

# Evaluation and learning – Mr Hastings and St Leonards

SUMMARY REPORT

July 2025



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This report provides a summary of the key findings from an independent process and impact evaluation of the Hastings and St Leonards Men's Health and Wellbeing Project (referred throughout this report as 'Mr Hastings and St Leonards' or the Mr Hastings and St Leonards 'movement'). The full evaluation report is available on the Hastings Voluntary Action website [here](#).

### About Mr Hastings and St Leonards

Mr Hastings and St Leonards is a three-year initiative funded by East Sussex County Council, hosted by Hastings Voluntary Action and led by local men. It has its origins in a desire to take a more co-ordinated, system-wide approach to tackling the issue of falling male life expectancy in Hastings.

Many different initiatives have been delivered in Hastings over recent years with the intention of improving health outcomes for those most in need. Individually, initiatives have demonstrated positive impacts on people accessing them. However, life expectancy data suggests that their combined impact has not led to improved health at a population level and no single action or organisation on its own can solve such a complex, multi-faceted health and wellbeing issue. This means that a whole system approach is needed, with care and support organisations, community groups, and local services working collaboratively together and in true partnership with those with lived experience.

The long-term vision is that men living in Hastings and St Leonards are at the heart of decision making about their lives, are living happier, healthier, and longer lives, and thrive in strong, supportive, and well-connected communities where they can fulfil their potential. The project has set out to do this by establishing a self-defining and self-sustaining 'social movement' for men's health and wellbeing in Hastings and St Leonards, based on the principles of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)<sup>1</sup>, and which mobilises and encourages collaborative action between:

- Male residents who have lived experience of needing and / or accessing support around their health and wellbeing and wider determinants of their health, and want to be involved in improving outcomes for men in their communities; and
- Services and community groups which either seek to support men around their health and wellbeing and wider determinants of their health, or have responsibility for other health assets (physical and environmental) that impact on health and wellbeing for men.

While the ultimate longer term aim of Mr Hastings and St Leonards is for the whole population of men living in Hastings and St Leonards to experience happier, healthier and longer lives, this will require many years of co-ordinated and sustained action at scale across the system. For this to happen, this current initiative focused on four main areas, each of which could evolve in response to learning throughout the duration of the current funding period and build the necessary foundation for longer term change:

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<sup>1</sup> See for example: <https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com/2013/08/15/what-is-abcd/> or <https://www.nurtureddevelopment.org/about-abcd/>.

- Building a **robust evidence base** in relation to what needs to change to improve men's health and wellbeing, and how, informed by the lived experience of local men and the input of a wide cross-section of those working across the care and support system
- Establishing a **men's social 'movement'**, to find ways to make better use of assets (knowledge, skills, ambitions and resources) in the community and to promote wide engagement, using a compelling narrative and championed by local men
- Understanding and creating the **conditions for change to happen**, including to facilitate connections and conversations, share learning and build a shared understanding of the health and wellbeing issues facing men in Hastings and St Leonards, and
- Building **sustainable infrastructure** for improving men's health and wellbeing over the longer term.

More information about the activities that were undertaken under each of these four areas is set out in Figure 1 below, along with the key changes and outcomes that we believe were generated by those activities, based on the findings from this evaluation.

A key objective of the work undertaken over the past three years was to also learn about what worked (and what could work in the future) in the Hastings and St Leonards local context, so that progress can continue to be made towards the longer term aims after the end of the current funding period, and irrespective of the availability of further funding.

With this in mind, Figure 1 also provides a summary of what needs to happen in order for the Mr Hastings and St Leonards movement to be successful in the future.

