

Report to:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	25 February 2025
By:	Director of Adult Social Care and Health
Title:	Proposal to reduce the funding for the Housing-Related Floating Support Service
Purpose:	To consider the outcome of the public consultation and to decide on the proposal to reduce funding for the Housing-Related Floating Support Service

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Agree to reduce the funding for the Housing-Related Floating Support Service from £4.3 million per year to £500,000 per year from October 2025;**
 - 2) Agree that the Council serve a contract variation notice on the service provider, BHT Sussex, to give effect to the reduction of funding set out in recommendation 1; and**
 - 3) Delegate authority to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health to take all necessary actions to give effect to the above recommendations.**
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cabinet agreed on 26 September 2024 to launch a consultation exercise relating to the Housing-Related Floating Support Service which provides housing advice to residents across the county (the papers are available: [here](#)). The proposal presented to Cabinet in September 2024 was to reduce the funding for this service from £4.3 million per year to £500,000 per year. This would be a reduction in the budget of 88.5%.
- 1.2 If the proposal is agreed, the change would happen from October 2025 at the earliest, as the Council is required to give six months' notice to the provider. This proposal, as well as other potential service changes being explored by Adult Social Care and Health, is to help close the Council's funding gap.
- 1.3 The consultation ran between 3 October and 28 November 2024. The impact of the new funding settlement for the Council has been considered when making the proposal in this report.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council currently commissions BHT Sussex to deliver short-term direct support to East Sussex residents with housing-related needs. The Housing-Related Floating Support Service is available to East Sussex residents aged 16+ years, living in, or moving to, independent or supported accommodation in all housing tenures who require housing-related support.
- 2.2 East Sussex County Council has commissioned housing related floating support since April 2014. It originated from the Supporting People Programme under which the

Council was in receipt of the Supporting People Grant. From 2011, Supporting People was subsumed into the overall Formula Grant paid to Local Authorities. Unlike many other Local Authorities, the Council has continued to invest in housing related support in recognition of the relationship between suitable housing and improving health and reducing health inequalities.

2.3 The service aims to underpin the strategic priorities of Adult Social Care and Health, and to:

- Enable people with housing related support needs to live independently;
- Identify the key components that enable people to remain living independently in their own homes, and their experiences of accessing existing support and the service;
- Understand the barriers that prevent people from living at home independently and work collaboratively to look at how to improve outcomes and reduce pressure across the system;
- Provide flexible, personalised, and appropriate housing support, stratified to manage a range of levels of need and risk;
- Minimise risk of homelessness and address inappropriate housing;
- Signpost individuals and/or family members as appropriate to health and social care services, education, training, employment and support, voluntary, community and social enterprise sector services that will assist with accessing and maintaining their housing and ability to live independently for longer;
- Provide time-limited follow up support to prevent and reduce risks of homelessness/ unsuitable housing;
- Ensure people are appropriately signposted or referred to mental health, social care, health services and substance misuse services as needed and any other appropriate services according to need.

2.4 During 2023/24 the service supported 5,282 individual adults and their households, 60% of whom were aged 16-59 and 40% aged 60+; with 71% supported to remain in their existing accommodation.

2.5 The table below shows the organisations making referrals to the service:

BHT Sussex: Organisations making referrals 2023/24	
Adult Social Care	41%
Districts & Boroughs	22%
Children's Services	10%
Other (inc. Health, VSCE and other statutory organisations)	21%
Self-referral (60+)	7%

2.6 The table below shows the needs of the those supported by the service:

BHT Sussex: Adults by needs 2023/24	
Physical / Sensory Disability or long-standing illness / Acquired Brain Injury	61%
Mental Health Condition	30%
Learning Disability / Difficulty / Neurodivergent	7%
Other	2%

2.7 The service provides a time-limited intervention of individual support, normally for three to four months, for adults and their households. The services can help those who are:

- at risk of losing their home due to domestic abuse, relationship breakdown, money or health issues;
- already homeless or living in temporary accommodation, such as a bed and breakfast or hostel; or
- living in poor quality or unsuitable accommodation.

2.8 The service can also help to manage peoples housing issues including debts and benefits, repairs, landlords and neighbours and additionally support to manage their mental health or substance misuse.

2.9 While responsibility for unsuitable or poor-quality housing and homelessness prevention in relation to housing provision is not an ESCC statutory responsibility, improving health and reducing health inequalities is, as well as the duty to prevent, reduce and delay the need for support (under section 2B of the National Health Service Act 2006 and section 2 of the Care Act 2014 respectively).

2.10 The health and wellbeing of people who experience homelessness is poorer than that of the general population and they often experience the most significant health inequalities and have poorer health outcomes. Many have co-occurring mental ill health and substance misuse needs, physical health needs, and have experienced significant trauma in their lives. This is driven/exacerbated by poor living conditions, difficulty maintaining personal hygiene, poor diet, high levels of stress and drug and alcohol dependence.

2.11 The map in Appendix 6 shows the location of adults who used the service in 2023/24.

2.12 BHT Sussex have worked with the Council to add a 'Homes for Ukraine Sustainment Service' to the contract. The aim is to support Ukrainian 'guests' and their East Sussex hosts to manage and maintain these living arrangements by supporting guests to access health and community services, and employment and educational opportunities to help guests to live independently and move on from host accommodation. This service is not in scope of the proposed savings targets.

2.13 BHT Sussex have also worked with the Council to allocate some of the underspend resulting from recruitment challenges directly to adults for a Voucher Top-Up Scheme for utilities and food, cold weather goods such as blankets, digital inclusion such as SIM cards and smart phones, and an emergency fund for things such as white goods, school uniform, and ID for benefits applications.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal, which was subject to public consultation, is to significantly reduce funding for the Housing-Related Floating Support Service from £4,372,615 to £500,000 per annum, a reduction of 88.5% in overall funding. This reduction in funding is to take effect from 1 October 2025, following a six-month notice period provided to the service provider, BHT Sussex.
- 3.2 The estimated annual revenue savings in a full year for this proposal are £3,872,615.
- 3.3 To determine the potential savings, we took the overall gross contract sum for the service, subtracted the six-month notice period (01/04/2025 to 30/09/2025) and the proposed remaining funding of £500,000 per annum. Therefore, the potential savings for 2025/26 will be a half year effect of £1,936,307 and full year effect of £3,872,615 from April 2026.
- 3.4 It is anticipated that in the 2024/2025 financial year there will be a further underspend, generated from reduced service levels due to vacancy control measures. This could be used, subject to Cabinet approval, to fund an extension to the Supported Accommodation notice period proposed in a separate report later on the agenda.

4 Insight

- 4.1 An eight-week public consultation on the proposal ran from 3 October to 28 November 2024. We asked people for their views on the proposal and how they would be affected if it went ahead.
- 4.2 All the feedback received during the consultation is available within the Members' and Cabinet Room for Members' consideration.
- 4.3 1,425 responses were received across the survey, consultation meetings and other feedback methods for this consultation as follows:

Respondent method	Total
Survey	1355
Emails	17
Consultation meetings (attendees)	53

- 4.4 Most respondents across all response methods disagreed with the proposal to reduce the funding for the East Sussex Floating Support Service. The responses were as follows:

Response	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree	1118	83%
Disagree	118	9%
Strongly agree or agree	55	4%
Neither agree or disagree, not sure or did not answer	64	4%

- 4.5 The final public consultation analysis report is attached as Appendix 4. Members will need to have regard to the key themes raised in the feedback as detailed below and in Appendix 4. At a high level:

- The majority of people and organisations strongly disagree with the proposal to reduce funding for the East Sussex Floating Support Service, with some viewing the proposal as “shameful” and “immoral”;
 - The service is immensely valued and seen as a vital lifeline for the most vulnerable in East Sussex. It was reported as very responsive, providing personalised and flexible support, offered face-to-face, including home visits, and has much shorter waiting times than other services.
- 4.6 The key messages included the following themes:
- Cutting the service would target the most vulnerable;
 - Many people praised the service and the staff who deliver it, saying that no other service provides the same level of personalised and flexible support;
 - The service has much shorter waiting times than other services and people really value the fact it offers home visits and face-to-face support;
 - Professionals from other organisations rely on referring people to the service and value how knowledgeable and skilled the staff are;
 - The size of the cut is too great and it would have far reaching impacts for the housing system;
 - It would cause greater demand for other services including within the Council and the NHS, local housing authorities and charities;
 - Staff from other organisations say they would not be able to fill the gap, meaning that people’s needs would go unmet;
 - People would lose out on funding they are entitled to and be at risk of remaining in unsuitable accommodation;
 - More people and families would end up in crisis and would be at risk of becoming homeless or dying;
 - The services people would end up getting support from instead would be more expensive than maintaining the budget for this preventative service;
 - People and organisations said the budget shouldn’t be cut for this service, with some saying it should get more money not less;
 - Some people said if the proposal has to go ahead, the amount being cut should be reduced. It would also be important to ensure there is accessible support for the most vulnerable.
- 4.7 At the County Council meeting on 11 February 2025, a petition was presented to the Chairman by Councillor Daniel Shing, calling on the Council to “protect and retain the East Sussex Floating Support Service”. The petition has not reached the 5000-signature threshold to trigger a Full Council debate. However, Standing Orders provide that the Chairman will refer the petition to the Cabinet or relevant Cabinet member to consider. The Chairman has referred this petition to Cabinet to consider as a relevant factor when deciding whether or not to implement the proposal set out in this report. A copy of the petition is available in the Members’ and Cabinet Rooms.

Equalities Considerations

- 4.8 In considering these proposals, Cabinet must have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,

as required under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010.

- 4.9 To better understand the likely impacts of the Proposal on those who have one or more protected characteristics, an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out (a copy of which can be found out in Appendix 5).
- 4.10 The responses from the consultation were used to inform the analysis carried out in the EqIA. Cabinet members must read and have regard to the EqIA when making the decision about this Proposal.
- 4.11 Key findings were that the service is skilled in engaging with people whose conditions and circumstances make it harder for them to engage with services due to cognitive difficulties and age-related frailty, long-term health conditions or disability, rurality, race and ethnicity, caring responsibilities and low income. Therefore, a significant reduction in funding and subsequent reduction in service will particularly disadvantage these communities.
- 4.12 Impacts identified from the EqIA are as follows:
 - It is likely that this proposal will impact older people negatively as the proportion of older people that are supported by the service (40%) is higher compared with the general East Sussex population (26%);
 - This proposal is likely to negatively impact people of working age as the service supports a greater proportion of people aged 16-59 (60%);
 - People who have a mental health condition are more likely to be affected by the proposal than those in the general population - 40% of the people the service supported self-report a concern with their mental health at the time of referral;
 - Applying for welfare benefits, and other financial support is challenging for people who use this service due to cognitive difficulties and age-related frailty, long-term health condition or disability, rurality, race and ethnicity, caring responsibilities and low income;
 - Face-to-face visits, which are part of this service, were reported as vital for people who find it difficult to engage with and navigate health and care systems and access support due to cognitive difficulties and age-related frailty, long-term health condition, disability, rurality, race and ethnicity, caring responsibilities and low income;
 - The service supports an above average proportion of the population that identify as Black and Minority Ethnic. The data tells us that the service supported a higher proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds (12.9%) compared to the East Sussex average of 8.0%. Withdrawal or reduction of face-to-face visits is likely to impact negatively on mitigating barriers to translation and interpretation when accessing information, advice and support. People from Black and Minority Ethnic groups will be disproportionately affected as they are more likely to experience homelessness and poor housing;
 - There is a lack of alternative housing-related support services that can support pregnant women and those with young children;
 - The service supports an above average proportion of the population that identify as not heterosexual. Prevalence of a mental health condition is known to be significantly higher in LGBTQI+ people. This can create a cumulative impact which

contributes to an increased risk of homelessness. There is a lack of alternative housing-related support services with expertise in supporting people from LGBTQI+ communities.

5 Alternatives considered

- 5.1 Our priority in Adult Social Care and Health is to meet our legal duties under the Care Act. To help us to do this, we have identified funding areas that we think need to be protected when we are looking at savings options.
- 5.2 These priority areas are the community care budget, carers support services, funding for the voluntary and community enterprise sector (VCSE), and funding for staffing frontline and care market roles.
- 5.3 While we recognise the importance of these services, the budget pressures we face mean that we have to make difficult decisions about how we spend our money. We have continued to fund housing support services over the last decade, despite the budget reductions we have experienced. This is because we recognise the value they provide to our residents and because they help prevent the need for other services from the Council and other organisations including the District and Borough Councils in East Sussex. The legal responsibility for providing advice, help and housing to those who are homeless, or at risk of becoming so, lies with the District and Borough Councils. We are therefore not required by law to provide these information and advice services for housing.
- 5.4 Given the feedback from the consultation and the impacts identified through the Equality Impact Assessment, officers have explored whether there are any alternative options that would safeguard the floating support service but still deliver the same level of savings.
- 5.5 BHT Sussex who currently provide the service suggested an alternative proposal to reduce the contract value by £2 million (46% reduction) instead of the proposed 88.4%. They have indicated that this would enable 3,500 people to be supported based on the current commissioned service model and noted that further remodelling of the service could further increase the number of people supported and safeguard service quality and successful outcomes. However, reducing the level of budget reduction would not achieve the required savings and therefore this is not considered a viable alternative option.
- 5.6 The five local housing authorities have stated that they would welcome an opportunity to work with partners to scope a cross-sector approach to homelessness prevention. This would include providers and partners from across health, care and criminal justice and would build on the good practice already underway in existing services. The local housing authorities have therefore recommended that the Council consider extending the transition period for the Floating Support contract, i.e. delaying the implementation of the reduction in funding, to enable systems partners to develop a cross-sector approach to homelessness prevention services.
- 5.7 However, again, any extension to the transition period to enable systems partners to co-design a cross-sector approach will not generate the required savings and therefore it is not possible to recommend this as an alternative option.
- 5.8 Appendix 1 sets out in more detail alternatives put forward through the consultation process.

6 Impacts and risks

- 6.1 This section explores the impacts and risks of going ahead with the proposal, including those outlined in the EqIA (see Appendix 5).
- 6.2 Older people, disabled people, carers and people living in rural areas are likely to experience a cumulative impact of the savings proposals.
- 6.3 Support to apply for and navigate welfare benefits, and other financial support can be challenging for people due to cognitive difficulties and age-related frailty, long-term health condition(s) or disability, rurality, race and ethnicity, caring responsibilities and low income thus impacting on their ability to access safe, secure housing and/or live independently in their own home. This can additionally be compounded for those who are living in poor quality/insecure/unsafe housing and/or are digitally excluded.

6.4 Financial implications

The proposal to reduce funding for the Floating Support service contributes to the required Council savings as set out in the table below:

	Current Budget	Revised Budget		Total Savings
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Expenditure budget	4,373	2,436	500	
Income budget	0	0	0	
Net budget	4,373	2,436	500	
Net savings	0	1,937	1,936	3,873

- 6.5 The wider system financial implications identified through the consultation are set out in detail in Appendix 2. In summary, it is estimated that with a significantly reduced Floating Support service, this would:
- generate an additional cost to the housing authorities in the region of £9,900,000 per annum;
 - risk the loss of Benefits income of approximately £900,000 per annum;
 - increase the cost to Children's Services of supporting families found intentionally homeless;
 - increase time required by ASC staff to work with people as they will not be able to refer as many people on for alternative support with housing and/or benefits issues.
- 6.6 Any future service model will need to be designed and where possible seek to mitigate some of the risks in the last two bullet points above.
- 6.7 The potential impacts the proposal would have on the health and care system, housing system, other organisations, services and residents are set out in Appendix 3. In summary, there would be a significant risk to the system and people using a wide range of services with an increase in homelessness and increased pressure on already challenged services. The floating support service is a critical component to the countywide approach to homelessness prevention. Reducing these services will result in increased demand for statutory homelessness and care services, and a further rise

in the number of people living in temporary accommodation and the length of time before people can secure move on accommodation. The proposed reduction to this service will fundamentally challenge the gains made in reducing homelessness and placements into emergency accommodation. This, in turn, would place further pressures on districts and boroughs in terms of unaffordable and unavoidable costs. As set out below, we will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the remaining limited financial envelope, and it may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken. However there are no comparable services or significant mitigations to the potential impact of the proposal.

6.8 The main risks of going ahead with the proposal are:

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
The proposed significant reduction in funding will have a negative impact on older people, pregnant women, households with children, people with disabilities, those from ethnic minority communities and those who have experienced multiple disadvantages.	This is likely to have a knock-on effect to many areas ranging from Adult Social Care, Children's Services, District and Borough Housing teams, local VCSE services, health and criminal justice services.	We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.
Ability to offer Housing Related Floating Support home visits will be lost.	<p>Identification of a range of issues facing adults using the service will be lost.</p> <p>The direct contact and referrals these professionals provide enables other services to provide suitable onward support, ensuring there is less 'slip-back' or, worse, acceleration into additional support services.</p> <p>May particularly impact people living in rural areas and those who are digitally excluded</p>	
Significant reduction in Housing Related Floating Support service delivery.	Increased risk of homelessness.	
	Potential increased demand for statutory homelessness and care services.	
	A further rise in the number of people living in temporary accommodation and the length of time before people can secure move on accommodation.	
	Loss of support to access private rented sector.	
	Potential impact on health and wellbeing as a result of living in unsuitable accommodation.	

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
	Added pressure on other VCSE agencies such as Citizens Advice and Money Advice/Welfare Benefits services.	
	Increase in fuel poverty and subsequent impact on individuals' health and greater risk of death.	
	Reduces opportunity to carry out preventative work with families who are facing eviction and housing issues including rent arrears and housing related debt and could lead to more families and children facing homelessness and the negative outcomes that come with this for both parents and children.	
	Potential increase in delayed discharges and A&E attendances.	
	Adversely impact population health and healthcare outcomes and increase health inequalities.	
Older people served by this support tend to have complex and enduring mental health problems, cognitive difficulties, co-morbid health issues and are socially isolated. They often experience problems with debt and are struggling to navigate other systems of support for housing and benefits.	Unable to access other services.	
	Unmanaged debt is known to be a risk factor for suicide.	
Lack of resettlement support.	Individuals more likely to be unable to sustain new accommodation.	
Lack of support to maintain independent living.	Increased risk of older people developing greater need for care and support / moving to long-term care.	
Some individuals may be affected by more than one of the proposed service changes and experience an aggregated effect, including those with drug and alcohol dependencies, and people at risk of homelessness.	<p>Homelessness leads to premature mortality, and the ONS reported in 2021 that 35% of all deaths of homeless people were attributed to drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>Older people, disabled people, carers and people living in rural areas are likely to experience a</p>	

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
	cumulative impact of the savings proposals.	
The proposal to cease funding for the on-site support for adults with mental health and additional needs in supported accommodation could be exacerbated by the significant reduction in funding for the Floating Support Service.	The proposed changes may restrict people's access to essential prevention and support services, which in turn may negatively impact their mental and physical wellbeing, place pressure on other services and potentially have cost implications in the longer-term.	
Making financial reductions in one part of local government can adversely impact, other parts of the sector.	The interrelated issues between social care and housing services, and potential gaps in provision at county council level may result in Districts and Boroughs needing to fill these to ensure the needs of customers continue to be met; however, budgets for this are already challenged.	
Increased use of temporary accommodation.	Significant cost to Districts and Boroughs.	
	Potential increase in child protection and safeguarding issues, reduced access to health and education and a direct impact on the health of children living in poor standard housing.	
Reduction in successful benefit claims (e.g. Attendance Allowance, PIP, Council Tax Reduction, Pension Credit).	Reduces individual independence and increases demand for funded services from Adult Social Care.	
Residents turn to other voluntary sector services support.	No capacity to support additional numbers of people needing services.	
Potentially ceasing the on-site support provided at five Supported Accommodation services for adults with mental health needs, and adults with additional support needs who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.	If these proposals go ahead this will further exacerbate the impact on East Sussex residents as a result of the significant reduction in funding for housing-related floating support services.	

7 Outline implementation plan

- 7.1 If this Proposal is agreed, the provider will be given six months' notice of the decision to reduce the annual funding. The intended notice period is 1 April to 30 September 2025. During the six month notice period, we will work with our Strategic Partner and District and Borough Authorities to redesign and co-produce a targeted service around homelessness prevention. Work is ongoing to explore funding options for a reduced, but targeted homelessness prevention service, which may include contributions from the Council, Districts and Borough Councils or other financial arrangements.
- 7.2 As this is a short-term service, existing adults using the service will not be directly affected; however, in order to manage such a significant reduction, the provider will need to gradually reduce referrals into the service in advance of the implementation date of 1 October 2025. This will ensure that all adults accepted into the service during that period will receive the support needed to meet their outcomes from the start of the remodelled service.
- 7.3 Implementation Plan:

Milestone	Action
March 2025	Inform provider of outcome of Cabinet decision.
March -June 2025	Set up workshops with key stakeholders including the provider and District and Borough Housing Authorities to co-design a cross-sector approach to housing advice and homelessness prevention services.
01 April 2025	Issue notice to the provider of the reduction in contract value.
April – September 2025	Provider to restructure service within the available financial envelope.
July 2025	Determine model, levels and scope of service within the available financial envelope.
June – September 2025	Provider to start stepping down capacity of service and reduce number of referrals to ensure there are no adults unable to receive a service from 1 October 2025.
August 2025	Issue contract variation to provider for signing.
September 2025	Communications rolled out to residents and referrers describing the remodelled service.
01 October 2025	Remodelled service commences.
January 2026	Quarterly review of remodelled service.

- 7.4 Once the remodelled service has been agreed, communications to a wide range of referrers and the wider public will be undertaken to explain the changes to the service.

8 Conclusions and reasons for recommendations

- 8.1 The Council is required to set a balanced budget. The 'State of the County' report presented to Cabinet in June 2024 set out a projected £55m deficit on the 2025/26 budget. Savings proposals requiring public consultation that would help to close this gap were presented to Cabinet in September 2024.
- 8.2 The total savings proposals for the Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2025/26-2027/28 set out in November 2024 were £20.628m, across all Council departments. The Adult Social Care & Health (ASCH) contribution to the savings total is £11.455m. In addition

to these savings proposals, in order to achieve a balanced budget, the Council is also drawing on its financial reserves.

- 8.3 The Housing Related Floating Support service is a highly valued service that provides support for people with significant, housing related, support needs.
- 8.4 The Council has noted the significant concerns raised through the consultation, the potential impacts for those with protected characteristics identified through the EqlA and the potentially significant additional costs and pressures that will be placed on other parts of the system if the proposed funding reduction for these services is agreed.
- 8.5 It has not been possible to identify any viable alternative proposals that would achieve the required savings from the ASCH budget. Consequently, given the Council's funding gap and the need to make savings, Cabinet are recommended to agree that the funding for the Housing-Related Floating Support Service is reduced from £4.3 million per year to £500,000 per year with effect from October 2025.
- 8.6 Cabinet must read and have regard to the EqlA when making decisions related to this proposal.

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Local members

All.

Background Documents

Consultation responses

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Alternatives Considered
- Appendix 2: Wider System Financial Implications
- Appendix 3: Impact of savings proposals on the wider system
- Appendix 4: Consultation Report
- Appendix 5: Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 6: Profile of Services

Housing-Related Floating Support Service - Appendix 1 - Alternatives considered

The five local housing authorities have stated that: "BHT Sussex are active within the local housing partnership and have supported service development within the sector, including new homelessness hubs. The local authorities have also been investing in additional homelessness prevention activity, including wellbeing and employability support and are keen to expand this further through grant funding opportunities. The local authorities would welcome an opportunity to work with partners to scope a cross-sector approach to homelessness prevention including providers and partners from across health, care and criminal justice, building on the good practice already underway with existing services." The local housing authorities have therefore recommended an extension to the transition period, i.e. delaying the implementation of the savings proposal, for the floating support contract to enable systems partners to develop a cross-sector approach to homelessness prevention services.

Rother DC have commented that the proposed timetable for the budget reductions is too short for the system to respond effectively to the impact. In the time available it will be challenging for the system to come together to try and support with additional funding or make improvements to the system, to compensate for the loss of funding. We are actively engaged with ESCC and BHT Sussex via the East Sussex Housing Partnership. We feel confident that a great deal can be done to support the service with additional funds from elsewhere across the wider health, social care, housing and criminal justice systems. The service offers excellent value for money in terms of the costs that can be avoided in expensive temporary accommodation costs. We encourage ESCC to consider extending the transition period by an additional 6-12 months to enable the partnership to collaborate to minimise the impact on vulnerable people.

Other organisations have also requested the opportunity to work in partnership to consider changes to the service model and collaboration with other providers: "A new model should be sought prior to looking at potential cuts, so the funding fits the model identified not finding a service to fit the funding available. Changes to the existing service and an alternative model should be considered and costing provided" (Wealden CAB).

