

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 the most deprived communities 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.**

For information contact the Project Team:

Teresa Flower, Project Manager

Email: teresa@hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk

Jacy Kilvert, Community Development Worker

Email: jacy@hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk

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

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



Step Back, be Brave and Trust the Process.

Quarterly Report (January to March 2024)

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

The development of the Mr Hastings and St Leonards initiative, and the emerging mens movement, encourages **conversations that raise awareness around mens health and wellbeing, supports community engagement and builds on local strengths, skills, passions, energy, and resources.**

The project **supports actions identified, designed, and led by local men** and **promotes collaboration** between groups and services in Hastings and St Leonards. The aim is to ensure the **legacy and sustainability of what works** for local men that can continue beyond the life of this project.

Mr Hastings and St Leonards social media continues to reach out to men across Hastings and St Leonards and further afield. The **Facebook** page currently has 205 followers and **LinkedIn** has 133 connections reaching local men, frontline workers and decision makers across the system. Posts are used to establish connections between local groups and services, share information between local men, their friends and families and encourage conversation. The men leading this part of the project are keen to be inclusive, for example including posts around International Women's Day and the local Women's Voice Event in Hastings. Popular **Podcasts** showcased Project Rewild 'Take Action Man' <https://www.projectrewild.co.uk/takeactionman> and The Grumpy Cook <https://www.facebook.com/grumpyatthebalehouse/>



Branding on pens, postcards, stickers, Tee-shirts, and mugs etc. encourage men, their friends, families, and local practitioners to join the conversation around mens health and wellbeing. The brand and projects agenda are becoming recognised. We are receiving feedback that Mr Hastings and St Leonards is influencing conversations in the absence of the project team or core group of local men. The Following was shared by Jan Papworth from The Big Local North East Hastings:

As a community development worker I attend many meetings with partners and local providers. It is notable that other providers are aware of the Hastings Men's Health and Wellbeing Project and have integrated it with their existing work so that it now forms an important element in many areas of community work. The ease with which this appears to have taken place suggests that people recognise the importance of this work which was previously missing from community-based approaches.



Step Back, be Brave and Trust the Process.



The Mobile Mens Room will be ready to commence its inaugural tour next quarter. The mobile sofa is ready to go and made its first appearance at the Men Don't Talk? film premiere. Local street artist Drew has been working on the mobile screens that will be used to stimulate conversation. A tour plan is being developed to coincide with local events and community group meetings.

Film Premiere - Men Don't Talk was premiered on March 3rd at the Kino Teatr in St Leonards on Sea. The evening was hosted by Travis Mains- Martin (Mr Hastings and St Leonards) and Fancies Saunders

<https://prometheusfilmproductions.com/>

Francis lives locally and is strong advocate for Mr Hastings and St Leonards sharing his skills and connections.

100 people attended the premier. Men involved in the production, their friends and families, and supporters of Mr Hastings and St Leonards. The film was followed by a question-and-answer session when twelve men involved in the film came up on stage and answered questions from the audience. A selection of the feedback received is included below.



The 'Men Don't Talk' film is amazing... powerful, yet not too dramatic, honest, and inspiring and just a wonderful opportunity to champion for the normalisation of conversations around men's mental health/wellbeing. Everyone involved in creating the film must be super proud!

"Such a well-made film and truly inspiring stories from the men themselves".

"Simply brilliant. I love how the discussion is done through haircuts – it makes it really informal and much more engaging. So professionally done. It felt grounded, honest, inclusive, and sensitive".



A second, open access, screening is planned for 25th April after which the film will be available for awareness raising and training. Relevant warnings, and how to access support, is included at the beginning and end of the film due to the content which explores mental health and suicide.

Following on from the interest generated by the Men Don't Talk? film **creative writing, acting/performance workshops** are now being facilitated by Francis. Eight workshops will lead up to a performance of **Men Talk!** at the **Stables Theatre in Hastings on 26th May 2024**.

18 men registered to take part in the workshops, of which nine have currently opted to perform their monologues on the night. It is anticipated that tickets will be free at point of access and booked via the Stables Box Office. Full details will be shared widely nearer the time.

