



MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

Equality and Diversity

Progress Report 2019

January 2020

INTRODUCTION

This is the Council's tenth annual progress report, setting out Equality and Diversity activity in 2019.

PROGRESS IN DELIVERING SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS IN 2019

This section identifies service improvements for the protected groups, together with those who may find it difficult to access services by virtue of where they live and those with poor skills or low incomes. It also updated on initiatives to support the armed forces community. Some of our initiatives cover a range of equality issues. These include our systems for reporting and dealing with hate crime and anti-social behaviour; safeguarding; the operation of our grants scheme; provision of activities through our leisure centres; and the Health and Wellbeing service.

Hate Crime Reporting

Figures for Hate Crimes reported in Mid Sussex for the last two years are shown below:

Type of Hate Crime	Mid Sussex		West Sussex	
	2019	2018	2019	2018
Transgender	8	8	36	27
Religion	9	7	83	76
Disablist	15	10	139	113
Sexuality	22	13	196	141
Race	84	77	783	640
Total	138	115	1,237	997

A hate incident/hate crime is any incident where the victim or another person believes that they, the victim has been targeted because of their perceived race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or gender identity. Sussex Police point out that hate crimes are under reported and the increases are seen in part as the success of initiatives to raise awareness of hate crime and how it can be reported. This also follows national trends.

Safeguarding

Mid Sussex District Council continues to work in partnership with both the West Sussex Safeguarding Children's Board and Safeguarding Adults Board to ensure co-ordinated responses across West Sussex. The Council's Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy has been accompanied by a programme of training for both Members and Officers.

Support to community organisations through our Grants Scheme

The operation of our grants scheme continues to support a wide range of community organisations and projects that seek to assist vulnerable groups. Overall in 2018/19 a total of £1,029,294 of Economic, Community Development and Facility Grants were awarded by the Council, attracting an estimated further £2,030,810 of investment into projects and facilities.

The grants scheme includes partnership agreements with a core of voluntary organisations that support vulnerable people of all ages and backgrounds. These agreements are in place with Citizens Advice; Age UK; Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA); and Action in Rural Sussex. The partnership agreements are awarded over a three-year period to provide continuity and financial security to these organisations, with grants of £239,379 awarded in 2018/19.

Information about the contributions of the partnership agreement organisations to disadvantaged groups in Mid Sussex is provided below:

- Citizens Advice dealt with nearly 12,000 clients who had 18,000 different issues through their offices in Mid Sussex during 2018/19. 43% of Mid Sussex clients were either disabled or had a long-term health issue. The biggest growth area for advice was around Universal Credit claims which accounted for 7% of advice given in 2018/19. Citizens Advice has used external funding to set up a dedicated Universal Credit telephone helpline and to provide new accessible face to face advice sessions at the job centre in Haywards Heath and at Saltworks, a community hub in the Bentswood area of Haywards Heath.
- Age UK has around 800 older people in Mid Sussex who are members of their three centres in Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath. The centres provide older people with a place where they can meet and socialise, enjoy a cooked lunch or take part in activities like short mat bowls, arts and crafts, quizzes and exercise classes. The Age UK centre in Haywards Heath successfully moved premises from the Cherry Tree to Lamb House. The larger facility has enabled the organisation to widen its offer, including the introduction of “twilight sessions” aimed at older working adults.
- Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA) supports local charities, volunteers, community groups, non-profit organisations and social enterprises. In 2018/19 MSVA had 338 member groups, gave practical 1:1 help to 70 community groups and charities, advertised 98 new volunteering roles, assisted in 53 successful volunteer placements, offered 11 training courses and 3 e-learning courses and held 6 events and 8 community drop-in sessions. The charity also hired out its Community room to 40 local groups.
- Action in Rural Sussex (AirS) provides valuable support to village halls, which are often the heartbeat of rural communities. This has included provision of legal, organisational and development advice for the trustees and management committees running these facilities on behalf of local people. During 2018/19, AirS completed a review of a selection of community facilities in Mid Sussex, which identified different aspects to consider in developing and operating community facilities. They also played a key role in delivering Mid Sussex Liaison Network events on sourcing and sustainable funding.

Leisure Centres

The Council’s Leisure Centres provide a balanced range of activities to suit all sectors of the community and includes a scheme for concessional use. Groups who benefit from concessional charges include the over 60’s; juniors of 16/17 years of age; students in full-time education; those in receipt of certain benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance; and registered carers. In 2018/19, concessional attendances amounted to 34% of the total. The Leisure Centres also work through the GP Exercise Referral Programme and provide activities for local schools and community groups.