BHT Sussex who currently provide the service have suggested a reduction of £2 million (46% reduction) would enable 3,500 people to be supported based on the current commissioned service model. Further remodelling of the service could further increase the number of people supported and safeguard service quality and successful outcomes.

Housing-Related Floating Support Service - Appendix 2 - Wider system financial implications

District and Borough Housing Teams

17% of adults referred by District and Borough Housing Teams were supported by the Floating Support Service to secure new accommodation in 2023/24. If this support had not been available and the households had gone on to be placed in temporary accommodation, this would generate an additional cost to the housing authorities in the region of £9,900,000 per annum.

Hastings Borough Council

Hastings BC made 276 referrals into the service in 2023/24. It costs Hastings BC an average of £15,800 pa to accommodate a household in privately procured temporary accommodation (TA), so, considering the very high success rate of the BHT service (87% successful outcomes), if those 240 households (87% of 276) didn't have their homelessness prevented it would cost Hastings Borough Council over £3.7m a year to provide them with temporary accommodation. This would be a 50% increase in Hastings Borough Council's current, already unsustainable and unavoidable, spend on TA. Plus, that is only for one year, it is realistic to say that with the increased demand we would double current times for households spent in TA before a permanent home is available. So, a four year stay in TA for those 240 households is an extra cost of just over £15m to Hastings Borough Council.

BHT Sussex

In the 12 months Oct 2023 - Sept 2024, BHT supported 275 eligible adults to claim Attendance Allowance. Based on the 93% success rate for applications for Attendance Allowance in the Service, this constitutes annualised additional income of £903,000 for East Sussex residents.

We also supported 993 people/households in fuel poverty to reduce debt and keep their home warm.

Children's Services

Savings made by reducing the funding for this service would lead to potentially higher costs for Children's Services, especially in relation to families who have been found intentionally homeless and had their housing duty discharged by the Borough and District Housing Authorities. The number of families being found to be intentionally homeless has risen over the last two years at an increasing cost to Children's Services in cases where accommodation must be funded for families with no other housing options under S.17 of the Children's Act 1989. Referrals to the East Sussex Floating Support Service are regularly made to assist in the prevention of families becoming intentionally homeless in the first place and to support those that have had their housing duties discharged to move on from high-cost temporary accommodation funded by Children's Services to their own privately rented accommodation. Spend on providing accommodation for these families has more than doubled in the past two years and will continue to increase. There is a risk that more families will end up homeless and potentially intentionally homeless if they are not able to access specialist housing advice and support. The cost to ESCC in 2023/24 of supporting families found intentionally homeless was £639,000 and the forecasted cost for 2024/25 is £575,000.

Rother DC

“The Floating Support Service is an effective homelessness prevention tool and demonstrates better value for money than investments made after a household becomes homeless. The housing and homelessness system is in crisis. We have reviewed the performance of the ESFSS within Rother in 2022/23 and estimate the degree of reduction proposed could mean we experience an additional 200 temporary accommodation placements. It could increase our net temporary accommodation costs by up to £1.4m, which is almost 10% of our total net revenue budget.”

“RDC is concerned that the degree of the budget reductions to this specific service is heavily weighted on homelessness prevention and risks tipping some district and borough Councils into a position where they cannot deliver a balanced budget.”

Please note, the figures contained within this section have been provided by the relevant organisations and are unvalidated.

Floating Support Service - Appendix 3 - Impact of savings proposals on the wider system

Health and care system	<p>The service has co-located staff working in statutory services' teams (5 District and Boroughs and Children's Services) which enables frontline workers to undertake close joint working with people and share resources and knowledge to deliver better outcomes.</p> <p>Adult Social Care</p> <p>2,230 people were referred to the service by Adult Social Care in the 12 months Oct 23 – Sept 24, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 490 people referred due to Mental Health problems (anxiety, depression, bi-polar disorder, schizoaffective disorders, personality disorders); • 336 people referred directly from the Dementia Support Team (over 60's); • 132 people referred due to high levels of vulnerability due to frailty (over 60's) – (frailty relates to the adult's mental and physical resilience, or their ability to bounce back and recover from events like illness and injury). <p>Of these, 51% were aged under 60 and 49% aged 60+.</p> <p>55% of those referred were supported to remain in their existing accommodation whilst the remainder were supported to identify and/or move into new accommodation. They were also supported with their finances, access to health services and with their wellbeing and staying safe.</p> <p>Statutory Children's Services</p> <p>603 people were referred to the service by Statutory Children's Services (referrals from Children's Services are when the risk to children in the household is high), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 families at direct risk of homelessness; • 120 families already experiencing homelessness (families living in temporary accommodation, living in unsecure accommodation); • 101 people at risk of domestic violence. <p><i>"At a time when the need to prevent homelessness and ensure children, young people and families have access to stable housing has never been higher, a reduction in the capacity of this service to support individuals and families with housing related support would have a worrying and far-reaching impact across children's services and the outcomes for the families and individuals we work with. It would most certainly have an impact on the opportunity to carry out preventative work with families who are facing eviction and housing issues including rent arrears and housing related debt and would lead to more families and children facing homelessness and the negative outcomes that come with this for both parents and children."</i> (Children's Services Managers)</p> <p>Health</p> <p><i>"Health and mental health services: acute services are reporting delays with discharges relating to housing needs."</i></p> <p><i>Housing colleagues have been supporting the development of Integrated Community Teams and Mental Health Neighbourhood Teams, it had been</i></p>
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	<p><i>envisaged that links to the housing-related floating support service would form a key opportunity to ensure housing is part of the core offer in each area.” (Hheads of Housing)</i></p> <p><i>“There is potential for this to have an impact on A&E services, which are already under pressure and at capacity, in the absence of the current support offer.</i></p> <p><i>Key considerations in regard to the support offer from this service include;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Access to safe and secure housing is a key determinant of health.</i> <i>• Across the county there are increasing numbers of people who do not have access to housing or whose housing is temporary.</i> <i>• Housing prices are 11x the average salary in East Sussex (ONS Housing Affordability, 2023 data).</i> <i>• 5% of East Sussex residents are either fairly or very dissatisfied with the quality of their housing, particularly renters, 18-34s and single parents.</i> <i>• 2.7% of households had fewer rooms than needed for the occupants, classified as overcrowded. Census, 2021.</i> <p><i>Noting the above, this proposal has the potential to materially impact the health and safety of a number of future service users across East Sussex and present a greater risk to many becoming homeless. There is also a strong risk that cutting funding will destabilise the system which is not set up nor has the expertise to cope with the influx of people in need of support.</i></p> <p><i>There could be a high risk that the proposals will adversely impact population health and healthcare outcomes and increase health inequalities.” (NHS Sussex)</i></p> <p><i>“The proposal to reduce funding for the Floating Support Service from over £4.3 million to £500,000 a year (88.5%) will have a significant impact on people who are at risk of homelessness. Many of those who use this service have been referred by housing colleagues in Borough and District Councils and may struggle to maintain their tenancies without this support, which may return pressures to Adult Social Care services.” (Healthwatch)</i></p> <p><i>“This is a person-centred service for vulnerable people who are not able to access other similar services. This service is skilled in engaging individuals whose conditions and circumstances make it difficult for them to engage with other services. The older people served by this support tend to have complex and enduring mental health problems, cognitive difficulties, co-morbid health issues and are socially isolated. They often experience problems with debt and are struggling to navigate other systems of support for housing and benefits. Unmanaged debt is known to be a risk factor for suicide. Clinicians believe that the people who tend to use this service would struggle to access alternatives.” (SPFT)</i></p>
Housing system	<p><i>“The Housing-related Floating Support Service is an integral part of local provision and meeting statutory duties in relation to homelessness prevention. Due to the high demand for homelessness services, there will not be capacity for local housing authorities to continue these interventions. Reducing these services will result in increased demand for statutory homelessness and care services, and a further rise in the number of people living in temporary accommodation and the length of time before people can secure move on accommodation.</i></p>

	<p><i>17% of clients referred by District and Borough Housing Teams were supported by the Floating Support Service to secure new accommodation in 2023/24. If this support had not been available and the households had gone on to be placed in temporary accommodation, this would generate an additional cost to the housing authorities in the region of £9,900,000.</i></p> <p><i>There are currently 1,232 households placed in temporary accommodation across East Sussex and approximately 1,400 children currently living in temporary accommodation. This trend has a significant impact on individuals and families, impacting access to education, employment and engagement with health and wellbeing. The cost of providing temporary accommodation is creating an unsustainable financial pressure on the local housing authorities, diverting resources away from other key services and threatening the overall viability of some councils. So far, this financial year (2024/25) the 5 local housing authorities have spent £6,358,800 on temporary accommodation. In In 2023/24, the cost of temporary accommodation in East Sussex was £14,194,421.</i></p> <p><i>The long waiting times for social housing mean the intensive support provided by the floating support service is key to ensuring people can access accommodation in other sectors, particularly the private rented sector.”</i> (Heads of Housing)</p> <p><i>“Eastbourne BC’s homeless hub (which is seen locally and nationally as a model of good practice) is hugely dependant on partnership working. The proposed significant reduction in funding to the floating support service threatens to compromise what has been a hard won, sector-leading piece of prevention work. The work of BHT Sussex in delivering floating support is a critical component to the countywide approach to homelessness prevention. We note that an 88% reduction to this service is proposed, which would fundamentally challenge the gains we have made in reducing homelessness and placements into emergency accommodation. This, in turn, would place further pressures on districts and boroughs in terms of unaffordable and unavoidable costs.”</i> (Eastbourne BC)</p>
Organisations and services	<p>The VCSE Alliance has stated that the voluntary sector’s likely future landscape and capacity will not be sufficient to pick up the shortfall and increased demands that will follow as a result of the proposed cuts.</p> <p>Wealden Citizens Advice state that they need to be able to work in partnership with other agencies to support their most vulnerable clients as they do not have the capacity nor expertise to meet the needs of floating support clients.</p> <p>Care for the Carers have told us that these services are vital for carers at risk of homelessness and are a key support for Care for the Carers in enabling some of the carers with the most complex caring roles to continue caring.</p>
Residents	<p><i>“Homeless children are more likely to be at risk, face upheaval that adversely impacts their education, fail to thrive because temporary accommodation doesn’t meet their needs, and because homelessness often leads to relationship breakdown for their parents</i></p> <p><i>Adults who end up sleeping rough or sofa surfing are more likely to develop mental and/or physical health problems, addictions, loss of employment, relationship breakdown and to engage in anti-social or criminal behaviours</i></p>

The county is an area of high housing costs and shortage of affordable accommodation, so the impacts of increased spending on addressing the issues outlined above are likely to be significant.” (Resident)

Feedback from residents

“I find this proposal to cut funding morally reprehensible. When there’s a tough decision to be made it’s always the vulnerable and the poor who get hit the hardest. Often dealing with council paperwork is bewildering and having help in getting what one is entitled to is invaluable.”

“In my experience this wonderful service is Vital. They literally saved my life. I think one shouldn’t underestimate the importance of their work for people in crisis, like i was. I could not have managed to survive without their expert help and patient advice and support.”

“The Floating Support Service has been a lifeline for us during extremely challenging times. They provided essential support and guidance when we needed it most, helping us navigate difficult situations and access resources that improved our quality of life.”

“There is no other service where a client would be contacted within 24 hours of starting the service and had a support session either over the telephone or face to face within a week of that contact.”

“This service is pivotal to East Sussex as it provides a home visiting service to vulnerable clients in order to prevent homelessness. Many clients do not have access to the internet, especially the elderly, and being able to visit them at home to support them with important paperwork and access the benefits system ensures inclusion, income maximisation and tenancy sustainment.”

“We would never have managed the housing forms without the support of the support worker.”

“They also helped us to fill in very difficult forms to claim what otherwise we may not be able to do by ourselves.”

“ASC require the support of the specialist teams such as the East Sussex Floating Support Service to be able to offer a comprehensive and knowledgeable service to our clients. ASC CANNOT take on this role as well, we are over run and running on empty as it is.”

“Everyone I knew who worked for the service was kind, caring, knowledgeable and just wanted to help people.”

“Many clients will no longer have bespoke, knowledgeable support with their housing and/or financial needs which in turn is likely to increase the disadvantages they are already facing.”

“88.5% might as well be 100%, it won’t be indistinguishable. And if anyone thinks that these are ‘savings’, just wait and see what time bombs you’ve just set off.”

“If it 88% cut you may as well say it is a closed service as the wait list will be enormous.”

“The proposed cut in funding is far to large! It seems to us that if this goes ahead you may as well do away with this service.”

“I couldn’t of coped if I did not have the support of BHT.”

“Without this service I do no know what we would have done!”

“The Floating Support Service brings badly needed professional help that just isn’t available elsewhere.”

	<p><i>"BHT are essential to keeping the homeless alive and feeling supported. I cannot express adequately how much BHT have helped me and continue to do so. I would probably be dead to be totally honest without the support and guidance from BHT and them fighting and working for my safety."</i></p> <p><i>"Service works with children as well as parents. Feedback from 10 year old (via staff member as she is at school) was sofa surfing then in temporary accommodation with her mum. Now they have their own accommodation and she has her own bedroom. Mum has been supported into work and is much happier. This has all made her life much better."</i></p>
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Appendix 4: Consultation results report

East Sussex Floating Support Service

About this consultation

This consultation is about the proposal to reduce the funding for the East Sussex Floating Support Service. It started on 3 October and closed on 28 November 2024.

Taking part in the consultation

The consultation survey was available to complete online and people could download a printable version. Emails, letters and feedback in phone calls were also accepted.

All of the consultations were promoted in our newsletters for residents, providers and staff. We also shared news stories with partners in the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sectors, to include in their newsletters for residents, organisations and staff.

General posters were shared with library teams and each affected service had a dedicated poster to put up in their service or building. Letters and emails were sent to people currently accessing the service and people who had used it in the last year. We also held consultation meetings in each area of the county.

The consultations were widely promoted in the local media and consultation leads talked about the proposals at relevant stakeholder meetings.

Who took part in the consultation

We received 1,425 responses to this consultation. The table below shows the different ways in which people took part. We also had 8 late survey responses received after the consultation closed.

Respondent method	Total
Survey	1355
Emails	17
Consultation meetings (attendees)	53

A general petition opposing the funding gap proposals was submitted by Lewes Liberal Democrats. It was signed by 100 people.

People were given the option of answering ‘about you’ equality questions in the survey, with 74% of respondents choosing to do so.

- Over half of respondents (53%) were someone who uses or has used the service, followed by someone who works in health and social care (16%).
- We heard from all age ranges, with the top group being over 65 (22%) and 45-54 (15%).
- Just under half were female (48%), while males accounted for 24% of known gender for respondents.
- Respondents were from all areas of East Sussex, with the top areas being Eastbourne, Hastings and Wealden (14%, 13% and 12% respectively).

Key messages

These key messages reflect the feedback received from organisations, groups and individuals across surveys, meetings and other feedback such as emails.

- The majority of people and organisations strongly disagree with the proposal to reduce funding for the East Sussex Floating Support Service, with some viewing the proposal as shameful and immoral.
- The service is immensely valued and seen as a vital lifeline for the most vulnerable in East Sussex. It's very responsive and has much shorter waiting times than other services.
- People said that cutting the service would target the most vulnerable and they are concerned that the reduction in funding would mean the service couldn't run effectively.
- People said that at a time when they've been heading into crisis, with no understanding of the options available to them or how to get the support they need to survive, the service has given them reassurance, genuine person-centred support, and helped to navigate the labyrinth of housing or social care systems.
- Many people praised the service and the outcomes it helps people to achieve. They were also highly complimentary about the staff, expressing how compassionate, understanding and helpful they are.
- A large proportion of respondents explained there is no other service like this that can provide the same level of personalised and flexible support. Many said they wouldn't have known where else to go if this service hadn't been available.
- People particularly value the fact the service offers home visits and face-to-face support for those who would otherwise not be able to access the remote support provision from other organisations.
- People shared how the service provides a wide range of critical support, from general advice on housing, benefits or finance, to filling in detailed applications/forms, and obtaining accommodation, as well as liaising with and accessing the right support from other organisations.
- People who have used the service say the areas which made the most difference to helping them live independently were help to better

manage their mental health and emotional wellbeing, and help to find new accommodation.

- It's felt that the knock-on effects of reducing the service would be far reaching, impacting people's ability to access the support they are entitled to. This would result in people losing out on funding they are entitled to, and being stuck in unsuitable accommodation, becoming homeless, or at risk of dying.
- Professionals in other organisations expressed how knowledgeable and skilled the staff are, and said that they heavily rely on referring people to them for support.
- Without the service, frontline staff in other organisations say they would not be able to fill the gap in support, or have the skills and knowledge to replicate it, meaning people's needs would go unmet.
- Both people who use the service and staff in other organisations said they would not be able to cope without the important role the service plays in the housing system.
- People said that prevention work would be compromised by this proposal, as people's support needs would increase without support. This would push them and their families into crisis and could lead to more people becoming homeless.
- People said the size of the cut would be too great and cause greater demand on services from the NHS, charities, housing organisations, social care and local councils. Moreover, this increase in demand would be more expensive than the cost of maintaining the current budget for the service.
- The top suggestion was not to cut the budget and keep funding the service as it currently stands.
- Some people said it should get more funding or that the amount cut should be reduced, while people also said it would be important to ensure there is still accessible support for the most vulnerable.

Sample quotes

These comments are a small selection of the responses we received in the consultation. They reflect the key themes or offer a specific suggestion.

Organisation comments:

- **Wealden Citizens Advice:** "Floating Support Services remain an important part of the support that we can offer to our clients. The fact that they can support clients with home visits and build that relationship is very important as many of the clients we support have long-term illness, suffer with mental health and/or disability. If we are unable to refer to them there would be a huge gap."

- **Hastings Borough Council:** “We made over 200 referrals in the last 12 months, so it is a service we make considerable use of to prevent homelessness. As a very rough measure it costs us an average of £15,800 per annum to accommodate a household in private TA [temporary accommodation] - so if those 200 households didn’t have their homelessness prevented it would cost us over £3m a year in TA costs.”
- **BHT Sussex (provider):** “Our response concerns the scale and resulting impact of this cut, reducing the contract by £4million, constituting a service reduction of 88.5%. A cut of less severity would retain a service that could perform its key role as an integral part of provision across East Sussex”.
- **Care for Carers:** “These services are vital for carers at risk of homelessness and are a key support for us in enabling some of the carers with the most complex caring roles to continue caring.”
- **East Sussex Children’s Services:** “We know that housing instability can negatively impact a child’s health, development and school performance and often compounds trauma that they are going through or have experienced. East Sussex Floating Support Service provides a valuable service which complements and strengthens the statutory work of our case management teams in supporting children and families to remain in, manage or access safe and suitable housing.”
- **Eastbourne Borough Council:** “The work of BHT in delivering floating support is a critical component to the countywide approach to homelessness prevention. We note that an 88% reduction to this service is proposed, which would fundamentally challenge the gains we have made in reducing homelessness and placements into emergency accommodation. This, in turn, would place further pressures on districts and boroughs in terms of unaffordable and unavoidable costs.”
- **Heads of Housing in East Sussex Authorities:** “The Housing-related Floating Support Service is an integral part of local provision and meeting statutory duties in relation to homelessness prevention. Due to the high demand for homelessness services, there will not be capacity for local housing authorities to continue these interventions. Reducing these services will result in increased demand for statutory homelessness and care services, and a further rise in the number of people living in temporary accommodation and the length of time before people can secure move-on accommodation.”
- **Rother District Council:** “The impact of these proposals is on some of our most vulnerable residents and on the financial position of Rother District Council. The concerns relate both to the degree of budget reduction to the ESFSS and Pathways scheme [separate service] as well as the timeframe in which it is proposed that these budget reductions are made.”

Individual comments:

- “I find this proposal to cut funding morally reprehensible. When there’s a tough decision to be made it’s always the vulnerable and the poor who get

hit the hardest. Often dealing with council paperwork is bewildering and having help in getting what one is entitled to is invaluable.”

- “In my experience this wonderful service is vital. They literally saved my life. I think one shouldn't underestimate the importance of their work for people in crisis, like I was. I could not have managed to survive without their expert help and patient advice and support.”
- “The Floating Support Service has been a lifeline for us during extremely challenging times. They provided essential support and guidance when we needed it most, helping us navigate difficult situations and access resources that improved our quality of life.”
- “There is no other service where a client would be contacted within 24 hours of starting the service and had a support session either over the telephone or face to face within a week of that contact.”
- “This service is pivotal to East Sussex as it provides a home visiting service to vulnerable clients in order to prevent homelessness. Many clients do not have access to the internet, especially the elderly, and being able to visit them at home to support them with important paperwork and access the benefits system ensures inclusion, income maximisation and tenancy sustainment.”
- “We would never have managed the housing forms without the support of the support worker.”
- “They also helped us to fill in very difficult forms to claim what otherwise we may not be able to do by ourselves.”
- “ASC require the support of the specialist teams such as the East Sussex Floating Support Service to be able to offer a comprehensive and knowledgeable service to our clients. Adult Social Care CANNOT [emphasis in original] take on this role as well; we are overrun and running on empty as it is.”
- “Everyone I knew who worked for the service was kind, caring, knowledgeable and just wanted to help people.”
- “Many clients will no longer have bespoke, knowledgeable support with their housing and/or financial needs ,which in turn is likely to increase the disadvantages they are already facing.”
- “88.5% might as well be 100%. It won't be indistinguishable. And if anyone thinks that these are 'savings', just wait and see what time bombs you've just set off.”
- “If it was 88% cut you may as well say it is a closed service as the wait list will be enormous.”
- “The proposed cut in funding is far too large! It seems to us that if this goes ahead you may as well do away with this service.”
- “I couldn't have coped if I did not have the support of BHT.”

- “Without this service I do not know what we would have done!”
- “The Floating Support Service brings badly needed professional help that just isn’t available elsewhere.”
- “BHT is essential to keeping the homeless alive and feeling supported. I cannot express adequately how much BHT has helped me and continue to do so. I would probably be dead to be totally honest without the support and guidance from BHT and them fighting and working for my safety.”
- “Service works with children as well as parents. Feedback from a ten year old (via staff member as she is at school) [who] was sofa surfing then in temporary accommodation with her mum. Now they have their own accommodation and she has her own bedroom. Mum has been supported into work and is much happier. This has all made her life much better.”

Results summary across all methods

Views on the proposal

Survey: 92% of respondents disagree with the proposal to reduce the funding for the East Sussex Floating Support Service. The majority chose strongly disagree over disagree (83% compared to 9%). A small portion of people (4%) agreed with the proposal.

The top 10 themes for why people agree or disagree with the proposal are:

- 1) Service: Service is vital/needed (582 comments)
- 2) Service: Praise of service and its benefit (316)
- 3) Views: Cuts target vulnerable people (266)
- 4) Impact: Couldn't cope without service (189)
- 5) Impact: Increased pressure on other services (149)
- 6) Comment about personal circumstances (125)
- 7) Views: Cuts too big for service to run effectively (117)
- 8) Impact: Poor/no access to support (115)
- 9) Service: Immensely valued (115)
- 10) Views: Worry about where people will get support instead (112)

Emails etc: The most common views were that organisations recognised the need to make saving (10 comments), that the cuts target the most vulnerable (9 comments) and that they will add more cost in the long term (9 comments).

Other common themes are:

- Views: Equivalent services not available (7 comments)
- Views: Already housing crisis in East Sussex (6)

- Views: Other services already struggling (6)
- Views: Will shift cost onto district and boroughs (6)
- Views: Detrimental to disabled people in particular (5)
- Views: Detrimental to people with mental illness in particular (5)
- Views: Disagree (5)
- Views: Need for this service is increasing (5)

Meetings: Where people expressed an opinion they said they disagree with the proposal. People highly value the service and feel it is sad and unfair that the budget could be reduced by so much. They are concerned about their support and where people would go in future for help, as they would have been lost without the service.

The Council needs to remember its duty of care. This service offers a level of support and understanding that isn't available from statutory services, while the staff bring in huge amounts of funding into the area through helping people to claim benefits.

Lots of people praised the service and how it has helped them. It was described as magnificent, amazing, and invaluable. Lots of people also talked about how amazing the staff are and how the support they provide is tailored to them. The staff advocate for people and champion their cause when other services won't listen.

The service helps people to navigate the system, ensuring they can access the benefits and support they are entitled to. People talked about their struggles dealing with housing services, private landlords and the police, and how those services don't care or listen, whereas this service does.

The service is really responsive and has much shorter waiting times than other services. The fact that it offers in-person support at home is critical, particularly for those who aren't online or who struggle to talk on the phone.

The service has supported people with advice and advocacy to access financial support, maximising benefits, accessing care, housing and courses, getting ID, opening bank accounts, securing Blue Badges and appealing negative decisions from statutory agencies.

