

## 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