East Sussex VCSE Alliance
April 2025

Alliance updates

The ES VCSE Alliance is going to conduct some research into the scale, impact, challenges and resilience of East Sussex's c3,500 VCSE organisations and groups.

The research is being led by the Alliance on behalf of Alliance members, East Sussex County Council and Sussex Community Foundation. The Alliance hopes this research will identify the issues, risks, impact and resilience of the sector and potential impacts on services.

It will provide recommendations to improve the wellbeing of people in East Sussex by strengthening the resilience of the VCSE sector and enabling the Alliance, its partners and funders to align their focus on activity that will achieve the greatest impact for local communities.

Alliance news

The East Sussex VCSE Alliance has provided an Alliance-wide response to changes to National Insurance and National Minimum Wage elements of the 2024 Autumn Budget.

Members highlighted the impact these two additional staff costs will have on organisations, staff and service users.

The financial implication is stark – these two changes will cost Alliance organisations an extra £2 million pounds per year.

The report details the impact these costs will have on organisations and service delivery and suggests practical examples of support the voluntary sector ask partners to consider.

Alliance members look forward to working with partners to mitigate the impact of these additional staffing costs. Read about it **here**.

Wider VCSE sector and networks: news and updates

Making Every Contact Count Training: Level 2

20th May 2025, 10am-1pm
Jackson Hall, Portland Place, Hastings, TN34 1QN

Making Every Contact Count (MECC) is a practical introduction to the skills in talking to people about the issues they are concerned about or the changes they are seeking to make.

It's about supporting people to identify and access the things that could help them.

If your work brings you into frequent contact with people and you want to improve the likelihood of making a real difference this training could be for you.

To book a place, please go to:
hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk/events

Alliance members: news and updates

Care for the Carers is excited to announce:

2025 East Sussex Carers Voices Conference – Celebrating Carers Week

Tuesday 10th June 9.30am to 4pm, at Kings Centre, Eastbourne

This is now the biggest carers event in the county, bringing together carers, decision makers and professionals providing support and services to carers. Last year saw over 120 people come together to discuss key issues facing carers, network and learn about services available to them.

This year will focus on health and social care and how these can work better for carers. Mark Stainton, Director of Adult Social Care & Health at East Sussex County Council is confirmed as a speaker and panelist, with national and NHS Sussex speakers also attending forward too.

Rother Voluntary Action (RVA) will be creating a **new community-led hub** in the centre of Bexhill that will help charities, community groups and individuals deliver essential support to people across Rother.

The creation of the hub is being developed in partnership with Rother District Council (RDC) following an award from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to purchase the premises in March 2024.

The hub is expected to open in 2026 and will make it easier for Bexhill residents and wider Rother to access essential services and support.

It will also be used as a co-working space for Rother's VCSE including partners such as Citizens Advice 1066 and provide a permanent home for RVA.

RVA continues to work closely with RDC and VCSE partners in delivering this much-needed and welcomed community service.

East Sussex Community Voice **hosts Healthwatch East Sussex**

The team have produced an information sheet on **how to access key health and care** services, including help with the cost of accessing services. For more information, read the guidance **here**.

Healthwatch have launched a **women's health survey** and are hoping to hear from women and girls aged 14+ across East Sussex from now until mid-May. They are looking to learn about women's experiences of healthcare services as well as their preferences for accessing services. More info and a link to the survey **here**.