## Overarching Theory of Change – Mr Hastings and St Leonards



### Why are we doing this?

*Mr Hastings and St Leonards (the 'movement') was developed in response to life expectancy for men in Hastings and St Leonards being significantly lower than the national average.*

*The long-term vision is that men living in Hastings and St Leonards are consistently at the heart of decision making about their lives, are living happier, healthier, and longer lives, and thrive in strong, supportive, and well-connected communities, where they can fulfil their potential and respond better to any challenges they may face.*

### What could influence how successful this is going forward?

- The capacity and diversity of local men who engage in the movement
- The knowledge and resources available to coproduce activities that are attractive for local men to engage with
- The extent to which wider system stakeholders are able and willing to engage in the project, and the availability of dedicated resources (supported by trusting and flexible funding models) to lead on driving and embedding further changes and alliances across the system
- The complexity of factors that influence men's health in the local area and the complexity of the wider support system

### What are we doing? Over 3 years the movement has involved...

- 1. Designing an approach** that builds on existing evidence and learning, and the lived experience of local men:
  - Community and system wide engagement
  - Establishment of a project steering group
  - Establishment of the Hastings and St Leonards Men's Health and Wellbeing Forum
- 2. Establishing a men's 'movement'** in Hastings & St Leonards, based on the principles of Asset Based Community Development
  - A compelling narrative and recognisable brand and identity
  - Local men as champions of the movement
  - Co-produced creative activities and opportunities to bring people together to promote new connections and open up conversations
- 3. Creating the conditions** for wider change
  - New connections and conversations with and between those across the system, including sharing learning and insights
  - Learning more about how effective asset based community engagement and involvement can lead to positive change
- 4. Building a sustainable infrastructure** for improving men's health in Hastings & St Leonards
  - Establishing the Mr Hastings and St Leonards CIC
  - Exploring the potential for longer term funding opportunities
  - Building the knowledge and skills necessary to continue the work of the movement beyond the current funding period

### What difference has it made?

#### *The men involved in establishing and promoting the movement have...*

- Been able to use their (lived) experience, knowledge, skills and interests to lead and support the work of the movement
- Experienced improved mental health and wellbeing
- Built their confidence to tackle their own challenges and / or to support or advocate for others through difficult times
- Had opportunities to begin to influence services and groups in relation to supporting men's health and wellbeing across the system

#### *The wider community across Hastings and St Leonards has...*

- Begun to increasingly recognise the movement, its importance for the community, what it is doing and trying to achieve, and how to get involved
- Started to engage with and contribute to the movement in new ways
- Begun to identify and get involved in opportunities to influence services and groups in relation to men's health and wellbeing

#### *Groups and services supporting men's health & wellbeing have...*

- Identified new partnerships, referral pathways and collaboration opportunities
- Increasingly recognised the value of Asset Based Community Development approaches and what this looks like in practice
- Started to change how they engage with and support men in the local area in order to codesign / coproduce support so that it better reflects the needs of local men

Figure 1: An overarching Theory of Change for Mr Hastings and St Leonards, based on the evidence from this evaluation

## Evaluation scope and methodology

Apteligen was commissioned in September 2023 to undertake evaluation and learning work for Mr Hastings and St Leonards. Our role was to:

- Understand the approach being taken and build an evidence based 'Theory of Change' which demonstrates what can be achieved, given the time and resources available (this is described in Section 3 of this report)
- Gather feedback and evidence about 'what works' and what doesn't and capture learning about why things have or haven't worked as expected
- Work closely with HVA, other community organisations and groups, and local men to understand what impact the project has had and opportunities for longer term change
- Demonstrate the difference that the movement has made for men in Hastings and St Leonards in this current funding round
- Provide regular updates and reports so that the learning can be used to inform the work of the movement, during the current funding period and beyond.

Within this, the evaluation was designed to understand:

- How, where, and why the initiative has contributed towards changing how the system operates around the health and wellbeing needs of local men, and the wider determinants of their health and wellbeing
- How the movement has contributed towards creating a positive shift in men's help seeking behaviours, and
- The contribution that this type of Asset Based Community Development / strengths based approach has made towards influencing and achieving the changes identified.