It has also helped people to move from unsafe and unsuitable accommodation to something better. This has helped people to improve their life by finding work and having their children live with them.

Potential impacts of the proposal

Survey: 1,206 people answered this question and the top 10 themes are:

- 1) Impact: Poor/no access to support (261 comments)
- 2) Impact: Couldn't cope without service (168)
- 3) Impact: People won't get the support they need (157)
- 4) Views: Worry about where people will get support instead (140)

- 5) Impact: Negative impact (unspecified) (131)
- 6) Impact: Homelessness (128)
- 7) Impact: Poorer mental health (122)
- 8) Comment about personal circumstances (121)
- 9) Views: Cuts target vulnerable people (113)
- 10) Service: Service is vital/needed (103)

Emails etc: The most common impacts raised were about increased pressure on other services (13 comments), the increased cost for other organisations (10 comments), and people becoming homeless (8 comments).

Other common impacts are:

- Impact: Increased burden on family/carer (7 comments)
- Impact: Couldn't cope without service (7)
- Impact: Significant increase in people living in temporary accommodation (7)
- Impact: Poorer mental health (6)
- Impact: Financial hardship (5)
- Impact: Poorer access to support (5)
- Impact: Poorer physical health (5)

Meetings: Most people who use the service are referred by statutory organisations, so if the service is reduced it would increase the pressure on those organisations.

Other services that can help with similar issues are already overwhelmed and have long waiting times. If the service was reduced it would severely limit the number of people who could be supported and people would wait a lot longer to get help.

Digital inclusion is a real concern if the service is reduced and it is likely that a lot less people would be supported to apply for the benefits they are entitled to, such as pension credit, attendance allowance and the winter fuel allowance. Applying for support with benefits, housing and mental health is complicated and it can be difficult to navigate the system when you are unwell or in crisis.

Without the support of this service people could miss out on funding that could improve their financial situation. They could also be stuck living in unsafe housing and be at risk of becoming homeless. It would make it harder for people living in temporary accommodation to find work and have their children with them.

Local authorities have a duty to assess and provide services, so cutting the service would affect the Council's ability to meet that duty. There would be a risk of people self-harming and a real risk to life if people are left without this support.

Suggestions

General suggestions are covered in the background report on the funding gap consultations, while service-specific ones are included here.

Survey:

- Suggestion: Don't cut service (169 comments)
- Suggestion: Increase rather than cut service funding (28)
- Suggestion: Don't cut as much as proposed (24)
- Suggestion: Continue to support the most vulnerable (26)
- Suggestion: Merge or reorganise services (8)
- Suggestion: Continue to provide accessible support (7)
- Suggestion: Prioritise welfare of people impacted who currently use service (4)
- Suggestion: Review number of service managers (4)
- Suggestion: Ensure equivalent alternative support is available (2)
- Suggestion: Improve service communication (2)
- Suggestion: Increase awareness of service (2)
- Suggestion: Increase service support offer (2)
- Suggestion: Increase training for staff (2)
- Suggestion: Make access to service means tested (2)
- Suggestion: Prioritise quick response for those in need (2)
- Suggestion: Prioritise support for filling in forms/applications (2)

Emails etc:

The top suggestions were:

- Suggestions: More joint working (7 comments)
- Suggestion: Focus on prevention (4 comments)
- Suggestion: Continue to support the most vulnerable (3)
- Suggestion: Don't cut prevention services (3)
- Suggestion: Utilise existing and effective volunteer/charity support services (3)
- Suggestion: Don't cut service (2)
- Suggestion: Extend transition period of closing the service for partners to develop joint approach to homeless prevention (2)

Meetings: The following suggestions were all made by one person:

- Don't cut such an extreme amount, but find a better balance that would allow the work to continue more like it does now, and give more time for the provider to look for other funding. The service should be promoted better so people know about it.

- Use places like doctors' surgeries to promote things people are entitled to, like pension credit.
- People could pay for the cost of their support.
- Measure the impact of the service so its value can be evidenced.

Other topics

Survey: The survey included a question that gave people the chance to make any additional comments or suggestions. The top themes for the comments were:

- Service: Service is vital/needed (80)
- Service: Praise of service and its benefit (61)
- Views: Cuts target vulnerable people (61)
- Impact: Increased pressure on other services (51)
- Views: Worry about where people will get support instead (47)
- Service: Praise of staff (46)
- Views: Adds more cost in the long term for other services and/or East Sussex County Council (43)
- Comment about personal circumstances (34)
- Impact: Poorer mental health (30)
- Impact: Negative impact (unspecified) (30)

Emails etc: The top other comments were about the consultation process/information (3 comments) and that East Sussex County Council must provide more information about alternative and capacity (3 comments).

Service specific questions

We asked additional service-specific questions in this survey.

Where people would have gone for support if the service hadn't been available: The majority said they wouldn't have known where else to go (436 comments).

The other top themes were:

- Views: Equivalent services not available (140 comments)
- Citizens Advice Bureau (96)
- Local council (71)
- Comment about personal circumstances (66)
- Council unhelpful (50)

- People supported by service struggle to access/engage with other services (45)
- Would have been homeless (41)

Which areas of support have made the biggest difference to helping people to live independently: The top answers were: help to better manage their mental health and emotional wellbeing (37%), and help to find new accommodation (35%).

The other top themes were:

- Stay in existing accommodation (28%)
- Improve your home environment (28%)
- Increase your income (26%)
- Manage your budget (24%)
- Better manage your physical health (21%)

Charts and tables

Survey responses including about you information

1) Are you completing the survey as:

There were 1,340 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Someone who uses/has used the Floating Support Service	714	52.69%
The family or carer of someone who uses/has used the Floating Support Service	101	7.45%
Someone who works for the Floating Support Service	59	4.35%
Someone who lives in East Sussex	115	8.49%
Someone who works in health or social care in East Sussex	215	15.87%
Someone who works in housing in East Sussex	50	3.69%
Someone who works in the voluntary or community sector	52	3.84%
Other (please provide details below)	34	2.51%
Not Answered	15	1.11%

If you ticked 'other' please provide details here:

There were 65 responses to this part of the question.

• Comment on personal circumstances	20
• I refer into service	8
• Comment re service	4
• Previously worked for the service	3
• Housing officer	3
• Responding on behalf of client	3
• Citizens Advice	3
• ESCC employee	3
• Family/friend of someone working at service	2
• Client	2
• Job Centre	2
• Charity	2
• Community support worker	1
• Domestic abuse service	1
• Never heard of service	1
• Voluntary worker	1
• Probation service	1
• Social worker	1
• Social prescriber	1
• Foodbank	1
• Local council	1
• BHT	1

2) How much do you agree or disagree with the proposal to reduce the funding for the Floating Support Service?

There were 1,349 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	41	3.03%
Agree	14	1.03%
Neither agree nor disagree	37	2.73%
Disagree	118	8.71%
Strongly disagree	1118	82.51%
Not sure	21	1.55%

Not Answered	6	0.44%
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Please use the box below to tell us why you agree or disagree:

There were 1,205 responses to this part of the question.

Comment theme	Total
Service: Service is vital/needed	582
Service: Praise of service and its benefit	316
Views: Cuts target vulnerable people	266
Impact: Couldn't cope without service	189
Impact: Increased pressure on other services	149
Comment about personal circumstances	125
Views: Cuts too big for service to run effectively	117
Impact: Poor/no access to support	115
Service: Immensely valued	115
Views: Worry about where people will get support instead	112
Service: Praise of staff	110
Service: Services rely on referring people to them for support	109
Service: Lifeline to people	107
Views: Unhappy/disagree with proposal	102
Impact: Homelessness	94
Impact: Negative impact (unspecified)	92
Views: Already housing crisis in East Sussex	91
Views: Equivalent services not available	91
Impact: People won't get the support they need	90
Views: Adds more cost in the long term for other services and/or East Sussex County Council	89
Service: Very accessible	80
Service: Prevents homelessness	78
Impact: Poorer mental health	73
Impact: Loss of support filling in forms/applications	73
Impact: Loss of benefits/financial advice	72
Views: Need for this service is increasing	68
Service: Provides person-centred support	61
Impact: More people in crisis	58
Views: Detrimental to the elderly in particular	57

Impact: Loss to the community/society	53
Views: Disagree with size of the cut	53
Impact: People at increased risk without service	50
Impact: Increased burden on frontline workers supporting people	49
Suggestion: Don't cut service	48
Views: Detrimental to people with mental illness in particular	43
Impact: Poorer physical health	41
Views: Services already limited	41
Impact: Loss of signposting to further support	40
Impact: Financial hardship	39
Service: Face-to-face support is important	34
Impact: Ability to have a home/suitable home	32
Service: Gives people someone to reach out to	32
Views: Short sighted	31
Views: I wouldn't know where else to go	29
Views: Service already under pressure with capacity	28
Views: Morally wrong	27
Impact: Increased support needs	25
Service: People would not be in a suitable home without service	25
Service: Helped me rebuild my life	24
Views: Unemployment	24
Views: Priorities are wrong	23
Views: Detrimental to disabled people in particular	23
Views: Other services already struggling	22
Impact: Risk of abuse/domestic abuse	21
Impact: Isolation	20
Service: High quality	19
Suggestion: Increase rather than cut service funding	19
Views: Everyone deserves access to support	19
Views: Recognise need to make savings	19
Impact: More people having to use temporary accommodation	18
Impact: People could/will die	17
Other: Criticism of government	17
Service: Advocates for the people it supports	16

Service: Support navigating housing/benefits/social care system	16
Service: Would not be alive without service	15
Impact: Less independence	14
Suggestion: Don't cut as much as proposed	14
Views: Shameful proposal	14
Views: Unacceptable for social care staff to do this work instead	14
Suggestion: Focus on prevention	13
Impact: Detrimental to the family and/or carer of the people affected	12
Service: Criticism of service effectiveness	12
Views: Cuts create inequality	12
Other: Criticism of council	11
Impact: Cause hardship and poverty	10
Other: Comment on other council spending	10
Other: Comment on consultation process or information	9
Unspecific/unclear comment	9
Impact: Increase in crime	8
Impact: Lower quality of life	8
Impact: More hospital admissions	8
Suggestion: East Sussex County Council should manage resources better	8
Suggestion: Cut elsewhere	8
Views: Service already underfunded	8
Service: Flexible support	7
Views: Service vital for young people and their prosperity	7
Impact: Cause hardship and poverty	6
Other: Comment re government spending	6
Suggestion: Continue to support the most vulnerable	6
Views: Recognise need to make savings	6
Views: Cuts unfair/unequal	6
Views: Same support can be received elsewhere	6
Views: Already can't cope with support they have	5
Service: Supports the family/friends of people who access the service	5
Suggestion: Cut management salaries	5

View: Poor experience of service	5
Impact: Cannot rely on care from family	4
Service: Efficient	4
Suggestion: Might as well cut entire service	4
Views: Comfort knowing the support is available	4
Views: Detrimental to neurodivergent people in particular	4
Views: Service is not a priority	4
Impact: People would have to go into care	3
Impact: Lose my current support	3
Impact: Use of alcohol and/or drugs	3
Other: Comment re consultation financial figures	3
Received no support from service	3
Service: Service built trust with people who they support	3
Suggestion: Cut East Sussex County Council staff pay	3
Suggestion: More joint working	3
Suggestion: Review number of service managers	3
Suggestion: Tax the highest earners more	3
Views: Agree with proposal	3
Views: Cutting service is a mistake	3
Views: Disagree with proposal based on anticipated impact given in consultation overview	3
Views: Service has already suffered from cuts	3
Service: Cost effective	2
Suggestion: Merge or reorganise services	2
Suggestion: Equip other service staff with housing information	2
Suggestion: Remove and condense office buildings	2
Views: People receiving support lack advocacy and representation	2
Views: Detrimental to young people in particular	2
Impact: Education	1
Impact: Forces people to leave the county	1
Impact: People discouraged from seeking help	1
Impact: Quit my job	1
Impact: Transition will be hard for people supported by service	1
Not sure	1
Comment relating to different service	1

Other: Comment re Care Act	1
Other: Quote from report	1
Other: Quote from report re deprivation in East Sussex	1
Service: Criticism of service efficiency	1
Suggestion: Charge people more to use services	1
Suggestion: Continue to provide accessible support	1
Suggestion: Cut named public health service	1
Suggestion: Ensure equivalent alternative support is available	1
Suggestion: Ensure people pay their tax	1
Suggestion: Fund service out of NHS budget	1
Suggestion: Increase service support offer	1
Suggestion: Invest in upskilling staff	1
Suggestion: Keep parts of the service running	1
Suggestion: Make access to services means tested	1
Suggestion: Pay service staff fairly	1
Suggestion: Provide ongoing support for people	1
Suggestion: Reduce benefits for those not seeking employment	1
Suggestion: Reduce forms given to ASC people	1
View: Cuts breach disability rights	1
View: Decision makers lack any understanding of needing this support	1
Views: No experience or knowledge of service	1
Views: Need to know what other options for cuts are first	1

3) How would the proposal to reduce funding for the Floating Support Service affect you or someone you care for?

There were 1,206 responses to this part of the question.

Comment theme	Total
Impact: Poor/no access to support	261
Impact: Couldn't cope without service	168
Impact: People won't get the support they need	157
Views: Worry about where people will get support instead	140
Impact: Negative impact (unspecified)	131
Impact: Homelessness	128
Impact: Poorer mental health	122

Comment about personal circumstances	121
Views: Cuts target vulnerable people	113
Service: Service is vital/needed	103
Impact: Increased pressure on other services	91
Service: Praise of service and its benefit	81
Impact: Loss of benefits/financial advice	76
Impact: Loss of support filling in forms/applications	76
Impact: Financial hardship	71
Impact: More people in crisis	70
It does not affect me	70
Service: Services rely on referring people to them for support	64
Views: Equivalent services not available	60
Impact: Ability to have a home/suitable home	58
Service: Very accessible	54
Impact: Cause hardship and poverty	51
Impact: Detrimental to the family and/or carer of the people affected	50
Impact: People at increased risk without service	46
Views: I wouldn't know where else to go	45
Impact: Loss of signposting to further support	44
Impact: Poorer physical health	43
Service: Lifeline to people	43
Impact: Increased burden on frontline workers supporting people	42
Impact: It may affect me in the future	42
Service: Gives people someone to reach out to	39
Impact: Unemployment	37
Views: Adds more cost in the long term for other services and/or East Sussex County Council	36
Views: Cuts too big for service to run effectively	35
Service: Provides person-centred support	34
Impact: People could/will die	33
Views: Detrimental to the elderly in particular	33
Impact: Isolation	32
Service: Praise of staff	32
Views: Detrimental to people with mental illness in particular	32

Views: Comfort knowing the support is available	30
Impact: Lose my current support	29
Impact: Less independence	28
Impact: Poorer mental health	25
Impact: Loss to the community/society	20
Views: Detrimental to disabled people in particular	20
Impact: Lower quality of life	19
Service: Advocates for the people it supports	19
Service: Immensely valued	19
Service: People would not be in a suitable home without service	19
Views: Services already limited	18
Impact: Risk of abuse/domestic abuse	17
Impact: Increased support needs	17
Service: Prevents homelessness	17
Service: Face-to-face support is important	16
Suggestion: Don't cut service	16
Service: Support navigating housing/benefits/social care system	15
Impact: Ability to find work	14
Not sure	13
Service: Someone to listen to you	12
Views: Other services already struggling	11
Views: Priorities are wrong	11
Views: Already housing crisis in East Sussex	11
Unspecific/unclear comment	10
Views: Need for this service is increasing	10
Views: Unhappy/disagree with proposal	10
Views: Everyone deserves access to support	10
Service: Criticism of service effectiveness	9
Service: Service built trust with people they support	9
Views: Morally wrong	9
Impact: Cannot rely on care from family	8
Impact: More people having to use temporary accommodation	8
Service: Would not be alive without service	8
Views: Short sighted	8

Views: Service already under pressure with capacity	8
Views: Service vital for young people and their prosperity	8
Other: Comment on consultation process or information	7
Views: Cuts create inequality	7
Views: Unacceptable for social care staff to do this work instead	7
Impact: People discouraged from seeking help	6
Other: Criticism of council	6
Other: Criticism of government	6
Service: Supports the family/friends of people who access the service	6
Impact: Education	5
Impact: More hospital admissions	5
Received no support from service	5
Service: High quality	5
Views: Detrimental to neurodivergent people in particular	5
Impact: Use of alcohol and/or drugs	4
Views: People abuse service/social care system	4
Views: Detrimental to young people in particular	4
Views: Already can't cope with support they have	3
Impact: Poorer physical health	3
Other: Comment on other council spending	3
Service: Cost effective	3
Service: Rebuilds lives	3
View: Poor experience of service	3
Views: Service already underfunded	3
Impact: Lack of active outreach to those in need	2
Impact: Loss of skilled staff	2
Impact: Loss to the community/society	2
Suggestion: Cut East Sussex County Council staff pay	2
Suggestion: Don't cut as much as proposed	2
Suggestion: Increase rather than cut service funding	2
Suggestion: More joint working	2
View: Decision makers lack any understanding of needing this support	2

Views: People supported by service struggle to access/engage with other services	2
Views: I am passionate about this service	2
Impact: More people going to prison	1
Impact: Ability to maintain work and/or carer responsibilities	1
Impact: Ability to support the people I work with	1
Impact: Delay in discharge from bedded care	1
Impact: Fear for the future	1
Impact: I would struggle to evict tenants safely	1
Impact: I'd refer people to alternative services	1
Impact: Increase in crime	1
Impact: Loss of support to adapt my home	1
Impact: People would have to go into care	1
Impact: Relapse	1
Other: Comment clearly relates to different service	1
Other: Comment re government spending	1
Other: Comment with link to report	1
Service: Criticism of staff and their knowledge/skills	1
Service: Gives one dedicated support officer	1
Suggestion: Careful planning/assessments needed before happens	1
Suggestion: Charge people more to use services	1
Suggestion: Continue to support the most vulnerable	1
Suggestion: Cut councillors' pay	1
Suggestion: Cut elsewhere	1
Suggestion: Cut management salaries	1
Suggestion: Cut non-essential parts of the service	1
Suggestion: East Sussex County Council should manage resources better	1
Suggestion: Reduce service in gradual stages	1
Suggestion: Ring-fence funding for this service	1
Suggestion: Run fundraising activities	1
Views: Catastrophic to cut so many services at the same time	1
Views: Currently lack of safeguarding for East Sussex residents	1
Views: Cuts help alleviate pressure on other services	1
Views: Cutting service is a mistake	1

Views: Disagree with size of the cut	1
Views: Lack of hope	1
Views: Poor experience of other services	1
Views: Same support can be received elsewhere	1
Views: Shameful proposal	1

4) If the service had not been available when you needed help, where would you have gone instead for support with housing?

There were 890 responses to this part of the question.

Comment theme	Total
I wouldn't know where else to go/Not sure	436
Views: Equivalent services not available	140
Citizens Advice Bureau	96
Local council	71
Comment about personal circumstances	66
Council unhelpful	50
People struggle to access/engage with other services	45
Would have been homeless	41
Impact: Couldn't cope without service	29
Service: Praise of service and its benefit	28
Long wait time for other services	26
Local authority/adult social care	26
Poor experience of other services/named providers	25
Impact: Poor/no access to support	24
Other services already struggling	22
Family member support	20
Impact: Poorer mental health	16
Service: Face-to-face support is important	16
Views: Services already limited	14
Friends' support	13
Local charity	13
Service: People would not be in a suitable home without service	12
Service: Would not be alive without service	12
Views: Alternative support options not adequate	12

Views: Worry about where people will get support instead	12
Received no support from service	11
Service: Very accessible	11
Unspecific/unclear comment	11
Age Concern	9
Impact: Increased pressure on other services	9
Service: Praise of staff	9
Impact: Loss of support filling in forms/applications	7
Brighton Housing Trust	6
Impact: Detrimental to the family and/or carer of the people affected	6
Impact: Cannot rely on care from family	5
Shelter	5
Solicitors	5
Council hard to contact	4
GP	4
Local MP	4
Food Bank	3
Hastings Advice and Representation Centre	3
Hospital	3
Housing Associations	3
Housing Authority	3
Impact: Isolation	3
Library	3
Mental health services	3
Other housing services	3
Samaritans	3
Seaview	3
Search online	3
Age UK	2
Council should signpost to adequate alternative services	2
Emergency shelters	2
I would go to my GP	2
Impact: Less independence	2
Impact: Cause hardship and poverty	2

Impact: Loss of benefits/financial advice	2
Impact: People at increased risk	2
Police	2
Service: Advocates for the people it supports	2
Service: Service is vital/needed	2
Views: Already housing crisis in East Sussex	2
Views: Comfort knowing the support is available	2
Views: Cuts create inequality	2
Views: Detrimental to people with mental illness in particular	2
Views: Service already under pressure with capacity	2
Would have waited until my circumstances declined	2
Young Men's Christian Association	2
Advocacy service	1
Agency	1
Ask my manager where to refer people	1
Ask people around me	1
Association of Carers	1
Benefits agency	1
Care for the Carers	1
Charities limited in support they can provide	1
Church	1
Community Outreach Service	1
Counsellor	1
East Sussex Housing	1
Eastbourne homes	1
Emergency services	1
East Sussex Recovery Alliance	1
Government	1
Hastings Advice and Representation Centre	1
Homelink	1
Current services previous name given	1
Impact: Cannot afford private support	1
Impact: Fear for the future	1
Impact: More people having to use temporary accommodation	1
Impact: People could die	1

Impact: People discouraged from seeking help	1
Impact: People would have to go into care	1
Impact: People won't get the support they need	1
Impact: Unemployment	1
Impact: Use of drug/alcohol	1
Internet	1
Job Centre	1
Lack of trust in other services	1
Local media	1
Macmillan	1
Nearest housing support service	1
Other: Criticism of government	1
Poor experience with local MP	1
Private agency	1
Psychiatric Unit	1
Rough Sleepers Initiative	1
Armed Forces charity, the Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmen's Families Association	1
Sussex Community Development Association	1
Service found me	1
Service: Gives people someone to reach out to	1
Service: Lifeline to people	1
Service: Support navigating housing/benefits/social care system	1
Social media forums	1
Social Prescriber	1
Southdown Housing	1
Single Point of Advice (SPoA)	1
Stonewall	1
Suggestion: Council should provide directory of accommodation	1
Sussex Homemove	1
Unable to comment	1
Victim Support Service	1
Views: Cuts too big for service to run effectively	1
Views: Detrimental to neurodivergent people in particular	1

Views: Detrimental to the elderly in particular	1
Views: Lack of information on other services available	1

5) Which of the following areas of support from the service have made the biggest difference to helping you live independently?

There were 880 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Stay in existing accommodation	377	27.82%
Find new accommodation	471	34.76%
Improve your home environment	376	27.75%
Increase your income	353	26.05%
Manage your budget	319	23.54%
Reduce your debts	260	19.19%
Better manage your physical health	287	21.18%
Better manage your mental health and emotional wellbeing	495	36.53%
Avoid harm from others	154	11.37%
Manage the misuse of drugs or alcohol	75	5.54%
Use computers and/or digital devices	174	12.84%
Use health services	188	13.87%
Reduce self-harm	116	8.56%
Not Answered	475	35.06%

Please tell us about anything else the service has supported you with that has made a difference to helping you live independently:

There were 531 responses to this part of the question.

