



East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership Business Plan 2023 - 2026



Executive Summary

Our Ambition

The Partnership ambition is to optimise interventions and initiatives across the county making East Sussex a safer place to live, work and visit by protecting vulnerable people, identifying those at risk of harm, and keeping communities safe.

We are committed to working collaboratively across the statutory and voluntary sectors to reduce and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, support the victims of crime, protect our most vulnerable residents, and create more inclusive and resilient neighbourhoods and communities. We will achieve this through raising awareness, through coproduction and collaboration, and through driving wider policy and systems change.

Our objectives take account of legislative imperatives, local and national best practice, and what works well across East Sussex's services and initiatives. They are evidence and data-led and informed by a re-imagined strategic approach which recognises the impact of service design on outcomes for people and places that have experienced multiple disadvantage.

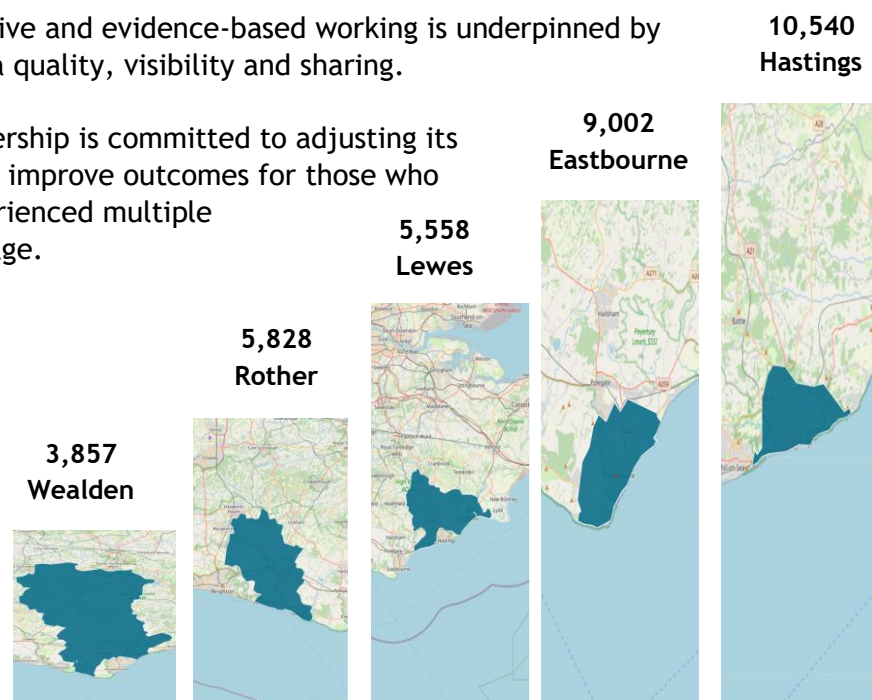
Our Strategic Priorities

- In **protecting vulnerable people**, workstreams range from improving online safety to disrupting modern slavery and protecting people from domestic and sexual violence and abuse.
- In **identifying those at risk of harm**, workstreams range from preventing people from being drawn into violent extremism to reducing the harms associated with drug and alcohol misuse.
- In **keeping communities safe**, workstreams range from improving road safety to reducing public place anti-social behaviour (ASB) and serious violence.



Key Strategic Messages

- East Sussex is a relatively safe place to live, work, and visit, although there are some significant collective challenges - most significantly around the acute shortage of affordable, appropriate housing across the county, which exacerbates vulnerability and hinders rehabilitation.
- The Safer Communities Partnership collectively delivers a range of effective services, interventions and community safety initiatives, without which, the impact of the issues and challenging some of our residents and communities would be far more acute.
- Some communities (places and people) are disproportionately affected by certain types of crime and ASB, and experience multiple types of disadvantage and/or discrimination.
- The Partnership must comply with statutory guidance, legislation and policy with new duties and statutory requirements around Prevent and Serious Violence, domestic abuse, the reduction in the supply and demand for drugs, and the duty to deliver a high-quality substance misuse treatment and recovery system.
- There is compelling evidence to support the co-production of solutions across organisations, and in partnership with those who are most affected by these issues. Resilient communities are safer communities.
- Collaborative and evidence-based working is underpinned by sound data quality, visibility and sharing.
- The Partnership is committed to adjusting its systems to improve outcomes for those who have experienced multiple disadvantage.