This was a mixed method formative evaluation which involved collecting data through interviews and informal discussions with men involved in the movement and system stakeholders, reflective diaries, a survey of local men, ripple effect mapping<sup>2</sup>, stakeholder workshops, attendance at project learning events, and gathering in-depth perspectives on the 'most significant change' experienced by different people involved in the work.<sup>3,4</sup>

The data from these activities was supplemented with data and information being collected directly by the project team as well as information contained in the quarterly project reports. A more detailed outline of the evaluation approach and timeline can be found in the full evaluation report, available [here](#).

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<sup>2</sup> See: <https://ppe.cw.wsu.edu/ripple-effects-mapping/>

<sup>3</sup> The Most Significant Change (MSC) approach (in the context of evaluating social change interventions) involves generating and analysing personal accounts of change and deciding which is the most significant – and why. For more information about Most Significant Change as an evaluation methodology see: <https://www.betterevaluation.org/methods-approaches/approaches/most-significant-change>

<sup>4</sup> A booklet containing all of the Most Significant Change stories is available [here](#).

### Commissioning and governance of the Mr Hastings and St Leonards project

The commissioning landscape can have a major impact on the extent to which project outcomes can be achieved. Mr Hastings and St Leonards was conceived as an Asset Based Community Development project that required cross-sector partnerships, guided by the experiences of local men, to build a sustainable movement for men's health which would lay the foundations for improving health outcomes for men over the longer term.

We found strong evidence that the flexible commissioning approach that was taken for Mr Hastings and St Leonards initiated and strengthened trusting relationships between men driving the work, and the host partner, which were also mirrored in the relationship between the host partner and the commissioner. This helped to generate some powerful attitudinal shifts among participating men, HVA staff and the commissioner, which embraced perceived risks and uncertainty. Participating men, in particular, valued an environment of trust that welcomed exploratory activity, vulnerability and honest conversations with everyone involved in this work. This was a key driver for creating an environment that was authentic and true to the principles of Asset Based Community Development.

*'We couldn't have done things in this way if we hadn't had a commissioner who was open to looking at things differently, doing things differently, measuring things differently and who trusted us. We have had an amazing opportunity, and it was clear at the last co-production event that we attended that this isn't everyone's experience across the region. Not everyone has this open, honest and trusting, relationship with their commissioners.'*  
[Project Manager, Hastings Voluntary Action - Host Organisation]

The development of a multi-stakeholder, cross-sector, steering group, which met regularly throughout the project, was also an essential component of the effective governance and delivery of Mr Hastings and St Leonards. However, there were few opportunities for the project to be represented on and to report into higher level / more strategic working groups and / or cross sector partnerships (despite some of the initial intentions for this to happen) and this may have impacted on the ability of this initiative to influence the wider system more widely than it has been able to achieve to date, and subsequently provide a more sustainable platform for local men to gain access to power and decision makers.

*'It was designed not to be another project-based initiative. The process was, and is, what is important – the process of developing it, not the 'brand' – which is useful in so far as it might keep the agenda visible. What I mean by this is: a. men's health must continue to be a priority focus b. system partners must recognise that early death of men is avoidable. The ongoing connection of this work with the system – leading with trust (and men's opinions) is paramount.'* [Original Commissioner, Public Health Directorate, East Sussex County Council]

And while a core group of men involved over the past two to three years have worked within the project framework to develop a community interest company (Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC) to sustain the energy and interest of local men beyond this phase<sup>5</sup>, it is important

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<sup>5</sup> From Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC: 'Through live performances, community events, and shared storytelling, we create opportunities for men to open up, support one another, and challenge outdated stigmas. [Retrieved from. <https://mensroom.community/about-mrhl/> Last checked: 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025].



to recognise that the current governance structure of Mr Hastings and St Leonards provides direct access to the system through professional, paid, staff and that there is a risk of disengagement if these system links aren't maintained in some way beyond the current funded period.

*'The men have got that stability in terms of the network around them, right now. Obviously, in certain services, people might feel that as they're not professionals, there might be that lack of, you know, follow up from an organisation. I think if there's an opportunity of handover, and that continuing networking support, that will be useful.'* [System stakeholder, Hastings Borough Council]

### Establishing and building the 'movement'

Strong progress has been made to establish and promote Mr Hastings and St Leonards as a men's health movement. There is consensus across stakeholders that the Mr Hastings and St Leonards brand has provided a strong visual identity that enables productive conversations about men's health to be initiated by peers and across local systems.

