Grant and the delayed rollout of Adult Social Care charging reform from October 2023 to October 2025. Whilst this enables us to maintain a degree of financial stability for 2023/24, demand and costs will continue to grow. There will be additional expectations arising from national reforms in this and other areas, bringing new and sustained financial and service pressures which will impact on our medium term financial plan (MTFP) and ability to meet needs.

2.22 The ongoing delay to the Fair Funding Review has meant greater uncertainty about the shape of any long-term sustainable settlement for local authorities. At a local level, the potential impact the economic downturn and increased cost of living will have on the collection of business rates and council tax respectively has yet to be fully assessed. There

is a risk that the extension of Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme discounts by our district and borough councils will see reductions in the collection of Council Tax. 2022/23 has seen the level of debt rise, particularly for Adult Social Care contributions, and it is expected that this trend will continue into 2023/24.

2.23 For the Capital Programme, there remain challenges in the supply chain for materials and price pressures within existing contracts, the impact of which is exacerbated by delays to delivery. Further significant pressures may materialise as new schemes are developed or go out to tender. The current technical consultation on the Infrastructure Levy has added a level of uncertainty to the value of future developer contributions, which remain an important funding stream for the programme. The Capital Programme holds a contingency of £7.5m to meet these uncertainties.

2.24 While the Council's reserves have been applied and maintained within a robust reserve policy, the level of reserves held by local government is coming under increasing levels of scrutiny. It is likely that national government will require us to review our reserves strategy, with a potential to constrain our use of our reserves in maintaining a stable financial position.

3. Adult Social Care and Public Health

3.1 Whilst major reforms to adult social care (ASC) charging (reported at State of the County 2022) have been postponed until 2025, other national reforms are being progressed and teams across the Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) department are continuing to respond to a range of national and local developments which are set out in more detail in the following sections. These include working with health partners to progress local health and social care integration and implementing initiatives to facilitate hospital discharge. Work to deliver local priorities and respond to strategic challenges, including market sustainability, workforce challenges, supporting the resilience of local communities and addressing threats to health is also covered here.

Health and Social Care Integration

National Health and Social Care Integration

3.2 Nationally, new Integrated Care System (ICS) arrangements came into effect from July 2022. The Hewitt Review was commissioned by Government later in 2022 to consider how the oversight and governance of ICSs can best enable them to succeed, balancing greater autonomy and robust accountability, with a particular focus on real time data shared digitally with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and on the availability and use of data across the health and care system for transparency and improvement.

3.3 The report, published in April 2023, called for the following:

- A shift from focusing on illness to promoting health;
- Delivering on the promise of systems;
- Unlocking the potential of primary and social care and building a sustainable, skilled workforce; and
- Resetting our approach to finance to embed change.

3.4 The role of local government and social care in the changes proposed is recognised throughout the report, starting with "the need to work on the basis of subsidiarity, through strong, empowered Place Partnerships and neighbourhood teams." Key messages with particular relevance to ASCH include:

- A reset of national/local relationships with a shift away from a culture of top-down performance management to one of learning and improvement.

- The need for social care to be better understood within the NHS.
- The need for a national conversation about what we expect from our care, and what we are willing to pay for it.
- The vital role for ICSs in supporting a more sustainable social care sector at system level, by taking an integrated approach to reducing the gap between demand for care and available supply, for example by encouraging the adoption of personalised, preventative and proactive models of care.
- Broadening ICS collaboration beyond members of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) to encompass wider partners, including social care providers, the VCSE sector, and the independent healthcare sector to ensure they are fully engaged and their contribution better understood within the NHS.
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC) should include within its assessment of ICS maturity how different partners, including local government, assess their engagement and relationships within the ICS itself, including the extent to which both public health expertise and the social care provider sector are involved in the leadership of the system.
- Using the proposed data framework for adult social care outlined in 'Care data matters: a roadmap for better data for adult social care' setting out what data the sector needs to collect, the purpose of those collections and the standard to which it is collected.
- The necessary focus on reducing elective care waits should be matched by an equal focus on reducing waiting times for acute mental health treatment.
- There should be an acceleration and expansion of existing work on understanding both need and the fair cost of care, before the proposed cap on adult social care costs is implemented.
- Recognition that children's social care is linked to both adult social care and the wider health system and suggestion that the work to understand need and the cost of care should be expanded to capture working age adults and potentially children's social care.
- That the Public Health grant should be increased.

3.5 The Government published a joint response to the 36 Hewitt Review recommendations and a report of parliament's Health and Social Care Committee (HSCC) inquiry on ICSs on 14 June. Key points from the Government's response include:

- Agreement with the proposed reduction of the number of overarching national targets imposed on ICSs, which will empower them to focus on priorities in their local areas.
- Development of a shared outcomes toolkit that will support places to develop their own robust shared outcomes, with priorities and metrics that are directly linked to the needs of their populations.
- Recognition of the importance of prevention to reducing overall demand on services, and that over time the focus of the NHS should increasingly shift towards implementing interventions to help improve prevention and support healthier life expectancy, rather than imposing a national expectation of a shift in spending in line with the 1% (at least) over the next five years recommended by the Hewitt Review.
- Confirmation that the future assessments of the effectiveness of ICS partnership working across the ICS will be undertaken by the CQC.

The response will contribute to shaping the future direction of ICS development nationally and locally and we will work with local ICS partners to review it in more detail and assess implications for the local system.

Local Health and Social Care Integration

3.6 ESCC has a key role in the new statutory arrangements for the local NHS that commenced on 1 July 2022, with representation on the NHS Sussex ICB and the Sussex Health and Care Assembly (the Sussex Assembly). The Sussex Assembly is the statutory

joint committee between ESCC, West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and NHS Sussex.

3.7 In 2022/23 the new joint Integrated Care Strategy 'Improving Lives Together' was produced by the Sussex Assembly based on the population Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) for the three ICS 'Places' - East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove - and building on the priorities set out in the three Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) Strategies covering each area. This is in line with previous agreements about the role and primacy of 'Place' and Place-based health and care partnerships within the Sussex ICS, and follows national guidance and Hewitt Review recommendations concerning the principle of subsidiarity.

3.8 The Integrated Care Strategy builds on the shared priorities for our East Sussex population set out in the East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022 – 2027) covering health outcomes improvement, children and young people, mental health and integrated community health, care and wellbeing. It describes an overarching ambition for a healthier future for everyone in Sussex over the next five years, across the following priorities:

- Growing and supporting our Sussex health and care workforce
- Improving the use of digital technology and information
- Maximising the benefit of partnership working; building on the work currently underway and through developing integrated approaches to community teams and partnerships in Places and neighbourhoods.

3.9 A five-year Shared Delivery Plan (SDP) is being brought together to support the strategy, following national guidance issued by NHS England. Following consideration by each local authority, HWB and NHS Sussex, a full finalised Plan will be submitted to NHSE by 30 June 2023 covering year 1 (2023/24) and the high-level milestones for years 2-5 (2024/25 – 2027/28). This will cover existing delivery priorities and high level milestones for ongoing shared programmes of work as well as new delivery priorities in the following areas:

- Accelerating health outcomes improvement, specifically focussed on cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, mental health and frailty/healthy ageing.
- Our model for delivering integrated health, care and wellbeing in communities.

Ongoing implementation of the strategy will be overseen at ICS level by the Sussex Assembly and at place level by each HWB.

Hospital Discharge

3.10 Successful utilisation of the additional £500m Government Social Care Discharge Fund, and other rapid improvement work over winter to help discharge patients safely from hospital and into onward care as fast as possible, led to a successful Sussex ICS bid to be one of six 'Discharge Frontrunners' nationally. This project will, in 2023/24, trial innovative long-term solutions to free up hospital beds and make sure patients get the right care at the right time, which could be rolled out across the NHS if successful. Each Discharge Frontrunner will receive specialist and tailored support, which will include evaluation, economic analysis, demand and capacity planning, leadership, and service design, as well as the ability to learn best practice from other areas.

3.11 In April 2023 the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund 2023/24 was announced. Local authorities must use this funding to build additional ASC and community-based reablement capacity to reduce hospital discharge delays through delivering sustainable improvements to services for individuals. Partners at Place level will finalise plans for use of this funding by the end of June 2023.

National Adult Social Care Reform – Next Steps

3.12 In April 2023 Government restated its committed to the 10-year vision for Adult Social care set out in the People at the Heart of Care white paper by publishing 'Next steps to put People at the Heart of Care'. This plan sets out how it proposes to build on work to ensure Care (ASC) is of outstanding quality, personalised and accessible. It details how £700 million will be spent to continue transformation of the ASC system in England, including investment in:

- improved access to care and support
- recognising skills for careers in care
- driving digitisation and technology adoption
- data and local authority oversight
- support to enable people to remain independent at home
- encouraging innovation and improvement
- joining up services to support people and carers

Together, these measures aim to put people at the heart of social care and form the next step towards Government's 10-year reform vision.

Alongside the plan Government also:

- launched a call for evidence for the care workforce pathway
- published the Better Care Fund policy framework 2023 to 2025
- published guidance and conditions for the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF)
- provided £27 million to local authorities through a grant to streamline local authority adult social care assessment processes
- launched an expression of interest for year 2 funding of the Adult Social Care Technology Fund

3.13 Further detail on local work to support care market sustainability and address ASC workforce challenges is outlined below.

Adult Social Care data

3.14 'Care data matters: a roadmap for better data for adult social care', published in February 2023, sets out the Government's roadmap for improving how ASC data in England is collected, shared and analysed, building on the commitments made in the Health and Social Care data strategy, Data Saves Lives and the ASC reform White Paper, People at the Heart of Care. The roadmap is published in draft, and views are currently being sought from those involved in the delivery and commissioning of care, unpaid carers, clients, and members of the public. Based on this feedback, which ESCC will contribute to, the final version of the roadmap will be published at the end of 2023.

ESCC Strategy for Adult Social Care

3.15 Together with our residents and partners, we have developed an Adult Social Care Strategy for the county. Specific to East Sussex, and informed by wide engagement, the strategy provides a person-centred framework which gives direction for a range of stakeholders. It will help people know what to expect from ASC services and support, and identifies six priorities:

1. The right support, in the right place, at the right time
2. Information and communication about care and support
3. Cost of living and cost of care, now and in the future
4. A suitable home
5. Personal connections with others
6. Group activities, hobbies and volunteering

3.16 The strategy, to be launched in summer 2023, includes 14 'We will' statements and summarises how those working within and alongside ASC will respond to the priorities of local people. Once launched, these 'We will' statements will be converted into a detailed delivery plan which, in turn, will inform the department's core policies and practice. Alongside this, working with partners and other service providers to help residents (including those not receiving services) to share their experiences of these priorities, we will also adapt the way feedback is gathered from people receiving adult social care services so that it aligns with the six priorities.

Market Sustainability

3.17 The sustainability of the care market continues to be a significant issue both nationally and locally. Announced by Government at the Autumn Statement in November 2022, the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund is intended to support local authorities to make tangible improvements to adult social care services, to build capacity and improve market sustainability. This reflects local authorities' duty, under section 5 of the Care Act 2014, to promote the efficient and effective operation of the market for adult care and support as a whole. Government considers that three vital target areas underpin the overarching objective of building capacity and improving market sustainability. These are:

- increasing fee rates paid to adult social care providers in local areas;
- increasing adult social care workforce capacity and retention; and
- reducing adult social care waiting times.

3.18 Locally a range of pressures are impacting on care market sustainability. National and international economic conditions have increased the cost of providing services and delays to major national reform programmes have led to uncertainty. The increase in the National Living Wage from April 2023, whilst welcome particularly in light of workforce shortages, also presents a cost pressure for many care providers. The ASC Market Support Team continues to work closely with local providers, the CQC and NHS to support and strengthen the independent care and support market, improve and sustain quality improvements, prevent business failure or service deterioration and identify and address business continuity and sustainability concerns. This supportive partnership approach has been successful in helping to ensure overall quality provision within the county.

ASC Workforce Challenges

3.19 Local and national recruitment continues to be a challenge across the ASC sector which has a significant impact on independent provider services as well as ESCC teams. To address this ESCC has established a three year ASCH workforce programme with six areas of focus: strategic workforce planning; recruitment; retention; enhancing the wellbeing of the workforce; leadership and management and building and enhancing social justice in the workforce.

Local Public Health priorities

3.20 A new Public Health Board is in place with representation from all parts of the Council and the NHS Sussex ICB. The Public Health Board will ensure that priorities to tackle health inequalities are aligned across the Sussex Health and Care Partnership (SHCP).

Health protection and addressing threats to health

3.21 Maximising our health protection expertise and impact to protect health in a wide range of settings is vital. This includes launching our new health protection strategy that sets out our broad priorities now that we have moved beyond Covid-19. The strategy outlines the roles and responsibilities of the local authority, NHS, UK Heath Security Agency (UKHSA) and other key partners involved in health protection, and how the system fits together locally. It demonstrates a joined-up, multi-agency approach to health protection, focusing on

minimising health inequalities and the impacts of the wider determinants of health. It states key indicators of success and outlines categories for health protection action into the life course approach.