The Health and Wellbeing service

The Health and Wellbeing Hub continues to be developed with a high emphasis on targeting people in the community who are at risk of the poorest health, with their services of particular benefit to vulnerable groups. Examples of their work this year have included:

- The falls prevention programme which has been integrated into the Local Falls Pathway (especially useful for older people to improve their strength and mobility) with classes held in East Grinstead, Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and Hassocks.
- Wellbeing Coaches who support people with complex health and wellbeing issues on a one to one basis.

- The prediabetes programme, which is delivered in GP surgeries across Mid Sussex and targets people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. People at risk include those with a high body mass index and adults from ethnic minority backgrounds. The majority of referrals have been via GP practices.

There is also a Mid Sussex Health and Wellbeing Network which is made up of approximately 80 organisations, both statutory and third sector working within the broad field of wellbeing. This is convened by the Hub quarterly and is a key source of exchanging information and getting referrals to and from the service. Specific meetings this year have covered adult education and volunteering opportunities; community support services such as the Age Well campaign and the Local Energy Advice Partnership; and Wellbeing Service including falls prevention and the time for dementia programme.

FOCUSED WORK AROUND PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS IN 2019

The next section of the report identifies service improvements for the protected groups last year.

Disability

- The Council's Housing Standards Team provided 140 Disabled Facilities Grants during 2018/19. These delivered a range of home adaptations to help disabled people to live more independently in their own homes, including ramps, stairlifts, adapting kitchens for wheelchair use and replacing baths with level access showers. A further 103 have been awarded in the period April to December 2019.
- Three wheelchair accessible new affordable housing units have been provided in 2018/19 and a further one in the period April to December 2019.
- Grants have been awarded to local groups that promote the interests of people with disabilities, including the Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity that helps young children with Cerebral Palsy, .4Sight Vision Support which provides for visually impaired people in Mid Sussex, the Cuckfield Stroke Communications Group, Kangaroos Breakaway club for young people with learning difficulties.
- The Council's Wellbeing Team and Places Leisure have provided a new mental health support programme run by Crawley Town Football Club Community Foundation. The "Move the Goalposts" scheme provides support and guidance to adults to improve their mental health.
- The improvements to the facilities provided at Jane's Lane Recreation Ground in Burgess Hill include installation of a changing places toilet. Also, the new playground facilities that have been provided are designed to be highly inclusive and include wheelchair accessible play equipment.
- The new Burgess Hill library provided as part of the town centre redevelopment has improved accessibility including a lift and Changing Places Toilet.
- A grant was awarded to Hassocks Community Association to improve disabled access at the Adastral Hall.
- A Parkinson's community garden has been provided at Beech Hurst in conjunction with Parkinson's UK, with features such as raised beds to accommodate wheelchair users.
- The Wellbeing Team is supporting Every Mind Matters, a new Public Health campaign that aims to support people to feel more confident to take care of their mental health and wellbeing.
- Housing Services has worked with several Housing Associations to provide 3 fully adapted Wheelchair units in 2018-2019 as affordable homes in Handcross and Burgess Hill and has also provided 2 wheelchair units in Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath thus far in 2019-2020

- Housing Services work with Sussex Oakleaf and Peabody Housing Associations to enable vulnerable people with mental health needs and other disabilities to live independently through support and intensive housing management.

Age

Work with Older People

- 14 Silver Sunday events, funded by grants from the Council, were held across the District in October. Silver Sunday is intended to mitigate the problem of loneliness amongst older people and to provide an opportunity for them to join together and make new connections. This year's events included a life Stories event in East Grinstead, a Tea Dance in Haywards Heath, a film show in Newtimber and a garden visit in Pyecombe.
- The Community Connections Directory of Services for Older People was issued by the Health and Wellbeing Team, developed in partnership with organisations working with, and for, older people in Mid Sussex. This includes an on-line version, which allows groups to keep their service information up to date <http://www.community-connections.org.uk/>
- Living Well in Old Age events were held in October at King's Centre, East Grinstead and the Dolphin Leisure Centre, Haywards Heath. These were organised by Places Leisure, the Alzheimer's Society and the Wellbeing Team, with partners such as audiology and Dementia Café also attending.
- The Council co-ordinates the Dementia Friendly Mid Sussex Group comprising the three local town Dementia Action Alliances and West Sussex County Council. The group meets to work towards dementia friendly communities across the district, share good practice and undertake joint projects.
- The Council has been working to provide a Dementia Friendly reception at Oaklands in association with the Mid Sussex Dementia forum run by the Alzheimer's Society.
- Housing Services have worked with Eldon Housing Association and WSCC to deliver a new Extra Care scheme at Lingfield Lodge in East Grinstead. The scheme has started on site and will provide 48 flats for frail older people in 2021.
- Housing Enabling are also working with Moat Housing Association to deliver 35 new flats for older people at Bell Hammer in East Grinstead which is expected to start on site in 2020