The men's monologues explore their experiences of childhood, grief, loss, and trauma. They focus on **'the light at the end of the tunnel'**. The monologues will be moving and invoke deep emotions. In recognition of this a **mindfulness exercise** will be shared at the end of the evening which will encourage connection and reflection. This will enable participants, and the audience, to release negative emotions before leaving the theatre. Alongside this information will be available about where support can be accessed locally.

Step Back, be Brave and Trust the Process.

The first **Grumpy Mens Club** was held at the Grumpy Cook Café in Hastings on 6th March with 15 men attending. This is a collaboration between the men from Mr Hastings and St Leonards and Barry Ashby - the Grumpy Cook. It will run every other Wednesday alternating with a Grumpy Women's Club. Barry is also taking this idea to his café in Milton Keynes. Having this regular opportunity to drop in and **'join the conversation'**, is something many local men have been asking for.



Let's Talk Men's Health was an event hosted by ESCC Library Service in collaboration with Mr Hastings and St Leonards. 25 men attended alongside female friends and family members. Local poets performed, Travis from Mr Hastings and St Leonards and Dan from Roots of Return <https://www.rootsofreturn.org/> shared their stories. Alastair spoke about his own experiences and his involvement with the Movember campaign <https://uk.movember.com/>

Capacity Building of local men is key to ensuring sustainability of Mr Hastings and St Leonards.

A **Mr Hastings and St Leonards Awareness Day** was held in February. Music, singing, drama, storytelling, and food/cooking were some of the shared skills and interests that were identified by the men that attended.



Man2Man

- Do you often feel isolated?
- Do you often feel lonely?
- Do you have difficulty making and keeping friends?
- Do you often have negative feelings about yourself?
- Do you often feel as though there is no one there for you?

Would you be interested in being part of a project I am starting where you can learn about your psychological development and understand more about your relationship with yourself and others?

If so, please contact John Darling for an informal chat. I have had a Psychotherapy practice in the area for over 15 years.

Email john.darlinguk@gmail.com
Mobile 07816 959728

GRAVESHED

Trapped
powerless
push
Anxiety
Afraid
ready to explode

TAKE BACK CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE
GROUP STARTING SOON FOR MEN
Call Paul 07961 650 442 or Sue 07949 008 787
email: susan.booney1@btinternet.com

Central to Mr Hastings and Leonards work is **building on the strengths, experience, and passion of local men**. Following on from conversations over the last year, a number of initiatives, led by men, are being developed. Mr Hastings and St Leonards has supported many of these projects sharing information, making connections, and building capacity within the community.

Next quarter **Action Focused Conversations** will be hosted to encourage more men to get involved, share their skills, and experience and join the conversation around mens health and wellbeing. These will be promoted widely and will pick up on issues identified as important to local men. **An emphasis on action** has been identified as essential to engaging men in the movement moving forward.

Recruitment for an **Assistant Community Development Worker** was completed this quarter. The role generated a lot of interest. A number of men, with a wealth of lived experience and local knowledge, were keen to be part of the future of Mr Hastings and St Leonards. We hope that everyone who spent time applying for the role will remain involved in the project. We have spoken with as many applicants as possible throughout the process, sharing and encouraging uptake of training and engagement opportunities and offering feedback. The new Assistant Community Development Worker will be **joining the team on 24th April 2024**.

Step Back, be Brave and Trust the Process.

We are promoting **Hastings Voluntary Action Training** to all the men engaging with Mr Hastings and St Leonards. HVA training can be viewed and booked here: <https://hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk/events> Alongside this we are accessing training, support and development opportunities requested/needed by men engaged in the project. These will be shared through social media, on the HVA webpage and through local networks and partners.

A thankyou gift given to Mr Hastings and St Leonards for a presentation delivered last quarter was used to host a **pizza and conversation celebration event** for local men. This was a chance to discuss ideas and make plans for the future.



The project team continue to build on connections, support local groups working with men, and explore new opportunities to reach out to men, their friends, and families.

Conversations, and planned activities, have continued this quarter through meetings and at events with ESRA, Wonky WI, Hastings and Rother Refugee Buddy Project, Hastings Trans Pride, Hastings and Rother Rainbow Alliance, Hastings Women's Voice, Seaview Project, Warming up the Homeless, Project Rewild Take Action Man, Veterans Hub Hastings College and many more.

