

Pride of Place

Working Towards a Better Future for Local People and Local Communities

A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex

EASTBOURNE • HASTINGS • LEWES DISTRICT • ROTHER • WEALDEN

2008-2026

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Foreword

It is a great privilege to present Pride of Place – our joint policy statement, which sets out the vision for East Sussex to 2026. It includes the ambitious plans of our partner agencies, organisations and communities. Our vision is to address the inequalities in our county, and create successful people, successful businesses and a sustainable environment.

The aim is to achieve a better quality of life for all local people and improve where we live, work and spend our leisure time. It has been developed through extensive consultation and collaboration. It will be regularly reviewed and updated.

Personal accountability means that every individual has a role to play and can shape our future.

Together we can tackle challenges such as deprivation, community safety, access to local services and climate change.

East Sussex is a historic and unique county, with beautiful countryside and coastline. It offers a diverse collection of towns, villages and rural communities and we need to ensure the continuing promotion of equal opportunities.

Pride of Place is about partnership working, where we unite around our common aims. We can achieve a great deal working together. This strategy provides the necessary framework for action.



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INTRODUCTION

Pride of Place is a Sustainable Community Strategy. It sets out a long term vision for improving people's quality of life and creating strong communities within and across East Sussex. It focuses on the issues and priorities that local people have told us they are most concerned about, like crime, housing, education, jobs and the environment. It also sets out the key things we must tackle to achieve the vision.

What is a Sustainable Community Strategy?

All local authorities have a duty to work with partner organisations to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy – a document which demonstrates how local organisations and agencies will work together to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area whilst safeguarding the prospects of future generations.

The task of developing this Sustainable Community Strategy has been taken on by the six Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in East Sussex, namely: East Sussex, Eastbourne, Hastings and St. Leonard's, Lewes District, Rother and Wealden. These Local Strategic Partnerships bring a wide range of organisations together to improve the quality of life for people in their area by tackling the big issues that concern them.

What is a Sustainable Community?

Most people want to live in a community where they know their neighbours and feel safe. A place with decent and affordable homes, local shops, lots of jobs and opportunities to get a good education and learn new skills. A place that provides the services and facilities people need, when they need them. A place that encourages people to be ambitious, and helps them achieve their ambitions - regardless of their age, background or circumstances.

Pride of Place provides a framework in which organisations, local people and communities work together to nurture, support and sustain communities which are:

- **Vibrant, inclusive and safe:** fair, tolerant and cohesive with a thriving culture and low crime

- **Well run:** effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership
- **Healthy:** promoting healthy lifestyles, good health and well-being and independence
- **Environmentally sensitive:** protecting and enhancing our natural and built environment, whilst reducing CO₂ emissions and adapting to climate change
- **Well designed and built:** providing high quality places and spaces for people to live, work and spend their leisure time
- **Well connected:** good transport services and communications linking people to jobs, health and other services
- **Prosperous:** a thriving, diverse and sustainable economy
- **Well served:** public, private and voluntary services that meet people's needs and are accessible to all, and
- **Fair for everyone:** equality of opportunity for all, including new communities, now and in the future.

Communities like this help us to live within environmental limits, create a sustainable economy, stronger, healthier and more just society and good governance now, and for future generations to come.

A Partnership Approach

The six Local Authorities and six Local Strategic Partnerships in East Sussex have, for the first time, linked their individual community strategies into one, integrated strategy - Pride of Place - and linked them to the strategies and plans of our partners. We have taken this approach because we believe we can achieve more by having a shared vision of the future and planning and working together to achieve it. This approach also means that we can make best use of our resources, joining up where necessary, whilst ensuring very local issues are also tackled.

Evidence of Need

Pride of Place is based on evidence of current needs, and the challenges and opportunities ahead. This evidence has been drawn from:

- Consultation with local authorities including Parish Councils, businesses, voluntary and community organisations

- Gathering and analysing information and statistics
- A range of public consultations and surveys to ensure local people's views, needs and aspirations have been included
- District, borough, countywide, sub-regional and regional plans and key data sources.

Links to Local, Neighbourhood and Parish Plans

A number of local community plans for local areas, neighbourhoods and Parishes exist which set out the issues that concern people in their local community, and their main priorities for action. These plans have been used to inform the District and Borough Community Strategies in Chapters 4 to 8 and the countywide strategy set out in Chapter 3, and will be reflected in the action plans.

As a result, local, District and Borough level strategic issues and priorities, as well as those which affect people and communities across the county, are included in Pride of Place.

Links to Local Development Frameworks

As well as ensuring local people's concerns and priorities are reflected in Pride of Place, it is also important that the physical infrastructure we need is developed. The planning system will play an important role in helping us deliver sustainable communities by facilitating provision of, for example:

- Affordable homes and housing options
- Shops, business sites and premises
- Schools, health facilities, social and community centres
- Transport networks for pedestrians, cyclists, bus and rail users, and private and commercial road users
- Parks, recreation, sports and play provision
- Energy supply, waste management sites and flood defences.

To make sure this happens, each of the District and Borough Councils in the county have been developing a Local Development Framework (LDF) alongside the Sustainable Community Strategy. An LDF is a collection of policies and plans that provide the framework for coordinating and delivering the spatial planning strategy for the area.

These LDFs, along with the South East Plan (the Regional Spatial Strategy) and other major plans, such as the Waste and Minerals Development Framework, will therefore guide how much development and building there is in an area, where it is located and what infrastructure services are needed to support it.

We have therefore worked hard to ensure that the local plans set out in Local Development Frameworks, and relevant county and regional plans, are fully aligned with the priorities identified in Pride of Place.

CHAPTER 1: Our Vision, Objectives and Priorities

Our vision and objectives

We want to raise the quality of life for all our residents by securing their future prosperity and well-being and improving the places where they live, work and spend their leisure time. Our vision therefore is: **to create places where everyone can prosper, be safe and healthy, and live in a high quality environment.**

To achieve this vision, our main objectives are to create and sustain:

- A vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy
- Great places to live in, visit and enjoy, and
- Safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

Our strategic priorities

Our research and consultation shows that a number of issues affect the quality of life for people in East Sussex. Tackling these issues have therefore become our strategic priorities, each of which contributes to the vision and objectives above:

- Developing our economy, creating jobs and increasing prosperity
- Providing high quality education, learning & skills opportunities
- Improving travel choices and access to services
- Providing high quality affordable housing
- Protecting our natural and built environments and adapting and responding to climate change
- Improving health and well-being
- Ensuring people and communities are safe and secure
- Creating strong communities and community leadership
- Enabling people to enjoy culture, sports and leisure.

We also know that, in relation to everything we do, we must:

- **Reduce inequalities and narrow the gap** between the least and most deprived individuals and communities, whilst raising the quality of life for everyone: Central to our vision is ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed in life. We aim to address poverty, disadvantage and exclusion wherever it occurs, and will build targets into our action plans to overcome the barriers that prevent people enjoying a good quality of life e.g. isolation, poor health, housing, education, skills and opportunities for meaningful employment.
- **Be sustainable** as we strive to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits: We must consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of our work, and ensure the resources and capacity needed to deliver change exist and are sustainable. We must also ensure that we meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. A healthy environment also supports social and economic activity and should be at the heart of everything we do.
- **Provide and deliver effective, high quality, customer-focussed services** which meet people's changing needs wherever they live.

Older people and children and young people also require particular attention because East Sussex has a large and growing older population, and because children and young people are our future. However, very few of the issues that affect people's quality of life occur in isolation to others, affect a single age group or community or can be tackled in one particular way. We must therefore make progress in all areas to achieve our vision – no single issue tackled in isolation will make enough of a difference and partnership working is the only way in which we will succeed in this. In addition, we recognise that we need to tackle causes as well as effects through, for example, early interventions and preventative work.

We also understand that nothing stays the same for long. That is why this strategy will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it stays relevant and up to date, and that resources are targeted at the individuals, communities, areas and issues that need them most. We will also be using information and trends to forecast the future so that we can better understand, influence and respond to it.

CHAPTER 2: Delivering Change and Monitoring Progress

Delivering our goals and priorities

There is a strong track record of local organisations delivering a range of activities effectively and also working well together across the public, private, voluntary and community sectors in East Sussex. There is a strong infrastructure of partnerships including those with a geographical focus e.g. the Local Strategic Partnerships or subject focus (e.g. Children's Trust Executive Group) and those who cover themes across the county e.g. the Community Safety Partnerships. The key plans of the Organisations and Partnerships that will continue to work together are listed in Chapter 9.

Pride of Place provides context for this work and the end of each chapter includes clear statements about the Key Tasks that need to be undertaken to ensure residents' and communities' lives improve. These tasks (summarised in Appendix 1) will be translated into actions and targets which will be co-ordinated and monitored to ensure they are delivered. There will be three sets of action plans:

- The Local Area Agreement (LAA) - a 3 year agreement between the Government and partners in East Sussex which will reflect some of the highest priority Key Tasks. The Government has identified a set of National Indicators and the LAA will contain up to 35 of these indicators. Negotiations on the LAA will be completed by June 2008.
- A Countywide Action Plan which encompasses the remaining Key Tasks and, where appropriate, indicators from the National Set that are not reflected in the 2008-2011 Local Area Agreement.
- Local Action Plan(s) based on the District and Borough Community Strategies and partners' plans – some of which are already in place or in development.

The key to these different plans will be to ensure that they are developed (where they do not already exist) in such a way that they connect to each other and that these connections make sense and are transparent. The targets in the local action plan(s) could, for example, include indicators from the National Set but where these are not appropriate locally will include the indicators that do make sense in East Sussex. The Countywide Action Plan could include local actions that are relevant in more than one District or

Borough, or are countywide. The indicators may well need to be different in different areas and/or to set different levels of achievement.

The action plans will be subject to equalities assessments to ensure they meet equality and diversity issues; a sustainability appraisal to ensure they deliver social, economic and environmental benefits and rural proofing to ensure they meet the needs of our rural communities. Details of these assessments and their intended outputs are set out in Appendix 2. Whichever action plan targets are included, the activity and resources to deliver them will be identified in the business plans of the relevant organisations. With the exception of some funding in Hastings, there is no new money available to deliver the action.

Pride of Place is a challenge to all of us, especially the large organisations and our partnerships, to use the resources we have to deliver the action identified and to ensure our plans reflect them. Reports and documents relating to the Local Area Agreement and the Local Action Plan/s will be available on (or via) the following websites:

East Sussex: www.essp.org.uk

Eastbourne: www.eastbourne.gov.uk

Hastings: www.hastings.gov.uk/lsp

Lewes: www.lvlc.info

Rother: www.rother.gov.uk/lsp

Wealden: www.wealdencommunitystrategy.co.uk

Monitoring Progress and Measuring Change

The Local Area Agreement will be monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to the East Sussex Strategic Partnership Executive Board. It will also be formally reported to the Government Office for the South East and central government once a year. The East Sussex Assembly will also be kept up to date with progress at its annual meeting. For all targets, we will regularly analyse current performance and future trends in order to show whether we are:

- Improving and heading in the right direction i.e. towards achieving the outcomes we are seeking
- Not showing any significant change
- Getting worse and moving in the wrong direction
- Unable to interpret how we are doing, perhaps through lack of information.

CHAPTER 3: What is Distinctive about East Sussex?

East Sussex has a population of just over half a million and covers an area of 1725 square kilometres (666 square miles), 64% falling within two nationally designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The county comprises the Boroughs of Eastbourne and Hastings, and the Districts of Lewes, Rother and Wealden.



Local Distinctiveness

Many people in East Sussex identify most strongly with their local neighbourhood, village, parish, town, district or borough. Each of these has a distinct history, community and identity and with it, distinctive strengths, problems and opportunities. There are also considerable differences within and between each of these local places. It is important to understand these differences, the different patterns of life and influence our neighbourhoods, villages, market towns and urban centres have on each other and on the county as a whole, as well as the influences of places located outside the county, such as Brighton, Kent and London.

We have many strengths including our natural environment, open spaces, countryside and coast; vibrant towns and villages with many and varied cultural activities, a mild southern climate, although this is changing, and a good location in relation to Crawley/Gatwick, Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells, Ashford, London and Europe via the ferry port at Newhaven.

Against this however are a number of challenges including:

- Poor transport and communication infrastructure
- A lack of affordable housing in urban and rural areas

- Poor access to services in some rural areas
- Coastal towns and economies in need of regeneration
- Low wages, skills and aspirations and high part-time employment
- Few high earners in East Sussex, most working outside the county
- An ageing population with an increasing demand for services
- Poor health, high rates of long term limiting illness in some areas
- Significant areas of poverty and of deprivation
- A weak local economy, dominated by small businesses employing fewer than 10 people, with lack of space in which to grow
- Flood risk in some rural and coastal areas
- Social issues, including crime and social change.

A County of Extremes

East Sussex is a county of extremes. Whilst the landscape is predominantly rural in character, nearly three quarters of the population live in urban areas (58% live in the coastal urban areas and a further 18% live in market towns). Four of our five urban centres are located on the coast, of which Eastbourne and Hastings are the largest and most densely populated. As noted in the Government's review of Sub-Regional Economic Development and Regeneration, there are major differences between the mainly urban coastal strip and the mainly rural inland areas.

The coastal strip has suffered from the decline in UK tourism, poor housing stock and a low wage economy focussed around tourism, public services and the care industry. Rural areas and market towns have also suffered a decline in traditional rural industries and some are struggling to maintain basic services and facilities, such as local shops and public transport, that those in urban areas may take for granted.

A general impression of affluence masks the fact that East Sussex is the 7th most deprived county in England out of 34 counties (excluding unitaries), with many people experiencing poverty and deprivation. Nearly 67,000 of all the county's residents are 'income deprived' while just under 25,000 adults experience 'employment deprivation'. According to the latest official estimates, around 80% of the super output areas in East Sussex now have a worse ranking for multiple deprivation relative to other areas than they did three years ago.

However, it is not yet clear how far some of these changes may be due to the ways deprivation is measured or because conditions have been improving more rapidly elsewhere.

The majority of the most deprived areas are in the coastal strip: the 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) showed that 15 of the 327 Super Output Areas (SOAs) in the county were among the 10% most deprived in England. This represents nearly 5% of the county's SOAs and is two more than in 2004. Fourteen of these 15 most deprived SOAs are in Hastings; the other one is in Eastbourne. Hastings' national rank has declined from 39 in 2004 to 29 today - moving it from amongst the 20% most deprived local authority areas in England to the 10% most deprived category. Hastings remains the most deprived local authority area in the region. Hastings SOAs that are in the most deprived 10% nationally are most concentrated in Central St. Leonard's, Castle and Gensing, but 5 other wards in the borough are affected.

In many rural areas affluence exists alongside, and therefore often disguises, the deprivation that exists in the rural districts of East Sussex, for example, but not exclusively, in Hailsham in Wealden and near Rye in Rother (in Eastern Rother ward), with areas in Wealden ranking amongst the 20% most deprived, and in Rother (excluding Bexhill) ranking within the 30% most deprived. Deprivation in our urban areas (Hastings, Eastbourne, Bexhill, Newhaven and Hailsham) is long term, deeply rooted and hard to tackle. This concentration is a result of cause and effect – educational and skills standards, poor housing conditions, poor health, and lower life expectancy in these areas. However, we recognise that we must also tackle rural deprivation.

It too is long-standing, and, given its dispersed nature, challenging to address, with additional aspects such as isolation and transport and access difficulties. In addition to extremes of deprivation there are a number of other significant differences within the county. According to the Audit Commission area profiles website:

- The percentage of the population that are within 20 minutes travel time (urban - walking; rural - driving) of a range of 3 different sports facility types, at least one of which has achieved a quality mark ranges from 0% in Eastbourne to 68.8% in Lewes

- Affordable dwellings completed as a percentage of all new housing completions ranged from 0.7% in Lewes and 3.9% in Eastbourne to 21.6% in Hastings and 25.6% in Wealden
- The percentage of land and highways assessed as having unacceptable levels of litter and detritus ranges from 6.7% in Rother to 22.6% in Hastings.
- Violent offences committed per 1,000 population ranges from 10.14 in Wealden, 16.75 in Lewes to 34.84 in Hastings.

According to the latest statistics compiled on East Sussex in Figures, the number of Job Seeker's allowance claimants in January 2008 ranged from 609 in Wealden to 1,859 in Hastings.

A Changing Population

One of the biggest challenges we face is an ageing population. We also need to provide young people with enough opportunities, jobs and affordable housing to enable them to stay in the county. In some rural areas young people are often unable to continue living in the same community they grew up in if they aspire to home-ownership or seek rented accommodation that they can afford. We believe this affects migration within the county (e.g. from rural to urban areas), and migration of young people out of the county. Some of our urban areas lack the better paid career opportunities that would keep the brightest of our young people.

Inward migration is another factor in our population change. Without it the population would be falling as there are more deaths than births. Those moving into the county include: the elderly, to retire; older adults, pre-retirement; families looking for a better quality of life, who then commute; economic migrants from accession countries and, to some extent, second home owners.

Those moving out of the county include young adults - we are losing our 16-29s, generally those with higher educational and skills attainment are leaving for better career opportunities or going away to university, becoming high achievers, taking their best earning and spending years elsewhere and not returning. We also lose some older people who return to their families or retire abroad.

The population will continue to change over the next twenty years – there will be a growing number of older and very elderly people, an increasingly diverse community and increasing inward migration. This change will have a number of effects and service providers will need to adapt, for example there will need to be a wider range of housing options as single occupiers, especially the elderly, increase.

Moving Within and Around East Sussex

The reasons people move around the county are many and varied. People are influenced by what they want to do, where services are located, and how easy it is to get there. There are less than 19 miles of dual carriageway in the county, 0.95% of the total road network, and no motorways. The main roads (A21, A22 and A23) are radial from London to the coast. Getting across the county is difficult with the A259 and A27 entirely inadequate for the volume of traffic they carry.

The inadequacy of trunk roads in East Sussex has a detrimental impact on the condition of our road network, where vehicles often use local roads to avoid congested sections of the trunk road network, particularly at peak travel times. There is also limited public transport in some areas and cross county services can be poor. In particular there has been under-investment in rail which is reducing the contribution this mode can make to inter-urban travel, although there are possible improvements to rail services including re-instituting the Uckfield to Lewes line and high speed rail services to London.