Recovery and Renewal

3.22 Covid-19 has exacerbated existing health disparities for many and along with current economic conditions, results in even greater challenges in addressing the wider determinants of health. Work with communities and system partners to mitigate the impacts of Covid continues, applying lessons learned on what worked well for communities and co-producing solutions to longstanding underlying causes of health disparities.

3.23 We will continue to develop plans to address the mental and emotional health and wellbeing of all affected groups. This includes building on the Making it Happen Programme which works with residents in East Sussex who want to build on the positive things that exist in their neighbourhood. We will also progress the Connected People and Places project and the recommendation to establish a 'stewardship approach' to tackling loneliness. This encompasses a collaborative approach to the design and commissioning of a programme of work with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and other partner agencies.

3.24 The use of research and developing evidence is core to Public Health, and this is being strengthened to address inequalities and support community recovery locally. Public Health has responded to the National Institute for Health Research's call for Health Determinants Research Collaborative funding to create innovative research collaborations between local government and the academic sector that focus on improving the wider determinants, or drivers, of health. This aims to maximise impact on established and persistent causes of health inequalities that affect coastal and rural communities in East Sussex. Should the East Sussex proposal progress to stage two of the process during the summer the outcome of the funding bid will be completed in December 2023. If unsuccessful the department will explore how elements of the proposal could be embedded.

Creative Health

3.25 The National Centre for Creative Health and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing is currently undertaking a Creative Health Review which will highlight the potential for creative health to help tackle pressing issues in health and social care, including health inequalities and the additional challenges we face as we recover from Covid-19. Locally, within the NHS and social care, there is growing recognition of the important role that creative health can play in supporting our health and wellbeing.

3.26 A Creating Healthier Lives – Arts in Public Health workstream is being developed locally to sustain, improve and prevent ill health and promote wellbeing through arts, creativity, and culture. The plan will link in with the East Sussex Cultural Strategy and support community recovery and renewal. A position paper introducing the work will be published later in 2023, outlining our statement of intent and commitment to developing a strategic plan that works for everyone across East Sussex.

Suicide prevention

3.27 Public Health led on the creation and monitoring of the East Sussex suicide and self-harm prevention plan. This is co-ordinated through a strategy group and broader multi-agency network group. Preventative approaches to the ongoing significant challenge of reducing deaths at places of high frequency is led by the Coastal Suicide Prevention Group. A new Pan-Sussex Suicide Prevention Strategy will be published early summer 2023, which will outline projects best delivered through collaboration between the three local authority areas, such as real time surveillance, communications, and the involvement of people with lived experience. Local plans in East Sussex will be developed subsequently during the summer months.

4. Children's Services

4.1 Major national policy reviews relating to Children's Services have been published in recent months, including the Government's response to national reviews of children's social care and the children's social care market. The Government has also released its Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan, as well as announcing that it no longer intends to bring forward the Schools Bill in the current Parliament. This section also summarises priority focus areas for Children's Services locally, including implementation of Family Hubs, a Family Safeguarding model and our local SEND strategy. In addition, there is information on demand-led service pressures and the impact these are having, work with schools to improve post-pandemic educational recovery, attendance and mental health and emotional wellbeing, and increase in demand for home to school transport.

National reforms to Children's Social Care

4.2 In February 2023, the Department for Education (DfE) published its response to three reports: the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review on the deaths of Star Hobson and Arthur Labinjo-Hughes, and the Competition and Market Authority Children's Social Care Market study. The DfE's response included an initial implementation strategy and consultation on its proposals, together with a wide range of policy commitments and the announcement of £200m of additional investment over the next two years. The strategy is focused on phase one of the Government's reforms, up to the end of the Spending Review period in March 2025.

4.3 The strategy commits to resetting children's social care to ensure that love and stable relationships are at the heart of the work done by children's social care. It is focused around the following six key pillars, with each pillar having detailed proposals:

- Family Help provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families;
- A decisive multi-agency child protection system;
- Unlocking the potential of family networks;
- Putting love, relationships and a stable home at the heart of being a child in care;
- A valued, supported and highly skilled social worker for every child who needs one;
- A system that continuously learns and improves, and makes better use of evidence and data.

4.4 It also outlines proposals for Regional Care Cooperatives (RCCs) to address the significant national sufficiency challenges in placements for cared for children. The DfE intends to work with local authorities, health, justice and the third sector to co-design and co-create RCCs in two areas, with a view to further roll out after testing and evaluation with the sector.

4.6 A 'Children's Social Care National Framework' is being developed as part of the implementation strategy. This will describe the outcomes that local authorities should aim to achieve for children, young people and families, with associated performance indicators. The strategy also includes a new five year post-qualifying 'Early Career Framework', which will be aligned to the Children's Social Care National Framework and is intended to include the skills and knowledge needed to deliver on the strategy's key priorities such as increased use of kinship care and loving relationships for children in care.

4.7 Given concerns about the impact of the use of agency social workers in terms of both cost and workforce sufficiency, the Government is consulting on whether to set national rules on agency usage. It is proposed to establish price rates for agency workers and a requirement that agency social workers have five years post qualifying experience.

4.8 The initial £200m financial commitment associated with strategy implementation includes a number of pathfinder and pilot programmes, such as £45m to deliver the Families First for Children Pathfinder, and £30m to increase the number of local authorities with family finding, befriending and mentoring programmes. Before the next Spending Review period the DfE intends to update, publish and consult on a new formula for children and young people's services funding.

4.9 ESCC agrees that reform and investment is required to ensure the right systems are in place to not only protect children, but to help them and their families to thrive. The focus on earlier help, support that builds on the strengths within a child's wider family network, and a greater ambition for our children in care, and care experienced by young people, align with the priorities and practice of ESCC Children's Services. The Council has recently responded to the three DfE consultations.

Service Demand

4.10 Over recent years Children's Services both nationally and locally have experienced a significant increase in demand. Local Government Association (LGA) analysis shows that since 2010 there has been a 53% increase in the number of children subject to child protection planning and a 28% increase in the number of children in care nationally. This has been further exacerbated by the pandemic and, more recently, the cost of living increases, with a continued projected increase in demand and complexity, specifically in the areas of child protection planning and looked after children.

4.11 Over the past two years, in line with national trends, ESCC has experienced a 37% increase in demand at the front door, an 18% increase in the number of social care assessments being undertaken with children and families, and a 32% increase in children subject to child protection planning. There has been an 6% increase in the number of looked after children since 2020 (not including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children). The demand for support has undoubtedly put pressure on the service and it will be important to continue to ensure we have sufficient capacity to meet our statutory duties. Over the last two years, as a service of last resort, we have also needed to provide some direct support to families, in terms of accommodation or other support, and this requirement is expected to continue.

4.12 In line with the national picture, ESCC also continues to experience significant challenges identifying sufficient high quality placements for children in care. Children's Services has been highly successful in supporting children to live within kinship care arrangements wherever possible. However, it is becoming increasingly challenging to identify appropriate placements and the price of placements has significantly increased. Demand for residential provision outstrips supply. Providers have become risk averse to offering placements to children with complex behavioural needs (because they present greater risk of missing episodes, challenging behaviours, and Ofsted notifiable incidents). The high demand in the system has also led to an escalation in the price that some providers are now charging.

4.13 Rigorous steps are taken to manage the market and individual contracts with providers. East Sussex is part of a commissioning framework agreement with other local authorities to improve leverage in purchasing placements and Heads of Service meet regularly with providers to address the safety and quality of placements as well as value of contracts. However, external consultancy support has been engaged to review the scope for different approaches which might help us secure more cost effective options. The interests of children will remain paramount in our approach.

Local Service Developments

Early Intervention, Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme

4.14 In March 2022 the DfE announced that East Sussex was one of 75 local authorities selected for a share of a £302m fund to establish Family Hubs and the Start for Life programme. ESCC has been awarded £4.6m for this programme over 3 years, with an additional £100,000 to deliver a 'Trailblazer' programme on peri-natal mental health.

4.15 ESCC's local Family Hubs build on the current Children Centre and integrated Early Help offers and support families with babies, children and young people from birth to 19 (or 25 for young people with SEND). The Hubs, the first of which are being launched in summer 2023, will provide a one stop shop approach, delivering a range of help, including for physical and mental health, housing, debt advice, youth services, domestic abuse support, as well as links to local voluntary and community sector organisations. At the heart of ESCC Family Hubs will be the Start for Life support, helping parents build strong relationships with their babies by providing parenting classes, health visiting support, infant feeding advice and peri-natal mental health.

4.16 A multi-agency Early Intervention Board was established in 2022/23 which is overseeing this programme as well as the development of an overarching Early Intervention Strategy, incorporating a wide range of early intervention programmes across the county including local implementation of the national Supporting Families programme and the Youth Justice Service 'Turnaround' preventative programme.

Family Safeguarding

4.17 In 2023/24, following a £2.3m annual investment by ESCC, Children's Services will be launching the Family Safeguarding model of child protection as a further development to our Connected Families service for families with children aged 11-17 who are at risk of needing to become looked after. The Family Safeguarding model provides intensive support for adults in three key areas: domestic abuse, mental health, and substance misuse. These areas are the most common factors nationally and locally in assessments of the needs of children for protection, and areas where demand for support services exceeds the available supply. They are often co-morbidities and are a significant factor in family breakdown, premature deaths, and poor outcomes for people with care experience. Family Safeguarding will be an important part of the way we seek to manage demand for social care.

4.18 ESCC's approach to Family Safeguarding will draw on models implemented elsewhere in the country, as well as reflecting and enhancing our own successful and well-established East Sussex 'Connected Practice' approach, which is strength based, trauma informed and relationship-based. ESCC has an established and effective multi-disciplinary SWIFT service and 'Foundations' programme which this initiative will build upon to offer earlier intensive support and interventions to families and increase resources for reunification.

4.19 The Family Safeguarding model aligns with the DfE's children's social care reform implementation strategy outlined in more detail above. This highlights that Children's Services should draw on a multidisciplinary workforce with the time, skills, and autonomy to give children and families the support they need, pursuing improved outcomes for both adults and children. Delivery of the model in East Sussex is planned to commence in January 2024.

SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan

4.20 The SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan is the Government's response to the SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper consultation and outlines an

ambition to improve inclusive practice in mainstream schools so that more children and young people with SEND can be supported in their local mainstream school without the need for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). However, the development of new guidance for all schools is not expected to be complete until 2025. The Government is also establishing Regional Partnerships to support development of special educational needs provision, with which ESCC will be engaging.

4.21 In line with the national picture, East Sussex continues to see significant increases in demand for statutory assessments and specialist provision for children and young people with SEND. The number of EHCPs has increased by 19% from 3,678 in April 2022 to 4,380 by the end of March 2023. We will continue to work proactively, analysing data to project future demand, and working with schools and Trusts to develop more specialist provision where this is appropriate. In 2022, alongside partners in the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) the Council published a new 2022-2025 SEND strategy which sets out our high-level direction, keeping children and young people and their families at the forefront of our local priorities.

4.22 We continue to work with schools to try to reduce the number of children and young people who are excluded from schools, which in East Sussex remains above the national average, and the corresponding need for alternative provision.

Schools policy

4.23 The Schools Bill, which was to implement legislation to support the White Paper, Opportunity for All, is no longer being taken forward. However, the DfE remains committed to the objectives that underpinned the bill, which include the aspiration for all schools to become part of Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). The Council will continue to play a critical role in facilitating strong local partnerships between schools and working with the Joint Primary and Secondary Board to shape a strong and cohesive school landscape across all phases, including through MAT development.

4.24 The DfE has confirmed its intention to pass legislation which will see local authorities obliged to maintain a register of children of compulsory school age who are not enrolled at specified categories of schools such as state schools, registered independent schools and non-maintained special schools. The Council will respond to this new duty when it is put into place.

Education recovery and supporting attainment

4.25 East Sussex has been identified by Government as an Education Investment Area (EIA) and Hastings as a Priority Investment Area. As an EIA, MATs that are interested in expanding or setting up in East Sussex are prioritised for development funding from the DfE. As a Priority EIA, Hastings will receive funding up to August 2025 to improve educational outcomes.

4.26 The pandemic has had a significant adverse impact on school attendance, with a doubling, both nationally and locally, of the proportion of children persistently absent from school, defined as more than 10% of sessions. The Government has published new attendance guidance to clarify responsibilities for local authorities, schools, parents and carers. By September 2023, the expectation is that all councils should strengthen their oversight of attendance through regular individual dialogue with all schools, and provide whole family early help support, free of any charge, to schools and all families of children whose attendance is less than 50%.

4.27 Locally, there will be a continued focus on working with schools to improve the engagement of some families so that they ensure their children and young people are in school. Supported by additional investment of £1.5m annually to deliver the expectations set

by the Government in its new guidance, a new Level 2 Early Help Key Work service will be in place from September 2023 to work with children and young people and their families where attendance is below 50%.

