Umbrella Sussex

Annual Review



MAKE END

LIBRARY OF THINGS HASTINGS

FREE SHOP

www.umbrellasussex.og.uk

April 2025 to March 2025

A collaborative project by Umbrella Sussex Volunteers

Introduction

Welcome, as we go into our 4th year we are thrilled to present our annual review for the year 01/04/24 to 31/03/2025

As we grow, we evolve, always sticking to our principles of inclusion, trusting the community we are part of.

So we

- Focus on community wealth building by sharing skills and sharing access to things
- Work cooperatively to overcome problems caused by poverty

Our volunteers run 2 regular projects:
Library of Things (lending) and Make and Mend (mending) plus “pop ups” like Free Shop and skill sharing workshops.



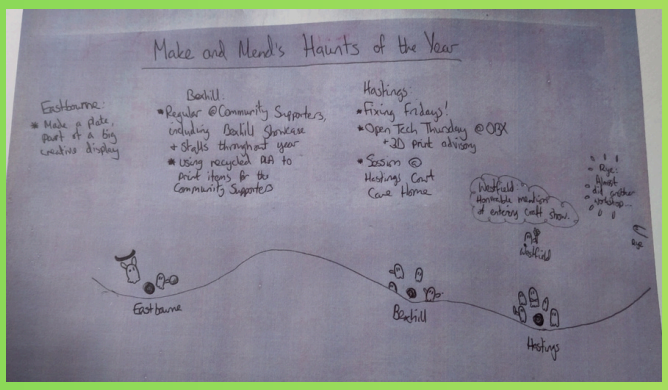
We (the core volunteers who run Umbrella Sussex) made this review together: We sat over tea and biscuits and spoke, drew and laughed our way through the last 12 months. We hope you like it.

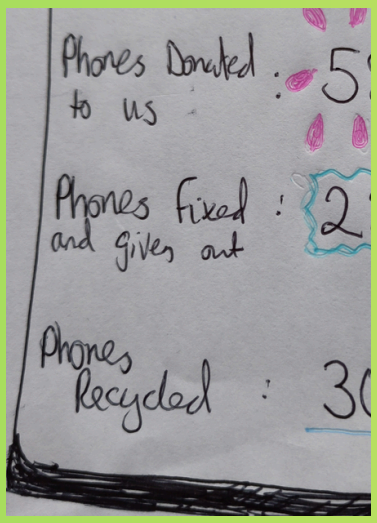
About Us: We are a community interest company limited by guarantee. We have charitable aims and an asset lock.
What this means: We act like a charity by trying do good things in our community and we can get grants to help pay our costs, but we can’t use things bought with grant money for private profit.
We have to do annual accounts, and we have to pay tax (if we make a profit)
We have 3 directors who are legally responsible for our organisation, and lots of other volunteers, including the directors, who run things day to day.
So far we haven’t employed anyone, and none of the directors takes a “dividend” (money that directors can take from a company to pay themselves).

Want to know more, to comment, get involved or get a more accessible version? Go online https://umbrellasussex.org.uk/

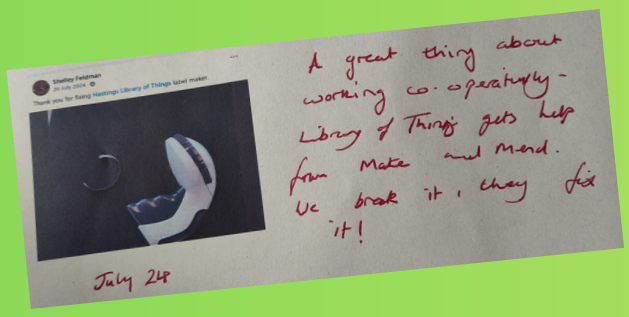
Core Project - Make and Mend sharing skills, saving things from landfill, drinking tea

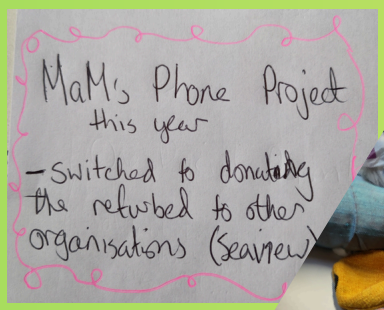
A cross between a Repair Cafe and a Knit and Natter. We aim to get more people repairing and maintaining their items instead of throwing them away.