Work with young people

- The Young Volunteer and the Community Service awards were merged in 2019 and were delivered through the 'Mid Sussex Applauds' awards. Over 150 people made nominations with a total of 89 individuals, businesses and organisations nominated. Twenty-nine shortlisted winners attended the awards ceremony in the Meridian Hall in East Grinstead hosted by the Chairman and the High Sheriff. All nominees received a letter of commendation from the Chairman in recognition of their contribution to community life.
- The seventh annual play day events were held in parks at Burgess Hill, East Grinstead, and Haywards Heath. The theme of this year's events was the circus, with some 2,200 children and their families attending.
- In addition to the normal play days, there was also a series of 10 playdays on tour across the District including in more rural areas such as Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint, Cuckfield, Scaynes Hill, World's End, Ardingly and Turners Hill. These were undertaken with partners Sussex Clubs for Young People, Places Leisure and West Sussex County Council Children and Family Centres. Some 990 children and their families attended.
- Three Skatefest events were held this year in Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and East Grinstead offering activities to the older age group and based in the Skate parks where young people gather. The activities offered included music and DJ workshops, Spay Can Art, Street Dance and Bike/Scooter maintenance. Around 100 young people attended

each event, with positive feedback from young people and adults helping to challenge the negative perceptions of Skate parks.

- A STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) challenge event was held with teams from local schools tasked to design and adapt a drone through an assault course and judged by a Dragons Den style panel.
- A grant was awarded to East Grinstead Tennis, Squash and Racketball Club to fund extra-curricular sporting activities for children and young people.
- A grant was awarded to the South of England Agricultural Society to contribute to the Young Craftsman of the Year competition.
- Six Form College to be reopened in 2020.

Race

- The Mid Sussex Diversity Forum has re-grouped following a number of years of inactivity. The group have elected a new committee and hope to initiate projects to support BME communities in Mid Sussex.
- The Mid Sussex Multicultural Group based in Burgess Hill successfully completed children's English support classes and women's meditation classes. The group meets regularly and are actively seeking funding opportunities to offer future classes.

Gypsies and Travellers

- We have established the need for settled gypsies and travellers' sites for the period to 2031 through District plan policy DP33. We will ensure a sufficient number of sites to meet the identified need over the plan period.
- The Council continues to manage the Bedelands site at Burgess Hill which provides 9 plots for gypsies and travellers.

Sexual Orientation

- Hate crime reporting on the basis of homophobia continues to be reported through the Crime and Disorder Partnership.

Religion or Belief

We work with local churches to meet the needs of more vulnerable residents:

- Our Housing Needs and Benefits Teams refer people to the Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead Foodbanks, which have connections to local churches. Vouchers are provided which can be redeemed for three days of emergency food. 193 food vouchers were issued by the Housing Needs Team in the period January to December 2019, compared to 162 in the previous year.
- Church groups were contacted to input to the annual count of rough sleepers in Mid Sussex and were involved in the organisation of the Silver Sunday events.
- The Council was part of the Pilot Voter Recognition scheme for the Local Government elections and made special provision for those who wear face coverings for religious reasons.

Sex

- The Walking Football Scheme for men over 50 has been well attended. There have also been some men only Weight off Workshops provided. The proportion of male clients of the Wellbeing Team over the year was 31%.

- The Mid Sussex Wellbeing Team has provided a programme specifically to help support male residents towards healthier futures. The scheme focuses on Motivation, Exercise and Nutrition (MEN).

Men and Women Suffering Domestic Abuse

An important aspect of our service provision related to the protected characteristic of sex is the assistance provided for people suffering domestic abuse. The number of recorded domestic abuse crimes in Mid Sussex has risen in 2018/19, with 997 crimes compared to 878 crimes in 2017/8. Part of the reason for the increase is the success of measures to encourage the reporting of domestic abuse and accessing support.

The Council's Housing Needs Team had 47 requests for housing advice in cases involving a violent breakdown of relationship with a partner in 2018/19, compared to 40 cases in the previous year. There is a cross-tenure outreach service provided by Home Group (Stonham). This provides housing related support to victims of abuse to enable them to be "safe at home" or enable victims to secure a safe home.

