

MAKING IT HAPPEN!

March 2022

Making it Happen is about discovering, celebrating and building on positive things in local neighbourhoods. Community Development Workers (CDWs) work with people to make the most of the opportunities that exist to create positive change.

**MAKING IT
HAPPEN**

Building Relationships

Individuals benefit as a result of being involved in conversations and decisions which lead to change, or to activities or groups occurring.

Half Term Engagement Activity at Shinewater Hub

The team supported family friendly engagement activities based in and around the Hub and recreation ground.

There was a face painter, treasure hunt with prizes, leaf and bark rubbing, leaf pictures and creatures, Halloween and autumn based crafts.

The 'Leaves of Change' activity hosted by the CDWs, gave residents an opportunity to contribute ideas about what is good in the community and what would make it better.



Learning Conversations

CDWs encourage people to talk about their interests and passions wherever possible: at events, while door knocking or just while walking around the area meeting people.

- In Willingdon Trees, the CDW chatted to people while out on a walkabout "I was able to stop and talk to people about my role in the area and about their thoughts and ideas of living in Willingdon Trees. I was able to encourage people to help me build a picture of their immersion within the local community"
- At an Older Peoples Day event in Peacehaven the CDWs chatted to people: "Interesting conversations with residents who were new to Kempton House - we heard how they liked the people in Peacehaven but were frustrated by lack of shops/facilities.

Ideas!

By tapping into the things that people care about or are motivated by, some wonderful ideas for projects emerge. Ideas from residents include:

- Community fridge (Crowborough)
- Events to buy used prom dresses and make a day of hair and makeup demonstrations (Lewes District)
- A local community radio station. (Willingdon Trees)
- A Queen's Platinum Jubilee Event in Bexhill. (Bexhill)
- Nature and photography walks (Uckfield)



Making Connections

Making it Happen encourages people to develop friendships, relationships and wider, more diverse, social networks for support.

Community development workers connect people with their neighbours, those with similar interests, and with the wealth of knowledge, skills, opportunities and resources available locally that might support them to achieve their goals.



Asset Mapping

In Shinewater the new CDW has created an asset mapping tool on google maps: “A way for me to outline the community spaces and groups specifically, but also a tool to engage with the public and record contacts as I do outreach in the area. I want to use this to map my engagement with individuals and keep a log of what they enjoy about the area.”

Top 100

At a meeting to identify potential new stakeholders to a Community Garden in Hampden Park, the CDW facilitated a ‘Top 100’ exercise. Those present list everyone they know against relevant skills, knowledge or experience. People under each heading are approached to tell them about the project. If they are interested, they are then invited to attend a follow up meeting, and then into to a deeper community conversation.



Information sharing, signposting and supporting collaboration – and the great things they can lead to

In Castle: “R’ approached Making it Happen wanting to get someone to deliver self-defence sessions for women. MIH brokered an introduction to Hastings Womens Voice – and they and ‘R’ are now in contact. Small Sparks funding was offered via Womens Voice. ‘R’ attended the Womens Voice Women Reclaim Hastings March and reported that “The march was amazing on Saturday and it was really special to be a part of it”.”

In Rother the CDW has been in contact with the Uplift Choir: “I had a conversation with them a few months ago and mentioned Sussex Community Foundation to them as another possible funding stream- they have applied and been given a grant”

Making Connections

Peacehaven Sparks Events

Neighbourhood event planned and delivered with local residents:

- Celebrate community successes
- Share learning and make connections
- Make decisions on a budget for local community projects
- Invite decision makers to come and listen



Celebrating community

The event was opened by Peacehaven's Deputy Mayor. It began with a celebration of community activity as representatives from local groups and organisations stood up to tell everyone about their projects. Five brave residents then did a fantastic job of presenting their ideas for new projects.

Community Budget – Project Ideas!

- The herb garden – George
- Container garden starter kits – 'L'
- Cookery classes – 'L'
- Raised planting beds – Sue, Kempton House
- Soup kitchen – Bushra, Peacehaven Mosque & Community Centre



After the presentations, there was a chance to network and vote over food and music laid on by local residents. This part of the event saw connections being made, and ideas being generated for future projects. It also opened doors for partnership working.

The Peacehaven Mosque and Community Centre Soup Kitchen proposal won the vote to receive a grant of £2,000. The Soup Kitchen will be open to all in the community and will be led by the Centres youth group. However, all five projects will be supported if the groups decide to go forward. They are all keen to keep in touch and to support each other.

