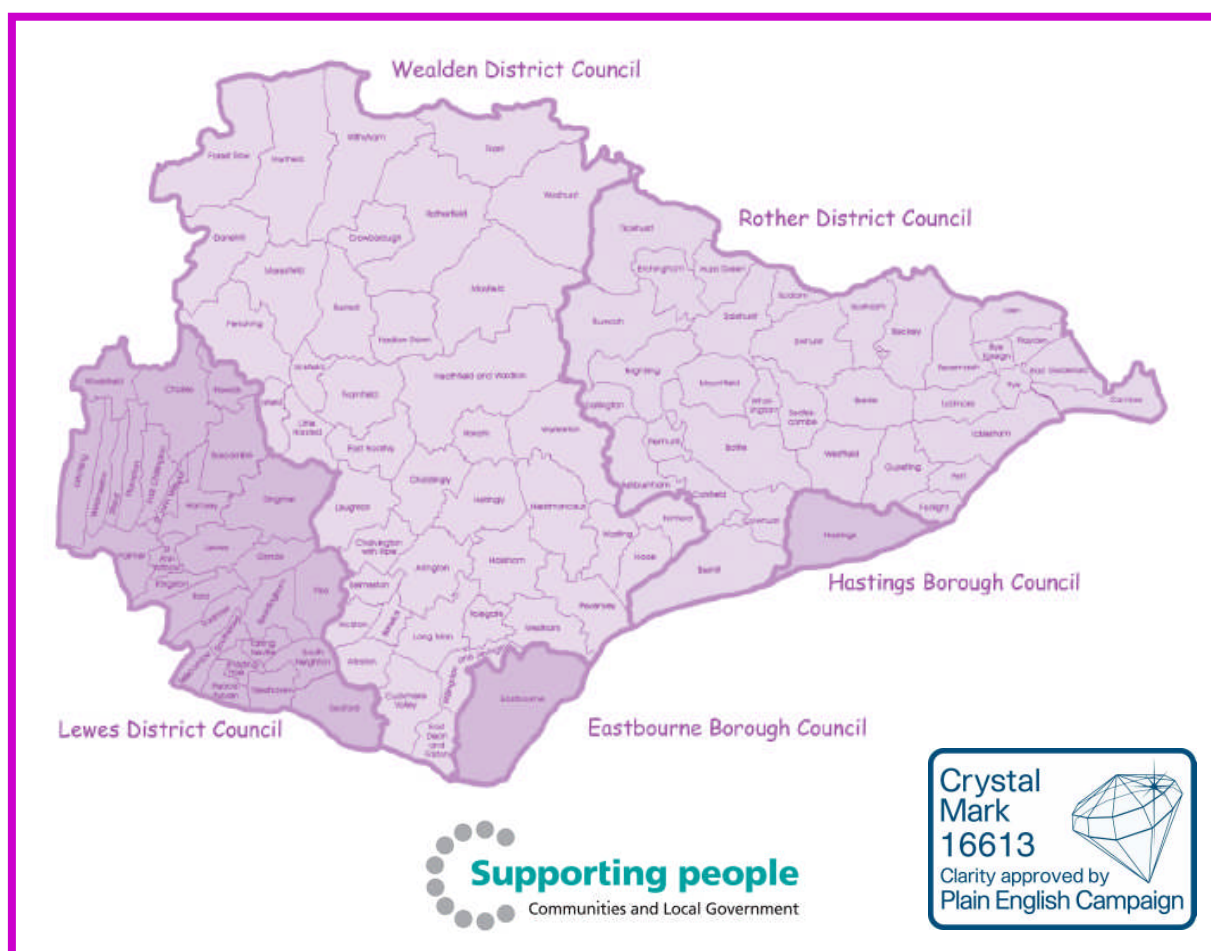


East Sussex

Supporting People Strategy

2005 to 2010

Update 2007-2008 to 2009-2010



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1 Introduction and background

Our Supporting People Strategy 2005 to 2010 is a five-year plan and was published in March 2005. We also published an updated version in July 2007. This is a summary of the updated version.