Mr Hastings and St Leonards are **working in partnership in Broomgrove** with Active Hastings https://www.hastings.gov.uk/sport_play/getactive/activehastings_listings/

The **Mens Health and Wellbeing Forum**, held at the White Rock Hotel in January, was attended by 22 representative from groups and organisations working with men in Hastings and St Leonards. There was a strong focus on the need to engage young men and fathers in the conversation. This influenced discussions around the venue for the June Celebration event currently being planned.

There was interest in future forums being hosted by mens groups within the community. This is key to ensuring ownership, and sustainability, of this forum moving forward.



Influencing Systems Change.

Mr Hastings and St Leonards is engaging across the system at a frontline, and strategic level. We are:

- **Raising awareness** of what impacts on mens health and wellbeing.
- **Increasing collaboration and conversations** across public, voluntary, community and business sectors.
- **Building connections** between men within the community and local organisations.
- **Sharing learning, and nurturing best practice**, based on what works for men in Hastings and St Leonards.

We are beginning to see 'ripples' across the system, increased interest in Mr Hastings and St Leonards approach, and achievements, to date. Invitations to share learning, requests to meet, ideas around changes to practice and offers to compile best practice case studies are being made.

Step Back, be Brave and Trust the Process.

This is a selection of what this has included:

- **Presenting** to Safer Hastings Joint Action Group, Adult Social Care Team Meeting, East Sussex Communications and Engagement Steering Group (CESG) and the 'Coproducting Coproduction' event in Brighton. Both offered opportunities to connect with new organisations and practitioners and share learning.
- **Marketplace stand** at the East Sussex Wellbeing at Work Gold Awards Event and ongoing engagement to increase awareness in local businesses around their male employee's health and wellbeing.
- **Conversations** with East Sussex County Council Alcohol Strategy lead around what impacts on mens alcohol use locally and how the strategy can collaborate with local men, and community projects, moving forward.
- **Meeting** with Health in Mind around future collaboration to increase mens access to the service.
- **Attending workshops** such as a Mens Mental Health workshop and Making it Happen Four Shifts workshop to ensure learning from Mr Hastings and St Leonards is shared and collaboration between local initiatives using similar approaches.
- **Inviting** practitioners, and decision makers, from across the system to attend Mr Hastings and St Leonards events such as the premiere of Men Don't Talk? Darrell Gale, Director of Public Health East Sussex, shared a clip from the film with the Health and Wellbeing Board in April after attending the premiere.
- **Hosting** members of the NHS Integrated Care Board at Hastings Voluntary Action to increase awareness of Mr Hastings and St Leonards, Hastings Voluntary Action and the potential for collaboration with the Voluntary and Community sector In Hastings and St Leonards. Feedback included:



The Mr Hastings work is inspiring and I'm sure will grow from strength to strength. I learned a lot about the power of communities and community assets.

Enhancing Project Impact and Learning.

This element of the project's delivery plan is influenced, and enhanced, by all activity described above.

- **The emerging mens movement.** The actions being identified, and taken forward, by local men and supported by the project team. The Projects capacity building opportunities, and resourcing to test new ideas that compliment, and collaborate, with existing provision for men locally will create legacy and sustainability for Mr Hastings and St Leonards.
- **Communication and awareness raising.** Branding, and marketing activities including social media, face to face presence at events and meetings, and branded merchandise to stimulate conversation within the community and local organisations. Input to HVA, and partner organisation newsletters and networking opportunities are also important.
- **Project team engagement across the system.** Workshops, presentations, and conversations with practitioners and decision makers within health and social care, housing, drug and alcohol services, local businesses and more. This extends to sharing learning regionally and nationally.

The projects steering group members continue to support Mr Hastings and St Leonards by making connections, sharing their knowledge and expertise, and inviting us to share our learning around mens health and wellbeing through events, newsletters, team meetings and partnership and networking groups.

Step Back, be Brave and Trust the Process.

This quarter they have also participated in conversations hosted by James and John from Apteligen, the projects learning partner, and attended the Men Don't Talk film premiere.

