



Alliance: updates and activity

We hope you're making the most of the end of summer and that you'll enjoy reading this month's updates from the Alliance and our members .

- Following on from a vibrant discussion at our July meeting, we're springing into action to prioritise the key strategic meetings we attend as Alliance representatives on behalf of the wider VCSE sector.
- We've been working hard developing a members' portal on our [new website](#) as well as creating a document bank, where members can share reports, bids and examples of good practice - these will be available for all external partners to access. Please see the reports currently available [here](#)
- The Alliance will be attending three Voluntary Association Community Network Events this autumn. If you see us in the exhibitor area, we'd love you to come and say hello and hear what we've been up to this year.

Welcome to Jigsaw South East: the Alliance's newest member

[Jigsaw South East](#) supports children and young people in areas of East and West Sussex, Surrey and Kent through the death of a loved one, both before and after bereavement.



Their vision is to ensure that no child or young person faces bereavement alone.

The unique service they provide, run by specially trained support workers, is tailored to meet the needs of the families they support, in person, on the phone or online. Jigsaw South East are aware that customs, traditions and beliefs may be different for each family and therefore ensure the support they offer reflects this.



A face mask decoration activity at a Making Meaning bereavement support session

Jigsaw South East supported over 600 children and young people in the last year.

The sessions and social activities offered are a chance for children and young people to meet others of a similar age. The activities within the groups are specially designed to help bereaved children understand their emotions, identify support networks and develop coping strategies. [Watch Jigsaw South East's work here:](#)

Wider VCSE sector and networks: news and updates

Invitation to join the New Sussex VCSE Mental Health Network



On 1st August we launched the new Sussex VCSE Mental Health Network. The network is for any voluntary, community or social enterprise organisation who supports communities (directly or indirectly) with their mental health: **Sign Up to the Sussex VCSE Mental Health Network.** The new Sussex network will continue its aim of informing and involving the VCSE sector in the [Community Mental Health Transformation Programme](#).

Sussex VCSE Leaders Alliance (SVLA) Structure



The SVLA recruited a Chair in early 2024 and are currently recruiting a Board of VCSE leaders to bring a range of perspectives, oversight and support in setting SVLA's strategic direction. The Chair is supported by four strategic roles - one will work across Sussex and one in each place. Riona Doidge has been appointed as [SVLA Strategic Lead, East Sussex](#). The East Sussex VCSE Alliance look forward to working alongside Riona and the SVLA team.

For further information please get in touch.

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

Alliance members: news and updates

Congratulations to Alliance members awarded Sussex Community Foundation grants:

Care for the Carers - £10,750 towards their 'Young Carers Programme'. The leading organisation supporting unpaid carers across East Sussex, Care for the Carers offer services such as direct support, groups, specialist counselling, an information & advice network and a free activities programme.



Little Gate - £5,000 towards their 'Supported Employment Training Programme' for young people. Little Gate trains and supports adults with learning disabilities and autism into paid employment. They are committed to changing society's views of disabled people in the workplace and help employers recognise the value of employing people with learning disabilities.



Amaze has published a full calendar of its events for parent carers (and young people aged 14 – 25) right up to July 2025.

These **free drop-in parent support groups** run regularly across East Sussex and Brighton & Hove. They offer parents of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) the chance to meet other parents and carers who know what it's like to bring up a child with additional needs. Sometimes, the groups will invite a professional to advise on a particular issue; sometimes the session leaders ask for parents' views on particular topics or services - **but mostly it's just time for a cuppa, a cake and a good chat!**



Congratulations and good luck to the Fellowship of St Nicholas (part of Alliance member, Hastings Community Network)

FSN's **temporary accommodation hub** work has been shortlisted by 'Children and Young People Now' Awards in the Supporting Families category. The outcome will be announced at an awards dinner in November.

Warming up the Homeless: new Hastings drop-in day centre

A new **drop-in day centre** for homeless communities or those facing homelessness has been established. Gizmo House is also a host venue for statutory and VCSE services who find the homeless community difficult to reach and engage with. We provide a relaxed setting provided by a charity people trust. Meeting rooms are available for partner's use. Contact us to find out **more**:

Gizmo House, 23 Priory Street, Hastings, TN34 1EA

01424 539812/07300 888138

Opening times:

Monday to Wednesday 10-4 & 7.30-9

Thursdays: 10-6

Fridays 10-1 & 7.30-9

Weekends: 4-7



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