

# Returning to Kendal Court:

An independent review of the  
experiences of people living at Kendal  
Court in Newhaven

September 2021

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# 1 Executive Summary

## 1.1 Context

In August 2021, Healthwatch East Sussex (HWES) undertook an independent review of the support needs of homeless people placed by Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) into Emergency Temporary Accommodation (ETA) at Kendal Court in Newhaven, East Sussex.

The focus was to explore and establish the current experiences of people placed at Kendal Court, with an emphasis on gathering their views about the suitability of the accommodation and support provision, and to learn from residents how they access health, care and wellbeing services when placed in out-of-area Emergency Temporary Accommodation.

## 1.2 Our approach in 2021

During a two-week period in August 2021, Healthwatch East Sussex undertook semi-structured interviews with 28 of the 42 residents living at Kendal Court at that time.

Engagement focused on gathering views and experiences on five core themes:

1. Residents' experiences of living at Kendal Court
2. Residents' experiences of being placed and arriving at Kendal Court
3. Issues affecting residents - practical, economic, social and health related
4. How, when and where support or help was sought, provided or accessed
5. Any changes that residents felt would help improve their experience

Qualitative responses and residents' narrative was recorded during the engagement process, analysed against the themes above, and cross-cutting issues identified.

This research was a follow-up to an [earlier review of residents experiences at Kendal Court, also](#) carried out by East Sussex Community Voice [The host body of Healthwatch East Sussex] in 2018.

## 1.3 Links to our study in 2018

The 2018 report set out the feedback received at that time and identified several areas for improvement, which included:

- More robust appraisal of an individual's health and social care support needs should be carried out prior to considering a placement at Kendal Court
- Facilitating residents' access to advocacy support and assigning of a case worker to vulnerable residents
- Information about Kendal Court facilities and local services should be provided to all new residents
- Kendal Court out-of-hours contact details to be clearly available
- Provision of on-site laundry facilities
- Installation of spy holes on front doors

- That Kendal Court was not a suitable place for children to be housed

## 1.4 Findings

Our study found that a majority of current Kendal Court residents (54%) indicated overall satisfaction with the accommodation provided. In the main, people reflected that Kendal Court is better than where they have been in the past, comparing it with prison, hostel accommodation or rough sleeping.

However, there was a significant minority who found it challenging and expressed the negative impact it had on them.

It is important to recognise that there have been some welcome changes and improvements implemented since 2018, summarised as follows:

- **Security:** 24hr security provided by a contracted company, together with key code on entrance gates. Spy holes have been fitted to front doors. However, at least two assaults have been a reason for ambulance attendance at Kendal Court in 2021.
- **Facilities:** Residents can now buy electricity tokens out of office hours from the security staff. There is one domestic type washing machine available in a Portakabin type building; Wi-Fi access, windows and common areas are in better repair and there is one seating bench outside in the yard.
- **Caretaker:** In 2018 the caretaker operated out of one small caravan. There is now a Portakabin type caretaker's office which is also used by security staff.
- **Resident make-up:** Women and children are no longer placed at Kendal Court
- **Emergency response:** Fewer attendances by emergency services
- **Travel:** Some provision of travel passes for some residents
- **Welfare:** BHCC welfare officer on-site once weekly

However, our 2021 research has indicated that issues identified in 2018 are still evident. This includes:

- Lack of appropriate mental health and care needs assessments and limited connectivity to appropriate support services.
- The caretaker and other on-site staff are not trained to support and refer residents who are in need to appropriate external services.
- Mental health emergencies are the most common reason for ambulance attendances to Kendal Court, both in 2018 and in 2021.
- No information about Kendal Court or the local area is provided to residents either prior to or on arrival at Kendal Court.
- Haphazard and insufficient supply of basic items on arrival. Both the lack of information and basic items is disorientating and causes significant deprivation to new arrivals especially those arriving from institutions such as prison or care settings.
- Three safeguarding concerns were raised by HWES in 2021 (collective concerns regarding women and children were raised in 2018).

## 1.5 Conclusions (see section 6)

Our study has identified four main conclusions:

- Some residents appear to have a level of vulnerability, mental health and other related needs which cannot be adequately met while housed at Kendal Court.
- Many residents could cope better at Kendal Court if they were enabled to access appropriate mental health and other support services.
- All residents at Kendal Court would have an improved experience of residing there (including self-management and in seeking support) if they were suitably informed, orientated and equipped on arrival.
- Voluntary Community Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations play an important and often essential role in supporting residents at Kendal Court, which goes some way to both improving outcomes for residents and preventing or reducing costly demands for emergency intervention. This needs to be recognised and reinforces the need for appropriate orientation and information sharing for residents on arrival.

## 1.6 Key Recommendations (see section 7)

We are proposing 11 recommendations in response to our findings. Key recommendations include:

1. Individuals with multiple and complex needs, or those who are extremely vulnerable, should not be placed at Kendal Court even if other recommendations are implemented. In order to prevent inappropriate placements at Kendal Court, robust assessments as stated in recommendation 2 should be undertaken.
2. Individuals should have their health and care needs assessed by mental health and/or social care professionals at the time of their housing placement assessment, and at the same be referred with consent to relevant VCSE organisations.
3. A multi-disciplinary assessment and referral pathway for people needing Emergency Temporary Accommodation should be established to identify and record the involvement, responsibilities and action status of all services involved with individual residents.
4. Comprehensive improvements to the provision of site information and essential items for residents entering Emergency Temporary Accommodation should be undertaken in East Sussex, including at Kendal Court. We recommend the adoption of minimum standards as documented in *The Emergency Accommodation Charter* produced by Eastbourne Citizens Advice, Justlife & Fulfilling Lives in collaboration with both Brighton and East Sussex Temporary Accommodation Action Groups (TAAG).

## 2 Introduction

This Healthwatch East Sussex (HWES) report is an independent review of the support needs of homeless people placed by Brighton & Hove City Council into temporary accommodation at Kendal Court in Newhaven, East Sussex. It is a follow-up to an [earlier review](#) carried out in 2018.

The timing (August 2021) coincides with Kendal Court being raised at the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) meeting in July 2021 which referenced the previous review. It was clear that new information was needed about the experience of residents currently placed there.

HWES has a broader priority for 2021/22 to address health inequalities, including those experienced by people living in Emergency and Temporary Accommodation (ETA). This review is the first in a series of engagement activities that we will undertake with people placed in ETA in East Sussex.

Kendal Court is leased by Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) for use as Emergency or Temporary Accommodation (ETA). The landlord is Colegate and Gray. There are 54 studio type flats in the building set out over three floors in five adjoining blocks. Currently the accommodation is single sexed with only male residents being placed there.

Our 2018 research and subsequent report found that approximately half of Kendal Court residents who engaged with us appeared to be coping with their placement, and an equal number were not. Residents were clearly upset and concerned by the five deaths which had occurred that year. Most did not feel safe because of the poor security arrangements which allowed aggressive behaviour and altercations to take place.

Additional findings included problems with residents' access to electricity tokens (office hours Mon-Fri only), lack of on-site laundry facilities necessitating a seven mile return trip to nearest launderette in Seaford, lack of information and basic items on arrival, and no emergency contact numbers for the site staff or landlord.

