



**Mid Sussex Strategic Intelligence Assessment**  
**April 2022**

## Background/Context

The Mid Sussex Partnership (MSP) is a partnership of organisations working together to improve the quality of residents' lives across the District.

The Strategic Intelligence Assessment (SIA) is an annual evidence base compiled and analysed to inform the priorities of the Mid Sussex Strategic Partnership (MSP).

The partnership has a statutory duty to work together to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in the District. The SIA aids understanding of emerging trends and patterns in crime and disorder and explores future threats and opportunities. It also provides an insight into health-related information relevant to the partnership's role as the local Wellbeing Partnership in improving the Health and Wellbeing of the District. This is increasingly important given the Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery that has dominated since March 2020.

Data contained in this document is primarily for the calendar year 2021. The Council is part of an arrangement with West Sussex County Council for the employment of a Data Analyst to produce SIAs for the Safer West Sussex Partnership and the County's District and Borough Councils. The crime data included in this SIA will be supplemented by a more comprehensive analysis of key crime and disorder trends and profiles to be produced by the Analyst in June 2022.

### The Mid Sussex Strategic Partnership and Subgroups

The structure and Terms of Reference of the MSP are reviewed annually, with the review in 2020 establishing three Subgroups of Community Safety, Health and Community Resilience reporting into the MSP Board.

The priority themes for 2021-22 for the subgroups were:

- **Community Safety:** Anti-Social Behaviour; Young People; Public Spaces; and Fraud.
- **Health:** Children & Young People's Mental Health - Supporting Children, Young People & Parents; Older People with Dementia; Workplace Health; Health Inequalities; and Promotion of Access to Health Care Services.
- **Community Resilience:** Recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic and Supporting the Needs of the Voluntary sector; Building Community Leadership Capacity through initiatives such as Community Champions; and Supporting the Changing Landscape for Volunteering.

This Strategic Intelligence Assessment is split by subgroup area and will be used to inform their priorities and projects for 2022/23.

Membership of the MSP Board is also regularly reviewed with the addition from 2021 of representatives from Sussex Community Transport and Action in Rural Sussex.

### Headline Demographic Information about Mid Sussex

- **Population** – There are 148,300 residents (2017) and there has been a 10.6% increase in this number in the last 10 years, due to natural growth (more births than deaths) and inward migration.

## APPENDIX A

- **Age structure** – older age structure compared with England. 30,000 people aged 65+ and rising with an additional 6,000+ projected in the next ten years. Using Office for National Statistics (ONS) projections, the increase of over 65s is projected to be in region of 22% and in over 85s in region of 28%, which is far higher than overall population rise.
- **Sex and ethnicity** - the population of Mid Sussex is almost split 50/50, male and female and the majority are of white ethnicity. The largest BAME group is Asian/Asian British. 6.5% of children in Mid Sussex schools do not have English as their first language.
- **Housing Growth and affordability**- 13,600 new dwellings are planned between 2014 and 2031. Housing affordability in West Sussex is a significant issue and is even more pronounced in Mid Sussex. You can expect to pay 13.4 times your annual salary for a middle of the range house in Mid Sussex.
- **Poverty and Deprivation** - Mid Sussex is the least deprived district within West Sussex (IMD Ranking). A smaller percentage of children are living in poverty in Mid Sussex than the County as a whole and nationally.
- **Transport** - 14.6% of the population in rural Mid Sussex parishes do not have access to a car and 60% of rural parishes have an hourly weekday bus service. Weekday evening and Sunday bus services are very limited for rural parishes.
- **Health and Life Expectancy** - for men and women, Mid Sussex has a high life expectancy, although in recent years male life expectancy has stalled.

# Community Safety

## Community Safety Data

The crime data included in this section of the Strategic Intelligence Assessment provides headline information and will be supplemented by a more comprehensive analysis of key crime and disorder trends to be produced for all West Sussex District and Boroughs later in 2022.

## Community Safety Subgroup

The Community Safety Subgroup is the Community Safety Partnership element of the MSP. It includes representatives from Sussex Police; Mid Sussex District Council; Town councils; West Sussex County Council Community Safety Team; a representative from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office; Mid Sussex Voluntary Action; and a school representative. Priority themes for the Subgroup in 2021/22 have been Anti-Social Behaviour; Young People; Public Spaces; and Fraud.

## Local Policing Priorities for Mid Sussex

As a District Mid Sussex remains one of the safest in England however the challenge for the Police and the partnership is to help people feel safer. Sussex Police has three core priorities. These alongside the Police and Crime Commissioners strategic intentions provide directions for policing in Mid-Sussex:

- Keep our communities safe and feeling safe;
- Identify and protect vulnerable people;
- Prevent and respond to harm.

Resources have been invested in additional staff, including an increase in neighbourhood policing and the Rural Crime Team. Neighbourhood or Prevention Policing is about engagement and providing targeted intervention to solve longer term issues, whilst boosting public confidence.

Local partnership priorities are:

- vulnerable people, both young and old,
- reducing violent crime, and
- seeking to reduce incidents of hate.

## Crime

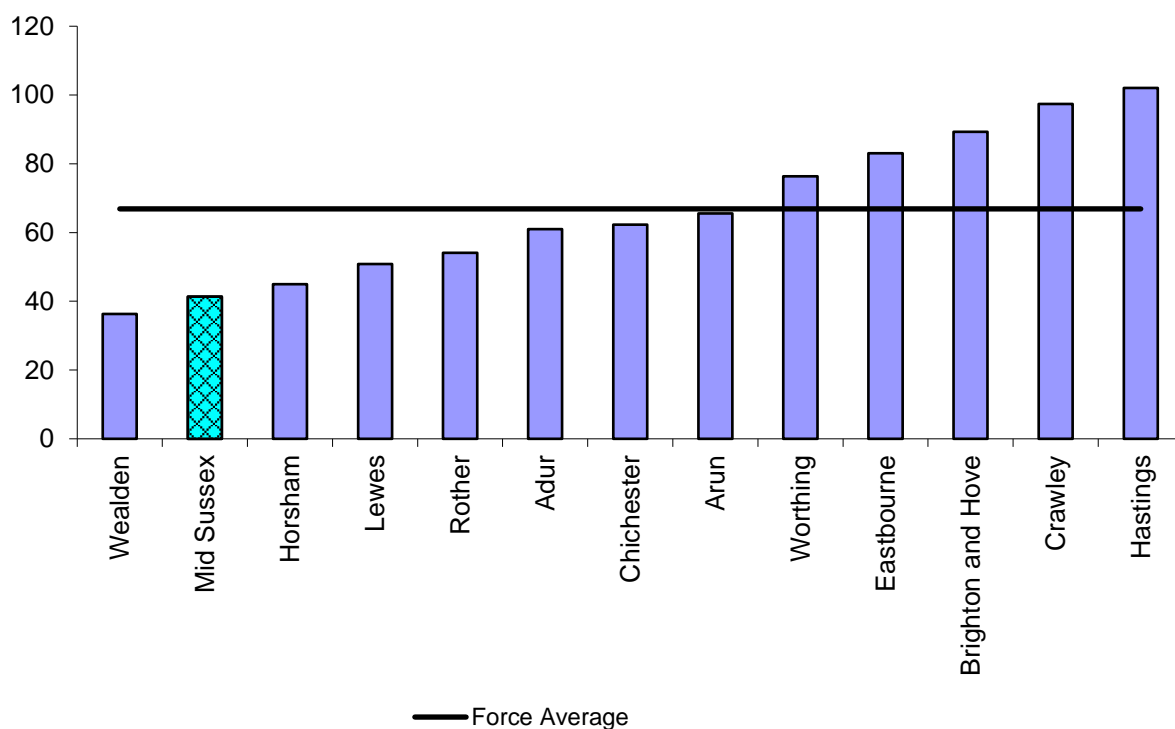
Crime per 1,000 population at 41.371 in 2021 shows that Mid Sussex is the second safest district in the Sussex Police area and the safest in West Sussex. The figure has decreased by 8.8% from 45 per 1,000 population in 2020.

