



# Pride of Place: **Summary**

Working towards a better future for local people and local communities

A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex

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EASTBOURNE • HASTINGS • LEWES DISTRICT • ROTHER • WEALDEN

2008-2026

# I 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 sustainable 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 do to tackle these priorities.

## I 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.

In East Sussex, the six Local Authorities and six Local Strategic Partnerships have worked together for the first time to link their individual community strategies into one, integrated strategy - Pride of Place.

## I A Partnership Approach

There are six Local Strategic Partnerships in East Sussex: East Sussex, Eastbourne, Hastings and St. Leonards, 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.

As the six Local Strategic Partnerships, we believe we will achieve more by having a shared vision of the future and planning and working together to achieve it. This partnership approach also means that best use can be made of resources, joining up where necessary, while ensuring very local issues are also addressed.

## I A Distinctive County

East Sussex has a population of just over half a million and covers an area of 1,725 square kilometres. The landscape is predominantly rural in character, with a significant coastline where more than half the population live in four main coastal urban areas. The county is made up of the

boroughs of Eastbourne and Hastings, and the districts of Lewes, Rother and Wealden. East Sussex is a county of extremes; with areas of reasonable affluence alongside areas suffering severe and long-term deprivation. These differences must be taken into account in planning for the future, particularly in prioritising areas of greatest need, and ensuring people enjoy equal access to services, regardless of where they live. The five districts and boroughs of East Sussex each have a strong sense of identity, with individual elements to celebrate, and issues which need to be addressed. East Sussex does not exist in isolation, so we must also be flexible in responding to changes occurring not only locally, but in the south east, nationally and abroad.

## I Our Priorities

We want to improve the quality of life for all residents by securing their future prosperity and well-being, and improving the places where they live, work and spend their leisure time.

### **Our vision is:**

*"To create places where everyone can prosper, be safe and healthy, and live in a high quality environment."*

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

Research and consultation show that a number of issues affect the quality of life for people in East Sussex, and these issues fall broadly into nine themes. These themes, and how we will tackle them, are set out in the following pages.

In everything we do we must reduce inequalities, be sustainable, and provide and deliver effective, high quality, customer focused services.

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Older people and younger people also require particular attention because East Sussex has a large and growing older population, and because children and young people are our future.

## ■ Delivery

In East Sussex there is a strong record of local organisations working well together and delivering real benefits to local people. We aim to continue this by committing to meet the challenges set out in Pride of Place.

### **Our strategy will be delivered through:**

#### **1. The Local Area Agreement (LAA)**

This is a 3 year agreement between central Government and local partners in East Sussex which links national and local priorities, matching them with up to 35 measures of performance (known as National Indicators) chosen from a larger group used nationally.

#### **2. Countywide and Local Action Plans**

These include priorities not easily measured by the National Indicators, or where measurement may take longer than the three year period of the LAA. These priorities can be at county level, where a joint approach adds value, at the local district and borough level or more locally through, for example, Parish or Neighbourhood Plans.

Our progress will be monitored and reported regularly. Regular updates on performance will be available at **[www.essp.org.uk](http://www.essp.org.uk)**

This leaflet is a summary of the key information within Pride of Place, the Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex. For a copy of the whole document, please visit **[www.essp.org.uk](http://www.essp.org.uk)**



## I EAST SUSSEX

East Sussex is an historic and unique county, with beautiful countryside and coastline. It offers a diverse range of towns, villages and rural communities, with a wide variety of leisure, sport and cultural activities. However it is a county of extremes, where areas of affluence can mask pockets of severe deprivation.

### I Wealden

Wealden is one of the most rural districts in England. From the High Weald to the South Downs, there are many sites of special scientific interest, internationally recognised wetland, and the highest proportion of ancient woodland of all English districts.

#### Key issues:

- Lack of affordable, quality housing
- Significant health inequalities
- Access difficulties to services and local infrastructure

### I Lewes

Lewes District extends over the South Downs and into Sussex Weald, with four main urban areas and a large rural hinterland. Over one third of the District is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Lewes District is generally affluent, but has areas of significant deprivation in the coastal towns and in some rural areas.

#### Key issues:

- Provision of affordable housing and planning for a sustainable future
- Protecting and enhancing the local environment
- Access to local facilities and services, particularly for disadvantaged groups

### I Eastbourne

Eastbourne is located at the foot of the South Downs on the south coast. It offers an elegant seafront, beach, and a range of sports facilities alongside a number of conservation areas.

