

A Year in Review 2025



Message from our Chief Executive, David Chaffey

We have faced some significant challenges this year but also have a lot to celebrate. We were delighted to be successful in our bid to NHS Sussex to be the lead provider for West Sussex Mental Health Support Services, in partnership with West Sussex Mind, for the next five years.

We have managed to navigate the impact of increased employer National Insurance rates and a funding cut to our East Sussex Floating Support Service through careful financial management and securing new support from the Borough and District Councils.

We continue to campaign for equity in the benefits system for those in Supported Housing through our 'Make Work Pay for Everyone' campaign and are hopeful that tangible policy change will be achieved this year.

Other highlights of the year include an exhibition of client and tenants' artwork funded by Arts Council England, and an impact celebration at First Base, our day centre for people experiencing homelessness in Brighton.

We continue to be very proud of all we do to empower people to overcome homelessness, poverty, addiction and mental ill health, all of which you can read more about inside.

Thank you as always for your support, which makes our work possible.



OUR IMPACT LAST YEAR IN NUMBERS

198

PEOPLE ACCOMMODATED IN OUR SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTED HOUSING



10,683

CLIENTS AND TENANTS SUPPORTED

1,489

HOURS OF FREE MEETING SPACE PROVIDED TO PARTNER AGENCIES



67

PEOPLE SUPPORTED TO ACHIEVE ABSTINENCE AND RECOVERY FROM ADDICTION



2,273

PEOPLE HELPED BY OUR ADVICE CENTRES IN BRIGHTON, EASTBOURNE AND HASTINGS



1,838

PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY OUR COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN WEST SUSSEX



21

PEOPLE JOINED US WHO HAVE FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE OF THE ISSUES OUR SUPPORT SERVICES ADDRESS



463

INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS ACCOMMODATED IN OUR COMMUNITY HOUSING



2,303

CASES OF HOMELESSNESS PREVENTED.

6,603

VISITS MADE TO FIRST BASE, OUR RESOURCE CENTRE FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS PROVIDING SHOWERS, HOT MEALS, LAUNDRY, IT FACILITIES, AND SUPPORT TO GET PEOPLE OFF THE STREETS.



£4,063,042

RAISED BY OUR WELFARE BENEFITS ADVISERS FOR 519 CLIENTS



New Developments

EXCITING NEWS FOR WEST SUSSEX MENTAL HEALTH

We are pleased to share that we were successful in our bid to NHS Sussex to be the lead provider for West Sussex Mental Health Support Services, in partnership with West Sussex Mind, for the next five years.

Having worked closely with local communities for over a decade as part of the Pathfinder West Sussex alliance, we are eager to use this experience to evolve the service.



Pathfinder staff on a recent team day out

As part of our new model, we will continue to involve service users, their families, carers and marginalised communities to inform how we work. We will be bringing new partners on board from the homelessness sector and expanding our services to provide comprehensive and coproduced community mental health support.

We are excited about this new chapter and keen to make a difference to mental health services in West Sussex!

“Voices of lived experience were at the heart of our bid and will be woven through service design and delivery.”

Rachael Kenny, Director of Mental Health and Support Services, BHT Sussex

EAST SUSSEX FLOATING SUPPORT SERVICE – AN UPDATE

Despite considerable opposition, the proposal by East Sussex County Council to cut the budget of our East Sussex Floating Support Service from £4.3 million per year to £500,000 per year sadly went ahead in October 2025.

We were overwhelmed by the support the service received, with more than 1400 people responding to the official consultation on the proposal and many more signing our petition to try to reduce the funding cut.

We worked behind the scenes to lobby decision makers and explore alternative funding avenues to protect this key homelessness prevention service. We were really pleased to secure financial support from the five District and Borough Councils in East Sussex, which will enable us to also provide Floating Support Officers in each of these geographical areas.

