



Welcome to the May edition of our newsletter!

June marks **Volunteers' Week** – which celebrates the contribution volunteers make to our organisations. On behalf of Alliance members, we would like to thank each and every volunteer for their support to the people and communities of East Sussex. 😊

To discuss becoming a volunteer for any of our member organisations, please contact the [Alliance](#)

The Alliance welcomes two new members

Hastings Community Network (HCN)

HCN is an overarching network comprising local voluntary community and faith groups, networks and forums. It offers communication channels between the voluntary and community sector and those making decisions locally. They identify ways for members to participate and influence decisions affecting service delivery. HCN links with Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex County Council and is a member of the Local Strategic Partnership. HCN brings together representatives from the Hastings VCSE sector to identify areas of common interest and share information.

BHT Sussex



BHT Sussex is a highly valued, progressive and unique charitable organisation made up of interlinked projects and services. BHT empower people to overcome homelessness, poverty, addiction and mental ill health by working in partnership across Sussex with councils, NHS and voluntary organisations.

BHT's mission is '**Combatting Homelessness, Creating Opportunities, Promoting Change**'.

Alliance member spotlight

Hastings Advice and Representation Centre is one of the newest Alliance members

Hastings Advice and Representation Centre (HARC) is a registered charity with 42 years' experience providing free and confidential Welfare Benefit specialist advice and representation. Our services are available to people of all ages across East Sussex. We aim to address inequalities, relieve poverty and improve the quality of life for vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

For more information visit our website at www.harcuk.com



'SignLive' launched at East Sussex County Council

Residents can now contact East Sussex County Council using British Sign Language (BSL). The council has launched a trial of the online BSL interpreting service, **SignLive**, to ensure more residents can access the help and support they need.

For more information, please visit www.eastsussex.gov.uk/contactus/signlive

For further information please get in touch.

Email: esvcsealliance@escv.org.uk Visit: www.esvcsealliance.org.uk

What we've been up to over the past year

April 2023

- Member workshop focuses on enhancing Alliance governance, membership and external relationships

September 2023

- Working groups formed to develop 3 key priorities and 2 governance workstreams

October 2023

- 2nd 'Commissioning Excellence Programme' workshop. 3rd scheduled February 2024

January 2024

- Two Alliance members host and evaluate the multi-agency 'Loneliness & Social Isolation Stewardship Programme'
- **Hastings Advice and Representation Centre** join the Alliance

July 2023

- New Alliance membership structure introduced - 'Associate Membership' level increases wider participation in Alliance
- 1st workshop of the two-year ESCC/VCSE Alliance co-chaired 'Commissioning Excellence Programme' takes place

November 2023

- Alliance hosts Annual Conference and publishes a two-year review of its activity
- **Wayfinder Woman** joins the Alliance

March 2024

- Administrative and Project Support Officer joins the team

April 2024

- The brand-new **Alliance website** is launched
- **Hastings Community Network** join the Alliance
- **Brighton Housing Trust** join the Alliance



VCSE
EAST SUSSEX ALLIANCE

For further information please get in touch.

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Alliance member organisations: news and updates

Amaze launch brand-new website

Local disability charity and VCSE member **Amaze** has recently launched a new website at their usual address <http://amazesussex.org.uk> This new site for parents and carers will sit alongside a sister site just for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) that will go live in a few months. Amaze would love you to visit the site and give feedback.

<https://amazesussex.org.uk/feedback/>. They'll be fine-tuning it over the next couple of months before a more formal launch in the summer.

DRI launches 'Shades of Sussex' film



This updated film documents the stories of ethnically diverse individuals who have moved to the UK and are currently based in Sussex. The film was originally released in 2022, however, between 2023 and 2024, DRI have extended the film to include the perspectives of four young individuals, with the hope of reaching and inspiring the next generation.

The film will be screened in schools across East Sussex, and at public screenings in Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, and Newhaven. The project has been supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Lewes District Council, Lewes Depot and Vandu Languages.

DRI are **seeking volunteers** to help with the screenings: [Become a volunteer | DRI | East Sussex \(driorg.com\)](#)

HVA Achieves Quality Award

HVA have been awarded the '[Local Infrastructure Quality Award](#)' by the National Association of Voluntary and Community Action. This rigorous process involved submitting over 60 pieces of evidence and involved HVA's services being independently audited including interviews with local organisations, funders and public sector partners.



Southdown Launches its UOK East Sussex Partnership



Southdown has launched a pioneering five-year partnership with [East Sussex County Council](#) aimed at creating a future where individuals seeking mental health support experience a seamless and compassionate pathway to care, regardless of where they enter the system - there is no 'wrong door'. It also includes a drop-in centre provided by [Seaview](#) and service user engagement activity by [Possability People](#).

For further information please get in touch.

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