**East Sussex County Council**

**The summary report for a conversation about drugs and alcohol**

**Background**

We asked East Sussex residents about drug and alcohol dependence to ensure the projects we commission to support drug and alcohol misuse address local needs.

These are the results from 116 online surveys and 9 focus groups in March 2022.

What you have told us will help to decide which groups and services will be funded to support people to tackle their substance issues.

**Top three things you told us**

1 To consider the big picture of harm to people's mental and physical health.

2 Focus more on alcohol support and separate it from drug support.

3 You need more support for families and friends.

**You also said**

Support from someone with lived experience is crucial for recovery.

Communication is key – tell us what to expect and when changes happen to support.

Make it easier to find out what support is available.

Educate local services around drug and alcohol misuse.

In person support is still preferred over online.

We need support tailored to our needs.

We need support for mental health needs and substance misuse together.

Services need to be delivered consistently.

Employers should allow for safe conversations to take place and support those affected to stay employed.

Support for families and loved ones is important.

**The top support services that residents are aware of**

51% are aware of Star or CGL.

43% are aware of Oasis Women’s Service.

38% are aware of Seaview or RADAR.

37% are aware of East Sussex Recovery Alliance

32% are aware of ADDER services.

30% are aware of ADFAM.

28% are aware of East Sussex Veterans Hub.

10% are aware of Kingdom Way Trust.

Residents told us that support should accessible to all who need it and tailored to groups including the over sixties, the armed forces, all genders and sexual identities, families and loved ones, street communities and parents.

**Some words that respondents told us that support needs to be:**

Flexible Non- judgemental Accessible Peer-led Anonymous Comfortable Face to face Approachable Understanding In person Positive Specific Consistent Local Drop in Promoted Flexible Informative Individualised For mental health.

**Things that people said in the survey and focus groups**

"Knowing about services, easy access to them are key, but services that are responsive to individual diversity in all areas is also important".

"Support needs to come from someone with lived experience. They understand what you are going through so you don't feel alone".

"It’s embarrassing. People don’t understand. My manager was new and just wanted to know whether I’d be working.”

“Attitudes towards substance misuse and addiction are the biggest barrier to people getting the help they need.”