The main movements are:

- Between rural areas, market towns and urban centres for work, shops and services, such as to Lewes as a centre employment with the major public sector employers – County Hall, Sussex Police, Primary Care Trusts
- Between Eastbourne and Hastings as larger urban areas offering more, and cheaper housing, employment opportunities, and access to services, cultural and leisure facilities
- To and from the Eastbourne-Hailsham Triangle area
- To Brighton, Gatwick and London for employment
- To Brighton for shopping, culture and leisure
- Along the Brighton - Lewes - Eastbourne corridor

- Along the railway lines to London with larger numbers of commuters the further up the line you travel i.e. in the north of Rother and Wealden.

East Sussex has a divided economy with the majority of people working within 5 km of their place of employment or at home. Levels of commuting to areas that offer better employment and career opportunities are dictated by the ease of access particularly by rail. This is evidenced by the significant number of people who live in the north and west of the county and commute to London or Gatwick.

East Sussex and Beyond

East Sussex is in the South East region of England - a large area with a population of over 8 million people, located between West Sussex, Surrey, Brighton and Hove and Kent, and within commuting distance of London. As mentioned above, there are numerous differences within the county, and even within the different Districts and Boroughs in the county. When taken as a whole, East Sussex also experiences a range of inequalities when compared to the rest of the South East region and nationally for example:

East Sussex has the highest levels of deprivation of all the counties in the South East. In East Sussex, 5% of Super Output Areas (SOA) are in the most deprived 10% nationally, compared to just 2% for the South East as a whole. Similarly, 10% of the East Sussex SOAs are in the most deprived 20% nationally, compared to 6% in the South East. Of the 95 SOAs in the South East ranked in the most deprived 10%, more than one in seven is located in Hastings. Across the greater South East, it appears that southern and eastern counties have fared worst over the last 3 years, with Essex, Kent and West Sussex also falling in the national rankings.

East Sussex has a large number of micro and small to medium sized businesses. Fewer people work for companies that employ 100 people or more; average full-time weekly wages are lower than the regional and national averages; there are fewer jobs per person, and unemployment is higher.

Around 10% of the population have no qualifications, this is slightly higher than anywhere else in the South East, and average GCSE attainment is lower than the England average. There are more residents of working age who are not working because, for example, they are caring for relatives, sick

or disabled than the rest of the region; and East Sussex remains one of the lowest Gross Value Added (GVA) contributors to the South East economy.

There are a number of environmental and climate change challenges: Some of our communities, businesses and infrastructure are at risk from flooding and drought. Our transport infrastructure, critical to enable people to access work and services such as health and education is poor. We have fewer trunk roads than any other county in the region, and no motorways. We also have a large sparsely populated rural hinterland, which makes decent and viable public transport coverage in rural areas difficult.

Housing is also a significant challenge: Local people have to borrow up to 8.5 times the average county salary to buy an average priced home in the county, compared to a regional average of 8.0 and a national average of 6.9 times the average salary. The level of people classed as homeless is above the national average.

East Sussex has the highest percentage of very elderly (85+) residents of any county in England. We have comparatively fewer people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities (BME), and more disabled working age residents than England and the South East. In terms of health: average life expectancy is higher, more adults are estimated to eat healthily and fewer are obese than the national average. However, there are more road injuries and deaths and more people are admitted to hospital for specific alcohol related conditions than the national average. Hastings, which is the most deprived district in the South East, suffers some of the greatest health problems and also has the lowest sports participation rate in the South East.

These, and other, issues are tackled in more detail in the following sections.



The Economy, Jobs and Prosperity

Where we are now

The Draft South East Plan recognises that East Sussex is dominated by low paid jobs; low skills and educational attainment, and areas of deprivation; poor housing in some areas and poor transport. There are also important economic differences between the mainly urban coastal parts and inland rural areas. The Government's recent review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration focuses on such "functioning economic areas". The revised South East Regional Economic Strategy recognises the particular problems of the south east coastal area, and looks at actions that may need to take place in the rural south east. Recognising these problems, the county has been highlighted by the Regional Development Agency as an area of need. Most businesses are micro to small and medium sized with a small turnover. They tend to trade in local markets within 10 miles of their business. Business survival in some areas is also low. With so many very small businesses, reaching them to give support and help to survive and grow will take focussed effort. More needs to be done to foster innovation and entrepreneurship, for example in environment related business or more traditional sectors such as tourism: entrepreneurship is generally weak due to lack of 'free finance' or low skills. Skills levels are mixed and particularly poor in our most deprived communities. Significant investment has been made, and still needs to be made into improving educational attainment, skills and aspirations to help develop the skilled workforce businesses need. Across the County, the voluntary and community sector are supporting people's transition into work, training or enterprise through volunteering.

Over 80% of jobs are in the service sector such as hotels, restaurants, transport and tourism. Local authorities and other public service agencies are amongst the largest employers. Private, voluntary and community sector enterprises need to be supported and encouraged to compete. The county's average unemployment rate is lower than the national average, but higher than the regional average. The rate differs across and within Districts and Boroughs with Hastings having the highest rate, Wealden the lowest. 57,000 people of working age are 'inactive' because, for example, they are studying, caring for relatives,

early retired, sick or disabled. This is above the regional average. Levels of part-time employment are high at 28.6% compared to the regional average of 24.7%. Again, localities differ - Hastings has the highest inactive rate, Rother the lowest. Job opportunities are limited with fewer jobs per person than the regional average. There is insufficient business accommodation in the county now and in terms of future demand assuming growth similar to that in England and Wales. It will be increasingly important to both retain existing employment sites and allocate new sites to ensure the economic success required for East Sussex. Hastings, Bexhill, Eastbourne, Hailsham, Seaford and Newhaven need regenerating and, as result, are areas of economic potential and growth. If these areas can be regenerated they would make a major contribution to the local economy and the prosperity of our residents.

The Challenges Ahead

There are four key areas that need to be addressed for the county's economy to grow and prosper: creating sustainable enterprise and improving productivity; reducing the barriers to employment (e.g. affordable childcare, public transport and low wages); developing essential infrastructure (e.g. transport, business accommodation and housing) and increasing academic achievement and skill levels. These issues are a bigger problem in some parts of the county than others, so targeting efforts will be necessary. Our urban areas - Hastings, Bexhill, Newhaven and the Eastbourne/Hailsham triangle require particular attention due to their economic needs and development potential.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to narrow the economic performance gap within and between communities in the county and between the county and the region, in order to develop a thriving, diverse and sustainable economy where everyone can prosper

Our key tasks will be to:

- Support local businesses to start up, diversify and grow
- Attract new and sustainable business and investment into the county
- Encourage and support innovation and entrepreneurial activity

- Facilitate the development of more affordable, modern and environmentally friendly business accommodation and sites
- Reduce barriers to employment and address worklessness
- Promote further and higher education and learning opportunities
- Invest in and promote skills development, especially in key sectors
- Recognise and support the different economic needs and development potential of our urban, rural and coastal economies
- Develop high-value and priority sectors such as engineering, ICT, environmental technologies, construction, care and retail
- Reduce child poverty by 2011 and eradicate it by 2020.



Transport, Access and Communications

Where we are now

The need to provide affordable and sustainable travel choices has never been greater. A high quality transport and communications infrastructure is crucial for residents to access jobs, education, learning, health facilities, shops and other services. It provides essential links to support economic growth and regeneration. However, East Sussex has a mixed provision of travel choices. Trunk roads, which are maintained by the Highways Agency, make up only 2.8% of our road network and our rail infrastructure is limited. This inadequate road network adversely impacts the condition of our own road network as people use minor roads in and between rural areas and coastal towns to avoid traffic congestion. Unreliable journey times on these routes are cited as one reason for poor economic performance, which reduces the attractiveness of the county to new businesses. Consultations with residents have revealed a range of transport issues including the need for better bus and rail services and improved travel choice for school journeys. Road safety continues to be a key priority in East Sussex.

Local Area Transport Strategies (LATS) are being established or updated for most of the larger urban areas and market towns in the county. Hastings has been designated as a Regional Hub in the South East Plan which will contribute to the social, economic and environmental regeneration of the town and surrounding area. Access to transport is particularly important for rural communities. Volunteer and rural bus schemes are improving, but transport in rural areas remains a challenge and needs to improve. Town and Parish Councils have funded improved travel and access for young people. The County Connect Service, a partnership between the Pensions Service, Fire & Rescue and Adult Social Care enables officers from these services to visit older and vulnerable people in their homes giving them greater access to public services.

We are keen to reduce the number of people who travel by private car to reduce congestion, minimise the impact on the environment and improve air quality. Investment is being made into alternatives to the car such as better facilities for walking and cycling, quality bus services and rail improvements

(e.g. more services on existing lines, extra stations and expansions to the network.)

Reducing the travel needs associated with future development is tackled in the Local Development Frameworks. Local authorities and public transport partners have also worked together to improve access to travel information, but there is still much to be done on improving accessibility, affordability and providing innovative community transport solutions. Major investment has been made into Broadband, the installation of Community Help Points and mobile libraries which are bringing services closer to people, particularly those located in the more remote rural locations.

The Challenges Ahead

Implementing the Local Transport Plan for the county and Local Area Transport Strategies will help to make best use of our existing infrastructure, reduce the need to travel and develop a wider range of sustainable and affordable travel choices such as walking, cycling and public transport. This will help to ensure the effect on our environment of developments to support new housing and employment sites is minimised. At the same time improvements are needed to the county's road network to make East Sussex a more attractive location for business and visitors and to unlock our major development sites for housing and employment.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to improve sustainable travel choices and access to services and facilities within and between communities in the county

Our key tasks will be to:

- Implement the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road and support the development of the Newhaven Port Access Road
- Increase sustainable travel choices, improve public transport and reduce the need to travel by car
- Improve road safety and reduce congestion, minimise negative impacts on the environment and improve air quality
- Reduce the number of children, young people and adults of all ages who are socially excluded by improving access to jobs, education, learning, health and other services through affordable transport and technology related solutions including next generation broadband

- Improve the maintenance and management of our transport network.



Housing

Where we are now

Most people in East Sussex are adequately housed in decent accommodation, and there are more owner-occupiers in the county than the national average. However house prices have increased substantially over recent years making owner occupation less achievable for many households. Those that cannot afford to or choose not to buy their own home rely on the private rented sector or social rented housing. In 2007, the average price for a semi-detached house exceeded £200,000 with prices much higher in Lewes, parts of Rother and Wealden. High house prices and low average salaries make it difficult for many local people to compete with those moving from higher priced areas outside East Sussex. For example, someone in Rother may need to borrow up to 10 times the average county salary to buy a home there, compared to a national average of 6.9. There is therefore a need to develop affordable alternatives to outright purchase.

A countywide housing needs survey suggests that an extra 2,270 affordable homes, predominantly for rent, are needed each year to keep up with demand. This is 70% more than the total planned housing development in East Sussex as set out in the South East Plan which proposes 27,000 new homes by 2026. We have met targets for building on used land and housing density, but not for affordable housing. However, building new homes is not the only solution. We should also improve housing by improving existing housing stock and developing alternatives to traditional purchasing and rental options. Nationally, 35% of private sector housing does not meet the Decent Homes Standard and a significant proportion of social housing falls short of this Standard. The proportion of private rented properties that are occupied by vulnerable people ranges from 3% in Wealden to 9% in Hastings. There are 8,500 empty properties in East Sussex, 3.7% of the entire housing stock. Local councils are tackling these issues through a range of policies, financial assistance and enforcement activities including a countywide Empty Homes strategy. Homelessness is an issue in all parts of the county. The District and Borough Councils are working to prevent people becoming homeless by providing accommodation, advice and assistance. Whilst the number of people registered as homeless has fallen, hidden homelessness remains high, with young people and others 'sofa surfing' and evidence of rough sleeping continuing in some areas.

The Supporting People programme is critical to the success of this work. Since 2003, housing authorities, health, social care, probation and voluntary groups have enabled housing-related support to be delivered to a range of vulnerable people through this programme. We need to do more to support older people, people with learning disabilities and mental health concerns for example to live independently. We also need to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers whilst striking a balance with the needs of the settled community.

The Challenges Ahead

Meeting the needs of homeless and vulnerable people, and delivering sufficient affordable housing are key challenges. But building houses and improving housing assets is not enough to create sustainable communities. Other infrastructure is needed such as schools, health facilities and roads. Green spaces and communal areas can help create a sense of place and community and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. As people live longer and more people choose to live alone, housing needs will continue to change. More needs to happen to tackle fuel poverty and climate change by making houses more efficient. All new grant funded social housing in the county will adopt the principles of sustainable construction and meet level 3 of the new Code for Sustainable Homes. We also need to manage the risk of flooding and coastal erosion.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to provide affordable, good quality and environmentally friendly homes and housing for all

Our key tasks will be to:

- Increase the supply of homes and increase and diversify the supply of affordable homes, housing and tenures in all areas, both rural and urban
- Develop high quality, modern and efficient health, social care and housing support services for older people
- Minimise homelessness, especially hidden and youth homelessness
- Improve the quality of existing homes and help bring empty homes back into use to help people in housing need
- Increase energy and water efficiency of new and existing homes
- Plan infrastructure needs alongside housing developments, and ensure new developments do not increase flood risk

- Extend number and range of people receiving housing-related support
- Enable new sites to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.



Environment and Climate Change

Where we are now

Our environment is precious and the impacts of climate change will be wide ranging and have a profound impact on our lifestyles as well as our economy. Protecting our environment and tackling and adapting to climate change are therefore two of the most important issues we face. One of the county's greatest assets is its natural environment and many come to visit its countryside, coast and cultural attractions. Two thirds of the county falls within two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the county has received national and international recognition for its countryside, bird habitats, fisheries, sites of special scientific interest and coastline. Around 1,000 local people volunteer for practical conservation tasks.

A good quality local environment can help improve health, reduce crime and contribute to our economy. Some towns have benefited from regeneration schemes and Conservation Areas have been designated in some settlements to maintain their unique character. Compared with the rest of the south east, the county is generally well provided with green space near where people live and there are proposals to convert the current waste landfill site between Bexhill and Hastings into a new countryside park. East Sussex has the second highest coverage of woodland of any county at 16.7%. Woodland is an important habitat for wildlife and leisure attraction, and also provides an important economic function for its landowners. Air quality in most of the county is generally good, but there are exceptions such as along roads such as between Bexhill and Hastings, and in central Lewes. We also have a problem with more widespread pollution with ozone levels in Sussex being some of the highest recorded in the UK. Waste is also a key issue. East Sussex has reduced the amount of household waste going to its landfills by 7% between 2004/5 and 2006/7 by encouraging residents, businesses and other organisations to recycle, however, waste from all sources continues to grow and landfill space will start to run out in 2008. Our focus will continue to be about promoting more sustainable waste management practices and encouraging people and organisations to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.

Our climate is changing. Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions and other greenhouses gases are the main human influence on the global climate and the Government has set national targets for reductions in CO₂ emissions.

The County has already experienced water shortages, heat waves, intense winter storms and flooding. Climate change will increase the frequency, severity and cost of such events and could have devastating social and economic impacts, especially on those whose future is dependent upon their environment, for example our coastal towns and farmers. It is therefore important we work together to tackle climate change and plan for its impacts both positive and negative. Councils and other organisations in East Sussex have already started to work together to address this issue and reduce CO₂ emissions and pilot renewable energy schemes. However, a great deal more needs to be done to deliver the reductions necessary and to plan for the impacts of climate change.

The Challenges Ahead

Achieving planned regeneration and new developments whilst protecting and enhancing our natural and built environment is a huge challenge. Reducing CO₂ emissions, mitigating and adapting to climate change will require great effort but not taking action will be costly, especially in relation to public health, prosperity and our quality of life. We can all play our part, for example by reducing our waste, energy and water consumption, and using greener transport options. We also need to care for our open spaces, ensuring they are accessible to all, and to improve our town centres.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to protect and enhance our natural and built environment for current and future generations, and enable individuals and organisations to tackle and adapt to climate change

Our key tasks will be to:

- Develop high quality environments in our towns and villages
- Reduce traffic, increase alternative sustainable travel choices and improve air quality
- Increase green spaces, leisure opportunities and visitor facilities and make best use of our natural assets
- Prepare for the effects of climate change; manage the risks and make the most of the opportunities
- Encourage individuals and organisations to minimise their water consumption, CO₂ emissions and overall environmental impact

- Reuse, reduce and recycle more household, business and industrial waste
- Ensure climate change is a strategic consideration of Local Development Frameworks and other planning policies.
- Improve streets and green spaces so that places are safer



Education, Learning and Skills

Where we are now

There is extensive evidence showing the advantages of good early years and primary education to later success in school and in developing social skills and appropriate behaviour. For example, quality nursery provision, support to parents and helping children learn to read during the primary school years are all crucial. Pupils entering secondary school without basic literacy skills struggle to access the curriculum and are at risk of falling further behind their peers.

Educational attainment in East Sussex has improved since 2002 but has, on average, been below national and regional levels at Key Stage 2, GCSE and A' Level. There are more variations in performance across the county: of the five boroughs and districts, the performance of Hastings is significantly lower, particularly in the secondary phase. Of the 354 districts nationally, Hastings (which is 29th most deprived district nationally) performance at Key Stage 4 is third worst. There are also significant variations of performance in Eastbourne. In some subject areas improvements have exceeded national averages, for example Science and Mathematics at Key Stage 3. In others, such as percentage of A*-C English and Mathematics we have not kept pace. However, the attainment gap between some groups of pupils and pupils as a whole remains too wide and work needs to focus on these pupils and areas to narrow the gap.

Access to learning outside formal education is an issue because of the rural nature of the county and lack of provision in some areas. Organisations have worked together to overcome these barriers for example by offering new learning opportunities in community settings, such as libraries and village halls. Sussex Downs College and new educational and vocational centres such as the University Centre Hastings, Wealden Skills Centre at Uckfield and Prospects House in Hailsham are delivering a range of further education, adult education and vocational courses to people who previously had to travel out of the county in some cases to access similar facilities. The East Sussex Economic Study 2007 highlights low skills levels in Hastings and Eastbourne. About 10% of the population have no qualifications, worse than the whole of the South East. A skilled and adaptable workforce is essential for local business to be profitable, competitive and sustainable. Inadequate opportunities, ambition and skills levels can also affect individual and

community wellbeing by perpetuating cycles of low aspiration, low attainment, unemployment and poverty already evident in some deprived communities and the high levels of young people not in education, employment or training. Opportunities to continue learning in later life, for example through the University of the Third Age, enable older people to be active, engage with and mentor young people and maintain their independence.