Comment theme	Total
Filling in forms	74
Support with benefits	72
Help with housing	64
Financial support/advice	61
Someone who listened to me	61

Avoid feeling overwhelmed	40
Comment about personal circumstances	39
Build independence	35
Help with mental health	35
Service: Praise of staff	32
Build confidence	28
Access to food and/or fuel vouchers	27
Clear advice on my options	26
Managing a tenancy	26
Service: Provides person-centred support	25
Signposting to other services	25
Accessing disabilities support	24
Received no support from service	24
Safe environment	23
Helped me find a suitable home	21
Liaising with other services	20
Service: Praise of service and its benefit	20
Service: Very accessible	20
Applying for housing	19
Getting utilities/furniture for my home	19
Moral support	19
Gave me hope	18
Help with physical health	18
Views: Comfort knowing the support is available	17
Information Technology/Digital support	15
Legal advice	15
Managing my home	15
Unspecific/unclear comment	13
Regular check-ups from staff	12
Service: Face-to-face support is important	12
Helps at time of crisis	11
Reduce isolation	11
Safeguarding people they support and/or their family	11
Adaptations to my home	9
Service provides a wide range of support	9

Feeling supported	9
Ability to afford living essentials	8
Build my knowledge	8
Liaising with local authority/adult social care	8
Service: Service is vital/needed	8
Service: Prevents homelessness	6
Support with addiction	6
Helps rebuild lives	5
Impact: Couldn't cope without service	5
Service: Would not be alive without service	5
The ability to access help	5
Views: I wouldn't know where else to go	5
Views: Poor experience of service	5
Help with life skills	4
Not sure	4
Accessing pension credit	3
Changed their life	3
Giving me a voice	3
Increases independence	3
Phone calls	3
Service: Lifeline to people	3
Support to attend appointments	3
Views: Worry about where people will get support instead	3
Views: Detrimental to people with mental illness in particular	3
Accessing food banks	2
Get into work	2
Getting a personal assistant	2
Improve my quality of life	2
Keeping updated with relevant information	2
Service: Criticism of service effectiveness	2
Staying in my own home	2
Suggestion: Don't cut service	2
Support with basic living needs	2
Views: Service vital for young people and their prosperity	2

Access to healthcare	1
Access to translation when meeting support services	1
Applying for identification documents	1
Appointing a Power of Attorney	1
Build social skills	1
Dementia support	1
Having a place for friends/family to visit	1
Impact: Loss to the community/society	1
Impact: People at increased risk without service	1
Impact: More people in crisis	1
Integrating with the community	1
Navigating eviction	1
Other: Criticism of council	1
Other: Criticism of government	1
Regular visits from other services	1
Respite	1
Setting up a bank account	1
Social interactions	1
Support to settle in new accommodation	1
Understanding letter	1
Views: People abuse service/social care system	1
Views: Cuts too big for service to run effectively	1
Views: Detrimental to neurodivergent people in particular	1
Writing letters	1

6) Do you have any other suggestions or comments you would like to make?

There were 616 responses to this part of the question.

Comment theme	Total
Suggestion: Don't cut service	169
Service: Service is vital/needed	80
Service: Praise of service and its benefit	61
Views: Cuts target vulnerable people	61
Impact: Increased pressure on other services	51
Views: Worry about where people will get support instead	47

Service: Praise of staff	46
Views: Adds more cost in the long term for other services and/or East Sussex County Council	43
Comment about personal circumstances	34
Impact: Poorer mental health	30
Impact: Negative impact (unspecified)	30
Impact: More people in crisis	28
Suggestion: Increase rather than cut service funding	28
Impact: Poor/no access to support	27
Impact: Homelessness	26
Suggestion: Continue to support the most vulnerable	26
Views: Equivalent services not available	26
Impact: Couldn't cope without service	25
Views: Recognise need to make savings	25
Suggestion: Don't cut as much as proposed	24
Impact: Loss to the community/society	23
Service: Lifeline to people	23
Suggestion: East Sussex County Council should manage resources better	22
Views: Proposal is morally wrong	21
Views: Priorities are wrong	20
Impact: People won't get the support they need	18
Other: Comment on consultation process or information	18
Views: Unhappy/disagree with proposal	18
Views: Cuts too big for service to run effectively	18
Suggestion: Cut elsewhere	16
Views: Need for this service is increasing	16
Views: Short sighted	15
Other: Comment on other council spending	14
Service: Very accessible	14
Impact: People at increased risk without service	13
Impact: People could/will die	13
Impact: Financial hardship	12
Impact: Poorer physical health	12
Views: Detrimental to the elderly in particular	12
Service: Face-to-face support is important	11

Suggestion: More joint working	11
Service: Gives people someone to reach out to	10
Service: Immensely valued	10
Impact: Loss of benefits/financial advice	9
Views: Services already limited	9
Views: Already housing crisis in East Sussex	9
Views: Other services already struggling	9
Other: Criticism of government	8
Service: Prevents homelessness	8
Suggestion: Merge or reorganise services	8
Views: Detrimental to people with mental illness in particular	8
Impact: Lower quality of life	7
Other: Comment re government budget	7
Other: Criticism of council	7
Suggestion: Continue to provide accessible support	7
Unspecific/unclear comment	7
Impact: Less independence	6
Service: Services rely on referring people to them for support	6
Suggestion: Cut management salaries	6
Suggestion: Focus on prevention	6
Views: Worry about where people will get support instead	6
Views: Cuts unfair/unequal	6
Views: Detrimental to disabled people in particular	6
Impact: Increase in support needs	5
Impact: Loss of support filling in forms/applications	5
Impact: More hospital admissions	5
Service: Provides person-centred support	5
Suggestion: Do things differently and innovate	5
Suggestion: Listen to the consultation feedback	5
Suggestion: Prioritise support for mental health	5
Suggestion: Remove and condense office buildings	5
Views: Service already under pressure with capacity	5
Impact: Cause hardship and poverty	4
Impact: Detrimental to the family and/or carer of the people affected	4

Other: Comment re government spending	4
Suggestion: Prioritise welfare of people impacted who currently use service	4
Suggestion: Review number of service managers	4
Views: Find an alternative way to save money	4
Views: People will lose their job	4
Impact: Lower quality of life	3
Impact: Increased burden on frontline workers supporting people	3
Other: Comment re government	3
Service: Criticism of service efficiency	3
Service: Advocates for the people it supports	3
Service: Supports the family/friends of people accessing the service	3
Views: People abuse service/social care system/system	3
Views: Cuts create inequality	3
Views: Cutting service is a mistake	3
Views: Service funding should go to other services	3
Views: Service vital for young people and their prosperity	3
Views: Shameful proposal	3
Views: Too many proposed cuts by East Sussex County Council at once	3
Impact: People would have to go into care	2
Impact: Ability to have a home/suitable home	2
Impact: Cannot rely on care from family	2
Impact: Loss of signposting to further support	2
Impact: Use of alcohol and/or drugs	2
Other: Comment re national finances	2
Other: Criticism of motivation behind proposal	2
Received no support from the service	2
Service: High quality	2
Service: Service built trust with people they support	2
Service: Service provides a wide range of support	2
Service: Would not be alive without service	2
Suggestion: Better use of funding	2
Suggestion: Cut councillors' pay	2

Suggestion: Ensure equivalent alternative support is available	2
Suggestion: Focus on providing stable and affordable housing	2
Suggestion: Improve service communication	2
Suggestion: Increase awareness of service	2
Suggestion: Increase service support offer	2
Suggestion: Increase training for staff	2
Suggestion: Look for private investors	2
Suggestion: Make access to services means tested	2
Suggestion: Prioritise quick response to those in need	2
Suggestion: Raise money from the highest earners	2
Suggestion: Reduce use of external private services	2
Suggestion: Tax the highest earners more	2
View: Decision makers lack any understanding of needing this support	2
Views: Comfort knowing the support is available	2
Views: Disagree with size of the cut	2
Views: Poor experience of other services	2
Views: Poor experience of service	2
Suggestion: Prioritise support for filling in forms/applications	2
Views: Already can't cope with support they have	1
Impact: Increase in crime	1
Impact: Isolation	1
Impact: More people having to use temporary accommodation	1
Impact: Reduce trust in East Sussex County Council	1
Other: Allow redundancy requests	1
Other: Comment on ineffectiveness of support in the long term	1
Other: Comment on survey	1
Other: Comment re impact of government actions	1
Other: Comment re impact on local politics	1
Other: Comment re law	1
Other: Comment re rent eligibility	1
Other: Unsure why East Sussex County Council cannot afford budget gap	1
Service: Support navigating housing/benefits/social care system	1

Suggestion: Focus on quality not just cost with contractors	1
Suggestion: Reduce public transport costs	1
Suggestion: Use technology	1
Suggestion: Use volunteers	1
Suggestion: Better monitoring of people's support needs	1
Suggestion: Better monitoring of service performance	1
Suggestion: Carry out full risk assessment of reducing service	1
Suggestion: Carry out risk assessment for other services impacted	1
Suggestion: Charge for use of NHS services	1
Suggestion: Close service and signpost to alternative support	1
Suggestion: Co-locate services	1
Suggestion: Consider the impact it has on the most vulnerable	1
Suggestion: Control population size	1
Suggestion: Cut Learning Disability services	1
Suggestion: Cut operational costs	1
Suggestion: Cut named Public Health service	1
Suggestion: Cut services supporting the least need	1
Suggestion: Develop the service with co-production	1
Suggestion: Education in schools on life skills	1
Suggestion: Find other ways to generate income	1
Suggestion: Focus on building young people's independence	1
Suggestion: Focus on helping people understand options available to them	1
Suggestion: Generate income from non-health-related/essential services and events	1
Suggestion: Hire compassionate staff	1
Suggestion: Improve service responsiveness	1
Suggestion: Incentivise the remaining support	1
Suggestion: Increase council tax	1
Suggestion: Invest in more accommodation	1
Suggestion: Joint transport between services	1
Suggestion: Limit amount of support per person	1
Suggestion: Lobby the government	1
Suggestion: Make decisions after May elections	1
Suggestion: Make small even cuts across all services	1

Suggestion: Manage immigration and/or international aid better	1
Suggestion: Offer group/peer support	1
Suggestion: Prioritise accessible support	1
Suggestion: Prioritise housing support	1
Suggestion: Prioritise support for adults and children differently	1
Suggestion: Prioritise support for dementia	1
Suggestion: Prioritise support for domestic abuse victims	1
Suggestion: Produce more self-help resources	1
Suggestion: Promote house sharing	1
Suggestion: Provide clearer information on support available for residents	1
Suggestion: Provide more person-centred/co-produced support	1
Suggestion: Provide more support for blind people	1
Suggestion: Reduce benefits for those not seeking employment	1
Suggestion: Reduce homelessness	1
Suggestion: Reduce public transport salaries	1
Suggestion: Reduce service in gradual stages	1
Suggestion: Reduce tax for the lowest earners	1
Suggestion: Review housing benefit payments	1
Suggestion: Stricter enforcement of fines (e.g., parking)	1
Suggestion: Utilise staff skills better	1
Suggestion: Work closely with service to mitigate impact	1
Views: Concern re unpredictable outcomes	1
Views: Curious re impact of not balancing the budget	1
Views: Detrimental to neurodivergent people in particular	1
Views: I am passionate about this service	1
Views: Social Care system is broken	1

About you equality questions

People were given the option of answering these questions, with 996 choosing to take part and 359 choosing not to answer them.

What age are you?

There were 955 responses to this part of the question, one of which was not an age.

Age	Total	Percentage of respondents
Under 18	1	<1%
18-24	26	2%
25-34	80	6%
35-44	122	9%
45-54	203	15%
55-59	104	8%
60-64	116	9%
65+	302	22%
Not answered	401	30%

What is your gender?

There were 993 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Female	657	48.49%
Male	328	24.21%
Non-binary	3	0.22%
Prefer to self-describe (please write in below)	0	0.00%
Prefer not to say	5	0.37%
Not Answered	362	26.72%

Self-described gender:

There were 5 responses to this part of the question:

- Comment on relevance/motive behind question x 3
- Transgender female
- Female

Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

There were 990 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	976	72.03%
No (please write in your gender identity below)	5	0.37%
Prefer not to say	9	0.66%
Not Answered	365	26.94%

Gender identity:

There were 8 responses to this part of the question:

- Comment on relevance/motive behind question x 4
- Female x 2
- Man
- Unspecific/unclear

What is your ethnic group?

There were 986 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
White English/Welsh/Scottish /Northern Irish/British	868	64.06%
White Irish	18	1.33%
White Gypsy/Irish Traveler	4	0.30%
White Roma	1	0.07%
Any other White background (please write in below)	33	2.44%
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	4	0.30%
Mixed White and Black African	6	0.44%
Mixed White and Asian	6	0.44%
Any other Mixed or Multiple background (please write in below)	2	0.15%
Asian or Asian British Indian	1	0.07%
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	3	0.22%
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	4	0.30%
Asian or Asian British Chinese	0	0.00%
Any other Asian background (please write in below)	5	0.37%

Black or Black British Caribbean	3	0.22%
Black or Black British African background (please write in below)	5	0.37%
Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background (please write in below)	1	0.07%
Arab	1	0.07%
Any other ethnic group (please write in below)	7	0.52%
Prefer not to say	14	1.03%
Not Answered	369	27.23%

Other:

There were 45 responses to this part of the question. People provided names of countries across Asia, Europe, and America; specific White, Black, and Mixed ethnicities; and comments on the motivations behind the questions.

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

There were 972 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
'Straight' / Heterosexual	851	62.80%
Gay or Lesbian	38	2.80%
Bisexual	26	1.92%
Prefer to self-describe (please write in below)	8	0.59%
Prefer not to say	49	3.62%
Not Answered	383	28.27%

Self-described sexual orientation:

There were 17 responses to this part of the question.

- Unspecific/unclear x 7
- Fluid x 3
- Comment on question x 2
- Asexual x 2
- Straight
- Pansexual
- Asexual and Aromantic

What is your religion or belief?

There were 963 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
No religion	446	32.92%
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	432	31.88%
Buddhist	12	0.89%
Hindu	1	0.07%
Jewish	2	0.15%
Muslim	15	1.11%
Sikh	0	0.00%
Any other religion (please write in below)	18	1.33%
Philosophical belief (please write in below)	12	0.89%
Prefer not to say	25	1.85%
Not Answered	392	28.93%

Other religion:

There were 47 responses to this part of the question.

People shared specific beliefs including different forms of Christianity, Paganism, Catholicism, Judaism, Muslim, Spiritualism, and forms of Humanism.

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

There were 969 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes (please answer part B below)	621	45.83%
No (go to the next question)	322	23.76%
Prefer not to say (go to the next question)	26	1.92%
Not Answered	386	28.49%

Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

There were 818 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes, a lot (please answer part C below)	400	29.52%
Yes, a little (please answer part C below)	196	14.46%
Not at all (go to the next question)	191	14.10%
Prefer not to say (go to the next question)	31	2.29%
Not Answered	537	39.63%

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

There were 638 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Physical Impairment	343	25.31%
Sensory Impairment	94	6.94%
Learning Disability/Difficulty	59	4.35%
Long-standing illness	273	20.15%
Mental Health condition	312	23.03%
Neurodivergent condition	76	5.61%
Other Developmental Condition	12	0.89%
Other (please write in below)	64	4.72%
Prefer not to say	37	2.73%
Not Answered	717	52.92%

Other:

There were 115 responses to this part of the question. This included very specific details regarding illnesses falling under the above health categories, as well as how it impacts their ability to cope day-to-day. Conditions provided largely covered:

- Autoimmune diseases/disorders
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular disease
- Conditions relating to energy levels

- Degenerative cognitive conditions
- Diabetes type 1 or 2
- Hormonal and/or vitamin imbalance
- Inflammatory conditions
- Mental health conditions
- Pain
- Physical injuries
- Respiratory conditions
- Visual impairment

Are you currently pregnant or did you give birth in the last twelve months?

There were 954 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	19	1.40%
No	922	68.04%
Prefer not to say	13	0.96%
Not Answered	401	29.59%

Are there any children under the age of 18 living in your household?

There were 965 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	224	16.53%
No	728	53.73%
Prefer not to say	13	0.96%
Not Answered	390	28.78%

Do you look after, or give any help or support to, anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age?

There were 959 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	310	22.88%
No (go to next question)	628	46.35%

Prefer not to say	21	1.55%
Not Answered	396	29.23%

Hours of care given a week

There were 308 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
9 hours a week or less	84	6.20%
10 to 19 hours a week	17	1.25%
20 to 34 hours a week	18	1.33%
35 to 49 hours a week	37	2.73%
50 hours or more a week	113	8.34%
Prefer not to say	39	2.88%
Not Answered	1047	77.27%

Who you care for

There were 328 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Parent	95	7.01%
Partner/spouse	120	8.86%
Child with special needs	48	3.54%
Other family member	36	2.66%
Friend	15	1.11%
Other (please give details)	19	1.40%
Prefer not to say	19	1.40%
Not Answered	1027	75.79%

If you answered 'other', please explain here:

There were 32 responses to this part of the question. Comments covered the following areas regarding who people care for:

- Family members (some specifying multiple family members) across different generations.

- Care via volunteering or job role.
- Assistant animals.

Armed Forces Service: Are you currently serving, or have you previously served in the UK Armed Forces (this includes Reservists or part-time service)?

There were 952 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	21	1.55%
No	924	68.19%
Prefer not to say	7	0.52%
Not Answered	403	29.74%

Are you in a household or family where someone is currently or was previously serving in the UK Armed Forces?

There were 970 responses to this part of the question.

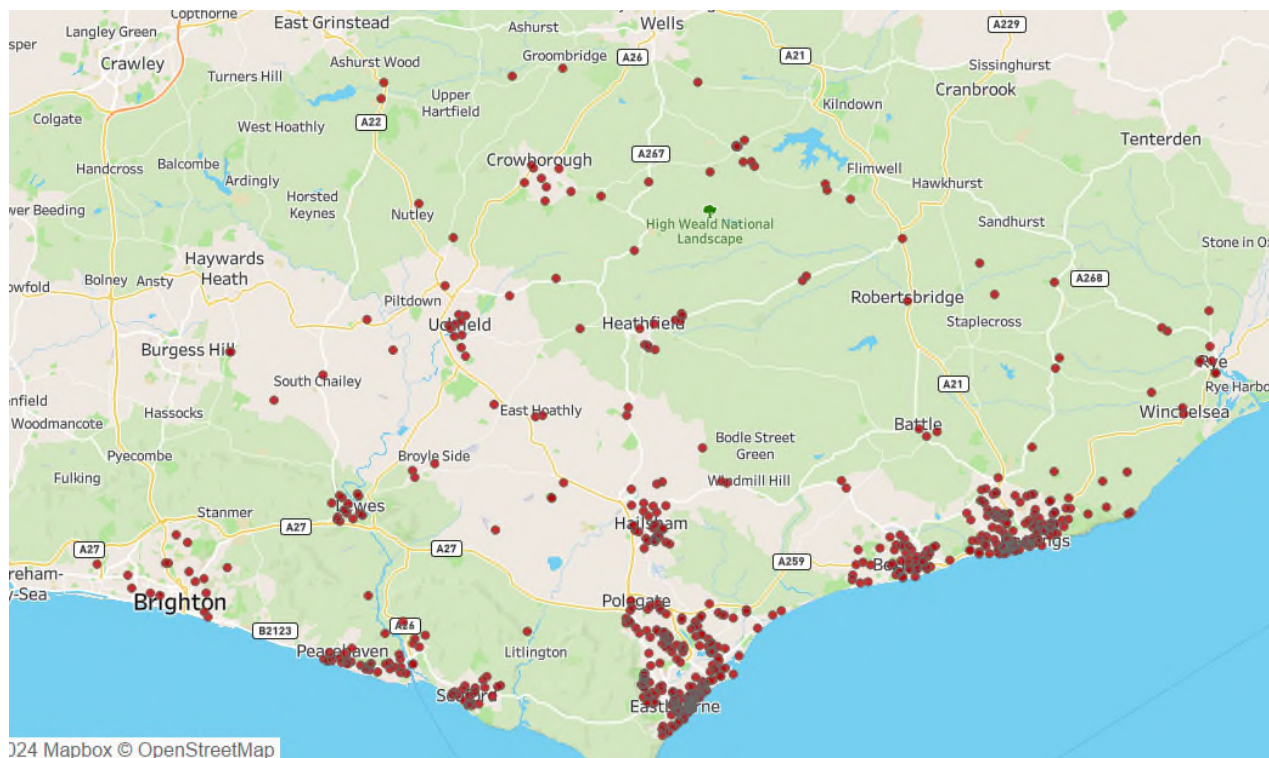
Option	Total	Percent
Yes	56	4.13%
No	904	66.72%
Prefer not to say	10	0.74%
Not Answered	385	28.41%

Please tell us your postcode:

There were 745 responses to this part of the question and 220 people chose prefer not to say.

Area in East Sussex	Total	Percentage of respondents
Lewes	77	6%
Eastbourne	193	14%
Wealden	156	12%
Rother	105	8%
Hastings	176	13%

Thirty-eight people (3%) provided postcodes outside of East Sussex.



Other feedback by email etc

Floating Support Service consultation responses

There were 17 responses to the consultation by other feedback methods. All of them were submitted by email and all but one came from organisations. The only individual response came from a resident of East Sussex.

The organisations who submitted a response are:

- BHT Sussex
- Care for the Carers
- Children's Services at East Sussex County Council
- Eastbourne Borough Council
- Hastings Borough Council (2 responses)
- Heads of Housing across the district and borough authorities
- Healthwatch East Sussex
- Lewes District Council
- Lewes Town Council
- NHS Sussex
- Rother District Council
- Sussex Community Development Association
- Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

- Wealden Citizens Advice
- Wealden District Council

The tables below cover the comment themes for all the respondents.

Views

Comment themes	Total
Views: Recognise need to make savings	10
Views: Cuts target the most vulnerable	9
Views: Proposal adds more cost in the long term	9
Views: Equivalent services not available	7
Views: Already housing crisis in East Sussex	6
Views: Other services already struggling	6
Views: Will shift cost onto districts and boroughs	6
Views: Detrimental to disabled people in particular	5
Views: Detrimental to people with mental illness in particular	5
Views: Disagree	5
Views: Need for this service is increasing	5
Views: Service vital for safeguarding people support by the service and/or people around them	4
Views: Cuts unfair/unequal	3
Views: Detrimental to homeless people in particular	3
Views: Detrimental to the elderly in particular	3
Views: Disagree with size of the cut	3
Service: Service is vital	2
Views: Catastrophic to cut so many services at the same time	2
Views: People supported by service struggle to access/engage with other services	2
Views: Concerned about impact of proposal	2

Views: Concerned about impact on Hastings residents	2
Views: Concerned where else people would get support	2
Views: Concerned where families will get support instead	2
Views: Cutting service is a mistake	2
Views: Impacts will be immediate for people accessing the service and statutory services	2
Views: No capacity for districts and boroughs to provide the support instead	2
Views: People may be affected by multiple proposed cuts	2
Views: Alternative services not suitable	1
Views: Carers vital for health and social care economy	1
Views: Concern re timeframe for cuts	1
Views: Cuts too big for service to run effectively	1
Views: Don't close service	1
Views: Families/carers need support too	1
Views: Homelessness prevention statutory under the Homelessness Reduction Act	1
Views: Insufficient time for other organisations to respond/mitigate risks	1
Views: Money won't be saved	1
Views: Priorities are wrong	1
Views: Short sighted	1
Views: Understand prioritising statutory duties	1
Views: Wellbeing relies on access to broad range of services	1

Service

Comment themes	Total
Service: Prevents homelessness	10

Service: Services rely on referring people to them for support	8
Service: Service is vital	6
Service: Works well alongside other services	6
Service: Praise of service	4
Service: Achieved good outcomes	3
Service: Praise of staff	3
Service: Provides person-centred support	3
Service: Very accessible	3
Service: Helps people to regain independence	2
Service: Helps to get/maintain employment	2
Service: High quality	2
Service: Immensely valued	2
Service: Lifeline to people	2
Service: Only service of its sort	2
Service: Specialist knowledge unique to service	2
Service: Supports engagement with other wellbeing initiatives	2
Service: Supports the most vulnerable	2
Service: Access to food banks/vouchers	1
Service: Cost effective	1
Service: Face-to-face support is important	1
Service: Flexible support	1
Service: Importance of the home visits	1
Service: Rebuilds lives	1
Service: Service built trust with people they support	1
Service: Service is beneficial	1
Service: Service key to wellbeing	1
Service: Support with finance and/or benefits	1
Service: Without service I would still be in an unsuitable home	1
Services: Signpost and connects to other services	1

Impact

Comment themes	Total
Impact: Increased pressure on other services	13
Impact: Increased cost for other organisations	10
Impact: Homelessness	8
Impact: Increased burden on family/carer	7
Impact: Couldn't cope without service	7
Impact: Significant increase in people living in temporary accommodation	7
Impact: Poorer mental health	6
Impact: Financial hardship	5
Impact: Poorer access to support	5
Impact: Poorer physical health	5
Impact: Ability to have a home/suitable home	4
Impact: Ability to sustain living independently and maintaining accommodation	4
Impact: Add more costs in the long term	4
Impact: People supported by service at increased risk	4
Impact: Compromise other organisations' work	4
Impact: More people in crisis	4
Impact: People's needs won't be met	4
Impact: Unsuitable housing detrimental to child development	4
Impact: Education	3
Impact: Loss of partnership working	3
Impact: Loss of skilled/specialist workforce	3
Impact: Ability to care for child	2
Impact: Employment	2
Impact: Even more limited services	2
Impact: Families would split up	2
Impact: Increase in crime	2
Impact: Increased burden on frontline workers supporting people	2
Impact: Loss of jobs	2

Impact: Multiple disadvantages for some who use several services	2
Impact: Negative impact (unspecified)	2
Impact: NHS	2
Impact: People could/will die	2
Impact: Poorer long-term outcomes	2
Impact: Use of alcohol and/or drugs	2
Views: Service already under pressure with capacity	2
Impact: Ability to maintain work and carer responsibilities	1
Impact: Carers will have less of a break	1
Impact: Community at increased risk	1
Impact: Cuts create inequality	1
Impact: Destabilise wider 'system' with rise in demand	1
Impact: Detrimental to already deprived communities in East Sussex	1
Impact: Engagement with other services	1
Impact: Greater risk of people losing their homes	1
Impact: Increase homelessness if cut	1
Impact: Increase in anti-social behaviour	1
Impact: Increase in families becoming homeless	1
Impact: Isolation	1
Impact: Less tailored or bespoke support	1
Impact: Loss of signposting/access to other services	1
Impact: Loss of staff results in loss of tax revenue	1
Impact: Loss to the community	1
Impact: Lower quality of life	1
Impact: Negative on carers	1
Impact: People would need to be in crisis to get help	1
Impact: Poorer recovery	1
Impact: Reduce carers' wellbeing	1
Impact: Reduce in wellbeing for people supported by services	1
Impact: Relapse	1
Impact: Size of cut hinders ability to scale up service in future again	1

Impact: Undo what staff have worked hard to build	1
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Suggestions

Comment themes	Total
Suggestions: More joint working	7
Suggestion: Focus on prevention	4
Suggestion: Continue to support the most vulnerable	3
Suggestion: Don't cut prevention services	3
Suggestion: Utilise existing and effective volunteer/charity support services	3
Suggestion: Don't cut service	2
Suggestion: Extend transition period of the floating support service for partners to develop joint approach to homeless prevention	2
Suggestion: Careful planning/assessments needed before happens	1
Suggestion: Develop the model before you decide the funding	1
Suggestion: Do things differently and innovate	1
Suggestion: Don't cut as much as proposed	1
Suggestion: Find other ways to save money	1
Suggestion: Lobby government in partnership with other services	1
Suggestion: Make decisions after May elections	1
Suggestion: Prioritise the housing elements of service	1
Suggestion: Reduce service in gradual stages	1
Suggestion: Reduce use of expensive residential care for adults	1
Suggestion: Use learning from current service to develop new model	1
Suggestion: Work with partners to develop new model	1

Other comments

Comment themes	Total
Other: Comment on consultation process or information	3

Other: East Sussex County Council must provide more information about alternatives and capacity	3
Other: Appreciation of East Sussex County Council's acknowledgement of impacts and commitment to co-production	1
Other: Can re-model service with smaller cut to reduce impact on capacity	1
Other: Care for the Carers must represent carers in design of alternative support	1
Other: Comment re consultation financial figures	1
Other: Comment re government funding	1
Other: Cost of temporary accommodation is driving financial instability in local authorities	1
Other: Districts and boroughs not in a financial position to cope with impacts of cuts	1
Other: East Sussex County Council needs to provide detailed financial information on savings	1
Other: East Sussex County Council should provide more information on which neighbourhoods currently benefit most from service	1
Other: How are the proposals being communicated to other organisations?	1
Other: How will East Sussex County Council meet its duty to shape the local adult social care market?	1
Other: Near future changes in government funding possible	1
Other: Not everyone affected will qualify for housing services	1
Other: Proposal in conflict with East Sussex County Council housing strategy	1
Other: Should have allowed more time to discuss proposals	1
Other: Supporting and working with VCSE sector vital for improved outcomes	1
Other: Unrealistic to expect other services to mitigate impacts sufficiently	1
Other: VCSE need services to signpost to	1
Other: Want to see the Equal Impact Assessment and proposed mitigations	1

Other: Welcome work with partners to scope cross-sector approach to homelessness prevention	1
Other: Work with NHS Sussex to understand and mitigate risks	1

Overall consultation responses

Responses addressing all 11 consultations combined

There were 10 responses addressing all 11 consultations at once by letter and email. These were from organisations (5), residents (4) and a member of parliament (1).

