

Mr Hastings and St Leonards

Mr Hastings and St Leonards has been funded for three years, from June 2022, by East Sussex County Council, is hosted by Hastings Voluntary Action and led by local men.

The projects long-term vision is that men living in Hastings and St Leonards are living happier, healthier, and longer lives. They are at the heart of decision making about their lives and thrive in strong, supportive, and well-connected communities, where they can fulfil their potential.



This project has been developed because we know that:

- Life expectancy for men in Hastings and St Leonards is significantly lower than the national average.
- Many initiatives have been delivered across the borough with the intention of improving health outcomes for those most in need.
- Individually, these have made a big difference to people who have had first-hand experience of them. However, this has not led to improved health across the wider population.
- This suggests that no single action, or organisation, can solve this complex issue on its own.

The Project Team, Teresa Flower (Project Manager) and Jacy Kilvert (Community Development Worker), were appointed autumn 2022 to mobilise, and encourage collaboration between:

- **Male residents** who have lived experience of needing and / or accessing support around the 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 the wider determinants of their health or have responsibility for other health assets (physical and environmental), that impact on health and wellbeing for men.

In the autumn of 2024 the **Community Interest Company (CIC) – Mens Room Hastings and St Leonards (15977181)** was formed by local men who are passionate about men's health and wellbeing.

For more information and to join the conversation:

Contact the Project Team:

- Teresa Flower, Project Manager: teresa@hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk a
- Jacy Kilvert, Community Development Worker: jacy@hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk

Read reports, and view opportunities, on the HVA project webpage:

<https://tinyurl.com/hvamenshealth>

Book events on HVA events Page: <https://hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk/events>

Visit the Mr Hastings and St Leonards Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/mrhsl>

Visit the Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC website: <https://mensroom.community/>



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Mr Hastings and St Leonards Quarterly Report

October to December 2024



1. Introduction.

Mr Hastings and St Leonards has a positive can-do, approach that builds on what works and recognises and values assets within communities, organisations and services across the system. We have followed the energy and passions of local men, built connections and encouraged collaboration rather than competition. This report highlights cross cuttings examples of:

- **Local men leading the way.**
- **Activity impacting across the system that surrounds men in Hastings and St Leonards.**
- **Sustainable outcomes, and opportunities for further development and growth.**

2. Examples of Activity this Quarter (October to December 2024).

What is included here is just a selection of the activity being undertaken by the HVA Team (Teresa and Jacy) and the men leading Men's Room Hastings and St Leonard's.

Mr Hastings and St Leonards 2024 Learning Event (23rd October 2024)

This was an opportunity to share learning, highlight local mens leadership across the movement, make connections, have fun, and look to the future.

The event report can be read on the HVA project page:

<https://hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk/sites/default/files/project/Mr%20H%26SL%20Learning%20Event%20October%202024.pdf>

Mr Hastings and St Leonards speak a lot about the 'ripple' the movement is having across the community, and the system that surrounds local men, their friends and families.

Ripple mapping is a method for capturing connections and the wider impacts of delivery, not always obvious through traditional approaches to evaluation. An element of ripple mapping was incorporated into this event and will be explored further with our learning partners Apteligen, over the coming months.



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Film Night (20th November 2024)



This event was an opportunity to bring together local men, and wider stakeholders, to view together three amazing films made by local mens initiatives **Take Action Man**, **A Band of Brothers**, and **Mr Hastings and St Leonards**. New connections were made, ideas shared, and future collaborations considered in a friendly and informal environment.

South Coast Film Festival (22nd November 2024)

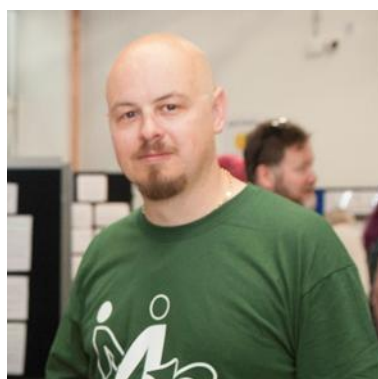
Mens Room Hastings and St Leonards, and Hastings Voluntary Action, received two awards at the South Coast Film Festival for the film 'Men Don't Talk?'

You can Now Watch the 'Men Don't Talk ?' Film online here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlplaN9z0zE>



Hastings Voluntary Action Volunteer Awards (2nd December 2024)



Annually, Hastings Voluntary Action invite nominations that recognise the achievement of local volunteers. This year David McMurdo, a founder member of the Mens Room Hastings and St Leonards, received an award for his amazing contribution. Below is an extract from his nomination.

“David has been volunteering with Mr Hastings and St Leonards since May 2023 when he joined a series of workshops to create the branding and identity for the project.

David was passionate about local men's health and wellbeing from the start, and although a quieter member of the team, had some brilliant ideas. His skills and abilities shone through.

I have watched David develop and grow as a person over the last year and he has really pushed himself out of his comfort zone to enable other men to come forward and talk about their own mental health.

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David is an inspiration to other men in the community and we have laughed and cried alongside him as he has shared some of his life memories and challenges”.