The outcomes of these conversations about men's health are often unexpected, with individual men reporting profound changes in their health and wellbeing, and their connection to the community and to each other. Community activity has a purposeful focus on action, and a recognition that men can bring their (lived) experience, knowledge, skills and interests to make a tangible difference.

A core group of local men have been actively engaged in the movement, effectively championing the cause and, alongside the HVA project team, coproducing a range of engaging and creative activities to raise awareness and engage with other men in the local community. Many others have been involved to a lesser extent and / or become aware of the Mr Hastings and St Leonards community.

The initiative has also gained prominence through coverage on [local BBC TV](#), as a [case example in a Local Government Association publication](#) (engaging local groups and people to address men's mental health and wellbeing), and in the [2024 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health in East Sussex](#) – Creativity for Healthier Lives, as a positive example of building meaningful connections with others to promote healthier lives.

There are early indications of how Mr Hastings and St Leonards, and Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC, could broaden their reach and continue to highlight the importance of growing men's health as a social movement, and encouraging more active collaboration and involvement with younger cohorts, men aged 65+, LGBTQ+ men, sports and activity clubs and male parents.

*'Ensure they are consistently using inclusive and welcoming language, so that all men feel seen and welcomed - including those aged 65+, trans men and refugees. Offer a range of times / days for people to get involved - including in decision-making activity about the direction and future of the work.'* [Respondent, Mr Hastings and St Leonards 2025 survey]

The consensus is that Mr Hastings and St Leonards is a visible and welcome initiative with potential for positive change. This includes the potential for it to tackle some of the common barriers to improving mental health among men which need to be addressed, such as the traditional views about what it means to be a man, mental health remaining one of the biggest taboo topics among men, judgements around men not seeking help which simplify a complex issue, and that men need and want diverse opportunities to build connections, have an active social life, and to strengthen relationships with others, not just those traditionally considered 'men friendly'.

The successes of this phase of Mr Hastings and St Leonards gives a strong indication of how men's health as a social movement might spread, building on the new connections and relationships that the movement has been able to facilitate across some of the existing men's groups and other services in the local community. In order to build on the strength of the initiative beyond this, there is a recognition that wider involvement and collaboration, with and between groups, will be needed along with some dedicated resource to build capacity and maintain connections with services and networks once the current funding has ended.

### Reach into the wider community

Mr Hastings and St Leonards depends on the active collaboration between local men, services and community groups around their wider health and wellbeing. Leading with an Asset Based Community Development approach has enabled connections between stakeholders to happen in creative and unexpected ways, with emphasis on the leadership of - and benefit to - local men in aspiring to long-term collaboration and positive change.

We found strong evidence that new, and existing, community and voluntary sector organisations and local networks have benefited from the project, and that unexpected connections and ideas have been generated through the flexible approach that has been taken.

Early and frequent opportunities to facilitate new and trusted conversations with and between those across the system (and the wider community) has enabled the identification of opportunities for men, services and community groups to collaborate and work differently to involve and support local men. There is strong evidence of ripple effects from the movement strengthening new and existing connections, to the benefit of local men – with access to support and services accelerated by the time and energy of men involved, and the access points to services being informed by the project.

The first connection with the project has often been a public activity or event that welcomed conversations about men's mental health, with the core group of men leading with their own lived experience of managing their mental health – signalling that vulnerability and honesty is both welcomed and encouraged. These have helped to nudge attitudinal shifts that have subsequently benefitted individuals and the local community.

While recognising the increasing reach and influence that Mr Hastings and St Leonards has grown in the community, there is also an opportunity to build a more strategic alliance across other men-led initiatives in Hastings and St Leonards, working towards shared aims. This will support the evolution of Mr Hastings and St Leonards and its long-term aim to grow men's health as a social movement.