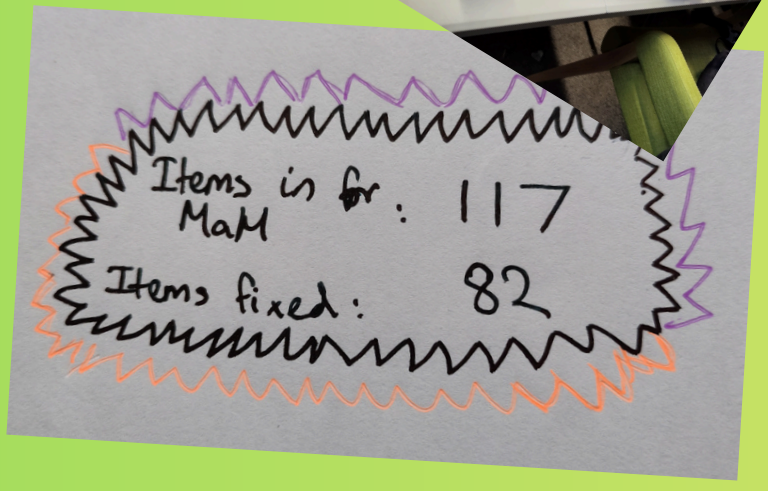




Mondays at Community supporters in Bexhill, Fridays the Community Hub, Hastings







Core Project Hastings Library of Things -Sharing is the new Shopping

Run by volunteer librarians every Friday

Hastings Library of Things is a community run lending Library where you borrow things, use them and return them to be used again



Borrowing is free to members. Members choose what they pay from £3 a year up for membership so everyone can afford it



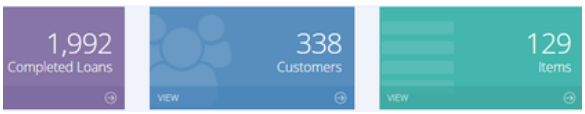










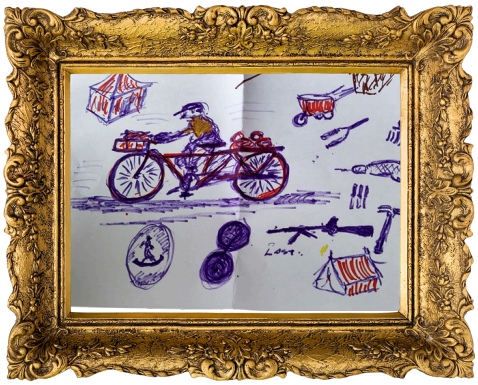


Things people said:

"My child loved the ¾ size sewing machine. Don't tell them, but we found one one ebay and are giving it to them for thier birthday. Thank you for getting them started"

"I am so grateful for the wheelchair, we used it to take Uncle Eddie around the old town- I didn't realise how many hills were in this town!"

"It's so great that you do this, thankyou"



Drawing of some "things", and our delivery bike, by Alan, our oldest volunteer by a country miles (30 years odd). He draws, he fixes, he paints and he is really really loved by us all.





