HASTINGS LIBRARY OF THINGS

THE FIRST YEAR









Save money, Save space, Save the planet

HASTINGS LIBRARY OF THINGS

Annual Review

31 March 2021 to 1 April 2022





Please let us know if a different format would be better for you.

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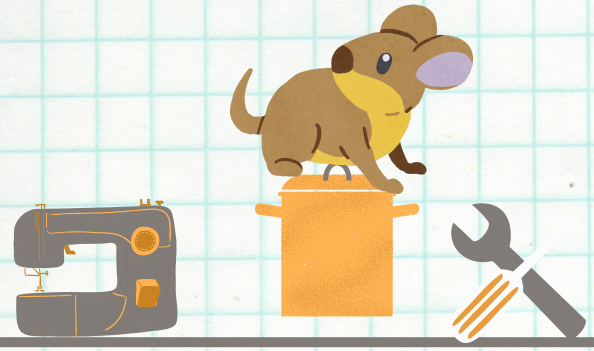
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join the library
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HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Libraries of Things, Tool Libraries, Toy Libraries, Share Sheds. They are mushrooming up all over the place.

Libraries of things own things, (useful and fun things) for or on behalf of the community. They lend them out to folk who want to use them, fix them up and end them out again, and again...





Hastings Library of Things is library of general things: Whimsical things like vintage tea sets, practical things like tools, community building things like tombola's and projectors. ,

We started in 2021. Lots of folk wanted one, so we just needed to get organised. (and find space and get things to lend out, and people to help out, money), and a bunch of paperwork. ..Easy peasy.

So we did all, some of that, and we launched 1 August 2021 in a disused former carpet shop (but more about that later)

Membership: Folk have to join the library before they can borrow. It's very cheap (£3 a year) , and borrowing is free.

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PRINCIPLES

There are different models for libraries of things and our members are motivated by different things.

We started from an idea that:
1) We don't need to own things, we need fair access to them.
2) As a community, we know what problems we face, and, we think we can find the answers. (we just need resources and the ability to organise).



Which brought us to the idea of a "sharing economy", that is, valuing each other, sharing skills and time, and, stuff!







Lots of of our members are motivated by the environment , which is also cool. All our things are dontated, from the backs of cupboards and bottom of the shed, so we are reducing post consumer waste and getting more from the things we already own

BONUS PAGE: 6

Community Organising



You have in IDEA!
Your idea will fix a big problem in your community



The community gets it, it's a winner

What's Community Organising now?

You and your community idea will change the world



(You will be local heroes)

You start to organise but it's hard work



RIP

Your idea could be buried under red tape lack of experience and resources



We can do it if we organise...together

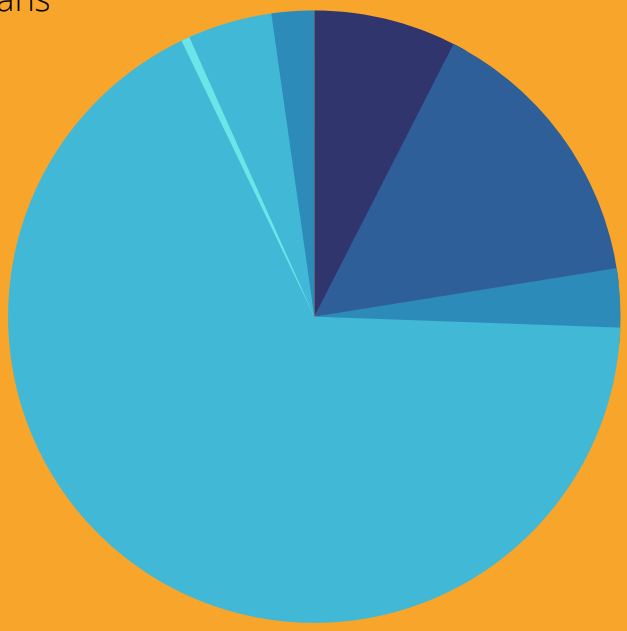
LIBRARY OF THINGS HASTINGS



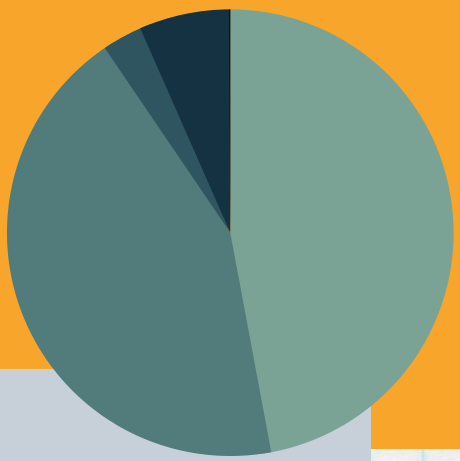
GAME ON

7 Numbers









Trivia

Most lent item- Folding Tables
Most expensive single donated thing- Marquee
Most costly repair- Overlocker
No. of items PAT tested- 132