There are a range of services and initiatives aimed at responding to domestic abuse. These include the WORTH services, which provide support to victims of domestic abuse and are based at hospitals in West Sussex, and the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) which brings together responsible agencies in West Sussex to discuss those cases with the highest risk of harm.

Safe in Sussex were awarded Government funding to deliver an outreach domestic abuse service across Sussex aimed at isolated and marginalised communities who cannot easily access support, which launched in May 2019.

Gender Reassignment

- Community safety - our hate crime incident reporting includes the recording of hate crime motivated by transphobia, which refers to various kinds of aversion towards transsexual people.

Gender Identity Issues in Mid Sussex

With regard to gender identify issues amongst young people, the Council's Community Engagement and Events Officer leads a forum called Better Young Lives, which currently has 60 partners representing 34 organisations from the voluntary and statutory sector. The forum provides an opportunity to share information and network. The group has discussed support services available for young people facing gender identity and wider LGBT issues.

The Group received a presentation from Allsorts, which is a charity that works with young people that identify as LGBT+. They currently deliver services in Chichester, Worthing and Horsham Find it Out centres and are keen to branch out in Mid Sussex. They offer advocacy for 11-19 year olds by appointment and deliver work in schools. They also work with the Youth Emotional Support Service (YES) who refer to the service for young people who identify as LGBT+ for support on various issues.

Residential Location

Supporting local communities

- A grant was awarded to Friends of Burgess Hill Green Circle Network towards a “Wild About Mid Sussex” free exhibition.
- A grant was awarded to Bentswood Community Partnership towards their Youth Engagement Project.

Community facilities

- The Council has worked with Hurstpierpoint Parish Council to provide a Hurstpierpoint Community Hub at the former site of the Ex-Serviceman’s Club at Court Bushes Recreation Ground. The new community building opened in June 2019 and provides a flexible space that can be used in different ways by local community groups. Resident and community involvement informed the design and facilities of the building, which is managed by the Parish Council.
- Improvements to the play facilities at World’s End Recreation Ground, Burgess Hill have been completed informed by consultation with the local community.
- A new community centre has been provided at Finches Field, Pease Pottage. The facility includes an office space for Slaugham Parish Council who are managing the building on behalf of the community. The Parish Council undertook the construction of the building, with Mid Sussex District Council providing s106 money of £675,000 and £111,145 of Council funding.
- The Council has contributed to the development of a new multi-use community building and village centre in Ansty through grants of £117,440 and release of section 106 developer contributions of £324,443.

Housing Initiatives

- New affordable housing delivered in 2018/19 included 29 homes outside of the three main towns. These included schemes at Handcross and Hurstpierpoint. Thus far in 2019-2020 34 new affordable units have been provided in Bolney, Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint and Turners Hill
- A rural exception site has been provided at Bolney in a development of 12 new rural affordable homes. This has involved a partnership of Mid Sussex District Council, Bolney Parish Council, Action in Rural England and English Rural. Homes in a rural exception site are provided in perpetuity for local people.
- The Council works with vulnerable households to prevent homelessness and to enable them to access and sustain private rented accommodation through the application of Discretionary Housing Payments as well as our Rent in Advance and Deposit Guarantee Scheme across the whole district.

Income or Skill Level

- Support has been provided for 16-19 year old NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or training) through the NEETS Forum and commissioning the Positive Placement Scheme delivered by the YMCA Downslink Group. This provided mentoring support, with 30 young people supported in 2018/19, of which 20 have gone into education, employment or training.
- Heat for Health – the Council is working with a national energy and money saving service called LEAP (Local Energy Advice Partnership). This provides in-home energy efficiency and money advice service for eligible Mid Sussex residents.
- The Council supported the Mid Sussex Apprenticeship and Traineeship at the Harlands college site in Haywards Heath. This provided the opportunity to meet apprentice employers and training providers from a large range of workplaces.

- 102 new affordable housing units were delivered in 2018/19, 76 for rent and 26 shared ownership. A further 191 new affordable homes have been delivered in the period April to December 2019.
- The Council's Housing Needs Team assisted 102 households to access private rented sector accommodation.
- The Council achieved Department of Works and Pensions funding to secure a post of Employment Co-ordinator for one year based in the Benefits Service and working closely with the Housing Team, to link up with hard to reach people who are not currently utilising the Universal Credit financial help.

Support for the Armed Forces Community

Mid Sussex District Council signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant in September 2014, which is a statement of mutual support between the District Council and the local Armed Forces community. The Council also received the Bronze Employer Recognition Scheme award in January 2018, which shows support for the Armed Forces community through its employment policies. Initiatives associated with this have included the adoption of a guaranteed interview scheme for suitably qualified applicants with an armed forces connection and proper recognition in the Council's employment policies of provision for members of the Reserve Forces.