Our things are donated by members of the community who think they will be better used not in cupboards but shared with others- thank you

Things We Did

In no Particular Order



Hastings Library
Mend Relocating t

By Shelley Feldman
Contributor

Hastings Library of Things and Make and Mend Bexhill and Beyond are excited to announce their relocation to the HEART Community Hub in Hastings Town Hall from 5th April 2024.
The HEART Community Info Hub, located in the Town Hall, Queens Road, and is a place where people can talk to a friendly helper, in person, about some of the services and activities available in the town. It's a great resource, especially for people less comfortable around using the internet, and is a comfortable, accessible space which is easy to get to.
By co-locating with the Heart Community Hub, Hastings Library of Things and Make and Mend aim to enhance accessibility and collaboration within the community, creating new opportunities for "lending, sharing and mending".
"We are thrilled to be locating within the Heart Community Hub," said Christine, Founder and Chief Fixer of Make and Mend Bexhill and Beyond. The Heart Community Hub provides an ideal space for our "Fixing Fridays" drop ins and, after a short break we look forward to welcoming people again, from Friday 5th April with their fixing challenges.
About Hastings Library of Things:
Hastings Library of Things is a community resource that offers a wide range of items for borrowing. Members pay a small fee to join, and there access to over borrow- from to lawnmowers sewing machi aim is to share so more peop to more thing having to buy About Make Bexhill and Make and M community dedicated t DIY culture living prac workshop and collab projects, empower to repair and crea culture resourc commu Hastin and Ma

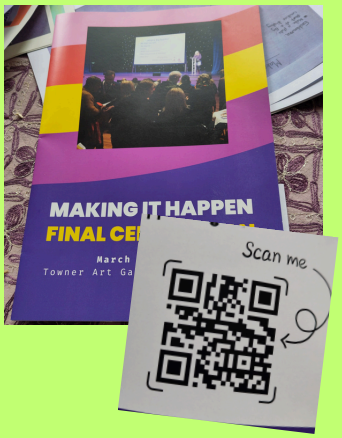
We moved into the HEART Community HUB

Lots of people helped us move, and we are grateful to you all for the lifting carrying and arranging - we have a lot of stuff- a 3D printer, over 100 borrowing things and loads of useful things we "might" need one day

HASTINGS ❤
HASTINGS EMERGENCY ACTION RESPONSE TEAM

COMMUNITY INFO HUB

We went to the Making it Happen Final Celebration



Making it Happen was a innovative funding programme that said "lets trust people doing stuff to get on with it and see what happens" Su at Hastings Voluntary Action and the whole MiH team were brillaint. The programme is over, but the learning isn't. We loved finding out about the other projects, and recommend a visit to their website to see how you can also "make it happen"

We did a Sewing Machine Awareness Day, because there is a national day for it!, which led to a monthly Make and Mend Fabric Friday



Our 7th Free Shop

The Sharing Economy Get's "shoppy"









some shoppers, a librarian, and a regifted hat

Free Shops are like Bring and Buys, but without the "buy". People bring things they can no longer use, and take things they can use or pass on

