A leading provider of housing, care and support in Sussex

Housing and Homelessness Prevention

Community Inclusion

Health and Wellbeing

Work and Learning

Financial Resilience

Impact Report 2017-18

We are a specialist housing association committed to preventing homelessness and supporting vulnerable people’s health, wellbeing and independence. We are a not-for-profit organisation and exist for the benefit of local communities.

www.southdown.org
Welcome

Foreword from Neil Blanchard, Chief Executive at Southdown

Welcome to our Impact Report for 2017-18, giving an overview of the difference our 950 staff have made to 9,040 vulnerable people’s lives over the past year.

At Southdown, we passionately believe that a true indicator of a civilised and caring society is how well it treats and supports its most vulnerable citizens.

Our wide range of services reach out to those most in need, and we actively work with communities to enable minority and under-represented groups to access support.

More than ever, clients of our services tend to be in crisis, facing multiple and complex issues. Due to social care funding cuts, in many cases we are there for them when no one else is.

Our clients describe the support they receive from us as ‘a lifeline’, ‘a way out’ and that it has ‘set me on a new path’.

This feedback, along with our Impact Report, are testament to the hard work and dedication of my colleagues across Southdown.

Thank you to all of our staff, commissioners and the local organisations we’ve worked with over the past year.

Going forwards, we will build on what we have achieved in 2017-18 to reach out to more vulnerable people in need of support.

If you have any questions about what we do, please get in touch.

Yours sincerely, Neil.

About Us

We’re Southdown, the largest not-for-profit specialist provider of housing, care and support for vulnerable people across Sussex.

Our mission is to offer vulnerable people the support they need to live a fuller life. We do this through tailored community-based services that support people to manage crises and to develop, maintain and improve good health, wellbeing and independence.

Our Support Approach

Housing and Homelessness Prevention:

Housing is a vital foundation from which people can address financial, social, physical, mental and emotional issues. A home is not enough though. Without equipping people with the skills, resources and resilience they need to maintain their tenancy, homelessness remains a threat.

Health and Wellbeing:

50% of social housing residents have a long-term health condition or disability and one in four people experience mental health challenges. Supporting health and wellbeing is fundamental to improving quality of life.

Financial Resilience:

Supporting people to manage their finances is essential to enable them to maintain their home. It can also help to maximise their income and stay out of, or sort out, debt problems.

Community Inclusion:

Social isolation and loneliness can have a big impact on health. Having effective community and social networks are major contributors to reducing health and economic inequalities.

Work and Learning:

Economic activity and paid work are important contributors to people’s escape from the cycle of poverty and improving their health and wellbeing.

About this report

All figures quoted refer to the year running from the 1st April 2017 to the 31st March 2018, unless otherwise stated.

Figures describing the success of interventions made by Southdown services relate to clients for whom the outcome was an identified support need.
Highlights in 2017-18

9,040 people were supported by our services.

1 in 5 of our clients accessed more than one of our services due to multiple needs.

94% of our clients said they were satisfied with the support they’ve received from us.

We recruited a new Housing Officer dedicated to supporting our tenants with learning disabilities (around a third of all our tenants).

We were commissioned to deliver the East Sussex Community Network, a range of mental health recovery services designed to support people to get well, stay well and prevent crisis.

We appointed a new Housing Director, Jim Aspdin, to help us develop more affordable Supported Housing in Sussex. In the next five years, we plan to invest £4.3 million to build more homes.

We were accredited as a gold standard employer by Investors in People, a standard only awarded to the top 2% of Investors in People companies.

Financial Resilience
£328,200 saved for our clients via our Money Management Teams.

We received planning permission to develop six specialist units of Supported Living accommodation in Brighton for people with learning disabilities and complex behavioural needs. The homes are due to be completed in 2019.

Award win
Our Supported Employment Service won a national Positive Practice in Mental Health Award.

100% of people receiving support from our Learning Disability Services said the support they’ve received from Southdown has made a positive difference to their life.

We were commissioned to deliver the East Sussex Community Network, a range of mental health recovery services designed to support people to get well, stay well and prevent crisis.