4.28 East Sussex has high levels of suspension and exclusion and these are rising further in line with national trends. School leaders are experiencing increased levels and complexity of need in their school populations and the demand for support services remains high. The Council will continue to work with schools to develop effective strategies and joined-up approaches to meeting children and young people's needs, to increase engagement in learning and reduce exclusions.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing in schools

4.29 Education is a protective factor against many of the risks to good mental health and wellbeing that face children and young people across East Sussex. A key area of our school improvement strategy involves opportunities for schools and settings to develop communities which promote and foreground good mental health and wellbeing. The Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs), funded by the NHS and managed by ESCC, will continue to be integrated into the existing education and clinical landscapes to support this. Five MHSTs will continue to operate across the county, and we will work to embed them into 68 targeted schools. We will use the learning from these schools to champion a whole school approach to mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Home to school transport

4.30 Recent rises in fuel costs and driver shortages have led to exceptional increases to the costs of contracts providing taxis for pupils requiring home to school transport. The majority of the spend on home to school transport relates to children with SEND, and the number of pupils with EHCPs has risen by 11.6% over the last three years and is forecast to rise a further 11.8% over the next three. Increased complexity of needs post pandemic and geographical spread reducing the possibility of taxi sharing are also driving cost increases, as are current market conditions which are leading to fewer providers bidding for routes and increased contract prices.

5. Migration

5.1 Over the last year the Government has developed new policy and legislation in relation to immigration, asylum, and refugee resettlement, in efforts to reduce pressures on current systems and services. These pressures arise from factors including an increasing backlog of asylum claims, slower than expected progress in resettling Afghans, significant numbers of Ukrainians arriving in the UK and an increase in small boat crossings via the English Channel.

5.2 Government's 'New Plan for Immigration' includes:

- A 'Full Dispersal' asylum system, incorporating all local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales as asylum dispersal areas.
- The Illegal Migration Bill which aims to change the law on whether people arriving in the UK, outside of prescribed routes, can claim asylum in the UK, and to remove people more quickly.
- A Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Rwanda which includes an 'asylum partnership arrangement' that allows the UK to send some people to Rwanda who would otherwise claim asylum in the UK.
- A 'Streamlined Asylum Processing' arrangement which aims to fast-track asylum claims in certain circumstances.
- Exploration of new large asylum accommodation sites to reduce the use of contingency hotels.

- Additional funding and policy measures to support the resettlement and accommodation of Afghans and Ukrainians.

5.3 Local authorities continue to play a key role in how these policies and schemes are implemented locally, working with the Government and local partners to ensure that those arriving will have access to safe accommodation, public services and community support. Further detail on the impacts for East Sussex and the County Council are outlined below.

Asylum Dispersal

5.4 The pressures described above have led to an increase in the use of hotels by the Home Office as 'contingency' accommodation for people seeking asylum, including in East Sussex. Although hotels in the county were already being used as short-term accommodation for adults awaiting Home Office decisions on their asylum applications, increasing numbers of people arriving in small boats in recent months and overcrowding at Manston migrant processing centre in Kent led to the Home Office arranging for new hotels to be stood up across the country, often at short notice.

5.5 The Home Office is also exploring the use of large sites, such as holiday accommodation, student accommodation or ex-military accommodation, as options for reducing the use of hotels; this includes the Northeye site near Bexhill. Concerns about the suitability of specific sites, relating to the welfare of those people who may be placed there and the stretched capacity of local services, are being discussed with key partners and Home Office officials to inform planning and decision making. ESCC continues to engage with Government officials to ensure the local context in East Sussex is understood.

Full Dispersal

5.6 The Government has extended responsibilities for asylum dispersal beyond previously specified areas (such as Hastings) and is asking all areas to take a role in dispersal, a model described as 'full dispersal'. Details of full dispersal plans for each local area are still emerging and local authorities are actively highlighting the risks and pressures to local services and infrastructure of additional asylum accommodation in East Sussex and the south east. The procurement of dispersal accommodation by the Home Office should take place after consultation with the relevant housing authority and we await further details on where accommodation may be procured in East Sussex. Areas will be allocated dispersal numbers, mainly based on a ratio to local population, and local authorities will be funded per dispersal bed.

Streamlined Asylum Process

5.7 The streamlined asylum processing model concentrates on legacy claimants from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Libya, Syria, and Yemen (those claims made before 28 June 2022). The model allows greater flexibility in processing these claims to expedite those which are likely to be granted. For claims that are successful, people will become eligible for housing and other support and services which may temporarily increase pressure on those services. Further details on implementation in East Sussex are still emerging.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and the National Transfer Scheme

5.8 ESCC continues to accept Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS), which became mandatory in November 2021. In early 2022, the number of UASC each local authority was expected to care for through the NTS increased from 0.07% of the child population to 0.1%. Through a combination of spontaneous arrivals and UASC received through the NTS, we have seen a steady increase in the numbers we are supporting, which currently stands at 74 looked after children and 110 care leavers (a 16% increase on 2021/22). UASC represented 25% of ESCC new entrants to care in 2022/23 and now make up 30% of care leavers.

5.9 There has been an increase in the number of UASC placed in hotel accommodation by the Home Office, whilst awaiting transfer through the NTS to local authorities. In East Sussex, Children's Services has worked with the Home Office and partner agencies to ensure safeguarding services are in place. Weekly multi-agency meetings take place with the Home Office, health services and Sussex Police to address any safeguarding concerns. A significant number of UASC went missing from the hotels across the South East in 2022-23, including in East Sussex. In line with our safeguarding procedures multi-agency strategy meetings were convened for each child accommodated in East Sussex, with regular review meetings taking place whilst the child is still missing.

5.10 In the autumn of 2022/23, 47 young people accommodated in adult asylum seeker hotels in East Sussex came forward disputing their initial age assessment. Children's Services is required to undertake age assessments in each case. 50% of these young people subsequently became looked after by ESCC as UASC. The proposed development of Northeye as an asylum accommodation site could add significant further pressures to Children's Services capacity and sufficiency of placements if the same proportions of age disputes are seen.

5.11 The new Illegal Migration Bill aims to deter people from crossing the channel in small boats by preventing those that do so from claiming asylum in the UK and detaining and removing them from the country. It places a new duty on the Home Secretary to remove those entering the UK by irregular means via a safe country. The only exceptions to this duty are for people at risk of "serious and irreversible harm" and unaccompanied children until they turn 18. The Bill does not place any significant new duties on local authorities in relation to accommodating and supporting UASC. There is an expectation, however, that UASC will be moved quickly into local authority care and the Home Office will be required to step in through hotel provision only 'sparingly and temporarily'. The expectation is that once they reach age 18 the young people will be recalled by the Home Office and removed from the country.

5.12 It is currently unclear exactly what implications the legislation, if passed, will have for East Sussex. It is possible that the prospect of removal at age 18 will significantly increase the numbers of young people in our care or housed in hotels in East Sussex who go missing, which will place additional requirements on Children's Services as well as the Police locally. There are also tensions between this legislation and the current law in relation to the protection and wellbeing of children (the Children Act 1989) which could create challenges for our staff on the front line in terms of how they best support children until they reach age 18.

Refugee Resettlement

Afghan Resettlement Schemes

5.13 Government established two resettlement schemes for Afghan citizens. For councils who support refugees to resettle through the above schemes, the Government has provided a standard integration funding package. Refugees waiting to be resettled are placed in 'bridging accommodation' (usually hotels) until more permanent housing is found. There are no such bridging hotels in East Sussex, and district and borough councils lead on resettling Afghans in East Sussex.

Visa schemes

5.14 The Government has created schemes which enable people from certain states, for example Hong Kong, to apply for visas and enter the UK. The terms of these visa schemes vary, but they usually enable people to access services, benefits, and the right to work whilst in the UK. Numbers of people entering East Sussex on this visa are not available, but we

engage with the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration (SESPM) and local partners to ensure people arriving in the county through this route can access the support they need.

Ukraine refugee response

5.15 In response to the refugee crisis arising from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Government established two main routes through which Ukrainian refugees can enter the UK - the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine (HfU), under which Ukrainian nationals can be sponsored to come to the UK by private individuals.

5.16 At the end of February 2023 almost 1600 Ukrainian guests had arrived in East Sussex on a HfU visa, matched with over 600 sponsors. To date upwards of 600 guests have moved on from their original hosts, with a high proportion of guests moving to positive accommodation outcomes, and around 60% of guests remaining with their original hosts. Ongoing support to hosts and guests remains vital to sustain arrangements and facilitate planned onward moves in a challenging housing market.

Future local support

5.17 In this context of new and developing policy and legislation, and the potential future impact of climate change and further international conflicts, expectations are that the numbers of refugees and asylum seekers may increase. Given the national expectation that all regions will contribute, it is anticipated that activity to support refugees and asylum seekers will be a significant and long term area of work and focus for the Council going forward. This will require development of our local resources, expertise and knowledge in these areas, a strengthening of existing and new partnerships, and a clear and joined up strategic approach across East Sussex and the wider region. This work will be led by the newly established Migrant Support Team, located in ASCH and working with teams across the organisation, including in Children's Services.

6. Communities

Financial Inclusion

6.1 In response to increases in the cost of living, and resulting impacts on households in the county, ESCC established the multi-agency Financial Inclusion Steering Group. The group brings together the VCSE, NHS, district and borough councils, DWP, and all ESCC departments to collectively work towards addressing financial inclusion.

6.2 The Steering Group has agreed a set of priorities to enable partners to better understand, develop and respond to the pressures that residents are experiencing. These include:

- strengthening data and developing a compelling evidence base;
- supporting cross-sectorial peer learning and knowledge sharing in relation to activities and services that can improve Financial Inclusion for residents;
- collaboratively developing approaches to service delivery that improve Financial Inclusion for the residents of East Sussex;
- maximising funding opportunities and the receipt of benefits and other support financial support to vulnerable residents and communities; and
- providing access to the right information.

6.3 This work is expected to be ongoing, with the priority being the identification of households in poverty or at risk of being in poverty and providing advice and support to ensure that they are in receipt of any benefits or other financial support that they may be eligible to claim.

Household Support Fund extension

6.4 The Household Support Fund (HSF) was introduced by Government in response to increases in the cost of living. Funding is aimed at anyone who is vulnerable or cannot pay for essentials and is distributed via local authorities. For 2023/24 ESCC will be receiving £7,793,567 from the HSF which will be allocated through several routes, reflecting national guidance that ESCC and partners should consider the needs of various households including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people.

Community Networks

6.5 ESCC commissioned Collaborate Community Interest Company to review the learning from Covid-19 Community Hubs and recommend how our collective learning could help embed the benefits of Community Hubs in the longer term. The resulting Community Networks programme will ensure we align with the needs and priorities of partners and communities, including:

- contributing to our Health and Wellbeing Strategy in East Sussex and our Sussex Integrated Care Strategy
- managing interdependencies with our Early Help strategy for families and the development of Family Hubs
- alignment with Local Plans at district and borough level
- alignment with Public Health led initiatives and programmes
- alignment with the priorities of the VCSE Alliance and wider VCSE sector.

6.6 The delivery of Community Networks in East Sussex, alongside other priorities, will be taken forward by the newly brought together Partnerships Team within ASCH, working across the Council and with key partners from the statutory and VCSE sector.

Community Safety

Community Safety Partnerships and Anti-Social Behaviour

6.7 The overall national policy for crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) is set out in the Government's Beating Crime Plan. As part of this, an in-depth review of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) has been undertaken to initially improve their transparency, accountability, and effectiveness, before assessing their position within the wider landscape of local partnerships. It is considering introducing a new duty for CSPs to report on local ASB strategy and delivery to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), as well as legislation to set out the PCC role in the ASB Community Trigger process. The findings of this part of the review concluded that, although the importance of local partnerships such as CSPs was widely acknowledged, they were not being used as effectively as they could be.

6.8 In order to take this forward, the Government has recently published an Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan and launched a consultation which proposes changes to: the relationship between CSPs and PCCs, the role of both in tackling ASB, and the nature and application of the ASB powers currently available to police forces, local authorities and social landlords. The East Sussex CSPs already work closely with the PCC's office and receive annual funding from the PCC to support community safety initiatives. Although ASB is managed at lower tier authority level, ESCC is working with community safety partners and the Office of the PCC to design the operating model for the proposed 'immediate justice' service that will be rolled out across Sussex.

Serious Violence Duty

6.9 The Police, Crime, Sentencing, and Courts Act 2022 has placed new duties on schools, police, councils, and health to prevent serious violence. The Serious Violence Duty

requires specified authorities, including councils and Youth Justice Services, to work together to produce an evidence-based analysis of serious violence in their local area and then formulate and implement a strategy detailing how they will respond to those issues. The Act and the Duty is far-reaching and will impact upon many of the services delivered by ESCC and its partnership arrangements. ESCC will have an essential and leading role to play to prevent and address serious violence, beyond involvement in the production of a needs assessment and strategy.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

6.10 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 and independent review 2021 sets out the policy context for local authorities in tackling these issues. The Modern Slavery Bill is currently working its way through parliament and aims to enhance the efforts in tackling modern slavery supply chains and to further strengthen support measures for victims of human trafficking. Councils have a key role to play in tackling modern slavery, including in identifying and supporting victims and working in partnership locally. The Council will be assessing compliance within the legislative framework by using the LGA 'maturity matrix', which provides a framework for local authorities to assess their current progress and plan future activity on modern slavery.

