

Mr Hastings and St Leonards

(Hastings and St Leonards Mens Health and Wellbeing Project)

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 this report we will share a brief update on progress this quarter. The report is presented using headings and actions from the projects agreed year 2 delivery plan.

1. **Development of Mens Movement (Mr Hastings and St Leonards).**
2. **Influencing Systems Change.**
3. **Enhancing Project Impact and Learning.**

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Visit the HVA Project Webpage: <https://tinyurl.com/hvamenshealth>

Mr Hastings and St Leonards Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/mrhsl> or scan this QR code.



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Quarterly Report (April – June 2024)

Development of Mens Movement (Mr Hastings and St Leonards).

Men Don't Talk? was screened for a second time on 25th April at Central Hall in Hastings. It was then premiered online, on Sunday 5th May and can now be viewed on the Mr Hastings and St Leonards YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@mrhsl>

BBC News South East featured the Men Don't Talk? film on BBC South East News:

<https://youtu.be/VloUYXWukkk?si=7KZQIKvM3-X1u3nA> and on Radio Sussex:

<https://youtu.be/ONs3RgBLIPY?si=LjzskX-3oeLrK6Ua>



"I could watch that film 100 times and always find another bit that I had missed before, really powerful, and speaking to the camera has a huge impact".

On April 20th Mr Hastings and St Leonards sponsored the **Hastings United Football Programme** which included a full-page colour advert in the programme, social media mentions, project mentions pitch side and over PA, and man of the match presentation.



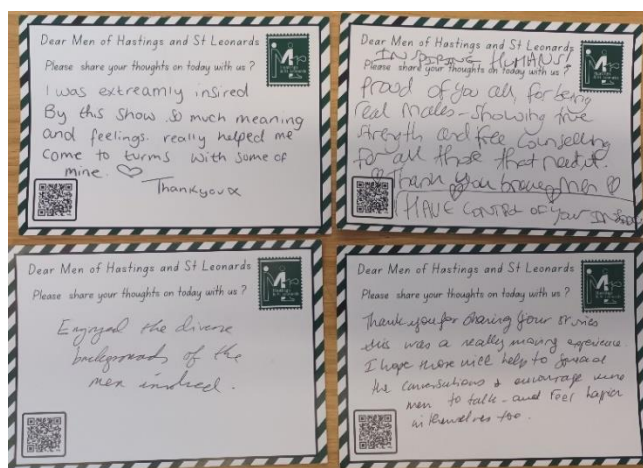
The Monologues of Men was performed at the Stables Theatre on Sunday 26th May. Local men were supported to write and perform their stories. This was a powerful way for them to share their experiences, offering hope and inspiration to others.

Audience feedback was collected on postcards and gave an insight into the impact of the performance. Some of what was shared is included here:

"It was a really powerful and positive performance. Each of them gave a lot and created a narrative which gave hope through the hurdles they'd faced. It was truly inspiring".

"Thank you for sharing. It really helps me think about my own story and not lame myself".

"Very brave and thought provoking. Thankyou men for sharing your stories and allowing yourself to be vulnerable. Keep on building this positive movement".



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The afternoon concluded with a mindfulness activity for everyone in the theatre facilitated by Lee Ring, a local practitioner and member of Mr Hastings and St Leonards.



A short film that documents the mens journey is being produced and will be available to view soon.

June 10th – 16th was Mens Health Week and Mr Hastings and St Leonards held its second annual Celebration Event on Saturday June 15th in Hastings Town Centre.

The stormy weather on the day impacted on the plan to have outside activities, information stands, and One You Bus. However, the event was able to go ahead inside Central Hall. The weather impacted on footfall but feedback about the day was positive and another great opportunity to strengthen connections and make plans for the future. John from Apteligen, Mr Hastings and St Leonards evaluation and learning partner joined for the day and made connections with local men and wider stakeholders.



Mr Hastings and St Leonards also hosted a stand during Men's Health Week at ASDA which instigated a request for a one-to-one meeting with male members of the workforce

The Grumpy Mens Club is now meeting every fortnight, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday evening of the month, at the Grumpy Cook café in Hastings Town Centre. This is a point of contact for local men to meet, talk and engage with the Mr Hastings and St Leonards movement.

The Mobile Mens Room tour schedule is being finalised with visits to St Michael's Hospice, CGL Star, Broomgrove Community Centre, Southdown Mental Health Hub, ESRA, Veterans Hub, East Sussex Collage, Warming up the Homeless, Seaview and Hastings Pier all being negotiated.

