East Sussex Suicide Prevention Plan

April 2015 – March 2016

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Appendix 1: Membership of East Sussex Suicide Prevention Group

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1. **Introduction**

Nationally suicide is a major issue for society. The overall trend in the suicide rate has been decreasing since 1998 until 2008 but has been rising slightly since. In 2013 there were 4,727 suicides recorded, a rise of 214 since 2012.\(^1\) Each one of these suicides is a tragedy and can be devastating for all those affected.

2. **Rates of suicide in East Sussex**

East Sussex has a significantly higher suicide rate than the England average, which has been the case for a number of years.

For the eight year reporting period 2006 – 2013:

- there were an average of 77 suicides per year, one third of which were of non-East Sussex residents.\(^2\) Of these deaths 32% (186 of the 584) took place at Beachy Head.\(^3\)
- the commonest methods of suicide for East Sussex residents were hanging, strangulation and suffocation, and poisoning as is the case nationally. However the proportion of deaths due to falling from a height was several times higher than the national average.
- Suicide at Beachy Head accounted for 72% of all the non-resident deaths in East Sussex, an average of 23 per year.

3. **Key sources of guidance and information**

In 2012 the government published its first suicide prevention strategy in 10 years. *Preventing suicide in England: A cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives* stated its overall objectives as:

- A reduction in the suicide rate in the general population in England; and
- Better support for those bereaved or affected by suicide.

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\(^1\) Department of Health. Statistical update on Suicide. February 2015

\(^2\) Suicide in East Sussex: Analysis of ONS Mortality data 2006-13, October 2015

\(^3\) The term Beachy Head refer to the approximately 3.7 miles of sea cliffs spanning from Birling Gap westwards to Holywell at the western edge of Eastbourne.
It identified six key areas for action in support of these objectives. In East Sussex we have based our action plan on these six key areas:

1. Reduce the risk of suicide in key high-risk groups
2. Tailor approaches to improve mental health in specific groups
3. Reduce access to the means of suicide
4. Provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide
5. Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour
6. Support research, data collection and monitoring

Two follow up reports have since been published, incorporating the findings from more recent research and making further recommendations for local action which we have incorporated, where possible, in our action plan.

In June 2013 the East Sussex Public Health team developed and obtained funding for a business case consisting of five interrelated strands of work in support of the suicide prevention agenda, focusing in particular on the reduction of suicides from Beachy Head. Much of this work was developed with the help of the Beachy Head Risk Management Group\(^4\) and the resulting actions are also represented in our plan.

Discussion at the East Sussex Suicide Prevention group meetings has further informed the actions in the plan.

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\(^4\) The Beachy Head Risk Management Group is a subset of the East Sussex Suicide Prevention Group and is an advisory group rather than a decision making body. It is comprised of the main statutory and voluntary agencies involved with incidents that occur at Beachy Head.
Based on the six key areas identified by the national strategy