### Crime per 1,000 population data for period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 for Sussex Community Safety Partnerships from iQuanta data

Rank	CSP	Crimes / 1,000 pop
1	Wealden	36.352
<b>2</b>	<b>Mid Sussex</b>	<b>41.371</b>
3	Horsham	44.996
4	Lewes	50.829
5	Rother	54.070
6	Adur	60.979

## APPENDIX A

7	Chichester	62.314
8	Arun	65.583
9	Worthing	76.395
10	Eastbourne	83.050
11	Brighton and Hove	89.321
12	Crawley	97.421
13	Hastings	102.017
	<b>Force Average</b>	<b>66.873</b>



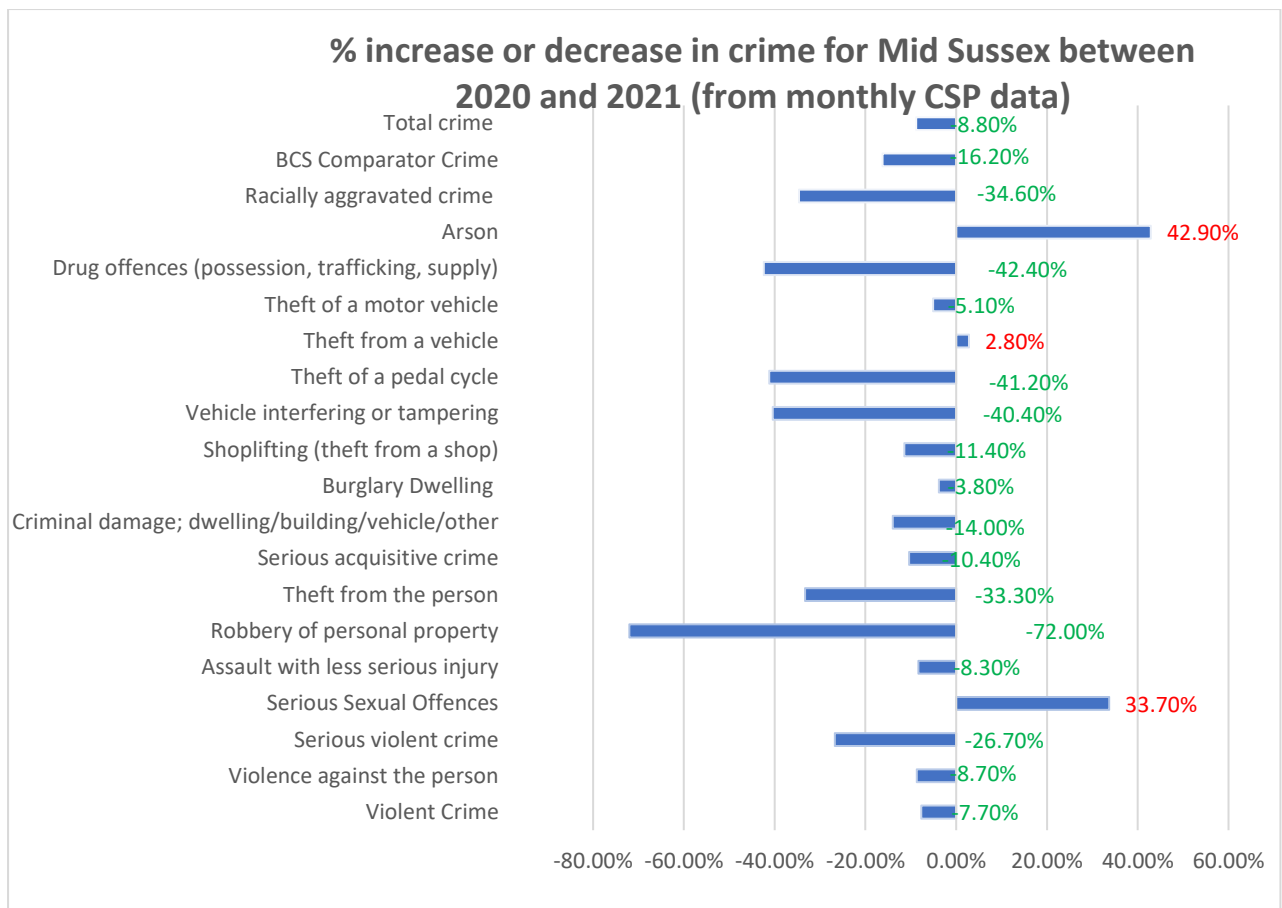
Total crime in Mid Sussex has decreased by 604 crimes in 2021 compared to 2020, which equates to a decrease of 9%. In West Sussex overall crime increased by 2.0%. Changes for West Sussex district and boroughs are shown below:

LA Area	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan – Dec 2021	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan – Dec 2020	Increase or decrease %
Adur	3,921	3,970	-49 (-1.0%)
Arun	10,543	10,483	60 (0.6%)
Chichester	7,548	6,624	924 (14.0%)
Crawley	10,952	10,578	374 (4.0%)
Horsham	6,470	6,354	116 (2.0%)
<b>Mid Sussex</b>	<b>6,248</b>	<b>6,852</b>	<b>-604 (-9.0%)</b>
Worthing	8,447	8,111	336 (4.0%)
West Sussex	54,129	52,972	1,157 (2.0%)

## APPENDIX A

### Crime data by type for Mid Sussex in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 (from monthly Community Safety Partnership data)

Crime type	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan – Dec 2021	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan – Dec 2020	Increase or decrease	West Sussex overall change
Violent Crime	3,392	3,675	-283 (-7.7%)	1,376 (5.1%)
- Violence against the person	3099	3394	-295 (-8.7%)	1,229 (4.9%)
- Serious violent crime	44	60	-16 (-26.7%)	-7 (-1.4%)
- Serious Sexual Offences	218	163	55 (33.7%)	248 (17.9%)
- Assault with less serious injury	664	724	-60 (-8.3%)	-187 (-3.3%)
- Robbery of personal property	14	50	-36 (-72.0%)	-77 (-21.2%)
Theft from the person	34	51	-17 (-33.3%)	-39 (-10.7%)
Serious acquisitive crime	363	405	-42 (-10.4%)	169 (5.2%)
Criminal damage; dwelling/building/vehicle/other	704	816	-112 (-14.0%)	-74 (-1.2%)
Burglary Dwelling	326	339	-13 (-3.8%)	-790 (-28.8%)
Shoplifting (theft from a shop)	265	299	-34 (-11.4%)	716 (19.6%)
Vehicle interfering or tampering	34	57	-23 (-40.4%)	-15 (-3.3%)
Theft of a pedal cycle	30	51	-21 (-41.2%)	-182 (-19.1%)
Theft from a vehicle	219	213	6 (2.8%)	387 (19.5%)
Theft of a motor vehicle	130	137	-7 (-5.1%)	-114 (-13.1%)
Drug offences (possession, trafficking, supply)	206	358	-152 (-42.4%)	-478 (-20.0%)
Arson	30	21	9 (42.9%)	-38 (-14.6%)
Racially aggravated crime	51	78	-27 (-34.6%)	17 (2.9%)
BCS Comparator Crime	1,964	2,344	-380 (-16.2%)	247 (1.4%)
<b>Total crime</b>	<b>6,248</b>	<b>6,852</b>	<b>-604 (-8.8%)</b>	<b>1,157 (2.2%)</b>



## Hotspots and Distribution of Crime in the District

Crime tends to occur in groups or hotspots. For example, to display a chart of shoplifting for a town it would indicate that a supermarket is the centre of this type of crime. Similarly, thefts from cars can clump around car parks or particular estates. Such crime series are often transient and although used by police and partners in our joint response, when tracked over a year do not provide useful information about risk. Local crime can be tracked down to post code level through [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)

Crime hotspots have informed the provision of CCTV camera in the District. The locating of new CCTV cameras is a project referred to later in this assessment and the adding of cameras in and around the East Court Estate at East Grinstead was in response to local reports of crime and anti-social behaviour.

## Rural Crime

Sussex Police have made tackling rural crime a priority and has boosted the Rural Crime Team. This was established in 2020 and tackles crimes, incidents and unlawful behaviour that affects rural and isolated communities most. The predominantly rural nature of the District makes this an important issue for Mid Sussex. Burglary has been the greatest recent area of concern in Mid Sussex for rural crime, both residential and business and community related.