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Mr Hastings and St Leonards had a presence at a number of local events this quarter including the Head on Board Skate Jam, Salvation Army Employability and Community Fair, Mental Health Week event at the Observer building, St Michaels Hospice Bereavement event and Hastings Women's Voice Event.

Mr Hastings and St Leonards also supported the 'Take Action Man' event where their new film was premiered.



Work commenced on the Mr Hastings and St Leonards Merman that will be part of 'Walking the Fish'. The merman will sit on the Mr Hastings and St Leonards branded sofa and be part of the parade. It will also take part in Hastings Pride and Hastings Carnival parades next quarter, raising awareness of mens health and wellbeing and encouraging local men to join the conversation.

Capacity Building opportunities are being planned and delivered based on what men say will equip them to continue the Mr Hastings and St Leonards Journey. This includes:

- Men identifying, and attending, a short training session with **Talk Club**, <https://talkclub.org/> a national mens mental health charity that encourages peer to peer talking groups. These local men hope to set up the first 'Talk Club' in Hastings next quarter, meeting on weeks that the Grumpy Mens Club doesn't meet.
- Discussions with Roger Prentice from **RDP**, [RDPI \(rdp-int.com\)](http://rdp-int.com) and Peter Bray from **Men in Mind** <https://www.mindcharity.co.uk/east-sussex/men-in-mind> around delivery of Male Wellbeing and Mental Health Awareness workshops for local men.
- Supporting individual men to recognise, and build, on their skills and experience. Engaging with their passions, interests and aspirations for the future career progression and contributions to Mr Hastings and St Leonards legacy and sustainability.

The Mens Health and Wellbeing Forum in May focussed on collaboration between local men's health and wellbeing projects.

- Exploring and identifying common themes that local mens groups share
- Looking at the benefits of a collaborative approach
- Discussing what needs to be in place to establish a strong and robust collaboration across men's health and wellbeing projects.
- Looking at the benefits of joint / collaborative funding bids across men's health and wellbeing projects.



The next meeting will focus on identify clear next steps, encouraging wider attendance and creating a framework for future collaborative working.

Mr Hastings and St Leonards contributed to **Phenomenal Happenings Latest TV - Making It Happen** (making-it-happen.org.uk) Episodes 5 – 8 focuses on Hastings and St Leonards with episode 6 including an interview with men from Mr Hastings and St Leonards.

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Influencing Systems Change and Enhancing Project Impact and Learning

The announcement of the General Election on July 4th meant that, at short notice, a number of events Mr Hastings and St Leonards was due to contribute to were postponed. This included:

- **The East Sussex Engagement and Research Symposium** which was planned for 11th and 12th June. This event was due to bring together local, and national, decision makers, practitioners, and community and voluntary sector partners. Mr Hastings and St Leonards were due to share learning from the projects journey, host a live podcast from the mobile mens room, host a screening and Q and A session around the 'Men Don't Talk?' film and present excerpts from the Monologues of men.
- **The Build Back Better Sussex International Health Equity Symposium** was an opportunity to share learning from the Mr Hastings and St Leonards approach
- **A Male Wellbeing event at Westminster** organised by Roger Prentis of RDPI, Travis Mains Martin was due to share insight from his own lived experience.

We hope that these opportunities will be rearranged later this year.

Conversations and sharing of learning have happened through **The Mens Mental Health Community of Interest** meetings, **Rough Sleepers Initiative Lunch and Learn** session, **Alcohol Strategy** meeting and conversations. **The Amplification of the Voices of Women in Coastal Communities'** event offered opportunities to explore the synergy between women's, and men's, health and wellbeing agendas.

Through East Sussex Wellbeing at Work the team delivered a Webinar on May 15th which attracted 20 attendees. Feedback was positive, and further conversations are underway with Kurt J. Lesker, a Hastings based company and the Wellbeing Team from East Sussex Health Care NHS Trust at Conquest Hospital.



Mr Hastings and St Leonard's also contributed to an **LGA feature on men's health and the 2023-24 Director of Public Health of Report on Creativity for Healthy Lives** both due for publication soon.

St Michael's Hospice has set up a **Mens Bereavement Support Group around grief and loss**. Martin, one of the first Men's Champions, and Volunteer Coordinator at the Hospice, has told us this group has evolved from the ongoing conversations with Mr Hastings and St Leonards.

Enhancing Project Impact and Learning

Everything included in this report contributes to the aim of '**Enhancing Project Impact and Learning**'.