The organisations who submitted a response are:

- Rother District Council
- Lewes Liberal Democrats
- Care for the Carers
- East Sussex VCSE Alliance
- East Sussex Seniors Associations

The tables below cover the comment themes for all the respondents.

Views

Comment themes	Total
Views: Cuts target the most vulnerable	6
Views: Recognise need to make savings	5
Views: Disagree	3
Views: Already housing crisis in East Sussex	2
Views: Concerned about impact of proposal	2
Views: Don't close service	2
Views: Limited capacity for VCSE sector to provide the support instead	2
Views: Proposal is morally wrong	2
Views: Proposal adds more cost in the long term	2
Views: Will shift cost onto districts and boroughs	2
Views: Angry with proposal	1
Views: Carers of people using service care for multiple people already	1
Views: Carers vital for health and social care economy	1
Views: Concern about impact on level of support services can provide post-cuts	1

Views: Concern re timeframe for cuts	1
Views: Concerned where people would go instead	1
Views: Cuts unfair/unequal	1
Views: Detrimental to the elderly in particular	1
Views: Disagree with using private organisations	1
Views: East Sussex County Council wastes money	1
Views: Homelessness prevention statutory under the Homelessness Reduction Act	1
Views: Impacts will be immediate for people accessing the service and statutory services	1
Views: Insufficient time for other organisations to respond/mitigate risks	1
Views: Knows disabled people who could work but don't	1
Views: Must prioritise the most vulnerable	1
Views: Other services already struggling	1
Views: Private support too expensive	1
Views: Service vital for safeguarding people they support and/or people around them	1
Views: Shameful proposal	1

Service

Comment themes	Total
Service: Prevents homelessness	1

Impact

Comment themes	Total
Impact: Increased pressure on other services	3
Impact: Poorer mental health	3
Impact: Financial hardship	2
Impact: Increased cost for other organisations	2
Impact: Poorer physical health	2
Impact: Increased burden on family/carer	1
Impact: Ability to maintain work and carer responsibilities	1
Impact: Add more costs in the long term	1
Impact: At risk of suicide	1
Impact: Carers will have less of a break	1
Impact: People using service at increased risk	1

Impact: Community at increased risk	1
Impact: Encourages negative attitude towards people who need support	1
Impact: Hardship and poverty	1
Impact: Homelessness	1
Impact: Isolation	1
Impact: Loss of staff results in loss of tax revenue	1
Impact: Loss to the community	1
Impact: Lower quality of life	1
Impact: More people would be in out-of-area accommodation	1
Impact: More hospital admissions	1
Impact: More people in crisis	1
Impact: Negative impact (unspecified)	1
Impact: Negative on carers	1
Impact: NHS	1
Impact: Poorer access to support	1
Impact: Reduce carers' wellbeing	1
Impact: Reduce wellbeing of people supported by services	1
Impact: Risk of abuse/domestic abuse	1
Impact: Significant increase in people living in temporary accommodation	1
Impact: Unsuitable housing detrimental to child development	1
Impact: Use of alcohol and/or drugs	1

Suggestions

Comment themes	Total
Suggestion: Focus on prevention	3
Suggestion: Utilise existing and effective volunteer/charity support services	3
Suggestions: More joint working	3
Suggestion: Continue to support the most vulnerable	2
Suggestion: Allow VCSE partners to reduce rental outgoings	1
Suggestion: Build accommodation under a Community Land Trust	1
Suggestion: Consider impact of loss of winter fuel allowance	1

Suggestion: Cut management salaries	1
Suggestion: Do things differently and innovate	1
Suggestion: Don't cut prevention services	1
Suggestion: Don't cut service	1
Suggestion: East Sussex County Council should manage resources better	1
Suggestion: Prioritise support for young people coming out of care	1
Suggestion: Run accommodation/care homes as a business to generate profit	1
Suggestion: Signpost charities to other sources of funding	1
Suggestion: Transfer assets to voluntary sector	1
Suggestion: Work with partners to develop new model	1

Other comments

Other: Supporting and working with VCSE sector vital for improved outcomes	2
Other: Appreciation of East Sussex County Council 's acknowledgement of impacts and commitment to co-production	1
Other: Care for the Carers must represent carers in design of alternative support	1
Other: Comment on consultation process or information	1
Other: Comment on government policy and country-wide issues not specific to consultations	1
Other: Comment re government funding	1
Other: Cost of temporary accommodation is driving financial instability in local authorities	1
Other: Districts and boroughs are not in a financial position to cope with impacts of cuts	1
Other: East Sussex County Council must provide more information about alternatives and capacity	1
Other: Provide information on proposed alternatives/mitigations	1
Other: Question re raising awareness of consultations with public	1
Other: Want to see the Equal Impact Assessment and proposed mitigations	1
Other: Will this be all the cuts or is more needed?	1
Other: Would NHS & ASCH save by working together?	1

Consultation meetings

A consultation meeting was held in each area of the county, as well as an online meeting.

Date held	Area of the county	Attendees
11 November	Newhaven	3 people who had used the service 6 staff members from the service
18 November	St Leonards	14 people who had used the service 5 staff members from the service
19 November	Bexhill	8 people who had used the service 5 staff members from the service
21 November	Polegate	2 people who had used the service 4 staff members from the service
25 November	Eastbourne	3 people who had used the service 3 staff members from the service
27 November	Online meeting	5 people who had used the service

Themes from the Newhaven meeting

- **Views:** One person recognised the need to make savings and another wanted clarification about whether the attendance allowance was affected. The service is often there at points of crisis and it is really valued for this reason.
- **Service:** The service has helped them to access support and funding they weren't aware of and is described as offering invaluable support at what is often a difficult time. People also said the staff are amazing and really positive, allowing you to build up a good relationship with them.

They help people to navigate the system and offer signposting to other organisations. This helps people to regain their independence and enables them to remain at home.

The fact the service is responsive and in-person also makes a big difference, particularly for those who aren't online. One person said they had recommended it to a friend who has recently come out of hospital.
- **Impact:** Without the support of the service they would have struggled to fill in the necessary forms themselves. This means that if funding for the service was reduced people may not find it easy to access the help that is out there, meaning they would miss out on funding that could make a real difference to their daily life and wellbeing.

So much is online now and the service is vital in making sure those who aren't digitally included don't miss out. It is difficult to navigate the system and without the support of this service many people would struggle.

- **Suggestions:** Use places like doctors' surgeries to promote things people are entitled to, like pension credit.

Themes from the St Leonards meeting

- **Views:** The vulnerable are always attacked first with cuts and it's not fair. There are already so many challenges with housing and it affects people's mental health when fighting for what they need.

The Council needs to remember its duty of care. People pay their tax and national insurance and should be able to expect support when they are older. This service offers a level of support and understanding that isn't available from statutory services.

- **Service:** People praised the service and said it was magnificent. The service is very responsive and the waiting time is much shorter than other services. The support is tailored to you, and they keep you updated.

People talked about how the service has helped them to complete forms and to move from unsafe and unsuitable accommodation to something better. They talked about their struggles dealing with housing services, private landlords and the police, and how those services don't care or listen.

The service saves money by limiting the support that people need from other services. People value the support it offers to navigate what is a complex system.

People emphasised how important it is to have the sort of face-to-face support that this service offers, and to not have to talk on the phone or to AI computers. The service has provided invaluable support to people, advocating for them and championing their cause when other services won't listen.

- **Impacts:** People would be stuck living in unsafe housing and be at risk of becoming homeless. If people can't get the support they need, there would be a risk of people self-harming, and a real risk to life if people are left without this support if the service is reduced.

Reducing the service and not advertising it will cost money in the long term. People won't have the information they need about what they are entitled to and many would struggle to cope without the help of this service.

- **Suggestions:** The service should be promoted better so people know about it.
- **Other:** The roads are the worst for potholes and there isn't enough money to run the Council. Cutting a service like this would have a negative impact on the Council's reputation.

Themes from the Bexhill meeting

- **Views:** People disagree with the proposal and highly value the support provided. They said the proposal is sad and tragic and were concerned about their support and where people would go for help in the future, as they would have been lost without the service.

This service is precious and must be protected. The Council has a duty to support people and this service is key in delivering that duty. The service gets lot of feedback from people saying how much difference it has made to them.

The staff bring in huge amounts of funding into the area through helping people to claim benefits. This money improves lives.

- **Service:** The service is amazing and the support it offers mustn't be lost. It is responsive and people feel really supported by staff. It offers hope at a difficult time and the human contact aspect is so important - both in terms of having home visits, and knowing you can pick up the phone and there will be a voice at the end of the line that's going to help you.

The service has supported people with advice and advocacy to access financial support, maximising benefits, accessing care, housing and courses, getting ID, opening bank accounts, securing Blue Badges and appealing negative decisions from statutory agencies. Support with form filling - sequencing all of these things together.

- **Impact:** People wouldn't know what they were entitled to in terms of housing and benefits. Other services don't have any time to help in the way the service does. As a result, people would struggle to fill in forms on their own and navigate what are often complex processes, so may not get the funding and support they need. At a time of housing crisis the service is particularly critical.

Digital inclusion is an issue and it is often the most vulnerable who can't afford the equipment or internet connection. A big proportion of people who use this service are in this group. If the service is reduced, it would have a big impact on their ability to claim the money they are entitled to.

Other services are already under pressure and if this service is reduced there will often be no alternative for people to get the help they need. People would also wait a lot longer to access help.

The money the service helps to bring into the area through claiming benefits would be lost. It's important to emphasize that these are benefits that people are entitled to, but the system is set up in a way that makes it hard for them to claim.

- **Suggestion:** One person suggested people could pay for the cost of their support. Measuring the impact of the service was proposed, so its value can be evidenced.

Themes from the Polegate meeting

- **Views:** People disagreed with the proposals and said they were determined to support the service by coming to the meeting. It is a valuable service that is needed and it would be morally wrong to cut it.
- It makes no sense to reduce this service as it prevents people needing help from other services when they are in crisis. The scale of the proposed reduction is particularly concerning.

People are concerned about how it would affect those accessing the service, or those who might need to in future. They would be marginalised if the proposal went ahead.

- **Service:** People talked about the challenges of getting hold of other services on the phone, how hard it can be to fill in forms on your own, and how other services don't support them with their issues in the same way. In contrast, this service was described as wonderful and the staff as so helpful.

People talked about the challenges they have in getting help and understanding financial information. The service helps them to overcome these issues and it achieves this in much shorter timeframes than other services.

Housing issues are often intertwined with mental health issues. The service deals with the financial side of things first and then supports people to improve their mental wellbeing. This includes establishing a support network for after the service ends for them.

- **Impact:** The proposed reduction would completely change the service and severely limit the number of people who could be helped and the amount of time that could be spent with them.

Digital inclusion is a real concern if the service is reduced, as lots of people at the meeting talked about the barriers they face to get help. This includes not being online, but also the issues with using the phone, such as being able to get through and not being able to hear.

There is a risk that fewer people would be able to claim the money they are entitled to including pension credit, attendance allowance and the winter fuel allowance. The systems in place to help people don't always work, so without this service people would struggle to apply on their own.

Local authorities have a duty to assess and provide services, so cutting the service would affect the Council's ability to meet that duty. The Council currently refers a lot of people to this service and if they couldn't do that then more [people] would probably need assessments.

It would also affect the work of the local housing partnership and potentially create a gap in the delivery of this work.

- **Suggestions:** Don't cut such an extreme amount but find a better balance that would allow the work to continue more like it does now. This would give the provider time to explore what they could do to mitigate the funding reduction.

Themes from the Eastbourne meeting

- **Views:** The funding cuts would be bad for East Sussex and services like this could have to close if they are not viable.

People also talked in detail about the struggles they are already facing to access services such as mental health and housing, and how there is no help available from statutory services in the south east any more.

- **Service:** People praised the service and talked about how it had helped them. The staff are key in your life and you remember them many years later. One person said they wouldn't have their own place or be in full-time employment without the support of the service.
- **Impact:** The service might have to close if funding is reduced, If it does stay open, some people would miss out if they did not meet the criteria, as it would become a niche service. People won't know what they are entitled to in terms of benefits and their lives will be put on hold while they are waiting for support to make applications.

People often find it difficult to explain the issues they are dealing with and without this service they would have to speak to multiple organisations. Other services that can help with similar issues are already overwhelmed and have long waiting times. If you are not IT-literate it is already harder to access support.

It would make it harder for people to get work, as living in temporary accommodation in a hotel is a barrier to employment. Living in temporary accommodation can also be a barrier to people having their children live with them or come to stay.

Themes from the online meeting

- **Views:** The service is often supporting people at the most vulnerable point in life and helps them to overcome the barriers that stop them getting the help they need.
- **Service:** People talked about the invaluable help provided by the service and how they wouldn't have been able to cope without it. The staff are like a helpful friend, helping you to navigate complex systems when you are struggling.

No other services do home visits, so the service is unique from that point of view. It also supports under 18s, which most other services don't. The work the service does helps the individual's whole family, with one child sharing how the service has helped her mum find accommodation and made her life better.

- **Impact:** Getting help often requires filling in lots of complex forms. People's medical condition can make this hard and in some cases impossible. With a reduced service, people who won't be able to navigate the system on their own will be left without the support they need. People would become more vulnerable as a result.

Most people who use the service are referred by statutory organisations, so if the service is reduced that will increase the pressure on those organisations. People would be homeless without the service and there would be a risk of an increase in suicides as a result.

Appendix 5 – Housing-Related Floating Support Service Equality Impact Analysis

Title of Project/Service/Policy	Housing-Related Floating Support Service
Team/Department	Housing & Support Solutions
Directorate	Adult Social Care and Health

<p>Provide a comprehensive description of your Project (Service/Policy, etc.) including its Purpose and Scope</p>	<p>This is an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) as part of the Council's Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources budget planning 2025-26 of the proposal to reduce East Sussex County Council's Adult Social Care and Health funding for the East Sussex Housing Related Floating Support Service from £4,372,615 to £500,000 per annum, a reduction of 88.5 per cent in funding.</p> <p>Overview of the Service East Sussex County Council Adult Social Care and Health currently commissions BHT Sussex to support people with housing related needs to engage with support, preventing escalation and increased risks of homelessness or the failure to continue living independently.</p> <p>This EqIA will focus on the provision of Housing-Related Floating Support services for people aged 16 and over, who are vulnerable and have support needs due to age, disadvantage, disability, substance misuse or ill health and who are experiencing a housing related issue.</p> <p>For example, people who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • losing or at risk of losing their accommodation • living in temporary/emergency accommodation • living in unsuitable housing • have no accommodation • require resettlement support • having trouble coping with their housing • require support to maintain their independence or are at risk of losing their independence due to their housing situation • require support to move to accommodation that will better meet their needs <p>East Sussex County Council Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) has commissioned housing related floating support since April 2014. It originated from the Supporting People Programme under which East Sussex County Council was in receipt of the Supporting People Grant. From 2011, Supporting People was subsumed into the overall Formula Grant paid to Local Authorities at a time that funding from central government was reducing as part</p>
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of wider fiscal cuts. A decision was taken at the time by East Sussex County Council to maintain a contribution to housing related support.

While homelessness prevention in relation to housing provision is not an East Sussex County Council statutory responsibility, improving health and reducing health inequalities are. Many of the cohort of individuals supported by this contract will have the poorest health and wellbeing within the County.

The aim of this service underpins the strategic priorities of Adult Social Care and Health, Children's Services, our NHS partners and the District and Borough housing authorities and supports vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes by:

- Being one way of contributing towards Adult Social Care and Health responsibilities of the Care Act 2014 (as amended) to promote individual wellbeing and prevent, reduce or delay the need for care and support and targeting those who need it most.
- Preventing the need for Temporary and Emergency accommodation, where possible, and avoid homelessness or insecure housing including crisis interventions where needed.
- Supporting adults to keep them safe.
- Working collaboratively with statutory and non-statutory organisations across the system to support people at risk of losing their independence or becoming homeless.
- Supporting individuals and families to improve their physical and mental health so they can experience greater healthy living and wellbeing and help to reduce health inequalities.
- Building resilience
- Supporting adults to gain independence, maximise their capacity to live as independent a life as possible by promoting self-care and avoid hospital or accommodation-based care.

Since 2021 BHT Sussex has delivered the East Sussex Floating Support Service.

The East Sussex Floating Support (ESFSS) Service is available to East Sussex residents aged 16+ years, living in, or moving to, independent or Supported Accommodation who require housing related support. The service is available to residents living in all housing tenures and includes East Sussex residents who are in temporary accommodation outside East Sussex by a statutory agency.

The service aims to:

- Enable people with housing related support needs to live independently.
- Identify the key components that enable people to remain living independently in their own homes, and their experiences of accessing existing support and the Service.
- Understand the barriers that prevent people from living at home independently and work collaboratively to look at how to improve outcomes and reduce pressure across the system.
- Provide flexible, personalised, and appropriate housing support, stratified to manage a range of levels of need and risk.
- Minimise risk of homelessness and address inappropriate housing.

- Signpost individuals and/or family members as appropriate to health and social care services, education, training, employment and support voluntary, community and social enterprise sector services that will assist with accessing and maintaining their housing and ability to live independently for longer.
- Provide time-limited follow up support to prevent and reduce risks of homelessness/ unsuitable housing.
- Ensure people are appropriately signposted or referred to mental health, social care, health services and substance misuse services as needed and any other appropriate services according to need.

The service supports people to achieve the following outcomes:

- Are adequately housed, preventing decline and the loss of independence.
- Can maintain and sustain their accommodation, avoiding homelessness.
- Are supported to identify appropriate accommodation and feel safe living in it.
- Are supported to maximise their income, and are supported to manage household bills, debts, and to keep warm and reduce energy bills.
- Maximise their quality of life.
- Can make informed choices about their support and how the Service is delivered.
- Receive timely support that meets their needs and delivers good outcomes.
- Are kept safe and free from avoidable harm.

East Sussex County Council has faced financial challenge arising from the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. In order to balance its budget, East Sussex County Council is still facing huge financial challenges and difficult decisions, so is reviewing all funding commitments.

One of East Sussex County Council's broad objectives is to support the prevention of homelessness by appropriate work with its District/Borough Council partners and this funding was a way of doing that. East Sussex County Council is still committed to that objective but the financial challenges facing the authority leave East Sussex County Council having to make difficult decisions to cease services.

Ceasing East Sussex County Council's Adult Social Care and Health funding of housing related support is one of the proposals being considered.

There is a minimum six month notice period on the contract, if the proposals are agreed the provider will be asked to communicate the notice period to people using the service and referrers and begin to reduce numbers of new adults to ensure that, as far as possible, work with adults is complete when the service significantly reduces.

During 2023/24 the Service supported 5,282 *(unique) people.

Individuals supported by the service do not have to have eligible care and/or support needs as described in the Care Act 2014, therefore do not need to have had an Adult Social Care and Health assessment to access this support.

Referrals come from a range key partner agencies across statutory and non-statutory organisations, and older people aged 60+ can self-refer into the service.

BHT Sussex: Summary of adults by

referrer pathway		
2023/24		
Adult Social Care and Health	3357	39%
Districts & Boroughs	2124	25%
Other	1468	17%
Children's Services	881	10%
Self-referral (60+)	732	9%

BHT Sussex sends East Sussex County Council information about the people using the service on a quarterly basis; this includes some demographic information which has been analysed below to understand how this decision may impact people with various protected characteristics.

The health and wellbeing of people who experience homelessness is poorer than that of the general population and they often experience the most significant health inequalities, have poorer health outcomes with many have co-occurring mental ill health and substance misuse needs, physical health needs, and have experienced significant trauma in their lives. This is driven/exacerbated by poor living conditions, difficulty maintaining personal hygiene, poor diet, high levels of stress and drug and alcohol dependence [Annual Public Health Report 2019/20 - Health and Housing](#)

Issues coming to the fore following the end of pandemic protections: Lack of private rental sector security emerged as a significant concern for housing advice providers, following the withdrawal of pandemic-era protections and delays in implementing the draft Renters Reform Bill. Changes to homelessness laws contributed to a surge in people living in temporary accommodation. Additionally, higher interest rates and fierce competition for rentals has bolstered demand for social rent housing. Notably, over 822,000 households were in rent arrears in April 2023 nationally.

[The-value-of-justice-for-all-a-report-for-the-Access-to-Justice-Foundation-and-the-Bar-Council-from-Pragmatix-Advisory.pdf \(atjf.org.uk\)](#)

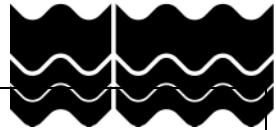
1. Update on previous EqlAs and outcomes of previous actions (if applicable)

What actions did you plan last time? (List them from the previous EqlA)	What improved as a result? What outcomes have these actions achieved?	What <u>further</u> actions do you need to take? (add these to the Action Plan below)
An EqlA was completed when the service was recommissioned in 2021. The service provider was required to provide quarterly monitoring reports based on agreed targets and outcomes. This included equality data relating to all protected characteristics as well as detailed data relating to disability.	Targets set, e.g. based on % split between working age and older people, ensured fair and proportionate support was being provided.	To consider the impact on working age and older people on proposals to reduce funding to the service.
There was a mixture of face to face, telephone and virtual support to meet differing needs of, for example, disabled people or those who were digitally excluded.	Services were accessible and more inclusive.	To consider the impact of accessibility and inclusiveness on individuals on proposals to reduce funding to the service.
Translation and interpreting services were available	Language barriers were removed.	To consider the impact of accessibility and inclusiveness on individuals on proposals to reduce funding to the service.
In 2018/19 an EqlA was completed regarding savings within Home Works and STEPS services. Actions included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quotas for Adults and Children's Services; Referrals to other information and advice services; Producing an implementation plan to help mitigate any negative impact upon people based on their protected characteristics. 	Services targeted at those who need them most. Some barriers to accessing services minimised.	The data used in the previous consultation was reviewed to inform methodology, consultation, data and research for the current EqlA. Previously identified risks and impacts were reviewed against the current risks and impacts.