## Knife Related Crime

Figures for serious knife crime in Mid Sussex are shown below:

Crime type	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan – Dec 2021	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan – Dec 2020	Increase or decrease	West Sussex Overall
Serious Knife Crime	30	41	-11 (-26.8%)	-48 (-10.5%)

Knife crime remains a high-profile crime statistic following continued media attention about increased incidents in the capital and a shift towards young victims and perpetrators.

Within Mid Sussex knife crime remains a very small proportion of all crime. Sussex Police participates in the National Operation Sceptre knife crime reduction programme, with a national campaign twice per year and ongoing proactive work. Close working is undertaken with Mid Sussex schools through this partnership, which is linked to the initiatives to tackle youth related anti-social behaviour set out later in this document.

## Fraud

Nationally, fraud is one of the fastest growing types of crime and there are thousands of victims each year in Sussex. Cyber-crime, fraud and online scamming have been identified as areas of increased concern following the pandemic and periods of lockdown. Data from Action Fraud suggests that online fraud is high in Mid Sussex. The main types of fraud are from online shopping in auctions and computer software service fraud. Courier and identity fraud is particularly prevalent, with victims typically living alone and elderly. Operation Signature has a particular focus on supporting vulnerable victims of fraud through such initiatives as fraud support volunteers who aim to provide bespoke fraud support to victims.

Romance fraud has been highlighted by Sussex Police as a growing area of concern, with more than £4 million taken from people in Sussex who fell victim to this type of crime last year and 427 reported incidents. This is mainly associated with more people turning to online platforms to form relationships since the pandemic.

## Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

### Police Anti-Social Behaviour Figures for Mid Sussex

ASB type	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan 2021 – Dec 2021	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan 2020 – Dec 2020	Increase or decrease (%)	West Sussex Overall
Personal	261	260	1 (0.4%)	-55 (-3.2%)
Nuisance	2,383	2,625	-242 (-9.2%)	-1,231 (-6.6%)
Environmental	116	164	-48 (-29.3%)	-197 (-18.3%)

The Police place Anti-Social Behaviour into three categories of personal, nuisance and environmental.

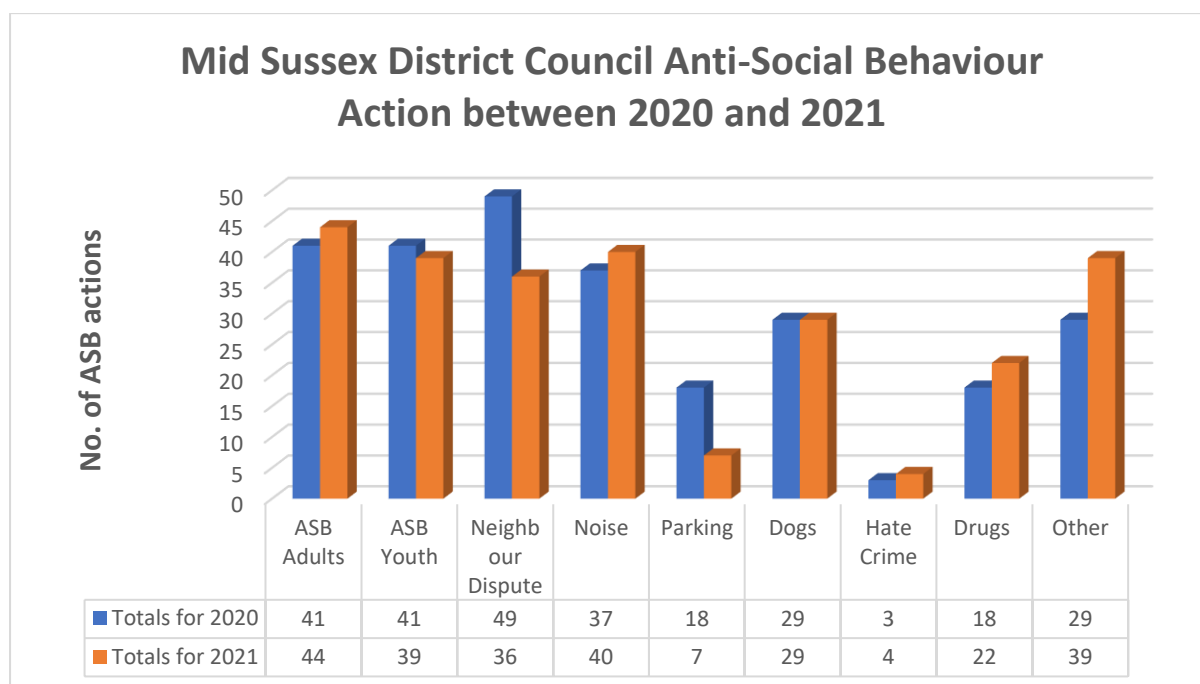
- Personal antisocial behaviour is when a person targets a specific individual or group.
- Nuisance antisocial behaviour is when a person causes trouble, annoyance or suffering to a community.
- Environmental antisocial behaviour is when a person's actions affect the wider environment, such as public spaces or buildings.



Mid Sussex has seen a reduction in nuisance and environmental ASB in 2021, while personal anti-social behaviour has stayed roughly the same. All three categories of ASB have reduced in West Sussex overall.

**Mid Sussex District Council Anti-Social Behaviour Action 2021 (figures for 2020 shown in brackets)**

Type of ASB	Burgess Hill	East Grinstead	Haywards Heath	Rural	Total
ASB Adults	10 (8)	7 (10)	14 (12)	13 (11)	44 (41)
ASB Youth	12 (16)	5 (6)	10 (4)	12 (15)	39 (41)
Neighbour Dispute	10 (16)	11 (8)	4 (16)	11 (9)	36 (49)
Noise	10 (9)	16 (9)	7 (9)	7 (10)	40 (37)
Parking	1 (9)	2 (1)	1 (2)	3 (6)	7 (18)
Dogs	9 (11)	6 (4)	3 (4)	11 (10)	29 (29)
Hate Crime	1 (2)	1 (0)	0 (1)	2 (0)	4 (3)
Drugs	4 (7)	6 (4)	8 (2)	4 (5)	22 (18)
Other	13 (10)	6 (7)	8 (6)	12 (6)	39 (29)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>70 (88)</b>	<b>60 (49)</b>	<b>55 (56)</b>	<b>75 (72)</b>	<b>260 (265)</b>



The number of reports of anti-social behaviour to Mid Sussex District Council decreased from 265 in 2020 to 260 in 2021. Neighbour disputes and youth ASB continued to be the main causes of ASB in both years. The Council works with partners such as registered social landlords, private sector landlords and local mediation services when managing neighbour disputes. Geographically the number of ASB reports has reduced in Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath and increased in East Grinstead and rural areas.

Monthly Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (HASBRAC) partnership meetings have been introduced to track interventions and agree further action on specific cases where individuals have been involved in ASB. This is having a positive impact.

### **Youth Related Anti-Social Behaviour**

Countering and preventing the incidence of youth related anti-social behaviour in the District has been a particular focus for the partnership and measures to address this have come under three strands of work:

- **Providing direct support with identified youths** – this included the REBOOT programme designed to identify young people at risk of being drawn into violent crime and to provide them with one-to-one support. The programme was transferred from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office to Sussex Police in April 2021. The scheme aims to engage and work with young people who are at risk of being drawn into crime and violence and is a four-stage programme with stage 1 being a home visit by a Police Community Support Officer to stage 4 where specialist support will take over in supporting the individual, although very few referrals progress to the higher stages. Other partners are involved with intervention activities including Active Sussex, Albion in the Community and Relate Family Counselling.
- **Prevention work in schools** – this includes “Your Life, You Choose”, School Law Days undertaken with secondary schools in the District. Led by local Magistrates with a focus on anti-social behaviour and crime, and the consequences for both victims and perpetrators this has been very well received by all involved. Despite the challenges faced due to covid in 2021, this project was delivered safely to one school (Imberhorne) in Mid Sussex in the summer, to their cohort of year 8 students, which is circa 200 young people. We are now planning for 2-4 Mid Sussex secondary schools to access this in 2022. MSDC and the Police have termly meetings with secondary schools in the District to discuss community safety issues around youth. Sackville School in East Grinstead also represent the schools across the District on the Community Safety Sub-Group
- **Support for parents of teenagers with challenging behaviour** – including the development of a project with Relate to provide support for parents of teenagers with challenging behaviour. Funding is available to support families of young people involved in ASB to work together to make sustainable changes with relationships and behaviours. No referrals were received in 2021. Partners will continue to consider this in cases where this support may be beneficial.