Collective safeguarding concerns were raised by the HWES reviewing team regarding residents who were vulnerable with apparent multiple and complex needs, and the placing of women and children at Kendal Court.

Since early 2019, HWES has remained involved with issues relating to Kendal Court via regular multi-agency meetings and liaison with Sussex Community Development Association (SCDA), Foodbank and Advice services. HWES has also received feedback from Citizens Advice via their central contact centre, and from SECamb regarding emergency call outs to the site.

### 2.1 Focus of review

The focus for this review was to gather feedback on the current experience of people living at Kendal Court, and to compare our findings with a similar study completed in December 2018. This includes learning how residents access health, care and wellbeing services when placed in out-of-area ETA.

**Aim:** To engage with residents at Kendal Court to gather information about their experiences relating to health and care services, and daily living activities.

**Objective:** To gather qualitative data via a simple questionnaire to be completed as an outcome of a semi-structured conversation between resident and researcher.

*We asked Kendal Court residents about:*

- Their experience of living at Kendal Court
- What works well for them living at Kendal Court and what could be made better
- What barriers they experience in accessing services from Kendal Court

*The insight gleaned is intended to:*

- Inform the East Sussex Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB)
- Identify where improvements have been made, and highlight any gaps in support
- Inform future policy and service delivery decisions made by BHCC and partners
- Contribute to broader HWES objectives of tackling health inequalities

## 2.2 Report Structure

The methods we used in optimising engagement, gathering information and analysing results are explained fully in section 3.

Section 4 begins with a summary of findings, followed by a detailed breakdown of responses to our five main questions.

Section 5 contains feedback and information gathered by external partner organisations. This provides further insight to residents' placement experience and adds context to the conclusions set out in section 6.

Recommendations are detailed in section 7 and are grouped for the attention of specific agencies.

The appendices contain copies of the documents created specifically for this activity. These include letters of invitation and fliers sent to residents, questionnaire, and a verbatim account provided by a Citizens Advice national phone line adviser.



## 3 Methodology

This review is based upon semi-structured qualitative interviews with residents at Kendal Court, in line with our strategic aim, to “Meet People Where They Are”, both geographically and contextually.

### 3.1 Qualitative Engagement techniques

We tailor our communication and engagement methods to our perceived needs and interests of the people we aim to reach. From our previous activities at Kendal Court, we understood the need to encourage and allow space for residents to talk about the things which are most important or immediate to them. We also knew that some residents may be wary, pre-occupied or otherwise struggle to engage in a formal, quantitative survey.

We therefore devised five main question areas, each including prompts to elicit as full a response as possible (see Appendix 1). In this way, we were able to achieve a subtly structured conversation. We firstly asked about the current surroundings (Kendal Court) and how they came to be there; then progressed to more detailed accounts of the individual’s health, care or other issues. The residents therefore had the opportunity of talking freely, and most did so in some detail.

### 3.2 Invitations to residents

The activity was promoted to residents by hand delivered letters to each flat inviting them to meet and speak to the independent HWES team over a 14-day period in August 2021. We maintained a consistent presence throughout, in late morning, early evening and weekend shifts. We ensured that our rota of reviewers included at least one familiar face from the previous day or session.

We also offered a “Text for a call back” to take part by phone, and in the second week delivered a “self-complete” version of the questionnaire to residents who had not yet engaged.

### 3.3 Risk Assessments and Face to Face engagement

The activity was robustly risk assessed to protect residents, staff at Kendal Court and the review team from catching or transmitting Covid 19. Social distancing was observed and face coverings were used.

Safety measures also minimised risks to individuals which may arise from challenging or threatening behaviour. Interviews took place outdoors in a confidential space but within sight of security staff.

All residents, regardless of whether they were taking part in the activity, were observed throughout to interact in a polite and appropriate way with HWES reviewers.

The team who interviewed residents comprised of HWES staff who have expertise in research, community engagement, volunteer management and safeguarding; and experienced lay reviewers from a range of relevant professional backgrounds including

three registered nurses, a magistrate, retired Dept of Health lawyer and a CQC inspection manager. Details of HWES Authorised Representatives can be [viewed here](#)

Reviewers worked in pairs to interview individual residents. This enabled one reviewer to focus their full attention on the resident while the other noted the questionnaire responses.

HWES provided a £20 supermarket voucher or postal order as a ‘reward and recognition’ to residents participating in this study.

### **3.4 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

The activity was carried out with strict observation of GDPR. This report will be circulated widely both to professionals and in the public domain, and personal information about individual residents will not be shared.

Some Kendal Court residents will have at some point experienced significant emotional and mental trauma or have conditions which could impact on their willingness to trust our reviewers.

We therefore collected the absolute minimum of personal data necessary to correctly record responses, avoid duplication and issue completion rewards. Only flat numbers were recorded unless individuals specifically consented to HWES referring elsewhere for support.

### **3.5 Equalities Monitoring**

During the planning stage of activity, we recognised that requesting standard equalities monitoring information could be a potential barrier to successful engagement with residents. Due to the small cohort of possible respondents, detailed equalities information could also enable individuals to be identified. However, our reviewers were asked to note signs which could indicate ill health, disability or self-neglect, accents (local, regional or overseas), and broad estimation of age and ethnicity. Some residents voluntarily offered information about their ethnicity and other characteristics, which was noted.

### **3.6 Analysis of results**

Following each engagement session, the reviewers uploaded responses to a secure online data collection and analysis tool. Given the non-sequential nature of free text qualitative answers, all responses gathered during the review were scanned firstly for broad trends and then filtered and examined more closely for specific information.

### **3.7 Presentation of findings**

Responses are grouped according to the topic of each main question. Some interviewing prompts, such as those eliciting responses about change, appear in more than one question. For clarity, we have grouped the responses according to the main question about change (Q5). HWES recognises the value of verbatim quotes and seeks to record these in all our engagement interactions. They can make an important point using very

few words and are a prominent feature of the findings detailed in section 4 (Quotes are *italicised* in this report).

### **3.8 Continuous Engagement**

Following specific engagement projects, HWES always seeks ways of continuing to engage with those who have taken part in activities.

Our plan for this project is to write to all residents, as we did in 2018, to thank them for participating, include a reminder that they are welcome to use our information and signposting service, and to offer a brief single page summary of our report in an easy read “You said, we did” format. (See Appendix 6 for the 2018 example).

## 4 Feedback from residents

28 residents took part in interviews out of a median occupancy of 42 out of 54 flats. This can be calculated as a response rate of 66%. According to information gathered from site staff, there were 12 - 13 flats vacant or otherwise not for use during the activity period of 02/08/21 - 13/08/21 inclusive.

This leaves 14 residents who were not engaged with this activity. We understood from site staff and some other residents that a few people barely leave their flat and avoid engaging with others when they do. The views of residents who, for whatever reason, are the most withdrawn, are therefore not represented in the findings of this report. We also learned that a small number of residents did not appear to live full time at Kendal Court; visiting only to collect post.