Preventing Violent Extremism

6.11 The policy context for this work is set out in a number of Government documents, including:

- the Counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST 2018**,** which aims to reduce the risk to the UK and its citizens and interests overseas from terrorism;
- the Protect Duty Bill, which aims to enhance national security by introducing new security requirements for certain public locations;
- changes to the Channel management process under the Government's Prevent anti-extremism programme, giving more responsibility and autonomy to local government safeguarding panels; and
- the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019

6.12 In 2023 the Home Office published the Independent Review of Prevent which considered the UK's strategy for protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The Government has accepted all 34 recommendations in full and these will inform the development of the East Sussex Prevent Plan for the current year.

National and local plans for tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

6.13 The Government published the National VAWG strategy in November 2021 and the Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan in March 2022. Its strategic priorities (of prevention, supporting victims, pursing perpetrators and a stronger system and partnership working) align with the priorities set within the Pan-Sussex Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence and Abuse and VAWG Strategic Framework, which was updated in March 2022 to encompass VAWG and the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act in 2021. In order to meet the statutory requirement under Part 4 of the new Act, ESCC has a legal duty to support victims of domestic abuse and their children living in refuges and other safe accommodation. ESCC has been allocated funding for 2021-2025 to meet this new requirement.

Drug and alcohol treatment work and Project ADDER

6.14 The publication of the Government's new ten year Combatting Drugs Strategy ('From Harm to Hope') in 2021 requires local partnerships to establish an effective governance mechanism, undertake a comprehensive substance misuse needs assessment, and produce a local strategy. Additional Government resources are being made available to realise these requirements. This work is overseen by the East Sussex Harm to Hope Board, a sub-group of the East Sussex Safer Communities Board.

6.15 Additional Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG), now including the funding for Project ADDER, has been made available to East Sussex from Government to meet the outcomes of the Combatting Drugs Strategy. The funding has enabled the expansion of Project ADDER from Hastings to the whole county. The Council has received funding from the SSMTRG - Housing Support Grant to support those in treatment with a housing need in East Sussex, with the aim of preventing people from losing stable accommodation, and funding from the Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant to deliver focused support to keep rough sleepers in Hastings engaged in drug and alcohol treatment.

6.16 The Council has also received additional funding from the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities to improve access to inpatient detoxification, and to improve the employability of those in structured treatment. There are also significant contributions – both financial and in kind - to this area of work from ASCH, and the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner.

Trading Standards

6.17 The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill is currently being considered in Parliament. When it was first introduced the Bill was intended to revoke all pieces of EU derived legislation by 31 December 2023, unless specifically kept or replaced. However, the Government now intends to amend the Bill to replace the cut-off point with a list of 600 laws that will be replaced by the end of the year. Among the laws to be revoked or replaced are ones that may have a direct impact on Trading Standards and potentially our ability to intervene in consumer issues. We will monitor this closely, as any reforms in such a volume will potentially have an impact on Trading Standards and, depending on how they are implemented, our resources and focus.

Local resilience arrangements

6.18 In December 2022, the UK Government Resilience Framework was released. This sets out the Government's aspirations for widespread changes to the way in which resilience activity is managed within the UK and, in particular, how it can be integrated with wider policy areas. The approach in Sussex will be informed pilots which commenced in Spring 2023.

6.19 Rother District Council has joined the East Sussex Resilience and Emergencies Partnership (ESREP) which means that all local authorities in East Sussex are now members alongside East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. This will enable us to create shared, strategic approaches across the whole of Sussex to create efficiencies and opportunities to standardise ways of working across the county.

National planning reforms

6.20 The Government introduced the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to Parliament in 2022, which emphasises the importance of a plan-led system (i.e. the Local Plan sets out where, when and how development will take place). This approach is broadly welcomed from by the County Council, although it will increase the need for timely and effective input into the district and borough Local Plan processes, particularly through our role as an infrastructure provider. Other changes and reforms proposed focus on matters including infrastructure funding, environmental assessment of proposals, enforcement, and providing additional protection to heritage assets. These will all impact on the Council, both within our County Planning Authority role and through our statutory consultee and infrastructure provider role. Identifying these impacts and ensuring that the Council can adapt its relevant service provision will be a critical task as the Bill progresses and more details are published.

6.21 In December 2022, the Government published further detail in a consultation that sought views on a proposed update of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which would set out how housing figures should be derived and applied so that communities can respond to local circumstances. No immediate changes to the standard method to calculating local housing need were proposed. The consultation also sought views on its proposed approach to preparing National Development Management Policies (NDMPs). These would be national policies with statutory weight – effectively 'trumping' local policies. The consultation provided only limited detail on NDMPs but it explained they would be set out in a separate (yet-to-be consulted upon) document.

6.22 The initial changes to the NPPF are expected to be published imminently and additional proposed changes are expected to be published for consultation later this year. Changes to national planning policy are having an impact upon the ability of local planning authorities to get an up to date Local Plans in place. In East Sussex, the majority of the county does not currently have an up to date Local Plan, meaning that the majority of development proposals that we are asked to comment upon, and plan for their infrastructure needs, are speculative in nature as they are not supported by an allocation in a Development Plan and are not part of a wider, holistic plan. Whilst this situation remains, workloads for our statutory consultee functions are expected to remain higher than normal and the ability to forward plan for infrastructure is undermined.

6.23 The Government has also published a consultation on the proposed Infrastructure Levy (IL). The IL would reform, and largely replace, the existing system of developer contributions (Section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy). The new system is intended to end lengthy negotiations and deliver a mandatory, streamlined and locally determined levy that will be calculated once a project is complete, instead of at the stage the site is given planning permission. The Government recognises that the levy will be a significant change so it will be introduced through 'test and learn' over a 10-year period. The Government intends for the reforms to give local leaders the tools to bring forward more infrastructure that communities need. However, there are concerns that this approach could result in spending on infrastructure such as roads, schools, and doctors' surgeries being reduced as the new levy can be spent on a wider array of things such as affordable housing and local council services. To help ensure that development continues to help fund essential infrastructure delivery, the County Council Network (CCN) has argued that the Government should allocate a certain portion of infrastructure levy receipts directly to county councils. The outcome of the consultation is awaited.

7. Highways and Transport

7.1 This section sets out a range of national and local developments impacting on transport planning and infrastructure in the county, encompassing highways maintenance, road safety, the refresh of the Local Transport Plan and planned improvements to local public transport, roads and measures to support transport decarbonisation.

Highways Maintenance

7.2 The new contract for highways and infrastructure services in East Sussex went live on 1 May 2023. The contract, valued at £297m, will run for an initial seven years, with an option to extend to a maximum of 14 years – worth up to £730m. Balfour Beatty Living Places will be responsible for maintaining the county's roads, pavements, drainage, street lights, traffic lights, highway structures and bridges in line with the County Council's asset management policies and investigatory levels. They will also provide winter gritting across the county and deliver highway improvement and maintenance schemes.

7.3 Highways capital investment was increased by £3.1m annually, in addition to

a £5.8m one-off contribution, as part of the 2022/23 RPPR process to reflect the importance of our road network and its role in providing connectivity for our businesses and communities. The additional £5.8m in addition to the existing annual capital maintenance programme provided for additional highway improvement works including further patching, lines and road markings, repairs to pavements and repair or replacement of road signs. These works have a visible positive impact for all road users. Proposals for further investment in highways maintenance in 2023/24 are being considered by Cabinet, in light of the significant increase in potholes and failures on the network caused by poor weather conditions experienced across the county during the winter.

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

7.4 In September 2022, the Department for Transport (DfT) confirmed that ESCC would receive its indicative allocation of £41.4m in BSIP funding. The majority of the capital funding element was specifically to deliver bus priority measures by the end of financial year 2024/25. In October 2022, the Council commenced a feasibility, design and review study across three packages of bus priority measures focussed on South Wealden to Eastbourne, Eastbourne Town, and Seahaven Towns. The progression of the above schemes will be dependent on the outcomes of the feasibility study and then consultation and further design stages. Funding will come from BSIP capital allocation of £18.5m for bus priority measures.

Refresh of the Local Transport Plan

7.5 The East Sussex Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out our strategy and policies for how we plan to invest in improving transport and maintaining the roads in the county to meet transport needs. Our current LTP covers 2011 to 2026, but it will be updated to reflect considerable recent changes in national, regional and local policy related to the environment, health and economy. The updated plan will influence how we plan and deliver transport in East Sussex in the future and support the Council's response to the climate emergency. The Government is expected to publish guidance on updating LTPs imminently and our Plan will need to align with this. There is an expectation that local authorities will have an updated plan in place by summer 2024.

7.6 It is proposed to consult on a draft strategy during autumn 2023, including bespoke consultation activities with specific groups, for example young people and the business sector, alongside a public consultation. Formal approval of the Plan will be sought in early 2024.

Transport decarbonisation

7.7 Transport is now the greatest contributor to carbon emissions in East Sussex, and supporting this area will be a major part of carbon reduction within the county. The Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan, 'Decarbonising Transport: a Better, Greener Britain' was published in July 2021. This sets out the pathway to net zero transport in the UK, the wider benefits of net zero transport and the principles that underpin their approach to delivering net zero transport. The Transport Decarbonisation Plan is influencing our own transport policies and plans for the county through the current update to the East Sussex LTP. To tackle transport related emissions, we will need to consider how we can use our cars less, how we move away from planning for vehicles to planning for businesses, people, and places more in the future; and ensure active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport become the preferred choice for short journeys or part of longer journeys.

7.8 To complement our LTP, our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, emerging Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy, Bus Service Improvement Plan as well as our Enhanced Bus Partnership will support the transport decarbonisation agenda at a local level.

Active travel

7.9 Active Travel England (ATE) is a new Government executive agency established to support walking, wheeling, and cycling, sponsored by the DfT. ATE is responsible for:

- allocating and awarding active travel funding
- enforcement of new cycling design guidance
- providing scheme design and implementation advice alongside scheme inspection
- monitoring local authority performance on active travel – including annual review of a local authority self-assessed active travel grade.

7.10 In January 2023, we secured £180,443 of Capability revenue funding. This will fund the development of pipeline schemes for future capital funding bids, including three school streets schemes, an active travel neighbourhood scheme and a potential segregated cycle lane, which will involve collaborative and co-design activities with communities and learning opportunities in relation to active travel.

National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy and local e-vehicle charging

7.11 The Council has made a commitment to develop a strategy to support the growing demand and needs of Electric Vehicles (EV) users within East Sussex. To understand the scope of what is required, ESCC has worked closely with external consultants, other public organisations within the county, and with district and borough councils. This work has highlighted the key areas and locations that will require EV infrastructure, as well as delivery challenges and funding gaps.

7.12 In March 2023, the sum of £4.4m was provisionally allocated to the Council under the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund. This funding will help to scale up the delivery of local charge points, enabling more residents, especially those without off-street parking, to switch to EVs. The ability to charge at or close to home is a major concern to many EV users and this will feature as main priority within the strategy. Further scope within the LEVI grant now allows consideration of sites that will support, tourism, taxis, and commercial vehicles, and work continues to identify suitable locations for inclusion. ESCC has submitted the Expression of Interest to access this funding in late May, requesting funding in 2023/24 in preference to being allocated funds later in 2024/25.

Road Safety

7.13 The statutory duty placed on us, and the expectation of our residents, in terms of road safety is significant. To manage this, we have a range of measures and programmes designed to fulfil the wide-ranging pressures we face, including an annual assessment of crashes occurring on our road network to inform prioritisation of road safety schemes as part of the Local Safety Scheme or Route Study work. We also receive many requests for small scale road safety improvements to be made which do not meet the requirements to be considered through the above routes. To address these concerns, £750,000 has been allocated from the Community Match underspend to deliver community focused road safety interventions. Selected schemes will address identified road safety concerns, and will be identified by considering a range of issues and specific site characteristics, weighted to define their relative priority. Current funding will enable a three-year programme of works to be delivered. Approval has also been given for any future underspends from the Community Match allocation to be allocated to support further community focused schemes.

7.14 £500,000 has also been approved by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment to undertake a Speed Management Programme. The funding will be split over the next three years with additional ongoing funding identified within future Capital Programmes. As part of the Speed Management Programme, a review will identify lengths of the main road network that would benefit from a reduced speed limit. It will also check that existing speed limits are effective and producing the desired reductions in vehicle speeds

using available speed data and vehicle telematics. The review will also identify sites of greatest need and local concern where proven traffic management measures would have a positive effect and enhance the effectiveness of the speed limit. Over the next three years, the project will see more than 25 stretches of road benefit from speed limit reductions or measures that will increase the effectiveness of existing speed limits.

