

**Report to:** Health and Wellbeing Board

**Date of meeting:** 4 March 2025

**By:** Darrell Gale, Director of Public Health

**Title:** Draft East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy

**Purpose:** To share a progress update and initial draft of the East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy with the Board. The strategy will provide a framework for ongoing partnership to reduce housing-related health inequalities.

---

**Recommendations:**

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

- a) Review the draft strategy and provide feedback on amendments, updates and additions to strengthen links to ongoing work to reduce health inequalities; and
  - b) Note the next steps to finalise and adopt the strategy
- 

**1. Introduction**

1.1 East Sussex Housing Partnership are developing a partnership housing strategy. The strategy will complement the place-based housing and homelessness strategies held by each of the district and borough authorities. Looking ahead to devolution and local government re-organisation the strategy will also set out a vision for the housing sector and our ongoing work in partnership. Housing is a foundational determinant of health, and the strategy will set a medium to longer term priorities for the sector locally, provide a framework for ongoing cross-sector collaboration and support partners to make the best use of capacity, resources, and expertise.

1.2 Over the past year, the partnership board has been strengthening its links with the Health and Care Partnership, local authority management teams and East Sussex Chief Executives Group. The partnership has also been mobilising a range of projects and activities which will also contribute to the strategy development process.

1.3 Once the strategy has been adopted, an annual implementation plan will be developed by the partnership.

**2. Producing the Draft Strategy**

2.1 The final strategy will be collectively owned by all members of the East Sussex Housing Partnership. The draft strategy has been co-produced with partners across the sector including:

- Producing an evidence base revisiting the data and themes from the earlier Annual Public Health Report 2019/20 – Health and Housing. The updated data has guided scoping discussions and the priority setting process. The strategy has also benefited from links to research and intelligence gathering already underway within the sector, including the independent evaluation of the East Sussex Wellbeing and Employment Service and the baseline assessment of housing retrofit needs carried out at the end of 2023. The evidence base and strategy will also incorporate findings from the multiple compound needs assessment. This research has also provided the opportunity to gather qualitative insights through engagement with people with lived experience of using housing services. Once the strategy has been adopted, the partnership will produce an annual overview of key indicators to review progress and shape the annual implementation plan. The partnership is also developing an approach to meaningful lived experience involvement across the sector to ensure this informs the implementation of the strategy and ongoing improvement of our services.

- Housing Partnership Board and Specialist Groups – the partnership has formed a series of specialist groups, to ensure the strategy reflects the sector as broadly as possible and to support closer management level integration. In addition to working with the board to develop our strategic vision, the specialist groups have also developed key actions and deliverables within each priority area.
- Strategy Workshops – the partnership hosted a series of themed strategy development workshops throughout the summer to reflect on key findings from the evidence base, explore national and local examples of good practice and identify priorities for the strategy.
- Strategic level engagement: the partnership has been strengthening its senior level engagement, including with the East Sussex Chief Executives Group and the management teams in each of the five housing authorities.
- Partnership network: the partnership has also been engaging with partnerships across the sector, and partner sectors including: Developers East Sussex, East Sussex Homelessness Forum, Temporary Accommodation Action Group, SPACES Programme Board, Local Plan Managers Group, East Sussex Energy Partnership, Partnership Plus, East Sussex Health and Care System Partnership Board, Sussex Health and Care Mental Health and Housing Programme, Multi-Agency Financial Inclusion Steering Group.
- Sussex Health and Care Assembly – the housing partnership hosted a housing seminar for the health and care assembly in November 2024. The findings from the assembly will be used to develop a cross-sector action plan which will be shared through the partnership network.

### **3. Next Steps**

3.1 The partnership board and specialist groups are continuing to refine the strategy, identify good practice examples to profile and gather feedback from wider networks and stakeholders on the priorities and key areas of work.

Further engagement will include:

- Further focused engagement with people with lived experience of using housing services, to be facilitated through the Changing Futures programme.
- Reviewing the presentation of the strategy to ensure it is accessible and engaging, including developing infographics of key data and evidence.

3.2 The final strategy will be adopted through the Cabinet process, and the relevant governance in partner organisations, over the summer and the timetable for this is currently being finalised. The partnership is keen to use the coming months to strengthen involvement from cross sector partners in updating and refining the draft strategy.

3.3 The final strategy and initial implementation plan will be presented back to the Health and Wellbeing Board once adopted by Cabinet.

### **4. Conclusion**

4.1 The Institute for Health Equity noted that “addressing housing-related health inequalities requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses not only improving housing quality, security and affordability, and improving the neighbourhoods where individuals and families live.”

4.2 Housing partners, Public Health and cross sector partners have been collaborating on the development of a place-based housing strategy. A first draft strategy is now available for review and feedback. Work to refine the strategy and priorities will continue over the coming months.

4.3 Following recent announcements, the partnership is keen to continue to support collaborative working, strong links to communities, and for the priorities identified through the strategy to guide the development of the sector locally.

**DARRELL GALE**

**Director of Public Health**

Contact Officer: Michael Courts

Email: michael.courts@eastsussex.gov.uk

## APPENDICES

**Appendix 1 – Working Draft East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy**

**Appendix 2 – Extract from Partnership Evidence Base**