We are committed to helping as many vulnerable people as possible with the funding available. New eligibility criteria have been established for the service, and staff are doing a great job at adapting and transitioning to a new service delivery model.

CLOSURE OF ROUTE ONE PREVENTED!

Route One, a vital supported housing scheme for people with mental health needs, has been saved from closure through effective partnership work with Brighton and Hove City Council.

We have agreed to continue to operate the service in a remodelled format – great news for the city, the residents and staff of the service.

With one in three supported housing providers having had to close schemes last year due to funding pressures, and 60% anticipating further closures, this outcome highlights what can be achieved through strong partnership and shared commitment.

BHT Sussex is a proud supporter of the national Save Our Supported Housing campaign, which calls for urgent, long-term investment in supported housing to protect these lifeline services for the future.

As part of this campaign we have written to Sussex MPs to raise awareness of the challenges we face and to invite them to visit our supported housing schemes, to see first-hand the difference they are making to people facing homelessness, addiction and mental ill health.



Mid Sussex MP Alison Bennett visiting our Supported Housing in Mid Sussex

CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE

We continue to push forward our ‘Make Work Pay for Everyone’ campaign, which seeks to address a benefits anomaly that penalises people living in supported housing, leaving them financially disadvantaged when they start working.

We have been working behind the scenes, building up evidence, lobbying MPs and liaising with the Department for Work and Pensions to try to find a workable solution to the problem.

We are coordinating our efforts with other homeless organisations and have recently contributed to a briefing by Centrepoin, highlighting the financial savings that the government can make by implementing policy changes to fix this anomaly. We very much hope to see policy change announced at the next Autumn budget.





Nikki Homewood and Brodie Hall from BHT Sussex with Carol Homewood from Brighton & Hove Museums, at First Base Heritage Open Day event.

FIRST BASE AT 40

This was the fortieth year that First Base day centre has operated from St Stephen's Hall in Brighton.

The centre supports people experiencing homelessness in Brighton and Hove and provides practical essentials such as

hot food, showers and clothes, alongside in-depth advice and support to move people away from homelessness for good. St Stephen's Hall is a grade II* listed building with a fascinating history, and this year for the first time it was part of the national Heritage Open Day festival, opening its doors to the public over two weekends. Built in 1766, St Stephen's Hall was previously the chapel at Brighton Pavilion, but was later moved brick by brick to Montpelier Place, where

it stands today. We took over the hall and reopened it as First Base Day Centre in 1985. The festival was a great opportunity for us to share with the public the history of the building as well as the important work that goes on inside it today. In October we also gathered together supporters and partners for a special impact celebration evening at First Base, where attendees could learn more about the impact the service has on individuals and the community.

Last year, First Base supported 512 people. One of those people, Samuel, shared his story with us:

I was living in a shared house in Portslade with a live-in landlord and two other flatmates. I was working as a chef for an agency, doing shifts in care homes and hospitals. I'd lost my daughter to Covid-19 and I started to drink to cope with the grief. I lost my job and then found work through another agency, but on my way to my first shift I turned around and went back home. I just couldn't carry on. "My benefits then suddenly stopped because I missed an appointment, and I couldn't pay my rent. Maybe I should have told my landlord what I was going through, but I don't think he would have cared. He gave me 24 hours' notice to leave. As a lodger, I had no rights. He put all my stuff out on the street

and someone nicked it, I lost my favourite clothes and shoes. "After losing his home, Samuel came to First Base Day Centre. "The first time I came here I was very surprised. I came to the door and explained I'm jobless, I'm homeless. I sat down, had a coffee – it tasted good after being out all night. I sat with one of the workers and started to speak. I felt I could open up to her. When I lost my daughter, I didn't tell anyone. No one knew what I was going through. My case worker was the first person I spoke to about losing my daughter. I had no other family, and to be honest, I felt like there was no way out. I wanted my life to end. But talking to her helped. I promised to keep coming every day. "She helped me sort out my benefits and referred me into accommodation. Things started to change in my head and I began to see a way out.