How to use this summary

The summary is set out in the same way as the updated strategy, so you can easily find out more information about the full strategy. You can get a full version of the updated strategy from our website or from the Supporting People team.

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About the Supporting People programme

The Supporting People programme pays for housing-related support services that help you to live independently.

Housing-related support is help you can get to find, or stay in, your own home. This includes help to manage your money, claim benefits, develop domestic or social skills, and keep you and your home safe. Housing-related support does not include personal services such as help with eating, washing and dressing, or day care.

Our Supporting People grant comes from the Government. We use the money to pay other organisations to give you the support you need and make sure that this support is as good as possible. We work with five local district and borough councils, health services and the probation service to manage the programme.

You can get more information about the Supporting People programme in our information leaflet 'IL15 Supporting People'. You can get this leaflet from our website or from the Supporting People team (see the contact details above).

National Supporting People strategy

The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) published a national Supporting People strategy, called 'Independence and Opportunity' on 20 June 2007. You can get a copy of the strategy and an easy-to-read summary from the national Supporting People website at www.spkweb.org.uk.

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The strategy has four main themes.

- To keep people that need services at the heart of the programme (this means making sure that we always think about what people want and need first)
- To work better with groups who run services in the local area
- To make people work well together, using a plan called a local area agreement, to improve Supporting People services
- To work more efficiently and reduce the amount of paperwork

Aims of the update to the five-year strategy

The aims of the updated five-year strategy are to:

- show what the Supporting People programme plans to do in 2007-2008 and 2009-2010;
- make sure that the limited money available is spent on the areas with the greatest priority;
- focus on meeting people's needs that are not being met at the moment; and
- make sure that the Supporting People programme is introduced into the day-to-day business of all our partners. (Our partners are organisations that have a say in the Supporting People programme.)

People involved in developing the update

We produced the updated strategy by working with a wide range of people interested in Supporting People. These included:

- East Sussex County Council;
- Eastbourne Borough Council;
- Hastings Borough Council;
- Lewes District Council;
- Rother District Council;
- Wealden District Council;
- Eastbourne, Lewes and Wealden Primary Care Trust;
- Hastings and Rother Primary Care Trust;
- the Probation Service (Sussex);
- organisations who provide Supporting People services;
- service users and people who may use services in the future; and
- voluntary and community organisations.

2 What we aim to do

Our vision statement

“The Supporting People programme aims to increase the opportunities and improve upon the life chances of vulnerable people in East Sussex by offering them accessible, high quality and affordable housing-related support services that promote independence, prevent crisis and complement existing and new housing, health and social care services.”

The main aims of the Supporting People programme

The programme aims to:

- help prevent a wide range of crisis situations (such as homelessness or having to go into residential care) for vulnerable people;
- make sure that housing-related support services help you to live as independently as possible;
- promote equality and include everyone in society;
- promote being safe in the community;
- support vulnerable people to get a new home and become part of the community;
- make sure that housing-related support services are available to people who need them, whatever their housing situation;
- only plan and buy services that will help to deliver the aims of the five-year Supporting People Strategy; and
- make sure that everyone is able to use the services funded from Supporting People.

Services

We have developed new ideas about how Supporting People services should work. We will consider the following when introducing and developing services.

- Services should be as flexible as possible so that they can support people in any housing situation.
- Services should be available across all of East Sussex.
- We should only provide ‘specialised’ services when a more general support service is not appropriate.
- We should assess everyone’s housing-related support needs.
- Services should offer support in a range of situations including:
 - helping someone to stay in their own home by providing support services there so they don’t need to move to special accommodation;

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- helping people who need a specialist accommodation-based service, for as long as they need (these are housing-related support services that are linked to specific housing or accommodation); and
- when people move on from accommodation-based supported housing.
- Some accommodation-based services need to have flexible access arrangements, for example, for women at risk of domestic violence.
- Services should focus on preventing crisis situations and promoting people's independence, in particular people who use accommodation-based 'specialist' services.