#### Key issues:

- Restricted employment opportunities and deprivation hotspots
- Growing proportions of younger and older people
- Lack of affordable, quality housing



### I Rother

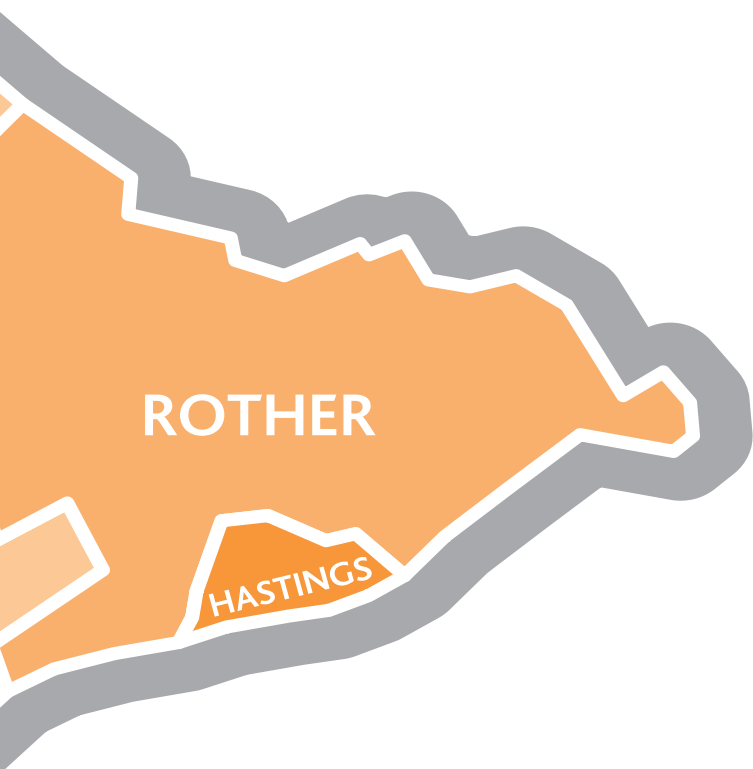
Rother benefits from a blend of some of the most beautiful countryside and coastline in South East England, containing the historic market towns of Battle and Rye, the Victorian/Edwardian seaside town of Bexhill and many picturesque villages. More than 80% of the district is designated as an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' and there are large natural areas of international conservation value.

#### Key issues:

- Lack of affordable, quality housing
- Balancing services to support a younger population
- Limited well-paid, high-skilled employment opportunities

## Key issues:

- A weak local economy
- Poor educational attainment and skills
- Poor transport links



## I Hastings

Hastings boasts eight miles of unspoilt beaches and over 600 hectares of open space, attracting visitors to its vibrant festivals, and superb seafood.

## Key issues:

- Neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation
- Below average levels of educational attainment in schools
- High proportion of working age population not in paid work

Map courtesy of [www.askcasper.org.uk](http://www.askcasper.org.uk), the support portal for voluntary and community groups.



# I PRIORITIES

Below is a snapshot of the issues facing East Sussex and some examples of what we will do to tackle them.

## I Economy, Jobs & Prosperity

### Where we are now

East Sussex is dominated by low paid jobs; low skills; poor educational attainment; areas of deprivation; poor housing and poor transport. Significant investment needs to be made to foster innovation and entrepreneurship, and to enable East Sussex's economy to grow and prosper.

### We will: Countywide

Support local businesses, encourage and support innovation and entrepreneurial activity, promote skills development, and support the development of our urban, rural and coastal economies.

### We will: Districts & Boroughs

- Hastings will work with partners to create opportunities for local people to improve their skills and get into work
- Provide support and advice for the small and micro businesses that predominate in Wealden, including those based on agricultural diversification.

### You could:

- Use local businesses
- Buy local produce
- Visit [www.escc.gov.uk](http://www.escc.gov.uk) for advice on setting up or developing your business.

## I Transport, Access & Communications

### Where we are now

East Sussex has a limited road and rail network, however there is increasing investment into alternatives to the car. Volunteer and rural bus schemes are improving, but transport in rural areas remains a challenge and needs to improve.

### We will: Countywide

Implement the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road and support the development of the Newhaven Port Access, increase sustainable travel choices, improve public transport, and improve access to jobs, education, learning, health and other services through affordable transport and technology related solutions including next generation broadband.

### We will: Districts & Boroughs

- Rother is supporting the development of

school travel plans and walking buses to encourage car alternatives for short journeys.

- Support the re-establishment of the Lewes-Uckfield rail link and improvements to the A27 - key infrastructure issues for Wealden0
- Lewes is keen to develop cycle ways between Lewes, Newhaven and Seaford.

### You could:

- Contact Traveline on **0870 608 2608** or [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk) for travel information
- Walk or cycle for short journeys
- Join a car sharing scheme e.g. [www.travelchoice.org](http://www.travelchoice.org)

## I Housing

### Where we are now

High house prices and low average salaries make it difficult for many local people to buy homes.

In order to keep up with demand, particularly for rental, we need to improve current housing stock, to encourage the use of empty properties and to concentrate on affordable housing.

### We will: Countywide

Increase the supply of affordable homes, housing and tenures, improve the quality of existing homes, help bring empty homes back into use and extend the number and range of people receiving housing-related support.

### We will: Districts & Boroughs

- Eastbourne is focusing on new development and on raising the standard of both public and private sector housing
- Wealden has affordable homes as their priority
- Lewes is keen to improve the condition of private sector homes, including energy efficiency measures.

### You could:

- Visit [www.ecsc.org.uk](http://www.ecsc.org.uk) for free and impartial advice on energy efficiency
- Visit [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) for advice on buying, selling and renting.