Men’s Health Strategy (28th November 2024)

In 2023 Mr Hastings and St Leonards contributed to the **Inquiry into Mens Health: The Health and Social Care Committee call for evidence**. The evidence was published in January 2024.

In a press release on 28 November 2024, Wes Streeting, Health and Social Care Secretary, has confirmed plans for a men’s health strategy as a result of the Select Committee Inquiry.

The strategy will address the biggest issues affecting men of all ages that are costing lives and may include: heart disease and strokes, prostate cancer and testicular cancer, as well as mental health and suicide prevention. [Secretary of State commits to first ever men’s health strategy - GOV.UK](#)

Male Wellbeing Event - Houses of Parliament (10th December 2024)



In December 2024 Dr Roger Prentis rap@rdp-int.com organised a **Male Wellbeing Event** at the Houses of Parliament which was hosted by James MacCleary MP.

Roger promoted the event as *“... an opportunity to hear how best to support the men in our lives (ourselves, our friends, colleagues, relations, partners, relatives ...), so they can be better informed and take control. It will also help organisations understand their responsibilities and, most importantly, what to do and how to do it...”*

Roger invited local men to attend, present and contribute to the discussion and a group travelled to London on December 10th.

Travis Mains-Marten from The Men’s Room Hastings and St Leonards was a member of the expert panel alongside **Dr Patrick Nyikavaranda** - Managing Director, Diversity Resource International, **Professor Philippa Sangster** - MBBS, FRCS (Urol), BSc (Hons), MSc Honorary Associate Professor, Consultant Urological Surgeon, Lead for male infertility, University College London Hospital, **Trevor Steven** - CEO, Mindflow, and **Mike McCarthy** - Founder, Baton of Hope and Journalist.

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Information Sharing, Learning, and Building Connections



Mr Hastings and St Leonards have participated in a wide range of events and activities this quarter within the community, and across the system with the aim of:

- raising the profile of mens health and wellbeing,
- sharing learning from Mr Hastings and St Leonards approach,
- promoting opportunities to be part of the Baton of Hope Tour planning and legacy,
- building relationships and connections to support future activity, and
- encouraging collaboration between local groups and across the system.

We have linked to key national campaigns such as:

- **Movember** <https://uk.movember.com/>
- **White Ribbon Day** – <https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/>
- **World Mental Health Day** <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>
- **International Mens Health Day 2024** - “Positive Male Role Models”
<https://internationalmensday.com/>

The team (HVA team members and men from Mr Hastings and St Leonards) have participated in, and presented, at many local and regional events/activities including:

- **Coastal Community and Creative Health Discussion Forum** (9th October) presentation, discussion and connections.
- **St Michaels Hospice Community Conversations: The Language of Dying, Death and Loss** (15th October) Sharing of learning.
- **Hastings and Rother Community Safety Partnership - White Ribbon Campaign** discussion around local activity (17th October). Mr Hastings and St Leonards is meeting with Hastings Borough Council Community Safety Team, and Hastings Women’s Voice, early in 2025 to agree a collaborative approach to addressing violence against women, men and families over the coming year.
- **Parents in Mind World Mental Health Day Men’s Health Walk** (19th October) participation and collaboration.

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- **Sussex Suicide Prevention Conference** (24th October) an invaluable opportunity to learn from, and network with, local practitioners and experts.
- **St Michals Hospice Saturday Social Sofa Tour** (30th November) Community Engagement
- **Women's Voice – Violence against Women and Girls: Let's Talk About it** (27th November) Learning from, and connecting with, individuals and services present.
- **Connecting People and Places - Tackling Loneliness in East Sussex Ripple Effect Mapping** (20th November) Sharing learning and connections.
- **Hastings and Rother Cancer Support Network** (4th December) Presentation, sharing of learning and ongoing connections. The network is meeting quarterly and producing a resource highlighting local (Hastings and Rother) support and services.

Mr Hastings and St Leonards reports, and resources, are accessible and made available widely through our mailing lists, webpage and HVA social media and newsletters.

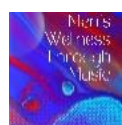
3. Planning for the Future.

An initial three-year funding period for Mr Hastings and St Leonards comes to an end in June 2025. Continued development, and the sustainability of key elements of delivery moving forward, continue to be central to the movements planning for the future.

Future funding opportunities are being explored with an emphasis on sharing learning and continuing to build capacity around mens health and wellbeing within Hastings and St Leonards, surrounding communities, and across the system.



We previously reported that the **Community Interest Company (CIC) – Mens Room Hastings and St Leonards (15977181)** has been formed and has been successful in securing their first funding to develop their website. They have also received a £200 donation from the Hastings Old Town Carnival collection. Work on their website is underway, and it can be viewed here: <https://mensroom.community/>

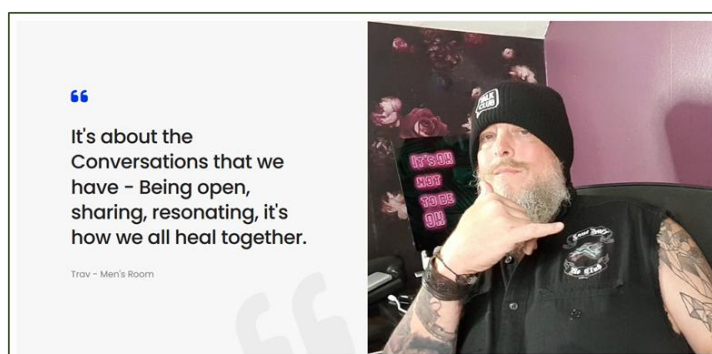


Mens Wellness Through Music has been the first local initiative to be successful in securing funding from Chalk Cliff Trust under the umbrella of the Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC.

