

Report to:	People Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	14 July 2025
By:	Director of Adult Social Care & Health
Title:	East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy
Purpose:	To share the draft East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy with the People Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 1) provide feedback on the draft East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy; and**
 - 2) support further public engagement on the draft strategy over the summer**
-

1. Background Information

- 1.1. The East Sussex Housing Partnership is a multi-agency group comprising the local housing authorities, housing providers and partners from across health, adult social care, children's services, criminal justice, the voluntary and community sector and representatives of government departments. The partnership includes a strategic board and specialist groups themed around different parts of the sector. The aim of the partnership is to set a medium and long-term vision to improve outcomes for people using housing services and to ensure the sector is an enabler for regeneration and growth.
- 1.2. The partnership has been developing a strategy to guide its work over the coming years. The partnership strategy will sit alongside and complement the individual strategies in each housing authority area and provide a framework for cross-sector working, supporting partners to make the best use of capacity, skills and resources.

2. Draft East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy

2.1 A working draft of the strategy is attached at Appendix 1. The final strategy will be collectively owned by all members of the East Sussex Housing Partnership. The draft strategy has been co-produced with partners across the sector including:

- Housing Partnership Board and Specialist Sub-Groups – the partnership has formed a series of specialist groups, to ensure the strategy reflects the sector as broadly as possible and to support closer management level integration. In addition to working with the board to develop our strategic vision, the specialist groups have also developed key actions and deliverables within each priority area.
- Strategy Workshops – the partnership hosted a series of themed strategy development workshops throughout the summer to reflect on key findings from the evidence base, explore national and local examples of good practice and identify priorities for the strategy.
- Local Housing and Homelessness Strategies - a number of local housing authorities are reviewing their own housing and homelessness strategies. Housing partners have been working to ensure strong read across between local strategies and the emerging partnership strategy.
- Producing an evidence base revisiting the data and themes from the earlier Annual Public Health Report 2019/20 – Health and Housing. The updated data has guided scoping discussions and the priority setting process. The strategy has also benefited

from links to research and intelligence gathering already underway within the sector, including the independent evaluation of the East Sussex Wellbeing and Employment Service and the baseline assessment of housing retrofit needs carried out at the end of 2023. The evidence base and strategy will also incorporate findings from the multiple compound needs assessment. This research has also provided the opportunity to gather qualitative insights through engagement with people with lived experience of using housing services.

- Once the strategy has been adopted, the partnership will produce an annual overview of key indicators to review progress and shape the annual implementation plan. The partnership is also developing an approach to meaningful lived experience involvement across the sector to ensure this informs the implementation of the strategy and ongoing improvement of our services.
- Partnership network and strategic level engagement: the partnership has also been engaging with partnerships across the sector, and partner sectors including: management teams in each local authority, Developers East Sussex, East Sussex Homelessness Forum, Temporary Accommodation Action Group, SPACES Programme Board, Local Plan Managers Group, East Sussex Energy Partnership, Partnership Plus, East Sussex Health and Care System Partnership Board, Sussex Health and Care Mental Health and Housing Programme, Multi-Agency Financial Inclusion Steering Group.
- Sussex Health and Care Assembly – the housing partnership hosted a housing seminar for the health and care assembly in November 2025. The findings from the assembly will be used to develop a cross-sector action plan which will be shared through the partnership network.

2.2 The partnership has identified the following priorities so far:

- Homelessness Prevention – supporting the earlier identification and support of people at risk of homelessness and reducing pressure on temporary accommodation.
- Housing, health and care integration - housing is embedded in work across health, mental health, social care and community sector partners to reduce health inequalities.
- Housing standards – to promote ongoing improvement against the national consumer standards for social housing.
- Development and enablement – supporting a sustainable supply of housing to meet local needs, including ensuring we are making the best use of our existing housing stock.
- Tackling climate change – a cross-sector approach to domestic retrofit to reduce carbon emissions from housing and ensuring a high standard of energy performance for new developments.
- Private rented sector – a consistent approach to implementing new legislation, maintaining access to good quality, well managed accommodation.

2.3 All of the strategy priorities will be underpinned by the themes of collaboration, evidence-based decision making and workforce development.

2.5 The housing partnership is also facilitating collaboration across the region on key areas of work, including preparing for upcoming legislative changes and strengthening our approach to reducing health inequalities linked to housing.

3. Community Engagement and Next Steps

3.1 The partnership board and specialist groups are continuing to refine the strategy, identify good practice examples to profile and gather feedback from wider networks and stakeholders on the priorities and key areas of work. The draft strategy will also be published for further public engagement over the summer.

3.2 The strategy is due to be adopted by the partnership board and each of the councils over the autumn. Once the strategy has been adopted, an implementation plan will be agreed, identifying key areas of work to support the strategy priorities over the next 12 – 18 months.

4. Key Areas of Work Underway

4.1 The partnership has been mobilising key areas of work, while the full strategy is developed, including:

- Developing homelessness prevention services, including expanding wellbeing support, home-visiting roles and links to employment and training. This includes supporting shared priorities with the new Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy.
- Continuing to develop services for people with multiple compound needs, including people with a history of rough sleeping. This approach builds on the good practice of the Changing Futures and Rough Sleeper Prevention and Recovery Programmes as well as the findings of a recent needs assessment carried out by Public Health.
- Scoping housing links to community-based models in health and care, including Integrated Community Teams and Mental Health Neighbourhood Support Teams.
- Supporting the co-production of a retrofit strategy for East Sussex.
- Joint work with the SPACES programme to identify public sector assets which may be suitable for accommodation development in the future.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 The draft East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy has been co-produced with partners to guide the development of the housing sector locally. Housing is a foundational determinant of health and key to reducing broader inequalities; parts of East Sussex face significant challenges with high rates of homelessness and people living in temporary accommodation. The sector is also key to supporting growth and regeneration, both through providing employment opportunities and ensuring the right mix of accommodation for sustainable communities. Work is continuing to refine the strategy priorities through the partnership network and public engagement.

MARK STANTON

Director of Adult Social Care & Health

Officer Contact: Michael Courts, East Sussex Housing Partnership Lead

Email: michael.courts@eastsussex.gov.uk

APPENDICES –

Appendix 1 – Draft East Sussex Housing Partnership Strategy