Number of crimes committed per 100,000 people in 2022

1 National Drivers influencing Safer Communities Work

Several national policy drivers and statutory duties inform the work of the East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership:

- The **Beating Crime Plan - GOV.UK** sets out the Government's plan to deliver the 'change that Britain needs', with less crime, fewer victims, and a safer country.
- The **Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022** places a new duty on schools, police, councils, and health authorities to prevent serious violence.
- The **Domestic Abuse Act 2021** reforming how the justice system and partner agencies work with victims of domestic abuse, and introducing a duty on local authorities to provide support in safe accommodation for victims of abuse.
- The **Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004** places a duty on Community Safety Partnerships to conduct Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- New recommendations arising from the **Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act - GOV.UK**.
- The Counter-terrorism strategy **CONTEST 2018 - GOV.UK** aims to reduce the risk to the UK and its citizens and interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence.
- The **Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019** and the recommendations in the **Independent Review of Prevent's report and government response - GOV.UK**.
- The national Combatting Drugs Strategy **From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives**.
- The **Draft Online Safety Bill - GOV.UK** which establishes a new regulatory framework to tackle harmful content online.
- The pending **Illegal Migration Act 2023**.
- The pending **Victims and Prisoners Bill - GOV.UK** and the joint statutory duty on Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and local authorities to work together when commissioning support services for victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse and other serious violence - so that services can be strategically coordinated and targeted where victims need them.

2 Local Strategic Alignment

This Business Plan aims to have operational application and to inform the actions of agencies working across the community safety landscape in East Sussex. It reflects and complements the individual priorities of the five District and Borough Community Safety Partnerships, National Probation Service, Fire and Rescue Service, Sussex Police and the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, alongside those of our local Adults and Children's Safeguarding Boards and the Youth Justice Plan.

3 Our Approach

The Partnership aims to implement a Public Health approach to improving the safety of our communities. We believe that the issues we are trying to address are not inevitable, that there are strong correlations between deprivation, vulnerability and crime, that we must do no harm, and that we must target our resources and energy in line with the evidence of ‘what works’.

Our approach is underpinned by a commitment to responding to people across the entirety of their experience, and by the promotion of diversity and equity of access to service provision. Of equal importance is the proportionate targeting of resource at a place-based level, recognising that there are chronic, long-term hotspots for crime and ASB which tend to be in the most deprived areas.

There are various interdependencies between the Partnership’s workstreams, with actions in one area affecting the outcomes in another. Our approach to tackling serious violence will therefore take account of the need to reduce drug and alcohol-related harm; our work on reducing re-offending will consider the impact of homelessness and worklessness on recidivism; and our actions to tackle public place anti-social behaviour will read across to our commitment to eliminating harassment and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). Running through all our workstreams is a focus on online safety and an attention to individuals who have experienced multiple disadvantage (those with ‘compound’ needs) through an intersectional lens.

The Partnership includes representation from specialist Children’s Services in recognition that communities are made up of both adults and children, and an understanding that upstream interventions that support behaviour change reduce the necessity for future crisis-driven responses. An integrated approach relies on partners taking an active role at a systems level tackling issues at scale through aligning priorities, commissioning, and external income generation; and sharing resources, data insights, intelligence, and learning. The implementation of change, however, happens at a local level - where people live, work and access services. It is at a place-based level that the contribution of our VCSE partners in enabling a safer East Sussex and as bridges to local communities is most important.

The Partnership will work together to create strong networks of support, building connections, shared values, and trust across and between communities, and empowering people in communities have a sense of control, to support each other and to take collective action. This approach draws on community assets, encouraging participation, influence, and ownership, while continuing to safeguard more vulnerable individuals and finding ways to enable their voices to be heard.

Community safety is an outcome rather than a collection of services, and the East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership is more than just the sum of its parts. Taking a data and evidence-informed approach to strategic and business planning, the Partnership will continue to evaluate its collective impact, developing a shared understanding of ‘what works’ and how best to achieve sustainability.