THE COMMON ROOM

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We operate from Eagle House, home to the Common Room. We have a tiny, heaving storage cupboard full of things, and we get to use the Common Room as our lending space.





This is where members come to collect and return things, and, sometimes sit and have a cuppa, or do some sewing.





WHAT NEEDS DOING?



Some of roles that help the library tick:



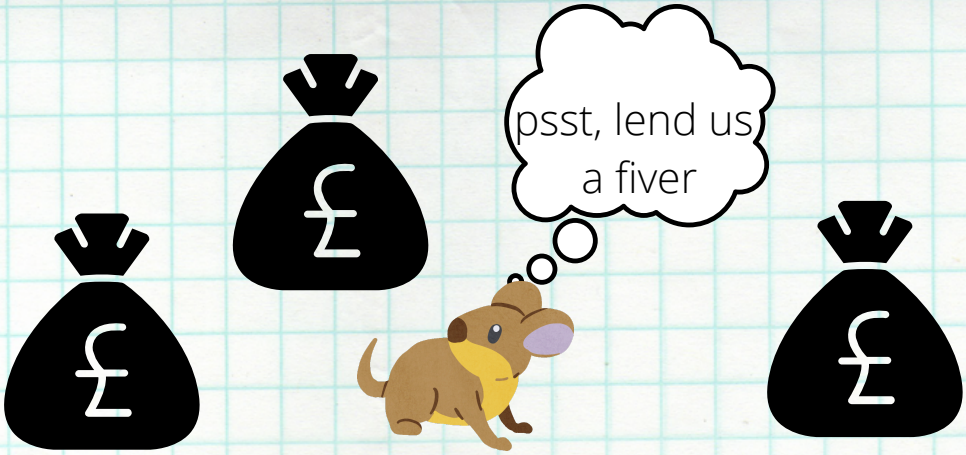
The Library runs on volunteers, the volunteers run on tea.

Some of the jobs are regular, some are one-off, some are things we didn't know we needed until someone turns and and offers to do it.

Librarians
Librarians check things in and out.
They never say “shhhsh”, in fact, they can actually make quite a lot of noise
Librarians keep track of the things and lend things out. They don't count jigsaw pieces, but they do lend out the jigsaw if you ask nicely.

Comms Folk
These guys... they use special super powers to get stuff in the press, and social media, sometimes, they take rather great photos.

Fund raisers
Running a library of things costs a bit, tea and biscuits for the librarians, replacement parts, volunteer expenses, insurance, rent. Membership fees help, but, we couldn't run without grants and fundraising activities. Finding, applying and then reporting on grants is a job and a half, but, it's lovely when the money comes in.





Inventory King (or Queen, or, non-hierarchical anarchist)
They take photos, they hunt the internet for instructional booklets, they list, quantify and categorise the things so that members can find them. And, they write informative and witty listing information.



Delivery and Collection Hounds
In cars, on foot and by bike, these guys will go the the highest edges of Hastings (yes, even the Ridge), to collect donations and deliver things to people who can't get out and about.



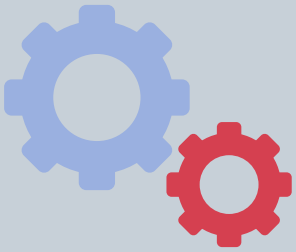
Cataloguer in Chief
All the things have a “number”, and, thanks to sticky labels, sharpie pens and 2 whole days of effort, all the things are now labelled so that the librarians can find them easily in the cupboard of things, thanks Cataloguer in Chief.

PAT Tester
Their name isn't Pat, but they do test, electrical items using a mixture of cunning, knowledge and an electrical safety testing device (also not called PAT).



Fixer, Tester, Identifier of Things
Armed with encyclopedic knowledge and many tools, the Fixer tests, cleans and fixes new donations so they are in tip top condition. They even tried to regrind some broken bolt cutters, selflessly moved their whole lawn with our newly gifted hover mover, and generally oil, cajole and charm things back into use. Fixer, we salute you!