We are working closing with our learning partners, **Apteligen who are supporting the evaluation of Mr Hastings and St Leonards** to ensure we learn as much as possible over the coming year. John and James produce a separate Learning Report quarterly providing more detail of their reflections to date. This quarter have **hosted conversations** with local stakeholders (face to face and virtually), joined us at the **pizza evening** to meet, and speak with, local men and attended the **Men Don't Talk?** premiere and recruited and trained the first **Peer Researchers**.



Looking to the future.

April – June 2024 is a busy time for Mr Hastings and St Leonards with the emphasis on:

- **Reaching out and encouraging more men to join the conversation.**
- **Recognising, valuing, and building on the skills, experiences, and passions of local men.**
- **Encouraging services, organisations, businesses, and local groups to join the conversation.**
- **Enabling action to initiate change and improve health and wellbeing for men in Hastings St Leonards.**

Some of next quarter's highlights (April – June 2024):

Date:	Opportunity:	Notes:
Twice a month (ongoing)	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.
April and May	Men Talk monologue workshops.	Facilitated by Francis Saunders eight creative writing and performance workshops leading up to a performance at the Stables Theatre in May 2024.
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.
April	MiH Film 'Phenomenal Happenings Films' produced	Available to view on https://making-it-happen.org.uk/latest-tv/ and including input from Mr Hastings and St Leonards and a range of local mens projects.
5 th April	Premiere of the Take Action Man film.	Take Action Man, hosted by Project Rewild, works closely with Mr Hastings and St Leonards. This film looks at why this kind of project is needed, and its impact on health and wellbeing of men and the wider community. Mr Hastings and St Leonards will be supporting Take Action Man on the night.

Step Back, be Brave and Trust the Process.

20 th April	Mr Hastings and St Leonards sponsor Hastings United Football Programme.	Full page colour advert in programme, social media mentions, project mentions over PA, pitch side man of the match presentation (photo in next programme).
24 th April	Assistant Community Development Worker joins Mr Hastings and St Leonards Team.	This new post will be working directly with local men to increase Mr Hastings and St Leonards reach. They will update and encourage access to the Projects Padlet which will share information and raise awareness of opportunities for and with local men.
25 th April	Mr Hastings and St Leonards Steering Group Meeting.	Online meeting, 32 members on mailing list from across sectors and with a wide range of roles.
25 th April	Men Don't Talk? Film screening	Open access screening at Central Hall in Hastings after which the film will be made available widely.
May/June	A range of local men led initiatives will be explored and developed	To include creative and physical activities. Full details will be shared widely through social media, websites, and community connections.
May/ June and ongoing.	Action Focussed Conversations	A number of conversation will be hosted that enable local men to explore issues important to them and take action to make a difference for men in Hastings and St Leonards .
May/June and 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 such as ESRA, St Michaels Hospice, Veterans Hub, Seaview, to join the conversation around mens health and wellbeing in Hastings and St Leonards. A tour programme will be made widely available.
22 nd May TBC	Mens Health and wellbeing Forum	Exploration of collaborative working to increase sustainability of mens projects locally. Hosted within the community by a local mens group.
26 th May	Men Talk	Performance of the Men Talk Monologues at the Stables Theatre in Hastings. This will be free at point of access and bookable through the stables box office.
10 th – 16 th June	Mens Health Week 2024	Men's Health Week 2024 - June 10-16, 2024 #menshealthweek let's talk Prostates (and everything else men's health!) https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/mhw
11 th and 12 th June	Engagement and Research Symposium	Hosted by ESCC the symposium will share learning and future plans for the Coastal Community & Creative Health project. It coincides with Mens Health Week and is offering opportunities for Mr Hastings and St Leonards to actively participate, share learning and achievements.
15 th June	Mr Hastings and St Leonards Celebration Event	This Celebration Event is planned for Mens Health Week 2024 and will be held in Hastings Town Centre with open air activities and stalls. Central Hall will be available for a programme of indoor activities and film screenings.
June 2024	Mr Hastings and St Leonards Padlet launch	This a platform for mens projects, events and opportunities that can be accessed by all. Raising awareness, encouraging action and collaboration.

Step Back, be Brave and Trust the Process.