The Challenges Ahead

We have achieved a great deal: increasing educational attainment, learning opportunities and skills development across East Sussex, improving access and developing new facilities such the new multi-million pound higher education and college centres in Hastings. A good education and relevant skills can improve people's life chances and quality of life. An educated and skilled workforce also contributes significantly to regenerating communities and improving our economy. We therefore need to do more to raise people's aspirations and achievements, and to narrow the gap between the highest and lowest achievers and between our most and least deprived communities.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to provide high quality education, learning and skills development opportunities for all by building on good performance and improving poor performance

Our key tasks will be to:

- Establish integrated services for children under 5 and their families through a network of children's centres and increase take up and quality of early years education
- Provide and increase accessible vocational and academic, lifelong learning and skills development opportunities for all, including people with special educational needs and people in later life
- Develop early years support for children, their parents and carers
- Raise educational achievement and skills levels across the county
- Reduce the educational attainment and skills gap for people from deprived and vulnerable backgrounds and disadvantaged areas
- Develop adult learning provision and take-up across the county
- Increase employer involvement and satisfaction with skills training
- Enable all young people to be in education, employment or training.

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Health and Wellbeing

Where we are now

People in some parts of the county are in very good health, but others suffer significant ill health. Health problems and health inequalities exist in every District and Borough in the county, although some are more extreme than others. For example, life expectancy in Gensing ward, Hastings is 72.3 years compared to 85.6 years in Mayfield, Wealden.

Poor health and health inequalities are related to poverty and deprivation. Whilst overall poverty in the county is below the national average, more than 52,000 people depend on means-tested benefits and more than 16,000 children live in low income families. The prevalence of mental health conditions is strongly related to deprivation. Residents in some areas of Hastings are three times as likely to have reported mental health problems as rural areas of Lewes. GCSE attainment is lower than the England average and the level of people classed as homeless is above average. These factors also impact on people's health and wellbeing. Early death rates from heart disease, stroke and cancer are falling. The death rate from smoking is also decreasing but still accounts for 1,000 deaths in the county each year, but much more should be done to improve people's life chances and to help them to avoid serious illnesses. Alcohol consumption is a problem in the county, with more people admitted to hospital for specific alcohol related conditions than the national average. Around 350 people die or are seriously injured on the roads in East Sussex every year, which is high and is partly a reflection of our predominantly rural and single-lane road network.

The number of older people over 65 who suffer from hip fractures is above the national average. The number of older people supported by Adult Social Care to live independently is low compared to similar areas in the region. However other innovative ways of helping older people to remain independent in their own homes continue to develop, including more flexible ways to provide care and to support people and their carers – however young or old they are. Permanent admissions to residential care and nursing homes supported by Adult Social Care remain low. 42% of adults are estimated to eat healthily, which is higher than the England average, and 17.3% are estimated to be obese, which is lower than the England average. Children have lower levels of tooth decay than England and the South East. The number of teenagers who become pregnant is highest in the most deprived

areas: Hastings has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy at 61.2 (per 1,000 population) which contrasts with Wealden which has the lowest rate at 26.6.

The Challenges Ahead

A lot of work has been taking place to tackle the main health problems across the county, including support for carers of all ages and smoking cessation and healthy eating programmes. But maintaining and improving people's health is not just about good and accessible healthcare services. We also need to tackle deprivation and low employment and improve access to education, transport, healthy environments, open and green spaces, good quality housing and services that promote healthy living, self-esteem, positive aspirations and independence. One of our biggest challenges will be meeting the changing health, social care and wellbeing needs of a growing aging population.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to reduce health and care inequalities within and between communities and improve overall health and wellbeing

Our key tasks will be to:

- Improve physical health, mental wellbeing and life expectancy, especially amongst those who are least healthy
- Reduce the number of people getting long term and serious illnesses
- Provide easy and appropriate access to information and services to help people of all ages to make healthy lifestyle choices
- Enable people to live healthy and active lives, and encourage use of open spaces including the countryside, beach, parks and gardens
- Reduce teenage pregnancy and reduce self-harming lifestyles, obesity, smoking, alcohol and substance misuse
- Support people to have access to, choice and control over services provided to help them remain independent as they grow older, or if they have physical disabilities, learning disabilities or mental health problems or live with long-term health conditions
- Improve the user, patient and carer experience and support for carers of all ages
- Improve support to children and young people on the edge of care, especially vulnerable teenagers.

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Community Safety

Where we are now

Nationally crime levels have been falling since a peak in 1995. This has been reflected in East Sussex, where overall crime in the county is below the national average. However, this disguises significant differences for example, crime rates in Eastbourne are just above the national average, and Hastings are higher by over a third.

People's perceptions of crime are often greater than the reality. This is a national phenomenon and may in part be caused by disproportionate media coverage of criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. Lack of reassurance around actual crime levels is particularly significant for older people, who are statistically much less likely to be victims of crime than other age groups. Bullying among young people can have a detrimental effect on self-esteem and educational attainment. As part of the Youth Cabinet elections in 2006, over 8,000 young people stated that bullying, safety and exams were their top three concerns.

The largest numbers of crimes are committed in the categories of violent crime and criminal damage. Drug and alcohol misuse is known to be a significant cause of crime and anti-social behaviour. According to a national study (Walby 2005) domestic violence costs East Sussex £6.8 million a year, impacting not only on the victim and their dependents but on the economy, housing, health and social care. With the high proportion of rural roads and poor road networks in the county, the number of deaths and injuries through road accidents remains a concern, particularly in Wealden.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in the county, established in 1998, involve a wide range of partners including local authorities, Police, Fire and Health services, housing providers, voluntary and community organisations. These partnerships and other agencies such as the Probation Service and the Courts Service are working together as part of the East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership to reduce crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse. The East Sussex Division of Sussex Police has also pioneered Neighbourhood Policing, ensuring a visible, accessible and responsive service to the community with named officers for each town, parish and neighbourhood.

These local teams focus on working with the community and partner agencies to reduce the crime and anti-social behaviour that impact on the quality of life of people in our communities.

The Challenges Ahead

A great deal of good work has been done so far, providing a firm foundation on which to build: the low crime levels in some areas need to be maintained, whilst high crime levels in other areas need to be reduced. Some types of crime in the county, such as criminal damage and violent crime need to be reduced further. Others, such as domestic violence and bullying need to be tackled because of the huge impact they can have on individuals and communities. However, safer communities are not just created by reducing crime and the fear of crime. We also need to reduce and tackle the factors that can lead people into criminal and anti-social behaviour such as family trauma or breakdown, unemployment, mental health problems, lack of respect for others, poor housing and poor environmental quality in urban settings. We also need to consider and reduce the possible impact our changing communities may have on social tensions, hate crime and community cohesion. Finally, we need to protect people's safety and wellbeing in times of civil emergencies, such as severe flooding.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to build safe communities through targeted activity, particularly in high crime areas

Our key tasks will be to:

- Reduce crime and re-offending, particularly in crime hotspots and high crime areas
- Increase community reassurance and reduce the fear of crime
- Reduce serious and violent crime, deliberate fire setting, domestic violence and hate crimes in particular, and ensure victims are supported
- Reduce the harm caused by drugs and alcohol misuse
- Build respect in communities, reduce anti-social behaviour and reduce bullying, wherever it occurs
- Protect children and young people from harm
- Improving communication, consultation and community engagement
- Reducing anti-social behaviour and improving perceptions
- Preventing youth crime
- Improving road safety

- Tackling emerging crime issues arising from the economic downturn



Community Strength and Leadership

Where we are now

Our communities are growing, changing and becoming more culturally diverse at a faster pace than during previous generations. The total population of East Sussex is forecast to increase by 3% to 519,000 by 2026. Almost all of this increase is projected to occur within the post-retirement age groups, with the very elderly projected to increase by over 60% by 2028. Some parts of the county are attracting high levels of new residents every year – some to retire, others in search of work or a better quality of life for them or their children. Some of our new residents move here from London and other parts of the country. Others move here from abroad including countries such as Poland and Croatia, and settle in towns such as Eastbourne and Hastings. Hastings and Eastbourne also provide accommodation for refugees seeking asylum in the UK. Whilst more people move into the county than out of it, some, mainly young people do leave for example to study or work.

Our population is predominantly white with an estimated 3.9% from Black and Minority Ethnic communities (BME) - significantly lower than England and the South East. However, our BME population has grown by 10,300 since 2001. Residents from BME communities live across the county with the highest proportion in Hastings and Eastbourne. East Sussex has a high proportion of disabled people. 19.8% of our working age residents are disabled compared to a regional figure of 16.4% and a national figure of 18.6%. Over the next 20 years, the number of people living alone is likely to increase and could represent around 42% of all households by 2026. This is due to more people living longer, separating, getting divorced or choosing to live alone.

Community leadership takes many forms from elected representatives such as local councillors and youth parliament members to others such as faith leaders and local 'champions', whose knowledge give them a real "feel" for local areas and issues. Strong community leadership and resident involvement gives a voice to local people's concerns and is crucial in helping to secure the resources needed for new or improved services and facilities.

Structures at area or parish level to support those who volunteer their time, energy and expertise are hugely important.

Public agencies, such as Police, Primary Care Trusts and local authorities provide services that reflect and meet different and changing needs such as translation services for people needing language support. The voluntary and community sector has also played a central role: providing community-based facilities, helping communities to get involved in designing and delivering services, supporting community empowerment networks and volunteers, and providing flexible or unique solutions which are difficult for large institutions to reproduce.

The Challenges Ahead

Whilst social and cultural change can bring many benefits, it can also create concern, conflict and division. Strong and sustainable communities need to be able to adapt to social, economic and environmental changes whilst retaining a sense of place and belonging. We need to ensure that people are not excluded from the services and opportunities on offer, and that people respect and value each other's differences. More needs to be done to develop and support local leadership, and to increase the capacity and capability of communities to solve problems, and get involved in planning services and making decisions that affect their lives and their neighbourhood. More could also be done to engage others, such as business and employers, in this area of work.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to build strong, sustainable communities with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership

Our key tasks will be to:

- Plan for and meet the needs of changing and new communities
- Promote fair access to inclusive services and assist those on lower incomes to gain better access to financial support and benefits
- Tackle social, financial and environmental inequalities
- Empower local people of all ages to have a greater voice and influence over local decisions that affect their lives and neighbourhoods
- Develop and strengthen the local Voluntary and Community Sector

- Promote community ownership or control of buildings, spaces and local community service delivery
- Support and encourage volunteering
- Encourage greater voter participation in local and national elections
- Plan a response in case of emergencies, reducing risk and informing the public.



Culture, Sports and Leisure

Where we are now

East Sussex has a rich cultural heritage, having been home to many artists and writers. Our culture continues to thrive with numerous events and festivals around the county. The East Sussex Arts Partnership enables more events to be created by pooling resources and making joint bids for funding. Glyndebourne offers world-class opera in a country-house setting and a site has been found for a new Historical Records Centre. The growing importance of our cultural economy and the regeneration and 'renaissance' of our coastal strip as a 'cultural coast' is also growing: Hastings has a lively arts scene, an £8.5 million cultural centre is being built in Eastbourne, the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill has recently been refurbished, the theatres of Eastbourne, Hastings and Bexhill attract national and international companies and a new water sports centre is being developed in Eastbourne.

Opportunities to actively participate also exist. Our countryside and coast provide a wide range of sport and leisure opportunities for residents and visitors alike including walking, cycling, hang gliding, sailing and windsurfing. A project which has created flood storage, wildlife and landscape compensation at Ouse Estuary Nature Reserve, Newhaven recorded more than 42,000 cycle trips and many walkers over a one year period. 7,000 people have taken part in guided walks. Five schools have specialist visual, media and performing arts status, a further five have specialist sports status. New physical education and community sports facilities have been provided at colleges and schools in Hailsham, Eastbourne, Hastings, Northiam and Crowborough and four community sports networks have been established. However, a national survey in 2005/06 showed Rother and Hastings as being in the bottom 25% of participation rates in sports or active recreation. Hastings, our most deprived district, has the lowest participation rate in the South East 16.7%, 15th lowest nationally (339 out of 354). Rother fared only slightly better with a 19.1% participation rate 76th from the bottom nationally.

Mobile libraries enable residents to order books and surf the internet. Access for disabled people is improving: Express Yourself Gallery in Hailsham gives artists who have experienced mental health issues the opportunity to show their work and disability sports groups are growing. The Countryside Access project has helped improve access to the countryside for disabled people by

replacing stiles with kissing gates, re-surfacing and installing boardwalks. Culture, sport and leisure play a role in our local economy: our towns provide shops, restaurants, leisure facilities, libraries, museums and cinemas. We have many tourist attractions, often run with the help of volunteers, such as the Herstmonceux Observatory, castles at Lewes, Pevensey and Hastings, Battle Abbey and Newhaven Fort and Redoubt Fortress in Eastbourne.

The Challenges Ahead

Culture, sport and leisure are key components of a sustainable community and are increasingly used as community development and regeneration tools: cultural and sporting events, like the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, help bring people together, can build self-confidence, counteract obesity and help people to adopt healthier lifestyles. Physical activity, sport and play can help to tackle anti-social behaviour and promote interest in the environment. We must therefore maintain our culture, sports, leisure and play facilities and increase access to and participation in cultural, sports and leisure activities and events.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to enable everyone to enjoy a wide range of cultural, sporting and leisure opportunities

Our key tasks will be to:

- Encourage participation in cultural, sporting and leisure activities amongst people of all ages and tackle the barriers of access and affordability, particularly in areas where active recreation and sports participation is low.
- Provide life-long learning opportunities in arts, culture and sports
- Promote the health and social benefits of an active life
- Develop support for cultural, sports and leisure based businesses
- Invest in multi-purpose community owned buildings in rural areas
- Conserve the natural and built heritage of East Sussex and its use
- Promote East Sussex as a place where the arts, culture, sports and play are valued and can be enjoyed
- Facilitate sustainable employment opportunities for professional artists, performers, sportspeople and others involved in the creative, sports and leisure industries and promote volunteering in the arts, culture, sports and leisure.

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Older People

Where we are now

Older people make up a significant percentage of the population within East Sussex. This percentage is set to grow as people live longer and also move into the county to retire. The number of very elderly (85+) is predicted to rise by over 60% by 2026. Older people are also among the most active members of society and this picture is strongly replicated in East Sussex. There is evidence to suggest that populations with large numbers of people in older age groups have high levels of skills, time and energy that produce significant economic outcomes as well as social dividends for local communities.

Services are being delivered through the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People which reflect the needs and aspirations of older people. Much work has already been done to increase participation by older people in planning these services. Seniors' forums have been established in District and Borough Council areas, brought together under the countywide East Sussex Seniors Association. In addition, District and Borough housing authorities, NHS East Sussex Downs and Weald, NHS Hastings and Rother and East Sussex County Council have carried out surveys and run consultation workshops for people over 50 to consult them on their future housing and support needs. The results of these consultations are being fed into locality Housing and Support Strategies for Older People. Local older people, service users and carers have also been involved in the design, purchasing and monitoring care and support services and major investment projects.

There are approximately 18,000 older people living in low-income households in East Sussex, and the proportion of older people living in low-income households has increased from just under 11% in 2004 to nearly 14% in 2007. In Hastings, more than one-in-five older people live in low-income households. Low incomes, coupled with poor housing and transport access for example, can lead to other problems such as poor health and isolation. We must therefore do more to tackle poverty, and encourage the take up of benefits, grants and support services.

The Challenges Ahead

We want East Sussex to be a county that values the contribution that older people make to our community and ensures they are able to make a contribution for as long as they want to by providing services that keep them healthy, independent and active. We also want to provide extra help and support to older people when they need it through a range of services that have been designed and developed with their input. To do this we need to ensure flexibility and choice in health, social care and housing services. We need to enable people to live healthy and active lives for as long as possible and to work proactively with an older workforce to get the most out of the contribution they can make to the county's economy and prosperity. We also need to work with carers of all ages to make sure they have the support they need to care for older family members and others, whilst developing the full range of strong community-based support services to enable people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to support older people and carers to have a healthy, active and independent life

Our key tasks (listed below) are integrated into the themes.

Underpinning them will be to ensure that older people continue to be involved in, and consulted about, the services that do, or may, affect them.

- Develop high quality, modern and efficient health, social care and housing support services
- Provide opportunities for continued learning and development in later life
- Assist older people and carers to play an active part in community life and have a collective voice
- Provide access to activities that promote a healthy lifestyle
- Assist older people and carers to gain better access to services and transport, and those on lower incomes to gain better access to financial support and benefits.

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Children and Young People

Where we are now

Children and young people make up around 23% of the East Sussex population. One in four households has dependant children living with them.

Child poverty, which can have a significant impact on children's lives and life chances, is an issue in parts of the county. Nearly one-in-five children in East Sussex live in income-deprived households, with Hastings being the most deprived district where nearly 30% or just over 5,000 children live in poverty. Eastbourne is the second most deprived district where nearly a quarter of children live in poverty. There are some areas in the county where child poverty is particularly concentrated. These include Central St Leonards ward (49%), Sidley ward (42%) and Hailsham East (39%). Poverty and social exclusion are potentially major barriers to achievement for a significant number of children and young people in East Sussex. Families in rural areas can also be disadvantaged through rural deprivation and with poor access to services.

Children's Trust Partners are working together to improve quality of life for children and young people, including those who have moved into the county from other places, such as eastern Europe. There have been some significant achievements including fewer young people being victims of crime, more children in deprived areas taking up nursery education places (although this is still lower than in non deprived areas), improvements to educational attainment, improved access to health services and participation in decision making.

The Challenges Ahead

In many areas of the county there is a need to overcome a culture of low social and educational aspiration which partly derives from our low wage, low skills economy. For example there are large disparities between the attainment of children entitled to free school meals and those that are not. This attainment disadvantage is replicated in other vulnerable groups such as children in care. One of our greatest challenges is to narrow the gap for all outcomes between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.

In addition we know that one of the biggest determinants of life chances for children and young people is the ability of family and carers to support them emotionally and practically to develop to their potential. One of the ways we intend to address these challenges is to shift more resources to early identification and intervention. Children and young people are the future of the county so we must ensure that they not only have access to education, leisure, transport and other services they need, but are also engaged in planning the future and enabled to flourish and reach their potential.