Our clients
61% were supported through our Homelessness Prevention Services
13% were supported through our Employment Support
8% were supported through our Housing provision
2% were supported through our Learning Disability Services

*21% of clients accessed more than one of our services due to multiple needs.

10th anniversary
Our Supported Employment Service celebrated 10 years of providing Individual Placement & Support (IPS), the nationally recognised best practice model to support people with mental health challenges secure and retain work.
Supported Housing

Every day people are struggling with homelessness, poverty, learning and physical disabilities, mental health challenges and risk of abuse.

Having a safe and affordable home can help. For many, it is vital to address barriers they are facing to take the initial steps to get their lives back on track.

As a specialist housing provider and landlord, we provide Supported Housing for vulnerable people. This means we provide both housing and support to enable people to live as independently as possible in their community.

Stats and facts

- 646 tenants and shared owners across Sussex for whom we are a landlord for or act on behalf of another landlord.

Personalised Support

- Our Housing Officers have fewer allocated tenants compared to general needs housing associations (117 compared to 500 plus).
- 162 of our tenants lost their linked support service due to local authority funding cuts. Our Housing Officers and Tenancy Sustainment Service have been there to support them when they’ve had nowhere else to turn.
- 1 in 4 of our tenants received additional support from our Learning Disability Services.
- 29 tenants were successfully supported to ‘move on’ to independent living, enabling us to use our Supported Housing for other people that need it.
- £1,812,000 invested to develop and maintain affordable housing for vulnerable people in Sussex.

Focus on: Tenancy Sustainment Service

We launched a new Tenancy Sustainment Service, an early intervention and preventative service that supports our tenants to sustain their tenancy in the long-term.

The service works with our tenants to increase their financial and digital capability, and to improve their knowledge on sustaining their tenancy and managing benefits including the transition to Universal Credit.

Tenant’s story

“I live in a studio flat – I’ve been there for 12 years. I’m a tenant of Southdown. I was lodging before and stayed at a friend’s.

It’s nice to have a place of my own. It gives me the time to do what I want to do and it’s given me a sense of security. It’s nice to be able to lock my flat. You can sit back and relax.

I received quite a lot of support from Southdown to help me live independently. My Housing Officer visits about once a month. He comes and talks to me about how I’m coping on my own. He listens to what I need. It feels personal. It’s always nice to talk to him.

It’s also good to have support from Southdown’s Property Services who get plumbers and locksmiths to come in and do the repairs.

“I received quite a lot of support from Southdown to help me live independently.”

I’m more confident with the support I’ve received, and that has helped me go out and volunteer and work. It’s improved my life.”

What our tenants told us:

- 93% were satisfied with the support they’ve received
- 89% were satisfied with the standard of repair work to their home
- 93% were satisfied with the condition of their home
- 98% said staff treated them politely and with respect

Stats and facts

- 100% tenant satisfaction with day-to-day repairs
- 100% of safety compliance checks completed on properties where we are the landlord
- 100% of rent collected successfully
Homelessness is one of the biggest issues facing our society today. Thousands of people are living on the streets or in temporary accommodation in Sussex. Across the country, more than a million households living in private rented accommodation are at risk of becoming homeless by 2020 because of rising rents, benefit freezes and a lack of social housing.

Our homelessness prevention services provide a range of support for vulnerable people in crisis and facing homelessness, and play a crucial role where other services cannot deal with the range of complex and inter-related problems people are facing.

We work in partnership with local housing, health and social care services, and we provide intervention support to prevent safeguarding issues reaching the threshold for statutory service intervention.

Focus on: Campaign to save Home Works

In February 2018, East Sussex County Council proposed to cut Home Works’ funding by 50% due to a reduction in central Government funding for Adult Social Care.

Alongside the Council’s public consultation, clients and staff from Home Works lobbied to protect the homelessness prevention service. The response was phenomenal and, we have been informed, was a factor in the Council reducing the severity of the cut to 28%.