### 4.1 Summary of findings

- 54% of residents who took part in the engagement activity expressed an overall satisfaction with their experience of living at Kendal Court, but responses varied a great deal with 3 people rating it between 1-2 (worst). Conversely, 4 residents rated it as 10 (excellent). The comments which accompanied these scores therefore ranged between expressing significant distress, to being satisfied or very pleased with the accommodation. In the main, people reflected that Kendal Court is better than where they have been in the past, comparing it with prison, hostel accommodation or rough sleeping.
- 78% of respondents specifically mentioned having received no information prior to their arrival about the facilities at Kendal Court or local services. They obtained verbal information from either the caretaker or other residents in the days following their arrival.
- 53% of respondents spoke about lack of access to mental health support; either for themselves or expressed concern about the needs of other residents. One person said: *“These people need care. This is not a care home.”* Some residents said that mental health support should be provided locally and could even take place at Kendal Court.
- Generally, there was a sense that the place was relatively calm, with little disturbance. Some described it as “quiet” and enjoyed the sense of being private. However, nearly 43% of responses expressed feeling isolated or fearful at Kendal Court.
- 42% of respondents said that the caretaker was helpful in providing them with both local information and basic items for daily living if any were in store. However, there appears to be significant variation in what tenants are provided with, which suggests the absence of an “essentials checklist” for new arrivals. Given that many new residents have arrived from either an institution such as prison, or rough sleeping, it is easy to anticipate that they will bring with them few or no household belongings.

- More than third of respondents felt that the distance from their formal or informal support systems in Brighton and Hove impacted their wellbeing. Some mentioned travel costs on a very low income as an additional barrier
- Several people said they were grateful for “a roof over my head”, and more than half were positive about the general standard, privacy and security of the accommodation
- Background factors for people at Kendal Court include having been in prison, in care, having a history of substance misuse and dependency and mental health issues
- There was a mixed response regarding awareness of or satisfaction from contact with the BHCC welfare officer, who visits weekly. There seemed to be uncertainty about the kind of support they could provide. Two people said they were uncomfortable with having to discuss their problem with the welfare officer while other staff were present in the caretaker’s office as it lacked privacy and confidentiality
- Residents made useful suggestions for improvements which included a common room/area for residents, weekly support sessions from the mental health team, gym equipment and better training for night security staff to support residents in difficulty
- Three incidents involving safeguarding concerns were highlighted during the review. One was jointly shared with Safeguarding Teams in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. The remaining two individuals were referred to the East Sussex Team

The following subsections provide figures and more detail about residents’ answers to our five main questions and suggested prompts as described in Methodology (section 3).

## 4.2 Detail of Findings

### Q1. How do you find living at Kendal Court?

- Prompts:
- What has worked well for you?
  - What do you find most difficult?
  - What changes would you like to see?
  - If you could change one thing about Kendal Court, what would it be?

Most residents who took part in the engagement activity expressed an overall satisfaction with their experience of living at Kendal Court by way of a score rating (1-10, where 10 is excellent), but the responses to this question varied a great deal which is reflected as follows:

- 15 (54%) gave a score from 6 upwards including 4 scoring at 10 (excellent)
- 10 (36%) people gave a score of 5 or below, including 3 (11%) who gave scores of 2 or under
- 3 (11%) people gave no score

Comments ranged between expressing significant distress, to being generally satisfied or very pleased with the accommodation. In the main, people reflected that Kendal Court

is better than where they have been in the past, comparing it with being homeless and sleeping in hostels and on the street.

Most respondents made both positive and negative comments about Kendal Court, with only three people providing entirely neutral (*I don't know*) responses or not answering the question.

#### **Things that work well at Kendal Court:**

17 (60%) of respondents made a total of 23 positive comments about the quality and facilities of the accommodation at Kendal Court.

15 people thought it was a good standard and were pleased with it. Comments included:

*It's spot on*

*It's nice having my own private space*

*Having laundry here is much easier than going to Seaford*

*Electricity tokens usually available 24/7*

9 people specifically said that it was good to “*have a roof over my head*” and were pleased to have their own self-contained flat and space.

The caretaker was mentioned positively by 12 people, including 2 whose feedback was negative about almost everything else. They found him helpful in providing them with local information and basics including kettles, bedding etc, if any were in the store.

*The caretaker is very friendly and helpful, fixes things that break.*

7 (25%) people appreciated the security arrangements on site. *I feel safe now.*

#### **Things that are difficult about living at Kendal Court:**

24 (85%) respondents made a total of 58 comments about difficult aspects of living at Kendal Court. This number does not include comments about information or mental health support which are detailed later.

Comments can be grouped in the following way:

- 15 comments about quality of mattress or lack of bedding, plumbing problems & other repairs, insulation related issues (noise, temperature)
- 12 comments about feelings of isolation or fear/discomfort of neighbours
- 10 comments about distance from services or informal support
- 7 comments about the cost of electric and laundry utilities
- comments about money worries or budgeting
- comments about visiting restrictions in place at Kendal Court
- 4 comments about access to GP and/or Covid vaccine

Comments included:

*Drains block easily. [Caretaker] fixed it a bit but still don't work well.*

*Room is good sized but poor air circulation on top floor, even if window open. Odours from other flats.*

*Had to take out a Universal Credit loan to buy basic necessities such as cutlery, pots and pans, sheets etc. Worrying about paying the loan back.*

A significant minority of at least 10 people indicated they were very unhappy at Kendal Court. 2 people described it as “awful”, another 2 people said it was “stressful”.

12 (43%) people made comments relating to fear, isolation & noise:

*Feels very 'isolated' at Kendal Court, only spoken to [caretaker] since arriving [2 weeks ago].*

*stressful, depressing and soul destroying*

*Most of the time I'm frustrated and having nightmares. I'm scared for my wellbeing. I don't get any support or help from anyone.*

*Grim - experiences bad anxiety and panic attacks. Dumping ground. Worse than prison*

Comments about neighbours included problems with noise levels, and another reporting that other residents taunted him about his religious beliefs. Another resident observed:

*Sometimes [people] bully others but it's not bad at the moment*

*There isn't much confrontation between tenants.*

What one change would you like to see? See Question 5 about suggested changes.

## Q2 Could you tell us how you came to be placed at Kendal Court?

Prompts:

- How long have you lived here?
- Where did you move from?
- How does this compare? Better, same or worse?
- What information were you given before coming here and by whom?

How long have you lived here?	No of respondents
0-3 months	9
3-6 months	3
6 months - 1yr	7
1 year to 2yrs	3
More than 2yrs	3
Length of time not stated	3
All respondents	28

One person had been at Kendal Court for about six years and said that they had noticed some improvements over that time.



2 people said they had been told by Brighton and Hove City Council that they would only be at Kendal Court for about 50 days, but at the time of interview, their length of stay was well beyond this.

17 (60%) respondents said they had moved to Kendal Court from locations such as prison, hostel accommodation, rough sleeping or had been discharged from a health or care facility. Of those 17 respondents, 14 said that Kendal Court was better than where they were before, but also commented on some difficult or inconvenient aspects of living there.

6 (21%) said that Kendal Court was the same or worse than where they were before. Of those 6, 4 were from places other than from rough sleeping, hostel accommodation or prison.

5 (17%) did not answer the question.

Residents were asked about the information they received prior to arriving at Kendal Court, and what was provided on arrival regarding information and household/daily living items.

22 of 28 responses (78%) specifically mentioned having received no information, apart from the address, about Kendal Court prior to their arrival. i.e. they did not know about the accommodation facilities, cash required for utilities and key deposit, or local services such as foodbank, health or care services. Respondents indicated that this type of information was obtained verbally from either the caretaker or other residents on arrival or in the days following. This is a key finding of the activity and was also a key finding of our engagement activity in 2018.