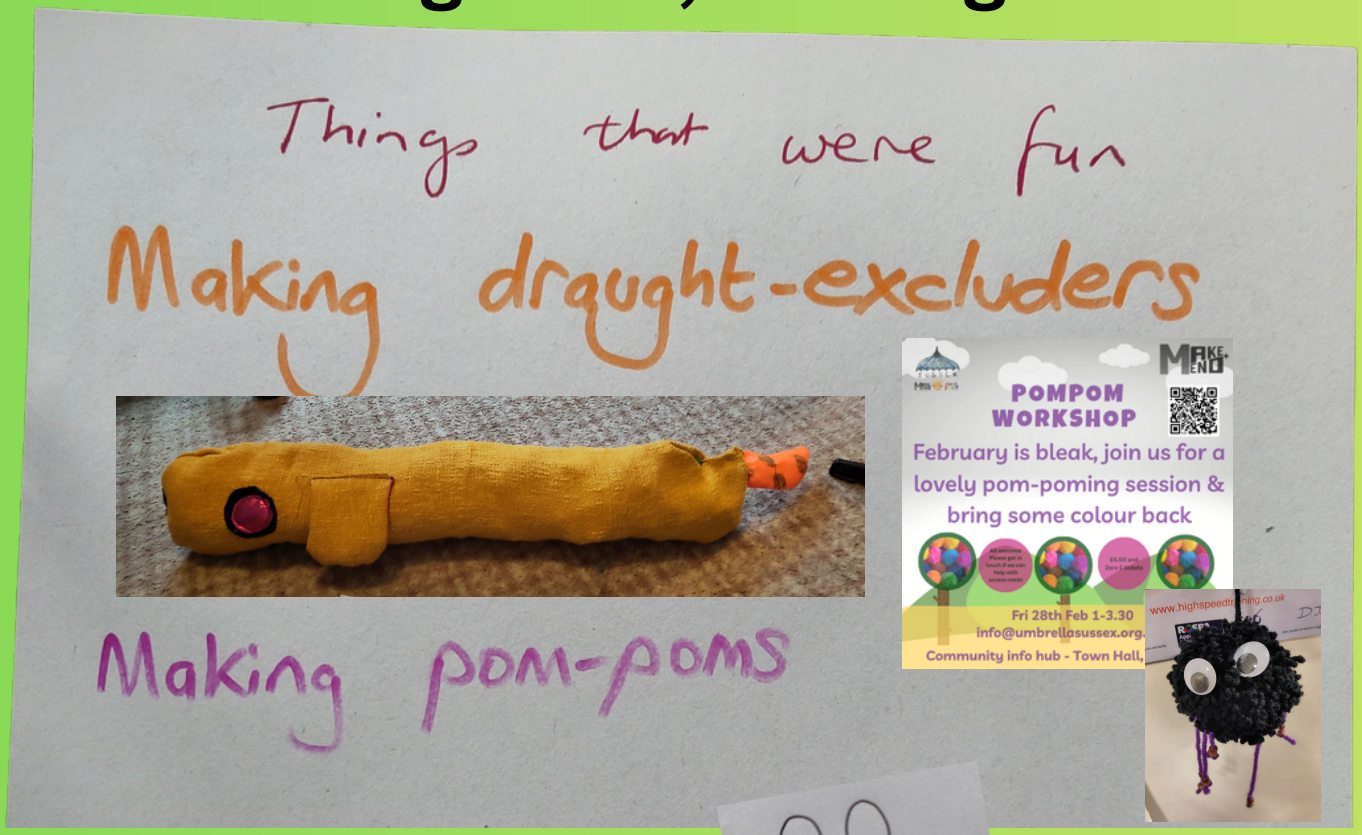
The only restrictions we give are how much people can bring, the taking takes care of itself

Free Shops are a lovely exercise in social co-operation- people love to share, we encourage people to linger and often people stay a an hour or too, helping put stuff out, washing up, making new "shoppers" a cuppa, chatting about this and that

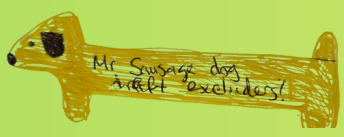
We have seen people from all different backgrounds spend time together at "Free Shops". It's one of our favourite things to do

Things We Did

Sharing Skills, Sharing Time













We used some of our fabric scraps to make and stuff draft excluders, we taught someone to make tiny cat earrings from felt

Scrap fabric and yarn- donated by locals, along with our bank of sewing machines (also donated) let us offer free and £5 sessions

You can find "how to make Me Sausage" on our website https://umbrellasussex.org.uk/make-it-mr-sausage-draft-excluder/

Things We Did

We were privileged to join Hastings Carnival Grand Procession





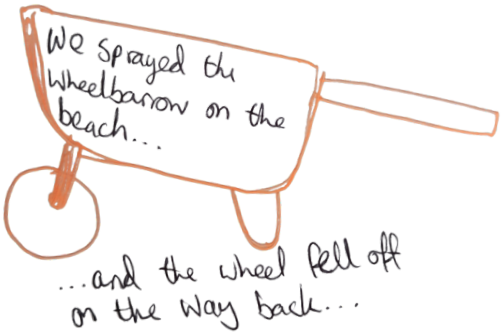
It was a lovely thing to be part of, the Old Town Carnival Folk are amazing. Year on year putting on a whole week of fun free activities for our town. They inspire us.