7.15 Using initial one-off funding from East Sussex Public Health, and working with the Behavioural Insights Team and partners from Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, we launched an innovative programme to understand the causes of serious collisions and trial interventions to help reduce the number of people being killed or seriously injured on East Sussex roads. Further funding has now been secured from Public Health to enable these trials to continue. We are currently working up potential interventions, aimed at our identified priority groups, that can be implemented through a randomised control trial. The outcome of these trials will be fully evaluated to improve our understanding of how to use behavioural science techniques to target those most at risk.

Transport for the South East (TfSE) Strategic Investment Plan

7.16 TfSE's Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) provides a framework for delivering their 2020 Transport Strategy by outlining the structure for investment in strategic transport infrastructure, services, and regulatory interventions up to 2050. Underpinned by a robust evidence base, the SIP as a regional plan is intended to provide advice to the Secretary of State for Transport on the investment priorities across the TfSE geography.

7.17 The SIP outlines two types of investment packages:

- global policy interventions of national regulatory and policy activities such as adoption of zero emission technologies to decarbonise transport; road user charging; and promotion of mobility methods of travel, which would be delivered across the South East; and
- place-based packages of multi modal (highways, rail, mass transit/bus, active travel) interventions within three area packages which cover parts of East Sussex:
    - Solent and Sussex Coast: A27/A259 and Coastway rail corridors
    - London - Sussex Coast: M23/A23, A22, A26 and A272, and Brighton Mainline, Uckfield rail corridors
    - Kent, Medway and East Sussex: A21, A259 east of Hastings and Marshlink rail corridors

7.18 Following agreement from the Partnership Board, the £45bn SIP has been submitted to the DfT with a request that it be considered as future investment decisions are made.

Exceat Bridge replacement

7.19 In October 2021, ESCC was awarded £7.9m funding from the Government's Levelling Up Fund to replace the Exceat Bridge. The scheme will be sensitively designed to reflect the outstanding natural landscape and to protect the unique nature of the area and ensure that the work we do not only benefits those using the road, but also protects and enhances this ecologically sensitive location. In December 2022, planning permission was granted from the South Downs National Park Authority with conditions in place to protect the natural landscape. Final detailed designs for the bridge are being completed along with negotiations for the required areas of land. Construction is expected to start at the beginning of 2024 and is expected to take between one and two years.

National Highways Programmes – A27 and A21

7.20 In 2020, Government published its second Roads Investment Strategy (RIS2), covering the period 2020 – 2025. RIS2 identifies that further work will be undertaken on developing proposals for the A27 between Lewes and Polegate as a potential pipeline scheme for construction between 2025 and 2030. This further work, managed by National Highways (NH - formerly Highways England), has commenced but is at an early stage.

7.21 RIS2 also included the development of a package of road safety improvements for the A21 corridor north of Hastings. NH continues work on the development of the proposed safety package study for the A21 which will be rolled out over the life of RIS2. While not included in the current RIS, we will continue to lobby and make the case to Government, including through TfSE, for improvements to the Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst, Flimwell and Hurst Green sections of the A21 in a future RIS.

Rail developments

7.22 Government has confirmed its intention to create a new public body, Great British Railways (GBR), which will run and plan the network, own the rail infrastructure, procure passenger services, and set and collect most fares and timetables. GBR is currently in shadow format, due to come into effect by autumn 2024, subject to legislation being progressed. The transfer of the current powers held by the Secretary of State for Transport to GBR will enable private partners to be contracted to operate trains, with franchising being replaced by Passenger Service Contracts. Fares and tickets will be simplified, including standardising mobile and online ticketing and flexible season tickets, and there will be better integration of rail with buses and cycling, as well as other forms of transport. It is important that we continue to be involved in future processes associated with the delivery of the Plan for Rail and engage with GBR to ensure that these changes benefit our residents, those visiting East Sussex, and businesses operating in and out of the county.

7.23 Following the Kent and East Sussex Rail Connectivity study, in May 2021 a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) which set out the strategic case for four options (two in East Sussex) to potentially improve rail connectivity to the Kent and East Sussex coast was submitted to Government. A formal response has yet to be received, however the scheme has been included in the Kent, Medway and East Sussex package of interventions in the TfSE Strategic Investment Plan. In the meantime, local MPs and the local authorities in East Sussex and Kent are working collaboratively to explore opportunities to lever in private sector finance or investment to fund the delivery of the rail schemes identified.

8. Economy

8.1 The following sections outline recent developments in Government policy and investment programmes that will affect the support we provide, with partners, to drive sustainable local economic growth in future. There will be challenges and limitations in the scope and scale of the delivery of some of this support in future, arising from reduced availability of growth funding for the county, as detailed in the sections below.

Supporting the local economy

8.2 The economic climate facing businesses across the UK, and locally in East Sussex, is one of unprecedented challenges. Following nearly 3 years of disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the changes to the UK's trading relationship with the EU, businesses must also now contend with the sharpest increase in costs for 40 years, high inflation, energy price instability, and record staff turnover. We will continue to monitor the situation and build a "pipeline" of interventions that can be put in place to support businesses with available resources.

8.3 The Team East Sussex (TES) Economy Recovery Plan (ERP), which was put in place to help businesses, people and communities recover from Covid, has reached its natural conclusion. We are currently working with partners to produce an Economic Insight Analysis which will set out the evidence base for a range of interventions that will have most impact on the economy, particularly in relation to productivity, innovation and pre-scale up businesses. This will inform a new Growth Strategy for the county to support longer term recovery and growth.

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

8.4 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were introduced across England in 2011 as partnerships between councils, businesses and other stakeholders, focussed on driving productivity and job creation. East Sussex is part of the South East LEP (SELEP), which also includes Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock. In early 2022, the Government set out the "pathway to devolution", where LEP functions were to be integrated into local democratic institutions across the country in a phased way by 2030. In the 2023 Spring budget the Government announced that it is now minded to end core funding for LEPs from April 2024 and integrate LEP functions into local government.

8.5 Following this announcement, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) launched an eight-week information gathering exercise to gain a fuller understanding of the impacts of their proposal if it is taken forward. DLUHC is expected to notify LEPs and all local and combined authorities of the outcome by summer 2023. Whatever the outcome, it is clear that the SELEP Delivery Plan for this year (2023/24) will need to include some immediate actions to support local areas in their moves toward devolution of these roles, functions and responsibilities. We know that many of SELEP's existing economic development functions will need to be worked into devolved frameworks, but the actual activities to be devolved, and precisely where they should be devolved to, are all yet to be determined, and so must form the basis of the discussions. We have established a local authority group to consider the implications of both the outcome of the consultation and emerging devolution proposals in Essex.

National economic investment programmes

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

8.6 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is the Government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Fund Programme (ESIF) in which the UK will continue to participate until the end of 2023. The Government launched the prospectus for the new UKSPF programme in 2022 with a focus on three main investment themes: Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business, and People and Skills. Each district and borough council in East Sussex has been allocated £1m, with the exception of Wealden District Council which has been allocated £1.2m, with each allocation covering a three year period from April 2022 – March 2025, giving a total allocation of £5.2m to East Sussex. For the limited UKSPF funding available, priorities have been determined by each borough and district authority against the three investment themes.

8.7 ESCC has been working with district and borough partners to develop and manage pan-East Sussex business support programmes and skills interventions. The business support programme has two strands: 'Start' will support new early-stage businesses in East Sussex that have registered within two years of receiving support, and 'Specialise' will allow businesses to access specialist advice and support from a pool of qualified and experienced consultants who are experts in their field. In terms of people and skills investment, Rother, Eastbourne, Lewes and Wealden Councils are all contributing funding towards the delivery of a coordinated 'Moving on Up' programme, helping individuals in supported and temporary housing, and those furthest from the workplace, to access training, employability support and support into and in work.

Multiply programme

8.8 In April 2022, the Government also released details of the new UK-wide Multiply Programme (part of the UKSPF) worth £559m. The aim of the programme is to reach adults over 19 years old to improve their functional numeracy skills to a qualification at Level 2.

8.9 ESCC is responsible for managing the programme in East Sussex which has been allocated £2.5m over the three year period from April 2022 to March 2025. The programme has been launched with partners from Further Education, independent training providers, and our local voluntary and community sector who are commissioned to deliver a wide range of numeracy provision. Over a thousand residents will be supported in 2023/24 and in 2024/25.

Levelling Up Fund

8.10 Government announced its £4.8bn Levelling Up Fund (LUF) in 2021. This provides funding to invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities. The LUF addresses the three investment themes of transport, regeneration and town centre, and culture.

8.11 Each upper tier local authority has the right to submit one bid on transport investment throughout the lifetime of the LUF programme. ESCC's first round bid was successful, receiving just under £8m in June 2021 to deliver the replacement of the Exceat Bridge, as outlined above, linking two of our growth areas, Eastbourne and Newhaven, which are also within the highest priority areas for the LUF.

8.12 Additionally, the Government announced in October 2021 that both the Eastbourne Borough Council and Lewes District Council LUF first round bids were successful with £19.8m and £12.7m respectively awarded. The Eastbourne LUF bid included £4.8m towards the pedestrianisation of the Seaside Road to Grand Parade section of Terminus Road (Victoria Place) which forms part of the wider public realm and pedestrian improvements that have been delivered in the town centre in recent years. The Lewes bid focussed on Newhaven, with investment in Newhaven fisheries.

8.13 In January 2023, Rother District Council secured £19.2m from the second round of the LUF for the redevelopment of the De La Warr Pavilion, including investment in satellite infrastructure to involve communities in Bexhill who are not close to the seafront. The Government has indicated that a third round of LUF will be made available in 2023/24 and Hastings Borough Council is intending to work up a proposal for submission. Hastings and Rother will benefit from a share of the £400m LUF fund delivered through Levelling Up Partnerships (LUPs) which are expected to provide bespoke place-based regeneration throughout 2023/24 and 2024/25. ESCC will continue working with colleagues in Hastings and Rother as plans are developed to define the interventions and support the bidding process and successful implementation.

Skills

8.14 The Skills East Sussex (SES) board has agreed the following priorities for 2021-2030 and sector-based task groups are working to action plans to address these:

- ensuring national policy and funding supports the delivery of learning and skills in East Sussex;
- enabling our Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) establishments to recruit excellent educators with specialist technical knowledge;
- improving our digital skills and digital inclusion;
- upskilling our workforce to increase regional productivity;
- supporting the unemployed and unqualified; and
- developing skills and provision for a Net Zero future.

8.15 The impact of advances in technology and the move towards Net Zero are important considerations for skills in East Sussex. Skills East Sussex has commissioned 'Future Skills' research, in partnership with the Institute for Employment Studies, to bring together feedback from over 300 local employers, alongside desk based research. The research will

help us better understand the impact of Net Zero, Artificial Intelligence, Digital/Technology, Brexit and the current economic challenges on the East Sussex economy and employment landscape. The findings will help our providers to plan future learning, and our employers to better understand the upskilling needs of their current workforce to support their businesses and the East Sussex economy.

8.16 The 2021 Skills for Jobs White Paper heralded the development of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), with Sussex Chamber of Commerce successfully applying to be one of eight national trailblazers. The LSIP is a collaboration with employers, education providers, local authorities and partners across Sussex, and builds on the successful model developed by SES and sector-based task groups. In 2023 the LSIP trailblazer is submitting a proposal to the DfE for a forward plan to support its future offers and development. This plan will shape the use of forthcoming Local Strategic Initiative Funding.

Culture and tourism

8.17 Several initiatives are progressing to help harness the potential of the visitor economy in the county. A south east consortium, led by Kent County Council and reaching from Essex to West Sussex, has secured one of six awards nationally to deliver the 'Create Growth Programme', a business support programme targeting pre-growth, intellectually property rich creative businesses with an appetite for growth through investor finance. The programme award of £1.275m sits alongside a £7m investment fund which is being delivered nationally and which south east creative businesses will be eligible to apply for.

8.18 The Turner Prize will be hosted in Eastbourne in 2023/24, and ESCC has worked with local partners to secure an additional £500,000 of funding from Arts Council England to deliver a £1m programme of activity to maximise the benefit of the prize for local young people, hospitality businesses and other tourist attractions.

8.19 The Sussex Visitor Economy Industry Group of leading business representatives has been established to advise the Sussex Visitor Economy Initiative (ESCC, West Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council) on pan-Sussex tourism development. With UK Community Renewal Fund investment, the Sussex Visitor Economy Initiative has supported the production of a prospectus for wine tourism which will be launched this year.

9. Environment and Climate Change

9.1 The following paragraphs detail the range of recent national commitments, strategies and legislation that impact the Council's work to deliver climate change mitigation and adaptation, and also to protect the local natural environment. It is also important to note that net zero is increasingly integrated into wider policy, for example in areas such as housing, transport and public procurement. Whilst the policy context below outlines the main recent developments, it is not an exhaustive list of every new policy that touches on climate change. Much national guidance or detail on plans for delivery is still awaited, including clear expectations on how central and local government will interact in delivery of net zero, and how several commitments made in the Environment Act are to be delivered. The level of funding allocated to delivering new national commitments may also be insufficient. We await further information on funding new burdens for ESCC arising from the Environment Act.