## Creating the conditions for wider change

Through the leadership and work of the Host Organisation, Mr Hastings and St Leonards has facilitated connections and conversations with a wide range of local organisations and system players, including those who have a real opportunity to influence change in relation to some key health determinants for men. Some of these connections and conversations have led to tangible action and new initiatives beyond the direct work of HVA and the core group of men, consistent with the overall aims of the project.

A number of connections have also been made specifically with groups and services focused on tackling some of the most important health determinants for men, including those working in:

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Housing and homelessness
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Physical activity
- Social isolation and loneliness, and
- Health and social care.

These have provided opportunities to share learning from the project to date (and in particular the factors that influence positive engagement among men of different backgrounds) and to consider how best to make use of the connections being made through Mr Hastings and St Leonards.

*‘This kind of conversation is important for the future – we’ve come together today across the community to focus on the connections in this work – but if we don’t meet up, we don’t know about what’s out there.’ [Co-Director, Men’s Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC]*

Mr Hastings and St Leonards’ focus on lived experience and ‘co-leadership’ is also engaging men in a more meaningful way than other initiatives may have done in the past. Key to this is the ‘authenticity’ and ‘relatability’ of the men involved in the movement and their willingness to share personal experiences, which should provide useful learning for others to consider.

*‘The hardest part of all this is how difficult it is to pinpoint success. I won’t know what impact my conversation will have unless they tell me there and then, or if I ever get any feedback. The overarching message is hope. I do know that it offers hope to people. Hope, connection, engagement, community, resonance. If Men’s Room achieves one legacy, the increased conversation and enhanced sense of community spirit and understanding is it.’ [Co-Director, Men’s Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC]*

However, the wider system of care and support is complex, and it is likely that a continued focus on broadening reach, supported by more targeted (deeper) engagement and follow-up with those best placed to influence system-wide change, will be needed. This could include reviewing and updating the system mapping work that was undertaken earlier in the project.

## Building sustainable infrastructure for improving men's health

Members of the core group of men involved in the movement undertook work during the final year of the project, with support from HVA, to explore the potential for the Mr Hastings and St Leonards movement to be formalised as an independent entity which could continue the work of the movement beyond the current funding period. This has resulted in the formation of a Community Interest Company (CIC) which will operate independently of HVA and attract funding from a range of potential sources to carry on the work that has begun under Mr Hastings and St Leonards.

This may also open up new opportunities to attract new men to the community, to broaden its reach, to build new partnerships, and to continue to promote the central message of opening up conversations about men's mental health and wellbeing. And while we have found evidence of a clear commitment among the core group for this course of action, although with some reservations about the capacity currently available to build a new organisation, there remains uncertainty about the extent to which this new entity can continue the wider system influencing work that will be necessary to support longer term sustainable change in attitudes and practice.

If early intervention is to play a key role in future work – as opposed to a primary prevention focus, or supporting men in crisis – then this presents opportunities to explore strategic and commissioning links with the appropriate parts of the health system, and further alliance-building across men's health projects in Hastings and St Leonards in order to ensure a broad range of experiences are included, and to avoid volunteer burnout as the movement grows.

*'Leave the future up to the men because they know what it needs and will come up with the solutions. It is so important to always expand and bring in new voices and perspectives to remain motivated and outward-looking, stay well-intentioned and diverse. The system is diverse – this will draw this out of the movement.'* [Original Commissioner, Public Health Directorate, East Sussex County Council]

*'We've stayed the course. And what we want to do is build for the next stage of it, and use the ABCD approach, again. It could have been very prescriptive. It could have been very sort of 'tick box'-like in its approach. And it wasn't.'* [Co-Director, Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC]

## Outcomes for local men leading and delivering the movement

The positive outcomes for individual men involved in Mr Hastings and St Leonards were frequently and powerfully reported by community and voluntary sector stakeholders and the men themselves. All intended outcomes for men involved have been met to some extent, with particular strength around men supporting other men, and having opportunities to use their (lived) experience, skills and assets to establish and promote the movement. There is also a strong indication that the men involved value the principles of the Asset Based Community Development approach taken, and will continue to apply this to any future evolution of the movement.