The main Council service that has had contact with veterans, reservists or active members of the Armed Forces is Housing. The Housing Register identifies those with an armed forces connection as they are exempted from the usual requirements to have a local connection. There are currently 8 households on the Register who have been in the armed forces connection. The Housing Needs Team have had 2 approaches in the last 3 years from homeless ex-forces people. The Council provides specialist advice and support to such applicants and liaises with organisations such as the armed forces charity SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association).

The Council continues to publicise the Heroes Welcome Scheme and there are 12 businesses signed up to the scheme in Haywards Heath.

Equality and Diversity and the Council's staff

In addition to looking at improvements to services in the context of the equality and diversity, this progress report also provides information about the Council's staff. As part of the requirement to publish Equality Data, we produce an annual monitoring report about the composition of our staff compared to the background Mid Sussex population. This includes information about age, sex, pay gap, ethnicity, sexuality, religion and belief and is published on the Council's website <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/my-council/about-the-council/equality-and-diversity/equality-data/>

The Council also provides on its website an employment profile. At the end of September 2019, the Council had 308 employees, 226 full-time and 82 part-time, with the following profile:

- 123 (40%) are men and 185 (60%) women
- 31% of senior managers (defined as the top 5% of earners) are women
- 22 (7.14%) have identified themselves as disabled
- 11 (3.57%) are from ethnic minority communities
- 2 (1%) are under 21 years of age
- 34 (11%) are 21-29
- 58 (19%) are 30-39
- 80 (26%) are 40-49

- 104 (34%) are 50-59
- 30 (10%) are over 60.

The Council's gender pay gap in 2018/19 was 7.7% calculated by comparing the mean average male and female employee pay. This compares to 6.3% in 2017/18. The median average gender pay gap for 2018/19 was 9.8%, compared to 11.2% in the previous year. The 2019 ONS national median average pay gap was 17.3% for all employees and 12.1% nationally for local government administrative staff. The gender pay gap is different to equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman.

The Council is required to submit this gender pay gap information to Government, together with quartile gender pay distributions as shown below for 2018/19:

Upper Quartile-	Men 53.33%	Women 46.67%
Upper Middle Quartile	Men 37.34%	Women 62.66%
Lower Middle Quartile	Men 35.53%	Women 64.47%
Lower Quartile	Men 38.67%	Women 61.33%

For staff with a disability, the Council is a "Disability Confident Committed" employer, recognising our commitment to the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees. This includes a commitment to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and to consider them on their abilities.

The age profile of the Council's staff in respect of the number of employees under 21 has been improved by the taking on of additional apprentices. Also, two former apprentices have been taken on as permanent members of staff.

Equality and Diversity Training

All recent new starters at the Council have received equality and diversity training. This has had an emphasis on understanding unconscious bias. All staff are also required to complete an equality and diversity on-line training module.

Equality Impact Assessments

The Council completes impact assessments where there are major changes to a service area or new policies. The assessments identify opportunities to promote equality and the barriers to services/differential impact on the protected groups in Mid Sussex. Assessments have been completed in 2019 for:

- Amendments to the Housing Allocation Scheme
- Voter Identification pilot for local council elections
- Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Strategy
- Council Tax Banded Income Scheme
- Burgess Hill Public Space Protection Order.

All of the completed impact assessments are published on the Council's website and can be found at <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/my-council/about-the-council/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessment/>

There is also a standard section in all of the Council's reports to Members, which assesses the "Equality and Customer Services Implications" of the actions referred to in the report.

CONCLUSIONS AND LOOKING FORWARD TO THE YEAR AHEAD

This report includes many examples of how the Council, working with its partners, is providing for the needs of the protected groups in the District and addressing disparities arising from where people live and their income or skill level.

The Council will be looking to further develop its equality and diversity work in the year ahead. Specific areas for development in 2020 include:

- Further work to ensuring that the Council's main reception is accessible for people with dementia and their carers.
- Delivering additional Changing Places public toilets in the District
- Further development of the Council's work to support the commitments in the Armed Forces Covenant.
- Providing play equipment for children with disabilities through our parks investment programme.
- Supporting community groups through grant funding to provide street parties to mark the 75th anniversary of VE day in May 2020.
- Providing training to staff and Members on recognising and responding to hate and extremism.
- Delivering a mental health awareness event during "Time to Talk" day in February 2020.