### **Mentivity**

Further activities have been developed through the Community Safety Subgroup in 2021 which has included a new project called Mentivity. This pilot youth mentoring group was born from the need to further support small groups of young people who are involved in or at risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour or crime in the local community. The highly experienced mentors will support identified young people and work with them to identify/recognise their aspirations and how to work towards them using the skills they already have, drawing them away from anti-social behaviour. The programme is expected to commence in the Spring of 2022.

### **Peer Group Conferences to address contextual safeguarding**

The Mid Sussex Peer Group Conference (PGC) was set up in early 2021 to ensure that statutory and voluntary sector partners work together collaboratively where there are concerns around particular groups of young people or locations where young people are known to congregate and to explore any risks and take appropriate safeguarding measures. This is managed by MSDC's Community Safety team and chaired by the Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager. During 2021, 4 peer groups were discussed. 3 were “closed” to the group, with 1 remaining open.

### **ASB Case reviews (also known as The Community Trigger)**

Residents can request an ASB case review if they feel that agencies have not taken appropriate action regarding their complaint. If the threshold is met for a review, agencies involved in the case will be required to review the actions taken and assess whether any further action is appropriate to tackle any ongoing issues. This process is overseen by an independent Chair who has had no prior involvement in the case and the resident will have an opportunity to for their voice to be heard in any review meeting. One case was received in 2021 which met the threshold, and a review was undertaken.

Monthly partnership meetings continue in order to track interventions and agree further action on specific cases where individuals have been involved in ASB.

### **Expansion of use or powers contained within the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014**

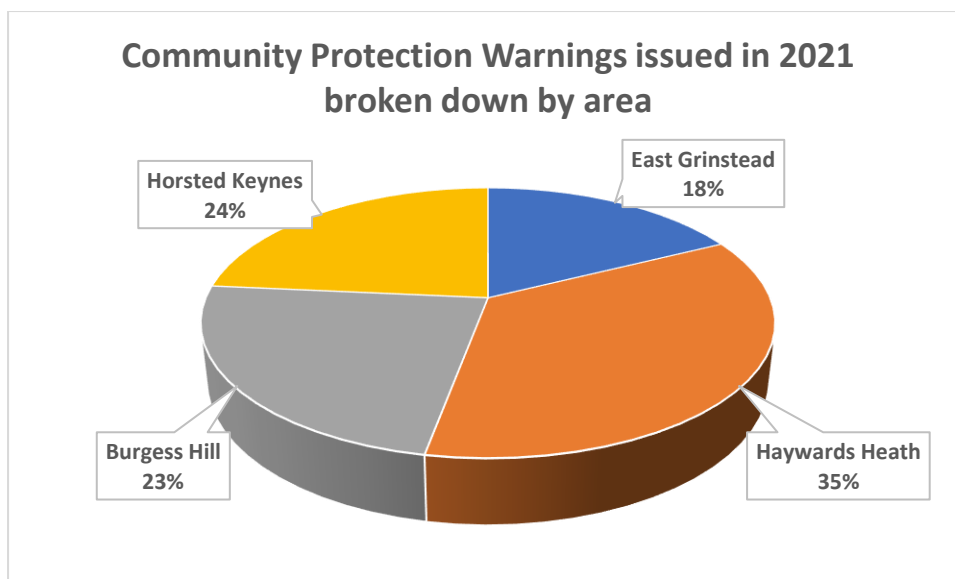
In response to increased levels of some types of ASB in the District, Mid Sussex District Council, Sussex Police, and other partners have continued to adopt the use of new powers contained within the 2014 Act. The Partnership has supported this through training events held by Mid Sussex District Council for Council officers, Police, Town Councils, housing associations and others.

### **Community Protection Notices (CPN)**

Community Protection Notices are designed to have a broad use and focus on how victims and communities are affected. The process starts with the issuing of a Community Protection Warning (CPW), which sets out conditions that must be adhered to. In the event that the conditions outlined in the CPW are not adhered to, it can be escalated to a CPN, which carries criminal sanctions if breached. The aim of the CPN is to stop behaviour and put in place steps to ensure it will not reoccur.

A total of 17 Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) were issued in 2021, with six of these were escalated to Community Protection Notice

A breakdown of the geographical areas where CPWs have been issued is below. It has been found that in the most part, the issuing of a community protection warning has stopped the behaviour. MSDC also works closely with West Sussex Mediation Service in helping neighbours settle their disputes.



### Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs)

A PSPO is an enforceable form of bylaw with Fixed Penalty Notice powers attached. A breach of the order is immediately criminal in nature and could lead to a fine (via Fixed Penalty Notice), and/or confiscation of relevant items and / or a prosecution with custodial sentence. We currently have a Public Spaces Protection Order in place to prohibit car cruising in Burgess Hill. Since the Order was put in place in 2020, there has been very little activity in this and there were no issues reported in 2021

### Mid Sussex Hate Crime

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. Figures for Mid Sussex are shown below:

Type of Hate Crime	Mid Sussex			West Sussex		
	2020	2021	Change	2020	2021	Change
Transgender	9	6	-3 (-33.3%)	31	46	15 (48.4%)
Religion	5	2	-3 (-60.0%)	66	46	-20 (-30.3%)
Disability	10	20	10 (100%)	127	128	1 (0.8%)
Sexuality	26	35	9 (34.6%)	205	229	24 (11.7%)
Race	116	90	-26 (-22.4%)	813	880	67 (8.2%)
Total	166	153	-13 (7.8%)	1,242	1,329	87 (7.0%)

Hate crimes tend to be under reported and increases can be seen as the success of initiatives to raise awareness of hate crime and how it can be reported. Training on recognising and responding to hate crime and extremism has been provided by members of the West Sussex Countering Extremism team, initially to Mid Sussex District Council Members and staff and is being rolled out to partner and other community groups.

## Domestic Abuse in Mid Sussex

	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan 2021 – Dec 2021	Rolling 12 Months Total Jan 2020 – Dec 2020	Increase or decrease (%)	West Sussex Overall % change
Domestic abuse crimes	1,052	1,165	-113 (-9.7%)	-427 (-4.5%)
Domestic abuse incidents	656	656	0	-196 (-3.6%)

Domestic abuse crimes in Mid Sussex decreased by 9.7% in 2021 and the number of incidents remained the same compared to 2020. In West Sussex overall the decrease in domestic abuse crimes was 4.5% and incidents 3.6%. Explanation to be added. There have been concerns arising from the pandemic and periods of lockdown that there is a greater incidence of domestic abuse, some of which may be unreported.

There are a range of services and initiatives available aimed at responding to domestic abuse. These include the Worth Specialist Domestic Abuse Service which supports people at high risk of harm or homicide because of domestic abuse. They have teams of IDVAs (independent domestic abuse advisors) across West Sussex who work to identify, assess, and assist people at risk. There is Safe in Sussex, a registered charity providing help and support for people affected by domestic abuse in West Sussex. They provide emergency refuges, drop-in centres and one to one help and practical support for anyone affected by domestic abuse. Also, the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) brings together responsible agencies in West Sussex to discuss those cases with the highest risk of harm.

In the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the Government has committed to transforming the way that councils and other public bodies respond to domestic abuse. Under Part 4 of the new Act, Tier One authorities such as West Sussex County Council now have a legal duty to support victims of domestic abuse and their children living in refuges and other safe accommodation. Tier One authorities were given funding for 2021-22 to enable them to meet this new requirement, along with an indication that further funding will follow. Partnership work is being undertaken across West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove to produce a Pan Sussex Domestic Abuse Strategy [https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/adult-social-care/domesticabusestrategy/user\\_uploads/final-domestic-abuse-and-safe-accommodation-strategy-1.pdf](https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/adult-social-care/domesticabusestrategy/user_uploads/final-domestic-abuse-and-safe-accommodation-strategy-1.pdf)

## Keeping women and girls safe

Incidents such as the murder of Sarah Everard have highlighted the experiences of women and girls across Sussex and issues about their safety. The new national police framework on Violence Against Women and Girls was published in December 2021 and aims to deliver a fundamental shift in priorities and give victims a consistently high standard of service. Stalking Protection Orders and the “Do the Right Thing” scheme, which encourages men to recognise sexual harassment and misogynistic behaviour, are initiatives being taken forward.