"When I first moved into my new accommodation, I found I couldn't sleep and I was only getting around 3 hours a night. I used to go walking instead. Now I've completely stopped drinking for the last 6 months and I'm feeling good about my accommodation. I get on well with my flatmates and my keyworker. "I now want to get back into work. I've started coming to the cooking group every week at First Base where I cook a meal for clients. It feels good to be able to use my skills in the kitchen. I like coming to the group as I'm very comfortable cooking. My CV has a big hole, but coming to the cooking group gives me something I can put on it. I'm also completing food hygiene training. "I'm in the right place now to work on my head. I don't want to forget my daughter. You don't get over it – you just learn to live."



Community Fundraising Update

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

We are determined to be there for people who need us, but we face big challenges. The cost of living keeps climbing and donations are falling, while our everyday running costs are increasing, along with the number of people asking for support. On top of that, local government funding that we rely on is being squeezed and competition for support is tougher than ever. Some of the vital services we provide are now at real risk, and we urgently need your help to keep going.

How You Can Help



REGULAR GIVING: Your commitment, no matter how small, can have a lasting impact. By becoming a regular donor, you provide us with the stability needed to plan ahead, ensuring that our support services continue to be there for those who are most in need.

Scan QR Code for more information



TAKE PART IN A SPONSORED EVENT: You can organise your own event, which we can support you with in a number of ways, including by providing branded running vests. You can also sign up to one of the many Ultra Challenges we currently offer. These are brilliant mass-participation endurance events which can be walked or ran, and many are in the Southeast.

Scan QR Code for more information



BUY YOUR CHRISTMAS CARDS FROM BHT SUSSEX: Once again, we are selling Christmas cards to raise more money for First Base. We have 7 different cards, designed by brilliant supportive local artists as well as our own talented staff! Cards can be ordered directly from our website or bought from our office in Brighton.

Scan QR Code for more information



ONE-OFF DONATIONS: Every single penny counts. Your one-time donation can provide a warm meal or hot shower for someone facing homelessness, or pay towards a support group or caseworker session. Together, small gestures create big change.

Scan QR Code for more information



LEAVE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL: Consider leaving a legacy of kindness. By remembering BHT Sussex in your will, you ensure that your compassion lives on and has a lasting impact. We have partnered up with Make A Will Online, a member of the Society of Will Writers, and are offering a free will to the first 10 people who sign up. After this there will be a cost of just £60 per will.

Scan QR Code for more information



DONATIONS OF CLOTHES AND TOILETRIES: Clean out your wardrobes with purpose! Your clothing (especially coats and trainers), towels and sleeping bags can bring comfort to those who have very little. A warm coat, a fresh set of clothes, or a basic toiletry kit can help restore self-worth and confidence to someone facing homelessness.

Scan QR Code for more information

Inspiration from our supporters

THANK YOU!

This year we have again received support from our brilliant community fundraisers, who have undertaken challenges and set up fundraising initiatives on behalf of BHT Sussex. We extend our heartfelt thanks to every one of you.



Takeda UK & Ireland gave a generous donation of practical items to First Base, after BHT Sussex staff and clients spoke at their annual conference. Items included toiletries, sleeping bags and jackets, which will all be put to good use by our clients.



A recently bereaved local Hindu family provided a special day of catering at First Base for our clients experiencing homelessness, as part of the Hindu post-funeral tradition of feeding people in need. We are exploring future events, such as a First Base Supper Club, as part of an ongoing legacy.

The Ambergate Trust has pledged their continued support to First Base for the next two years. The funding will enable the centre to continue to employ additional staff to help with the day to day running of the service, freeing up caseworkers to dedicate more time to clients, particularly those with complex needs, thereby improving the quality and depth of support provided.



During Volunteers Week we were delighted to celebrate some of our highly valued volunteers with mayoral receptions at Brighton and Burgess Hill Town Halls!