These residents also commented on the lack of essential items on arrival at Kendal Court.

*I had no information apart from the address. Arrived with nothing.*

12 (43%) people made positive comments about the caretaker including 4 who mentioned that he helped them with some items whenever he could. However, there appears to be a great deal of variation in what tenants are provided with, and what they have to do without, which suggests the absence of an “essentials checklist” for new arrivals. Given that many new residents have arrived from either an institution such as prison, or rough sleeping, it is easy to anticipate that they will bring with them few or no household belongings.

*Was given a food parcel when I arrived but no tin opener, knives, forks etc*

*It [the flat] had bed and mattress but nothing else when I arrived. The mattress is very old. [Caretaker] sorted out some bedding and the previous tenant left a kettle and toaster*

*No bedding or anything, not even a kettle.*

One person described the caretaker as “amazing”, in terms of the help he provided when they first arrived.



### Q3. Is there anything troubling you in your day-to-day life?

Prompts:

- Health and wellbeing?
- Getting help and support?
- Money or benefits?
- Getting food, cooking equipment or bedding?

17 people (61%) reported that they had mental health issues and/or difficulties relating to substance misuse and addiction. 4 of these people said they were accessing support, but 15 (53%) of all respondents specifically mentioned lack of access to mental health support; either for themselves, or they expressed concern about the needs of other residents and that there was no support on site for such people. This is a key finding of our engagement activity.

Residents' comments were recorded as follows:

*Not nice here - so many people with mental health issues, some so frightened they don't want to come out of [their] room*

*It is hell to me being here but I have no choice. I wasn't given any information by anyone but I was just dumped here by housing benefit.*

[paraphrased by interviewer]: Has a psychiatric nurse and a [recovery] worker. However, neither has been to see him or support him at KC, they only contact him by phone. They are both based in Brighton and Hove, so when he needs to see them, he has to go to them. This costs about £6 on the bus.

Some residents said that mental health support should be provided locally and could even take place at Kendal Court. See Question 5 for residents' suggestions for change.

When answering other questions with our reviewers, some respondents also spoke of poor access to mental health services and mentioned specific concerns such as:

- Feeling lonely and isolated
- Needing more support from mental health (MH) services
- Hears voices and waiting for mental health services.
- Trying to get help with MH - been diagnosed with depression, PTSD and a personality disorder.
- Anxiety and/or depression.
- Panic attacks
- Self-harming
- Feelings of fear affecting his mental health.

There was a marked difference between those people who were troubled but had good support and those who did not. 3 people said they were receiving effective support from either mental health services or a voluntary organisation. Some others had friends and family, usually in Brighton, who were able to support them.

10 respondents felt that the distance from their formal or informal support systems in Brighton and Hove impacted their wellbeing. Some mentioned travel costs on a very low income as an additional barrier.

3 respondents had no phone, one saying that they had not found a public phone in Newhaven. This is clearly a significant communication barrier for both resident and support service.

#### Q4. Where do you get support from?

Prompts:

- Friends and family? Health and care services? Community groups? Others?
- How easy is it to get support?
- Does the support provide what you need?
- Is anything missing?

27 of 28 respondents answered this question with 56 comments relating to support. There was some repetition of answers given to previous questions. This question and accompanying prompts elicited feedback about more than one type of support and accessibility, and the extent to whether the respondent found them useful.

*Sources of support included:*

- SCDA Foodbank
- Friends, family or neighbours
- Probation Officer
- Mental Health Team & Health in Mind
- GP
- Frances Taylor Foundation
- Drug & Alcohol Recovery Services
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- St Mungo's
- BHCC housing or welfare officer
- Site staff at Kendal Court

The most significant access issue was to do with residents realising their need for support but either making unsuccessful attempts to contact services or not knowing how or where to start trying to engage. 10 (35%) respondents indicated difficulties about this.

*I have tried many times but still I can't get any support*

*It's very hard for me to get support when I need it*

*I don't get support or help from anyone*

Although 4 people said they had registered with a local GP, 2 were having trouble getting an appointment. One person who had only recently transferred had been unable to get an appointment despite being close to running out of essential medication.

8 people said they had remained registered with their Brighton GP. Reasons for this included being worried about difficulties registering with a new out-of-area practice, a preference for continuation with staff who knew them, or because they were accessing related support services also based in Brighton.

4 people said they get support from other residents at Kendal Court and the caretaker. The type of support provided by the caretaker in this context was not specified i.e to do with accommodation and facilities, or other kinds of support which may not be formally part of his role.

2 people made positive comments about the BHCC welfare officer, but another 4 people indicated that their contact with the officer had not been helpful to them.

16 (57%) people said their support systems were in Brighton and Hove. Family and friends were mentioned as being key sources of support, with several residents also accessing one or more other formal support services.

2 people said they did not need any kind of support, and a further 6 people said they didn't need any more than the support currently in place.

## **Q5. What changes would help you the most?**

Prompt: Is there anything you need but can't get?

9 people (32%) either did not answer the question or did not suggest any specific changes, although several of these respondents mentioned problems which were difficult either for them or others.

The remaining 19 respondents made suggestions as follows:

3 people wished for mental health support on site, and linked to this, another 3 people suggested that site staff be trained to provide support for those in difficulty, especially at night.

While at least 5 residents hoped to change their location back towards Brighton, 4 others suggested a more pleasant outdoor space and/or a common room for exercise and meeting others for friendship and support. For some people, there was a real sense of supporting each other and being aware of the support needs of others.

Other suggestions for change included the following:

- Cheaper electricity & laundry
- Help to access help for money worries, debt or legal problems
- Panic buttons in flats for residents
- Better mattresses and/or household equipment such as cookware and tin opener.
- Better repairs (plumbing, heater) and insulation from noise and temperature.

One person wanted more ways to join in on things going on locally, and another only wanted Sky TV and a BBQ.

Comments include the following, grouped by topic:

Mental health and other support:

- *Need mental health support here rather than Brighton.*
- *There should be someone here once a week from the Mental Health team for us to talk to. I need supported living can't cope on my own.*
- *Need to have night support*
- *I 'get on with it' day to day but not easy for everyone*
- *Getting through to housing dept & information about getting my own place, otherwise no changes.*
- *All ok - have friends*

Site facilities:

- *Would like help getting pots and pans and better mattress as this one gives me a painful back.*
- *Better room conditions, bed is awful, uncomfortable. Using duvet on mattress [springs poking through]*
- *OK at the moment as it's summer, but heater faulty or broken. Need to take it up with maintenance service.*
- *Good having security on site - panic buttons in rooms would/could reduce deaths*
- *I would like to live in a safer place than Kendal Court. [resident did not specify in what way he felt endangered]*
- *A new bedroom with taller ceilings*

## **Q6. Other comments and themes: Anything else you want to tell us?**

8 people (29%) had nothing they wished to add. Most others re-stated points which were important to them.