The following are the main areas we will focus on.

- We want to use less 'specialist' services and replace them with general support services.
- We want to have services that prevent problems.
- We would like to introduce a central access point, where people are assessed for their needs and then offered either general support or more complicated and specialist support. It is important that people are moved through the system as quickly as possible.

3 Why housing-related support is needed

One of the main reasons we updated the five-year strategy was to find out the level of housing-related support services that was needed and whether we were meeting your needs. To do this we:

- collected information about your needs from all the Supporting People partners;
- analysed the services we have at the moment and the need for housing-related support and found what problems there were; and
- came up with ways to solve these problems.

Information we collected

From the information we collected we found there was a need for a range of housing-related support services. These included the following.

- Accommodation specifically for ex-offenders.
- Floating support for people who misuse drugs and alcohol. (Floating support is housing-related support services that are not linked to specific housing and can support people wherever they live.)
- Outreach or floating support for women at risk of domestic violence.
- Support that will reduce the risk of homelessness for all vulnerable people.

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- Supported housing for vulnerable young people, particularly 16-to-17-year-olds, who are at risk of becoming homeless.
- Extra-care housing for older people (which usually means those aged over 60).
- More flexible floating support for older people.
- Floating support for:
 - young people with a disability that affects their senses (such as being deaf or blind);
 - people with long-term neurological conditions such as multiple sclerosis, motor neurone disease or epilepsy;
 - young adults who have a physical disability; and
 - specialist floating support for people with an acquired brain injury (an injury to the brain that has happened since birth), focused on moving them to general housing-related support services.
- Extra support services for gypsies and travellers.
- Services for teenage parents in Rother and Wealden.
- Services for people with learning disabilities, particularly in Rother.
- Services for people from black and minority-ethnic (BME) groups with specific needs.

Main issues

When we were updating the 'needs profile' for housing-related support services, we found the following.

- It is important that services funded by Supporting People help the strategies and plans of all Supporting People partner organisations.
- Sheltered housing is an important part of the Supporting People programme. But in some cases we are paying for support for people who do not need it. To prevent this, some providers of accommodation-based services are now changing to community-based floating support services. This process needs to continue.
- General floating support services should be available to all vulnerable people.
- People should receive a housing-related support service based on their need for that service, rather than because they have another specific need (such as for mental-health services).
- Specialist support services should only be provided for people whose needs cannot be met by a general floating support service.
- We will work with a range of housing providers to find new solutions to help people 'move on' to independent housing.

4 Links to other strategies

One aim of updating the Supporting People five-year strategy was to make the Supporting People programme more involved in the day-to-day business of all partners. We have done this by making links with other local strategies and plans.

The full version of the updated strategy includes a list of all the strategies that are related to Supporting People.

5 Priorities for 2007-2008 to 2008-2009

Our priorities for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 are based on our new ideas of how housing-related support services should work and the areas where we need to improve.

Our priorities are to:

- provide a new floating support service for people who have problems with drug and alcohol misuse;
- provide a new service for people experiencing domestic violence;
- extend the floating support service for gypsies and travellers;
- have supported housing specifically for ex-offenders;
- develop a general floating support service available to all vulnerable people across East Sussex;
- develop and introduce a young people's homelessness strategy across the county;
- develop a new extra-care service in Peacehaven, and develop other extra-care services across the county, in line with housing and support strategies for older people;
- change and improve support services in sheltered housing (where appropriate); and
- change and improve home-improvement agency services.

6 Achieving our plan for 2007-2008 to 2008-2009

The commissioning and delivery plan in the updated strategy explain the actions that the Strategic Forum will take to meet the priorities and aims that we have agreed. Commissioning is the process of planning, buying and evaluating services.

The main area of work for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 is to introduce our new way of running housing-related support services. This is shown in two 'phases' or projects.