4 Our Strategic Objectives

- Build resilience in communities, and co-design services to improve life-outcomes.
- Identify and shape services to anticipate and respond to people and places that experience multiple disadvantage.
- Increase awareness of violence against women and girls, the support available, and the importance of reporting to police.
- Ensure the provision of safe accommodation options for victims of domestic abuse and their children.
- Collaborate to tackle Serious Violence, working to address the causes of violence in our communities.
- Disrupt Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking activity and ensure our supply chains are free from modern slavery.
- Embed better identification and referral of adult victims of violence, exploitation and abuse.
- Raise public awareness around fraud and scams.
- Comply with the legislative changes following the Independent Review of PREVENT.
- Support community cohesion initiatives around asylum seekers and migrant accommodation.
- Improve access to high quality, accessible drug and alcohol treatment services, increasing numbers in treatment by 20%.
- Reduce drug-related deaths.



5 Protecting Vulnerable People: Snapshot

Violence Against Women and Girls

- Sexual Violence and Abuse was the most selected community safety category in the 2022 public Reputation Tracker Survey.

Rape and Sexual Violence

- Across the county there was a 2% decrease in reports of sexual offences during 2022/23 compared to the previous year.
- Lewes was the only area to see an increase in reports of sexual offences.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

- There was a 6% decrease in reported Domestic Abuse Crimes during 2022/23 compared to the previous year. This was mirrored by a decrease in referrals to specialist domestic abuse services.

Hate Crime

- Reports of Racist and Hate Crime have increased during 2022/23 compared to the previous year, with Gender Hate Crime reports increasing by over 100%.
- The Northeys proposals to house asylum-seekers in Bexhill may result in tensions in local communities.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

- 73 police reports of Modern Slavery to the National Referral Mechanism during 2022/23 up from 44 in 2021/22; 44 of these were under 18 years old; 59 were male.
- Placement of asylum-seeking people in hotels increases risk of criminal and labour exploitation.

Street Community and People who Sleep Rough

- Life expectancy is much lower for people forced to sleep on the streets due to poor physical health, abuse and exploitation, and the risks of drug overdose.

6 Identifying those at Risk of Harm: Snapshot

Preventing Violent Extremism

- The current national threat from terrorism level is SUBSTANTIAL, meaning an attack is likely.
- Prevent and Channel referrals remain low in East Sussex.

Contextual Safeguarding and Exploitation

- A key priority in the Police and Crime Plan and Sussex Police is the disruption of organised crime groups and county lines, complemented by undertaking cuckooing checks on vulnerable people, and providing educational material to schools.

Improving Outcomes for People who have experienced Multiple Disadvantage

- The Changing Futures Programme has been established, aiming to improve outcomes at an individual, service and systems level.

Drug-Related Harm

- The number of people in drug treatment increased by 4.2% in 2022 - 2023 compared to the previous year.
- Successful completions from drug treatment improved by 5.1% on the previous year.

Alcohol-Related Harm

- The number of people in alcohol treatment increased by 13.4% in 2022 - 2023 compared to the previous year.
- Successful completions from alcohol treatment improved by 8.9% on the previous year.

Drug and Alcohol Related Deaths

- 60 deaths in 2022 have been notified by the Coroner's Office to date, compared to 68 in 2021 and 57 in 2020.

7 Keeping Communities Safe: Snapshot

Public Place Serious Violence

- During 2022/23, Public Place Serious Violent Crimes increased by 12% compared to the previous year, with the highest percentage increase in Robbery.
- Both suspects and offenders are almost three times more likely to live in the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods compared to the least deprived 20%.
- Violence Against the Person offences account for 66% of all First-Time Entrants to the Youth Justice Service.
- Serious violent crime including knife crime and robbery is the second most important community safety issue identified by residents in the 2022 Reputation Tracker.

Reducing Reoffending

- The adult reoffending rate is 7.3%, which is lower than the 10% national average, although 80% of people who receive cautions or convictions have offended before.
- The reoffending rate for children and young people is 25%; considerably lower than the national rate which is over 30%.
- 84% of children become first time entrants to the Youth Justice Service without having previously received an informal intervention.

Fraud, Scams and Online Safety

- Online safety, harassment and abuse is the third highest community safety concern of residents (after sexual and serious violence) in the East Sussex Reputation Tracker Survey 2022.
- Fraud is the fastest growing crime type and is responsible for 39% of all reported crime.
- Nearly 50 per cent of all adults have been targeted by fraudsters and there are over 900 reports a year to Operation Signature.
- 54% of victims of fraud are over 75 years old and live alone.