Responses recorded by our reviewers include the following quotes (italics) and paraphrases:

General positive comments:

- *2 years clean and proud of this*
- *Just happy to have a roof over my head*
- *Flat is cosy, I like the location, near the station and the gym.*
- *He wanted us to know that he thought LGBTQ people would be safe at KC.*

General negative/critical comments:

- *Seeing others suffer is not nice.*
- *I've started drinking again, this is not a nice place to be*
- *One problem is boredom. Would like a gym or gym equipment to keep me busy.*
- *Construction site next door is very noisy*

- Should have an information sheet giving basic information eg about the electricity, food bank, etc. He feels "frustrated" for other people in the block, who clearly have mental health issues but they get no support. Staff are very good, helpful and friendly.
- Feels 'very isolated' No support before or after arriving. Council 'unhelpful' and providing outdated information regarding services. GP has referred resident to mental health services but has not heard anything from them. Was told he would only need to wait a couple days but has been over a week.
- He is ok as he is out to work 5 days a week but feels sorry for the others who have nothing to do during the day. Other people need mental health support but don't get it.
- Felt there was no support for residents after the deaths at the accommodation.
- Winter is challenging at Kendal Court due to cold.
- Feels emergency services are unwilling to come to Kendal Court due to poor reputation.

## 4.2 Equalities Monitoring

As stated in the methodology, the characteristics of respondents were observed and recorded by the researchers, although some information was pro-actively offered by the participating residents.

### Ethnicity

- 17 respondents either identified themselves or were estimated to be of white British ethnicity.
- 9 respondents either identified themselves or were estimated to be of African, Central/South Asian or European ethnicity.
- 2 - unknown

### Age:

- 15 (53%) respondents were in 30-49 age group
- 3 were estimated as being under 30yrs old
- 5 were estimated as being 50+ years old
- 5 were unspecified

### Disability & health conditions disclosed by residents included:

- Mental Health conditions: anxiety, depression, hearing voices, personality disorder, Post Traumatic Syndrome Disorder (PTSD)
- Diabetes
- Epilepsy

- Learning difficulty (ADHD, Dyslexia)

### **4.3 Safeguarding**

- HWES raised three safeguarding concerns during the review according to relevant protocols. One was jointly shared with Safeguarding Teams in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. The remaining two individuals were referred to the East Sussex Team.

## 5 Feedback from partners and service providers

In undertaking this research, Healthwatch East Sussex received feedback about Kendal Court and its residents from three organisations with whom we often work in partnership: Citizens Advice Bureau, Sussex Community Development Association (SCDA) and South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECAmb).

The feedback provided by each organisation is presented below.

### 5.1 Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

HWES was contacted by national advice organisation Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) regarding a resident of Kendal Court who was in crisis over his electricity supply. This example illustrates the complex needs of some residents, and the impact on physical and mental wellbeing resulting from lack of access to basic utilities of daily living.

A full copy of the correspondence is located in Appendix 5, and a summary of the key points as understood by CAB from the client is presented below:

- Citizens Advice contacted by an individual with severe mental health issues including psychosis. Also has epilepsy.
- Unable to buy electricity meter card because no money. Therefore no electricity in his flat to maintain refrigeration of food, cook or heat food, obtain hot water or to charge his phone to seek further support. The client needs to take his medication with food.
- A local welfare scheme who provide food stated they could not help with utilities. Food vouchers were provided by the Council, but no support with electricity issue. No schemes provide 'cash support' which is required for electricity purchase at Kendal Court.
- The apparent scheme for electricity top ups is that they need cash to purchase a paper voucher for the meter and this can only be done via the caretaker when they are 'on site' at Kendal Court. Issues in communicating with caretaker.
- Information pack from the electricity provider for emergencies was sent via email, but individual unable to read or understand it.
- I will be raising concerns internally via our social policy scheme about this location and also re the DWP and local authority who both felt it was ok to turn our client away without assistance despite knowing of his vulnerability and mental health issues.
- Lack of information or details on local support networks and organisations an issue for both the resident and the ability of organisations such as CAB to offer support.



## 5.2 Sussex Community Development Association (SCDA)

Sussex Community Development Association (SCDA) deliver [Community Food and Advice](#) services in the Seahaven areas including emergency food parcels. Since the pandemic they have been delivering regular food parcels to residents at Kendal Court as well as supporting individuals face to face at the centre on Denton Island for essential living items. They report that residents arriving at Kendal Court often have no access to basic essential items for cooking, bedding and means to pay for electricity.

These issues are long standing, first identified in the review of 2018 and still presenting in 2021. Following the 2018 review & report, regular meetings were set up between East Sussex and Brighton and Hove City Council housing and social care teams to:

- Establish a forum for regular dialogue
- Receive updates on any recommendations made that were being implemented
- Provide assurances that the health and support needs of vulnerable residents were being addressed
- To act as an early warning system to prevent further loss of life at the accommodation

The meetings take place every 6 weeks. However, SCDA are still not assured that the health and support needs of vulnerable residents are met. Sometimes information shared by BHCC is contradictory and lacks clarity e.g. recent assurances [in 2021] by BHCC that all Kendal Court residents are provided with food parcels through an arranged provider. This service actually ceased in June 2020.

Other difficulties around communication with BHCC highlighted by SCDA include:

- Issues for residents around paying for and the costs of electricity. Requests to BHCC for unit cost to be disclosed have not been answered
- The length of time for actions to be implemented i.e. laundry services, now in place but with issues around charges and capacity (machine size & quantity)
- Welfare Officer Support and challenges regarding information sharing pathways. The welfare officer is not always aware that someone has been placed at Kendal Court and only finds out when they undertake weekly drop-in sessions on a Wednesday. There have been occasions when a resident moves in on a Thursday or Friday with no food, electric or basics and has nothing until the following Wednesday. As soon as SCDA are informed they can respond, e.g. urgent delivery of emergency food parcels, electricity voucher, basic kitchen essentials
- Liaison and communication pathways between BHCC and SCDA are not regular and consistent. Previous attempts by SCDA to communicate regularly, share information, and formalise an information sharing & referral pathway with BHCC have been unsuccessful until the most recent multi-agency meeting when BHCC confirmed that they are happy to discuss an agreed pathway. See recommendations section 7 of this report.



Moving forward, a more rigorous monitoring structure is required to ensure there is compliance with any agreed actions and recommendations made in this report.

### 5.3 South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMB)

A week before the start of our planned engagement activity at Kendal Court, HWES became aware of two incidents at the site which took place within days of each other. A resident was found dead in his flat, and another needed emergency treatment for self-inflicted injury.

To better understand the frequency and nature of ambulance attendance at this site, and to provide comparison, we requested non confidential call out data from SECAMB during like-for-like periods in 2018 and 2021.

As shown in the table below, the overall number of 999 calls is significantly lower in 2021 than in 2018, and the number of patients requiring hospital treatment in 2021 is less than a quarter of those in 2018.

It is concerning that mental health was the most common reason for call out both in 2018 and 2021. This suggests that appropriate support is not in place for some residents who have significant mental health care needs.

Two safeguarding referrals were made by SECAMB since January 2021.

	From 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2018 - 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2018	From 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2021 - 13 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
999 calls	64	29
NHS 111 calls	6	10
Ambulance attendances where the patient has been discharged/referred on scene	13	9
Ambulance attendances where the patient has been conveyed to hospital	23	5
Most common presenting complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Breathing problems</li> <li>• General medical related calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Medical related calls</li> <li>• Bleeding</li> </ul>

## 6 Conclusions

The findings from our engagement activities with residents at Kendal Court, together with feedback from other organisations have led us to develop four main conclusions from this study, two of which directly relate to mental health assessments and support.