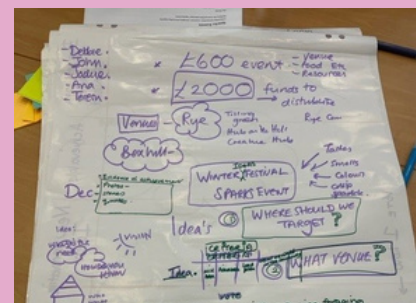
Feedback from participants:

- "This was a valuable event, connecting community groups and like-minded people together. It was fun, informative and exciting!"
- "The Sparks event was incredible! Amazing proposals – wonderful and welcoming atmosphere."
- "The food was delicious and the music was very funky! It was brilliant being able to connect and meet people in the community again"
- "Thank you everyone for arranging this amazing event. We have managed to meet so many wonderful people from the community. They all showed us support for our project."

To be continued....

Watch this space for news of Sparks events from all the Making it Happen areas. The Rother Team held their event in January and shared details of their fantastically creative planning process...

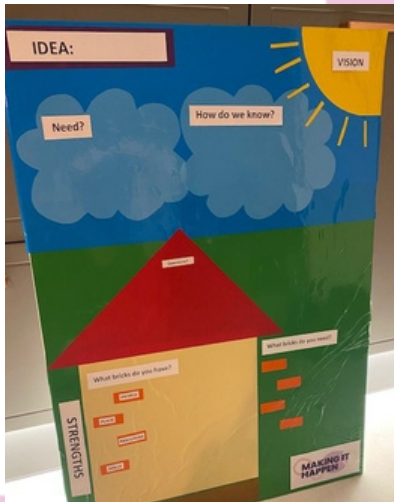
More news on this event and from events in each of the District and Boroughs to follow!



Community Led Activity

Making it Happen builds capacity within communities which leads to community-led action and activity that influences change

Sometimes input from the CDWs is minimal – a conversation which sparks an idea; a connection to a neighbour who also loves that idea; the impetus to explore how to make it work in practice; and connections with the skills, knowledge, resources or funds that help to fill in the missing pieces of the puzzle to make it happen. Sometimes a project is already up and running, but new connections or ideas give it a new lease of life.



Emerging projects

- Arts for disability project – Bexhill
- Creative writing project – Willingdon Trees
- Oral history project – Rother
- Choir – Seaford
- Refugee support group – Bexhill
- Women's ethnic minority group – Bexhill
- Dementia friendly coffee, cake and chatter club – Rother
- Community gardens – Pebsham and Newhaven
- Peer support for parents of children with SEN – Newhaven
- Suicide prevention and support project – Peacehaven

Small Sparks Grants – up to £500

Christmas Tree Display

A Christmas Tree display to bring people together. Residents have done this in the past and successfully drawn people from all over the area. The grant was to make a bigger splash and to encourage engagement in a fun, festive way. (Hollington)



Bexhill Walking Cricket

To maintain the groups momentum and celebrate success. The Christmas lunch event was offered as a communal buffet which could be accessed by new people wanting to join the group (Bexhill)

Gardening for Mental wellbeing

A gardening group to help with mental health wellness & wellbeing. People are welcome to join the group by approaching Southdown for a self-referral. (Newhaven)

Community Planter

A planter for the estate for use by all in the community for the benefit of health & wellbeing by nurturing and maintaining the planter and growing veg or flowers. (Crowborough)

Bexhill Sinphonietta

A project to bring classical music to the young people of Bexhill. Young people and their families can benefit from learning more about music and how to musically express themselves. (Bexhill)

Positive Health and Wellbeing

Making it Happen supports people to recognise their own skills and talents, or improve their mental health, as a result of taking part in groups, activities and from making connections

There is more and more feedback from residents about the impact which being involved in community activity is having on their lives.



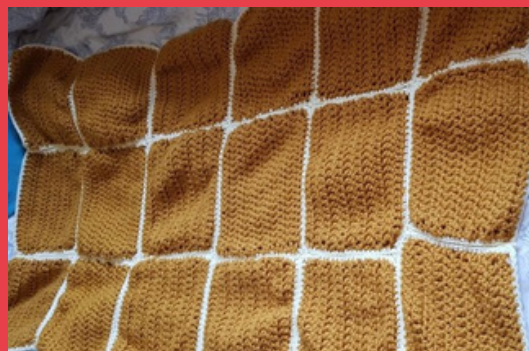
The Bricky Christmas Lights

"There was a clear outcome of 'conversation'. People who live next door and only bump into each other every so often had the opportunity to share stories, catch up on local gossip and share in the Christmas cheer. This solidified the desire by local residents to do more low-key events for this close knit community. There are to be further community activities for next year's jubilee, continued litter picks, and other social events." (Peacehaven)