- The development of the Mens Movement.
- Capacity building within the community.
- Influencing the system that surrounds local men.
- Sharing learning around the projects approach and impact.
- Recognising how small changes can make a big difference to local mens experience.
- Building strong and collaborative networks.

In the final funding year we will ensure that all our resources are focussed on equipping the mens movement to be sustainable and continue its journey post June 2025.

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Our priorities for the coming year include:

- Encouraging more men, their friends, families, communities, workplaces and services that support them, to **'join the conversation'** around mens health and wellbeing.
- Sharing information, resources, inspiration and connections which enable decision makers, and practitioners, **to step back, be brave and trust the ABCD (Asset based Community Development) Process or Approach**
- Enabling the mens movement to build on their skills, knowledge and connections (**building capacity of the individuals involved and the movement as a whole**) while supporting them to put in place the **structures and support networks** they will need moving forward.

Our evaluation partners Apteligen are here to enhance the learning we gather and can share from Mr Hastings and St Leonards delivery.

Apteligen produce a Quarterly Evaluation and Learning Report which sits alongside this report. This quarter it covers:

- Interviews with external stakeholders.
- Speaking with local men and project partners at the Celebration event in June.
- Reviewing the projects theory of change.
- Reviewing evaluation methods for year two (year 3 of project delivery)

Looking to the future.

Some of next quarter's highlights July – September 2024 (with a few dates for your diary in October 2024):		
Date:	Opportunity:	Notes:
Ongoing (Twice a month)	Grumpy Mens Club.	Opportunity for men to come together and join the conversation hosted by the Grumpy Cook and men from Mr Hastings and St Leonards.
Ongoing	Social Media and Podcasts	Led by men leading Mr Hastings and St Leonards, podcasts and social media continue to be produced and shared highlighting local opportunities, services, and issues relevant to mens health and wellbeing.
Ongoing	Mobile Mens Room on Tour	Mr Hastings and St Leonards will be participating in events and awareness weeks, attending local projects and places men congregate. A timetable of activity is in place and being promoted.
Ongoing	Mr Hastings and St Leonards Padlet	Development will continue with first phase launch July 2024
July 2nd	East Sussex VCSE Mental Health Network	Presentation on Mr Hastings and St Leonards approach, impact and learning. Ongoing attendance by project team.
July 5th	Baton of Hope application submitted https://batonofhopeuk.org/the-baton/	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. Outcome of application expected 31st July 2024
July 6th	Walking the Fish	Merman produced by Members of Mr Hastings and St Leonards and paraded on mobile Sofa. Opportunity to reach a wider group of men, friends and families with Mr Hastings and St Leonards messages

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July 16/18th	Overcoming Overwhelm	Workshop delivered by Roger Prentis - RDPI (rdp-int.com)
July 23rd	Mr Hastings and St Leonards Steering Group Meeting.	Online meeting, 48 members on mailing list from across sectors and with a wide range of roles all of whom receive reports, share information on behalf of Mr Hastings and St Leonards and can be called on for support and connections.
August 1 st – 12 th	Hastings Old Town Carnival week	Merman produced by Members of Mr Hastings and St Leonards and paraded on mobile Sofa.
August 14th	Male Wellbeing Session	Delivered by Roger Prentis - RDPI (rdp-int.com)
August 19 th	Men in Mind Mental Health Training	Workshop for men involved in Mr Hastings and St Leonards delivered by Peter Bray from Men in Mind.
August 25 th	Hastings Pride	Merman, and Mr Hastings and St Leonards will participate in parade and have a stand at Pride 2024
September 25th	SRA Recovery Event	Mobile Mens Room will attend and encourage conversation.
Date TBC	Film evening	Opportunity to screen films made by Mr Hastings and S Leonards, ABOB, Take Action Man, and other local mens projects (open to all mens projects locally)
Dates TBC	A range of local men led workshops being developed	Mindfulness, positive male psychology, music and more.
October 9th	Mens Mental Health Community of Interest Group	Face to face meeting in Lewes.
October 11 th	Hastings College World Mental Health Day event	Detail TBC
October 23rd	Mr Hastings and St Leonards Learning Event	Held in the Hastings Borough Council Chamber this event will be open to all interested stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apteligen, our evaluation partners, will share their findings to date. • Mr Hastings and St Leonards will share impact and learning • Stakeholder will be asked to consider how they can impact on the movements legacy and sustainability as we move towards the final eight months of project funding.

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