### **1. That some residents should not be at Kendal Court because their level of vulnerability and (mostly mental health) related support needs cannot be provided or monitored adequately.**

A number of residents expressed significant concerns over their own circumstances and wellbeing, identifying a self-awareness of their issues, as well as the challenges they experienced in accessing timely and appropriate support. This is also reflected in the feedback provided by other stakeholders and support organisations that have regular contact with Kendal Court residents.

It is clear that these issues have a significant impact on the individuals themselves, but also have a knock-on effect on other residents, as well as staff. Emergency and other local services are also required to respond to issues when preventative action and ongoing support may be more appropriate.

While the helpfulness of site staff is clearly valued by many residents, their role is essentially to operate the site facilities, maintain order and facilitate the comings and goings of residents. As far as we are aware, they are not trained or required to provide personal support, signposting or referral of residents to services other than emergency services.

This was evidenced during our fortnight of activity by the raising of 3 safeguarding concerns about residents by HWES representatives who are well qualified to recognise when this action is necessary, and further supported by data from SECAMB which show 2 safeguarding referrals made as a result of contact via 999 calls.

We can only report feedback from those who engaged with our activity. 14 residents who were recorded as living there, did not, for whatever reason take part. From the information gathered from other residents and site staff, it seems that some residents rarely leave their flat, while a very small number seem to be mainly absent.

It seems likely therefore that of those 14 people, there will be some who are in great need of support services. If they are withdrawn and socially isolated, they are likely to be less confident in engaging with neighbours or site staff to gather useful information which would help their situation.

It may be easier to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of those residents by holistic assessment at the time of placement, because once they are in self-contained accommodation without any obvious route to support, the opportunities to engage them towards recovery are reduced.

**2. Many residents could cope better at Kendal Court if they were accessing appropriate mental health support services.**

Mental health is a cross-cutting theme which featured strongly throughout our engagement. Therefore, the provision of appropriate and accessible support for residents is key.

We do not say that all residents with mental health support needs should not be at Kendal Court; at least 3 people we spoke to were accessing mental health services which appeared to be working well for them, despite some needing to budget for and travel to Brighton to their appointments.

The key issue is that once a person is placed at Kendal Court, those who have mental health support needs do not seem able to access this for themselves. This potentially hinders early intervention and preventative action.

Again, even if the caretaker and security staff recognise that an individual needs support, we understand that their roles and remit do not require or equip them to refer.

With training and collaborative working between the housing team, mental health provision and social care colleagues, multi-disciplinary support needs could be identified at the placing assessment, enabling the client to be connected to appropriate services at an earlier stage and then monitored during their residence at Kendal Court.

**3. All residents at Kendal Court would have an improved experience of residing there (including self-management and in seeking support) if they were suitably informed, orientated and equipped on arrival.**

We found that many residents appear to be coping with their placement at Kendal Court. They indicate that because their needs are being met, they can organise themselves, manage distance and travel to their support arrangements and are confident at the site. However, even the residents providing the most positive feedback commented on the un-informed and haphazard manner of their arrival and orientation.

Accessing information and equipment prior to and on arrival appears to be a problem for every new resident at Kendal Court. This hinders residents' experience and their ability to undertake day-to-day tasks. It is disappointing that this was identified in the 2018 study and corresponding recommendations to address it were provided at that point.

Provision of basic information would greatly aid orientation, especially for those not familiar with the area, site or local support services (some of which have changed significantly during the pandemic). Similarly, provision of necessities would be of benefit and ensure that all residents start on a similar footing.

**4. Feedback from residents and other organisations demonstrate the important, often essential roles played by Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations in supporting people in need at Kendal Court.**

Residents who were accessing services through this sector recognised and appreciated the value of their input. The words of one resident who said: *"I don't know where I would be without them"* invites us to reflect on the practical and economic

consequences for statutory services if the VCSE sector could not or did not provide support which prevents or reduces people needing emergency intervention.

This input needs to be appropriately recognised and supported and reinforces the call for appropriate orientation to be undertaken and support information to be shared with residents on arrival.

## 7 Recommendations

### 7.1 Recommendations for the East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB)

1. The HWB will review their work programme to include ongoing monitoring of people's experiences placed in Emergency and Temporary Accommodation (ETA) as part of a wider commitment to addressing health inequalities.

### 7.2 System Recommendations for Statutory Authorities and service providers

2. Individuals with multiple and complex needs should not be placed at Kendal Court even if other recommendations are implemented.
3. Individuals should have their health and care needs assessed by mental health and/or social care professionals at the time of their housing placement assessment. Where this is not possible an assessment should be completed within a few days of being placed. Placing authorities should consider attaching a member of their Adult Social Care team or a mental health professional to Homelessness Services for this purpose.
4. Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) and mental health providers should establish an effective system of support for people's mental health needs based in Newhaven, ideally including on-site support at Kendal Court. This could be achieved through regular drop-in sessions from the Mental Health Team or by commissioning voluntary organisations to provide services.
5. A clear holistic needs **assessment & referral pathway** is needed for homeless people. This should detail who is responsible for what at each point in that pathway, involving the relevant disciplines (housing, physical and mental health, social care, safeguarding, criminal justice system, and emergency services) and across administrative borders. This would provide clarity for all staff and relevant parties and provide accountability at each stage in the process, particularly with out of area placements.

VCSE organisations to be referenced and included in assessment and referral pathways. Given that residents can become isolated and withdrawn in self-contained accommodation, early referral to and engagement with appropriate voluntary organisations offers a great potential for implementing a preventative care agenda.

The commissioning of voluntary organisations should therefore be fully explored for their viability to deliver preventative care and work in partnership to achieve best outcomes for residents. Options for partnership working with other organisations could include:

- Obtaining client consent to refer and share information with key local services such as Foodbanks (SCDA in Newhaven) or other relevant voluntary services

responding to particular health conditions or disabilities.

- Providing access to a menu of related services available at or near emergency and temporary accommodation sites e.g. social prescribing, Citizens Advice Bureau, financial literacy, substance misuse services and visits by GP based paramedics.

These initiatives could provide an early and positive start in achieving long term wellbeing outcomes for individual residents and could achieve a system cost benefit compared to frequent and repeated use of emergency and more acute services.

6. **Standardised information should be provided** to all residents in Emergency Temporary Accommodation (including those at Kendal Court), both prior to and following arrival, including:

- Amount of cash needed for arrival (electricity meter & key deposit) and ongoing expenses
- Public transport options, and caretaker's hours
- A checklist of household items which will be provided and those which are not
- Key information about local services including: GP, Foodbanks, Dentist, Pharmacy, transport, other support services and advice, shops & post office.
- Contact details for both statutory mental health services and for voluntary sector services such as Samaritans and Mind.