Our strategic priority for 2026 is to ensure children and young people are well cared for, have healthy life styles, achieve their potential, and grow into confident, empowered, responsible adults - able to contribute to the economic prosperity of the county

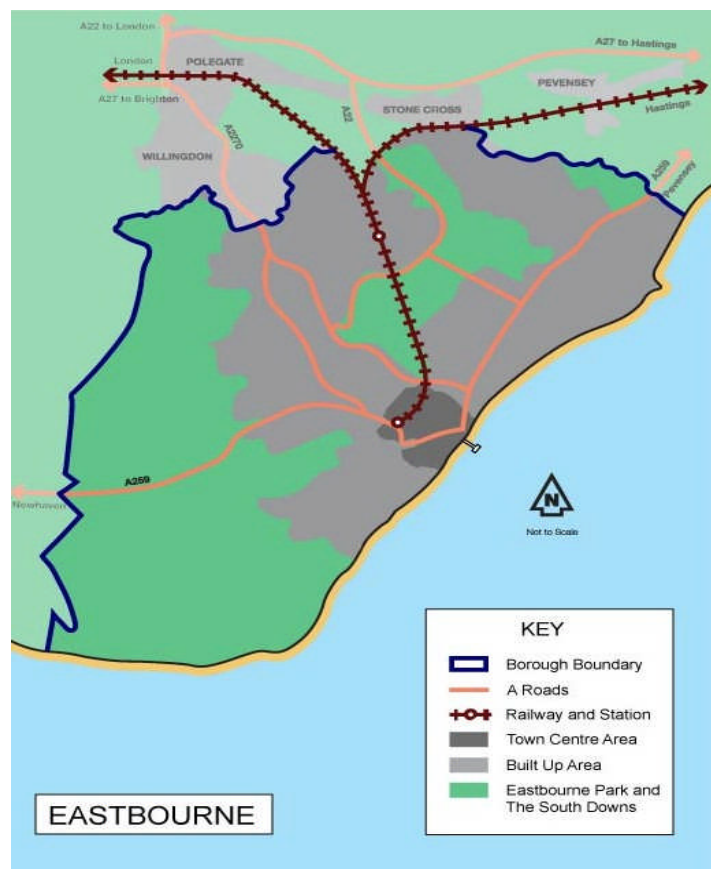
Our key tasks (listed below) are integrated into the themes.

Underpinning them will be improving the way that agencies work together through the Children's Trust to identify and respond, in an integrated way, to the needs of children and young people and their families; and shifting resources to prevention and early identification and increase the range of family support services available

- Improve access to services, especially in rural areas
- Help children and young people to make healthy lifestyle choices and reduce health inequalities
- Reduce teenage conception rates across the county
- Protect children and young people from harm
- Reduce bullying towards children and young people wherever it occurs
- Improve support to children and young people on the edge of care, especially vulnerable teenagers
- Establish integrated services for children under 5 and their families through a network of children's centres and increase take up and quality of early years education
- Provide positive activities for children and young people and to increase opportunities for children and young people to be involved and participate in decisions which affect them and their communities
- Tackle youth homelessness, and provide better housing and housing-related support for young people
- Reduce child poverty by 2011 and eradicate it by 2020

- Raising the aspirations, confidence and motivation of families and communities as well as individual children and young people.

CHAPTER 4: Eastbourne



Eastbourne is located in a beautiful setting at the foot of the South Downs on the south coast. The town is at the eastern end of the South Downs and is a gateway to the South Downs Way, one of the UK's most popular National Trails. This special, distinctive environment is recognised and valued by Eastbourne Residents. The famous Beachy Head cliff rises 162 metres (530 feet) above the sea and is the highest chalk cliff in Britain. Wonderful panoramic views can be enjoyed from the cliff top. 1,200 acres of Open Downland is open access land, free for the public to explore and enjoy. It can be accessed by a coastal footpath or the inland bridleway and is a wonderful

environment for walking and rambling. Nearly 3000 acres of downland is used for farming with public access on rights of way.

The town has an elegant seafront and beach with attractive gardens and a pier and significant areas of historic interest with 12 conservation areas and over 250 listed buildings. Eastbourne also has a range of parks and gardens and a wide range of sports facilities and children's activities. The resort beach from the Pier to the Wish Tower has won many awards due in part to excellent water quality. Sovereign Harbour in the east is one of the south coasts premier harbour areas offering a marina and berthing facilities alongside high quality housing.

In comparison with the County, Region and Nation as a whole, Eastbourne has a higher percentage of the population of pensionable age, those aged 85 and above and a lower percentage of the population aged 0-15. This trend has narrowed in recent years. We need to ensure that we monitor our changing population profile to allow us to provide services that meet the needs of our residents

Eastbourne shares many of the challenges that are common throughout the South East. For example: rising house prices and a lack of affordable housing, substance misuse, low wages, providing services for a growing population of younger people whilst caring for the elderly and disabled. We must work together to improve the quality of life for children, young people and families at risk, meet our transport needs more effectively, promote healthier communities and narrow the gap between those with good health and those with poor health, promote our economy and community safety, raise standards across our schools and maintain our good local environment.

Whilst some areas of the town are considered affluent, there are also some pockets of severe deprivation. Recent evidence shows that parts of Devonshire, Langney and Hampden Park wards are amongst the most deprived areas in England. Eastbourne has the second highest level of unemployment of any borough or district in East Sussex. We must reduce the gap between these areas of deprivation and the rest of the town.

OUR 2026 PARTNERSHIP VISION FOR EASTBOURNE

By 2026 Eastbourne will be a premier seaside destination within an enhanced green setting. To meet everyone's needs Eastbourne will be a safe, thriving, healthy and vibrant community with excellent housing, education and employment choices, actively responding to the effects of climate change.

Eastbourne will be a place:

Regeneration & Economy

- That is attractive for holidays and short breaks, with quality hotels, attractive events and activities
- Where people want to live and work
- That has a mix of skills and businesses providing for a sustainable economy
- That has good road and rail links across South East England connecting Eastbourne to the rest of the UK and Europe and a communications infrastructure providing access to the global economy

Environment

- Where people respect and protect wildlife, the open environment and the built environment
- Where we reduce, reuse or recycle the majority of our household and business waste
- That has an integrated public transport system that encourages people to leave their cars at home
- Where people understand the local implications of climate change and are actively seeking to reduce their carbon footprint

Health & Social Care

- That is healthy with services delivered appropriately in the community

Housing

- That has a good supply of high quality sustainable housing which offers choice for local people and those wishing to move to the town to work

Community Safety

- Where people feel safe in their homes and within the town

Learning & Skills

- That encourages lifelong learning

Culture and Sport

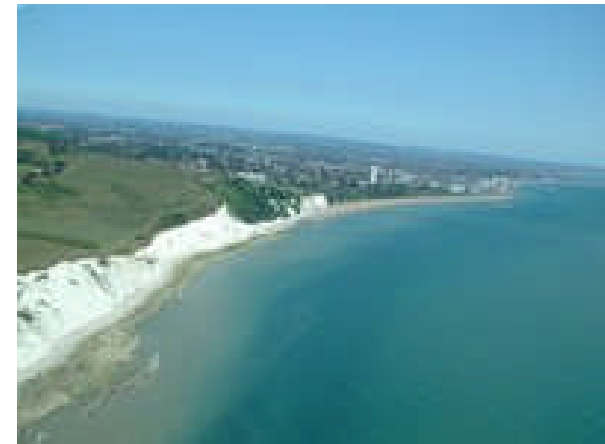
- That is known for a broad range of opportunities for all to engage in the creative arts, sport and recreation

Communities Working Together

- That has residents with a strong sense of community, responsibility and spirit of volunteering
- That is accessible to people with a range of disabilities and needs

Children, Young People & Families

- That is good for children and young people to grow up and stay, where families and their extended networks can flourish



WHAT ARE OUR LOCAL ISSUES?

REGENERATION AND ECONOMY

In 2026 Eastbourne will have:

- **Well paid jobs for local people with a workforce skilled to match employment opportunities**
- **A modern sophisticated town that people want to live in, work in and visit with space for businesses to grow**
- **A broad economic base with diverse employment opportunities available**

Eastbourne provides all the benefits of a seaside resort and is also a good base for exploring the nearby countryside. As a resort employment in the leisure sectors is high - hospitality, leisure, retail and sports and whilst there is a specialist industrial 'cluster' in pump manufacture this is small. The largest employment sector is the public sector.

The Eastbourne/Hailsham Triangle is recognised as a key strategic location along the Sussex Coast, which offers considerable potential for additional economic and sustainable development; but at the same time, is an area of economic need and opportunity. The area has been identified in the South East Plan as a growth area, and the Sussex Coast has been recognised by SEEDA as underperforming in its contribution to the regional economy. An Economic Blueprint was recently commissioned to set out a vision and economic strategy for the area, including recommendations as to how it can make a significant contribution to the sustainable economic growth of East Sussex, the coastal strip and the broader region.

OUR PRIORITIES IN EASTBOURNE

Ensure robust Leadership and Coordination by:

- Establishing a mechanism to lead, in partnership, the Triangle in a single co-ordinated approach, to ensure that it is not simply a growth area for residential development but contributes to the economic growth of the region

Provide High quality and Sustainable Economic Infrastructure by:

- Creating a land-use planning and policy framework to ensure that development takes place with the necessary high quality integrated transport, education, community facilities and open spaces, business support, utilities, ICT services and support infrastructure, whilst protecting and enhancing the green environment
- Unlocking and assembling strategic sites to support inward investment, support and retain local growing businesses and actively encourage the provision of high quality well paid jobs
- Creating better public transport connectivity within and beyond the Blueprint area and to raise the profile for further A27 improvements

Promote Confident and Creative People by:

- Ensuring residents have the necessary skills and qualifications to meet the needs of business today and in the future, and work with business to develop a coordinated approach to tackle labour shortages and skills deficiencies
- Developing local interventions to encourage employment for all
- Encouraging employers to invest in training and developing their workforce

Nurture a Culture of Entrepreneurship by:

- Tapping into support infrastructures for businesses to promote and increase the number of start up and micro businesses

Support Smart, Sustainable Enterprises by:

- Developing a coherent, prioritised Tourism Development programme
- Encouraging competitiveness, creativity and enterprise, particularly amongst small and medium sized enterprises
- Modernising the local economy to enable diversification into new growth areas
- Supporting and encouraging investment in the large scale retail led regeneration of the town centre to ensure it delivers maximum economic impact
- Encouraging high quality of tourist accommodation, targeted at specific groups within a defined market

ENVIRONMENT

In 2026 Eastbourne residents will:

- **Enjoy a higher quality of life through having a clean, safe and accessible natural, urban and marine environment**
- **Value and protect the environment, conserving and enhancing it for future generations**
- **See all new developments being planned and designed with minimal adverse impact on either the historic or the natural environment**
- **Be aware of the local implications of climate change and are actively seeking to reduce their carbon footprint**

Maintaining and improving the environment is key to a sustainable future for Eastbourne. Tourism and business thrive in a high quality environment. We cannot afford to take Eastbourne's environmental advantages for granted. We must take into account the local implications of climate change whilst conserving and improving our green spaces and built environment, as well as our coastline, downland and wildlife.

OUR PRIORITIES IN EASTBOURNE:

Protect and manage the town's unique green setting by:

- Developing and managing a green network that will enable wildlife to flourish in our town
- Maintaining our parks, gardens and street trees to a high standard
- Using the laws available to us to protect our most valued areas and wildlife species

Encourage and educate Eastbourne residents, services and businesses to value, protect and improve their environment by:

- Identifying specific areas of environmental importance in the town, forming and supporting community groups to help protect and maintain them
- Keeping our streets and all open spaces clean and tidy
- Contributing to the development of a green network by encouraging wildlife into gardens

Make homes, services and businesses more environmentally friendly through energy efficiency, conservation of resources and waste management by:

- Encouraging and educating everyone to reduce, reuse and recycle waste
- Encouraging local businesses and services to adopt positive environmental practices
- Promoting ways of saving resources and reducing household running costs e.g. energy efficient and insulated homes

Encourage the use of alternative methods of transport to reduce the number of car journeys made in Eastbourne by:

- Improving the standard and quantity of public transport
- Improving facilities for cycling and walking
- Encouraging the production of green travel plans

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

In 2026 Eastbourne will have:

- **An improved level of health and well being for all residents**
- **Fast convenient care, delivered to a consistently high standard**
- **Services that are available when people want them, tailored to their individual needs**
- **Care that is organised from home to hospital, through to discharge, and followed up smoothly and efficiently**

Eastbourne's population is older than the England average, and maintaining the independence of Eastbourne's older residents is a key part of delivering focused health and social care services. Large variations exist in the health and social care needs of Eastbourne residents with health inequalities existing in areas such as Devonshire and Langney wards. Eastbourne has significant levels of child poverty, and incidences of adult mental ill-health and suicide are higher than the average for England.

When improving opportunities to access services that prevent ill-health and support well-being, we must ensure that these services are targeted at our most vulnerable residents, but continue to promote good health among the wider community. We must ensure that all our services are accessible to migrant communities, hard to reach and excluded groups.

OUR PRIORITIES IN EASTBOURNE

Enable and support individuals and families to enjoy a positive and fulfilling home life by:

- Increasing opportunities, through support and care, for people to live independently at home
- Supporting carers effectively, including young carers

Provide high quality community based services that avoid the need for crisis services and hospital admissions by:

- Continuing to expand intermediate care that meets the needs of Eastbourne's residents
- Providing preventative services in the community e.g. delivering an integrated falls service that both reduces the occurrence of falls and ensures appropriate care and rehabilitation should a fall occur

Continue and enhance community education and health improvement opportunities to enable residents of Eastbourne to make informed lifestyle choices and reduce incidences of major killer diseases by:

- Working with partners, including employers, to deliver practical, healthy, lifestyle advice across all age ranges e.g. early intervention and advice on sensible drinking and substance misuse
- Improving mental well being and reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness
- Further promoting Stop Smoking Schemes across all age ranges in Eastbourne
- Encouraging people to take more exercise, reduce obesity, and improve their diet and nutrition
- Improving sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy

HOUSING

By 2026 Eastbourne will have:

- **A housing market that provides greater housing choices for all**
- **High quality condition and management in all housing stock**
- **Appropriate housing with support for vulnerable people**
- **Successful, well run safe neighbourhoods supported by appropriate infrastructure and amenities**

Eastbourne has a high annual need for new affordable homes to rent. To deliver these we need to identify sites, particularly those in public ownership, and the necessary financial resources. As well as increasing and expanding affordable housing choices for older people, we also need to build homes of an excellent quality which will attract higher skilled workers who will support our economic ambitions.

Homelessness is a major issue for Eastbourne. We must improve the quality of private rented homes and access to these for people on low incomes, and those with support needs. An estimated 29% of Eastbourne's housing fails the decent homes standard, particularly private rented homes. Poor conditions in Houses in Multiple Occupation and fuel poverty are particular concerns. We also need to identify suitable accommodation for gypsies and travellers.

Eastbourne has a reasonable supply of supported housing, but we need to make better use of this by increasing provision of support for those ready to move on and live more independently, particularly young people. We also need to address current gaps in support services to people with a range of mental health, alcohol and substance misuse problems, and those in the criminal justice system.

OUR PRIORITIES IN EASTBOURNE

Improve the condition of housing stock in Eastbourne by:

- Regenerating empty and underused properties and improving Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Achieving the government's Decent Homes Standard for all social housing stock and increasing the number of tenants living in Decent Homes in the private sector
- Ensuring sufficient resources are allocated to enable older people to maintain their properties

Meet the housing and support needs of vulnerable and excluded people by:

- Preventing homelessness and minimising the use of bed and breakfast accommodation
- Identifying suitable sites for gypsies and travellers
- Increasing the supply, quality and access to supported housing for vulnerable groups
- Increasing the provision of support available to enable vulnerable people to remain in their own homes
- Increasing housing options for young people unable to stay in their parents home

Improve the availability of a range of suitable housing for all and contribute to improvements in local neighbourhoods by:

- Increasing the supply of affordable housing and making best use of the planning system and land available, including public land
- Planning all new housing and regenerating some areas to create balanced and sustainable communities, where there is a mix of housing types and sizes
- Providing housing and support services to support economic growth, ensuring there is reasonable access to amenities
- Promote partnering to provide effective neighbourhood management and housing provision

COMMUNITY SAFETY

In 2026 Eastbourne will be:

A safe and secure place to live with:

- **People being and feeling more secure in their homes and daily lives**
- **More offenders brought to account and deterred from reoffending, with victims better supported**
- **Fewer people's lives being ruined by drugs and alcohol abuse**

Feeling safe in our homes and in our daily lives is something we all want in our homes, on our streets and in our neighbourhoods.

Crime in Eastbourne has reduced substantially between 2003 and 2006 and is lower than it has been for some time. For example burglary of people's homes has reduced by over 64%. However perception of crime is different, in that levels of fear of crime are higher than levels of actual crime.

We need to continue to target our efforts at crime hotspots and low level crime that negatively impacts on our communities. This cannot be achieved by one agency alone. We need to empower our community to find local solutions to local problems.

OUR PRIORITIES IN EASTBOURNE

Prevent and reduce crime and disorder by partners working together and using effective community engagement to deliver:

- Targeted police operations and effective youth diversion activity to reduce anti social behaviour, criminal damage and low level arson
- Effective multi agency initiatives to further reduce crime across the town and particularly in 'hot spot' areas
- Proactive enforcement, licensing control and ongoing partnership working reduce low level public place violent crime and common assault particularly in the town centre at night
- Reduce the fear of crime in our communities through marketing and communication initiatives e.g. developing a media strategy
- Designing out crime and improving security when we plan new development or improve existing developments

Prevent and reduce misuse of drugs and alcohol by:

- Continuing to disrupt the local supply of controlled drugs in Eastbourne
- Prioritising prolific offenders for diversionary drug treatment and enhancing the level of aftercare including housing support
- Maintaining licensing control to prevent irresponsible sales of alcohol
- Developing targeted education programmes to deal with alcohol and substance misuse issues

Ensure our personal safety and safety in our homes by:

- Providing fire safety advice and support
- Running safety equipment loan schemes
- Reducing accidents in our homes through safety checks and smoke alarm installation, particularly to vulnerable people and in targeted areas

LEARNING AND SKILLS

In 2026 Eastbourne will have:

- **A population with skills and education levels needed to be successful both personally and in the local economy**
- **Performance in all schools and colleges that matches or betters the national average**
- **Fully effective engagement with employers, providing them with access to high quality learning and training to improve economic development**

Education provides skills for life. If we have the right skills in Eastbourne, they will help support the local economy and will encourage more employers to locate in the town. Eastbourne is a relatively under skilled community and we need to motivate our residents to learn and that learning needs to be valued.