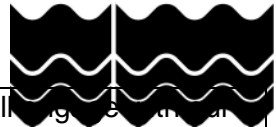
2. Review of information, equality analysis and potential actions

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

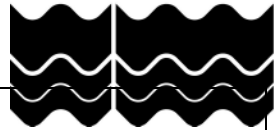
Protected characteristic groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• advance equality of opportunity,• eliminate discrimination, and• foster good relations																											
Age	<p>Proportion of Population by age range (%):</p> <table><tr><th>Age range</th><th>East Sussex</th><th>England</th></tr><tr><td>0-19</td><td>21%</td><td>23%</td></tr><tr><td>20-44</td><td>25%</td><td>33%</td></tr><tr><td>45-64</td><td>28%</td><td>26%</td></tr><tr><td>65+</td><td>26%</td><td>18%</td></tr></table> <p>2023/24 Service Data:</p> <p>The service supported 5,282 unique people aged 16 and over and their households.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data – Proportion of people supported by age:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 60% were age 16-59• 40% age 60+	Age range	East Sussex	England	0-19	21%	23%	20-44	25%	33%	45-64	28%	26%	65+	26%	18%	<p>Percentage of adults (all ages) reporting satisfaction with the service:</p> <table><tr><th colspan="4">2023/24</th></tr><tr><th>Q1</th><th>Q2</th><th>Q3</th><th>Q4</th></tr><tr><td>95%</td><td>95%</td><td>99%</td><td>97%</td></tr></table> <p>The age-range of people that engaged in the consultation events included older people, adults of working age, young people and children.</p> <p>A common theme that emerged across all groups was that people didn't know where to turn to when they faced an unexpected health issue or what is available to them e.g. Council Tax Benefit, Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit.</p> <p>A person explained that they needed help but didn't know where to go. "I think the fact that we didn't know the</p>	2023/24				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	95%	95%	99%	97%	<p>This proposal will have a negative impact on people of all ages.</p> <p>People will be less able to access information and advice on welfare benefit eligibility the impact of this is that it is likely to increase the number of people experiencing financial hardship.</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>
Age range	East Sussex	England																													
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20-44	25%	33%																													
45-64	28%	26%																													
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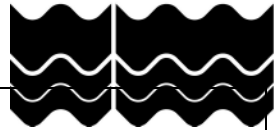
<p>Age</p>	<p>2023/24 Service Data –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71% of adults were supported to remain in their existing accommodation. 	<p>service was there and when I needed them, they came and helped me. The support is still there, and they are amazing, these cuts are tragic, what are we going to do now? What about other people using the service and in the future. I feel very lucky to have been helped.”</p> <p>“It was overwhelming in a way. It helped me massively. They helped me understand what there is and what is there for us. It made us feel hopeful. It’s not easy. They were there for us.”</p> <p>“I also didn’t know about the service. I needed to get support and tried to register for housing. I went to Town Hall and went to see CAB but that didn’t work as well as I wanted to. Then someone from Heart Response referred me for BHT floating support and they came and helped me.”</p> <p>92% of all respondents to the consultation survey disagree or strongly disagree with the proposal to reduce funding by 88.5%</p>		
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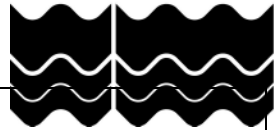
Age 60+	<p>60+</p> <p>According to the 2021 Census, the greatest growth in the East Sussex population occurred in the 70-74 age category, which increased by 46.6% compared to a national average of 36.8%.</p> <p>2021 Census data identifies that the proportion of the population of East Sussex aged 65 and over now stands at 26.1%, up from 22.7% in 2011.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data – Break-down of people supported aged 60+:</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Age group (>60)</th></tr><tr><th>Age range</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>60 to 64</td><td>16.3%</td></tr><tr><td>65 to 69</td><td>14.2%</td></tr><tr><td>70 to 74</td><td>13.3%</td></tr><tr><td>75 to 79</td><td>19.8%</td></tr><tr><td>80 to 84</td><td>16.4%</td></tr><tr><td>85 to 89</td><td>14.0%</td></tr><tr><td>90+</td><td>6.3%</td></tr></table> <p>East Sussex is fifth most deprived of 26 County Councils.13% of people aged 60 plus were living in poverty in 2019 (source Joint Strategic Needs Assessment).</p> <p>Excess deaths in East Sussex for females, as a proportion of the population is higher than national average</p>	Age group (>60)		Age range	%	60 to 64	16.3%	65 to 69	14.2%	70 to 74	13.3%	75 to 79	19.8%	80 to 84	16.4%	85 to 89	14.0%	90+	6.3%	<p>60+</p> <p>Older people told us that they would not have applied for Attendance Allowance without the support of the service. This is due to a range of factors including digital exclusion, cognitive abilities, levels of stress caused by major health impacts (dementia, cancer, onset of long-term conditions), meaning they are eligible for the benefit at a point they are least able to apply independently.</p> <p>A common theme from older people was that the provision of advice and information on Welfare Benefits and other services as well as support to complete applications is essential in enabling them to remain in their homes.</p> <p>“BHT have supported with completing the attendance allowance forms, we didn’t know all this was available. This has allowed us to have a cleaner and a carer to support with washing. It has given us a little bit of independence.”</p> <p>“Attendance Allowance pays for chiropodist and the hairdresser. It’s like heaven. It has enabled us to remain at home together. It’s given us a new lease of life.”</p> <p>“I had a 29-page form which BHT staff member helped me fill out. Talking through and describing in more detail questions such as: Can you get out of a</p>	<p>60+</p> <p>It is likely that this proposal will impact older people negatively as the proportionately the number of older people that are supported by the service (40%) is higher compared with the general East Sussex population (26%).</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>
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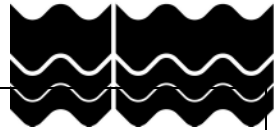
Age 60+	<p>2023/24 Service Data – People supported to claim Attendance Allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 275 people supported• 93% of applications were successful• £903,000 of annualised additional income.	<p>chair. She described how I would get out of the chair, rather than just say I can.”</p> <p>52% of respondents to the consultation survey, who use or have used the service, were aged 60+. Of these, 92% disagree or strongly disagree with the proposal to reduce funding by 88.5%</p>										
	<p>Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>The Excess Winter Deaths index is a measure that compares the number of deaths that occurred in the winter period (December to March) with the average of the non-winter periods (August to November and April to July).</p> <p>Excess Winter Deaths: Source: PHE, Aug 2021 - Jul 2022</p> <table><tr><td></td><td>East Sussex</td><td>England</td></tr><tr><td>Female - All ages</td><td>10%</td><td>8.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Male – all ages</td><td>7.40%</td><td>8%</td></tr></table>		East Sussex	England	Female - All ages	10%	8.1%	Male – all ages	7.40%	8%	<p>Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Older people told us that they valued the fact the service was able to carry out face-to-face visits. They said that due to cognitive abilities and levels of stress caused by health impacts other methods made communicating their needs difficult.</p> <p>“I can’t always hear on the phone either.”</p> <p>“Very difficult to talk to someone over the phone and explain something”.</p> <p>“People of a certain age need to know that we’ll be alright, that we can pick up a phone, ask for help and that we’ll get it.”</p> <p>Feedback from clinicians within Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Older</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>The removal of the Winter Fuel Allowance to older people who are not claiming Pension Credit may impoverish older people who are not aware of their eligibility to Pension Credit and will no longer have access to the service to assist in applying.</p> <p>One million households will miss out due to the Winter Fuel Payment changes - Policy in Practice</p> <p>The impact of this is that people age 60+ are at greater risk of financial hardship as they are not in receipt of the Winter Fuel Allowance to assist them to ensure their home is warm.</p>
	East Sussex	England										
Female - All ages	10%	8.1%										
Male – all ages	7.40%	8%										



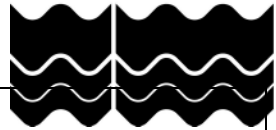
<p>Age 60+</p>	<p>Health - county East Sussex Report Builder for ArcGIS (eastsussexinfofigures.org.uk)</p>	<p>Adults Mental Health Service in East Sussex.</p> <p>This is a person-centred service for vulnerable people who are not able to access other similar services. This service is skilled in engaging individuals whose conditions and circumstances make it difficult for them to engage with other services. The older people served by this support tend to have complex and enduring mental health problems, cognitive difficulties, co-morbid health issues and are socially isolated. Older people, particularly with a Mental health condition, often experience problems with debt and struggle to navigate other systems. Unmanaged debt is known to be a risk factor for suicide. Clinicians believe that the people who tend to use this service would struggle to access alternatives.</p>	<p>The Floating Support service supports people to increase affordable warmth within their homes by referring to a Warm Home check service. There is a risk that fewer older people would be able to access support to keep their home is warm and this would impact negatively on their ill health. Many older people are already experiencing poor health due to a long-standing illness or condition. Deteriorating ill health has potential to have an impact on A&E services already under pressure and at capacity.</p> <p>Living in a cold home can lead to a range of poor health outcomes. People aged 65 and over are particularly vulnerable to the cold. It is also associated with additional winter deaths.</p> <p>Damp and mould primarily affect the airways and lungs, and the respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and, in the most severe cases, death. Damp and mould can cause disease and ill health in anyone, but</p>	
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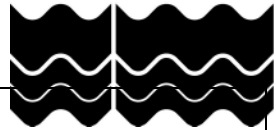
<p>Age 60+</p>			<p>people with underlying health conditions, weakened immune systems, and some other groups of people are at greater risk of ill-health from damp and mould</p> <p>Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK</p> <p>This group of people are at greater risk of harm or injury as one in three people aged over 65 trip or fall and the cost to the NHS is estimated to be more than £2bn per year.</p> <p>https://www.kingsfund.org/publications/exploring-system-wide-costs-falls-older-people-torbay</p> <p>Many falls take place in the home and are preventable, therefore housing related issues are major contributors in determining the risk of someone having a fall. The impact of falls on older people can increase demand on local NHS services and Adult Social Care and Health.</p> <p>Older people experience specific issues of isolation (often increased for those in</p>	
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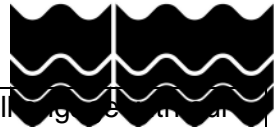
<p>Age 60+</p>	<p>Digital Exclusion According to Age UK, three out of ten people aged 65 to 74 and two-thirds of those aged 75 and over are not online. There is also a link to social disadvantage. For example, while only 15 per cent of people aged 65 to 74 in socio-economic group AB do not use the internet, this rises to 45 per cent in group DE.</p> <p>The Office of National Statistics (ONS) records the proportion of non-internet users as halving between 2011 and 2018, down from 20% of adults to 10%. Of those who are classed as non-internet users, 55% come from adults aged over 75, and 24% of those aged 65 to 74.</p>	<p>Digital Exclusion “post covid and everything is on-line – expectation from services since then that everyone is digitally enabled and capable, but everyone isn’t – we shouldn’t assume!”</p> <p>“She [BHT Worker] could do the paperwork online, she knew who to talk to. There was so many depts to call, I am not equipped for that. I do not have a computer or smart phone.”</p>	<p>rural areas and reluctance to engage with digital access because of potential for scams.</p> <p>This proposal will have a negative impact on older people as the proposal is likely to reduce the number of home visits. Home visits are vital in being able to identify and manage risks within the home.</p> <p>Digital Exclusion This proposal will impact negatively on older people as a reduced service is likely to impact on the level of face-to-face service delivery. With a reduced level of service there is potential for services to look to digital solutions. Digital exclusion is particularly high among the oldest age groups – nationally around a third (34%) of those aged 75+ and one in ten (10%) of those aged 65-74 do not use the internet. Even those who can carry out tasks such as emailing and video calls this does not mean they have the confidence and skills to safely apply for support online as this can involve inputting personal information and</p>	
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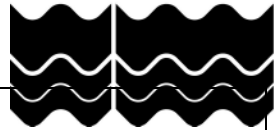
			<p>uploading photos or other evidence.</p> <p>LR Age UK ID202857 Digital Report.pdf</p> <p>There is an increased risk that this group will be unable to access and engage with services that may impact negatively on their mental and physical wellbeing with delays in accessing support. This has the potential to increased costs to health and Adult Social Care and Health services.</p>									
Age 16-59	<p>16-59</p> <p>There are 51,780 people claiming Universal Credit in East Sussex. 16.3% of all people aged 16-65 were claiming UC in June 2024 in East Sussex. The national average for England is 16.4%.</p> <p>10.3% of households in East Sussex were in fuel poverty in 2019 compared to 9.3 % in England.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data – Break-down of people supported aged 16-59 years:</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Age group (<60)</th></tr><tr><th>Age range</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>16 to 24</td><td>13.4%</td></tr><tr><td>25 to 34</td><td>28.0%</td></tr></table>	Age group (<60)		Age range	%	16 to 24	13.4%	25 to 34	28.0%	<p>16-59</p> <p>“Personally, without BHT I wouldn’t be working, I work in the NHS as a practitioner. I was mentally unwell; my marriage broke down. I was living in a hotel and on the brink of going homeless.”</p> <p>“I am out of work at the moment as I don’t feel well. I struggle with forms at the best of times, I struggle with forms online. I needed help with this. They helped me. Thank you.”</p> <p>Feedback from Wealden Citizens Advice ‘Often where there is a housing issue, there is more going on in our clients’ lives. Many adults who approach Wealden Citizens</p>	<p>16-59</p> <p>This proposal will negatively impact people of working age as the service supports a greater proportion of people aged 16-59 (60%).</p> <p>People under 35 years are particularly affected as Housing Benefit rulings usually only allow for a person to be able to claim for a single room in a shared house. This is called the Local Housing Allowance shared accommodation rate (SAR). Housing costs and Universal Credit: Renting from a private landlord - GOV.UK</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>
Age group (<60)												
Age range	%											
16 to 24	13.4%											
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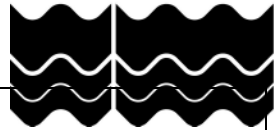
Age 16-59	35 to 44	25.6%	<p>Advice, not only have housing issues, but debt and income issues and have complex lives. People have benefited greatly from this service and outcomes to reduce homelessness are evident.</p> <p>48% of respondents to the consultation survey, who use or have used the service, were aged under 60 years. Of these, 92% disagree or strongly disagree with the proposal to reduce funding by 88.5%</p>	<p>Nationally, the ability of young adults to form households of their own continues to fall.</p> <p>Insecure housing means living with the constant uncertainty of not having a stable place to stay. This could be due to the threat of eviction because of rising rent costs or having to live in temporary or unsuitable accommodation.</p> <p>The stress of not having a secure place to call home can worsen existing mental health problems or cause new ones to appear. Poor mental health can also make it much harder for someone to find and maintain a settled home. This increases their chances of being forced into homelessness or becoming trapped in a cycle of insecurity and increases the risk of family breakdown.</p> <p>Homelessness Monitor Crisis UK Together we will end homelessness</p>	
	45 to 54	21.4%			
	55 to 60	12.2%			



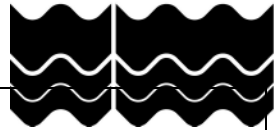
Age 16-59	Children According to the 2021 Census there were 20,908 (22.1%) of children living in relative low-income families in 2021/22.	Children Feedback from 10-year-old (via staff member as she is at school) "I was sofa surfing then in Temporary Accommodation with mum. Now have own accommodation and I have my own bedroom. Mum has been supported into work and is much happier. This has all made her life much better."	Children Children living in households will be affected as poor housing and/or homelessness may have particularly negative impacts.	We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.								
	2023/24 Service Data: Number of households with children supported: 24% (1,287) of households supported by the service that included children.		Children are particularly vulnerable to living in a cold home leading to ill-health and developing ongoing health conditions (childhood asthma) There would be increased associated risks for families with children and young people, including child protection and safeguarding issues, access to health and education and a direct impact on the health of children living in poor standard housing.									
	2023/24 Service Data: 603 referrals made by Children's Services	From a younger couple with children: "We appreciate ASC coming. We used to have a very small place one bedroom with my three children. We now manage to have all my family. BHT contacted me- a very good person came and visited me- I was in one room with three children- I cannot afford to rent a bigger house as the rent was too high- over £1000pcm- wanting me to go into PRS - BHT helped me to find somewhere to live".	Homelessness during childhood can be a traumatic experience that affects life-long health and wellbeing. In 2019, Information Services Division (ISD) Scotland conducted a mixed method health needs assessment of children experiencing homelessness in the NHS Lanarkshire board area. They concluded that homelessness is a traumatic Adverse									
	<table><tr><th>Referral reason</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Families at direct risk of homelessness</td><td>13.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Families already homeless</td><td>19.9%</td></tr><tr><td>Families at risk of domestic violence</td><td>16.7%</td></tr></table>	Referral reason	%		Families at direct risk of homelessness	13.2%	Families already homeless	19.9%	Families at risk of domestic violence	16.7%	East Sussex Children's Services: All teams across Children's Services including our Single Point of Advice, Multi agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Duty and Assessment, and Locality Family and Youth Support teams regularly refer families or individuals to the service to prevent the risk of them becoming homeless or to support them with housing issues at both a preventative early help and	
	Referral reason	%										
Families at direct risk of homelessness	13.2%											
Families already homeless	19.9%											
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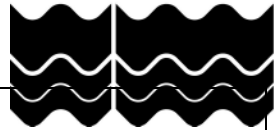
<p>Age 16-59</p>		<p>statutory level. The co-location of ESFSS support workers within the MASH teams leads to successful partnership working which is effective and valued by both East Sussex Children's Services staff and ESFSS, and leads to valuable joint working and successful outcomes for families. ESFSS offer a service that all teams are able to refer to easily and with confidence.</p> <p>The number of families being found to be intentionally homeless has risen over the last two years at an increasing cost to Children's Services in cases where accommodation must be funded for families with no other housing options under S.17 of the Children's Act 1989. Referrals to ESFSS are regularly made to assist in the prevention of families becoming intentionally homeless in the first place and to support those that have had their housing duties discharged to move on from high-cost temporary accommodation funded by Children's Services to their own privately rented accommodation. Spend on providing accommodation for these families has more than doubled in the past two years and will continue to increase.</p> <p>Feedback from the Lewes Family Support Team: "We regularly refer to the floating support service and I'm</p>	<p>Childhood Event (ACE) that can affect a person's health and wellbeing throughout their life, and that homeless children are also more likely to experience other ACEs. They often experience poorer physical and mental health than their housed peers and were significantly more likely to be referred to CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), although were less likely to attend appointments. Key recommendations arising from this work included the acknowledgement of inequalities in health outcomes faced by children experiencing homelessness, and the need for joint working across homelessness, health, care, schools and other public services that interact with homeless children.</p> <p>Equalities considerations for housing, homelessness, health and care</p> <p>Housing instability can negatively impact a child's health, development and school performance and often compounds trauma that they</p>	
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<p>Age 16-59</p>		<p>worried about the prospect of losing this support. Particularly I'm worried that not having this will at times prevent us from closing cases. Quite often, we reduce risks and can close, with BHT continuing to support with ongoing housing needs. This would be different if this support is removed."</p> <p>15% of respondents to the consultation survey, who use or have used the service, have dependent children in the household and of these, 94% disagree or strongly disagree with the proposal to reduce funding by 88.5%</p>	<p>are going through or have experienced. The service provides a valuable service to front-line workers in Children's Services which compliments and strengthens the statutory obligations and case management teams in supporting children and families to remain in, manage or access safe and suitable housing.</p> <p>With increased demand on local children's services to prevent homelessness and ensure children, young people and families have access to stable housing a proposed reduction in this service will impact on the capacity of this service to support individuals and families with housing related support. This has the potential to have a worrying and far-reaching impact across children's services and the outcomes for children and their families.</p> <p>The proposal to reduce the service is likely to impact on the ability of Children's Services ability to carry out preventative work with families who are facing eviction and</p>	
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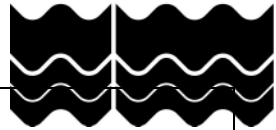


<p>Age 16-59</p>			<p>housing issues including rent arrears and housing related debt, thereby lead to more families and children at risk of homelessness and the negative outcomes this will have on the physical and mental health and wellbeing for both parents and children.</p> <p>This proposal is likely to result in a significant increase in costs for Children's Services especially in relation to families who have been found intentionally homeless and had their housing duty discharged by the Borough and District Housing Authorities.</p> <p>This will impact negatively on children and their families as it is likely more families will end up homeless and potentially intentionally homeless if they are not able to access specialist housing advice and support.</p> <p>The proposal to reduce the service is likely to increase workloads and reduce capacity of front-line staff that will have a negative impact on children achieving good outcomes. Children's Services do not</p>	
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			have expertise in housing-related needs and support thereby, would not be able to replicate this service.	
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Disability	<p>In the 2021 census, 20.3% of East Sussex residents were living with a long-term physical or mental health condition or impairment that affected their ability to carry out day-to-day activities in 2021, the same proportion as in 2011 (compares to 18% for England & Wales).</p> <p>34.8% of households in East Sussex had at least one member identifying as disabled under the Equality Act in 2021.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data – Break-down of people supported by need:</p> <table><tr><td></td><td>%</td></tr><tr><td>Physical / Sensory Disability or long-standing illness / Acquired Brain Injury</td><td>61%</td></tr><tr><td>Mental Health Condition</td><td>30%</td></tr><tr><td>Learning Disability / Difficulty / Neurodivergent</td><td>7%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>2%</td></tr></table>		%	Physical / Sensory Disability or long-standing illness / Acquired Brain Injury	61%	Mental Health Condition	30%	Learning Disability / Difficulty / Neurodivergent	7%	Other	2%	<p>The service report that 40% of adults’ self-report a concern with their Mental Health at the time of referral.</p> <p>“I have recently retired. My worker has been invaluable to me. I cannot do forms and things. I find it impossible. My worker has been outstanding. I now have PIP and they have helped me get on the Housing Register. I can’t fault the service one bit. Long may it last. [Without the service] I wouldn’t have known what to do.”</p> <p>“The waiting list was only 6 weeks at BHT, they came and helped me straight away. I have a physical disability, and I am a wheelchair user. My flat was too small- there was no room for my mobility scooter. BHT helped me to move”.</p> <p>“I have the intelligence to read and fill in a form. My complex needs are</p>	<p>People who are disabled are likely to be more affected by the proposal than those in the general population, this is because the characteristics of this cohort evidence that many of the people who have been supported by the service are disabled. A person’s disability or long-standing illness may consequently create a housing need.</p> <p>People who have a mental health condition are more likely to be affected by the proposal than those in the general population - 40% of the people the service supported self-report a concern with their mental health at the time of referral.</p> <p>Having problems with housing can impact negatively on people’s mental health. People who have poor mental</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>
		%												
	Physical / Sensory Disability or long-standing illness / Acquired Brain Injury	61%												
	Mental Health Condition	30%												
	Learning Disability / Difficulty / Neurodivergent	7%												
	Other	2%												



2023/24 Service Data –

Breakdown by age of people supported that identified as disabled under the Equality Act 2010.

Age range	Yes	No	Did not disclose
16-24	58.8 %	40.2 %	1.8%
25-34	61.1 %	37.9 %	1.0%
35-44	67.4 %	31.4 %	1.2%
45-54	76.5 %	21.9 %	1.6%
55-64	85.0 %	13.9 %	1.1%
65-74	86.1 %	12.5 %	1.5%
75-84	86.7 %	11.3 %	2.0%
85+	88.0 %	10.0 %	2.0%
Total	75.7 %		

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Digital Exclusion

around my eyes, I cannot see very well. A BHT worker came to my home and has helped me.”

“They were brilliant, I don’t know what I would have done without them. They know the phraseology of the forms, the detail required. I wish I could show you how detailed the forms were. I now have my benefits and a blue badge.”

“You feel vulnerable due to illness. The help from BHT has been invaluable - positive, friendly, nonjudgemental – amazing service.”