7. A number of site, staffing and placement management options should be considered by Brighton and Hove City Council in relation to Kendal Court:

- **Consistent provision of essential items** for new arrivals, with a clear sanitising procedure and serviceability checks for the transfer of pre-owned items such as mattresses, bedding and electrical items. Future procurement of Emergency Temporary Accommodation in East Sussex should specify and deliver minimum standards for facilities such as laundry, wi-fi, communal space, confidential meeting space, security, service and utility charges etc.
- **Phone and email contact with on-site staff.** Contact details for Kendal Court site staff and linked services should be provided to residents and made available to friends/relative and external organisations. This will allow contact to be maintained, enable delivery of support and allow concerns to be identified and responded to.
- **More clarity and consumer rights information** provided for residents about electricity and other cash charges made on site. The name of the electricity provider should be clear to residents, together with the unit charge. Receipts should be given for all cash transactions.

- **Confidential meeting space:** Another Portakabin could provide a communal area for residents, but also be used for health, care, VCSE professionals, or the welfare officer to meet with people in a confidential space. A transparent partition or door and an alarm button could be fitted as a means of keeping people safe.
  - **Laundry facilities:** The laundry facility is welcome but inadequate for the number of residents. There is only one domestic type washer and dryer and no outdoor drying equipment. Rotary driers could be easily installed in the site yard. These could be removable for daytime use only while the caretaker and security staff are active, to prevent damage or injury during the caretaker's absence.
  - **Exercise & wellbeing:** Other suggestions for use of outdoor space could be a bike rack, benches for seating, a greened area, or a type of simple fixed base outdoor gym equipment.
8. Healthwatch East Sussex recommends that 'The Emergency Accommodation Charter' drawn up by Eastbourne Citizens Advice, Justlife & Fulfilling Lives in collaboration with Temporary Accommodation Action Groups (TAAG) in Brighton and East Sussex is fully implemented as it closely reflects the evidence leading to our recommendations. The [Brighton Hove Draft Emergency Accommodation Charter](#) was presented at the [BHCC Housing Committee Sept 2020](#) with an agreement from committee members both then and at the [BHCC Housing Committee Nov 2020](#) to progress and implement the principles it contains.

### 7.3 Recommendations for Healthwatch East Sussex (HWES)

9. HWES to seek reassurances that a response will be received when raising safeguarding concerns across Local Authority boundaries and that adequate support has been put in place.
10. HWES to take the learning from this study to inform how we carry out future reviews at other Emergency Temporary Accommodation establishments in East Sussex.
11. HWES to share the learning from this review with statutory and voluntary sector partners across Sussex, other local Healthwatch and with Healthwatch England.

### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our volunteers, VCSE and statutory partners, Kendal Court residents and site-staff for enabling and supporting this activity.



## 8 Appendix 1: Engagement Questions

### Questions for Kendal Court Residents

#### Background

This document is to guide HWES staff and volunteers undertaking semi-structured interviews and engagement with residents of Kendal Court, Newhaven.

It contains a list of key questions that staff/volunteers should seek to ask. This includes some prompts that may help when engaging with participants and in encouraging a response.

Please be aware that this process may involve populating this sheet with personal and confidential information. Correspondingly:

- It **MUST NOT** be left where others can access it - either in hard copy or electronically.
- It **MUST** be returned to Healthwatch East Sussex as soon as possible or be securely destroyed/shredded following uploading of results.
- **No** personal or other details should be communicated via email.

#### Interview/Engagement details:

Date of interview	
Time of interview	
Flat number of resident	
HWES interviewer	
HWES note-taker	

#### Interviewer observations

- Approximate age
- Appearance
- Any other comments

--

#### How do find living at Kendal Court?

Prompts:

- What has worked well for you?
- What do you find most difficult?
- What changes would you like to see?
- If you could change one thing about Kendal Court what would it be?

--



<b>Could you share with us how you came to be placed at Kendal Court?</b>									
Prompts:									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you lived here long? Where did you move from?</li> <li>• How does this compare? Is it better, the same or worse?</li> <li>• What information were you given before coming here &amp; by whom?</li> </ul>									
<b>Is anything troubling you in your day-to-day life?</b>									
Prompts:									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your health and wellbeing?</li> <li>• Getting help and support?</li> <li>• Money or benefits?</li> </ul>									
<b>Where do you get support or help from?</b>									
Prompts:									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends and family?; Health and care services?; Community groups?; Others?</li> <li>• How easy is it to get support?</li> <li>• Does the support provide what you need?</li> <li>• Is anything missing?</li> </ul>									
<b>What changes would help you the most?</b>									
Prompts:									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there any support you need but can't get?</li> </ul>									
<b>Anything else you want to tell us?</b>									

**Overall, how would you rate your experience of living at Kendal Court?**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

## 9 Appendix 2: Participation letter 1

**healthwatch**  
East Sussex

30<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Resident

We would like to listen to what you think about being at Kendal Court.

We are independent of all councils and health or care services. Our job is to hear from you about your needs, and if there is anything you need help with or would like to change.

We will be around in the outside space in or next door to Kendal Court on different days during August. We will have ID, information which might be useful, and can offer a £20 voucher if we can complete a few questions with you.

You do not have to give your name, and we will make sure that the information you give us cannot identify you.

If you would like to take part but prefer to talk to us by phone, just

**Text us for a call back: 07860 018613**

or phone us on 0333 1014007

(standard network rates apply)

Thank you and we hope to meet you soon

Kind regards

**Kate Richmond**

Engagement Officer  
East Sussex Community Voice – *delivering Healthwatch East Sussex*  
Greencoat House, 32 St Leonards Road  
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Tel: 01323 403590



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Website: [www.healthwatcheastSussex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatcheastSussex.co.uk)  
Registered Company Number: 8270069

## 10 Appendix 3: Participation letter 2 (double sided)



9<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear Resident

We are keen to find out what you think about being at Kendal Court.

We are independent of all councils and health or care services. Our job is to hear from you about your needs, and if there is anything you need help with or would like to change.

Turn over the page for dates in August when we will be around in the outside space at Kendal Court. Please feel welcome to come and meet us.

We will have ID, information which might be useful, and can offer a £20 voucher if we can complete a few questions with you.

We will make sure that the information you give us cannot identify you. We will not talk about you with anyone else at Kendal Court or the council.

You can complete and return the questions in the Freepost envelope provided. If you would like to take part but prefer to talk to us by phone, just **Text us for a call back: 07860 018613** or phone us on 0333 1014007 (standard network rates apply)

We must receive your completed questionnaire by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> August. We will then post you a £20 Sainsburys voucher. Make sure you write your name and address on the front page!

Thank you and we hope to meet you.

**Kate Richmond**

Engagement Officer  
East Sussex Community Voice - *delivering Healthwatch East Sussex*  
Greencoat House, 32 St Leonards Road  
Eastbourne, East Sussex  
BN21 3UT  
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Website: [www.healthwatcheastSussex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatcheastSussex.co.uk)  
Registered Company Number: 8270069



**Healthwatch will be at Kendal Court in August 2021:**

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> August 3.30-5pm**

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August 11am-1pm & 2-4pm**

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August 11am - 1pm & 2-4pm**

We hope you come over and meet us  
or

Text us for a call back: 07860 018613

or

Phone 0333 1014007 (standard network rates apply)

11 Appendix 4: Participation flyer (double sided)

**healthwatch**  
East Sussex

**How is it for you at  
Kendal Court?**

**Tell us what you think**

**We are:**

- Confidential
- Caring
- Independent

**Take part in our survey and receive a  
£20 voucher**

**We are visiting Kendal Court during August  
Look out for us in the courtyard - we hope to meet you**

**Phone or text for a call back**  
*(standard network rates apply - we can call you back)*

**Call: 0333 101 4007**  
**Text only: 07860 018613**

Anything you tell us will be kept in the strictest confidence and your personal details will not be shared with anyone.