Nelly, a student from Brighton College, performed a piano recital to a packed audience at Brighton Unitarian Church – an incredible performance which raised over one thousand pounds for First Base!



Glendale Services kindly donated gardening tools to the conservation group run by our Pathfinder service, which meet regularly to connect with nature to improve mental wellbeing. This service has also collaborated with Wakehurst to enable free access for our clients to this beautiful nature venue.



Brighton and Hove Buses continue to support us with free bus tickets to help our clients get to essential appointments around the city. This year they have also invited us to join and share funds raised from their famous 'Santa bus'.



Community Calling has recently provided one hundred reconditioned smartphones for First Base clients, which they can use to access online services, manage benefits, stay in touch with case workers and family, and apply for jobs.

COMBATING HOMELESSNESS

First Base Day Centre

A resource centre for people who are homeless or vulnerably housed in Brighton & Hove.

Call: 01273 326844

Hastings Young People's Service

Supported accommodation for 33 people aged 16 to 25 from Hastings and St Leonards who are homeless.

Call: 01424 435376

Phase One

A 52-bed high support hostel for single people experiencing homelessness with complex support needs.

Call: 01273 328285

East Sussex Floating Support Service

This service offers short-term housing-related support across East Sussex for people who require support to live independently.

Call: 01273 645400

Homes for Ukraine Sustainment Service

Service for those taking part in the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Provides accommodation-related support to Ukrainian refugees and their British hosts.

Call: 01273 645400

Choir with No Name Brighton

Choir for people who have experienced homelessness and marginalisation. Members rehearse and share a meal together every week.

Call: 07825 079132

RECOVERY FROM ADDICTION

Addiction Services

Residential housing projects with programmes of support for people seeking abstinence and life recovery from drug and/or alcohol addiction.

Call: 01273 604245

Detox Support Project

This project supports six residents to detox safely from drug dependence to achieve abstinence, and is clinically supervised by CGL Brighton and Hove Recovery Service. Our service is rated Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission.

Call: 01273 684741

Recovery Project

A comprehensive programme of individual and group support in a therapeutic community for 26 residents who have achieved abstinence from drugs and/or alcohol.

Call: 01273 604245

Move On

Supports 32 residents in their on-going recovery and reintegration into work, education and meaningful activity.

Call: 01273 645414



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Emotional Wellbeing Service

Service for those struggling with their mental health in Mid Sussex and Crawley - Mental Health Support Coordinators provide 1:1 support and groups within GP Surgeries and the local area.

Call: 07867 160259

Shore House

Accommodation and intensive support for 20 people with complex mental health needs, including those with a dual diagnosis.

Call: 01273 929392

Archway Project

Residential care homes in Hove for 19 adults with mental health support needs, rated Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission. Incorporates 'Step Down' service which supports people's discharge from mental health hospital back into the community.

Call: 01273 748031

Oak House

A 24-hour residential service for 14 adults with mental health support needs in Burgess Hill. It supports people to move on from residential care or hospital into more independent living situations.

Call: 07850 642986

Route One

Supported accommodation for 24 adults with mental health support needs in Brighton and Hove, comprising 2 shared houses and self-contained flats.

Call: 01273 929470

Leylands Road

A residential care home for six people in Burgess Hill providing care and support for people with enduring mental health needs.

Call: 07850 642986

Pathfinder and Be OK

Pathfinder provides free and confidential support for adults experiencing mental health difficulties across West Sussex. Support includes advice, community groups and one-to-one sessions. Be OK provides the same service for young people (16–25 year olds)

Call: 0300 303 5652

WORK, LEARNING & EMPLOYMENT

Accommodation for Work

Housing and support for people who are homeless who are actively engaged in work and learning. Accommodation is provided at four shared houses, supporting a total of 22 residents.

Call: 01273 645440

Work Placement Programme

Helps people who are in homeless supported accommodation to gain work experience through one to four week work placements with follow up support.

