



HVA

Hastings Voluntary Action

Annual
Review
2023–24



Hastings Voluntary Action is a charity that **enables positive change** in Hastings

We grow
groups



"As a charity run totally by volunteers, HVA's services are critical to our progression."

Godfrey Bevan
Hastings & St Leonards
Men's Shed



"HVA is an essential resource for voluntary groups in the area, without which we would all be very much worse off."

Jim Breeds
Ore Community Library Group & Old Hastings Preservation Society



"A reliable source of advice and a trusted organisation that I turn to regularly. HVA is available to charities for support, governance and strategy advice plus so much more. Invaluable!"

Trudy Hampton-Hodges
Warming up the Homeless

"When we set up our charity we would not have known where to start without HVA. The support we have received has been invaluable – including support for funding applications, ongoing support recruiting volunteers, providing a postal address, and examining our financial accounts."

Philippa Beagley,
Dance Hastings



Review of the Year



For over 30 years Hastings Voluntary Action HVA has been at the centre of supporting an active and vibrant Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in the local area. We are proud to be a user-led organisation with our Trustees being directly elected from our diverse member network. This ensures that our services are grounded in the needs of local groups and that our strategic role remains relevant.

At a practical level we manage approximately 14,000 enquiries a year providing support on a wide range of issues from funding to finance, strategic development and

partnership working. Our **direct services** also provide low cost access to independent Examinations and Payroll support. Through our work at Jackson Hall and Central Hall, we have provided permanent, regular or one-off spaces so that local organisations have access to a modern affordable accommodation.

Our **neighbourhood work** supports local people doing the things that are most important to them and our work in the Making it Happen programme and our 10-year stint as the Locally Trusted Organisation for the North East Hastings Big Local programme are examples of this.

We have a **wide portfolio of projects** which range from the Links Project for Asylum Seekers and Refugees to the Mr Hastings and St Leonards Men's Health Project. We are pleased to announce a new partnership with public health to support a new programme to improve access to green spaces and we also welcome Macmillan Cancer as a new collaboration partner.

Learning is important to HVA – not just offering a diverse range of training to local groups, but also ensuring that we are reflecting and learning from the work we do. To this end we have worked with the Institute of Volunteering Research to understand the changes in the way people are volunteering and develop a strategic response to them. Our **Facing the Future** report also worked extensively to learn the lessons and identify the challenges facing the sector.



At a time of considerable political and financial change for the sector, it is important that **our voice is strong and accountable**. Our support of **Hastings Community Network**, with its directly elected representative and regular events and networking opportunities, adds structure and promotes diversity, whilst enabling the sector to be represented at a Strategic Level.

The volume of our work for a small organisation is considerable but the quality of that work is important to us. That is why we submitted ourselves to the rigorous process of independent assessment to become one of the first organisations in the whole country to be **awarded the Local Infrastructure Quality Award**.

For all these reasons we are proud of the work we have achieved over the past year and we hope that by reading this report you feel that HVA is an organisation which is **supportive to its members, responsive to local needs and an integral part of the local infrastructure** enabling positive change for Hastings.

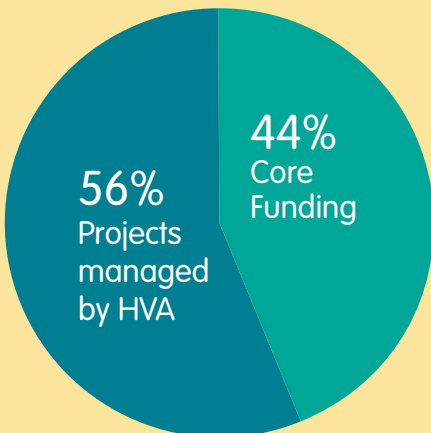
HVA provided specific
one-to-one support to
345
different organisations

128 people were given
extra support to start volunteering

To keep the sector
informed HVA published
fortnightly ebulletins to
1800+ readers
& daily posts to **2000+**
Facebook followers

Where our funding comes from: 2023–24

Total: £778,066



HVA's **funding advice**
service levered in
over **£1.4 million**,
and created or sustained **23** jobs.

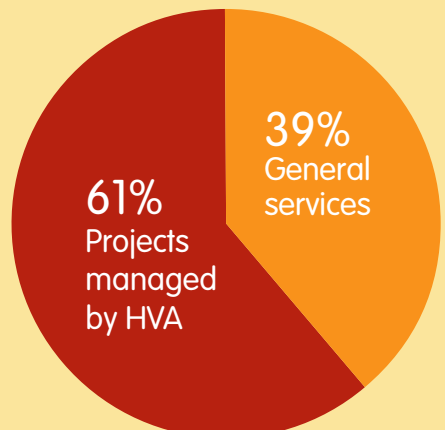
HVA organised

29 training sessions
to increase skills and knowledge

HVA managed **meeting**
spaces in Hastings town
centre for over
500 sessions

How we used the funding: 2023–24

Total: £895,274



HVA manages several projects which aim to improve life for communities and residents in Hastings & St Leonards:



The Links Project is multi-agency partnership that provides access to support and advice for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants across East Sussex. We run weekly drop-ins and we are part of Sanctuary Café in Eastbourne.



Making it Happen is focussed on Hollington and Castle wards and can help you to turn your idea into reality. From listening to you, connecting you with others with the right expertise or signposting you to training, MiH can provide as much or as little support as you need.



Big Local is a ten year, £1m resident led project based in north-east Hastings that aims to help residents improve their local area.



Mr Hastings and St Leonards is a men's health and wellbeing project led by local men. We believe that men in Hastings and St Leonards will fulfil their potential and live happier, healthier, and longer lives if they are involved in decision making and live in supportive communities.



The Hastings & Rother Food Network is commissioned by Public Health to find ways to reduce food insecurity. Our priorities are food and health, food and connections, food and education and local food businesses.



The **Holistic Health Project** is a pilot funded by a legacy left to HVA. This initial phase provides young people with opportunities to access wellbeing activities, tools and resources which encourage them to look after themselves.



The **Community Cancer Champions** is a borough-wide programme, initially being piloted in Broomgrove in partnership with MacMillan. It aims to recruit health champions to encourage the uptake of cancer support to those with a diagnosis and to those with greatest risk of a diagnosis.

For further information head to hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk/projects

HVA services

Starting and running a group

Helping you develop your group's constitution; consider your policies and financial management.

Training

HVA runs regular training sessions on subjects to meet the needs of voluntary groups. These include First Aid and Child Protection training.

Volunteering

Linking volunteers and non-profit organisations that need help.

Funding advice service

Hastings Voluntary Action can help groups to improve the effectiveness of their fundraising.

Community Accounting

Supporting voluntary organisations to look after their money correctly, with advice, independent examinations and payroll calculations.

Representation

Working with groups to develop a stronger voice for the voluntary sector within Hastings and across East Sussex.

Room hire

Our offices, located in Hastings town centre, have a range of spaces specifically designed to accommodate meetings, training and interviews.

Community projects

Filling gaps and bringing people together, using our knowledge and expertise.



Hastings Voluntary Action

hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk

Tel: 01424 444010

Registered Charity 802632

Registered Company 2409902

Cover photograph: Josie Barnes