8 Complementary Community Safety Initiatives: Snapshot

Anti-Social Behaviour (local Community Safety Partnerships)

- Reports to police of all forms of ASB: personal, nuisance and environmental decreased substantially in the year 2022 - 2023 compared to the previous year, with nuisance ASB reports decreasing by 39%.
- Residents' top two priority ASB concerns during 2022 were drug dealing and under-age drinking in public places.

Street Communities (local Community Safety Partnerships)

- Aggressive street begging and verbal abuse/ intimidation were residents' third and fourth ASB priorities in the 2022 Reputation Tracker.

Road Safety (Sussex Safer Roads Partnership and local Road Safety Action Groups)

- Of sites with four or more crashes resulting in injury in a three-year period, sites in Eastbourne rank the highest in the county.
- Having ranked anti-social driving and speeding as the 2nd most chosen ASB priority during 2021, residents ranked this issue at the same priority level as littering in 2022.



East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership Business Plan 2023 - 2026

▪ Building resilience in communities

Co-Production	Produce a Safer Communities Co-Production Charter to underpin the ESCC Safer Communities Team approach to co-designing services alongside those with lived experience, community members and local businesses.	By March 2024
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▪ Protecting Vulnerable People

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise public awareness • Encourage reporting to the police • Targeted prevention work with children and young people • Support and safeguard victims 	Ongoing
Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse	Commission support in safe accommodation services.	2023/2024
	Progress the East Sussex Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Partnership Action Plans to prevent and identify abuse early, deliver excellent services and pursue perpetrators.	2023 with annual refresh
	Refresh of pan-Sussex Strategic Framework for Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse, and the Pan-Sussex Strategy for Domestic Abuse Accommodation and Support.	2024
	Refresh and expansion of domestic abuse needs assessment to include community and accommodation support needs.	2024
	Multi-agency training to be offered to schools and colleges and alternative education settings.	By end March 2024
	Ensure learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews is coordinated and shared across agencies in order to prevent future deaths.	Ongoing

Hate Crime	Partnership action plans for addressing Hate Crime are undertaken at a Pan-Sussex level through the Hate Crime Steering Group, and at a place-based level in the District and Borough Community Safety Partnerships: <u>Eastbourne and Lewes</u> , <u>Hastings</u> , <u>Rother</u> and <u>Wealden</u> .	Ongoing
	Agree a clear definition of Hate Crime, introduce a programme of engagement within affected communities to better understand the picture across East Sussex, and seek funding to commission a good quality service to facilitate reporting and support for victims of Hate Crime.	By end March 2025
	Develop a Community Engagement Strategy to foster community cohesion around asylum hotels.	By end March 2024
Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking	Refresh the approach to tackling Modern Slavery across the Partnership, raise awareness and encourage reporting of concerns of modern slavery, human trafficking and exploitation, implementation of the Government's Modern Slavery Toolkit, establishment of a Modern Slavery VCSE Forum and ensure all supply chains are free from Modern Slavery.	By end March 2024
Street Community and People who Sleep Rough	The Partnership will develop a mechanism to better record crimes, exploitation and ASB experienced by members of the street community and those who are in inadequate temporary accommodation provision.	By end March 2024

▪ **Identifying those at Risk of Harm**

Preventing Violent Extremism	Identify emerging local counter-terrorism risks in partnership and coordinate activity to mitigate them through the East Sussex Prevent Board and the implementation of the East Sussex Prevent Plan.	2023 with annual refresh
	Ensure Prevent Duty compliance through self-assessment against the Home Office toolkit.	By end March 2024
Contextual Safeguarding and Exploitation	Establish a partnership governance mechanism to share intelligence, data and best practice to safeguard adult victims of exploitation and disrupt perpetrators of adult exploitation and abuse.	By end March 2024
Improving Outcomes for People who have	Take practical steps to change the people, processes, organisations, beliefs, and cultures that make up the systems of support for people experiencing multiple disadvantage, and to prevent unnecessary deaths.	By end March 2025

