

ESCC report to Brightling parish council 12th January 2022

Former rough sleepers benefit from training

A scheme that helps those at risk of homelessness into work and training opportunities is being rolled out to a further 50 people, following a successful pilot.

The project, managed by East Sussex County Council's ESTAR (Employability for Supported and Temporary and Refugees) and delivered at Plumpton College, recently welcomed a group from the Rough Sleepers initiative for an eight-week training programme. The programme included a mixture of activities to support wellbeing, a qualification in Horticulture Studies, and work experience alongside a land management company.

Some of the clients taking part said they had previously slept rough in the parks that they were now helping to improve and felt like they were giving something back.

Project ADDER: Home Office visit and new campaign launch

Senior representatives from the Home Office's Project ADDER team visited the project's Hastings Delivery Hub to meet some of the partner organisations who are working together to tackle drug-related harm in the town.

The event, hosted the East Sussex Veterans Hub (ESHV), was an opportunity for partners to highlight the work they are doing to address the town's high rate of drug use, and to showcase some of the successes funded through Project ADDER.

In the months since its launch, officers working under Project Adder in Hastings have completed 387 drug seizures, taken 272 weapons off the streets including 127 knives, and seized £29,312 in cash. There have also been 27 organised crime groups disrupted and, in November, police shut down four county line networks in the area.

Part of the Project ADDER initiative includes the launch of the Choose Your Future campaign, which aims to empower young people to consider their choices by educating them on the dangers of drug use. This activity has initially launched in Hastings and will be extended across Sussex in early 2022.

Council secures £2.5million from the UK Community Renewal Fund

East Sussex County Council has secured funding for five projects, which will receive a share in over £2.5million as part the Government's Community Renewal Fund:

- Lewes District Council, in partnership with Plumpton College, the South Downs National Park Authority and Sussex Modern, will receive £705,000 for a high-impact tourism campaign including pilots and research to create a global brand for wine and cultural tourism.
- The Hastings 2066 initiative will receive £636,173 for a new Immersive Studio, which will allow people to discover artistry and history through augmented reality and digital technology.

- The county-wide 'Minding the Gaps' project has been awarded £547,627 to support participants into employment by providing training and skills development opportunities.
- The county-wide Innovation Masters Programme will receive £529,287 to improve the productivity of the local micro-business community through masterclasses, workshops, and roadshows.
- The Hastings Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Futureproofing Initiative will receive £100,100 to create a 'Whole System' approach to volunteering in the town and reform service access

Council to receive Levelling Up funding for new Exceat Bridge and Newhaven transport connections

Chancellor Rishi Sunak has announced a multi-million-pound Levelling Up funding package to rebuild the Exceat Bridge with two lanes, which will top up the funding previously secured by East Sussex County Council. The rebuild will reduce the bottleneck of traffic caused by the current one-way system.

The scheme will be sensitively designed to reflect the outstanding natural landscape of the area and will include works to enhance wildlife habitats. Construction is expected to take two years, but the A259 will remain open for most of the construction period to minimise disruption to road users.

In addition, Newhaven is set to receive more than £19million in funding to improve transport connections and cycle paths in the area.

Views sought on Bexhill town improvement scheme

East Sussex County Council, working with Rother District Council, is inviting residents to share their views on plans to transform an area of Bexhill to create a more attractive and safer public space.

The plans include traffic management and improvements to public space for Town Hall Square and proposals for the junction of Buckhurst Place and Sackville Road, and Beeching Road and London Road.

The scheme is being funded using Local Growth Fund (LGF) money secured through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) together with Community Infrastructure Levy funding.