Climate change - national policy context

9.2 In 2021, the UK Government published its Net Zero Strategy 'Build Back Greener'. This did not include any statutory responsibility for local authorities to reduce carbon emissions, but did set out commitments to:

- set clearer expectations for local places, clarify how the partnership with local government should work, and consider how action at national, regional, local, and community levels fit together;

- provide resources for local places to deliver stronger contributions to national net zero targets; and
- build local capacity and capability.

9.3 As the Net Zero Strategy indicates, local authorities are widely considered to have a key role in decarbonising services such as local transport, waste disposal, and public buildings. More broadly, local authorities are seen to have a key role to play in creating change amongst residents and businesses, via their investment and procurement decisions, planning and placemaking responsibilities, and by direct engagement with residents. In 2021, the National Audit Office reported that 91% of local authorities have adopted a commitment to decarbonise either their own activities, their local area, or both.

9.4 The 2022 US Inflation Reduction Act and the EU Green Industrial Plan have significantly changed the global landscape for net zero investment, ushering in significant state subsidies for net zero industries. The UK is expected to respond to these developments, most likely through the 2023 Autumn Statement.

'Mission Zero' Independent Review of Government Net Zero Policy

9.5 In 2022, the Government commissioned Chris Skidmore MP, a former Energy Minister, to undertake an independent review of the UK's net zero policies. The report, 'Mission Zero', was published in January 2023 and contained 129 separate recommendations. A Government response was published in March 2023. Amongst other local actions, the review suggested a statutory duty for local authorities to take account of the UK's net zero targets, a recommendation rejected in the Government response. Commitments in the Government response with relevance to county councils are:

- Establishing a set of principles for devolving net zero funds as part of wider devolution deals
- Exploring simplification of local net zero funding
- Supporting local capacity and capability building through the Local Net Zero Hubs
- Supporting skills and economic development through a Net Zero and Nature Workforce Action Plan (due in 2024) and a Net Zero Power and Networks Workforce Action Plan (timescale to be confirmed)

Local action on climate change

9.6 ESCC declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council set a target of achieving carbon neutrality from its activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050. This is in line with the updated target for the whole UK agreed by Parliament in 2019. Further to this, in 2020, ESCC committed to cutting its corporate carbon emissions by an average of 13% per year. In 2021, ESCC committed an additional £9.6m to help meet this reduction target up to March 2025. A new Climate Emergency Plan was approved earlier this year, covering the period 2023-25.

9.7 ESCC commissioned modelling work to identify the most cost effective options to reach net zero. Whilst this work identified potential 'quick wins', it also demonstrated the scale of the challenge. The cost for ESCC to get to net zero for building and transport emissions (scope 1 and 2) could be approximately £200m between now and 2050, largely due to the investment needed for decarbonising heat in buildings, including schools. A key area for ESCC is bidding for external funding to maximise the impact and reach of its resources.

9.8 Even if global warming can be limited to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, significant additional investment is likely to be needed in measures to adapt to the effects of climate change that are already locked in. Climate change adaptation refers to the adjustments we need to make in response to actual and expected climate change, to ensure that the Council can continue to operate effectively as the climate changes.

ESCC's Climate Emergency Plan commits us to:

- Assessing the Council's vulnerability to climate change
- Producing a climate risk register
- Developing a climate adaptation/ resilience strategy and programme
- Embedding climate adaptation into business-as-usual decision-making and risk management

9.9 In 2021, the Council worked with its partners on the East Sussex Environment Board to produce a Climate Emergency Road Map for the whole county, which was adopted by Team East Sussex in January 2022. The road map summarises many areas of work that the Council leads, or collaborates with partners on, to mitigate and adapt to climate change. These include programmes to support more walking, cycling and local bus services, address fuel poverty, support businesses in becoming more energy efficient, support residents to invest in renewable energy and to manage flood risk to homes and businesses. Progress on the county-wide Roadmap will continue to be driven by the Environment Board. A range of existing thematic partnerships will also continue to address climate change in East Sussex, including partnerships covering housing, waste, skills and local planning. ESCC has also recently completed a review with Community Energy South (CES) on ways to align the climate change objectives of the County Council and the network of community energy groups established in East Sussex. We also fund CES to deliver carbon literacy training in the community and recently submitted a bid with CES and UK Power Networks for funding from UK Innovate's Fast Followers programme to develop community energy plans.

Environment Act

9.10 The Environment Act received Royal Assent in November 2021 and the Government is now in the process of introducing secondary legislation, policy and guidance to implement elements of the Act. Many aspects of the Act will have implications for ESCC, but in some areas, the extent of these will not be fully understood until that secondary legislation, guidance and/or policy emerges.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

9.11 Under the Act ESCC will be a Responsible Authority for preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). In broad terms, the LNRS will set a spatial strategy for how and where measures to achieve nature recovery will be achieved. It has been provisionally agreed that ESCC will work in partnership with West Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and the Local Nature Partnership to prepare the evidence base and undertake the necessary stakeholder engagement for the preparation of LNRSs. This should ensure a degree of consistency between the two strategies that will eventually exist – one for West Sussex and one for East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

Biodiversity

9.12 Related to the production of the LNRS is the mandating, through the Environment Act, of a requirement for new developments to deliver a minimum of a 10% gain in biodiversity, known as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Following consultations in November 2021 and September 2022, DEFRA published an updated metric and associated guidance in March 2023. Whilst this indicates how Government expects BNG to be implemented, secondary legislation and guidance, along with a national site register for off-site BNG, is still awaited. A phased approach to the implementation of BNG is due to commence in autumn 2023. Whilst the preference will be for the gain to be delivered on development sites (in line with the mitigation hierarchy), there will be occasions where off-site gain is necessary, and the LNRS will be used to guide this to some extent. Given delays to the commencement of the LNRS process, they are unlikely to be in place before BNG becomes mandatory for major developments in November 2023 (and for minors in April

2024). DEFRA has acknowledged that assessing and monitoring the implementation of BNG will create additional resourcing pressures on planning authorities. Clarity over additional burdens funding should be available by autumn 2023. In the meantime, some seed funding has been made available to all local planning authorities to prepare for mandatory BNG.

9.13 The Environment Act also strengthens the existing Biodiversity Duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, requiring all public authorities to consider what action they can take to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, and to report on progress against that duty. The strengthened duty came into force in January 2023, and the first Biodiversity Report must be published no later than three years after that date, with subsequent reports published every five years. Whilst some indications of mandatory content have been provided, further guidance is awaited from DEFRA. Additional funding for this duty should be provided to planning authorities by autumn 2023.

Environmental Improvement Plan

9.14 The Environment Act contained a commitment to refresh the 25 year Environment Plan every five years. The first refresh took place in early 2023, via the release of a new Environmental Improvement Plan. Most of the actions outlined in the plan are part of existing plans and strategies, however, the plan made new commitments to:

- set legally binding targets for air pollutants;
- publish an air quality strategy with clear guidance to local authorities on embedding action into their wider functions; and
- launch a Local Investment in Natural Capital (LINC) programme, initially by funding several pioneering authorities.

Waste provisions

9.15 The Environment Act also has significant consequences for ESCC in its role as Waste Disposal Authority. Changes to waste management in the county will include the provision of weekly food waste collections, the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme and the introduction of extended producer responsibility for packaging. These changes will impact ESCC's waste contracts. They are likely to include the need to modify transfer stations and introduce changes to the volumes and type of recycling materials. There are still significant unknowns in respect of these changes, including how certain elements will be funded, with a Government announcement expected imminently.

Flood risk management

9.16 The Government has stated that it wishes to implement this legislation over the next 12-18 months. It would see Lead Local Flood Authorities (such as ESCC) take on responsibility for the approval, adoption and maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) constructed as part of new developments. This will have significant implications for the Council's Flood Risk Management team, as currently our role is restricted to commenting on proposed drainage schemes at the design stage. Consultation on secondary legislation, new burdens assessments, and matters such as transitional arrangements is expected later this year. Although there will clearly be resource and budget implications for the Council these are unclear until further detail emerges.

10. Supporting Services

10.1 The below section provides updates on key local and national developments for ESCC's supporting services. Local priorities are to deliver the implementation phase of the Modernising Back Office Systems programme; deliver measures in response to workforce challenges; continue delivery of the Council's Property Asset Management Plan including

carbon reductions; and further develop digital approaches to support organisational resilience. Key national developments include public procurement and audit reforms.

Modernising Back Office Systems Programme

10.2 The Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS) Programme was established to replace the Council's core finance and Human Resources (HR) systems. The current system, SAP, will no longer be supported by the supplier beyond 2027. Replacing a system originally implemented over 15 years ago provides opportunities to take advantage of new technology which is better able to support an agile and flexible workforce, and provide easily accessible data and insight to support management decision making.

10.3 Following an extensive and robust procurement process, Oracle Fusion was selected as the new software platform, and Infosys as the implementation partner. The replacement system will deliver clear benefits, including a better user experience, undertaking transactional activity (freeing staff up to focus on more complex and value-added advice), and better availability of data and management reporting.

10.4 The programme has now moved to its implementation phase, with governance and resourcing having been refreshed to ensure that it is fit for purpose for a complex implementation, involving the replacement of the organisation's critical finance, HR, recruitment, and procurement systems.

Workforce Challenges

10.5 In common with many employers, we are experiencing significant recruitment and retention challenges as a result of the current national labour market conditions and cost of living pressures. The national labour market is the tightest it has been for 50 years with an increase in the 'participation gap', with more people of working age either retiring or moving into education. Locally, there are particular challenges in front line social care roles (qualified and unqualified) and some of our technical and professional roles such as legal services and engineering. The position is exacerbated in our more rural locations with recruitment in these areas being especially difficult. There is evidence to show that this tight labour market is putting pressure on pay levels.

10.6 The Council has put in place a number of strategies to respond to these pressures. A new employer recruitment brand – We Choose East Sussex – has been developed and launched, aimed at promoting the Council as a high quality employer of choice. Alongside this new brand, targeted recruitment and retention strategies have been put in place including a new 'Refer a Friend' scheme, an updated relocation policy, employee loans policy, salary sacrifice schemes and financial wellbeing resources.

10.7 As well as seeking to attract experienced individuals, we are also utilising approaches such as apprenticeships, traineeships and intern arrangements as a way of bringing new talent into the Council. Our experiences to date have identified the need to support some groups to become 'work ready', and additional one-off funding provided by Cabinet has funded a new Pre-Employment Co-ordinator post which has a specific responsibility for establishing clear pathways for job seekers to access opportunities within the Council. Being a diverse and inclusive place to work further supports our recruitment and retention aims.

10.8 Retention of or existing workforce is also a key aim. We are committed to supporting our staff with continuous professional development and creating an environment where staff are encouraged to learn and grow. In line with this, two new leadership development initiatives were launched during 2022/23: the 'Ladder to Leadership' programme and Heads of Service masterclass programme. Both initiatives were well received and evaluations are now taking place in order to further enhance and develop these programmes for the future.

We continue to develop our extensive wellbeing offer to support our staff to remain healthy and well, both in and out of work.

Property Asset Management

10.9 The Council's Asset Management Plan 2020-2025 contains an action plan to ensure operational assets are used efficiently, and a programmed approach to asset disposal has been established. There is increasing focus on ensuring the Council's assets are optimally utilised and continue to reduce their carbon and physical footprint. This includes reviewing the use of our corporate estate, including County Hall, and rationalising use where possible.

10.10 Capital investment has been targeted to improve environmental sustainability as part of the Council's net zero commitment, as well as ensuring that property assets support all Council objectives and services. Property policies are being updated to increase support for communities including common asset transfer and joint use leisure assets.

Procurement Bill

10.11 The Procurement Bill currently working its way through Parliament is expected to receive Royal Assent in July 2023. The Bill is the foundation for the Government's Transforming Public Procurement regime, which will see the biggest change to the Procurement Regulations in nearly 30 years. The Government has committed to providing a six month implementation period, which will commence once secondary legislation has been agreed. Current timescales predict that procurement will be required to be fully compliant with the regulations from July 2024, although this is dependent on the Bill passing prior to Parliament's summer recess.

10.12 The impact on procurement teams will be significant over the next two years. In preparation for the new regulations, work is required to understand existing processes, systems, people, and planned procurement activity that will be impacted. By starting planning now, we can ensure we are in the best position when the new regulations come into force. An extensive Learning and Development package will be rolled out by the Cabinet Office which will require all procurement practitioners to complete a minimum of 10 hours of training and an advanced course which will consist of three days for expert practitioners. The resource implications of the planning, training, and implementation will have a significant impact on the available resources of the procurement team.