experienced Multiple Disadvantage	Establish multi-disciplinary Changing Futures delivery team to work with 125 adults who have experienced multiple disadvantage, accountable to a Multiple, Compound Needs Board at which systems barriers will be unpacked and resolved, trauma-informed care and co-production principles will be promoted, and joint commissioning will be explored.	
Drug and Alcohol related Harm	Implement the East Sussex Harm to Hope Strategy and Action Plan aiming to increase the number of people accessing treatment by 20% and increase the continuity of care for eligible individuals leaving prison and entering community treatment to 75%; accountable to the East Sussex Harm to Hope Board.	2023 with annual refresh
	Benchmark local commissioning practice against the national commissioning standards self-assessment tool, co-design and re-commission a new treatment service with all relevant stakeholders.	By end March 2025
	Encourage people to seek help earlier especially in terms of alcohol misuse support in conjunction with Public Health through the implementation of the <u>East Sussex Alcohol Harm Strategy</u>	Ongoing
	Remove stigma around accessing support by 'normalising' conversations about drugs and alcohol and raising the profile of support available.	Ongoing
Drug and Alcohol related Deaths	Contribute to a national reduction in drug-related deaths of 1,000 lives saved.	By end March 2025

▪ Keeping Communities Safe

Public Place Serious Violence	Implementation of Serious Violence Duty, through the production of an East Sussex needs assessment, response strategy and action plan.	By end March 2024
	Design, develop and co-ordinate a place-based response in neighbourhoods with a high risk of serious violence across East Sussex.	By end March 2025

	Work to manage and reduce the high rates of serious violence associated with the street community in Hastings town centre; through a partnership approach including Seaview, Project Adder and the Rough Sleeping Initiative complemented by council wardens and police patrols.	By end March 2025
Reducing Reoffending	The <u>Sussex Criminal Justice Partnership</u> brings criminal justice agencies together to agree priorities and identify local strategic direction and to deliver the <u>Sussex Reducing Re-offending Strategy</u> via the Reducing Re-Offending Sub-Group.	Ongoing
	The <u>Youth Justice Service</u> Chief Officers' Group brings together the Home Office, ESCC Safer Communities and Children's Services with other providers involved in youth justice services to deliver the Youth Justice Plan aiming to prevent children from entering the criminal justice system and from reoffending, as mandated by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.	2023 and annual refresh
Fraud, Scams and Online Safety	Deliver a Get Safe Online Business event: Working together to keep your Business safe Online ; a free training event aimed to increase awareness of the techniques used by criminals and the protective measures individuals and businesses can employ to protect themselves both at work and at home.	By end March 2024
	Initiate an annual Fraud and Scams Forum for Charter Partners.	By end March 2024
	Promote online safety to residents and provide targeted training to professionals and the VCSE; organise and support a large scale public facing event e.g. 999 festival.	By end March 2024
	Coordinate targeted Digital Ambassador training for ESCC Children's Services, Adult Social Care, the education sector, and the VCSE to grow a team of cyber-smart volunteers who can support individuals and their community as a whole to stay safe online.	Ongoing

▪ **Complementary Community Safety Initiatives**

Anti-Social Behaviour and Street Communities	Partnership structures and action plans for addressing anti-social behaviour and street communities are delivered at a place-based level in the District and Borough Community Safety Partnerships of <u>Eastbourne and Lewes</u> , <u>Wealden</u> , <u>Hastings</u> and <u>Rother</u> .	Ongoing
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	Partners to map and understand the prevalence of day-to-day ASB, including escalating ASB and harassment that might not be reported to police, to support the development of strategic preventative initiatives to address local ASB.	By end March 2025
	Partners to work together to make our streets and businesses safer, encouraging the reporting to police of shop-lifting, ASB and criminal damage in our communities.	Ongoing
	Implementation of Immediate Justice Scheme for ASB offenders, and the promotion of ASB Case Reviews to the public.	By end March 2024
Road Safety	Plans for tackling road safety issues can be found on the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership website. There are Road Safety Action Groups for the Eastbourne, Lewes and Wealden areas and the Hastings & Rother areas which report to their own Community Safety Partnerships.	Ongoing
Data Collation and Sharing	The Partnership will facilitate collaborative and evidence-based working through a focus on sound data quality & analysis, visibility and sharing, producing an agreement on standard KPIS, activity and demographics (including those with multiple, compound needs), establish the frequency of reporting, and jointly commit to producing analyses, identifying local trends.	By end March 2024