Performance in our local schools and colleges has improved. However we still have issues in Eastbourne – 8.76% of young people post 16 in our town are not in education or employment with training, often these young people have a challenge in finding suitable permanent accommodation. Managed transfer systems have reduced exclusions and schools are working together to raise levels of performance and attainment particularly in targeted schools. Our workforce is under skilled and we must provide opportunities for people to learn throughout their lives.

OUR PRIORITIES IN EASTBOURNE

Improve our education and skills levels by:

- Motivating people to learn and ensuring that appropriate courses are available to everyone
- Providing courses that offer qualifications that are recognised and valued by employers
- Constantly improving skill levels to reflect local economic needs, so that we can compete globally

Improve standards in schools and colleges by:

- Encouraging family engagement in a child's education
- Providing high quality Information Advice and Guidance to all young people and their families to help their transition between school college and work
- Ensuring there are broad and balanced school and college curriculums providing a blend of opportunities including learning in the work place

Improve our work with employers by:

- Improving our links between schools, colleges and work places and encouraging employers to engage with the education system
- Providing all young people with high quality work-related learning and work based experiences
- Encouraging apprenticeships and jobs with training

CULTURE AND SPORT

By 2026 Eastbourne will have:

- **Cultural, sports and leisure facilities for everyone**
- **Programmes that help all people and communities explore and develop their creative and sporting talent**
- **Options for culture and sport that will encourage community participation and improve health and educational attainment**
- **Historical, archaeological and built environments that celebrate and contribute to civic understanding**

Eastbourne has a long history of providing superb culture, sports and leisure facilities together with exciting events. Our built environment is an excellent example of Victorian seaside town planning, with an unspoilt seafront, wide avenues and elegant villas. In 2006 the town gained Beacon status from the government under the theme culture and sport for hard to reach groups. We have theatres which bring a range of world class productions to Eastbourne, and a new cultural centre which presents important contemporary art exhibitions in galleries of international standard, alongside its acclaimed art collection. The building also provides conference and exhibition halls and a suite of community and education spaces that promote learning.

We have a range of indoor and outdoor sporting facilities suitable for all abilities from beginners to the world class athlete. Through our sport outreach programmes we offer activities for a number of groups, including people with disabilities and young offenders.

Using our theatres and art collections we have developed a number of innovative educational outreach programmes involving local people, including a visual arts outreach programme which is the principle driver through which we use culture to engage the hard to reach, tackle social exclusion and promote economic regeneration.

OUR PRIORITIES IN EASTBOURNE

Increase participation in sport, physical and cultural activities by:

- Ensuring our facilities are accessible to all and providing innovative programmes for all age groups and levels of ability
- Supporting our clubs, societies and community groups through partnership working
- Targeting our programmes at groups who are traditionally excluded and supporting and encouraging vulnerable groups e.g. those with mental ill health, and the disabled to take part in community leisure
- Working with partners to identify people at risk who would benefit from outreach programmes

Provide suitable and positive sport and cultural programmes by:

- Setting up community panels to encourage resident participation
- Identifying investment opportunities to develop new facilities and maintain existing ones
- Providing inclusive cultural and sporting developmental programmes
- Supporting our gifted and talented residents to achieve their full potential

Contribute to the development of Eastbourne's economy by:

- Promoting cultural tourism and a creative economy that attracts new visitors and residents to the town
- Providing attractive events
- Providing cultural and sporting education programmes to raise levels of attainment, improve employment opportunities and career progression

COMMUNITIES WORKING TOGETHER

In 2026 Eastbourne will be a place where:

- **Everyone can access information, services, natural greenspace, cultural and recreational facilities in a way that is suitable to them**
- **Diversity is valued**
- **Everyone feels that they belong and each person is important to the future of the town**

We want Eastbourne to be a place where people can influence the way in which services are provided, feel good about this ability to influence change and feel good about their local area. To achieve our ambitions for Eastbourne we must all work together. Enabling encouraging and supporting each other with residents taking responsibility for their local area and what happens in it.

Eastbourne has a strong history of voluntary and community activity that adds immense value to the delivery of services, to the support of the most vulnerable and to the creation of opportunities for participation. However, not all residents or community organisations have the opportunity to contribute to making Eastbourne a better place to live.

Eastbourne has a number of distinct and diverse communities. We must celebrate this diversity and further foster mutual understanding and respect. We need to create opportunities to listen to views from the community, especially to those who are most vulnerable or marginalised, listen to what people need and adapt our services where possible.

OUR PRIORITIES IN EASTBOURNE

Enable access to information and services for all by:

- Making sure all our public buildings are accessible
- Making all our information leaflets available in different formats and languages on request
- Promoting anti poverty initiatives and providing support to low income households
- Increasing the amount of information we provide via the internet and improving our telephone access to information and services
- Providing services locally within communities where possible

Fully engage with all our communities, support and encourage all residents to participate in decision making processes by:

- Working hard to reach EVERYONE when we conduct consultation and making sure we feed back when we can
- Supporting the development of specialist forums in Eastbourne
- Providing opportunities for everyone to be able to participate in the future of the town
- Developing processes to fully measure community participation and involvement

Co-ordinate our activities, build capacity and support for the voluntary and community sector by:

- Co-ordinating our information management and consultation
- Targeting our services and supporting communities in areas of greatest need
- Recognising good practice between sectors and working within the framework of the Compact

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

By 2026 Eastbourne children and young people will:

- **Be celebrated, cherished and well cared for by their families and their community**
- **Be safe and protected against risks they cannot manage, but supported to take increasing responsibility as they grow older**
- **Have every opportunity to learn and develop with high quality support**
- **Have healthy lifestyles**
- **Have the opportunity to benefit from, and contribute to, the economic prosperity of the community**
- **Participate as fully as possible in decisions that affect them personally, the development of services and local democratic activity**

The 2001 Census shows that there are over 18,000 children and young people aged under the age of 18 living in Eastbourne. 6000 of our children (39%) live in low income households. The challenges facing our children and young people include teenage pregnancy, youth homelessness, school exclusions, young people not in education or employment and young people as victims of crime. There are significant differences in outcomes for children and young people in different areas of the town. We must ensure that we give all families and children the best start in life possible, together with support for development during pre birth, early years, childhood and teens. We must promote positive images of our young people and celebrate their successes.

There are a wide variety of activities and facilities in Eastbourne that are available for young people. It is essential that children and young people are actively engaged in a balance of play and learning opportunities which are free of charge, free to choose and free to come and go, and that these activities and facilities challenge them physically, imaginatively and creatively.

OUR PRIORITIES IN EASTBOURNE

Supporting families and parents by:

- Providing co-ordinated information, guidance and support to families and designing services that take account of parents, carers' and young persons' views
- Providing effective support to families in crisis to strengthen families and prevent children being taken into care
- Helping parents and carers in challenging circumstances fulfil their parenting responsibilities and meet the needs of their children through a range of interventions and practical support, including parenting programmes and support groups
- Helping parents and carers support their children in their learning through stronger relationships with schools and meeting the learning needs of families as a whole
- Reducing and preventing the number of families, and time, spent in temporary accommodation

Preventing youth homelessness and helping young people to maintain their accommodation by:

- Providing supported accommodation for young people 16+ and helping those young people manage and maintain that accommodation
- Avoiding the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation

Ensuring our community is a safe place for young people by:

- Providing youth activities and places to go
- Tackling and preventing drug and alcohol abuse
- Reducing the number of young people who are victims of crime
- Working with local communities to tackle anti social behaviour

Co-ordinate and provide our services locally by:

- Building Children's Centres that provide a range of services and activities
- Increasing the number of extended schools that provide a range of extra support services to children and families
- By putting into place Play Strategies that target our services to areas of greatest need

CHAPTER 5: Hastings & St. Leonards

Hastings and St Leonards is a town committed to changing itself through regeneration. In 2007 Hastings was ranked as the 29th most deprived local authority area of 354 in England. 21 of the town's 53 neighbourhoods were identified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally. 11 of the town's 16 wards contain one or more of these neighbourhoods, with the highest concentration in Central St Leonards, and 14 of these 21 neighbourhoods were in the 10% most deprived in the country.

Hastings' position has been recognised nationally and has attracted significant resources to support the regeneration process. However, there is still a long way to go and this is emphasised through the key 21 strategic targets set out below.

On the one hand, Hastings has a distinctiveness arising from the natural beauty of its coastline and surrounding countryside, its unique combination of architecture and its urban features. The town offers a blend of historic architecture and monuments, 8 miles of unspoilt beach and around 600 hectares of recreational/open space attracting visitors from all over the world to enjoy its vibrant festivals, superb seafood and other local produce. The town is a special place with an 86,000 community that is fiercely loyal to the town, has a strong identity and a rich cultural and creative life which is reflected in a strong and active voluntary and community sector.

On the other hand, Hastings & St Leonards has:

- Crime rates that are among the highest in the country, including violent crime
- High economic inactivity levels
- Persistently low educational attainment levels
- One of the highest teenage conception rates in the country
- Poor physical and mental health of residents
- High levels of substance misuse and addiction rates

These factors of social and economic exclusion have exacerbated deprivation in all its many facets since the post war period. The economic history of Hastings reflects the rise and decline of a seasonal low-wage economy, predominantly based on tourism and leisure. This has meant the town has not kept pace with economic growth elsewhere in the South East and as a result has faced serious economic decline. Poor infrastructure and transport links reinforce its isolation from the South East's economic hotspots, and have made it more difficult to tackle the town's economic problems.

A major issue for the town is the level of economic participation. Hastings consistently has the highest unemployment rates in East Sussex. The 2001 census revealed that only 64.6% of working age people are economically active. Low rents and house prices have also attracted a large number of economically inactive people and has created a high demand for health care and public services. This has left the town located in the prosperous South East, but with the economic and social indicators of a deprived north eastern city.

In recent years, the people of Hastings & St Leonards have worked in partnership with central government, regional and local agencies to reverse economic decline. Progress has been made, and the quality of life for many has improved. Nevertheless, narrowing the gap between the generally prosperous South East and the many disadvantaged parts of Hastings remains challenging.

Significant investment in the town's physical infrastructure coupled with successful partnership working, concentrated in the most disadvantaged areas, is starting to reverse the severe levels of social and economic exclusion experienced by many residents.

Hastings and St Leonards is becoming an area of opportunity, innovation, creativity and energy, but it will require a sustained level of investment for some time to come if the town and its communities are to fulfil their considerable potential.

2013 - Our 10 Year Vision

In 2003 the Hastings and St Leonards Local Strategic Partnership agreed a 10 year Community Strategy for Hastings, which described a vision and mission, and set 21 targets for improving our town. We revised the strategy in 2006 to take account of the better than expected improvements in some areas and the need to revise targets in others and to ensure the strategy remains relevant.

Our strategy will be refreshed in 2008/09, to ensure it is fit for purpose as a 'Sustainable' Community Strategy. This Chapter therefore reflects our current Strategy and its 2013 time horizon, and should therefore be regarded as an interim position.

Our vision

“The renaissance of Hastings through social, economic, cultural and environmental regeneration.”

Our mission

“To build on the town’s strong community spirit, culture, diverse population and extraordinary natural environment to create a safer, healthier more sustainable and more prosperous place with lasting opportunities for everybody.”

The following sections detail the issues we’re focusing on to deliver the vision for our town and listed are the 21 Key Targets.

The Ripple Effect

Achieving our vision for Hastings isn't going to be easy. We have to overcome complex issues of multiple deprivation experienced by many of our residents. But, by working along-side our partners and local residents, and by focusing on the most deprived neighbourhoods, we have set in motion a ripple of change that will reach every corner of the town, improve overall well-being in Hastings, and thereby raise performance levels across the whole of East Sussex.

The first four of our 21 key targets relate specifically to this ripple effect. In particular, the first target is about 'narrowing the gap' between Hastings and the rest of the South East Region of England, by progressively reducing towards zero the number of neighbourhoods in the most deprived category.

KEY TARGETS

1. Narrowing the Gap

Progressively reduce the number of neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived nationally.

2. Resident Satisfaction with the Local Neighbourhood

Increase the % of local people satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.

3. Child Poverty

Narrow the gap between child poverty rates for Hastings and East Sussex as a whole. (Measured as the proportion of children aged under 16 living in households in receipt of Income Support).

4. A Town for the Next Generation

Increase the proportion of young people who think the town is a good place for them to live in.

A Safer Town

Making the town a safer place to live in and work in is one of our biggest challenges and top priorities. Hastings & St Leonards has the highest levels of crime in East Sussex. Although our total recorded crime rate remains above the national average at 142 per 1,000 population for 2005/06, it has fallen from 166 per 1,000 in our baseline year of 2002/03. Our target is to halve the gap between our rate and the national average by 2013/14.

Crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour and communities feeling unsafe all have a tremendously negative impact on our town. This is in terms of quality of life and opportunities for attracting and maintaining regeneration investment.

Crime rates in the town also vary, with the town centres experiencing a higher rate of violent crime, much of which is alcohol related. Substance misuse impacts on crime and we need to significantly reduce harmful use of Class A drugs by targeting enforcement and treatment provision. Efforts are continuing to reduce acquisitive crime by focusing on the most harmful offenders and to build respect in communities by reducing antisocial behaviour and criminal damage. Hastings has one of the highest rates nationally for bicycle crime.

The impact of high crime rates affects different parts of our community. For example, although young people commit the most crime, they are also most often the victims of crime. Residents and businesses have consistently identified crime reduction and more policing as the most important issues in improving their quality of life and business commercial activity and confidence.

KEY TARGETS

5. Community Safety

Progressively reduce the gap between overall crimes rates per 1000 for Hastings & St Leonards and the average for England & Wales.

6. Community Safety

Increase the % of residents who feel safe walking alone in their local neighbourhood at night.

An Economically Successful Town

Despite the South East being the United Kingdom's most robust regional economy Hastings does not share in this prosperity. Reversing the trend of high unemployment, low weekly wages and a low skilled workforce is the focus of considerable regeneration activity by partners.

The Hastings and Bexhill Task Force under SEEDA's leadership has had a high degree of success to date which, in turn, has had a catalytic effect. This has most notably been in terms of the emerging new further and higher education developments, renewed business confidence in the area, and the potential for the new Link Road. Some economic indicators and trends are beginning to move in the right direction after many years of economic and social decline; others are not. Continued investment in the regeneration programme is vital in order to build the momentum required to achieve sustainable economic growth, enable businesses to prosper and address the barriers to worklessness that many local people experience.

Hastings is essentially a small firm economy with some 85% of firms employing ten or fewer employees. We are working to build a working and learning community, making sure that local people have skills to meet the changing local economy needs. We need both to generate new job opportunities through inward investment and support the growth of existing companies. We also need to strengthen key employment sectors such as tourism, creative industries, advanced engineering and construction, and play an active role in the 'knowledge economy'. The inadequate nature of the local transport infrastructure means these new employment opportunities are needed within the urban area so as to minimise the need for travel.

An example of how partners are working to create these opportunities is the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI), which is a ground breaking development linking enterprise and community. The LEGI aims to increase entrepreneurial activity in the local population; support growth and reduce the failure rate of locally owned businesses; attract appropriate inward investment and franchising as well as making use of local labour resources.

The importance of Hastings' position within the regional economy has been recognised and Hastings/Bexhill has been recognised as 1 of the 56 Primary Urban Areas in England and as a Regional Hub in the South East Regional Economic Strategy. The Local Strategic Partnership is continuing to work

with the Hastings and Bexhill Task Force and other partners to make sure local people can share in the opportunities and wealth created.

The low level of skills within the local workforce is a barrier to business productivity and economic growth, and keeps people in a cycle of deprivation. The Government has made Hastings a recipient of Working Neighbourhoods Funds from April 2008, special funding available for the three years, to help tackle issues of economic exclusion and worklessness.

KEY TARGETS

7. Unemployment

Reduce median unemployment in the town to the East Sussex level.

8. Earnings

Increase median weekly earnings to national levels.

A Learning Town

Education is a key tool in supporting the regeneration of our town, raising the aspirations of our young people and breaking the cycle of deprivation. The LSP takes a 'life-long learning' view of education and wants to see a thread of learning from pre-school throughout formal education and into the workplace and adult education.

Our top priority however is closing the gap in secondary school performance, which is not only below the county average but also amongst the worst nationally. Hastings' position for performance at age 16 for GCSE (5 good grades) has declined dramatically from being the 63rd worst out of 388 Local Authorities in 1997/98 to being the 3rd worst in the year 2005/06.

Other areas of concern include primary schools, where attainment levels of 11 year-old pupils have improved but results are still lower than county and national levels. Also of concern are the numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). In Hastings, 11.84% of young people are NEET, which is well above the county average of 8%.

We want to improve access to learning and the diversity of opportunities for all 14-19 year olds. The results from the 2001 Census show that 31.7% of people aged 16-74 in Hastings & St Leonards have no qualifications at all.

The LSP is focussed on ensuring key partner agencies are engaged in the mission to drive up standards in our schools, to build capacity, raise aspiration and offer opportunities and support for our young people.

KEY TARGETS

9a. Education

Increase the % of 15 year olds achieving 5 or more GCSEs A* - C grades or equivalent.

9b. Education

Increase the % of 15 year olds achieving 5 or more GCSEs A* - C grades including English and Mathematics.

An Inclusive Town

An inclusive society is characterised as one that strives for reduced inequality, a balance between an individual's rights and duties and increased social cohesion. Social inclusion is the process by which efforts are made to ensure that everyone, regardless of their experiences and circumstances, can achieve their potential in life. We want:

- Everyone to have an equal opportunity to take part in and benefit from the regeneration of our town
- Our communities and service providers to work together to achieve our shared vision of the future.

Our town has a strong record of community involvement and one of our greatest assets is the local people whose effort and commitment make it a better place to live in. We need to involve more people:

- By improving and promoting opportunities for them to participate in the services that can change their lives.
- Where necessary, by targeting specific individuals, groups or neighbourhoods affected by multiple forms of economic, social or environmental deprivation to ensure their voices are heard.

KEY TARGETS

10. Community Cohesion

Increase number of residents who feel people from different backgrounds live harmoniously in the town.

11. Community

Increase voluntary and community sector activity (including community participation).

12. Community Involvement

Increase the number of people surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area.

A Healthier Town

There is a clear link between deprivation and ill health and Hastings has higher proportions of younger and older people than average. The indicators of health are poor when compared with England.

On average men and women in Hastings can expect to live shorter lives than in England as a whole. Rates for teenage pregnancy, the number of hip fractures in people aged 65 and over, smoking rates, the number of people claiming sickness benefit because of mental health problems and the number of people admitted to hospital for alcohol specific conditions are all above the national average for England.