## Safe Places

The Community Safety Subgroup has been expanding the Safe Places initiative, which provides for designated public places that supports vulnerable people if they feel scared or at risk while they are out and about. The scheme currently reaches 20 different locations within Mid Sussex, including cafes, sports centres, and libraries, enabling access for all. Membership

has since been renewed for 2022-23 whilst we continue to seek and sign-up appropriate businesses/premises to build the network. A separate Sussex-Wide scheme to develop a safe space app is being developed with statutory partners with a primary focus on the safety of women and girls which will be rolled out in 2022. We have worked in collaboration to share information and data which will support and benefit the residents of mid Sussex on a larger scale.

### **CCTV Project**

Putting in place new and improved CCTV arrangements in the District has been a key community safety project to upgrade existing cameras and provide additional cameras across the District. Replacement cameras are of high resolution allowing for crystal clear imaging, real time footage and enhanced zoom capabilities. They will contribute to crime prevention and the prosecution of offenders. Five new locations across the District now have high-definition CCTV. These are:

- St John's Park, Burgess Hill
- Victoria Park, Haywards Heath
- Clair Park, Haywards Heath
- King George's Field, East Grinstead
- Holtye Avenue, East Grinstead

We have also installed CCTV at East Court and Mount Noddy, both in East Grinstead and these are expected to be up and running soon. These were installed in response to increased reports of crime and anti-social behaviour in and around these areas.

### **Serious and Organised Crime**

#### **County Lines and Cuckooing**

'County Lines' operates by gangs from urban areas, in particular London but also other cities, which use the national rail network to distribute drugs. They introduce a telephone number in a new area to sell drugs directly at street level. Potential buyers telephone the number and local runners are dispatched to make deliveries via a telephone 'relay or exchange' system. Gangs are always adapting how they operate, however one of the current primary methods of supplying drugs is through 'Cuckooing'. This is where vulnerable residents are targeted to accommodate dealing or deal on behalf of the drug network through intimidation, incentives or on the basis of a sexual relationship which is often exploitative.

Whilst coastal areas of West Sussex such as Worthing and Bognor Regis tend to have higher rates of county lines activity, along with Crawley, criminal networks have a reach into communities across Sussex. Initiatives such as Operation Fortress have seen national intensification weeks for County Lines to make arrests, drug seizures and to carry out safeguarding action to support vulnerable people and addresses where people are at risk of being 'cuckooed' to check on their safety. This helps to strengthen the unified voice from police and partners that says this is a hostile environment for drug supply.

#### **Modern Slavery**

Modern slavery is the illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain. It covers a wide range of abuse and exploitation including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude and forced labour. Victims of modern slavery often tricked or threatened into work and may feel unable to leave or report the crime through fear or intimidation. National reports indicate that the incidence of slavery in the UK is on the increase. Mid Sussex has seen several such

investigations, for example people being moved and housed in isolation for industries such as nail bars, farming, cleaners, and car washes.

## **Community Safety and Public Spaces**

### **Unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller Encampments**

There were five unauthorised traveller encampments in 2021. Protecting public space is one of the priorities to be addressed by the Community Safety Subgroup, including projects to improve reporting of issues in recreational spaces and informing the public about our actions in response to unauthorised traveller encampments.

### **Unauthorised Camping and Rough Sleepers**

There were six dens and camps cleared by Mid Sussex District Council's Landscapes Team from Council land in 2021. A protocol for dealing with unauthorised camping (including tents and rough sleepers) on Council land has been developed.

### **Flytipping in Mid Sussex**

Fly tipping incidents recorded by the Council decreased from 541 in 2020 to 429 in 2021, a reduction of 21%. The majority of these related to fly tipping on highways at 503 in 2020 and 412 in 2021. "Other" household waste incidents was the largest category of fly tipping, with the next largest type of fly tipping being construction waste, which showed a reduction from 71 in 2020 to 23 in 2021. The primary focus is on removing fly tips from public highways as soon as possible to reduce risks to the public. The targets are to respond within 24 hours of a fly tip being reported and to remove them within three working days.

The number of fly tipping incidents in Mid Sussex is relatively low. In 2020/21, local authorities in England dealt with 1.13 million fly-tipping incidents, an increase of 16% from the 980,000 reported in 2019/20. The 2020/21 reporting period covers the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. The first national lockdown introduced in March 2020 led to some local authorities being unable to maintain collections of dry recyclates, with some suspending garden and bulky waste collections. There was also a widespread closure and limiting of access to household waste recycling centres. These factors and others such as changes in household consumption, travel and leisure patterns may have contributed to the national increases seen in the number of fly-tipping incidents reported for 2020/21.

### **Noise Data**

Mid Sussex District Council's Environmental Protection Team deal with reports of noise complaints. The number of noise complaints in 2021 was 1,022 compared to 904 in 2020, an increase of 118 (13%). Loud music and dogs continue to be the top two causes of noise complaints. The majority of complaints are resolved informally, without the need for the use of formal enforcement powers. The number of complaints can be influenced by several factors, such as long periods of good weather leading to more outdoor activities and entertainments. The limiting of activities during the covid lockdowns may also have been a factor.

# Health & Wellbeing

## Health Subgroup

The MSP's Health Subgroup comprises a range of statutory and third sector partners including the Council's Wellbeing Service; CCG; Public Health; Sussex Community NHS Trust; and Healthwatch.

This Health Subgroup has been officially recognised by the West Sussex Health and Care Partnership Executive and NHS Integrated Care System as the Local Community Network (LCN) for Mid Sussex. In West Sussex the LCNs now form the ground level mechanisms to enable effective local partnership activity, along with the three Primary Care Networks in Mid Sussex and 20 PCN's across West Sussex. This approach recognises that District and Borough Councils have oversight of what is going on for their local populations and enables partnership working between Health and all partners at a level and scale that is practical and effective.

The Subgroup's Priority areas to be addressed in 2021/22 were:

- Children and Young People's Mental Health - Supporting Children, Young People and Parents;
- Older People with Dementia;
- Workplace Health;
- Health Inequalities; and
- Promotion of Access to Health Care Services.

## Health Challenges in Mid Sussex

There are underlying health challenges for Mid Sussex, some of which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Mid Sussex overall is a healthy place to live and grow. It is frequently in the best 25% of all areas on a range of childhood measures known to have an impact on longer term health and wellbeing. There are, however, a number of health challenges for Mid Sussex, including those relating to the District's ageing population. The number of people aged 65+ and 85+ is projected to rise in the next 10 years by 22% and 28% respectively. There are increasing numbers of people with one (or more) long term health conditions, including over 14,000 carers (of which 3,500 are 65+).

Other health challenges for Mid Sussex include:

- Estimated 15,000 – 20,000 smokers
- Over 60% of adults are overweight or obese
- There are over 6,000 adults with diabetes
- Over 16% of adults are physically inactive
- There has been a slight rise in early mortality in fewer than 75s which may mean the next generation of 65+ are not as healthy as the previous generation.