They are always looking for more entries, and money raised goes to local charities.



https://oldtowncarnivalweek.co.uk/events/

The Wheelbarrow Thing...

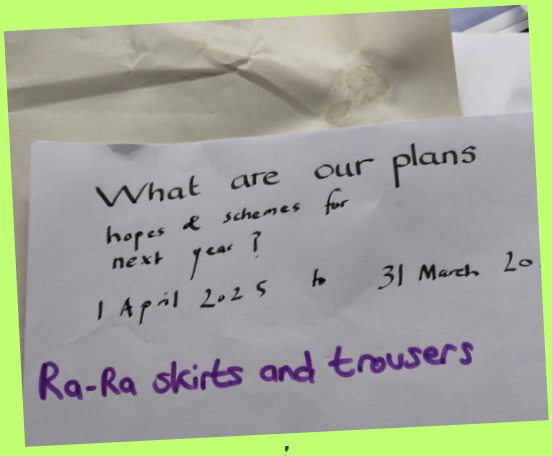


We made up a “team” of regulars, members, and volunteers. The theme was “Heros of Air Land and Sea”, so we made superhero capes (a LOT of capes), using our Library of Things sewing machines of course. and there was a wheelbarrow thing...

'We left the wheelbarrow on the beach while we went for a swim, when we came out of the sea (so we put our towels and that in it, when we came out there was someone taking a photo!' We were also keenly watched by 2 police chaps, shoving the wheel back on and trying to look normal, or at least “Normal for Hastings”

you can borrow the wheelbarrow from us, Alan fixed it (with a hammer!)

Plans for 2025-2026



More Free Shops
More workshops and collaborations
Hastings and Bexhill Carnivals









Get Involved

Support the Sharing Economy

- Volunteer- we are looking for people to do fun(d)raising events and build our sponsorship programme (where lovely forward thinking and lovely businesses help us in kind or cash)
- Join the Library of Things and pay what you can , and tell other people about it so they can join as well
- Use the Make and Mend service
- Join our newsletter list
- Contact us about ideas you have to support the sharing community. We are always happy for a chat





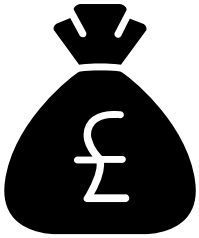


https://umbrellasussex.org.uk/contact-us/

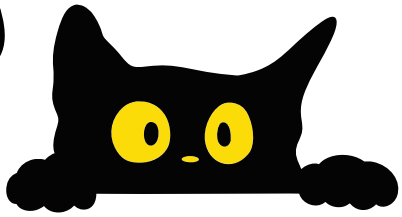
Money



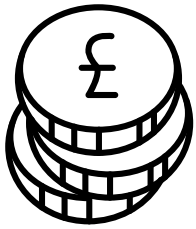
Our full accounts, from 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, are published on our website- Open Data page



Money In- £10325
Money Out- £10386
Grants Received- £8278
Membership Income- £1936
Other Income- Donations & Fixing Fees- £111



Where does the money go?



By far, our biggest cost is rent- at around £5000, then accountancy and book-keeping £1200, insurance £900, computer software and phones £700, volunteer costs and training £700, then events, stationery and fixing supplies. (this is a snapshot- see https://umbrellasussex.org.uk/open-data/ for the real deal prepared by our lovely accountants Galloways)

https://wearegalloways.com/

Thank you



Thank you to our members, supporters funders and participants, thank you to HEART, our landlords, big shout out to Kim, Maria, Katrina and AJ, to HVA and the Grow project, and especially Su, Jane, Steve and Kim there, to our amazing volunteers and directors, to Izzy for our access guide, and everyone else, too many to list individually, but, including all the facebook helpers, members and supporters who shared your time, your skills and your resources, there is no Umbrella Sussex without you

SUSSEX

MAKE END

LIBRARY OF THINGS HASTINGS

FREE SHOP

www.umbrellasussex.og.uk

Goodbye from Team Library and Team Fix It

