



**VCSE**  
EAST SUSSEX ALLIANCE

# Quarterly Report

## Executive Summary

Q3 2025/26

1<sup>st</sup> October – 31 December 2025

# Quarterly report: Q3 October to December 2025

## Q3 in numbers

East Sussex VCSE  
Alliance members

**27**



Meetings of priority  
working groups

**20**

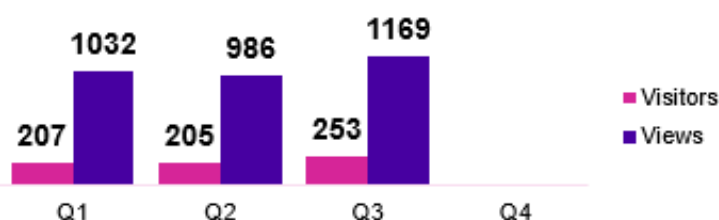


Multi-agency  
meetings co-chaired

**5**



Website visitors and page views



Documents shared  
on the website  
include:



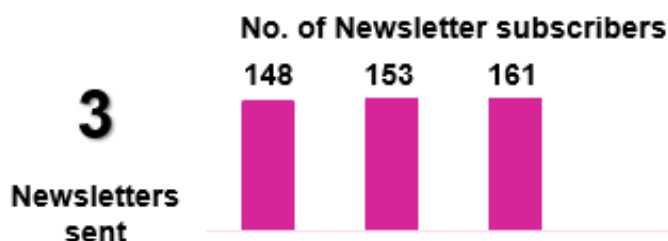
[State of East Sussex  
VCSE Sector Full  
Report](#)



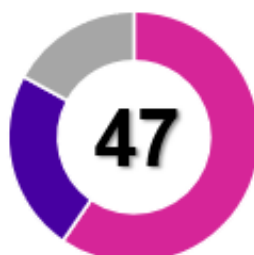
[State of East Sussex  
VCSE Sector  
Summary Report](#)



[East Sussex VCSE  
Alliance Report,  
Executive Summary  
Report July –  
September 2025](#)



No. of boards/partnerships/programmes &  
steering groups with Alliance representation



- ESCC
- NHS
- OTHER

**282**

Hours Alliance members  
contribute to strategic  
partnership meetings  
approximately

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1. Highlights and strategic impacts

The East Sussex VCSE Alliance plays a vital role in shaping local service design, influencing policy, and strengthening the voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. This section provides a concise summary of key activities and progress across all sections of the main quarterly monitoring report.

#### 1.1 Priority one: Financial Inclusion & Cost of Living

Efforts under this priority focused on strategic alignment with financial inclusion initiatives and the co-design of specialist money advice services.

- ❁ **Multi-Agency Financial Inclusion Steering Group** - co-chaired to ensure strategic alignment with this group.
- ❁ **DWP Crisis & Resilience Fund design** – VCSE engagement in shaping the new fund, Alliance members now Reps on the ESCC Reference Group
- ❁ **Co-design and potentially co-commission specialist money services**, working alongside ESCC colleagues, collaborative commissioning of money advice services
- ❁ **Household Support Funding (HSF7)** - monitoring the impact of reduced funding
- ❁ **ESCC's Early Help Transformation Programme** – VCSE collaboration on the co-design of an 'early intervention' service, supporting families and children.

#### 1.2 Priority two: VCSE Sector Resilience

The Alliance concentrated on understanding the sector's current resilience through its research and preparing for future local authority structural changes.

- ❁ **State of the Sector research** being prioritised this quarter:
  - State of sector research published and launched
  - Identifying sector resilience challenges and responses
  - Action plan to be developed with our partners
- ❁ **Local Government Reorganisation & Devolution** – Alliance drafting a joint response to proposals.

#### 1.3 Priority three: Representation, Relationships & Influencing

This priority aimed to strengthen the VCSE sector's voice and influence across strategic systems and partnerships.

- ❁ **Strengthen VCSE representation at strategic meetings:**
  - Extensive development of representation workstream
  - Capacity challenges and need for funded representation
  - Development of streamlined reporting mechanisms

- Ongoing VCSE representation at strategic system meetings

## 1.4 Alliance oversight Groups

Groups provided governance and strategic input across key thematic areas.

- 🌀 **Social Prescribing** - Social Prescribing recommissioning paused for alignment with NHS 10-year plan
- 🌀 **Climate Change** - Climate Change group linking with local networks and contributing to assessments
- 🌀 **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion** - EDI Oversight Group published 19 members signed up to the Alliance EDI Charter

## 1.5 Collaborative programmes of work

Collaborative programmes advanced strategic partnerships and co-designed services across East Sussex.

- 🌀 **Commissioning Excellence Programme:**
  - Impact report in development, scoping Phase 2 of the programme
- 🌀 **Tackling Loneliness Programme:**
  - Events continue to be undertaken this quarter
  - Evaluation underway and future funding proposals being developed
- 🌀 **Befriending Scheme:**
  - Service progressing well, strong referrals following increased Comms
- 🌀 **SPACES Programme:**
  - Discussions regarding asset transfer in relation to Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

## 1.6 Sussex Voluntary Leaders Alliance (SVLA)

The Alliance worked closely with the Sussex Voluntary Leaders Alliance (SVLA) to ensure strategic alignment and shared VCSE leadership across Sussex.

- 🌀 Joint Strategic Lead role now in post, working across ES VCSE Alliance and SVLA
- 🌀 Joint workplans ensure alignment for SVLA and ES VCSE Alliance
- 🌀 ES contributions to the NHS commissioning intentions and 'VCSE engagement' service specification
- 🌀 ES drafted proposed next steps to finalise SVLA purpose and governance.
- 🌀 ES SVLA Reps attended an NHS Health Inequalities event with over 100 attendees

## 1.7 Communication and engagement

Efforts focused on increasing visibility, stakeholder engagement and information sharing.

- ✿ Improved external visibility through regular bulletins, news articles and social media
- ✿ Website traffic increased by over 50% since last year
- ✿ November saw record engagement on the website, driven by State of the Sector research.
- ✿ Hosted member workshops and meetings.

## 1.8 Secretariat and governance

Governance activities ensured robust oversight, member engagement and transparent commissioning processes.

- ✿ Alliance membership reached 27 organisations
- ✿ 3 new member applications pending.
- ✿ Extensive meeting schedule across all members working groups
- ✿ Development of co-commissioning model with ESCC

## 1.9 Quarterly focus: System-wide collaboration

This quarter placed significant emphasis on financial inclusion, reflecting substantial system-wide changes and collaborative work across partners.

Key points include:

- ✿ Shaping and responding to the new Crisis & Resilience Fund framework
- ✿ Monitoring implications of reduced Household Support Funding (HSF7)
- ✿ Co-designing specialist money advice services for 2027 launch
- ✿ Strengthening early intervention through Children's Services collaboration on the new service
- ✿ Partnership Plus leading on designing development programme to respond to findings in state of the sector research
- ✿ Multi-agency steering group co-designing Phase 2 of the Commissioning Excellence Programme