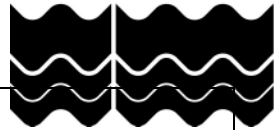
“I couldn’t cope- without BHT supporting me, it is a ‘must do’ service. This service is like drops that fall from heaven- this has saved me from depression, from being a burden on the NHS- of having to go to hospital- it saved me from a flat that wasn’t suitable- I didn’t even have a carpet. I was not able to do the paperwork- it no longer comes easy to me. I got assistance to come and support me, assistance to complete forms, and to get carpeting in my flat”.

“If BHT were taken away, people just won’t know what is available to

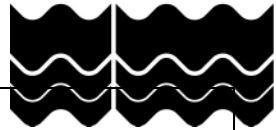
health may already be at increased risk to eviction due to behavioural and financial reasons.

The emotional and mental impact of losing a home can exacerbate poor mental health. The experience of applying for housing support can be stressful. People with a disability or long-standing condition may lack the skills to navigate a complex system of applications for social renting. There is a potential risk to exacerbate an existing condition that adversely affects their physical and mental health and well-being.

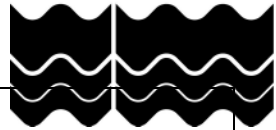
Having a disability or long-term health condition means many people rely on Welfare Benefits. This means managing money is harder, worrying about money (e.g. food insecurity, home insecurity, utility costs, debt, etc) can impact negatively on a person’s physical and mental health, thereby leading to a cycle that can impact every aspect of an individual’s life.



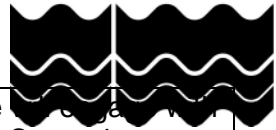
	<p>In people with at least one health/sensory impairment 26% of them don't have all the foundation digital skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For people with multiple impairments this increases to 37% <p>Error! Bookmark not defined.</p> <p>Substance Misuse East Sussex is home to an estimated 2,300 people who use opiates and/or crack. Of these, 53.3% were in treatment at some point in 2021/22 which is above the national average of 46.3%. but it does indicate a possible further 1,050 people using opiates or crack who are not accessing treatment.</p>	<p>support them, or what they are entitled to. People's lives are put on hold whilst they sit on waiting lists waiting for support, this will happen more and CAB won't be able to cope".</p> <p>"My lifestyle has improved, there are many benefits- my main problem is hoarding. I hope that I can get better".</p> <p>"I'm now in a house share and I have been empowered by BHT to get out of a cycle- we need to spiral back up and this is key in supporting people like me. It's not easy. We need to know where to go. We need to be supported to access support when it is needed".</p> <p>"I was served with Section 21 notice and had to leave my home. I thought, what on earth will happen to me? BHT were referred to me and they helped me find somewhere else to live. I wouldn't have been able to cope with this on my own".</p>	<p>A 2014 health audit conducted by Homeless Link in England found that 41% of people experiencing homelessness have long-term physical disabilities compared to 28% of the general population, while 45% of people experiencing homelessness have a diagnosed mental health condition, compared to 25% of the general population.</p> <p>The Unhealthy State of Homelessness Homeless Link</p> <p>Disabled people were less likely to own their own home than non-disabled people of the same age and were more likely to live in social rented accommodation</p> <p>East Sussex 2021 Census Briefing: Disability (eastsussexinfofigures.org.uk)</p> <p>Damp and mould primarily affect the airways and lungs and the respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and, in the most severe cases, death. Damp and mould can cause disease and ill health in anyone, but people with underlying health</p>	
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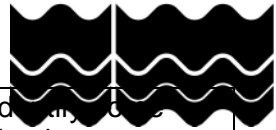
		<p>“People do not envisage or aspire to be homeless. Its life experiences, life events.”</p> <p>“The landlord owns nearly all the properties in the road we lived in and he didn’t fix any of the issues. It shouldn’t be allowed!</p> <p>The flat was assessed as a risk to life. BHT contacted the landlord, who served a no-fault eviction, rather than do the work.</p> <p>Council believed everything the landlord said but he is now doing the work needed since she left.</p> <p>BHT supported me to find a new property and I was eventually offered somewhere more appropriate.”</p> <p>“I asked the DWP for help with form filling and was told they can’t help as they’ve reached their quota. “This is the same for all these [statutory] services, they don’t have time to help people like BHT do”.</p> <p>Adult who identified as autistic – in Emergency Accommodation for 5 months, now in Council flat. Service enabled me to overcome mountain of paperwork, “I would still be homeless without the service”</p>	<p>conditions, weakened immune systems, and some other groups of people are at greater risk of ill-health from damp and mould.</p> <p>Research by Mind examined the relationship between mental health and housing and summarised the key impacts of housing conditions that affect emotional and mental wellbeing as follows:</p> <p>Physical condition of the property - Poor quality homes including those which are cold and or damp have a strong negative impact on both physical and mental health and can cause low self-esteem and increase isolation.</p> <p>Affordability of the property - Housing is one of the largest costs to a household and can cause a great deal of financial stress. Nearly half of people who have stress related to housing report that it is due to lack of finances. People who own and can afford their own homes tend to have higher life satisfaction, with those who rent privately having the lowest.</p>	
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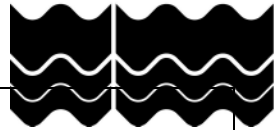
		<p>Adult has acquired brain injury, served with S21 after complained about damp, can't cope with forms. "Stress makes me very ill, couldn't cope without support. Service helped contact the Council, fill in forms to apply for housing and Blue Badge. Now in Private Rented Sector through council will get help to apply for social housing as will need more suitable accommodation as condition gets worse. "Service made all the phone calls and sent emails as I find this too difficult and don't remember to respond/send further information"</p> <p>Feedback from Wealden Citizens Advice 'Floating Support Services remain an important part of the support that we can offer to our clients. The fact that they can support clients with home visits'.</p> <p>76% of respondents to the consultation survey, who use or have used the service, said that they have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. Of these, 92% disagree or strongly disagree with the proposal to reduce funding by 88.5%</p>	<p>Overcrowding - Overcrowding is strongly linked with depression, stress and anxiety. Local environment - if the neighbourhood is in disrepair, with a lack of green spaces and poor facilities this can affect mental health, as can the perception (and in some cases, the reality) of high rates of crime, sense of safety and noise.</p> <p>Room for Improvement: a review of mental health and housing (mind.org.uk)</p> <p>Housing is a source of identity and housing problems can have an impact on people's physical health and emotional and mental wellbeing. Annual Public Health Report 2019/20 - Health and Housing </p>	
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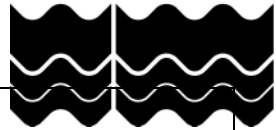
Gender reassignment	<p>The 2021 East Sussex Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Queer + (LGBTQ+)¹ Comprehensive Needs Assessment estimates that there may be 5,572 Trans and Gender Diverse (TGD) people (1% of the population) living in East Sussex</p> <p>2021 Census: 1640 residents declared their gender identity was different to that assigned at birth which is 0.4% of the population.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data</p> <p>Gender as presented below and therefore does not separate CIS and Transgender people.</p> <table><tr><td>Female</td><td>57%</td></tr><tr><td>Male</td><td>42%</td></tr></table>	Female	57%	Male	42%	<p>There were no specific views regarding this protected characteristic from the consultation sessions.</p>	<p>In the UK, one in four transgender people have experienced homelessness, with twenty-five per cent of participants experiencing discrimination when buying or renting accommodation</p> <p>The needs assessment also found that homelessness disproportionately impacts LGBTQ+ people - 18% of LGBTQ+ and TGD people surveyed had experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.</p> <p>LGBT in Britain - Trans Report (2018) Stonewall</p> <p>This indicates it is likely to impact negatively on this group of people as they are more likely to struggle to find and maintain accommodation.</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>
Female	57%							
Male	42%							
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>There are just under 5,000 births per year in East Sussex. Hastings has the highest overall birth rate as well as for women aged 15-19 years. Lewes and then Rother have the highest birth rates for women aged 35-44 years.</p>	<p>Feedback from the consultation heard from a young couple whose accommodation was no longer suitable due to expecting another child:</p> <p>“We appreciate ASC coming. We used to have a very small place one bedroom with my three children. We</p>	<p>Housing insecurity can impact negatively on pregnant women’s perinatal mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Reduced nutritional intake in pregnancy is common while homeless because of a lack of</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible</p>				



	<p>Nationally it is not known how many pregnant women are currently experiencing homelessness in the UK</p> <p>A survey by 'Dispatches and RCM find that 99.7% of midwives have seen mothers who were homeless over the past six months' 2023 saw the highest numbers of families experiencing homelessness and living in temporary accommodation since records began Statutory homelessness in England: Infographic 2023-24 - GOV.UK</p> <p>BHT figures for 2023/24 shows that the service supported 137 women who were pregnant. This information is only recorded for Female pregnant, no children (99) and Couple pregnant, no children (38). The actual figure is likely to be higher when including pregnancy is families that already have children.</p> <p>Pregnancy can also impact on job security around one in nine mother (11%) reported that they were either dismissed, or made compulsorily redundant, where others in their workplace were not; or treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their job.</p>	<p>now manage to have all my family. BHT contacted me- a very good person came and visited me- I was in one room with three children- I cannot afford to rent a bigger house as the rent was too high- over £1000pcm- wanting me to go into PRS - BHT helped me to find somewhere to live".</p>	<p>access to cooking facilities in temporary accommodation. Poor diets can cause anaemia, pre-eclampsia, haemorrhage and death in mothers. They can also lead to stillbirth, low birthweight, wasting and developmental delays for children.</p> <p>Several studies link housing insecurity and adverse impacts on the health of the child including low birth weight, premature birth, maternal death and increased need for healthcare of the child post birth.</p> <p>(Housing instability and adverse perinatal outcomes: a systematic review - PMC (nih.gov)).</p> <p>This indicates people that share this protected characteristic are potentially at increased risk of being impacted by housing issues.</p> <p>This is likely to impact on District & Borough Councils and Children's Services as women who are classed as priority need under The Homelessness (Priority Need</p>	<p>to identify the mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>
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			for Accommodation) (England) Order 2022.	
<p>Race (ethnicity) Including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers</p>	<p>8.0% of the adult population in East Sussex is from an ethnic minority Group (including White minority groups). This compares to 18.8% in England.</p> <p>In 2021, 93.9% (512,440) of usual residents in East Sussex identified their ethnic group within the high-level "White" category, a decrease from 96.0% (505,420) in the 2011 Census, but still significantly higher than the English national average (81.0%) and also higher than the average for the Southeast region (86.6%).</p> <p>4.6% were of another white background; 1.6% were Asian/ Asian British, 0.5% were Black/ Black British and 1.3.% were from other ethnic backgrounds.</p> <p>Those selecting a non-UK identity only accounted for 5.5% of the overall population (29,880 people), which is an increase from 4.3% of the population (23,090 people) in 2011. The most common non-UK identities are Polish, Irish, Romanian, Portuguese and Italian.</p> <p>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%).</p>	<p>An adult from Eastern Europe was living in accommodation where he felt unsafe due to with criminal activity and anti-social behaviour that he was experiencing in his accommodation. Due to his living circumstances, he was hospitalised under Psychiatry for three weeks. "People are not helping me, I was told to go to CAB, no help there. I needed to move as quickly as possible. I was advised to go to the Police Station, they didn't help. They (BHT) helped me to get this place, but it is temporary for one year".</p>	<p>The data tells us that the service supported a higher proportion of people with this protected characteristic (12.9%) compared to the East Sussex average of 8.0%.</p> <p>The service supported a higher proportion of Black/Black British (1.7%) compared with the East Sussex average (0.5%).</p> <p>A higher than East Sussex average of Black/Black British people using the service this would indicate this proposal would have a negative impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Nationally, a higher proportion of people identified as homeless in Census 2021 identified within the "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African" (15.0%), "Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups" (5.1%), or "Other ethnic group" (6.1%) high-level categories, when compared</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>



East Sussex has over 1200 refugees from Ukraine staying in the county. Precise data on asylum seekers and refugees is not available however East Sussex currently has six adult asylum seeker hotels, with the majority in Eastbourne.

2023/24 Service Data - Ethnicity:

Ethnicity	Individuals	%
White British	4249	87.1%
All Other Ethnicities	628	12.9%

2023/24 Service Data – Break-down of people supported by Ethnicity:

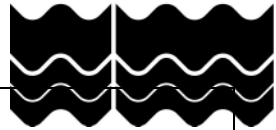
Ethnicity	Individuals	%
Arab	20	0.4%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	13	0.3%
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	4	0.1%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	14	0.3%
Asian/Asian British: Other	22	0.5%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	9	0.2%

with the rest of the population of England and Wales (4.0%, 2.9%, and 2.1%, respectively).

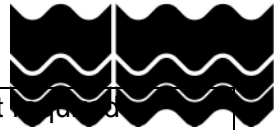
People from ethnic minority groups may be disproportionately affected as they are more likely to experience homelessness and poor housing.

Evidence suggests that ethnic minority individuals are at a higher risk of experiencing "hidden" homelessness. They were also less likely to perceive themselves as homeless and therefore less likely to access homelessness services, making homelessness in these communities less visible.

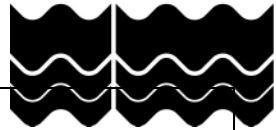
People from ethnic minority backgrounds may face additional barriers including access to translation and interpretation particularly when it comes to information and advice, appropriate information about housing options and rights,



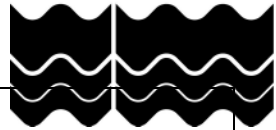
	<table><tr><td>Black/Black British: African</td><td>49</td><td>1.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Black/Black British: Caribbean</td><td>21</td><td>0.4%</td></tr><tr><td>Black/Black British: Other</td><td>16</td><td>0.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Gypsy/Irish Traveller</td><td>22</td><td>0.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Mixed: Other</td><td>29</td><td>0.6%</td></tr><tr><td>Mixed: White & Asian</td><td>12</td><td>0.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Mixed: White & Black African</td><td>7</td><td>0.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Mixed: White & Black Caribbean</td><td>33</td><td>0.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Other Ethnic Group: Other</td><td>42</td><td>0.9%</td></tr><tr><td>Persian/Iranian</td><td>9</td><td>0.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Prefer not to say</td><td>34</td><td>0.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Roma Traveller</td><td>3</td><td>0.1%</td></tr><tr><td>White: British</td><td>4249</td><td>87.1%</td></tr><tr><td>White: Irish</td><td>47</td><td>1.0%</td></tr><tr><td>White: Other</td><td>222</td><td>4.6%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>4877</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Blank/No Information</td><td>22</td><td>0.5%</td></tr></table>	Black/Black British: African	49	1.0%	Black/Black British: Caribbean	21	0.4%	Black/Black British: Other	16	0.3%	Gypsy/Irish Traveller	22	0.5%	Mixed: Other	29	0.6%	Mixed: White & Asian	12	0.2%	Mixed: White & Black African	7	0.1%	Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	33	0.7%	Other Ethnic Group: Other	42	0.9%	Persian/Iranian	9	0.2%	Prefer not to say	34	0.7%	Roma Traveller	3	0.1%	White: British	4249	87.1%	White: Irish	47	1.0%	White: Other	222	4.6%	Total	4877		Blank/No Information	22	0.5%		literacy issues, lack of familiarity with the system, institutional, structural and personal discrimination and difficulties in getting specialised advice. Currently the service can support people who share this protected characteristic by being able to offer face-to-face support. If this proposal is agreed, it is likely to impact upon the service's ability to undertake face-to-face support. This will impact negatively on people from ethnic minority backgrounds as access to face-to-face support can minimise barriers to interpretation and translation.	
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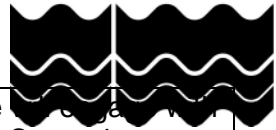
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>In 2021, 45.9% (250,330) of usual residents of East Sussex identified as Christian, down from 59.9% (315,650) in 2011.</p> <p>The second most common religion in East Sussex after Christianity is Islam. The proportion of the population stating they were Muslim increased from 0.8% of the usual resident population (4,200) in 2011 to 1.1% (6,190) in 2021.</p> <p>This is low compared to both the Southeast Regional and the English national averages, with 3.3% of residents in the South East specified their religion as Islam, and 6.7% across the whole of England.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data – Break-down of people supported that disclosed their religion:</p> <table><tr><th>Religion</th><th>Individuals</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Agnostic</td><td>46</td><td>1.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Atheist</td><td>64</td><td>1.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Buddhist</td><td>18</td><td>0.4%</td></tr><tr><td>Christian (all denominations)</td><td>1579</td><td>32.6%</td></tr><tr><td>Hindu</td><td>3</td><td>0.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Jewish</td><td>12</td><td>0.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Muslim</td><td>80</td><td>1.7%</td></tr><tr><td>None</td><td>2330</td><td>48.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Not known</td><td>462</td><td>9.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Orthodox</td><td>3</td><td>0.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>47</td><td>1.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Pagan</td><td>28</td><td>0.6%</td></tr></table>	Religion	Individuals	%	Agnostic	46	1.0%	Atheist	64	1.3%	Buddhist	18	0.4%	Christian (all denominations)	1579	32.6%	Hindu	3	0.1%	Jewish	12	0.2%	Muslim	80	1.7%	None	2330	48.2%	Not known	462	9.5%	Orthodox	3	0.1%	Other	47	1.0%	Pagan	28	0.6%	<p>There were no specific views regarding this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Most adults in the service either have no religion or are Christian. It is not felt that this proposal would have a significant impact on individuals from a religions or belief perspective.</p> <p>Whilst it may be possible for some individuals to seek additional support via their religious or spiritual groups it is not likely this would represent a mitigation as they are unlikely to have knowledge of housing-related support options.</p>	<p>Not supported</p>
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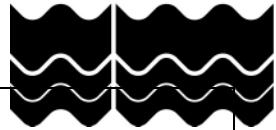
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Sex	<p>Of the population of East Sussex, 299,064 (52%) are female and 270,788 (48%) are male.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data – Break-down of people supported by sex:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Female 57%Male 42% <p>32% of homeless women from the general population reported that domestic violence contributed to their homelessness and 52% of domestic abuse survivors need support to help them stay in their own home or move to new accommodation.</p> <p>Homelessness and domestic abuse spotlight - SafeLives</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data: Referrals made to the service for people at risk of domestic violence:</p> <table><tr><th>Referring organisation</th><th>Number</th></tr><tr><td>Statutory Children's Services</td><td>101</td></tr></table>	Referring organisation	Number	Statutory Children's Services	101	<p>From the consultation sessions a theme that emerged particularly for older women was that during their marriage their husband managed all household finances and bills.</p> <p>“I need help to fill these in (Pension Credit), I have never done this stuff before. I worked as a cleaner in the hospital. I have never had to do this; my husband always did everything before he passed away at 91yrs.”</p>	<p>The proportion of females supported by the service (57%) is a higher than East Sussex average (52%). This suggests that this proposal may disproportionately impact women as they are more likely to be supported by the service compared to men.</p> <p>Women over the age of 65 years may be more likely to be impacted negatively due to them reporting having not previously managed finances.</p> <p>Women are negatively impacted by their gender as women with experiences of domestic abuse described feeling more at risk in environments where they are exposed to men.</p> <p>A combination of traditionally disadvantaged aspects of identity may inform</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>											
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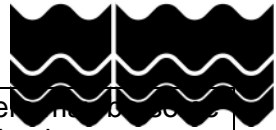
	<table><tr><td>Local Housing Authorities</td><td>98</td></tr></table>	Local Housing Authorities	98		<p>experiences or increase risk of homelessness.</p> <p>For example, a young woman who is under 18 and a refugee is likely to face greater complexity in navigating her homelessness.</p> <p>In-her-shoes-young-womens-experiences-of-homelessness.pdf</p> <p>The service contributes to supporting domestic abuse and sexual violence victims. The service works in partnership with the Domestic Abuse Portal and supports those women who do not meet the threshold for Domestic Abuse services but need support to manage their safety and mitigate risk. It is likely that this could increase the number of safeguarding referrals into Children's Services and Adult Social Care and Health.</p> <p>It is likely that this could see an increase in calls to the Police and an increased attendance at local A&E departments.</p>	
Local Housing Authorities	98					



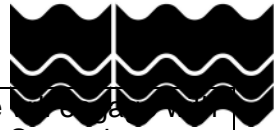
Sexual orientation	<p>The 2021 East Sussex LGBTQI+ Comprehensive Needs Assessment estimates that there may be between 17,273 and 39,004 LGB+ people living in East Sussex (between 3.1% and 7% of the population)</p> <p>In adults, the GP patient survey found that mental health condition prevalence was significantly higher in LGB+ people (41%), compared to heterosexual people (11%), especially in bisexual people (56%).</p> <p>According to the 2021 Census 3.3% of East Sussex residents declared themselves as LGB+.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data – Break-down of people supported that disclosed Sexual Orientation:</p>	<p>There were no specific views regarding this protected characteristic expressed through the consultation sessions.</p>	<p>4.5% of people supported by the service in a 12-month period identified as not heterosexual which is above the estimated percentage within East Sussex (3.3%), therefore this indicates a negative impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Nationally, almost one in five LGBT people (18 per cent) have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. This number increases to almost three in ten LGBT disabled people (28 per cent) compared to more than one in ten LGBT people who aren't disabled (11 per cent). One in four trans people (25 per cent) have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives, compared to one in six LGB people who aren't trans (16 per cent). LGBT people in category C2DE (lower income households) are more likely than LGBT people in category ABC1 (higher income households) to have experienced homelessness, 25</p>	<p>We engaged with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>																																				
	<table><tr><th>Sexual Orientation</th><th>Individuals</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Unsure</td><td>90</td><td>1.9%</td></tr><tr><td>Queer</td><td>3</td><td>0.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Prefer not to say</td><td>157</td><td>3.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Pansexual</td><td>16</td><td>0.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>6</td><td>0.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Lesbian</td><td>40</td><td>0.8%</td></tr><tr><td>Heterosexual/Straight</td><td>4388</td><td>90.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Gay</td><td>58</td><td>1.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Bisexual</td><td>87</td><td>1.8%</td></tr><tr><td>Asexual</td><td>12</td><td>0.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>4857</td><td></td></tr></table>	Sexual Orientation	Individuals	%	Unsure	90	1.9%	Queer	3	0.1%	Prefer not to say	157	3.2%	Pansexual	16	0.3%	Other	6	0.1%	Lesbian	40	0.8%	Heterosexual/Straight	4388	90.3%	Gay	58	1.2%	Bisexual	87	1.8%	Asexual	12	0.2%	Total	4857				
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Blank/No Information	42						
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>According to 2021 census data for East Sussex:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single 29%• Married 46.5%• Civil Partnership 0.4%• Divorced 11%• Widowed 8% <p>The service does not collect data on marriage and/or civil partnerships.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data – Break-down of people that disclosed relationship status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single 71%• Couple 21%• Other 8%	<p>N/A. There were no specific views regarding this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>There is no identified impact relating to marriage and civil partnership.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>			



<p>Armed Forces</p>	<p>In 2021, 21,173 people in East Sussex reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces (4.6% of usual residents aged 16 years and over).</p> <p>There were 19,917 households (8.3% of all households) in East Sussex with at least one person who had served in the UK armed forces.</p> <p>East Sussex had the 4th highest proportion of veterans in the 16 and over population (4.6%) in the Southeast.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data:– 3.5% of people supported by the service during 2023/24 identified as either currently serving, a veteran or dependent of someone in the armed forces.</p>	<p>There were no specific views regarding this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>People who currently serve or veterans of the armed forces are at increased risk of homelessness. As such Local Authorities have a legal duty to have due regard to the principles of the Home - Armed Forces Covenant when exercising certain statutory functions in the fields of healthcare, education and housing.</p> <p>Nationally the number of veterans has shown an increase from 1,850 to 2,110 homeless veterans in the period 2022-23. Homelessness among armed forces veterans in England rises by 14% Ministry of Defence The Guardian</p> <p>The proposal of a reduced service will impact negatively on people who currently serve in the armed forces, veteran or a dependent as the potential of a reduced service may exclude people from this group who are currently eligible.</p>	<p>The Homelessness Mitigation opportunities for this group who could be signposted to access VCSE organisations that specialise in the support people who serve or have previously served in the Armed Forces.</p>
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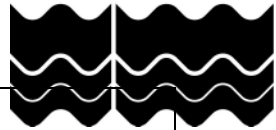