We are working with the Council to manage the impact of the funding cut, and doing what we can to maximise our vital support for vulnerable people in crisis. We are also supporting the Council to lobby central Government to address the national crisis in social care funding.

Home Works provides support to prevent homelessness and improve health and wellbeing.

What clients of our homelessness prevention support told us:

“I felt totally relaxed and confident when speaking to the supported housing manager over the phone as just knowing that I had support when speaking gave me the ability to relax where usually I would find it hard due to anxiety and nervousness. You helped me to fill in the forms, letting me understand the questions and helping me answer in my own words. I would like to thank her for also being caring when I was getting tearful whilst talking about my family, which has been torn apart. Thank you. I only hope I can repay you by showing you in six months a responsible and productive member of society.”

- Client of our Housing Brokerage Service, which supports people using probation services to secure and sustain suitable accommodation.
Mental Health Recovery Support

Mental health affects us all. One in four people each year in the UK experience a mental health problem, and those who haven’t will most likely know somebody who has. Neglect, abuse, poverty, homelessness, work stress, relationship difficulties and lack of timely access to good services all contribute to poor mental health.

We provide a range of mental health recovery services across Sussex to support people to get well, stay well and prevent crisis. We value the expertise of people with lived experience of mental health challenges and actively involve them to design, deliver and monitor our services.

Stats and facts

2,514 People were supported by our mental health recovery services.

757 People were supported by our Preston Park Mental Health Recovery Centre, which provided 48 individual group sessions and activities over the year.

252 People were supported by our East Sussex Community Wellbeing Service. Three months after support, on average people reduced their number of GP appointments from 3 to 2 visits.

Working in partnership with local GPs, our Community Wellbeing Service provides tailored ‘social prescribing’ to support people find practical non-medical solutions when everyday life is affecting their health and wellbeing.

What clients of our mental health recovery support told us:

91% said the support they’ve received has made a positive difference to their life.

97% said staff treated them politely and with respect.

Services we provide:

Brighton and Hove Recovery Services:
• Recovery College
• Preston Park Mental Health Recovery Centre

East Sussex Recovery Services:
• East Sussex Community Network (Wellbeing Centres, Peer Support Service, Thinking Well and Staying Well Space) started in November 2017
• Peers in Partnership (from 1st April 2018, the service was remodelled to form People in Partnership)
• Community Wellbeing Service and Community Links (from 1st April 2018, these services were remodelled to form Community Connectors)

Client story

“I’ve spent the last 30 years in and out of mental health services. When I was 21, I had a really good job in the city. I had a flat, I had a car. But I was desperately unhappy and didn’t know how to cope with my mental health. As a result I had a mental breakdown.

At that time, there was no recovery. I would spend all day at a day centre drinking tea and being medicated. It was about containing people and herding them off the streets. It felt like being left on the scrapheap to stagnate.

It was only seven years ago that I got a bipolar diagnosis. But although I knew what it was, I didn’t make any changes to help recover so I continued to be ill. Two years ago I was hospitalised for the first time, and it suddenly made me realise I had to change my life to recover and get better.

I first heard about Brighton and Hove Recovery College from my psychiatrist. It was like a prescription really. I started coming to the College as a student about a year ago.

I’d been on a lot of courses run by mental health professionals where I felt like they didn’t understand my experiences. With co-production, however, someone with lived experience is also teaching the course. They know the reality, not just the theory.

I’ve definitely increased in confidence. Before, I would have had trouble sitting in a room with people I don’t know. Learning has also made me more alert and made me more interested in things.

Mental health is coming out of the shadows and services have improved so much. I feel lucky.”

Stats and facts

Delivered as a partnership with the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, the Brighton and Hove Recovery College uses education in a supportive learning environment to help people with mental health challenges become experts in their own self-care and recovery.

Over the past year:
• 848 students completed one or more of 50 courses and 49 one-day workshops.
• As a result, 76% felt more able to consider returning to employment or voluntary work.

Focus on: Brighton and Hove Recovery College

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Unemployment can have a major impact on a person’s mental wellbeing and physical health, as well as their financial security. It can cause depression, anxiety, stress and low self-esteem. Finding or returning to work can be therapeutic and can have many positive effects including reversing the adverse health effects of unemployment.