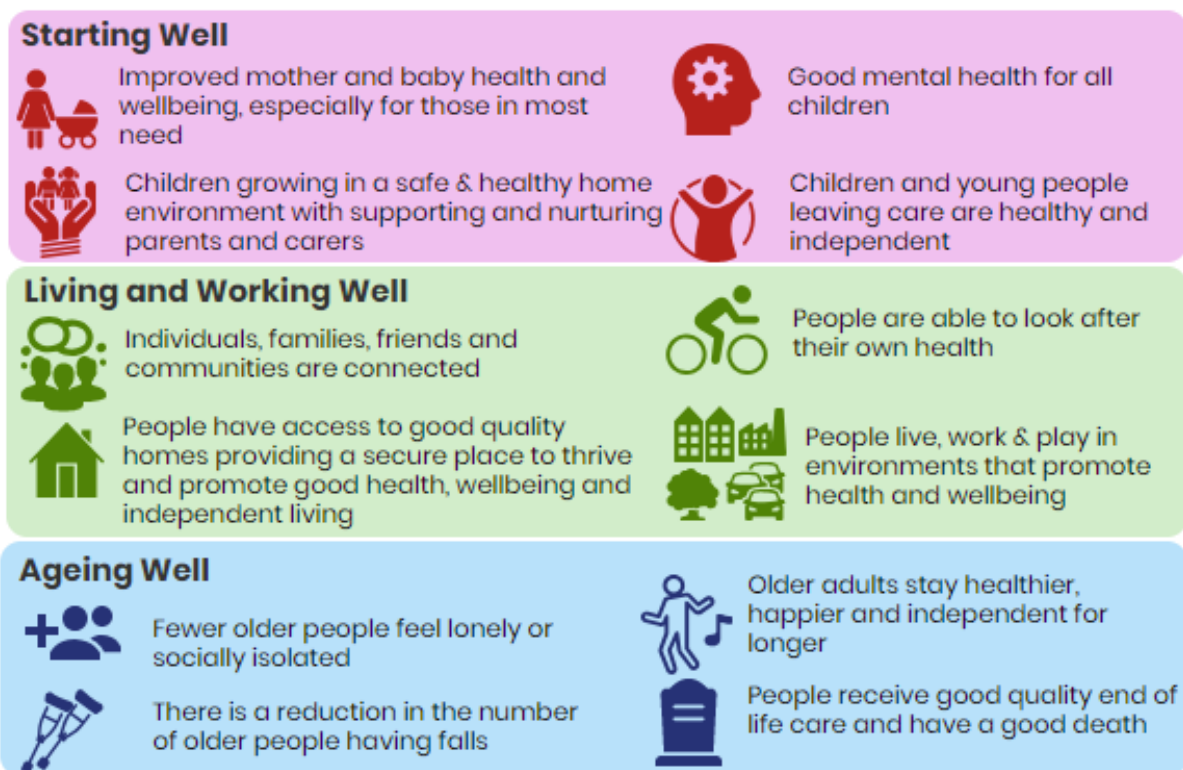
## Health Priorities for the Wellbeing Service

The District Council is commissioned by Public Health, West Sussex County Council to provide a Wellbeing Service with the aim of preventing ill health through the promotion of healthy lifestyles. This is provided through a Wellbeing Hub, which provides signposting, advice, and a range of locally commissioned services.



During 2020/21, the Wellbeing service delivered 1,078 interventions, with 92% of those who responded to requests for feedback reporting a health improvement. The pandemic limited the number of interventions that the Wellbeing Team was able to provide face-to-face and a hybrid service was developed with on-line and telephone support. During 2021/22, the Wellbeing service has delivered 1,780 interventions.

Priorities for the Wellbeing Services are in line with the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 – 2024: Start Well, Live Well, Age Well and the latest Health Profile.



A copy of the [Strategy](#) and supporting documents can be downloaded from the Health and Wellbeing Board website [www.westsussex.gov.uk/hwb](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/hwb).

Priorities in Mid Sussex include falls prevention (those at risk of falling & Hip fractures), adult weight management and prevention and diagnosis of type 2 diabetes (prediabetes interventions). Priorities in Mid Sussex that are on a par with national trends include:

- falls prevention (those at risk of falling and hip fractures)
- Estimate dementia diagnosis rate
- Adult and child weight management
- prevention & diagnosis of type 2 diabetes
- Hospital admission rate for alcohol-specific conditions
- Smoking prevalence in adults
- Percentage of adults classified as overweight or obese
- Smoking prevalence in adults in routine and manual occupations
- Excess winter deaths index

Issues which are significantly worse than the national average are:

- Emergency hospital admission rate for intentional self-harm
- Killed and seriously injured rate on roads

- Estimate diabetes Diagnosis rate

### Health Challenges from the Pandemic

The main health challenges arising from the pandemic can be summarised as follows:

- a greater need to address mental health and loneliness issues for all ages- new public health evidence suggests impacts are greatest in children and young adults as well as the older generation.
- an increase in harmful behaviours including smoking prevalence in adults, problematic drinking, and a rise above the national average for emergency hospital admission rate for intentional self-harm.
- a deterioration in workplace health with the mental health charity Mind (2021) estimating that nationally 1 in 6 workers are experiencing depression, anxiety, or stress.
- some reductions in physical activity, with subsequent implications for level of obesity and diabetes, from many people working from home and less opportunities to participate in exercise
- the pandemic has tended to exacerbate existing health inequalities, with people from Black ethnic groups most likely to be diagnosed and death rates from COVID-19 highest among people of Black and Asian ethnic groups.
- more pressures on carers and the clinically vulnerable – with 84,500 unpaid carers in West Sussex and a recent estimate of those termed Critically Extremely Vulnerable by the Government and NHS during the pandemic of 4,500 individuals in Mid Sussex.
- the need to ensure that people are accessing clinical health and preventative services for all health-related problems.

### Health Service Access

The last point is particularly important in considering the legacy from the pandemic in the levels of reductions in health service contact across both primary and secondary care, which is likely to manifest itself later as an increased number of preventable deaths. Many planned hospital appointments were cancelled during the pandemic with over an 80% reduction in non-elective admissions. There is also some evidence that patients stayed away from general practice and there has been a shift from face to face to telephone consultations. In addition, there has also been a drop in preventative activity in the health service, e.g. pausing screening programmes and reductions in dementia diagnosis rates. Referrals to mental health services have dropped. In some instances, this may have been due to changes in circumstances, for example fewer patients seen through educational referrals, as a result of school closures.

Pressures on GP surgeries make the expansion of services such as social prescribing even more important. It has been estimated that around 20% of patients consult their GP for what is primarily a social problem and access to non-clinical resources to enable patients to improve their health and wellbeing can free up GP time to focus on patient healthcare.

### Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing in Sussex

West Sussex County Council have undertaken a Study in October 2021 “**Rapid Review of the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Children and Young People's Mental Health**”

**and Wellbeing in Sussex.”** Overall, the report found that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a considerable impact on children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing and the demand for mental health and health wellbeing services. Social isolation, loneliness, school closures, increased stress due to the economic impact of lockdown measures especially on low earning households contribute to a negative impact on mental health. Evidence suggests that the pandemic has hit the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups hardest, thus exacerbating longstanding inequalities.

Evidence from Children and Young People Surveys found that:

- In 2021 approximately 37,150 children aged 6-16 were estimated to have a mental disorder in Sussex, constituting an increase of more than 25% on 2017/18.
- The percentage of children and young people with possible eating problems increased between 2017 and 2021, from 6.7% to 13.0% in 11–16-year-olds and from 44.6% to 58.2% in 17–19-year-olds.
- In 2021 an estimated 46,000 11–19-year-olds have a possible eating problem in Sussex.
- In 2020/21, 5,851 primary and secondary school pupils were identified with social, emotional, and mental health needs (3,063 primary school age and 2,788 secondary school age) across the three local authorities in Sussex.

In terms of the impact on services across Sussex:

- There has been a 32% rise in average monthly referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and a 34% increase in the number of people waiting for CAMHS services (2,410 in March 21 compared with 1,805 in March 2020).
- People waiting for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) assessment and for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) have increased by 43%; with an additional 778 children in the 15 months to June 2021.
- There has also been an increase in referrals for children and young people with eating disorders, with an overall increase of 77.1% in 2020/21 compared with 19/20.
- All three local authorities in Sussex are below the national targets for percentage of children and young people with eating disorders seen within one week and within four weeks as of December 2020.
- Mental Health A&E attendances for 0 - 17-year-olds in Sussex increased by 14% (Apr-Aug 21) compared to the same period in 2019 (pre-Covid-19 baseline).

The report determines that a focus on preventative and early intervention services and addressing the social determinants of mental health is key to address the increase in demand, especially support in schools and other educational settings. Additionally, tackling the fragmentation of children and young people’s mental health services by bringing services together across the whole system is essential to meet the increased demand and to reduce inequalities.