### Key area 1: Reduce the risk of suicide in key high-risk groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Next Steps</th>
<th>Lead</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Training - General</td>
<td>By December 2016 train at least 250 front line staff in suicide intervention skills including ASIST; SafeTALK and MHFA (part of business case)&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>• Continue to work closely with Grassroots to ensure that appropriate groups are targeted for training</td>
<td>ESCC Grasroots Suicide Prevention Charity</td>
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<td>• Evaluate the effectiveness of Grassroots training</td>
<td>ESCC Grassroots</td>
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<td>1.2 Training – A&amp;E</td>
<td>A&amp;E staff to be provided with training that supports them in working with patients with mental health problems, who have suicidal ideation or who self-harm.</td>
<td>• Identify training needs and implement training</td>
<td>SPFT</td>
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<td>• Implement recommendations of self-harm audit</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3 Non-statutory ‘place of safety’</td>
<td>Establish and evaluate the ‘Place of Calm’ a non-statutory ‘place of safety’ for those in Eastbourne who have suicidal thoughts (part of business case)</td>
<td>• Service due to commence mid-June 2015</td>
<td>ESCC Sussex Oakleaf/Recovery Partners</td>
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<td>• Commission an evaluation by December 2015</td>
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<sup>5</sup> The business case includes five interrelated work streams approved for one-off public health funding
| 1.4 Beachy Head patrol | Establish and commission support for the Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team (part of business case) | • Identify support needed by October 2015  
• Commission support by December 2015 | ESCC |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1.5 Taxi companies     | Work with taxi companies and taxi drivers in Eastbourne and Seaford to ensure they are equipped to support a passenger they suspect is going to Beachy Head to take their own life. | • Contact all taxi drivers working in Seaford and Eastbourne re their suicide prevention role  
• Provide information to all taxi drivers on training and support available by December 2015 | ESCC  
Grassroots  
Sussex Police |
| 1.6 People with mental health problems | Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT) to develop a Trust suicide prevention plan for East Sussex which contributes to this overall suicide prevention plan. | • SPFT to work with Public Health in the development of the Trust’s suicide prevention plan for East Sussex  
• SPFT to bring the plan to the East Sussex Suicide Prevention Steering Group for discussion by January 2015 | SPFT  
SPFT  
ESCC |
| 1.7 Suicide Safer City | Consider whether it is beneficial for East Sussex to become part of the Suicide Safer City network. | • Keep abreast of Grassroots’ and Brighton & Hove’s application to become a Suicide Safer City | ESCC |
## Key area 2: Tailor approach to improve mental health in specific groups

| 2.1 Young men | Improve the mental health of men | • Consider current provision for men and services we might commission in the future, by August 2015  
• Ensure all commissioned suicide prevention services are, where appropriate, considering the needs of men  
• Disseminate resources (eg SPFT/Grassroots suicide app and East Sussex/Grassroots resource booklet) to organisations working with men | ESCC  
All providers |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 2.2 LGBT groups | Improve the mental health of LGBT groups | • Consider current provision for people who are LGBT & services we might commission in future  
• Ensure all commissioned suicide prevention services consider the needs of LGBT groups  
• Disseminate recent PHE resources to relevant orgs | ESCC  
All providers |
### Key area 3: Reduce access to the means of suicide

| 3.1 Adapt infrastructure at Beachy Head | Implement the recommendations of the Beachy Head infrastructure report (part of business case) | - Work with ESCC Directors, senior managers from key organisations and Beachy Head Risk Management Group to find feasible solutions.  
- Develop a costed action plan for the infrastructure recommendations  
- Erect ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) camera at Beachy Head | ESCC  
ESCC  
Sussex Police |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| 3.2 Collaborative working at Beachy Head | Ensure the continuance of Beachy Head Risk Management Group to facilitate joint working. | - Use the BHRM group to help implement the infrastructure report recommendations | ESCC  
EBC |

### Key area 4: Provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide

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<tr>
<th>4.1 Counselling for those bereaved or</th>
<th>Evaluate the effectiveness of the Supporting Survivors of Suicide project (part of business case)</th>
<th>- Monitor the number of people given support and the number of</th>
<th>ESCC</th>
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6 Supporting Survivors of Suicide is a two year pilot project which is being delivered by Sussex Community Development Association (SCDA) in partnership with the charity Counselling Plus and was established in October 2014. The qualified counsellors provide individual or group support depending on the needs of the client; clients can self-refer or be referred in by any agency.
| affected by suicide | sessions delivered | • Evaluate effectiveness  
• Work with the service provider to secure on-going funding if it proves to be effective |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 4.2 Information for those affected by suicide | Ensure information on suicide prevention and current service provision is available and disseminated widely | • Disseminate Help is at Hand booklet and encourage all relevant providers to order it.  
• Publicise the SPFT/Grassroots suicide App through commissioned services; stakeholder groups; training events.  
• Ensure the East Sussex/Grassroots resource booklet is widely distributed |
| 4.3 GP support | Consider the feasibility/need for provision of specific support to GPs when a patient takes their own life by suicide | • Discuss with CCG clinical leads  
• Encourage GPs/practice staff to attend Grassroots training |
| Key area 5: Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour |  |
| 5.1 Media | Work with local journalists to raise awareness of issues around reporting on suicides (carried over from 14/15) | • Discuss with local comms. leads in ESCC, SPFT and Samaritans re: |
|          |                   | ESCC |