Our award winning Supported Employment team support people with severe and enduring mental health challenges to secure and retain paid work and undertake education, training and work placements. Employment Specialists work in partnership with NHS mental health clinical teams to provide tailored support. Once in work, support continues to help people sustain their jobs.

Our Supported Employment service follows the evidence-based ‘place then train’ Individual Placement Support (IPS) approach.

Focus on: Work in Mind

Work in Mind works in partnership with East Sussex Health in Mind so that we can offer people accessing psychological therapies the opportunity to receive specialist employment support at the same time.

Support provided follows the evidence-based Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model and the service is identified as an Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service.

Since the service started on 30 October 2017, it is successfully supporting people to secure work as well as retain jobs.

Client story

"I was diagnosed with mental health challenges at 15. I suffer with anxiety and I’ve got fibromyalgia as well. I wasn’t diagnosed with fibromyalgia until a few years ago. It affected me because I was scared of doing things with the amount of pain I was in, but once I’m doing something, it takes my mind off the pain. That is why work is part of recovery. A year ago my NHS counsellor recommended Southdown’s Supported Employment service. My Employment Specialist helped me find what’s right for me without me knowing what it was. She has given me the confidence to understand I can do things, I can find something that’s right for me and not let my anxiety take over. When we first met, we started talking about my likes and dislikes, what I’ve got training in, and what I’d like to do. We did my CV together and wrote down what things I was capable of. I’m a qualified hairdresser. My plan is to go into nursing homes and offer my skills. I’ve seen in myself how I want to do more things. I don’t say ‘no’ straight away. I can now talk to people on the phone. I’ve gone to nursing homes to publicise my work. Employment support has given me more confidence to go out and see my friends. It’s opened my eyes to what I can do. It’s given me confidence to look at new ways of coping. Working has also helped financially. I am now starting to save so I can move out in a few years. That was definitely not something I would have considered in the past. I’ve felt like my Employment Specialist was there to help me and push me in the right direction. I definitely wouldn’t be in the place I am today if I hadn’t had support."

Stats and facts

1,200
People were supported by our employment support services.

1 in 3
People were supported by our employment support services to secure paid work.

79
Number of people at risk of losing their job supported to stay in employment.
Learning Disability Support

We are the largest provider of accommodation, care and support for adults with learning disabilities across Sussex.

We are specialists in providing support for people with additional physical disabilities and behaviour support needs.

Our Support Workers encourage our clients to have confidence in their own abilities, supporting them to do daily tasks and lead fulfilling lives.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) rated all of our services as 'good' except one which received a 'requires improvement' for minor system changes (now resolved and audited).

"Where people did not have the capacity to consent, decisions made on their behalf had their best interest and human rights taken into consideration. People were supported to make choices and decisions and have control over their lives." CQC

What people said about our learning disability support:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What our clients told us</th>
<th>What our clients' families / advocates told us</th>
<th>What organisations we work with told us</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% say our support has made a positive difference to their life.</td>
<td>90% rated the knowledge and skills of our staff as good or very good.</td>
<td>100% rated the professionalism of staff as good or very good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94% say they are involved in planning their support.</td>
<td>91% rated the support around their relative's health and wellbeing as good or very good.</td>
<td>100% rated the way staff support clients as good or very good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97% say staff treat them politely and with respect.</td>
<td>95% rated the respect shown to their relative by staff as good or very good.</td>
<td>100% rated the way staff represent the views of our clients as good or very good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100% say staff explained how to give feedback or make a complaint.</td>
<td>90% rated overall satisfaction of support as good or very good.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stats and facts

189 Number of people we have supported.

36% Percentage of people we support who have additional complex behaviours. An increasing number of new clients referred to us have complex behaviour support needs.

450 Number of staff employed to deliver our learning disability support.

20-76 years The age range of our clients. We support adults of all ages.