If you are interested in helping out we'd love to find a role for you. This is our project, make it yours too.



EVENTS WE WERE PART OF

Hastings Commons





Make and Mend



Transition Town Hastings





Launch Day - Diary:
Lots of visitors, 8 new members,
our first "lends": A jigsaw puzzle and a lego set.
6 people turned up, to help.
4 new donations, including a pair of hair straighteners and curling tongs (same person)
We weren't ready, the was no loo, and no kitchen,
we didn't know who'd come,
We learnt a new phrase "organisers headache!"
but, it worked out lovely!



SHARING

we lend to small and large communites and community projects, helping them help each other



we were given lots of fabric, and craft books which we donated to the common room to use for Crafty Fridays- every Friday from 1 October:

Ore Community Centre

Borrowed our tombola for their





Local artists borrowed our tables for community workshops



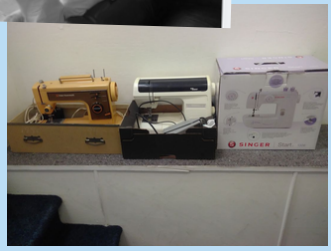
borrowed our tea urn before we'd even opened!



Local activists borrowed our sewing machines

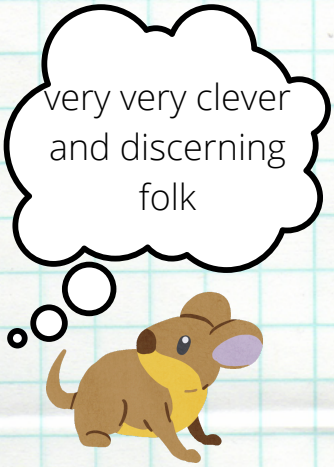






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WHO BORROWS FROM US?



BB borrows the pressure cooker to batch cook her beans

CA borrowed the urn, for a massive street party

TNG borrowed lego- til she'd built them allllll!!!!











TMA borrowed the steam cleaner to clean her carpet

DOT borrowed bunting and a vintage tea set for a 50ths themed birthday party

PD borrowed the sewing machine, when hers gave up the ghost, allowing her to finish some work, which, paid for a new sewing machine...

TMS borrowed the candy floss machine, and the planer. We didn't ask....

F borrowed the wheelchair while recovering from a broken leg













HINDSIGHT

Things we changed from the original plans

we ditched the borrowing fees- to encourage people and cut down admin. we felt the net fee, about £1.50 an item wasn't cost effective. started this as a trial but it worked so we kept it.

we were asked to extend the borrowing time for toys and games and puzzles. we asked our group for thier opinion

and then we made the change.

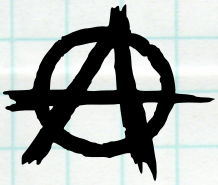
we changed our "byline" to "save money, save space, save the planet"

Things we learnt

Compromise on everything, except for your principles.

You will burn your dinner if you forget to stir it.

Trust each other and the idea, beware of power silos, trust anarchistic cooperation





WHERE NEXT?

We are forming, a community interest company for the sharing economy.

Founder members will be Hastings Library of Things, and Make and Mend, but we will be open to projects who hold sharing economy principles, are willing to working in a cooperative way and are willing and able to contribute to the running of the cooperative

Benefits:
Less admin time- more time running your project
peer support and knowledge sharing inc. policy development and best practise
1 set of accounts and company reports to file
a bank account for grants/other income/ shared bank and payment processing
public liability insurance- shared cost
shared directors- which are at a premium!

Examples of Sharing economy initiatives:
Scrap stores/ community fridges/ skills shares/ time-banking/ libraries of things





THANK YOU

We thank and shout out all our members, those who joined and those who have spent hours volunteering, fundraising, promoting, planning, testing things, writing, proofreading.

and we thank our funders, the grant makers, annonymous donators and members who paid a fee or donated a thing

Thank you Mam for the PAT testing

shout out to zed who made this sweet logo

MAKE END+ Bexhill-On-Sea

funders & friends





Hastings and St Leonards Men's Shed- who made us a tombolla and gave us chisels!

Hastings Voluntary Action
Making it Happen Small Sparks Fund

DPD Eco Fund

KEEP IN TOUCH

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