10.13 The Cabinet Office has also confirmed that a revised National Procurement Policy Statement will be released that will align with the new regulations and continue to support our approach to Social Value and Sustainable Procurement. The onus will be on procurement professionals to take advantage of the flexibility and apply their commercial skills, whilst also aligning with local and national priorities as set out in the National Procurement Policy Statement. During the implementation period there are likely to be additional costs to develop new policies and implement the changes, with pressures around resourcing and training to ensure that Orbis Procurement is confident and compliant in delivering under the new regulations.

National Audit Issues

10.14 The challenges with the delivery of local authority audits continue, with the National Audit Office reporting that auditors were only able to give opinions on 12% of local government bodies' 2021/22 financial statements by the statutory publication deadline of 30 November 2022. This compares to 9% of opinions for the 2020/21 statements when the deadline was earlier, on 30 September 2021. This remains a significant reduction on the 97% achieved for 2015/16. Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) reports that 632 audits remain outstanding. This is the case for ESCC, where the audits of 2020/21 and 2021/22 accounts remain unclosed. The accounts for 2022/23 have been published

(Statement of Accounts | East Sussex County Council) and are open for public inspection. It is expected that Grant Thornton will start their audit of the accounts in July 2023.

10.15 The challenge of finding sufficient staff within audit teams and heightened regulatory expectations, particularly with regard to Property, Plant and Equipment and pension valuations, is adding to these pressures. The PSAA procurement of local authority external auditors for five years, from 2023/24, focused on encouraging new audit firms into the market and a more sustainable supply. This resulted in audit fees increasing by an average of 150%. The Government has promised £45m over the three years from 2022/23 to support additional audit and financial reporting costs. The Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority (ARGA), which is being set up to replace the Financial Reporting Council, will become the new system leader for external audit in 2024, at the earliest.

10.16 The CIPFA 2022 Position Statement for Audit Committees set out principles that it expects all local government bodies to strive to adopt, including the inclusion of at least two independent members of the committee, as well as undertaking a self-assessment of committee effectiveness.

Digital development

10.17 Developments in process automation, chatbot technology and artificial intelligence (AI) present a variety of opportunities to ESCC to support organisational capacity and resilience. The rapid progression of AI-enabled solutions means that expectations of ESCC service recipients are likely to evolve as well as the variety of technical solutions that may become available.

10.18 Whilst there would be a requirement for investment in establishing the prerequisite data architecture and technology infrastructure, and skilled resources in this area, it does present an opportunity to innovate in service provision to provide a more efficient and better service to users or to increase organisational resilience.

Appendix 3

Current and Proposed Priority and Delivery Outcomes

a) **Current** priority and delivery outcomes

Driving sustainable economic growth - delivery outcomes

1. East Sussex businesses are supported to succeed and grow sustainably
2. The county is an attractive place to live, work and do business
3. Individuals, communities and businesses thrive in East Sussex with the environmental and social infrastructure to meet their needs
4. The workforce has and maintains the skills needed for good quality employment to meet the needs of the current and future East Sussex economy
5. The value of our role as both a significant employer and a buyer of local goods and services is maximised
6. All children progress well from early years through school and into post-16 education, training and employment

Keeping vulnerable people safe - delivery outcomes

7. All vulnerable people in East Sussex are known to relevant local agencies and services are delivered together to meet their needs
8. People feel safe at home and well supported by their networks
9. Children grow up supported by enduring, loving relationships
10. People feel safe with services
11. We work with the wider health and care system to support people to achieve the best outcomes possible

Helping people help themselves - delivery outcomes

12. Commissioners and providers from all sectors put people first when providing services and information to help them meet their needs
13. The most vulnerable get the support they need to maintain their independence and this is provided at or as close to home as possible
14. Through working well with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, individuals, families and communities are supported to be independent and to thrive

Making best use of resources now and for the future - delivery outcomes

15. To help tackle Climate Change East Sussex County Council activities are carbon neutral as soon as possible and in any event by 2050
16. We work as One Council
17. We work in strong and sustained partnership with the public, voluntary community, social enterprise and private sectors to ensure that our collective resources and influence are used to deliver maximum benefits
18. Ensuring we achieve value for money in the services we commission and provide
19. Maximising the funding available through bidding for funding and lobbying for the best deal for East Sussex
20. We are an employer of choice and support our staff to achieve and develop

b) **Proposed** priority and delivery outcomes

Driving sustainable economic growth - delivery outcomes

1. East Sussex businesses are supported to succeed and grow sustainably
2. The county is an attractive place to live, work and do business
3. Individuals, communities and businesses thrive in East Sussex with the environmental and social infrastructure to meet their needs
4. The workforce has and maintains the skills needed for good quality employment to meet the needs of the current and future East Sussex economy
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13. The most vulnerable get the support they need to maintain their independence, supported by their social networks, and this is provided at or as close to home as possible
14. Through working well with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, individuals, families and communities are supported to thrive

Making best use of resources now and for the future - delivery outcomes

15. To help tackle Climate Change East Sussex County Council activities are carbon neutral as soon as possible and in any event by 2050
16. We work as One Council
17. We work in strong and sustained partnership with the public, voluntary community, social enterprise and private sectors to ensure that our collective resources and influence are used to deliver maximum benefits
18. Ensuring we achieve value for money in the services we commission and provide
19. Maximising the funding available through bidding for funding and lobbying for the best deal for East Sussex
20. We are an employer of choice and our staff are supported to achieve and develop, ensuring we have the workforce we need to deliver services both now and in the future

Appendix 4 – State of the County 2023 Capital Programme Update

Capital Programme Update

1 Background

1.1 Through the Reconciling Policy Performance and Resources (RPPR) process the Capital Strategy and programme are reviewed annually to ensure that they support the Council's responsibilities and departmental service strategies. To manage investment to a sustainable level, the Capital Strategy focuses on the delivery of targeted basic need for the council to continue to deliver services as efficiently as possible, rather than rationing through prioritisation. Basic need for the purpose of strategic capital planning is provided below: -

- Place: ensuring we can deliver services by planning for future need.
- Asset Condition: maintaining our assets to an agreed level.
- ICT Strategy: ensure that our ICT is fit for purpose for delivering modern council services in a digital era and protecting data.
- Climate Change: supporting the Council's aim of reaching carbon neutrality from our activities as soon as possible and in any event by 2050 in an appropriate and cost-efficient way.

1.2 At Full Council in February 2023 the target led basic need capital strategy of 20 years, supported by a 10-year planned capital programme was approved. The strategy provides for the programme being updated annually to maintain this 10-year planning horizon.

1.3 The capital programme 2022/23 to 2032/33 reported as part of the Budget in February 2023 had a total programme expenditure of £724.9m and a borrowing requirement of £332.9m. Table 1 below provides details of the approved capital programme and funding.

Table 1 – Capital Programme (Budget 2023) (£m)	**2022/23**	**MTFP Period**			**2026/27 to 2032/33**	**Total**
		2023/24	**2024/25**	**2025/26**		
Gross Expenditure	**82.207**	**96.744**	**102.376**	**61.050**	**382.528**	**724.905**
Specific Funding	(10.293)	(18.680)	(26.973)	(3.417)	(1.386)	(60.749)
Net Expenditure	**71.914**	**78.064**	**75.403**	**57.633**	**381.142**	**664.156**
Formula Grants	(33.418)	(25.243)	(17.937)	(17.960)	(135.738)	(230.296)
New Homes Bonus Grant	(0.816)	-	-	-	-	(0.816)
Capital Receipts	(9.591)	(5.149)	(3.149)	(3.360)	-	(21.249)
Reserves and Revenue Set Aside	(20.435)	(12.768)	(5.540)	(6.100)	(15.106)	(59.949)
Developer Contributions Target	-	-	-	-	(18.970)	(18.970)
Programme Borrowing	**7.654**	**34.904**	**48.777**	**30.213**	**211.328**	**332.876**

1.4 In addition to the basic need programme the Capital Strategy allows for the Council to consider business cases where a clear payback or funding stream can be demonstrated. Any payback reduces the borrowing in the year it is received and therefore contributes to the ongoing sustainability of the programme. As such these projects are not included in the capital programme until their overall impact, including funding implications, have been assessed and approved.

2 Capital Programme Updates

2.1 Table 2 below summarises the gross movements to the approved capital programme since budget setting in February 2023, noting that the first 3 years of the programme to 2025/26 are

approved, whilst the remaining years to 2032/33 are indicative to represent longer term planning against priority outcomes for capital investment. The movements reflect the 2022/23 outturn position and other updates in accordance with the approved governance and variation process. A detailed programme has been included at **Annex 1**.

Table 2 - Capital Programme (gross) movements (£m)	**2022/23**	**MTFP Programme**			**2026/27 to 2032/33**	**Total**
		2023/24	**2024/25**	**2025/26**		
Approved programme at February 2023	**82.207**	**96.744**	**102.376**	**61.050**	**382.528**	**724.905**
Approved Variations (see 2.2)	1.891	0.200	0.000	-	-	**2.091**
Other Programme Updates (2.3)	-	0.689	-	-	-	**0.689**
Capital Programme Reprofiles (2.4)	-	(17.007)	(10.399)	19.227	8.179	**0.000**
*2022/23 Net Outturn Slippage (2.4)	(7.988)	8.226	(0.200)	(0.038)	-	**0.000**
*2022/23 Net Outturn Over/Underspend (2.4)	(0.702)	-	-	-	-	**(0.702)**
*2022/23 Expenditure (2.4)	(75.408)	-	-	-	-	**(75.408)**
Total Programme	**0.000**	**88.852**	**91.777**	**80.239**	**390.707**	**651.575**

2.2 Net nil approved variations to the programme since Budget in February 2023 total a gross £2.1m, as summarised in Table 3 below:

Table 3 – Approved Variations since February 2023	**Gross Variation (£m)**
Getting Building Fund: Observer Building (Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Specific Grant)	0.315
Getting Building Fund: Seven Sisters (Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Specific Grant)	0.084
Passenger Transport Software Replacement (revenue set aside)	0.037
Hastings/Bexhill Movement and Access Programme (Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Specific Grant)	0.174
Lewes Bus Station Replacement (revenue set aside)	0.100
Community Match Fund (Parish Council Contributions)	0.021
Youth Investment Fund (specific funding and revenue set aside)	0.193
Solar Panels on Primary Schools (specific grant)	0.151
Schools Delegated Capital (specific grant and schools contributions)	0.712
Eastbourne Town Centre Phase 2b (specific grant)	0.304
Total Net Nil Approved Variations	**2.091**

2.3 The capital programme has also been updated for cash limited programmes that represent grants received. Following government announcements of 2023/24 grant allocations, the Other Integrated Transport Schemes (£0.022m) and Schools Capital Building Improvements (£0.667m) programmes have been updated to reflect anticipated grant as detailed in section 3.

2.4 Total 2022/23 capital expenditure was £75.4m against an approved budget of £84.1m, resulting in a variation to budget of £8.7m. This variation comprises of net slippage of £8.0m which has been reprofiled into future years following a review by services and Capital and Strategic Asset Board, and a net underspend of £0.7m on the planned programme. Details of this are presented in the Q4 monitoring report. The revised programme also reflects reprofiles across years following a review from services to reflect current best knowledge.

3 Funding Update

3.1 At budget setting in February 2023 several announcements regarding future formula grant allocations were still outstanding. Assumptions previously made for planning purposes relating to these were therefore not changed, as levels were considered reasonably prudent. Given that these non-specific grants are used to fund the approved targeted Basic Need capital programme, not to inform the level of investment. The level of investment being a strategic decision by the Council. Therefore, the Capital Strategy asserts that any additionality is used to reduce the Councils need to borrow.

3.2 Considering the above, Table 4 provides the capital funding position, updated to reflect the 2022/23 outturn position, approved variations and Government funding announcements.

Table 4 - Capital Programme Funding movements (£m)	**As at February 2023**	**Approved Variations** (see 2.2)	**2022/23 (Under) / Over Spend*** (2.3)	**2022/23 Funding *** (2.3)	**Other Funding Changes**	**Updated Funding**
Developer Contributions - identified (see 3.7)	**9.860**	0.004	0.000	(0.558)	0.332	**9.638**
Development Contributions - Target (3.7)	**18.970**	-	-	-	(0.332)	**18.638**
Other Specific Funding	**50.889**	1.924	(0.856)	(7.472)	0.114	**44.599**
Capital Receipts (see 3.8)	**21.249**	-	-	(9.591)	3.162	**14.820**
Formula Grants (see 3.3 to 3.6)	**230.296**	-	-	(33.857)	8.584	**205.023**
New Homes Bonus Grant	**0.816**	-	-	(0.816)	-	**0.000**
Reserves and Revenue set aside	**59.949**	0.163	0.115	(17.302)	(0.034)	**42.891**
Borrowing	**332.876**	-	0.039	(5.812)	(11.137)	**315.966**
Total Programme Funding	**724.905**	**2.091**	**(0.702)**	**(75.408)**	**0.689**	**651.575**

Formula Grants

3.3 **Highways Maintenance Capital Funding:** As part of the Budget on 15 March 2023, the government announced an additional one-off £200million for highways maintenance for the financial year 2023/24, of which the East Sussex County Council allocation is £2.360m. In addition, the DfT also confirmed that Highways Maintenance allocations for 2022/23 of £13.275m per year will be rolled forward to 2023/24 and 2024/25, being an increase of £2.939m per year compared to the prudent planning assumption. It should be noted that these announcements are subject to wider incentivisation measures to be consulted on with local highways authorities.