KEY TARGETS

13a. Living Longer, Healthier Lives

Reduce death rates from circulatory disease (coronary heart disease and stroke) in people under 75.

13b. Living Longer, Healthier Lives

Reduce death rates from cancer in people under 75.

14. Teenage Pregnancy

Reduce the under 18 conception rate.

15. Substance Misuse

Increase % of substance misusers retained in treatment for 12 weeks or more.

A Town with a Decent Home for Everyone

Housing issues that are common to many of the coastal towns in the region, are acutely felt in Hastings and St Leonards. In the main these issues relate to:

- The poor supply of affordable housing suitable for a range of needs and consequential issues of homelessness.
- The relatively large and poor conditioned private housing sector.
- A growing disparity between house prices and income ratios, that is making access to home ownership increasingly difficult for those on modest incomes.

Poor housing conditions impact on every aspect of individuals' lives from health through to education and employment opportunities. Hastings has twice the national average level of households living in private rented accommodation (24%) and most of the poorest of this housing is concentrated in the town centres. Hastings has a higher percentage than the national average of private sector homes (39%) that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard and a significant proportion (23%) of these are occupied by vulnerable people. The town has a large stock of difficult to adapt Victorian housing and there is a shortage of sites for new housing within a tight urban area.

A decent home is the foundation for decent quality of life. Our challenges are to match housing need and supply, improve support for vulnerable households, to prevent homelessness and minimise the time people remain homeless. We are committed to delivering improvements to poor living and environmental conditions, to achieve a more effective and lasting use of existing buildings and to deliver affordable housing solutions (within the social and private sectors) that provide a degree of choice for people in housing need.

A key challenge is to tackle energy efficiency and fuel poverty. In Hastings 49% of Non-Decent homes fail the Standard due to inadequate thermal comfort, which equates to 19% of the overall housing stock. 52% of non-decent homes were built prior to 1919. Also 6% of all Hastings households are in fuel poverty, with the highest proportion of these households in the owner/occupied housing sector where income is less than £10,000 per annum.

KEY TARGETS

16a Housing – New Homes

Build 3300 new homes by 2013.

16b Housing – Built on Brownfield land

Ensure 60% of new homes are built on previously developed land (brownfield).

16c Housing – Affordable Homes

Ensure 25% of new homes built as affordable homes for young people and others in need.

17. Housing – Improving Conditions

Improve housing standards within the most deprived wards to reflect the Decent Homes Standard.

18a. Homelessness

Progressively reduce the numbers accepted as homeless per 1000 households.

18b. Homelessness

Progressively reduce the numbers of households in temporary accommodation.

A Town that's Good to Live in

By investing in cultural activity and the town's environment, housing, facilities and public transport infrastructure, we can improve people's quality of life. Our town can become fully inclusive:

- Through celebrating the diversity of cultures among its ethnic minority communities.
- By ensuring its parks and gardens, leisure and cultural facilities and activities are as accessible as possible.

There is a need to use energy and resources more responsibly to protect our environment and make it sustainable. We need to improve the management of our green spaces, wildlife and habitats and our built environment.

We will continue to work with partners to develop and improve the existing transport network for the town. This includes road improvements for access, road safety, traffic management and congestion as well as opportunities for public transport, walking and cycling. Many people without cars can't easily get to work, shops, and health facilities or take part in local leisure and cultural activities.

We recognise the value of arts, sports and cultural activities in terms of health and wellbeing, but also as a tool for economic development and inclusion, made possible through engagement in creative industries, cultural tourism and sporting programmes.

A national survey in 2005/06 showed that Hastings had the lowest participation rate in sport or active recreation of districts in the South East Region, and the 15th lowest of 354 districts nationally. This clear correlation between deprivation and participation rates is being addressed, and progress made, through partnership interventions such as the Active Hastings Community Sport Network.

KEY TARGETS

19. Transport – Bus Travel

Progressively increase the total number of bus passenger journeys.

20. Access to open Space

Increase % of households within 300m of an accessible open space that meet the Council's quality standard.

21a. Waste Recycling

Progressively increase the amount of household waste recycled and composted.

21b. Clean Streets

Increase the % of streets which are clean.

Contact us

To find out more about the LSP and the Hastings and St Leonards Community Strategy contact the LSP Co-ordinator on 01424 451131 or email lsp_coordinator@hastings.gov.uk

Or visit www:hastings.gov.uk/community_strategy

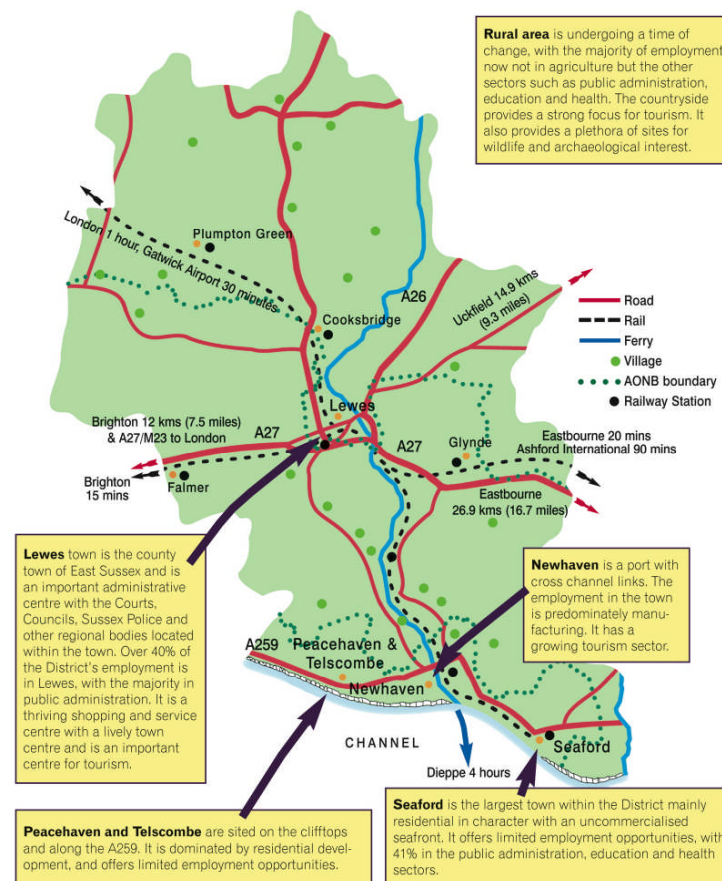
CHAPTER 6: Lewes District

Lewes District extends inland from the Channel coast over the South Downs and into the Sussex Weald covering 292 square kilometres. Over one third of the area forms part of the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and around half is proposed to be included in the South Downs National Park.

Most of the District's 93,900 population live in the four main urban areas (Seaford, Newhaven, Peacehaven & Telscombe and Lewes). Around 14% live in the many villages, hamlets or isolated settlements. There are just over 42,000 households in the District, 31% are single person households and 24% are households with children. Around 88% of the housing stock is privately owned.

Lewes District is a generally prosperous and affluent area. However pockets of deprivation and social exclusion exist, particularly in parts of the coastal towns and some rural areas. Parts of Newhaven and Peacehaven are amongst the top 10% most deprived areas in the South East. 9.0% of over 60s and 10.7% of children live in families that are income deprived.

The 2001 Census shows a 16.7% increase in population since 1981, wholly due to inward migration. Population is projected to reach 98,636 by 2026. We have an ageing population, above national average in every age band over 50, and below average in all age bands under 40. There are still over 19,000 people in the under 18 age group. Women make up 52.2% of the population and 22.5% of people are above retirement age. Black and minority ethnic groups make up 2.1% of the population. Bengalis and Chinese are the main ethnic groups in the District. Around 13% of the economically active population is disabled.



The Lewes District Local Strategic Partnership

The Lewes LSP (Local Voices, Local Choices) comprises representatives from the business, community, voluntary and statutory sectors, as well as representatives from 5 Area Partnerships covering the towns of Newhaven, Seaford, Peacehaven and Telscombe, Lewes and the rural parts of the District. More information about the LSP and the work of these Area Partnerships is available at www.lvlc.info

Our Vision and Principles

Our long term vision is of vibrant, distinctive, safe and sustainable communities where everyone who lives, works, visits or studies in the District supports one another and takes care of the environment – a community we can all be proud of. The following principles underpin our vision:

- **Sustainability** – understanding the environmental, social economic and ecological impact of our actions both today and in the future and taking account of this in our policies and work programmes.
- **Equality and Diversity** – reducing poverty and social exclusion and closing the deprivation gap in parts of the District. We are particularly concerned with understanding and meeting the needs of young people, older people and those from minority groups.
- **Empowerment and Participation** – listening to local people and communities and encouraging involvement in local decision-making.

Our Sustainable Community Strategy links to and is supported by a wide range of national, regional and local strategies and plans, many of which have been developed through partnership working and collaboration between a variety of agencies and organisations.

Our Shared Community Themes and Priorities

A Valued Environment – *protecting and enhancing the environment, reducing waste, taking action to manage climate change, making sustainable use of land and developing community environmental projects*

Lewes District has many areas of natural beauty and historic interest. It is clean, safe and tidy. Local people put a high premium on their environment. They recognise it is under pressure - from housing and commercial development, rising levels of traffic and waste and from the effects of climate change, including flooding.

Priorities for the future

- Taking action to reduce and manage the effects of climate change, including coastal erosion and flood risk.
- Sustainable waste management – reduce, re-use and recycle.
- Reduce environmental crime (litter, graffiti, abandoned cars).
- Protect and conserve the natural and historic environment and encourage high quality and sustainable design and new build.
- Reduce traffic congestion and air pollution and develop safe and sustainable local transport options.

Decent, Affordable Housing For All – *everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home, regardless of tenure*

Lewes District is relatively affluent attracting a high proportion of owner occupiers with less than 12% of the housing stock in the social rented sector. With average house prices at over £236,000, affordable housing is an important priority for local people. Many wards in the District fall within the top 40% most deprived in the country for access to affordable housing and services. The District needs around 4,400 homes by 2011 to meet projected demand, but supply needs to be matched with adequate infrastructure and transport links. 2.5% of household spaces are unoccupied and around 2.3% of all housing in the District is deemed to be unfit.

Priorities for the future

- Provide new affordable housing in sustainable locations.
- Improve the availability and quality of local housing regardless of tenure.
- Encourage energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.
- Prevent and reduce homelessness in the District.
- Encourage take-up of housing and other benefits.
- Ensure adequate housing related support which meets the needs of vulnerable, minority and disadvantaged groups.

Safer, Stronger Communities – *reducing crime and the fear of crime, dealing with anti-social behaviour and creating and sustaining active and inclusive communities*

Although actual levels of crime are relatively low, crime and anti-social behaviour are important issues for local people. Overall crime in the District has dropped by nearly 5% since 2006/07. Residents have told us that low levels of crime are one of the most important factors in making an area a good place to live. Activities for young people are seen as important in helping to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The local Crime Reduction Partnership (CRP) works through its Action Groups and 5 Local Action Teams to engage local communities in targeting local problems.

Priorities for the future

- Vehicle crime – focussing on theft and damage to vehicles
- Vehicle safety – focussing on reducing accidents and dangerous driving.
- Alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour – focussing on young people, domestic violence, licensing enforcement, education and training.
- Community engagement – focussing on obtaining and sharing data, consultation, working with Local Action Teams and tackling perceptions of crime.

Access to Good Local Facilities - *improving access to services and facilities that meet local needs, providing sustainable transport options and activities for young people, encouraging participation in sport and physical activity, particularly amongst target groups.*

Local people value their access to good quality local sports, recreational, cultural and play facilities. Of particular importance is the need for more sustainable local transport services. Although there are good inter-urban bus and train networks, most of the rural areas are poorly served by public transport. Traffic congestion is a regular problem in many towns and villages, particularly during peak commuting times. Facilities and activities for young people is an important priority.

Priorities for the future

- Provide better access to public transport and more sustainable transport options.
- Improve local parks and play areas in consultation with local communities.
- Carry out essential road and pavement repairs.
- Encourage wider access to and participation in play, sport, leisure and cultural activities, particularly amongst young people and minority groups.

Healthier Communities – *improving the health and wellbeing of the population and reducing health inequalities; encouraging participation in sport and physical activity, particularly amongst target groups.*

Most of the District's population is active and in good health compared to other parts of East Sussex. There is a higher than average number of older people in the District although life expectancy is above the national average. Healthy eating amongst adults is above average in the District and levels of smoking and binge drinking are relatively low. Rates of heart disease, stroke, suicide and lung cancer are falling. There are significant pockets of ill health in the District, particularly along the coastal strip, in Peacehaven, Seaford and Newhaven. Smoking related illness and obesity is a particular problem in Newhaven.

Priorities for the future

- Ensure everyone has access to local, good quality health and social care services that meet their needs, especially children, older people and those living in more deprived areas.
- Promoting healthy eating, sport and physical activity and smoking cessation, particularly in the coastal towns.
- Promoting health and safety in the home and workplace.

A Vibrant and Sustainable Local Economy – *sustainable economic growth through inward investment, supporting local businesses and increasing employment opportunities. Raising educational achievement and developing skills and learning opportunities for everyone, whatever their age or background*

The service sector and small businesses dominate the local economy with few large private sector employers. The rural parts of the District support the second highest levels of employment in the District. Newhaven has a significant manufacturing sector. Unemployment is rising in the District with pockets of higher unemployment focussed in the coastal towns. Wages are low compared to the South East in general. 11.1% of people are income deprived and 10.9% of the working age population claim key benefits. An above average number of people on Job Seekers Allowance have been out of work for a year.

There is a mixed picture of educational attainment and adult skills across the District with parts of Lewes, Newhaven and Peacehaven falling in the bottom 20% most deprived areas in the country.

Priorities for the future

- Raise the economic performance of the District by supporting existing businesses, attracting inward investment and encouraging new businesses start ups.
- Support regeneration projects in deprived areas.
- Promote sustainable tourism.
- Provide access to support, advice and training for those not in employment.
- Safeguard and develop key strategic infrastructure sites.

- Encourage sustainable, local procurement and consumption.
- Improve basic skills and levels of education attainment for all.
- Supporting workforce development to meet the needs of local employers.

Local Action Through Area Partnerships

Lewes District Local Strategic Partnership actively supports five Area Partnerships which work closely with local communities to identify issues and develop projects and other actions. These Area Partnerships, along with Crime and Disorder Local Action Teams have brought about a number of projects which have benefited local communities and improved local Quality of Life.

Priorities for Lewes town

▪ Affordable housing ▪ Youth and community facilities ▪ Develop town as a key visitor and retail centre ▪ Encourage diverse local businesses ▪ Protect and enhance the character of the town ▪ Ensure measures are taken to protect the town from flooding.

Priorities for Newhaven

▪ Create a learning community ▪ Improve health and community wellbeing ▪ Improve community life ▪ Help businesses grow ▪ Encourage new business ▪ Make Newhaven more accessible ▪ Revitalise Newhaven's port ▪ Maximise tourism opportunities ▪ Create a busy town centre ▪ Promote riverside development and provide appropriate housing with supporting infrastructure ▪ Maintain an attractive and well used environment.

Priorities for Peacehaven & Telscombe

▪ Improve town centre facilities ▪ Better access to education and skills training ▪ Develop employment opportunities in the town ▪ Provide more effective local road and public transport links ▪ Better community facilities.

Priorities for the Rural Areas

▪ Affordable housing ▪ Maintaining sustainable local communities through adequate infrastructure provision ▪ Encourage farm diversification, sustainable rural tourism and leisure employment ▪ Access to facilities and opportunities for young people.

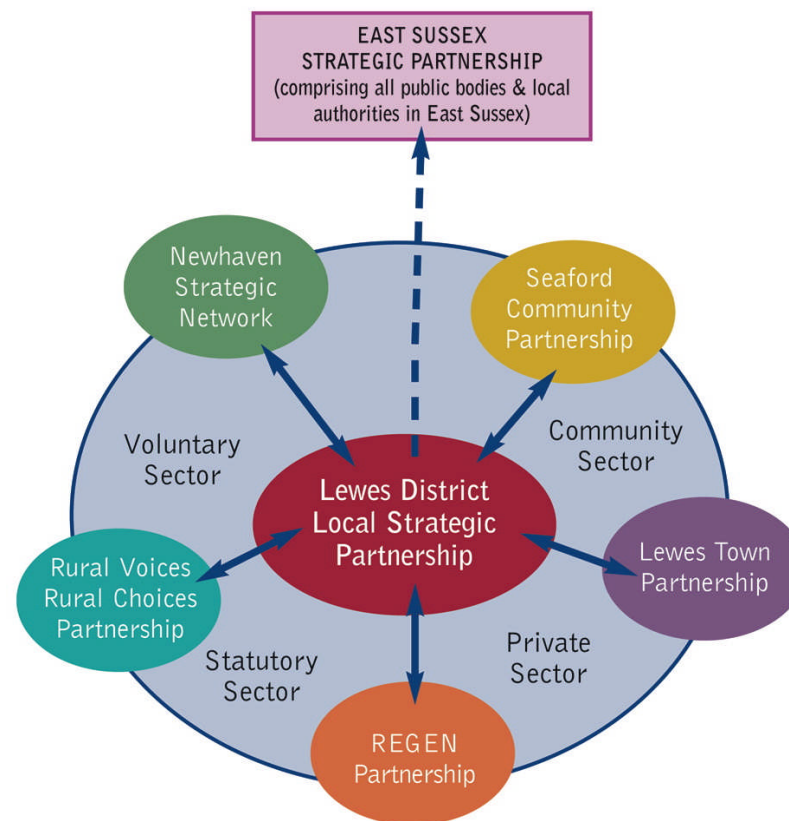
Priorities for Seaford

- Improvements to the seafront
- Promote tourism and business growth
- Affordable housing
- Maintain a distinctive and vibrant town centre
- Better facilities for young people
- Improvements to Cradle Hill Industrial Estate
- Increase in employment opportunities and provision for start-up businesses
- Improved health facilities
- Protection of meeting places and provision of community centres
- continued development of the 'one stop shop'.

Turning Words Into Action

Community involvement and partnership working has resulted in some important improvements in the Quality of Life of local people in recent years. But there is still a great deal to do.