- The first phase deals with how services work (except those for older people). This means:
 - developing a floating support service for all client groups that will be available to people in all types of housing, wherever they live in the county; and

- deciding which of the services we have should be specialist services, either as they are now or with some changes.
- The second phase involves changing (where appropriate) and improving support services for elderly people, specifically if they use sheltered housing and home-improvement agency services.

People are put into client groups according to their support needs, and they may be in more than one group.

7 Our financial plan for 2007-2008 to 2009-2010

The total funding available for 2007-2008 is £11,806,210. This includes the Supporting People Grant from the Government of £11,561,210, plus money that was not spent last year. We will receive the same Supporting People grant (£11,561,210) each year for the next three years.

Funding to pay for our new way of working will come from existing Supporting People resources. The level of funding will depend on:

- the amount of funding used for specialist services that could be replaced by a general service; and
- how much money we can save and if we can provide services that are even better value for money, by using this new way of working.

8 Procurement policy

Procurement means the process of buying goods, works or services. (In Supporting People it usually means buying services.)

All our procurement will be in line with East Sussex County Council rules ('standing orders'). This applies to tendering exercises (inviting providers to make a bid to provide services) and developing services.

9 Move-on accommodation

District and borough council housing departments plan and provide accommodation for people moving on from accommodation-based services. This will be strengthened and improved by the new commissioning plan.

10 Service performance and quality

We will monitor all new and existing services in line with the Supporting People contract-monitoring and review policy. Using the links we have with other strategies and plans, we will decide what we want to achieve in services funded by Supporting People.

11 Access to services

There are different ways of accessing Supporting People services. These include:

- direct access by an individual service user;
- access through the East Sussex County Council Supported Accommodation Team (SAT) for some mental-health and learning-disability services; and
- access by the district and borough councils for some types of supported housing.

We want to improve access to Supporting People services. We want to do this by having one way of accessing services (possibly one for each district or borough council area). However, the arrangements we make will need to be flexible enough to still allow people to access a service direct.

12 Equality and diversity

We will carry out an equality impact assessment (EIA) if there is a change in our policy or strategy. (An equality impact assessment is when we work out if a policy or strategy might lead to some groups of people being treated differently from others.) We will carry out an EIA when we start to use this updated Supporting People strategy.

All services will have equality and diversity targets to achieve. These targets are to do with to how local black and minority-ethnic (BME) groups access and use their services. We will monitor these targets using the information on Supporting People client record forms, and the contract monitoring and review process we carry out every year.

13 Getting involved

We will involve service users by using the new commissioning plan in line with the Supporting People service-user involvement policy. We will do this in the following ways.

- A representative from the service-user group will go to strategic meetings such as the Strategic Forum and Core Strategy Group.
- We will ask service users for their opinion on new services or any changes we make.
- We will give service users a copy of this updated strategy.
- We will tell everyone about our progress with the commissioning plan in the Supporting People newsletter.

Choice and control

We will talk to service users and other people interested in Supporting People about:

- how we can give people more choice about the services we offer; and
- how service users can have control over the design and details of services and how they are delivered and managed .

We will learn from the pilot schemes across the county and individual budgets (a way of giving people who are eligible for services the money to arrange their own services, instead of us providing them direct) and other similar projects that aim to increase choice and control for service users.

14 How service providers get involved

The Strategic Forum and Core Strategy Group are committed to working with providers of housing-related support services to achieve the aims and commissioning plan contained in the strategy update.

We will work with service providers and explain how we will use this strategy and how we will develop the Supporting People programme. We will do this by using the Supporting People provider forum. We will invite representatives from the provider forum to meetings of the Strategic Forum and Core Strategy Group.

We will also work with other voluntary and community organisations using the local partnership groups and forums they are represented by.

15 Review of the strategy

This update of the five-year strategy will be reviewed in the final year of the strategy (2009-2010).



The summary of the Supporting People five-year strategy update was written by Candice Miller from the East Sussex Supporting People team and Ian Copeman from the Housing and Support Partnership.

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