East Sussex Healthcare
NHS Trust

Eastbourne District General Hospital
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Tel: 0300 131 4500
Website: www.esht.nhs.uk

FOI REF: 26/730

2 November 2026

Further to your recent request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, I now set out our answers to your specific questions, and any clarifications sought and provided, as follows:

1. **Does your trust operate a home birth service? Please specify whether this is through a dedicated home birth team or integrated into wider maternity services.**

   East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) operates a home birth service. This is provided as part of our wider maternity service, rather than by a dedicated home birth team.

2. **If your Trust does not have a dedicated home birth team, did you previously have one that has been dismantled within the last 10 years?**

   Not applicable.

3. **Are home birth services available 24 hours a day, seven days a week across the whole geographic area overseen by your Trust?**

   Yes.

4. **Have you been able to provide home birth services 24 hours a day, seven days a week without any suspensions, pauses, restrictions or limitations to that ability in the last 12 months ending August 2026? If that period is not available, please provide figures for the most recent 12 months available and specify what period they cover.**

   No. The home birth service has experienced suspensions during the last 12 months up to August 2026.

5. **Please list the number of suspensions and restrictions to home birth services in this period, the dates on which these occurred, the terms of each suspension/restriction (full, partial) and reason(s) for each suspension and restriction.**

   Please refer to the document titled “FOI 26-730 Home Birth Suspensions Data”.

6. **During this period, were there any occasions where the Trust was unable to send midwives to attend a home birth due to unforeseen circumstances (such staffing shortage, sickness, emergency redeployment, lack of available midwives)? Please state how many times this occurred and, if recorded, the reason(s).**

   Yes. There were 18 occasions when ESHT could not send a midwife to attend a home birth.

7. **How many home births have been attended by midwives in the Trust in this period, including those resulting in intrapartum and/or postnatal transfer into hospital and those resulting in a baby being born at home with no transfer-in?**

   ESHT midwives attended 57 home births between 1 September 2025 and 31 August 2026.

I trust this information is helpful in its detail or explanation however, if you are dissatisfied with the response, then you have the right to request an internal review. If you wish to seek an internal review, please write to the Freedom of Information Team at esh-tr.foi@nhs.net quoting the above FOI reference number, within 40 working days. Please note the Trust is not obliged to accept a request for an internal review after this time period.

Yours faithfully

Freedom of Information (FOI) Team
East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
0300 131 4716
Core Hours of Business: Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm

FOI 26/730

Date	Length of Suspension	Reason
5/12/2025	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
15/12/2025	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
19/12/2025	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
20/12/2025	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
22/12/2025	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
23/12/2025	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
24/12/2025	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
6/1/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
8/1/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
14/1/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
23/1/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
24/1/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
28/1/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
30/1/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
3/2/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
7/2/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
9/2/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
13/2/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
14/2/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
15/2/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
16/2/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
17/2/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
18/2/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
19/2/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
20/2/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
21/2/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
23/2/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
5/3/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
9/3/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
14/3/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
15/3/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
8/4/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
9/5/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
15/5/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
20/5/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
21/5/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
26/5/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
27/5/2026	Full	Staffing/Acuity
28/5/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
1/6/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
10/6/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
12/6/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
19/6/2026	Full	Staffing/Acuity
24/6/2026	Full	Staffing/Acuity
26/6/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity

28/6/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
29/6/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
1/7/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
5/7/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
8/7/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
10/7/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
11/7/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
12/7/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
14/7/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
18/7/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
24/7/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
31/7/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
7/8/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
9/8/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
10/8/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
17/8/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
20/8/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity
21/8/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
24/8/2026	Partial	Staffing/Acuity
29/8/2026	Not Recorded	Staffing/Acuity

Please note that we do not hold complete or reliable records of home birth suspensions prior to December 2025.