## I Environment & Climate Change

### Where we are now

One of the county's greatest assets is its natural

environment. However harmful ozone levels in East Sussex are some of the highest recorded in the UK. We need to focus on encouraging people and organisations to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste, as well as adapting to climate change.

### **We will: Countywide**

Increase green spaces, leisure opportunities and visitor facilities, make best use of our natural assets, encourage households and businesses to minimise water consumption, CO2 emissions and to reuse, reduce and recycle more of their waste.

### **We will: Districts & Boroughs**

- Lewes is tackling climate change, improving air quality in town centres, reducing waste, improving recycling rates and increasing resilience to flooding in the Lewes District.

### **You could:**

- Reuse, reduce and recycle as much of your waste as possible
- Respect, explore and enjoy the local countryside.

## Education, Learning & Skills

### **Where we are now**

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. Many new learning opportunities have been created, especially for adult education, however provision is not equal across the county and rural areas in particular need to be targeted.

### **We will: Countywide**

Provide and increase accessible vocational and academic, lifelong learning and skills development opportunities for all, develop early years support for children, their parents and carers and raise educational achievement and skills levels across the county.

### **We will: Districts & Boroughs**

- Hastings will work with partners to raise achievement in schools and encourage young people to continue in education and training.

### **You could:**

- Help your children with their homework
- Not take your child out of school in term time
- Take classes through an adult education centre or [www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk)

## Health & Wellbeing

### **Where we are now**

Health problems and health inequalities exist in every District and Borough in the county, although some are more extreme than others. These inequalities are often related to poverty and deprivation, which must be targeted.

### **We will: Countywide**

Reduce the number of people getting long term and serious illnesses, reduce teenage pregnancy and self-harming lifestyles such as smoking, support people to have access to, and choice and control over services provided to help them remain independent and support carers of all ages.

### **We will: Districts & Boroughs**

- Reducing teenage pregnancy is a priority in both Hastings and Eastbourne.

### **You could:**

- Get sexual health advice at [www.brook.org.uk](http://www.brook.org.uk)
- Call **0845 60 80 191** for advice and support for carers
- Get information and support to stop smoking at [www.nhs.uk/gosmokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/gosmokefree)

## Community Safety

### **Where we are now**

Crime in East Sussex is below the national average but perceptions of crime are often high. There are also significant differences across the county. A number of partnerships are working towards reducing crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse, alongside Neighbourhood Policing with named officers for neighbourhoods.

### **We will: Countywide**

Increase community reassurance and reduce the fear of crime, reduce serious and violent crime, and build respect in communities, reduce anti-social behaviour and reduce bullying.

### **We will: Districts & Boroughs**

- Rother is keen to tackle the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly supporting the Safer Rother Partnership.
- Eastbourne will continue to reduce anti-social behaviour and criminal damage through youth activities and targeted education programmes.

### You could:

- Report incidents to Sussex Police on **0845 60 70 999**
- Take personal safety classes
- Fit window locks and do not leave valuable items on show.

## Community Strength & Leadership

### Where we are now

East Sussex has a 3% population increase forecast for 2026, almost all of whom are in the retirement age groups. We are continuing to investigate ways of effectively engaging and giving residents the opportunity and ability to make local decisions, through local councillors and youth parliament members to faith leaders and local 'champions'.

### We will: Countywide

Tackle social, financial and environmental inequalities, support and encourage volunteering, and empower local people of all ages to have a greater voice and influence over local decisions that affect their lives and neighbourhoods.

### We will: Districts & Boroughs

- Hastings will continue to promote community cohesion, and encourage the development of positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.

### You could:

- Become a local volunteer, visit **www.eastsussex.gov.uk/volunteering**
- Respond to consultation
- Become a Councillor
- Attend local council meetings
- Vote in local elections.

## Culture, Sports & Leisure

### Where we are now

East Sussex has a rich cultural heritage, with numerous tourist attractions and a variety of opportunities to participate in sports, arts and leisure activities.

### We will: Countywide

Encourage participation in cultural, sporting and leisure activities, tackle the barriers of access and affordability, promote the health and social benefits of an active life and promote East Sussex.

### We will: Districts & Boroughs

- Wealden is focusing on making better use of community facilities such as village halls and promoting the participation of sports and leisure.
- A programme of improvements to children's play areas is being developed in Lewes District.

### You could:

- Join a local sports centre or sports club
- Promote the area to non-residents
- Respect, explore and enjoy local attractions.



**Eastbourne Strategic Partnership**  
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esp@eastbourne.gov.uk



**East Sussex Strategic Partnership**  
www.essp.org.uk  
01273 481177  
essp@eastsussex.gov.uk



**Hastings & St Leonards Strategic Partnership**  
www.hastings.gov.uk/lsp  
01424 451844  
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**Lewes District Strategic Partnership**  
www.lvlc.info  
01273 484396  
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**Rother Strategic Partnership**  
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**Wealden Strategic Partnership**  
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If you would like our information in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or in another language, please contact 01273 336 140.