

# Changing Futures Sussex Impact Briefing 2

Policy, Governance & Strategic  
Development



A report outlining the transformational impact of Changing Futures Sussex in achieving greater strategic prominence in policy, governance, and service development in the MCN Arena

# The Changing Futures Programme Sussex has enabled Multiple Compound Needs (MCN) to achieve greater strategic prominence in policy, governance, and service development

Changing Futures Sussex has transformed how multiple compound needs (MCN) is understood and prioritised - moving MCN from the periphery to the mainstream of strategic planning, governance, and commissioning decisions.

This has been achieved through sustained advocacy and high-level engagement with senior leaders, resulting in stronger cross-sector partnerships and increased accountability for how MCN is understood and prioritised across Sussex.

*"I have found Changing Futures to be immensely valuable in supporting complex clients. The collaborative approach has been excellent, they have been constantly patient-centred and have consistently prioritised the best interests of the individuals served. The service is well-managed, and any concerns are escalated promptly and efficiently. Overall, it is an outstanding service..."*

**Senior Mental Health Nurse (SPFT)**

# 1) Raising the profile of multiple compound needs

Changing Futures Sussex has significantly increased the visibility and prioritisation of MCN across Local Authorities and beyond. This is evidenced by the formal, system-wide embedding of MCN across several strategic policy frameworks at local and national levels.

## **MCN is now embedded in multiple Local Authority strategies and policies**

including Adult Social Care Strategies, Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategies, and Combatting Drugs Partnership Strategies.

## **MCN is reflected in wider system strategies**

including Safeguarding Adults Board Policy and Procedures, Integrated Care Board plans, NHS Trust policies, and the Pan Sussex Domestic Abuse Strategy.

## **MCN is reflected in national strategies**

including the National Homelessness Strategy, the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, the Child Poverty Strategy, and also the Local Outcomes Framework, all making specific and explicit reference to multiple disadvantage.

An [independent evaluation](#) of the system level impacts achieved by Changing Futures Sussex published in 2025 found that the programme had fostered greater multi-agency collaboration and decision-making, improved cross-sector collaboration and significantly raised the profile of individuals with MCN.

## 2) Collaborative, multi-agency governance

Changing Futures Sussex has formalised how local systems make decisions about MCN by championing the establishment of dedicated MCN governance structures across Sussex. Dedicated MCN Boards have been established, bringing together senior leaders from local authorities, health, housing, the voluntary sector, police and probation services to coordinate MCN strategy, commissioning, accountability, and system-wide collaboration.

**MCN Board established  
in West Sussex**  
in operation since January 2025

Changing Futures championed  
the establishment of MCN  
Board in East Sussex  
operating since July 2024



**MCN Steering Group** established in Brighton & Hove in  
2023 - now evolved into **Homeless and Multiple Compound  
Needs Integrated Community Team (HMCN ICT)**  
established in October 2025

All of these governance structures will continue beyond the Changing Futures funded period, helping to keep MCN firmly on the mainstream agenda and supporting its continued influence during and beyond local government reorganisation.

### 3) Direct influence on commissioning and service development

Changing Futures Sussex has influenced how local systems assess need and make decisions about commissioning, service planning, and service development for MCN across Sussex.



#### West Sussex Public Mental Health Needs Assessment 2024

Changing Futures Sussex supported the West Sussex Public Mental Health Needs Assessment (MHNA) 2024, which includes a dedicated chapter to MCN, deepening understanding of the issue.

People with lived experience informed the MHNA's design, priorities, and areas of focus through a Changing Futures co-production working group.

## West Sussex Homelessness Health and Wellbeing Needs Assessment 2026

Changing Futures Sussex is also supporting the West Sussex Homelessness Health and Wellbeing Needs Assessment. A Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG) has been established and peer researchers recruited.

This assessment will yield important insights into the experiences of individuals with MCN and inform future commissioning decisions. This is particularly significant given that 86% of individuals with MCN supported by Changing Futures in Sussex were experiencing homelessness when they first began working with the programme.

## Homeless & MCN Integrated Community Team (HMCN ICT) Compact Agreement in Brighton and Hove

The Compact Agreement formalises shared ways of working across all ICT partners and enables the design and commissioning of an integrated MCN system in Brighton and Hove. It also supports the transition of the Changing Futures multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) into the local authority structure after the programme ends in March 2026.

The Partnership is explicitly referenced in Priority 3 of Brighton and Hove City Council Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy as the mechanism to improve joined up working between the council's homelessness and homeless healthcare services. [The Strategy can be accessed here.](#)



## East Sussex Multiple Compound Needs Health Needs Assessment 2025

Changing Futures Sussex contributed to the East Sussex MCN Health Needs Assessment, undertaken by the East Sussex Public Health team in 2024 using advanced data-linking methodology, collating data across multiple sectors. Published in 2025, the assessment identified a significantly higher number of people in the county experiencing MCN than previously estimated. [The assessment can be found here.](#)

### Commissioning Network

The Sussex Commissioning Network was established by Changing Futures in May 2023, with in-person workshops held quarterly since then. Sessions typically bring together 20-25 commissioners, and the mailing list now includes over 100 people in commissioning roles across the three Sussex Upper Tier Local Authorities (covering Public Health, Adult Social Care, and Safer Communities), Integrated Care Board (ICB), Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, Probation, and District and Borough Housing representatives. Since its launch, the Network has strengthened collaborative activity across Sussex. Joint, cross-directorate commissioning groups have been established in all three Local Authorities. The ICB has developed commissioning intentions and active conversations are underway on future co-commissioning and greater alignment of budgets.

### Ongoing funding commitments

The greater strategic prominence of the MCN agenda across Sussex has manifested in confirmation of continuation funding for multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) in Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex County Councils which were previously funded exclusively using the Changing Futures grant. The total committed investment across the three place-based partnerships for MCN delivery in 2026/27 amounts to over £2M.

# Enablers / Optimised Conditions

Below is a list of enablers and optimised conditions that have allowed the impacts to be achieved:

- Senior leadership buy-in
- Dedicated programme management resource to drive system-wide change, convene senior leaders, and promote shared ownership of MCN
- Multi-agency relationships and MDT working
- Data – growing evidence base, including Public Health-led Health Needs Assessments



# Risks / Red Flags

Below is a list of risks and red flags that highlight a return to practice before Changing Futures:

- Return to siloed working, weakening cross-sector collaboration
- Loss of strategic leadership
- Commissioner misalignment as opportunities missed
- MCN deprioritised
- Loss of specialist expertise



# Links for further reading

## Changing Futures Sussex Impacts Reports:

1. [Introduction & Summaries](#)
2. [Service Transformation](#)
3. [Governance & Commissioning](#)
4. [Data & Evidence](#)
5. [Co-Production](#)
6. [Trauma Informed & Reflective Practice](#)

## Impact Reports Supporting Data

### Area Data Packs:

- [Brighton & Hove](#)
- [East Sussex](#)
- [West Sussex](#)

### [Pressure Maps Insight & Learning](#)

## 'Voices of Changing Futures Sussex' - Client voice Project

### [Voices of Changing Futures You Tube Playlist](#)

## Further Learning & Resources

### [Changing Futures Sussex Learning Archive](#)

### [Changing Futures Sussex System Resources Archive](#)

# Changing Futures Sussex

[www.changingfuturesussex.org.uk](http://www.changingfuturesussex.org.uk)



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