Focus on: Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)

PBS is about understanding why an individual is displaying behaviours of concern and then using this understanding to tailor care and support to improve their quality of life. It’s about understanding that every action has a reason behind it and that using restrictive practice is not always the best way to support people.

- We established our dedicated PBS team in 2014
- 44% reduction in the use of physical restraint since 2014, for clients who we have supported.
- Our physical interventions training is accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD), whose mission is to enable excellent support, champion the rights, and improve the quality of life of people with disabilities.
- Over 200 staff completed our PBS training in 2017.

What people said about our learning disability support:

- "Sarah’s* care team supported her and her family with her recent move with great forward planning work and effort by the team to make it as easy as possible for her transition. We are very grateful to all involved." - advocate

- "My son, Jake*, has been in the care of Southdown for getting on to thirty years now and my late wife and I have never had any serious concern for his welfare in all that time. You seem able to attract staff who are without exception both caring and friendly for which I am profoundly thankful." - family member

- "My sister, Emily*, is very well cared for by staff that have known and cared for her for many years. This continuity is invaluable to her wellbeing. They are truly caring in their interactions with her." - family member

- "Very good, caring staff. Excellent care provider." - community nurse

- "A well run service. The staff are always welcoming and friendly. There is always a lovely atmosphere in the home." - music therapist

*names changed
The Place to Work

We believe in doing the very best we can for people – for our staff as well as our clients. We work hard to recruit and retain skilled and caring individuals who hold the same values as Southdown. In return, we aim to be the best employer we can be.

Stats and facts

1,124 Staff employed across Sussex.

1 in 5 of our workforce are disabled or have a long-term health condition.

1 in 3 of our staff are carers, outside of work, for disabled or elderly relatives/loved ones.

7.3 Average years of service of Southdown staff.

Top 10 Employer for Working Families (6th year in a row).

0% gender pay gap (comparing the median hourly rate of pay for men and women).

10% of our staff are European nationals. We value their support to run our services. Following Brexit, we will continue to do what we can to support our staff to stay in the UK.

Focus on:
Gold Standard by Investors in People

Investors in People is the international standard for people management, defining what it takes to lead, support and manage people effectively to achieve sustainable results.

After a rigorous assessment process, which included completed surveys and interviews with our staff, Investors in People awarded Southdown its top award, the Gold Standard (putting Southdown in the top 2% of companies assessed on their people management).

Results also included:
- Southdown has strong leaders who genuinely lead from the front with staff confirming that they are inspired by their leaders.
- The values and expected behaviours within Southdown are understood and practiced by staff.
- Performance management is strong and effective.
- Staff learning is continuous and learning provision is innovative and flexible.
- Staff say it is a great place to work.

“Making a difference is one of the main reasons I am in this job. Knowing we can support someone to grow and change is brilliant.”
- Employee at Southdown

Corporate Social Responsibility

With a turnover of £27 million and employing over 950 local people, we make a significant contribution to the local Sussex economy and its communities.

We prioritise using the services of local businesses, and with all our employees living locally, they in turn reinvest their salaries to further stimulate the local economy.

The Environment

LED Lighting

After replacing the lighting at our Lewes head office with LED lights in 2016, the total ‘wattage’ of lighting has been reduced by 60% (eight tonnes of carbon emission) per year.

Recycle and reuse

We continue to recycle all redundant ICT equipment as well as our office waste paper and as much cardboard, plastic, glass and metal as possible. We also recycle our furniture – either within Southdown or by donating to a local charity – and buy recycled where we can.

Solar panels

Our solar panel installations continue to generate excellent levels of free and green electricity. The panels are on track to pay for themselves within six years (by 2022) and will continue to generate free electricity for a further 15 to 20 years.

Social Impact

As an ethical Community Benefit Organisation, we want to understand the wider, additional social value we bring, over and above the outcomes of the services we provide.

Using the Social Value Charter developed by Orbis, it is calculated that Southdown brought an additional £2 million value to Sussex in 2017/18.

Employment Opportunities

Southdown has many employment opportunities for skilled, caring people who embrace our values.

Visit www.southdown.org/jobs to see our current vacancies.