Our detailed Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the actions we will take to improve service delivery and make a noticeable difference to people's lives. It is supported by a number of policies and delivery programmes as well as specific strategies for housing, education, health and social care, economic development, transport and the environment. The Strategy will be monitored and reviewed each year and progress reported to the LSP. Our Strategy also supports and contributes to wider improvement programmes and targets, including the East Sussex Local Area Agreement.



For more information about the Lewes LSP or its five Area Partnerships visit our website www.lvlc.info or contact the LSP Co-ordinator on 01273 484396.

Tracey Evans

Chair of Lewes Local Strategic Partnership

CHAPTER 7: Rother



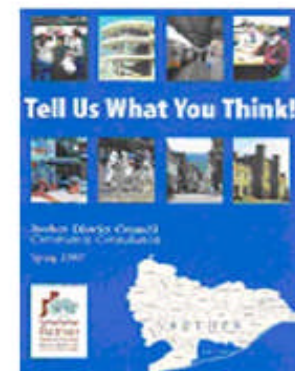
Rother Local Strategic Partnership

better
by working **together**

www.rother.gov.uk/LSP

We consulted with the residents of Rother in 2002 through our "Tell Us What You Think" Community Consultation.

From this consultation, eight Priority Action Areas were highlighted as needing attention.



A Community Forum was convened in February 2003 where organisations were invited to take the lead on the Priority Action Areas.



Community Forum - 2003

From this Forum the Rother Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) was formed in May 2003 to develop, implement and monitor a Community Plan for the Rother area that ensures sustainable and balanced improvements in its economic, social and environmental well being and plans for improvements in the quality of life of Rother communities.

Introducing the Rother Local Strategic Partnership



A draft Community Plan was sent to all households across the district in March 2004 for consultation, with the Rother Community Plan published in November 2004.



The first set of Action Plans were published in November 2005 and the targets are reviewed annually by Priority Action Groups. Action Plans can be found by visiting our website www.rother.gov.uk/LSP.

A Phased performance management approach has been adopted by the LSP utilising Rother District Council's Performance Management System so that progress on targets can be monitored.



Rother Local Action Plans Support Programme

After sponsoring 20 local projects in 2004/05 using the money made available from Second Homes Council Tax, the LSP decided it wanted to see further contributions of these funds from East Sussex County Council, Rother District Council, Sussex Police and the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service put towards a long-term programme of activity. The Rother Local Action Plans Support Programme commenced in August 2005 and runs until March 2009 and is delivering a programme of support to local communities in the Rother area wishing to consider, develop or implement Local Action Plans.

In the past, local planning, in its broadest sense, has often been an exclusive process. The LSP is committed to supporting communities to work together to produce plans which embrace issues of importance to local people, whether it be the number of litter bins in the parish, or a major development for affordable housing or a youth club. The important element of this new way of working is that all people within a parish, rural town or ward within a town are encouraged to take part and contribute to the final **Action Plan and be party to taking forward actions identified through extensive consultation with local people.**

The published Action Plan provides a tool for monitoring and evaluating achievements over time and ensures that local voices are heard within the statutory planning processes.



Your Children & Young People

Our Ambition

Is to consult and engage with children, young people and their families in the development of facilities and extended day services which meet their needs, enable all to participate in the wider community and realise their potential. In particular, we will develop family support services that promote the health, confidence and safety of all children and seek to reduce disaffection and tackle the underlying social causes of crime and anti social behaviour.

Why is this a priority?

- The community's continuing prosperity will depend on its creativity, skills and willingness to contribute
- Services and facilities to support children and young people realise their potential, and make the transition to adulthood require continuous improvement and evaluation, and
- Many young people feel marginalised and patronised by adults. They need to be engaged and consulted, be given opportunities and encouraged to participate and contribute to community activity. Surveys conducted with young people through Local Action Plans and for the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) cite "things to do and places to go" as their top priority.

Our top priority

To refine the area Action Plan for Rother to meet the objectives of the Government's 'Every Child Matters', 'Youth Matters' and the new extended day services agenda, focussing on key areas of identified need.

Your Community Safety

Our Ambition

Is to actively support the Safer Rother Partnership's (the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) efforts to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime.

Why is this a priority?

- Residents (Satisfaction Survey 2006) said that the level of Crime was the most important thing to make an area a good place to live, (although it is low down the list for improvement), and
- Rother is a safe place to live, work and visit and we want to keep it safe.

Our top priority

To provide support and to implement initiatives where appropriate to help achieve a reduction in Crime (British Crime Survey Comparator Crime).

The Safer Rother Partnership uses intelligence and analysis to target its partnership resources to where the crime is being committed. Works in partnership to target the most prolific offenders across Rother, and also focuses on reducing the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour on the local community and the fear of crime.

The Safer Rother Partnership also contributes to the reduction in crime across East Sussex.

Your Culture & Leisure

Our Ambition

Is to provide year round opportunities for both local people and visitors to access and participate in a wide range of culture, sport and leisure activity.

To also build a strong multi-agency partnership to guide Rother's cultural development and advocate the role of culture & leisure in social, environmental and economic well being.

Why is this a priority?

- Potential to improve the quality of people's lives
- Promotes healthy lifestyles and living, both physical and mental
- Supports community cohesion, local identity and stronger communities
- Helps reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly through increased diversionary activity
- Economic and regenerative impact of local recreation, cultural tourism and the creative industries, and
- Contributes to protection of both built and natural environment.

Our top priority

To encourage healthy active lifestyles through increased opportunities to participate in sport, leisure and cultural activities.

Your Employment & Skills

Our Ambition

To ensure that the people and businesses of Rother have the right level of skills, and space to grow to support a flourishing local economy.

Why is this a priority?

Low average earnings 5.5% below the regional average; pockets of high levels of unemployment.

Our top priority

To support the development of new commercial workplace throughout the District.

Your Environment

Our Ambition

Is to meet our global obligation to reduce Rother's environmental impact by reducing consumption of non-renewable resources (including fresh water), reducing waste, and improving local biodiversity.

Why is this a priority?

Environmental and economic constraints combine to make reducing the use of all non-renewable resources important. The cumulative environmental impacts and financial costs of such activities as aggregate extraction, water treatment, energy generation, and waste disposal are all increasing. It makes good economic sense to address these issues now as well as being necessary to protect our environment.

Our top priority

Reduce waste.

Your Health

Our Ambition

To coordinate the action of local organisations to improve the health and reduce health inequalities within the population of Rother.

Why is this a priority?

Rother has a higher than average population of older people. Overall poverty in Rother is below the England average but levels of health deprivation vary throughout the district with over 8,400 people dependent on means tested benefits and over 2,400 children living in low income families. Socially disadvantaged people tend to live in Bexhill and Rye, but inequalities are also experienced in rural communities, but these tend to be less apparent.

(APHO and Department of Health. 2007. Rother Health Profile 2007. London).

Our top priority

Reducing smoking, especially in disadvantaged groups and pregnant women.

Your Housing

Our Ambition

To influence the development of sustainable communities by raising awareness of the affordable housing options; providing better and environmentally sustainable accommodation and tackling housing related poverty.

Why is this a priority?

Local Action Plans have identified a lack of affordable housing as a barrier to sustaining rural communities, which is currently under-represented in the housing register.

The Rother District population profile has the second highest population over 65 and the highest over 85 population by district in England and Wales.

Our top priority

Raise awareness to engage rural communities and assist individuals to live in the area of their choice.

Your Transport

Our Ambition

To support initiatives that reduce road congestion and pollution levels by improving travel choices for all people and reducing demand for travel by car.

Why is this a priority?

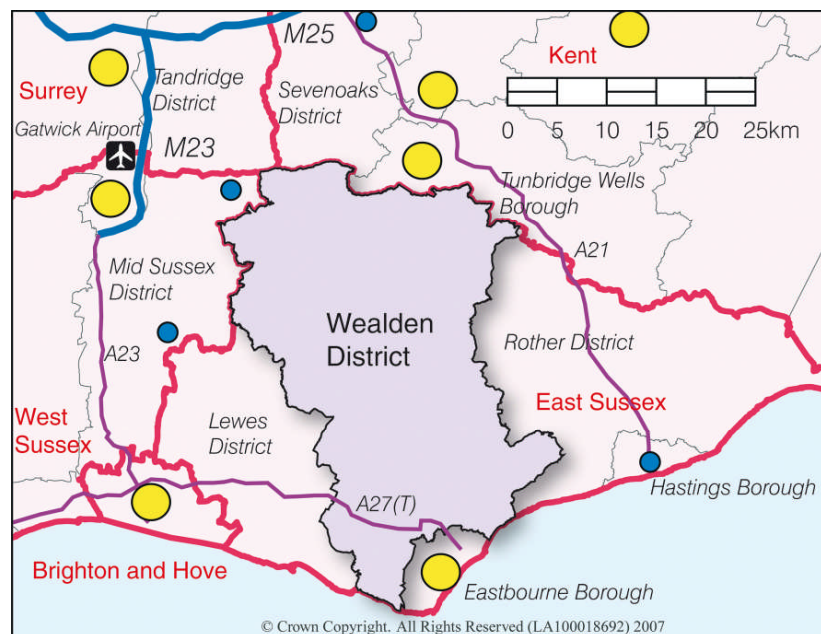
Rother residents have identified issues of road congestion, traffic speed, road safety and accessibility of services as key to improving the quality of life in the area.

Our top priority

To support the development of school travel plans and walking buses as a way of encouraging shorter journeys to be made using alternatives to the car.

Further information about the work of the LSP can be viewed on our website at www.rother.gov.uk/LSP or you can e-mail lsp@rother.gov.uk

CHAPTER 8: Wealden



The largest of the East Sussex districts and boroughs with 28% of the total population and 324 square miles of extremely attractive countryside, Wealden is classified as one of the most rural districts in England (DEFRA). The population of just over 143,000 people comprise 62,700 households. Half live in the five small market towns, Crowborough, Hailsham, Heathfield, Polegate and Uckfield which range in size from 7,500 to 20,000. The rest live in the many villages and hamlets nestling under the South Downs or hugging the contours of the High and Low Weald. Some are 'chocolate box' beauties such as Alfriston and Mayfield, others have links with stars like Winnie the Pooh, Sherlock Holmes and the Bloomsbury Group.

Wealden has a comparatively small black and minority ethnic population - over 96% of residents describe themselves as White. The balance comprises small numbers of people of Asian, Caribbean and Black African backgrounds. The small numbers mean it is important to engage with our black and minority ethnic community using voluntary and community groups wherever possible.

There is evidence of health inequalities across the district however these are often masked by the façade of wealth across the district. For example life expectancy at birth averaged 87.7 in Crowborough North and 77.3 in Hailsham East in 2003-2005. In 2001 31% of Wealden households contained one or more persons with a limiting long term illness.

In South East terms, Wealden has average levels of young people up to the age of 14, significantly fewer residents in the 15 – 44 age range, and a significantly above average population of pensionable age. Population density is low - just 167 per km² compared with the 421 per km² average for East Sussex as a whole.

By 2011, Wealden's population will increase to around 148,000, and its make-up will change. There will be fewer school age children, and more young people aged between 16 and 29. The elderly population (65+) will have grown by over 4000, mostly in the 65-74 age group. The number of households will also increase to around 66,500, with more single person households.

Despite an outward appearance of affluence, Wealden faces a number of challenges, not least the hidden nature of deprivation in the District which is not effectively identified by tools which focus on the density of multiple deprivation. Individual experiences of hardship are no less dramatic, and often more difficult to target in such a rural area. There is a severe shortage of affordable housing exacerbated by high house prices and low local wages. Market towns have identified needs for regeneration, and the rural villages face issues of economic and social sustainability, including access to services for those without their own transport.

The countryside environment is key to understanding Wealden with 93% of the district classified as rural. Ashdown forest is the largest area of land that has never been ploughed in the South East and the High and Low Weald, South Downs and the internationally recognised wetlands of the Pevensey Levels create a uniquely distinctive and varied character.

61% of the District falls within the boundaries of the High Weald or South Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Wealden also has the highest proportion of ancient woodland of all English districts. Flooding also shapes the area environmentally and socially, curtailing opportunities for development. There are 29 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 301 sites of archaeological importance, 18 historic parks and gardens including several by Gertrude Jekyll, and 102 scheduled ancient monuments. This richness and diversity of landscape and heritage are significant factors in making Wealden such a desirable place to live.

The Gross Value Added contribution to the economy of businesses and employees in Wealden for 2007 is estimated at £1,267million, set to grow by 2.3% for 2008. Around 44,000 people work in the District, most, about 74%, in the service sector. Small and micro businesses form a fundamental part of the Wealden economy – around 90% employ fewer than 10 people – and increasing numbers of people work from home. 75% of these small businesses are farm-based, and the diversified agricultural sector therefore makes a significant impact on the area both in terms of economy and shaping the landscape. Northern parts of the district have strong rail links with London and there is significant commuting to the capital with its higher salaries and career opportunities.

The Wealden vision

- a healthy, rich and diverse environment based on sustainable principles for everybody in Wealden
- reduce health inequalities, provide appropriate information and advice and access to health and social care services in order to maximise the potential for good health and well-being
- enough decent, affordable homes to meet the needs of everyone who lives in or needs to live in the District
- access to lifelong learning, education and skills training to allow Wealden residents to fulfil their potential

- a broad range of opportunities to improve quality of life, health and well-being, including sport, leisure, recreation and the arts
- a prosperous and sustainable local economy that is dynamic, flexible and maintains the environmental qualities of the area
- residents and visitors to Wealden are confident of their safety and free from the fear of crime
- improved accessibility for all and reduce the impact of traffic on people and places

Wealden issues

ENVIRONMENT

A clean and healthy environment was top of the list of priorities in making somewhere a good place to live and most residents were happy with this aspect of life in Wealden. Concern about the environment recognised the need to protect what is already here, but action for improvement is also an important factor. The beauty and tranquillity of the area is what people said they valued most about living in Wealden. The importance of protecting the environment was equally important to all age groups.

Priorities

- Recognise and adapt to climate change and its impact on Wealden, including management of CO2 emissions, the demand for water and the provision of adequate water resources, including new resources where there is environmental capacity
- Support flood risk assessments and appropriate plans to reduce flood risk and make space for water; and providing of a network of green spaces to buffer the effects of climate change on wildlife
- Strive for the provision of adequate environmental infrastructure to be in place before more houses are built
- Encourage sustainable design through the introduction of a Supplementary Planning Document which includes energy efficiency, greater use of renewables and sustainable transport
- Protect, maintain and enhance both rural and urban environments
- Encourage support for farmers, other landowners and managers who maintain the landscape and contribute to the quality and visual attractiveness of rural environments
- Encourage the sale of local food and non-food products including bio-diesel
- Support efforts to ensure that proposed new development takes account of the appearance and unique character of the area
- Encourage improved facilities for pedestrians and adequate provision of high quality, accessible open space, to include facilities for children's recreation in safe, central locations with minimal nuisance to neighbours, a safe and comprehensive network of footpaths, bridleways, and rationalised signage and street furniture

- Maintain and improve public open space for people and wildlife, to include the general tidiness, maintenance of verges, removal of litter, tree planting and maintenance of existing trees and planting schemes
- Strengthen policies for dealing with waste and encourage waste reduction and more recycling by providing additional opportunities, and their inclusion as standard in new developments
- Address the issues of litter, fly-tipping, abandoned cars, dog litter and graffiti

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

The people we asked said that social and healthcare services were one of the top three aspects in making somewhere a good place to live - only the environment and safety from crime were seen as more important. 23% of residents identified health and social care as something which needed to be improved. Many concerns focused around difficulties in getting to services rather than the level of care received. The Healthy Wealden Partnership works to improve health and social care services in Wealden, helping to make Wealden a healthier place to live.

Priorities

- Encourage cohesive and flexible partnership working to provide good access to health and social care services, with particular consideration for areas where provider boundaries do not match, and transport issues when considering change
- Support existing outreach projects, and the exploration with relevant partners of opportunities to maximise the use of existing facilities to offer a range of health care services locally
- Increase levels of community engagement around service improvement and the implementation of change, recognising concerns about the pace and frequency of change, and their need for clear information about proposed changes and their implications
- Promote direct links between local frontline health and social care staff and voluntary and community sector workers, exploring ways to optimise the use of existing facilities and community buildings through partnership
- Support social inclusion, especially in rural areas, and seek to promote innovative ways of addressing exclusion and health inequalities
- Promote five key areas of health improvement: reducing the number of people who smoke; tackling obesity; improving sexual health; improving

mental health and well-being; and reducing harm and encouraging sensible drinking.

- Maintain support for the use and development of volunteers in the delivery of local community healthcare services, for example, care and support for the elderly, children and the disabled
- Continue to strengthen partnership working with wider partners, including voluntary and community groups, parish, town and district councils, and healthcare service providers to identify areas for service improvement and innovative solutions to access issues

HOUSING

Our consultation demonstrated that affordable homes for local people was the top priority for improving housing opportunities. The results highlight a certain amount of conflict however, as many residents did not want to see new housing development. It will be important to balance the requirements of the South East Plan with local needs and views. The Wealden Local Development Framework is the key planning mechanism which will help deliver what people in Wealden want and need over the next twenty years.

Priorities

- Lobby for an increase in the percentage of affordable housing in developments, an extension of the requirement to include smaller schemes, and encourage affordable provision in all settlements
- Encourage initiatives to promote the green agenda, working towards a reduction in carbon emissions, and the 'eco-homes' standards in the provision of both social and private sector housing
- Encourage greater provision of specialist adaptation of accommodation, eg for older people and those with special needs, in the social and private housing sectors
- Support the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Wealden Design Guide to set standards and provide a means to strengthen the case for good design which is in keeping with local character. The Guide should address issues around sustainability, quality of life and the flexibility to encourage and allow new patterns of working
- Encourage planning authorities to secure benefits from developers to contribute to adequate infrastructure in line with housing development including water, energy, transport and the provision of new jobs and services that provide for the needs of an ageing population

- Support and encourage mixed development comprising both houses and employment sites
- Influence the Local Development Framework to allow villages to expand in order to provide small scale developments, and allow higher density dwellings (eg terraced houses) in rural areas providing the design and layout is appropriate and includes suitable provision for open space and parking
- Build on partnerships and networks with private landlords to encourage best practice and access to lettings initiatives
- Contribute to the progress of the 'HOPE' affordable housing project
- Promote initiatives to address the 'Respect' agenda and activities to combat anti-social behaviour

LEARNING

Most residents said they are satisfied with the standard of education in Wealden and that this is an important factor in making the area a good place to live. A few thought that there should be more opportunities for lifelong learning. A vibrant economy depends on a skilled workforce which aspires to success, so we must ensure that learning opportunities are available so that local people develop the skills required by local employers.