ESCC All  
ESCC  
Grassroots
### Key area 6: Support research, data collection and monitoring

#### 6.1 Coroner’s records
- **Audit coroner’s records and ensure that local audit data is robust**
  - Review local audit data and identify issues and problems by August 2015.
  - Commission a review of the audit data gathered, address gaps in data collection, input backlog of data, identify way forward (work with coroner to access archived data) by January 2016.
  - **ESCC**

#### 6.2 BHCT data management
- **Establish robust data collection systems within BHCT**
  - Commission IT support for BHCT to develop a database by January 2016.
  - Investigate data sharing between BHCT and SPFT
  - **ESCC BHCT SPFT**
| 6.3 Audit | Conduct an annual suicide audit using local suicide data and Office for National Statistics (ONS) data | • Regularly input data onto local database  
• Analyse data to identify trends and areas for suicide prevention intervention | ESCC |
| 6.4 Real time surveillance | Explore the benefits of ‘Real time’ surveillance | • Learn from the pilot studies in the North West of England | ESCC |
| 6.5 Collaboration with Exeter University | Collaborate with Exeter University who are developing a research proposal for evaluating the impact of implementing the recommendations of the BH Infrastructure Report | • Discuss proposal with Christabel Owens, author of infrastructure report  
• Gain appropriate consents within ESCC to collaborate with proposal | ESCC |

### 7: Review structures and processes

| 7.1 Embedding the suicide prevention agenda within mental health | Improve links with East Sussex Mental Health Commissioning | • PH Consultant to improve links with Joint Commissioner | ESCC |

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7 ‘Real time’ surveillance aims to provide information to front line local authority and NHS staff to enable them to respond to local clusters of suicides and to provide timely support to people bereaved by suicide.
| strategies and plans | Ensure collaborative working between key organisations and review structures and processes to reduce overlap and duplication | Implement meetings with local authority leads in West Sussex and Brighton & Hove to share learning. Consider feasibility of working more closely with Brighton and Hove City Council Public Health Department | ESCC |

**Notes**

BHCT - Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team are a charity who provide a crisis intervention service
ESC - East Sussex County Council
EBC - Eastbourne Borough Council
Grassroots - A national Suicide Prevention Charity based in Brighton
Recovery Partners - A mental health recovery project working across East Sussex contracted to deliver Place of Calm in conjunction with Sussex Oakleaf
SPFT - Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust
Sussex Oakleaf - A charity that provides services to people with mental health needs, personality disorder, at risk of homelessness contracted to deliver Place of Calm with Recovery Partners.
Appendix 1: Membership of East Sussex Suicide Prevention group

Consultant in Public Health, ESCC
Project Manager, Public Health, ESCC
Member of public with lived experience
Director of Nursing Standards and Safety, SPFT
Interim Deputy Director Adult Services, SPFT
Sussex Police Mental Health Lead
Head of Community Safety, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
Youth Offending Team, ESCC
Director, Grassroots Suicide Prevention
Mental Health Commissioner, Adult Social Care, ESCC
Health Improvement Specialist, Public Health, ESCC
Eastbourne Samaritans

ESCC – East Sussex County Council
SPFT – Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (Mental Health Trust)
Appendix 2: Membership of Beachy Head Risk Management Group

Consultant in Public Health, ESCC
Project Manager, Public Health, ESCC
Director of Nursing Standards and Safety, SPFT
Interim Deputy Director Adult Services, SPFT
Interim General Manager, Acute Services, SPFT
Chief Inspector, Eastbourne District, Sussex Police
Eastbourne Samaritans
Trustee, Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team
Professor of Sociology in Health and Medicine, Brighton University
Coastguard
Consultant Psychiatrist, SPFT
Counselling Partnership Project
Director, Place of Calm
Specialist Advisor (Downland), Eastbourne Borough Council
Practice Manager, Approved Mental Health Practitioner and Emergency Duty Service, Adult Social Care, ESCC