## NHS Reducing Health Inequalities

As mentioned previously, the pandemic has tended to exacerbate existing health inequalities. An important context for this area of work is **Core20PLUS5** – An approach to reducing health inequalities, produced by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) in December 2021. This is the NHS contribution to a wider system effort by Local Authorities, communities and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector to tackling healthcare inequalities and aims to complement and enhance existing work in this area.

The **Core20** refers to the most deprived 20% of the national population as identified by the national Index of Multiple Deprivation and considers the social determinants of health. The **Plus** element identifies population groups experiencing poorer than average health access,

experience and or outcomes. These include ethnic minority communities, people with multi-morbidities, protected characteristic groups, people experiencing homelessness, drug and alcohol dependence, vulnerable migrants, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, sex workers, people in contact with the justice system, victims of modern slavery and other socially excluded groups.

There are **five** clinical areas of focus. Governance for these five focus areas sits with national programmes; national and regional teams coordinate local systems to achieve national aims.

1. **Maternity:** ensuring continuity of care for 75% of women from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and from the most deprived groups.
2. **Severe mental illness (SMI):** ensuring annual health checks for 60% of those living with SMI (bringing SMI in line with the success seen in learning disabilities).
3. **Chronic respiratory disease:** a clear focus on Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) driving up uptake of COVID, flu and pneumonia vaccines to reduce infective exacerbations and emergency hospital admissions due to those exacerbations.
4. **Early cancer diagnosis:** 75% of cases diagnosed at stage 1 or 2 by 2028.
5. **Hypertension case-finding:** to allow for interventions to optimise blood pressure and minimise the risk of myocardial infarction and stroke.

## Dementia

Responding to growing numbers of older people with dementia has been a priority for the Health Subgroup. Current estimates are that there are 2,270 older people with dementia in Mid Sussex, predicted to rise to 3,500 by 2030. Wards estimated to have the highest dementia prevalence of the population aged 65+ in Mid Sussex are Hassocks and Lindfield.

West Sussex County Council and NHS Clinical Commissioning Group have produced a West Sussex [Joint Dementia Strategy](#) for the period 2020–23 building on the Dementia Framework 2014-19. The strategy sets out commitments to tackling dementia and provides a framework for further action based around the five elements of the Dementia Well pathway. Dementia Friendly Communities in Mid Sussex have had input to the Strategy.

## Health Subgroup activity in 2021/22

There have been a number of projects taken forward by the Subgroup to address some of the health issues identified above. These have been built around themed meetings of the group and have included:

### Vaccination Insight and Workplace Health Support

The Subgroup has been involved with the co-ordination of the Covid vaccine roll out in the District. Workplace Health Support has been delivered through the Wellbeing Team. In 2020/21, 413 employees engaged with the Mid Sussex workplace health service, with a total of 46 Community or Workplace Health talks being delivered to 25 different workplaces. Workplace health is recognised by Public Health as a key vehicle through which to engage with younger, working age adults who are best placed to avoid developing long term conditions by adjusting lifestyle and behaviours.

These health initiatives have helped to counter one of the more under reported impacts of the pandemic on working age adults, which has been loneliness. The recent government report – Employment and Loneliness 2021, evidences the benefits, for both employers and

employees, of addressing loneliness and supporting social connections as part of workplace wellbeing.

### **Mental Health Support for Children & Young People**

Sub- Group projects have included Emotional Resilience Workshops which have now been completed, provided through Sussex Oakleaf at the Escape Room, Burgess Hill. Key topics covered were anxiety and depression, eating disorders, suicide awareness and safe social media including virtual bullying.

The Subgroup is now developing the “Power 4 Parents” project, which will be delivered through Brighton Housing Trust and will be funded from the Health Subgroups budget. This would enable the funding of a three day a week post to lead on providing a local information pack which would be distributed to schools and parents, offering, signposting and drop ins. Also providing for the development of forums and workshops relating to mental health support and activities which are available in the area for young people.

### **Access to Support Services**

Projects under this theme have included the Bringing people together living with dementia project, which provided a cookery session through Impact, within the Orchards Shopping Centre marquee. Four organisations worked in partnership to make this happen: Haywards Heath Dementia Friendly Community, Impact Tasty Team, The Orchards and Mid Sussex Voluntary Action. This session has now been delivered.

The Diabetes screening event was held in East Grinstead with the District Lions. The objective was to raise the awareness of diabetes as a health issue and potentially diagnose residents, so they can seek support and early remedial action. 280 people attended the event, with 10% referred onto the national prediabetes programme for further support. It is hoped, (subject to funding) that this event can be rolled out to other areas including Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill.

### **Prevention and Independent Living**

Projects supported by the Subgroup have included the Places for People Young Persons Cancer Rehabilitation Project. This works with Places Leisure to offer up to 10 cancer patients on a low or no income to take part in the 12-week exercise programme. This will be able to support them both during and after their treatment to improve both their mental and physical wellbeing.

Mid Sussex Older Peoples Council are to host an event with advice for people to continue to live in their own home. The ongoing Covid pandemic has impacted on delivery of this project. The Mid Sussex Older People’s Council have been keeping their newsletter going and they are hoping to deliver the event in Spring 2022.

### **Mid Sussex Health and Wellbeing Network**

In addition to the Health Subgroup, meetings of the Mid Sussex Health and Wellbeing Network are convened by the Wellbeing Hub every quarter and are an important focus for partnership working around different community and health issues in the District. It is made up of about 80 organisations representing different groups, charities and statutory organisations involved in health. The Network has had to move to virtual meetings during the pandemic, starting again with an in -person meeting at the end of March 2022. Subjects covered this year have included the impact on children’s and young people’s mental health during and after the pandemic.

# Community Resilience

## Community Resilience Subgroup

The Community Resilience Subgroup includes Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA), representatives from the West Sussex County Council Partnerships and Communities Team; Sussex Community Foundation; Clarion Housing Group; and Community Services staff from Mid Sussex District Council. The overall purpose of the Subgroup is to consider community resilience issues across the district where partnership work can add value and implement partnership action to tackle these issues.

The Subgroup's priorities for 2021/22 were:

- Recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic and Supporting the Needs of the Voluntary sector;
- Building Community Leadership Capacity through initiatives such as Community Champions; and
- Supporting the Changing Landscape for Volunteering.

## Recovery from the Pandemic and Community and Voluntary Sector Support

There have been a number of local studies on the implications of the pandemic, including a MSVA and Healthwatch West Sussex Study on the Voluntary Sector Response to COVID-19 in Mid Sussex. Also, East Sussex County Council commissioned the Institute of Voluntary Action Research to carry out a study, which reported in May 2021 of the Voluntary and Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in East Sussex. These reports concluded that there are significant challenges that lie ahead from:

- Already limited resources need to stretch further
- Social distancing and lockdown rules will continue to limit reach
- The range and complexity of needs are likely to increase.

The specific impacts of Covid-19 on VCSE organisations were identified in three categories:

- Services and approach
- Collaboration and partnership
- Charity finances

### Impact on services and approach

The pandemic has forced CVSEs to think differently and change their approach, for example in making use of on-line services and dealing with changes in relation to volunteering. Moving services on-line has led to an increase in the number of people that CVSEs can reach. However, some services are based around face-to-face interaction and digital exclusion remains an issue for those who might otherwise drop off the radar if services are delivered entirely remotely. Such services will have added costs to ensure that the venues that they use are Covid secure.

CVSEs have also expressed concerns about the complexity of needs arising from the pandemic, with the need to respond to issues such as mental health, unemployment, domestic abuse, and the isolation of children from their peers. Also, worries about not having the resources or training to deal with more complex needs and that the reduction in

statutory face-to-face services has left volunteers in a difficult position, which they are not qualified to deal with.

### **Volunteering**

There has been a mixed picture in relation to volunteering. Some organisations have increased their number of volunteers e.g. for mutual aid and conservation projects. Others have seen a drop off in numbers, especially for older volunteers. Also, where there are problems from social distancing and the closure of physical spaces to meet. A greater increase in volunteering has come from other younger age groups making use of social media e.g. in setting up online mutual aid community pages that provide space for social interaction and support. Studies suggest that the loss of older volunteers could be replaced by a younger age group, especially through working with schools and bringing volunteering into what they do.