Call: 01273 645493

Supported Placements to Achieve and Rally Change (SPARC)

Project of supported work placements within BHT Sussex services, for people who have experienced homelessness and who are currently accommodated in BHT Sussex residential services.

Call: 01273 326844

Tenant & Client Involvement

Works with tenants, clients, staff and management across Brighton & Hove, West Sussex and East Sussex to create opportunities for tenants and clients to get involved in the design, development and delivery of BHT Sussex services.

Call: 01273 645443

BHT Sussex Training

A leading provider of voluntary sector training in Brighton & Hove, supporting local services to improve outcomes for vulnerable people across the South East.

Call: 01273 645420

HOUSING SERVICES

Brighton Community Housing

236 community homes in the Brighton area managed by BHT Sussex. **Call: 01323 340018**

Hastings Community Housing

83 community homes in the Hastings and St Leonards area managed by BHT Sussex.

Call: 01323 340018

Mid Sussex Supported Housing

Delivers accommodation and support to 55 adults in Mid and North West Sussex who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Call: 01444 870023

PRS Leasing

We lease properties in Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings, providing accommodation for people who have a history of homelessness and who are unable to access social housing.

Call: 01323 340018

LEGAL & ADVICE

Brighton Advice Centre

Provides specialist advice on housing, immigration, asylum and welfare benefits, as well as free representation at the Brighton County Court for those facing possession proceedings.

Call: 01273 645455

Eastbourne Advice Centre

Provides specialist housing and welfare benefits advice by telephone and face to face by appointment as well as advising at the Court Duty Scheme at Lewes County Court.

Call: 01323 642615

Hastings Advice Centre

Provides specialist housing advice through an appointment-based service, an outreach service, and a Court Duty Scheme.

Call: 01424 452610

Macmillan East Sussex Welfare Benefits Service

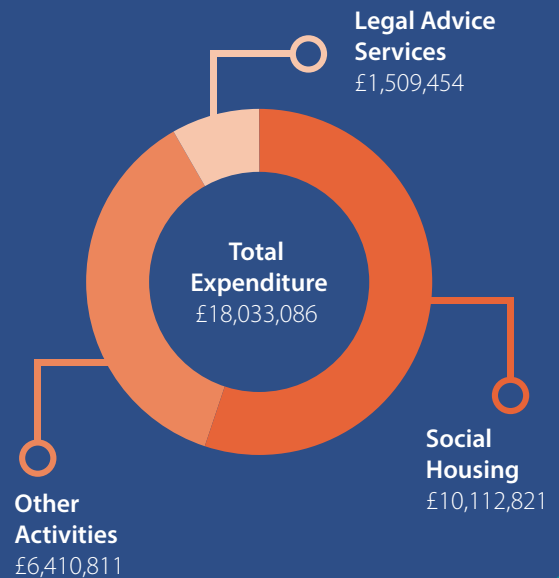
Comprehensive welfare benefits advice available across East Sussex for anyone affected by cancer and their families, delivered in partnership with Money Advice Plus and funded by Macmillan Cancer Support.

Call: 01323 635989



Our Finances

The charts below show income and expenditure summary data from the management accounts of BHT Sussex for the year ended 31 March 2025. The full audited financial statements for this period can be found at bht.org.uk.



Find out more

You can phone, email or check our website using the contacts below, or search for BHT Sussex on our social media channels, and follow us for regular updates on our work.

📞 01273 645400

✉️ enquiries@bht.org.uk

🌐 www.bht.org.uk



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Gold

FR Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

**LIVING
WAGE**
BRIGHTON & HOVE

**MENTAL
HEALTH
AT WORK
COMMITMENT**

**disability
confident**
EMPLOYER

British
Assessment
Bureau
UKAS
MANAGEMENT
SYSTEMS
8289
ISO 9001
QUALITY MANAGEMENT