There is strong evidence that the project has led to profound outcomes for individual men who played an active role in engaging with Mr Hastings and St Leonards. The men involved frequently cite the freedom, flexibility and the fidelity to the Asset Based Community Development approach as a significant driver in supporting their experience of the work, building their confidence to engage and to advocate on behalf of other men, and to proactively use their skills, assets and experiences in playing an active and equal role in developing Mr Hastings and St Leonards.

There is both direct testimony and reported evidence to suggest that men have experienced improved mental health and wellbeing through their involvement in the movement, with mental health being a significant focus of Mr Hastings and St Leonards soon after project activity commenced. Stakeholders have placed strong emphasis on the variety of opportunities for men to come together as being a driver behind a reduction in isolation and improvements in mental health and wellbeing.

*‘The formation of groups such as the Grumpy Men’s Club has provided a non-judgmental environment where men can connect, share their thoughts, and find camaraderie. These groups have played a vital role in reducing isolation, which is a major contributor to poor mental health. Events such as the Men’s Health Week Celebration have further strengthened this sense of community, drawing attention to important issues and encouraging more men to take an active role in their wellbeing.’ [Steering Group Member and Lived Experience Coordinator, Possability People]*

There was also much evidence to support men feeling more confident to act for themselves or others. This manifested as individual men or their loved ones signposting someone to Mr Hastings and St Leonards, or initiatives within the movement, as a first step to connection and community. It also extended to reports of men feeling more proactive and empowered in their conversations with their employer or with services, such as accessing their GP.

An unexpected outcome that might support a more flexible and engaged involvement from statutory services going forward has been the impact that Mr Hastings and St Leonards has had on commissioner attitudes within East Sussex County Council. There is evidence to suggest attitudinal shifts and more expansive conversations around commissioning as a result of Mr Hastings and St Leonards. This may be the opportunity to influence service (re)design going forward, dependent on the lasting involvement of senior decision-makers with commissioning responsibilities.

## **Outcomes for men in the wider community**

We found evidence through this evaluation that men outside of the movement have started to recognise the importance of the movement and what it is trying to achieve, and to feel motivated to engage with and contribute to the movement. The core group of men have proactively sought opportunities to reach wide audiences, engaging with men’s health and peer-led initiatives outside of the immediate Hastings and St Leonards catchment area, and successfully bringing their stories and experiences to national audiences (for example, being invited to speak at a Parliamentary event with a mental health focus, and successfully bidding to bring the Baton of Hope to Hastings in 2025).

These opportunities offer a recognition of the importance of the movement and what it is trying to achieve, and make a clear connection between this work in Hastings and national objectives around men's health and wellbeing.

*'I always say that if I can help one person by sharing my personal history of trauma, of addiction, that makes everything that I lived through worthwhile, but what I'm seeing is more than that. This work is about more than that. It's engaging and creating a sense of empathy and understanding within the community where people are less likely to look down on those who are struggling and more likely to look down with an outstretched hand and say 'Here, can I help you?' [Co-Director, Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC]*

### **Outcomes across the care and support system for men's wellbeing**

There is consensus across stakeholders that the co-designed Mr Hastings and St Leonards brand provides a strong visual identity that has enabled productive conversations about men's health to be initiated by peers and across local systems. In order to build on the strength of the initiative beyond the brand, there is a recognition that wider involvement and dedicated resource is needed to build capacity and maintain connections with services and networks once the current funding has ended.

At the time of compiling this final evaluation report (May 2025), future resourcing for a continuation or next phase of Mr Hastings and St Leonards is not confirmed, and discussion of sustainability and legacy focuses primarily on the continuing work to grow men's health as a social movement through the newly formed Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC.