The level of grant funding continues to be lower than the approved highways maintenance investment, and therefore in line with the principles outlined in the Capital Strategy, it is proposed that the total additional funding of £8.238m between 2023/24 to 2024/25 will reduce the required borrowing associated to highways investment.

The Integrated Transport capital programme is funded by the Integrated Transport Block at grant level, supported by external funding (such as developer contributions) approved via variations. The allocations for 2023/24 and 2024/25 of £2.941m per annum have been announced alongside the Highways Maintenance block funding. Consistent with current funding

principles, the increase in Integrated Transport Block funding of £0.022m per year compared to the planning assumption will therefore result in an increase to the programme budget.

3.4 **Schools Basic Need Allocation:** On 28 March 2023 the Department for Education (DfE) announced the schools' capital funding to local authorities for the 2025/26 financial year to support the creation of places needed for September 2026. With regards to Schools Basic Need capital allocation, the announcement based principally on data collected from local authorities in the 2022 School Capacity Survey (SCA), represents a total decrease in funding of £0.344m compared to estimated grant funding. ESCC allocates this grant to fund the Schools Basic Need capital programme to meet the statutory duty of providing sufficient school places. The required level of investment is historically greater than the level of basic need grant received, with a borrowing requirement of £6.2m over the period 2022/23 to 2025/26.

3.5 **High Need Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA)**: The DfE announcement in March 2022 provided allocations for the HNPCA for East Sussex County Council for 2022/23 (£3.775m) and 2023/24 (£5.124m). ESCC allocates this grant to fund the programme of required SEND places. From 2023 there will be a requirement to report on SEND places in the annual School Capacity (SCAP) return to the DfE in the same way for mainstream school places. As a result, capital funding for SEND places is likely to come through the council's annual school basic need funding allocation in future years.

3.6 **Schools Condition Allocation:** The Schools Capital Building Improvements programme is currently planned on the basis of priority one (health and safety) works; identified via condition reports, and essential safeguarding risk mitigation. This is a cash limited budget representing estimated grant received, thereby having a net nil impact on the programme. The confirmed funding allocations for 2023/24 of £4.649m represents an increase of £0.667m compared to planning assumptions and will therefore result in an increase to the programme budget.

Developer Contributions (Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy)

3.7 S106 and CIL funding contributions provide an important source of funding towards basic need requirements and unfunded infrastructure schemes, and can often facilitate leverage of additional external funding. Ongoing work through the cross departmental CIL and S106 working group has identified a further £0.332m of developer contributions that can be used to fund basic need programme to reduce the S106/CIL funding target in the capital programme.

In May 2022, the Government introduced the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill into Parliament. Within this Bill are likely to be changes to the mechanism currently used for securing new and expanded infrastructure with the introduction of a single Infrastructure Levy which continues to increase the uncertainty with regard to this funding stream.

There continues to be a risk that the current target for Developer Infrastructure Contributions to support the programme is too high, and opportunities will be sought through the RPPR process to reduce the funding target while not increasing the need to borrow.

Capital Receipts

3.8 Review and refinement of Property Services schedule of capital receipts is undertaken on a regular basis with estimates based on Property Officers' professional judgement on a site by site basis. This is supported by the work undertaken recently and successfully getting a number of surplus properties to the point of sale. Following a recent review, it is suggested that anticipated capital receipts can be increased by £3.162m for capital planning purposes.

4 Programme Update and RPPR Next Steps

4.1 Work will now be progressed as part of the RPPR process to extend the programme by a further year to maintain a 10-year planning horizon and ensure continued links into, and support

of, the Council's other strategies, as well as adequacy of the risk provision and climate emergency work allocation.

4.2 The Capital Strategy will also be reviewed to ensure it continues to drive investment ambition in line with the Council's priorities and to continue to include equality impact assessments (EQIAs) as part of the capital RPPR process, whilst also providing for appropriate capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management within the context of sustainable, long-term delivery of services.

4.3 As part of RPPR Service Departments will also, as normal, be asked to conduct a general review of their specific investment and any ongoing business case development outside basic need. Specific issues arising are set out below: -

School Place Planning - School Basic Need and Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) School Places

4.4 There remains some uncertainty over precisely how many school places will be required in the future. This is dependent on local planning authorities developing their local plans for housing and the impact this will have on the number of school places required to serve those developments. The 10-year school basic need capital strategy will be updated taking into account potential impacts of local plan reviews to inform future requirement.

4.5 The number of children and young people in East Sussex with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) continues to rise steeply. In the next four years, it is forecast that overall numbers of children and young people aged 4-19 with EHCPs will grow by around 15%. The current capital budget allocation for SEND place provision is £21.9m over the MTFP period to 2025/26. This includes £18.9m for nursery, secondary and post-16 provision at Grove Park, which is proposed to be taken forward at the current primary school site subject to consultation and feasibility. An update of the schools basic need strategy over the summer will assess need and gaps in provision for specialist facilities and inform requirements for the wider 10-year programme as part of the RPPR process.

Highways Maintenance Investment

4.6 The Highways Maintenance capital programme was uplifted as part of the 2022/23 RPPR process to stem the rate of road deterioration and ensure the basic need target maintained current road conditions. A review of the latest highway maintenance prices from the recent highway contract procurement and the condition information from recent surveys in is being undertaken to inform potential additional one-off and ongoing investment requirements to maintain the Council's road condition targets of 4%, 4% and 14%, and is to be considered as part of a seperare report and as part of the RPPR process.

Carbon Neutral Commitment

4.7 To achieve the Council's aim of reaching carbon net zero by 2050 at the latest in an appropriate and cost-efficient way, extensive works to decarbonise ESCC's estates operations will be necessary. It is anticipated that there will be increasing pressures on the current programme due to the climate change agenda meaning additional requirements will need to be incorporated into the current programme, such as emerging environmental planning requirements and low carbon replacements of current assets.

Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS)

4.8 The Modernising Back Office Systems (MBOS) programme was established to deliver the replacement of the Council's financial, resource management and procurement systems. The total approved capital budget allocation for the MBOS delivery is £13.1m, of which £3.3m is remaining in 2023/24. Additional resources are earmarked in reserves to support delivery, to be

included in the capital programme as an approved variation at a later date as the programme progresses.

5 Programme Risks and Pressures

5.1 A £7.5m ongoing risk provision was approved in February 2023 to mitigate against capital programme risks, representing more than 2% of the programme over the MTFP period. This risk provision is a permission to borrow for emerging risks and is managed through ensuring Treasury Management capacity rather than representing funds that are within the Council's accounts. There are several risks and uncertainties regarding the programme to 2025/26 and beyond which have necessitated holding a risk provision, these risks as reported at Budget 2023 include:

- Excess inflationary pressures on construction costs
- Uncertainty about delivery of projects in the programme, e.g. highways and infrastructure requirements
- Any as yet unquantifiable impact of supply issues and cost increases
- Any as yet unknown requirements,
- Residual project provision (previously removed) if required; and
- Uncertainty regarding the level of government grants and the ability to meet CIL and S106 targets.

5.2 There are currently increased uncertainties that exist within the construction industry in terms of supply chain issues and high-cost inflation. The capital programme includes an element of 'normal' level of inflation for ongoing target-based core programmes (as opposed to programmes that have cash limited envelopes) such as Highways of 3% annually, with any increases above this level to be covered by the risk provision.

5.3 In addition, it is anticipated that there will be increasing pressures on the current programme due to the climate change agenda meaning additional requirements will need to be incorporated into the current programme, such as emerging environmental planning requirements and low carbon replacements of current assets. The risk provision and potential provision for the area will be reviewed as these requirements become clearer.

6 Conclusion

6.1 This report provides an update on current approved capital programme as part of the annual RPPR cycle. Work will now be progressed as part of the RPPR process to extend the programme by a further year to maintain the 10-year planning horizon and link into and support the Council's other strategies. The Capital Strategy and programme will be reviewed, considering other Council strategies as defined in the Capital Strategy, any requirements outside basic need will need to be supported by a business case.

Annex 1 – Detailed Capital Programme

Capital Programme (gross) (£m)	MTFP Period			2026/27 to 2032/33	Total
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26		
Adult Social Care:					
House Adaptations	0.050	0.050	0.050	-	**0.150**
Learning Disability Support Living Scheme	2.177	2.914	0.854	0.104	**6.049**
Greenacres	0.140	-	-	-	**0.140**
Adult Social Care Gross	**2.367**	**2.964**	**0.904**	**0.104**	**6.339**
Business Services:					
Salix Contract	0.350	0.350	-	-	**0.700**
Lansdowne Secure Unit – Phase 2	0.065	-	-	-	**0.065**
Schools Basic Need	1.931	0.837	11.833	49.177	**63.778**
Special Educational Needs	1.692	1.347	-	-	**3.039**
Special Educational Needs – Additional Places	5.422	8.000	5.000	0.429	**18.851**
Disability Children's Homes	0.716	0.024	-	-	**0.740**
Westfield Lane	0.053	-	-	-	**0.053**
Capital Building Improvements (Schools)	5.594	4.199	4.182	28.074	**42.049**
Capital Building Improvements (Corporate)	3.509	4.640	4.640	31.960	**44.749**
IT & Digital Strategy Implementation	4.742	5.319	7.187	55.708	**72.956**
IT & Digital Strategy Implementation - MBOS	3.332	-	-	-	**3.332**
IT & Digital Strategy Implementation - Utilising Automation	0.024	-	-	-	**0.024**
Business Services Gross	**27.430**	**24.716**	**32.842**	**165.348**	**250.336**
Children's Services:					
House Adaptations	0.050	0.050	0.050	-	**0.150**
School Delegated Capital	1.150	1.150	1.150	-	**3.450**
Conquest Centre Redevelopment	0.015	-	-	-	**0.015**
Children's Services Gross	**1.215**	**1.200**	**1.200**	**-**	**3.615**
Communities, Economy & Transport:					
Broadband	0.160	0.100	5.257	-	**5.517**
Climate Emergency Works	3.095	5.459	-	-	**8.554**
Flood & Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme	0.943	0.930	0.989	0.683	**3.545**
Bexhill and Hastings Link Road – Complementary Measures	0.189	-	-	-	**0.189**
Economic Intervention Fund – Grants	0.175	0.300	0.300	1.083	**1.858**
Economic Intervention Fund – Loans	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.850	**1.750**
Stalled Sites	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.120	**0.270**
Upgrading Empty Commercial Properties	-	0.007	-	-	**0.007**
Community Match Fund	0.140	0.325	-	-	**0.465**
Community Road Safety Interventions	0.485	0.237	-	-	**0.722**

Newhaven Port Access Road	0.086	0.708	-	-	**0.794**
Real Time Passenger Information	0.070	0.094	0.061		**0.225**
Passenger Services Software	0.026	-	-	-	**0.026**
Bus Services Improvement Plan	3.245	18.680	-	-	**21.925**
Lewes Bus Station Replacement	0.004	-	-	-	**0.004**
Queensway Depot Development	0.504	-	-	-	**0.504**
The Keep	0.228	0.026	-	0.823	**1.077**
Other Integrated Transport Schemes	3.740	3.308	7.324	20.762	**35.134**
Integrated Transport Schemes – A22 Corridor	0.100	-	-	-	**0.100**
Exceat Bridge Replacement	2.320	3.612	0.920	-	**6.852**
Libraries Basic Need	0.508	0.799	0.449	1.796	**3.552**
Peacehaven Library Refurbishment and Conversion	-	0.027	-	-	**0.027**
Highways Structural Maintenance	20.193	21.688	22.246	172.805	**236.932**
Bridge/Structures Assessment Strengthening	4.740	1.775	3.025	14.616	**24.156**
Street Lighting and Traffic Signals	4.686	3.839	3.888	8.012	**20.425**
Street Lighting and Traffic Signals – Salix Scheme	0.219	-	-	-	**0.219**
Visibly Better Roads	1.293	-	-	-	**1.293**
Rights of Way Surface Repairs and Bridges	0.552	0.514	0.484	3.705	**5.255**
Communities, Economy & Transport (LEP Funded Schemes):					
Eastbourne Town Centre Phase 2	3.296	-	-	-	**3.296**
Eastbourne/South Wealden Walking & Cycling Package	2.064	-	-	-	**2.064**
Hailsham/Polegate/Eastbourne Movement & Access Corridor	0.275	0.119	-	-	**0.394**
Hastings & Bexhill Movement & Access Package	4.154	-	-	-	**4.154**
Communities, Economy & Transport Gross	**57.840**	**62.897**	**45.293**	**225.255**	**391.285**
Total Programme Gross	**88.852**	**91.777**	**80.239**	**390.707**	**651.575**