Talk Club and Grumpy Men's Club – a place to join the conversation.

In the early days of Mr Hastings and St Leonards local men, and wider stakeholders, often asked where men can meet to get involved in the movement.


A physical meeting place was something that was high on local men's agenda. Talk Club, and Grumpy Mens Club, are beginning to address this issue.



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Talk club is a national initiative that has been brought to Hastings by men from Mr Hastings and St Leonards with a regular meeting on a Thursday evening every fortnight.

“Talk Club start with asking ‘How are you? Out of 10?’ By putting a number on how we feel and explaining why, men have a way to open up and measure their mental fitness” <https://talkclub.org/>

Talk Club Hastings

Join The Conversation Every Other Thursday

We are thrilled to announce our *Talk Club Sessions*, a way of providing a safe, supportive space for men to connect, share, and listen.

These sessions will take place every other Thursday, offering a consistent opportunity to open up about mental health and foster meaningful conversations.

Grumpy Mens Club is a ‘drop in’ at a local café in the centre of Hastings every fortnight on a Wednesday evening. This is a collaboration between Mr Hastings and St Leonards and the Grumpy Cook Café.

Talk Club and Grumpy Mens Club are promoted through the men’s Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/MrHSL>

The Baton of Hope Tour visits Hastings on 23rd September 2025.



The Baton of Hope is on a mission to change society’s approach to suicide and save lives conceived by two dads who had both lost their sons to suicide <https://batonofhopeuk.org/the-baton/>

Mr Hastings and St Leonards have been successful in their application to host the **Baton of Hope Tour 2025** and work is underway to ensure this is the collaborative, creative and inclusive experience we are all committed to.

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A successful community launch event was held on 19th November 2024 and regular planning meetings are enabling a wide range of local men, the wider community, and stakeholders from diverse groups and organisations, to share in planning the batons visit and its long-term legacy.

There are many ways to get involved:

- **Become a Baton Bearer:** <https://batonofhopeuk.org/become-a-baton-bearer/>
- **Join us in organising the tour and the events** leading up to the Hastings leg of the tour: Contact Jacy jkilvert@batonofhopeuk.org
- **Keep up to date on progress, and opportunities to get involved by visiting:**
 - Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards webpage: <https://mensroom.community/>
 - Baton of Hope Hastings Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/899681561722110>

Ensuring that the **collaborative, and supportive, approach that underpins Mr Hastings and St Leonards** continues moving forward is a priority for the Mr Hastings and St Leonards HVA Team at this time.

The following support structures are currently in place offering invaluable insight and challenge.

- **Mr Hastings and St Leonards Steering Group** is made up of a diverse group of frontline workers, decision makers and local men. It's informal, and accessible approach, welcomes the skills, experience and connections of all our members. Members can attend meetings and/or be contacted for advice, connections and support. Currently there are 41 individuals registered on the steering group mailing list. All receive regular updates, quarterly reports, invitations to Mr Hastings and St Leonards activity and quarterly steering group meetings. An increasing number of local men are engaging with the steering group and actively contributing to agenda, sharing learning and lived experience.
- **Hastings and St Leonards Mens Health and Wellbeing Forum** is an opportunity for local practitioners and group leaders to come together and share ideas and expertise. The Forum is open to anyone who either currently works with men or would like more men to access their services or groups. It encourages collaboration rather than competition with an agenda led by the membership. There are currently 76 members on the forums mailing list.

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- **Membership of local (local, regional and national) networks and partnership groups** is an important way to build relationships, make connections and share learning. The team are members of the East Sussex VCSE Mental Health Network, Active Hastings Partnership, Hastings Youth Partnership, Hastings Community Network, Mental Health Action Group, Mens Mental Health Community of Interest.

It isn't always practical for local men to engage with these opportunities as they are often held at times that are difficult for them to attend. However, there are key meetings, which prioritise lived experience, or areas of specific interest to men involved in Mr Hastings and St Leonards, that they already participate in.

In January 2025 Mazin Al-Jumaili, one of the Directors of Men's Room Hastings and St Leonards CIC, will be sharing information about Baton of Hope with the **Suicide Prevention Partnership Group (SPPG)**.



In February members of Mr Hastings and St Leonards will be participating in **Co-Production in Sussex: The future is in your hands**. This event is about creating the future of Co-Production and Lived Experience Involvement across Sussex.



Join the conversation at home, in the workplace and in the community.

Get involved in Baton of Hope 2025.

Make a difference to the future of mens health and wellbeing in Hastings and St Leonards.

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