



VCSE
EAST SUSSEX ALLIANCE

Quarterly Report

Executive Summary

Q4 2025/26

1st January – 31 March 2026

Quarterly report: Q4 January to March 2026

Q4 in numbers

East Sussex VCSE
Alliance members

29



Meetings of priority
working groups

14

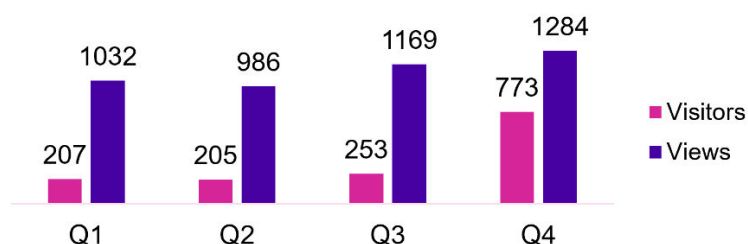


Multi-agency
meetings co-chaired

4



Website visitors and page views



Documents shared
on the website
include:



[Joint Alliance response to Local Government Reorganisation Consultation](#)



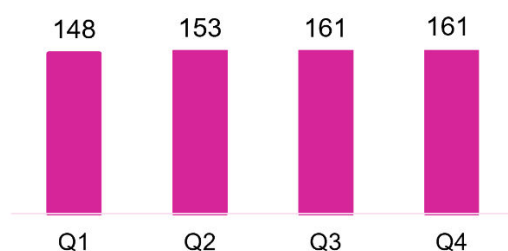
[Tackling Loneliness in East Sussex – Rotherfield St Martin](#)



[The East Sussex VCSE Alliance Our journey evolving together](#)

No. of Newsletter subscribers

3
Newsletters
sent



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



288

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** – Strong engagement in multi-agency financial inclusion work, including co-chairing steering groups.
- **DWP Crisis & Resilience Fund design** – Significant contribution to design of the new Crisis & Resilience Fund and local delivery models.
- **Co-design and co-commission of specialist money services** - working alongside ESCC colleagues, Active co-design and recommissioning of specialist money advice services.
- **ESCC's Early Help Transformation Programme** – VCSE collaboration and engagement in Families First Programme development

1.2 Priority two: VCSE Sector Resilience

Work under this priority concentrated on understanding and responding to structural challenges facing the VCSE sector.

- **State of the Sector research:**
 - Publication and dissemination of the research
 - Action plan to be developed with our partners next quarter
- **Local Government Reorganisation & Devolution** – Alliance submitted a joint response to proposals.
- **Devolution** – early involvement in thematic discussions, promoting VCSE insight and experience

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:**
 - Representation at over 48 strategic meetings across health, care and partnership boards.
 - Pilot of a new representation and feedback model to improve transparency and impact.

- Development of full representation framework, guidance and tools.
- Growing demand for VCSE representation creating capacity pressures

1.4 Alliance oversight groups

Oversight groups provided light-touch governance and continuity across specialist thematic areas.

- **Social Prescribing** - Social Prescribing activity still paused in line with NHS recommissioning delays
- **Climate Change** – oversight with local networks maintained
- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion** - EDI Charter expanded to 21 signatories with resources and reflection survey completed.

1.5 Collaborative programmes of work

The Alliance continued to co-lead and participate in several major collaborative programmes.

- **Commissioning Excellence Programme:**
 - Impact report finalised and programme progressed towards Phase 2.
- **Tackling Loneliness Programme:**
 - Opportunity for Alliance members to discuss final scope of Phase 2 programme
 - Evaluation of Phase 1 published
 - SCDA endorsed as lead provider with delivery support provided by members
 - Continuation funding agreed for three years
- **Befriending Scheme:**
 - Positive momentum in the scheme, promotion on local radio and Alliance newsletter
- **SPACES Programme:**
 - Ongoing engagement in SPACES and asset-related discussions

1.6 Sussex Voluntary Leaders Alliance (SVLA)

Work with the Sussex Voluntary Leaders Alliance focused on system alignment and strategic influence.

- Active leadership alignment between East Sussex and Sussex-wide VCSE structures
- Input into final NHS Commissioning Intentions and VCSE engagement and co-production models
- Co-design and production of future SVLA Operating Framework

1.7 Communication and engagement

Communication activity increased significantly to strengthen visibility and sector connectivity

- Three newsletters issued and increased outward-facing comms
- Website traffic increased by over 200% compared to Q3
- Publication of the Alliance Annual Report and multiple sector resources.

1.8 Secretariat and governance

Core governance and operational functions remained stable with steady growth in membership

- Alliance membership grew to 29 organisations
- Regular member, executive and working group meetings held.
- Progress on co-commissioning governance models and funding support

1.9 Quarterly focus: System-wide collaboration

This quarter placed significant emphasis on representation, relationships and influence.

This area generated the highest workload, greatest system impact and exposed significant capacity risks.

Priority should be given to:

- Consolidating the new representation model
- Resourcing representation roles
- Ensuring that escalated issues demonstrably lead to system change outcomes