Priorities

- Focus on the need to provide skills for employment as a means of supporting business to encourage a thriving sector with small, clean, highly skilled businesses with minimal transport needs
- Concentrate skills training around the five main Wealden towns
- Link with existing colleges and universities through the provision of outreach centres and business centres attached to Colleges.
- Support appropriate training in order to grow the local economy and provide businesses with the skills they need, for example, the Wealden Skills Centre (Uckfield) is an ideal opportunity to develop this and similar initiatives should be actively encouraged
- Identify the skills relevant to the small, clean, high-skill, low transport-requirement, knowledge-based businesses to be attracted to Wealden and support training and apprenticeships which will allow local people to develop as appropriately skilled employees

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, SPORT AND LEISURE

Cultural and sporting activities can play a key role in addressing a range of issues that affect quality of life, including mental and physical health, community safety and prosperity. High quality leisure opportunities are also an important factor in attracting visitors to the area.

Priorities

- Promote, support and increase community participation in a wide range of sport, leisure and cultural activities in the Wealden District, through partnership working including that of the Wealden Community Sports and Leisure Network (CSN)
- Explore, enhance and encourage opportunities for the development and marketing of green spaces and play opportunities
- Explore, enhance and encourage opportunities for the development and marketing of green tourism and address potential conflicts of interest between visitors and residents
- Encourage recognition that leisure and tourism are inherently linked as leisure facilities for local people are also attractive to visitors
- Explore how attractive, well equipped, multi-purpose community facilities, such as village halls, can be put to a wider variety of uses
- Encourage closer co-ordination and partnership working to provide more opportunities for sustainable tourism in Wealden and promote it more effectively

PROSPERITY

86% of people felt that links between business and education was the most important element in improving the prosperity of the District. A number of residents are concerned about declining services in villages and the need to improve facilities in Wealden towns. Tourism plays an important role in improving the local economy as visitors spend an estimated £248 million in the area every year. The consultation also identified a need for support and advice to agriculture and other business sectors in the area.

Priorities

- Support existing and emerging businesses in order to encourage a thriving range of sectors which will provide more employment opportunities as a prerequisite for enhancing quality of life in Wealden
- Encourage small, clean, high-skill businesses with minimal transport needs, e.g. the knowledge-based sector
- Encourage a balanced approach between residential use and new or existing business sites, for example, by encouraging a more sympathetic approach to the conversion of redundant farm buildings for alternative business uses
- Support efforts to ensure that adequate employment opportunities are in place or under development where more houses are to be built
- Ensure that appropriate support and infrastructure is available for the small and micro businesses which tend to predominate in the area
- Encourage partners to ensure the five core towns are attractive as local retail and service centres
- Encourage business links with existing colleges and universities through the provision of outreach and business centres attached to those institutions, for example to develop more apprenticeship opportunities locally
- Improve links between business and the local community for example, by encouraging local businesses to employ local people, encouraging and supporting flexible working patterns and measures to include people with disabilities
- Develop use of broadband, particularly for electronic communication and websites, and encourage more active networking amongst local businesses
- Establish a mechanism to lead, in partnership, the Eastbourne / Hailsham Triangle in a single co-ordinated approach, to ensure that it is not simply a growth area for residential development but contributes to the economic growth of the region

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Residents of Wealden identified 'safety from crime' as the second most important aspect in making somewhere a good place to live. Although levels of crime are low in the area as a whole, 41% said 'safety from crime' needed improving. The Wealden LSP believes that safety can best be improved

through partnership working and by tackling people's fear of crime because this can have a big impact on the quality of life even when levels of crime are relatively low. Resources will be targeted to address problems in any areas where higher than average levels of crime are identified.

Priorities

- Encourage design for, and enforcement, of appropriate speeds through villages and on new estates including traffic calming and pedestrian safety.
- Educate drivers to encourage better driving behaviours
- Encourage a more visible police presence where there is an identified need, for example through the use of PCSOs and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes
- Encourage members of the community to work more closely with the police and other agencies to tackle crime through Local Action Teams
- Influence the Local Development Framework to ensure that the design of housing and communal facilities enhances community cohesion and the feeling of well-being
- Promote community safety and the reduction of the fear of crime as a high priority for public, private and voluntary sector services
- Encourage members of the community to become active in the collective identification of community safety priorities and in the active communal resolution of those issues
- Promote the need for tolerance, respect and understanding for all diverse sections of the community and emphasise that a balance has to be found between individual choice and freedom, and the greater needs and well-being of the community

TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

Wealden people identified getting to places easily and safely as being important in making somewhere a good place to live. It was also seen as the highest priority for improvement. The survey also highlighted concerns about the volume and speed of traffic, congestion and the lack of public transport. The LSP recognises that dealing with transport in a rural area requires a balance between ensuring people can get about easily and reducing the impact of traffic on people and places.

Priorities

- Address safety and congestion issues generated by the 'school run', for example by encouraging a greater proportion of school journeys on foot or by bike
- Encourage early consideration of traffic flow and parking issues when new facilities are being planned
- Lobby for and encourage more integrated public transport to allow interchange wherever possible between rail, bus, community transport, shared cars, cycling and walking, with appropriate facilities to promote their safe use
- Promote and lobby for the reinstatement of the Uckfield to Lewes railway line
- Lobby for further improvements to train services and better station facilities to encourage their use: this includes additional carriages to reduce overcrowding, extra trains later into the evening for leisure purposes, and a simplification of the fare structure to encourage increased use
- Encourage improved access to rail stations by all modes of transport, including provision of adequate parking facilities
- Raise the profile for further improvements along the A27.

For further detail please access the Wealden Community Strategy at www.wealdencommunitystrategy.co.uk

Chapter 9: Evidence Base and Related Plans and Strategies

Pride of Place is based on a wide range of evidence drawn from a number of sources including:

- Citizens surveys carried out by our County, District and Borough Councils
- Public consultations carried out in the development of local, countywide, sub-regional and regional plans and strategies
- Research and data gathered during the development, delivery and evaluation of services

All the evidence used in this strategy has been tested and updated during the consultation period. A companion to Pride of Place has been published, providing the data source and date of all the evidence used

In addition to the action plans which will accompany this strategy, our priorities will also be delivered through a range of plans, listed below.

Local Action Plans, Parish Plans and Neighbourhood Plans are available through the District or Borough in which your local area, Parish or neighbourhood is located. Contact your Local Strategic Partnership for more information (contact details on the back page of this strategy).

District and Borough Plans

Local Development Framework core strategies and Council Plans for [Eastbourne](#), [Hastings](#), [Lewes](#) District, [Rother](#) and [Wealden](#)
[Draft Blueprint for Economic Growth and Prosperity: Eastbourne Hailsham Triangle \(2006\)](#)

Draft Hastings and Bexhill Economic Development and Inclusion Strategy

[Hastings Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy](#)

County-wide Plans

Adult Social Care Plan

Adult Social Care Three Year Plan (insert new hyperlink)

[All Together Better: The East Sussex Local Area Agreement \(2006\)](#)

[Annual Plan: Learning and Skills Council Sussex \(2007/08\)](#)

[Area Investment Framework for East Sussex \(2004\)](#)

Assessment of Police and Community Safety (APACS)

[Carers Commissioning Strategy](#)

[East Sussex Adult Social Care Plan \(2001-2010\)](#)

[East Sussex Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy](#)

[East Sussex Anti-Bullying Strategy \(2005-2008\)](#)

[East Sussex Children and Young People's Plan \(2006-2008\)](#)

[East Sussex County Council Plan \(2007-2008\)](#)

[East Sussex Domestic Violence Strategy \(2007-2009\)](#)

[East Sussex DAAT Drug Strategy \(2005-2008\)](#)

[East Sussex Economic Development Refresh \(2007\)](#)

[East Sussex Fire Authority Strategic Plans \(2007-2012\)](#)

[East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan](#)

[East Sussex Harm Reduction Strategy \(2007-2009\)](#)

[East Sussex Infrastructure Development Plan \(2006\)](#)

East Sussex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

[East Sussex Local Transport Plan \(2006-2011\)](#)

[East Sussex Safer Communities Plan \(2007\)](#) Draft

East Sussex Supporting People Five Year Strategy (2005-2010)

[East Sussex Traveller Strategy](#)

East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Waste Local Plan (2006)

[Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People](#)

[Learning Disability Joint Commissioning Strategy](#)

[Mental Health Commissioning Strategy](#)

[NHS Fit for the Future \(East Sussex\)](#)

[Physical Disability Commissioning Strategy](#)

[Time of Our Lives Older Persons strategy](#)

[Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

[Sussex Police Authority Strategic Plan \(2005-2008\)](#)

Sussex Police East Sussex Divisional Plan (2008-09)

Sussex Police Local Policing Plan (2008-2011)

[Trees and Woodland: A strategy in East Sussex](#)

Sub-regional Plans

[East Sussex Brighton and Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011](#)

[Minerals Local Plan](#) and [Waste Local Plan](#)

Review of Sub-regional Economic Development and Regeneration

Key Regional Plans

Coastal South East: A Framework for Action

[NHS South East Coast Operating Framework](#)

[Regional Economic Strategy for South East England 2002-2012](#)

Regional Economic Strategy Implementation Plan




[Regional Transport Strategy](#)




[Regional Housing Strategy](#)



[South East Plan](#)




South East Water Resources Strategy

APPENDIX 1: Summary of Strategic Priorities and Tasks

Theme	Strategic Priority	Key tasks - countywide
 <p>Economy, Jobs and Prosperity</p>	To narrow the economic performance gap within and between communities in the county and between the county and the region, in order to develop a thriving, diverse and sustainable economy where everyone can prosper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local businesses to start up, diversify and grow • Attract new and sustainable business and investment into the county • Encourage and support innovation and entrepreneurial activity • Facilitate the development of more affordable, modern and environmentally friendly business accommodation and sites • Reduce barriers to employment and address worklessness • Promote further and higher education and learning opportunities • Invest in and promote skills development, especially in key sectors • Recognise and support the different economic needs and development potential of our urban, rural and coastal economies • Develop high-value and priority sectors such as engineering, ICT, environmental technologies, construction, care and retail • Reduce child poverty by 2011 and eradicate it by 2020.
 <p>Transport, Access and Communications</p>	To improve sustainable travel choices and access to services and facilities within and between communities in the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road and support the development of the Newhaven Port Access Road • Increase sustainable travel choices, improve public transport and reduce the need to travel by car • Improve road safety and reduce congestion, minimise negative impacts on the environment and improve air quality • Reduce the number of children, young people and adults of all ages who are socially excluded by improving access to jobs, education, learning, health and other services through affordable transport and technology related solutions including next generation broadband • Improve the maintenance and management of our transport network.
 <p>Housing</p>	To provide affordable, good quality and environmentally friendly homes and housing for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the supply of homes and increase and diversify the supply of affordable homes, housing and tenures in all areas, both rural and urban • Develop high quality, modern and efficient health, social care and housing support services for older people • Minimise homelessness, especially hidden and youth homelessness • Improve the quality of existing homes and help bring empty homes back into use to help people in housing need • Increase energy and water efficiency of new and existing homes

Theme	Strategic Priority	Key tasks - countywide
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan infrastructure needs alongside housing developments, and ensure new developments do not increase flood risk • Extend number and range of people receiving housing-related support • Enable new sites to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.
 <p>Environment and Climate Change</p>	<p>To protect and enhance our natural and built environment for current and future generations, and enable individuals and organisations to tackle and adapt to climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop high quality environments in our towns and villages • Reduce traffic, increase alternative sustainable travel choices and improve air quality • Increase green spaces, leisure opportunities and visitor facilities and make best use of our natural assets • Prepare for the effects of climate change; manage the risks and make the most of the opportunities • Encourage individuals and organisations to minimise their water consumption, CO₂ emissions and overall environmental impact • Reuse, reduce and recycle more household, business and industrial waste • Ensure climate change is a strategic consideration of Local Development Frameworks and other planning policies • Improve streets and green spaces.
 <p>Education, Learning and Skills</p>	<p>To provide high quality education, learning and skills development opportunities for all by building on good performance and improving poor performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish integrated services for children under 5 and their families through a network of children's centres and increase take up and quality of early years education • Provide and increase accessible vocational and academic, lifelong learning and skills development opportunities for all, including people with special educational needs and people in later life • Develop early years support for children, their parents and carers • Raise educational achievement and skills levels across the county • Reduce the educational attainment and skills gap for people from deprived and vulnerable backgrounds and disadvantaged areas • Develop adult learning provision and take-up across the county • Increase employer involvement and satisfaction with skills training • Enable all young people to be in education, employment or training.
 <p>Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>To reduce health and care inequalities within and between communities and improve overall health and wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve physical health, mental wellbeing and life expectancy, especially amongst those who are least healthy • Reduce the number of people getting long term and serious illnesses • Provide easy and appropriate access to information and services to help people of all ages to make healthy lifestyle choices • Enable people to live healthy and active lives, and encourage use of open spaces

Theme	Strategic Priority	Key tasks - countywide
		<p>including the countryside, beach, parks and gardens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce teenage pregnancy and reduce self-harming lifestyles, obesity, smoking, alcohol and substance misuse • Support people to have access to, choice and control over services provided to help them remain independent as they grow older, or if they have physical disabilities, learning disabilities or mental health problems or live with long-term health conditions • Improve the user, patient and carer experience and support for carers of all ages • Improve support to children and young people on the edge of care, especially vulnerable teenagers.
 Community Safety	To build safe communities through targeted activity, particularly in high crime areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce crime and re-offending, particularly in crime hotspots and high crime areas • Increase community reassurance and reduce the fear of crime • Reduce serious and violent crime, deliberate fire setting, domestic violence and hate crimes in particular, and ensure victims are supported • Reduce the harm caused by drugs and alcohol misuse • Build respect in communities, reduce anti-social behaviour and reduce bullying, wherever it occurs • Protect children and young people from harm • Improving communication, consultation and community engagement • Preventing youth crime • Improving road safety • Tackling emerging crime issues arising from the economic downturn.
 Community Strength and Leadership	To build strong, sustainable communities with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for and meet the needs of changing and new communities • Promote fair access to inclusive services and assist those on lower incomes to gain better access to financial support and benefits • Tackle social, financial and environmental inequalities • Empower local people of all ages to have a greater voice and influence over local decisions that affect their lives and neighbourhoods • Develop and strengthen the local Voluntary and Community Sector • Promote community ownership or control of buildings, spaces and local community service delivery • Support and encourage volunteering • Encourage greater voter participation in local and national elections • Plan a response in case of emergencies, reducing risk and informing the public.

Theme	Strategic Priority	Key tasks - countywide
 Culture, Sports and Leisure	To enable everyone to enjoy a wide range of cultural, sporting and leisure opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participation in cultural, sporting and leisure activities amongst people of all ages and tackle the barriers of access and affordability, particularly in areas where active recreation and sports participation is low. • Provide life-long learning opportunities in arts, culture and sports • Promote the health and social benefits of an active life • Develop support for cultural, sports and leisure based businesses • Invest in multi-purpose community owned buildings in rural areas • Conserve the natural and built heritage of East Sussex and its use • Promote East Sussex as a place where the arts, culture, sports and play are valued and can be enjoyed • Facilitate sustainable employment opportunities for professional artists, performers, sportspeople and others involved in the creative, sports and leisure industries and promote volunteering in the arts, culture, sports and leisure.
 Older People	To support older people and carers to have a healthy, active and independent life	<p>Key tasks are integrated into the themes. Underpinning them will be to ensure that older people continue to be involved in, and consulted about, the services that do, or may, affect them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop high quality, modern and efficient health, social care and housing support services • Provide opportunities for continued learning and development in later life • Assist older people and carers to play an active part in community life and have a collective voice • Provide access to activities that promote a healthy lifestyle • Assist older people and carers to gain better access to services and transport, and those on lower incomes to gain better access to financial support and benefits.
 Children and Young People	To ensure children and young people are well cared for, have healthy life styles, achieve their potential, and grow into confident, empowered, responsible adults - able to contribute to the economic prosperity of the county	<p>Key tasks are integrated into the themes. Underpinning them will be improving the way that agencies work together through the Children's Trust to identify and respond, in an integrated way, to the needs of children and young people and their families; and shifting resources to prevention and early identification and increase the range of family support services available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to services, especially in rural areas • Help children and young people to make healthy lifestyle choices and reduce health inequalities • Reduce teenage conception rates across the county

Theme	Strategic Priority	Key tasks - countywide
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect children and young people from harm • Reduce bullying towards children and young people wherever it occurs • Improve support to children and young people on the edge of care, especially vulnerable teenagers • Establish integrated services for children under 5 and their families through a network of children's centres and increase take up and quality of early years education • Provide positive activities for children and young people and to increase opportunities for children and young people to be involved and participate in decisions which affect them and their communities • Tackle youth homelessness, and provide better housing and housing-related support for young people • Reduce child poverty by 2011 and eradicate it by 2020 • Raising the aspirations, confidence and motivation of families and communications as well as individual children and young people.

APPENDIX 2: Equality Impact Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Rural Proofing

Pride of Place has been subjected to Equalities Impact Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Rural Proofing. However, each of these highlighted the need to carry these activities out on the Pride of Place action plans.

Equalities Impact Assessments

Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out on the action plans to help establish how far they will meet the needs of diverse people in the community. It sets out potential barriers in accessing services or employment, on the basis of people's race, ethnicity, disability, gender, age and other criteria [for example asylum or refugee status]. It looks at whether any differences between groups of people are justifiable and, if not, offer potential solutions.

Sustainability Appraisal

A sustainability appraisal of the action plans will be carried out to enable sustainable development objectives to be integrated into our actions. While there is no statutory requirement to carry out an appraisal of this type it will demonstrate the action plans' overall contribution to sustainability. We will use an appropriate methodology, such as the Sustainability Appraisal Guide within the Regional Sustainability Framework.

Rural Proofing

The action plans will be rural proofed using the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs rural proofing checklist to ensure that they meet the needs of rural areas. The role of rural proofing is to challenge urban-centric assumptions that may occur in service design and delivery, and may be inherent in the data used to inform decision making.

The Rural Proofing Checklist will be used to:

- Consider whether the action plan is likely to have a different impact in rural areas, because of particular rural circumstances or needs;
- Make a proper assessment of those impacts, if they are likely to be significant.
- Adjust the plans, where appropriate, with solutions to meet rural needs and circumstances.



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Hastings & St Leonards

strategic
partnership