**healthwatch**  
East Sussex

**Information**  
and **Signposting**  
**Service**

**We are**

- Confidential
- Caring
- Independent

**We can help connect you to:**

- Health or care services
- Support groups
- Complaints advocacy

Call US (Mon - Fri 10am-2pm) **0333 101 4007**

Text only **07860 018613**

Email

**Enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk**



## 12 Appendix 5 - Feedback from Citizens Advice Bureau

Healthwatch East Sussex was contacted by national advice organisation Citizens Advice (CAB) regarding a resident of Kendal Court who was in crisis over his electricity supply. Here is a copy of the correspondence received. Some information has been redacted to preserve individual's identities.

*"I am contacting you just to raise your awareness of an issue I faced this morning with an extremely vulnerable client who has been placed temporarily in Kendal Court, Newhaven by Brighton Council.*

*I am actually based in xxxx but our advice line accepts national calls hence why the query came to me.*

*Our client has severe MH issues including psychosis plus suffers with epilepsy. He has previously attempted suicide and was literally at breaking point when I spoke with him.*

*Our client stated to me that he needed food to take his medication, but he had no electricity left with no means to purchase a top up voucher and was concerned that the only food he had left would 'go off' if he was left to wait till Monday. He also had no way of charging his phone which was on 4% battery, nor would he have any heating or hot water for personal hygiene reasons.*

*Our client tried to deal with this himself yesterday by approaching DWP for an advance payment through his Universal Credit (UC) but this was refused due to him already having a new claim advance that he is still repaying.*

*The local welfare scheme who provided food stated they would not help with utilities.*

*Our client also contacted our adviceline, but this was again picked up by an out of area adviser who did try to raise a request for our local office to contact the client but unfortunately this was not picked up before close of business yesterday.*

*The apparent scheme for electricity top ups is that they need cash to purchase a paper voucher for the meter and this can only be done via the caretaker when they are 'on site' at Kendal Court.*

*Our client states that he was given vouchers by the council for food but was told he would need to sort the electricity himself.*

*Our client states that he purchased food that needed to be kept in a fridge due to his previous time spent in prison which put him off most packet food and he also did not think about the food going off without electricity.*

*When our client queried how he would purchase electricity with no funds he was just told that no assistance was available that would provide him with cash.*

*Although I can appreciate the reasons for not doing this, it does not leave our client, or any other resident, any option when in an emergency situation.*

*Our client tried to speak with the Kendal Court caretaker this morning but stated that not only did they not speak great English, but he also indicated that he didn't know who could help our client anyway.*

*I asked our client if he had received an information pack with the electricity provider for emergencies included in it but our client stated that he had been sent this via email, but he could not read or understand it.*

*I asked our client to go to the meter to see if he could locate the supplier and a reference number in the hope that I could reach out to them for assistance, but our client stated that there was no information whatsoever either on the meter or in the cupboard which it is housed in.*

*I spoke with a lady called xxxx in social care who tried to locate any organisation who could help but she also drew a blank.*

*Unfortunately, due to not being based in the local area meant that I had no access to, or any information on, any local schemes that might have been able to offer emergency assistance.*

*Upon trying to google information for local support networks in and around Newhaven, I noticed that there is no information whatsoever available on how you can contact Kendal House, let alone in emergency situations.*

*I did however find a stream of complaints and/or concerns about this accommodation and the vulnerability of its residents including the report from yourselves ref: REP 7974 which also made reference to the electricity scheme.*

*I will be raising concerns internally via our social policy scheme about this location and also re the DWP and Local authority who both felt it was ok to turn our client away without assistance despite knowing of his vulnerability and mental health issues.*

*I am unsure if this accommodation is still being investigated by Healthwatch but genuinely believe that the issue with this electricity top up is one that either needs investigating, or further investigation being raised."*



## 13 Appendix 6: 2018 Short report for residents

Dear Kendal Court resident

We did a survey at Kendal Court a few months ago and would like to thank all those who took part. Here is a short report on what you told us about health and care services while living here, and what has happened since then.

Our full 22 page report is available online or you can see a printed copy at the Newhaven Foodbank at 31a High Street, Newhaven, BN9 9PD. The survey has ended but **Healthwatch** is still interested in your experience of health and care services now! – What works well? What doesn't? What would you change?

We are interested in hearing your views each and every time you use, or try to use a health or care service, so please feel welcome to contact us. The more feedback we get from you, the stronger your voice! You can remain anonymous if you prefer. Please get in touch:

**T: 0333 101 4007** (10 am to 2pm weekdays; or leave a voice message anytime)

**Text: 07493 328214** <https://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/>

### A Summary of what you told us:

- Kendal Court is better than rough sleeping or hostels. Positives include the privacy of an individual front door and not sharing a bathroom or cooking space. For some it is a dry and light living space.
- Not enough information about Kendal Court or Newhaven is provided for new arrivals, such as where to find the foodbank, GP or laundry.
- Basic items are not always provided on arrival, such as bedding, pots & pans, even when residents have no possessions of their own.
- Electricity meters can only be topped up via the caretaker Mon-Fri 9-5pm. No access for residents needing to top up outside of these hours.
- Half the residents of Kendal Court do not feel safe. Front doors have no spy holes or security chains and arguments between residents are noisy.
- Residents don't want to register with a GP in Newhaven due to worry of losing local connection to Brighton where many would like to return to.
- Most residents are very satisfied with their GP in Brighton or Newhaven.
- Most residents are not registered with a Dentist
- Some care, health and housing support needs have not been met and residents do not always know who to turn to for help.
- It's difficult to keep contact with family, friends and support networks in Brighton

- No laundry facilities at Kendal Court, the nearest laundrette is a 3 mile bus ride to Seaford. This is expensive, inconvenient and undignified.
- Difficult to afford travel costs to and from Brighton and other towns to attend appointments, especially those with physical or mental health problems. Travel passes to residents would help.
- No out of hours emergency contact (caretaker hours Mon-Friday 9-5pm)

### **What we noticed**

- Some residents chose not to answer the door and did not engage
- Access code locks on external doors of the building were not always in use or were known by non-residents. External doors were left open.
- The survey was difficult or uncomfortable to complete for some residents who felt ill, worried or upset.

### **What has happened since you spoke to us:**

- Weekly visits from Brighton & Hove City Council Welfare Support Officers to temporary accommodation sites including Kendal Court
- Improved response times from welfare support officers for Kendal Court residents when they are in crisis
- Mobile laundry facility now available one day a week at Kendal Court
- NHS and local authority services are trying to work more closely together across Brighton and East Sussex
- Professionals, councils and the public understand more about problems faced by people in temporary housing, especially when placed into another area outside Brighton & Hove.
- East Sussex Public Health is now planning a report on housing and homelessness later this year.

Thank you again to all those who took part, we hope this starts changing things for the better for all residents in temporary housing. Please tell us what you think of your health or care services when you have contact with them.

**T: 0333 101 4007** (10-2pm weekdays; or leave a voice message)

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END