Staff fundraising

Each year we nominate a local charity to support. In 2017, our staff raised over £1,500 for the Trussell Trust, which runs over 400 foodbanks, giving emergency food and support to people in crisis across the UK. Staff also gave regular monthly donations of food and household products for local food banks. Our chosen charity to support in 2018 is Macmillan Cancer Support.
Responsive to need
- We respond to the changing needs of clients, local communities and commissioners.
- We track and support the development of best practice and innovation.
- We are optimistic and solution focused and respond calmly and positively to resolve issues as they arise.

Ethical in all we do
- We maintain a set of core values and embed these into everything that we do.
- We appreciate the privileged role we have in supporting vulnerable people and always place their interests at the core of all decisions we make.
- We aim to be an employer of choice and offer good benefits and working conditions to our staff.

Dedicated to quality
- We provide high quality personalised services.
- We invest in staff and managers to ensure that they are skilled, confident and caring.
- We put in place robust mechanisms to monitor the quality and impact of the services we provide.
- We perform at a consistently high level to deliver contract outputs and outcomes.

Value for Money
- We offer services that offer good value for money for the quality delivered.
- We continually review and benchmark all operational and central services cost areas and set savings targets.
- We operate sound and robust business systems and processes to maximise efficiency.

Focused and stable
- We work in geographical areas that can be accessed and supported by our core resources.
- We focus on client groups and service models where we are confident that we can deliver the required skills, resources and quality.
- We are a not for profit organisation and use any surpluses generated to reinvest in our services and develop innovation.

Vision
Everyone, no matter what their life experience, background or challenges will have the opportunity to lead their life to the full.

Mission
To offer vulnerable people the support they need to live a fuller life.

Values

What People Say About Us

We'd like to congratulate Southdown, Investors in People accreditation is the sign of a great employer, an outperforming place to work and a clear commitment to success. Southdown should be extremely proud of their achievement.”
Paul Devoy, Head of Investors in People

We are concerned that in a deprived area that this vulnerable population will be put at even more risk. This cut will have a knock on effect to a whole range of local services from A&E, Walk-in Centres, Police, Social Health Care, Connect and GP practices. It is much more than a homeless prevention service. It is a vital community resource helping to resolve housing, health, social and financial issues.”
East Sussex GP commenting in response to the funding cut faced by our Home Works service.

I am a nurse who was looking after [one of your learning disabled clients] today. I felt I should send this email to express how pleased I was with the care, professionalism, knowledge and excellent documentation provided by the care workers who accompanied her. Thanks to their support, [your client] remained calm and her surgical journey went seamlessly. Your staff are amazing!”
Local Nurse.

The Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust successfully works in partnership with Southdown’s recovery services to co-deliver a fantastic range of courses to increase awareness and understanding of recovery and self-management whilst reducing stigma relating to mental health. The unique model of all courses being co-produced and co-delivered by people who have a lived experience of mental health problems and those in a professional caring role has been inspirational in giving people the hope to live the lives they want to be living.”
Lead Occupational Therapist at the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

I personally feel that Home Works is an essential lifeline to many people, and whether you look at it from a moral and social point of view or simply from one of economics, it is well worth all of the funding it receives.”
Independent Town and District Councillor, Lewes Priory Ward

The support is very much about empowering the person rather than cradling the person. She gave me information that made me feel secure. I had a plan, I had choices. It made me feel back in control. I wasn't a passive passenger on this journey.”
Client of Southdown's Homelessness Prevention and Mental Health Support Service in Brighton and Hove
How to contact us
We want to hear from you.

Whether you would like to find out about our services, provide feedback on support you’ve received or enquire about job opportunities, please get in touch.

Our contact details are listed below.

Southdown Housing Association

Registered Head Office
2 Bell Lane, Lewes
East Sussex, BN7 1JU

Phone: 01273 405 800
Email: info@southdown.org
Website: www.southdown.org
www.southdown.org

Southdown is an exempt charity registered with the regulator of social housing (L1829).
Southdown is also a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 (20755R)