Men's time, skill and energy is vital to the ongoing growth of this movement and any related / allied initiatives. In order to effectively collaborate with system stakeholders there is a need to recognise and value their input, trust the direction(s) they propose to go in, and to flex existing systems and processes so that volunteers are able to engage equitably and outside of traditional working hours. Commissioners within East Sussex County Council have explicitly stated their recognition of the value of the Asset Based Community Development approach that was a strong feature of this project, and have indicated that the perceived success of Mr Hastings and St Leonards in mobilising local men and partnership building (to the benefit of men's health and wellbeing) has influenced their internal advocacy for similar funded public health interventions.



As a result of the learning from Mr Hastings and St Leonards over the past three years, there is a shared recognition across the Host Organisation, among steering group members, and among the core group of men who have been involved to date, that connections with the wider system need to be identified and consolidated in order to further develop this social movement and to influence the way the wider system works to address men's health and wellbeing across Hastings and St Leonards.

With this in mind, we would encourage all relevant stakeholders to give consideration to the following recommended actions with the aim of continuing to build momentum across the local community and with a view to generating impact beyond what has been achieved over the past three years.

### **For a strategic alliance of local people and professionals working together for improved men's health outcomes:**

- Develop a new strategy for deeper engagement across the system, especially with statutory services but also building on the many different conversations and relationships that have been established to date across the community and voluntary sector – focusing on where the biggest impact could be for longer term sustainable change. This could include revisiting some of the system mapping work that was undertaken earlier in the project and identifying any gaps that exist in relation to the achievements of Mr Hastings and St Leonards to date.
- Better understand the data that may be available (or which could be collected) to track changes at a population level, and across the care and support system, that may provide evidence of improved men's health and wellbeing and more timely access to informal and formal support mechanisms among men in the local community. This should include consideration of how existing data can be accessed and used, and what needs to be put in place to respond to what that data is saying.

### **For growing the Mr Hastings and St Leonards movement:**

- Make use of the updated Theory of Change for the men's movement based on the findings from this evaluation, to generate short, medium and long-term plans and outcomes linked to relevant local and county-wide strategies.
- Identify opportunities for building sustained linkages with the wider public health system and related initiatives (such as through one or more stakeholder 'roundtables'), led by Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC but with support from Hasting Voluntary Action as the local infrastructure body and key statutory services.
- Bring interested members of the current project Steering Group through into the next phase of this work, with an emphasis on clearly defined and proactive roles that link grassroots, volunteer-led, work of local men to systems stakeholders and decision-makers.
- Explore and identify how best to leverage off the upcoming Baton of Hope tour to further consolidate the membership and strategic development of Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC, centring the men's work and using this national opportunity as a platform to speak about the evolution of Mr Hastings and St Leonards as a movement.

**For future funding and commissioning by East Sussex County Council and / or other system partners:**

- Consider what potential there is to commission a small piece of community-led / action research that could establish a new 'baseline' position around men's health and wellbeing in Hastings and St Leonards, and which could be used to inform future priorities for this movement.
- Offer free or subsidised access to mental health first aid training for all Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC members, with scope for peer-to-peer coaching on an ongoing basis through East Sussex County Council – currently available to council staff only.

**For Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC:**

- Recruit to the Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC board based on the specific mix of skills and systems linkages that might be required in the future, with an emphasis on influencing those parts of the system that will lead to the greatest longer term impacts.
- Hold one or more listening sessions with local allied groups to develop a clear (and shared) vision for local men's health and wellbeing, leading to a clearly defined vision statement for subsequent work that others can actively take forward in their own organisations / groups.
- Develop a future strategy and action plan, with indicative milestones for key activities over a three to five year period, informed by the learning from this evaluation and which specifically aims to further influence system change while increasing the reach and diversity of men involved in the movement. This should give specific consideration to the partnerships that need to be developed to leverage the existing knowledge, reach and influence of others across the system, and how online (including social media) channels can be used to further raise awareness and seek engagement in the initiative. Any future action plan should also give consideration of how best to balance both online and in-person activities in order to potentially engage with new people in different ways.
- Continue to work collaboratively with HVA to ensure that the leadership role that Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC members will be taking on in the future is represented in different spaces going forward, in order to maximise the benefit of the investment / resources dedicated to the project to date.



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