### **Collaboration and partnership**

The pandemic has encouraged many to strengthen existing partnerships and establish new ones. Organisations have been able to coalesce around a common purpose with a focus on addressing economic insecurity and social equality. Remote working in response to Covid-19 has enabled connections with others and the overcoming of geographical barriers that may have prevented partnership working before.

People have reported greater levels of trust, honesty and transparency in partnership working, particularly in relation into funding arrangements.

### **Community and Voluntary Sector Finances**

The pandemic has thrown into sharp relief the importance of the sector to local communities, in particular the ability to respond quickly and effectively to emerging local needs and issues. Although some organisations have been able to access specific national and local emergency funds, there are still significant concerns about the long-term financial sustainability of CVSEs. Almost every organisation reported the loss of some unrestricted and/or earned income. Activities that would normally generate these income streams such as social enterprise ventures and fundraising events have had to cease or be greatly curtailed.

The report identifies that there needs to be an adaptation of funding and commissioning arrangements post pandemic to assist the CVSE sector. This will include more longer-term grants and more proportionate application processes that acknowledge that small CVSE's are often run by extremely small staff teams.

### **Financial Support for the Community and Voluntary Sector in Mid Sussex District**

Funding bodies have recognised the difficulties faced by the sector arising from the pandemic. For example, as part of its Covid Recovery Plans, Mid Sussex District Council has introduced a £300,000 Covid Grant Fund Scheme for local businesses, community groups and voluntary organisations affected by the coronavirus pandemic. To ensure that the Community Voluntary Sector were able to take full advantage of the grant scheme, targeted engagement was undertaken by the Council's Community Services Team working with Mid Sussex Voluntary Action. The Covid Grant Fund Scheme has delivered grants to 43 community and voluntary organisations amounting to £140,834.

## Community Leadership and Inclusion in Mid Sussex

### Engagement with Local Minority Communities and Community Champions

The 2011 Census showed that 9.7% of the Mid Sussex population are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups. “White Other” is the biggest of the BME Groups at 4.8%, with Asian or Asian British: Indian the largest single other group at 1%. There is increasing evidence of the disparity of Covid-19’s impact on Black, Asian and Minority ethnic groups. This is reflected in Covid-19 diagnosis and mortality rates.

One of the projects reported to the Subgroup is the Community Champions project developed with Mid Sussex District Council and Citizens Advice to engage with local minority communities to improve access to support, information, and services. The Community Champions project finds informal volunteers in our community to be champions; to share information at a community level and to help develop preventative messaging to ensure they are more effective across all the District’s diverse communities. The project now has a full-time post and has moved forward from providing champions with up-to-date information about Covid-19 to share with their communities online to face to face interactions on a broader range of support people to take up vaccinations, helping people returning to work, benefits, and refugee resettlement.

### Digital Inclusion and Digital Champions

The Community Resilience Subgroup has identified digital inclusion and the development of digital champions as an important issue to be addressed in Mid Sussex. Digital inclusion is about ensuring the benefits of the internet and digital technologies are available to everyone. Digitally excluded people can lack skills, confidence, and motivation, along with having limited or no access to equipment and connectivity. This can create additional layers of social exclusion and exacerbate social and economic problems.

Information from the Office for National Statistics 2020 estimates that 7.8% of UK adults have either never used the internet, or last used it over 3 months ago. As well as access to the internet, digital inclusion is also about people’s ability to use it, with an estimated 21% of UK adults, or 11m people, not having the essential digital skills for everyday life.

It has been identified that the best way to help digitally excluded people is to provide one to one support with trusted digital champions. These can include Volunteer Digital Champions and those associated with organisations or partnerships. Representatives from West Sussex County Council’s Library Service have joined the Subgroup given the role of their existing Digital Access Team. Proposals are being developed for MSP funding to provide a programme of Digital Champions for individuals who need additional support and not able to access libraries.

### Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)

The number of NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in the District is one indicator of the economic wellbeing of young people. Young people who remain NEET are generally regarded to be at greater risk of social exclusion through the loss of economic and social opportunities.

Young people have been one of the groups most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic through:

- a. Disruption to their education
- b. Worsened mental health outcomes



### c. Worsened economic wellbeing from loss of work and earnings

There was a total of 46 NEETs in Mid Sussex on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022, split as follows:

- NEETs seeking Employment, Education and Training: 33 (14 in Haywards Heath, 11 in Burgess Hill, 4 in East Grinstead and 4 elsewhere)
- NEETs not available (those young people who for personal circumstances are not able to look for work – e.g. through pregnancy, illness etc.) 13 (3 in Haywards Heath, 4 in Burgess Hill, 6 in East Grinstead).
- Unknowns 73 – these are year 12 and 13 cohort young people who WSCC officers have been unable to contact who might be NEET or EET but no details are available.

The Mid Sussex area accounts for 12% of the West Sussex county total. The total number of unknowns for West Sussex is 571, which accounts for 3.4% of year 12 and 13 cohort.

The Community Resilience Subgroup has been considering a replacement for the MSP funded Mid Sussex NEETs Positive Placements mentoring project, which was delivered by YMCA Downslink, who can no longer provide the service. Research has been undertaken through the NEETs Forum and Mid Sussex Better Young Lives Forum to establish the support needed. Feedback from partner agencies has emphasised the importance of the initial stages of engagement with a young person before they are ready to participate in more structured scheme to get them into employment, education, or training. This “graded exposure” approach works to build up the young person’s confidence to make them ready for further support.

Engagement with partners also points to the need for the young person to be provided with a co-ordinator to identify the other services for them to work with and to provide for a handover to the next level of exposure to support. These principles are being taken forward in the procurement of a replacement scheme.

### **Sustainable Food Partnerships and Community Hubs**

Mid Sussex is a prosperous district, but there are pockets of relative deprivation in each of the three main towns. Mid Sussex has one of the lowest claimant count unemployment rates in England, however, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the number of people in the District who are out of work. In August 2019, 815 residents were unemployed. This rose to 3,400 in August 2020 before falling back to 2,280 in August 2021. However, there are still nearly three times more unemployed people in the district than there were before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Community Resilience Subgroup has been involved with the development of the Mid Sussex Food Partnership bringing together organisations in the Mid Sussex area who work to overcome food poverty, reduce food waste, and distribute to those in need. The main foodbanks in Mid Sussex are at Haywards Heath and East Grinstead, run by the Trussell Trust, and the Burgess Hill Community Food Bank. It is expected that demand for these services and assistance for those in fuel poverty will increase with the emerging “cost of living crisis” arising from the increase in energy and other costs.

The Subgroup is also involved with the development of a network of community hubs in the District. Community hubs provide a public space that bring several community agencies and neighbourhood groups together to offer a range of activities, programs, and services. These can link into sustainable food partnership initiatives through such services as community cafés. Existing and potential new community hub sites include Bentswood in Haywards Heath, Stone Quarry in East Grinstead, and the Cherry Tree in Burgess Hill.

### **Rural Isolation and Transport Issues**

Mid Sussex is a predominantly rural district and transport issues contribute to rural isolation. Data from April 2019 shows that 14.6% of the District's Rural Parish population do not have access to a car. The Rural Parish with the highest percentage of people without a car is Clayton at 32.9% (557 people). Keymer Parish is the second highest percentage at 21.4%. This is a factor in issues of rural isolation, along with the provision of public transport.

60% of Mid Sussex rural parishes have an hourly weekday bus service and a further 30% have a weekday service of some sort, although this is not hourly. 10% have no service at all. There is limited weekday evening service in Mid Sussex with only four out of the 20 (20%) rural Parishes having a service – Clayton and Pyecombe hourly and Slaugham and Worth have some sort of evening service. The Sunday service is poor with only one Parish having a regular service (Worth).

The Community Resilience Subgroup and MSP Board has recognised the importance of providing support for community transport initiatives, particularly in working with Community Transport Sussex. They help local people who struggle to access public transport due to age, disability or because there is a lack of safe or adequate public services in their area. The Subgroup has agreed funding for a scheme to build up community transport infrastructure including the use of electric vehicles and supporting people with transport in rural areas.