<p>Impacts on community cohesion</p>	<p>People said the size of the cut would be too great and cause greater demand on services from the NHS, charities, housing organisations, social care and local councils. Moreover, this increase in demand is likely to be more expensive than the cost of maintaining the current budget for the service.</p>	<p>Many of the comments in all of the feedback sessions were that the human cost of these decisions would negatively impact the community. It is felt that the knock-on effects of reducing the service would be far-reaching, impacting people's ability to access the support they are entitled to and resulting in people losing out on funding they are entitled to and being stuck in unsuitable accommodation, becoming homeless, or at risk of dying.</p>	<p>Potential for increases in homelessness and access to temporary accommodation, also increase in rough sleeping due to inability to maintain accommodation. Wider impacts for consideration are that insecure housing may impact on ability to maintain employment and/or attendance of school or college.</p> <p>Wider impacts for consideration would be deteriorating physical and/or mental health which could increase the risk of individuals misuse of alcohol or illicit substances a</p>	<p>We have engaged with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>
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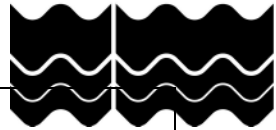
Additional categories

(identified locally as potentially causing / worsening inequality)

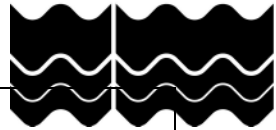
Characteristic	What do you know?	What do people tell you?	What does this mean?	What can you do?
Rurality	<p>The Floating Support Service provides a county-wide service and can offer home visits.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data: Analysis of postcode data has been mapped giving the location of adults who used the service in 2023/24 (see 2.9 of Cabinet report).</p> <p>The map shows that the larger proportion of adults are from coastal urban towns of Hastings and Eastbourne, it also demonstrates the reach of the service into the rural areas of the county and proportionate with data population for East Sussex.</p> <p>74% of the population in East Sussex lives in an urban area with the remaining 26% living in a rural area (2021 census).</p> <p>A report completed in 2023 Homelessness in the Countryside identified that rural areas receive 65% less funding per capita than urban for</p>	<p>A key theme from the views of both service users and partners is the value of being able to support adults with home visits and without this there would be a gap.</p> <p>People living in rural areas often must travel distances to access support, although no specific views on this were feedback, one lady who attended the consultation session covering the Wealden area share that she travelled two hours to attend the session.</p>	<p>The proposed reduction in funding is likely to put at risk or limit the offer of home visits.</p> <p>There is therefore a risk that this proposal will adversely affect people living in rural area of the county who have limited access to transport and increased costs associated with accessing support.</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>



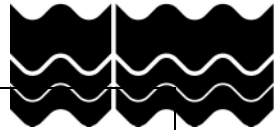
	homelessness prevention and there is a 24% increase in rural rough sleeping in the past year.			
Carers	<p>Care for the Carers estimates that there are 69,241 (11.7%) unpaid carers in East Sussex. It is difficult to know the actual number of carers because so many carers are hidden.</p> <p>Care for the Carers is a key referral partner with a direct referral pathway into the service.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data:- 112 carers were referred for support.</p> <p>2023/24 Service Data:- 12.8% of people supported by the Floating Support Service had a known caring responsibility.</p> <p>Care for the Carers Survey 2023 99% of carers in East Sussex responding said they feel stressed</p> <p>There are over 10,000 people claiming Carers Allowance in East Sussex. (Source DWP Feb 2020)</p> <p>8% of carers aged under 55 cannot afford their rent/mortgage payments. 14% of carers are in debt as a result of caring. This increased to 23% for carers in receipt of Carer's Allowance.</p>	<p>A common theme that emerged from carers is that they didn't know where to turn to when they were faced with the impact of caring for someone. This is exacerbated further when the carer experiences an unexpected health issue.</p> <p>One carer described, "Our life's a perfect storm. We've found it (the service) invaluable. I would describe myself as capable to complete a form but trying to care (for husband with dementia) and have cancer treatment isn't easy."</p> <p>Carer for her husband who is diagnosed with dementia and experiencing ill-health was referred to the service by the Memory Clinic. The service was able to offer support with forms, benefits, and Blue Badge, "This (the service) is desperately needed - like a friend. Non-judgemental, no expectations, was able to talk about our needs, came to help husband, helped me as well"</p> <p>A carer explained "If the service wasn't here, we would have missed</p>	<p>The proposal to reduce the service may place an additional burden on carers who are already stressed and fatigued by their caring role. People with this protected characteristic are at increased risk of their health and wellbeing being adversely affected due to their caring role.</p> <p>Carer's Allowance is the lowest benefit of its kind at only £76.75 per week (2023/24 rates) for providing a minimum of 35 hours of care.</p> <p>People with caring responsibilities struggle financially often because their income has been affected by caring: many carers have had to reduce their working hours to care, while others are unable to work at all due to caring responsibilities. As a result of a reduced or limited income carers are more likely to find it difficult to maintain their accommodation or ensure a safe home environment.</p> <p>Care for the Carers outline the following impacts for carers:</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>



	<p>Carers UK State of Caring 2023 (carersuk.org)</p>	<p>out on the attendance allowance and left it.”</p> <p>Feedback from Care for the Carers, ‘Changes to service delivery at the proposed scale will come with significant consequences for some of the most vulnerable residents in East Sussex and our deep concern in respect of the impact of these proposals on vulnerable people in East Sussex and their carers’.</p> <p>21% of respondents to the consultation survey, who use or have used the service, are carers and of these, 93% disagree or strongly disagree with the proposal to reduce funding by 88.5%</p>	<p><i>Reducing their ability to take a break from their caring role</i> - A lack of access to breaks / respite is already one of the most challenging aspects of caring in East Sussex, which carers consistently tell us significantly reduces their wellbeing and increases the likelihood of carer breakdown.</p> <p><i>Increasing the likelihood of carers being able to maintain employment</i> - Changes in service times/days of day service provision are key risks to carers being able to negotiate or maintain flexible working with their employers.</p> <p><i>Reducing carers’ financial wellbeing</i> - Being able to maintain employment is vital to carers’ ability to maintain choices, independence and financial wellbeing. The proposals will jeopardise this.</p> <p>Reducing carers’ health and wellbeing - As described in the consultation information, the proposed changes will be stressful for both service users and their carers, and will</p>	
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			destabilise caring arrangements, impacting on carers' wellbeing.	
Low income	<p>East Sussex is ranked 93 out of 151 Upper Tier Local Authorities (UTLA) on the IMD rank. Hastings is the 13 most deprived Lower Tier Local Authority (LTLA) out of 317 LTLAs in the country, with similar levels of deprivation as Newham, and Blackburn with Darwen.</p> <p>Wealden is the least deprived LTLA in East Sussex, with a rank of 254, which means it has similar levels of deprivation as Sevenoaks and Hambleton.</p> <p>In East Sussex there are 329 LSOAs Lower Super Output Areas. 22 of these are in the most deprived 10% nationally. 16 of these are in Hastings, four in Eastbourne, and two in Rother</p> <p>In 2023 in East Sussex the average (median) house price was £345,000, 10.1 times the average annual earnings of residents, which were £34,028. In comparison the average house price in England was £290,000, 8.3 times average annual earnings, which were £35,100.</p> <p>The cost of private rented housing in East Sussex rose by up to 27%</p>	<p>Feedback received from the survey and consultation events: “They supported me to get pension credit. I felt rich after previously not being able to pay my rent and council tax.”</p> <p>“I find this proposal to cut funding morally reprehensible. When there's a tough decision to be made it's always the vulnerable and the poor who get hit the hardest. Often dealing with council paperwork is bewildering and having help in getting what one is entitled to is invaluable.”</p> <p>“Many clients will no longer have bespoke, knowledgeable support with their housing and/or financial needs which in turn is likely to increase the disadvantages they are already facing.”</p>	<p>Nationally 14% of people in the UK were in absolute low income before housing costs in 2022/23, and 18% were in absolute low income (absolute poverty) after housing costs. Poverty in the UK: statistics - House of Commons Library</p> <p>Rent arrears are a priority debt as landlords can evict tenants from their home if they don't pay. Those on benefits (both in and out of work claimants) are particularly vulnerable to falling into arrears due to benefits not being increased in line with inflation, and the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) being frozen at March 2020 levels.</p> <p>This proposal to reduce the service will have a negative impact for people on a low income as it will adversely affect their ability to access the support they are entitled to and resulting in people losing out on funding they are entitled to.</p>	<p>We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>



between 2019 and 2023. Average private rents ranged from £167 to £253 a week across districts

During 2023/24 BHT supported adults with cost-of-living pressures with additional payments via a client's fund.

Client Fund	Budget	Number supported
Cold Weather Goods	£60,000	1151
Emergency Fund	£60,000	302
Digital Inclusion Fund	£60,000	443
Voucher Top-up	£130,00	639
Total	£310,00	2535

People that share this characteristic may be less resilient to unexpected spending needs such as the failure of a boiler or other durable good and are more likely to get behind with payments and fall into debt.

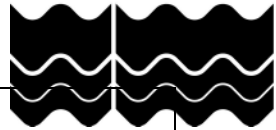
This can impact adversely on their mental health and put them at increased risk of anxiety and depression and increase the risk of suicide.

Low-income families are more likely to go without essentials such as food and heating to cut back on spending.

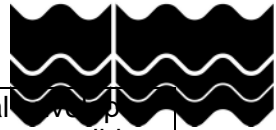
[Not heating, eating or meeting bills: managing a cost of living crisis on a low income | Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)

People's ability to afford healthy food is a major determinant in the nutritional quality of their diets that can cause them to experience poor health outcomes.

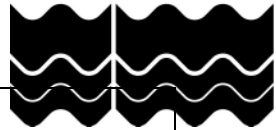
The national picture suggests that amongst the poorest fifth of the population, households with children would have to spend 70% of their disposable income



			on food to afford a diet in line the government recommended healthy diet.	
Digital Exclusion	<p>Digital ExclusionError! Bookmark not defined. The population of insecurely housed/homeless people who have confounding factors (neurodiversity, language issues, lack of basic education, offending history, addiction issues, mental health problems) tend to be much younger (30 – 55) and there is a huge population of these adults who need digital skills/access help to manage their lives.</p> <p>20% of the population in the UK do not possess all the foundation digital skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In socio-economic classes D/E this increases to 36% 	A common theme that emerged from the consultation sessions that people of all ages felt disadvantaged as more services go digital, they are unable to access support, advice and information. This was higher for people older and who work or worked manual work e.g. lorry driver, hospital cleaner.	<p>The national picture tells us that three out of ten people aged 65 to 74 and two-thirds of those aged 75 and over are not online. There is also a link to social disadvantage. For example, while only 15 per cent of people aged 65 to 74 in socio-economic group AB do not use the internet, this rises to 45 per cent in group DE.</p> <p>The Office of National Statistics (ONS) records the proportion of non-internet users as halving between 2011 and 2018, down from 20% of adults to 10%. of those who are classed as non-internet users, 55% come from adults aged over 75, and 24% of those aged 65 to 74.</p> <p>There is a higher risk of digital exclusion, particularly amongst older people and people on low incomes.</p>	We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.
Other groups that may be differently affected (including but not only:	<p>Rough Sleeping</p> <p>Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2023 - GOV.UK</p>		<p>The average life expectancy for a rough sleeper is 44 years men and 42 years for women.</p> <p>Options for people sleeping rough are limited due to their often</p>	We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited



homeless people, substance users, care leavers – see end note)	<p>Number of people sleeping rough in East Sussex on a single night in autumn 2023</p> <p>Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <table><tr><th>Local Authority</th><th>Single night estimate</th></tr><tr><td>Eastbourne</td><td>37</td></tr><tr><td>Hastings</td><td>31</td></tr><tr><td>Lewes</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Rother</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Wealden</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>85</td></tr></table> <p>71% of adults were/ supported to remain in their existing accommodation.</p> <p>Adults with low literacy</p> <p>1 in 6 (16.4%) adults in England are estimated to have very low literacy, which means they may struggle with longer texts and unfamiliar topics (OECD, 2016)</p> <p>The average worker in the UK with very low literacy will earn approximately 7.1% less than if they had a basic level of literacy. This means that they would need to work an additional 1.5 years over their lifetime to make up for this disparity (Pro Bono economics, 2021).</p>	Local Authority	Single night estimate	Eastbourne	37	Hastings	31	Lewes	6	Rother	5	Wealden	6		85		<p>complex needs limited appropriate accommodation options. This is further exacerbated by several grant funding streams supporting services people with multiple compound needs, including the East Sussex Rough Sleeping Initiative and Changing Futures programme, due to end March 2025.</p> <p>The proposal to reduce funding for Supported Accommodation services may also impact this group.</p>	<p>financial support</p> <p>It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.</p>
Local Authority	Single night estimate																	
Eastbourne	37																	
Hastings	31																	
Lewes	6																	
Rother	5																	
Wealden	6																	
	85																	



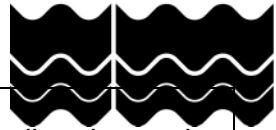
	<p>In England, 43% of working-age adults don't have the literacy skills they need to understand and make use of everyday health information (Public Health England, 2015)</p> <p>Public Health England and UCL Institute of Health Equity (2015), Local action on health inequalities Improving health literacy to reduce health inequalities</p> <p>16.54% of adults supported by the service had a health condition that may impact on their literacy.</p> <p>Seldom-heard voices: Adult literacy in the UK National Literacy Trust</p>			
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Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations- include assessment of cumulative impacts (where a change in one service/policy/project may have an impact on another)

A reduction in funding from £4,372,615 to £500,000 per annum, a reduction of 88.5% in overall funding is likely to require a fundamental service redesign. This reduced level of funding would enable approximately 854 adults per annum to use the service as opposed 5,282 people supported in 2023/24 (based on current model of service delivery). Consideration will need to be given to narrowing the scope of the service to targeted groups only, i.e. older people or Adult Social Care and Health adults only.

There are some services in East Sussex that provide housing advice, but we know these are in high demand and don't necessarily offer the same level or type of support e.g. home visits and face-to-face. The service is heavily used by Adult Social Care and Health, the District and Borough housing authorities, Children's Services as well as other Statutory and VCSE organisations.

This significant service reduction is likely to place an increased burden on these services and could lead to poorer housing outcomes for people. Homelessness and insecure housing are known to have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of the individuals affected and consequently can be linked with increased use of healthcare and support services which has a significant impact on other stakeholders.



Key Impacts:

The Floating Support Service supported almost 5,300 residents during 2023/24 to access appropriate support to address their housing needs tailored to each individual situation with face-to-face support as needed.

The proposed significant reduction in funding will have a negative impact on older people, pregnant women, households with children, disabled people, those from ethnic minority communities and those who have experienced multiple disadvantages. This is likely to have a knock-on effect to many areas ranging from Adult Social Care and Health, Children's Services, District and Borough Housing teams, local VCSE services, health and criminal justice services many of which are already facing reduced funding streams alongside an increase in demand.

Risks -

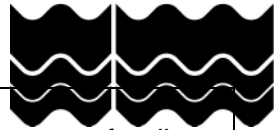
It is highly likely the proposals would result in a significant decrease in provision of support to address risks to adults including:

- loss of / risk of losing accommodation
- ability to manage/move on from temporary/emergency accommodation
- living in unsuitable housing
- lack of resettlement support
- ability to cope with housing
- support to maintain independence or is at risk of losing their independence due to their housing situation
- no support provision to move to accommodation that will better meet their needs
- homelessness

This may lead to:

- street homelessness
- suicides and death on the streets
- people living in unsafe conditions
- people living in conditions that put their health at risk
- use of health services particularly A&E
- demand for mental health services
- safeguarding
- criminal behaviour

This is further exacerbated with the proposal to withdraw funding for the support provided within Supported Accommodation and with several grant funding streams supporting services people with multiple compound needs, including the East Sussex Rough Sleeping Initiative and Changing Futures programme, currently due to end March 2025 leaving uncertainty about the future of these services.



The money advice/welfare benefits provision in the county is under huge pressure with increasing demand and the ending of the Additional Measures funding in March 2025.

Intersectionality

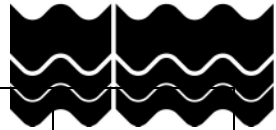
Applying a systemic analysis to the impact of the decision ensures protected characteristics are not considered in isolation from the individuals who embody them. The proposal will impact individuals who have more than one protected characteristic. People in need of housing advice may be disproportionately disadvantaged across multiple areas and have more than one protected characteristic, in particular in terms of race, socio-economic status, sex and disability.

With the potential for additional reductions in funding to other support services within RPPR scope, the cumulative effect on the availability of support options for adults affected by these proposals is significant.

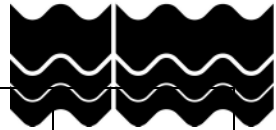
There are 1,360 East Sussex residents known to have multiple and compound needs (usually a combination of three or more of the following: mental health needs, homelessness, drug and alcohol use, survivors of domestic abuse, involvement in the criminal justice system). Many of these are likely to require support from services that can offer a flexible approach with a range of communication options including face-to-face and with flexibility regarding the timescales within which support can be offered. Without this flexible support, and the cumulative impact of the reduction in other services, the impact for residents who have multiple and compound needs is likely to be increased risk of homelessness, worsened mental health, reduced access to drug and alcohol services, increased harmful behaviours and increased involvement in the criminal justice system.

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

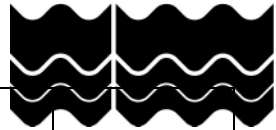
Source and type of data (e.g. research, or direct engagement (interviews), responses to questionnaires, etc.)	Date	Gaps in data	Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with? (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
<p>Research</p> <p>Annual Public Health Report 2019/20 - Health and Housing </p> <p>The-value-of-justice-for-all-a-report-for-the-Access-to-Justice-Foundation-and-the-Bar-Council-from-Pragmatix-Advisory.pdf (atjf.org.uk)</p> <p>Health - county East Sussex Report Builder for ArcGIS (eastsussexinfigures.org.uk)</p> <p>One million households will miss out due to the Winter Fuel Payment changes - Policy in Practice</p> <p>Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK</p> <p>https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/exploring-system-wide-costs-falls-older-people-torbay</p> <p>LR Age UK ID202857 Digital Report.pdf</p> <p>Housing costs and Universal Credit: Renting from a private landlord - GOV.UK</p> <p>Homelessness Monitor Crisis UK Together we will end homelessness</p>			



<p>Equalities considerations for housing, homelessness, health and care (ihub.scot)</p> <p>The Unhealthy State of Homelessness Homeless Link</p> <p>East Sussex 2021 Census Briefing: Disability (eastsussexinfigures.org.uk)</p> <p>Annual Public Health Report 2019/20 - Health and Housing </p> <p>LGBT in Britain - Trans Report (2018) Stonewall</p> <p>'Dispatches and RCM find that 99.7% of midwives have seen mothers who were homeless over the past six months'</p> <p>(Housing instability and adverse perinatal outcomes: a systematic review - PMC (nih.gov)).</p> <p>Pregnancy and Maternity-Related Discrimination and Disadvantage (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>Homelessness and domestic abuse spotlight - SafeLives</p> <p>In-her-shoes-young-womens-experiences-of-homelessness.pdf</p> <p>lgbt in britain home and communities.pdf (stonewall.org.uk)</p> <p>Home - Armed Forces Covenant</p> <p>Homelessness among armed forces veterans in England rises by 14% Ministry of Defence The Guardian</p> <p>Homelessness in the Countryside</p> <p>Carers UK State of Caring 2023 (carersuk.org)</p> <p>Poverty in the UK: statistics - House of Commons Library</p>		
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<p>Not heating, eating or meeting bills: managing a cost-of-living crisis on a low income Joseph Rowntree Foundation</p> <p>Seldom-heard voices: Adult literacy in the UK National Literacy Trust</p> <p>Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2023 - GOV.UK</p> <p>Tables on homelessness - GOV.UK</p> <p>East Sussex in Figures – Data Observatory – Welcome to East Sussex in Figures state-of-the-county-2024.pdf</p> <p>UK Parliament Post: Consumer Debt and Mental Health October 24 POST-PN-0732.pdf</p>			
<p>Consultation meetings held with stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of Service- Operational Management Team Meeting Homelessness Health and Support Group Mental Health and Supported Living Accommodation Board East Sussex Mental Health Oversight Board Mini East Sussex Housing Officers Groups Financial Inclusion Steering Group- Changing Futures Citizens' Panel East Sussex Housing Partnership Board Disability Rights Representation Group East Sussex Inclusion Advisory Group Harm to Hope Partnership East Sussex Seniors Association 	<p>20/09/2024</p> <p>24/09/2024 26/09/2024</p> <p>27/09/2024 03/10/2024 07/10/2024 10/10/2024 11/10/2024 15/11/2024 18/10/2024 22/10/2024 07/11/2024 08/11/2024</p>		



<p>Strategic Referral Partners including:</p> <p>Adult Social Care and Health Children's Services District and Borough Housing Authorities NHS services including Primary Care; Acute and Community hospitals; Mental Health; Community teams, Rehabilitation services; Maternity and Health Visiting; Social housing providers Advice Agencies VCSE services including Carers' organisations; Age UK; hospices; Stroke Association; housing and homelessness agencies; drug and alcohol services; MARAC (domestic abuse services) Police Probation Jobcentre Plus Schools Care agencies Private letting agencies Family/friends</p>			
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4. Prioritised Action Plan

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

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
Negative impacts identified in the EqIA above	We will engage with our Strategic Partner and key stakeholders to redesign services within the limited financial envelope. It may be possible to identify some mitigations once this work has been undertaken.	Some of the negative impacts are expected to be mitigated through this action.		April – September 2025

Housing-Related Floating Support Service - Appendix 6 - Profile of Service

12 months Oct 2023/Sept 2024: 5,064 people directly supported (443 re-referrals =5,497 cases).

- Total number of people in these households was 10,399 (parents, children, grandparents etc)
- 1,287 of these households had children (estimate from household data is 2,721 children)
- 1,116 people were 75+ years old
- 3,055 people reported having a long-standing illness

84% of referrals came directly from statutory partners. Referrals were assessed within 2 days and an Floating Support Officer (FSO) assigned to the case within 7 working days. Efficient referral process for statutory partners means that peoples needs are assessed rapidly, reducing the need for statutory intervention.

Local Housing Authorities: 1,416 referrals from the Local Housing Authorities (the 5 District and Boroughs- Hastings, Rother, Wealden, Eastbourne, Lewes):

- 282 single people referred who were homeless (208) or at risk of homelessness (74)
- 299 families referred that were homeless (175) or at risk of homelessness (124)
- 243 people referred due to Mental Health problems
- 101 older people referred with support needs (access to extra care housing, support with benefit applications, referrals for ASC care packages, mobility issues, physical health issues)
- 98 people referred at risk of domestic violence

Prevention of Homelessness: 1,856 people / households were facing imminent homelessness (i.e. they were losing their accommodation or at risk of losing their accommodation):

- 1,342 cases were prevented from becoming homeless, including:
- 877 cases – were supported to be able to remain in their current accommodation
- 412 cases - were supported to find new accommodation

Of the remaining 514 cases:

- 269 cases were supported to be ready to move once accommodation is identified (housing register forms completed, bidding on properties on Home Move, engagement with letting agents)
- 245 cases - support was not completed due to the person disengaging with the service.

Statutory Children's Services: 603 people were referred by Statutory Children's Services (referrals from Children's Services are when the risk to children in the household is high), including:

- 80 families at direct risk of homelessness
- 120 families already experiencing homelessness (families living in temporary accommodation, living in insecure accommodation)
- 101 people at risk of domestic violence

Adult Social Care: 2,230 people were referred by Adult Social Care, including:

- 490 people referred due to Mental Health problems (anxiety, depression, bi-polar disorder, schizoaffective disorders, personality disorders)
- 336 people referred directly from the Dementia Support Team (over 60's)
- 132 people referred due to high levels of vulnerability due to frailty (over 60's) – (frailty relates to the adult's mental and physical resilience, or their ability to bounce back and recover from events like illness and injury).

Mental Health Conditions and/or Long-Term Health Conditions (Oct 23 - Sept 24)

	<i>July - Sept 2024</i>	<i>April- June 2024</i>	<i>January - March 2024</i>	<i>October - December 2024</i>
Yes	1765	1657	1631	1575
No	517	512	501	474
Prefer not to say	1	3	1	1
<i>Mental Health Condition</i>	929	855	929	883
<i>Long-standing Illness</i>	867	732	750	706
<i>Mobility issue</i>	526	436	467	466
<i>Physical Impairment</i>	441	377	378	339
<i>Sensory Impairment</i>	140	112	128	116
<i>Learning Disability / Difficulty</i>	113	107	108	114
<i>Autistic Spectrum</i>	135	100	103	87
<i>Acquired Brain Injury</i>	52	49	42	40
<i>Other</i>	70	56	66	60

Adults accessing the service have severe complex health needs which are exacerbated by their housing situation. There is a clear link between housing and health inequalities.

Adults accessing the service live in insecure tenancies, live under the threat of eviction, have high housing costs, live in temporary accommodation for prolonged periods, live in housing that is in disrepair, damp, and in poor condition or overcrowded - all have a detrimental effect on physical and mental health.

Accommodation is often unsuitable for people who are accessing the services health needs.

The map below shows the location of adults who used the service in 2023/24.