Crochet Club

"The Crochet Club is hugely valued, both as a hobby but also as a social activity. A number of the volunteers found that it was more than just social, it offered emotional and practical support from other members on many topics and levels". (Hailsham)



Christmas Tree Event

"The event aims to offer a friendly welcome to people beyond the Crescent and to send out a message of neighbourliness, with the hope this will encourage people to want to take better care of the area and to get more involved with the group." (Hollington)



The Walking Cricket Club

The club has "reunited old friends who played the game during their younger days and had lost touch and have now also forged new friendships. The sessions have alleviated loneliness and isolation for a number of the participants". (Bexhill)

Tidemills Choir

The Group gave feedback on the impact of their grant. They strongly agreed that their Small Sparks grant had helped them achieve something valuable in their community and that it had helped people connect in a meaningful way. "The joy that the choir participants took from performing to the public. There was a real sense of belonging with this choir. The response from the public was wonderful to see." (Newhaven)

Children and Young People

Making it Happen

While Making it Happen is a neighbourhood community development programme, it includes engagement with children and young people. Our focus is building relationships and trust with groups, organisations and services that work with young people to explore how Making It Happen might add value and support their work. Where realistic, we work with children and young people directly.



Examples of how we work

- In Willingdon Trees and Hampden Park the Team plan to deliver five assemblies to year groups at a local school. This will be followed up with drop in sessions over two lunch breaks, where young people can approach the CDWs to tell us about their community project ideas.
- In Shinewater the CDW is working with the Friends of Shinewater Park to follow up on a range of engagement activities carried out previously. The “Making It Happen team is developing a co-design engagement assembly and workshop for Shinewater schools”
- In Hailsham, the CDW is working with Grovelands School Farm to “explore their ideas for involving the community. The idea is to get the children involved in managing and developing the farm and, once set up, to invite groups to use it.”
- In Newhaven, the new MIH trainee CDW will be working with the Newhaven Youth Forum. The role includes exploring ideas with members for activities & projects they would like to lead on.

Community Photo Library

In Hastings the CDW reflected on a conversation with two residents who have formed a Community Interest Company: “J wanted information about a Small Sparks Grant. They have an idea to use photography as way to engage young people in arts and create a community photo library. We discussed thoughts about outreach with young people. They understood the need for ideas to be bottom up and come from young people themselves. From talking with young people they have already identified a project around the skate park.”

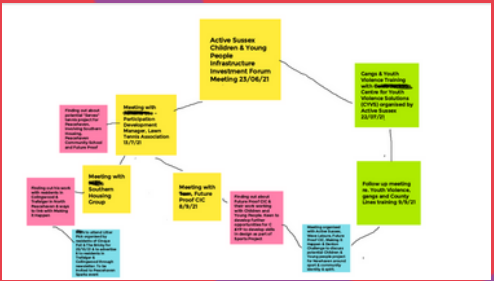


Crowborough Youth Club

In Crowborough, the CDW reflected on a visit to the youth club. "One young man told me that if he wasn't at the club he would just be hanging out in the local park with his friends. I asked him what the club meant to him and he said "It's a place to spend time with my friends somewhere warm and dry. I like playing chess and chilling out and I have tried some things I had never done before like jewellery making which I enjoyed. I feel more confident and like getting to see my friends outside of school time""

Partnership and Collaboration

In Newhaven, a range of youth providers led by Active Sussex are collaborating to provide diversionary activities for children and young people. The Making It Happen Team are supporting the involvement of local community organisations, such as Newhaven Football Club, in the partnership.



Making it Happen

Important Information

Getting Support

Have you got a good idea to make positive change in your neighbourhood?
What do you need to put in place to make it happen?

Making it Happen Community Development Workers can support you to turn your good idea into reality. From listening to your idea, connecting you up with others who feel the same, signposting you to training or putting you in touch with people with the right expertise, resources or information about funding, they can provide as much or as little support as you need. Contact us by email or [fill out this form](#) to tell us about your idea and to find out more about how we can support you, including information about Making it Happen funding opportunities.

Emails for more information:

To get support: hannah.sherman@sussexcommunity.org.uk

To find out more about the programme: angie.greany@sussexcommunity.org.uk

Making it Happen is Delivered by:

- Eastbourne: [3VA](#)
- Hastings: [Hastings Voluntary Action](#)
- Lewes District: [Sussex Community Development Association](#)
- Rother District: [Rother Voluntary Action](#)
- Wealden: [Action in Rural Sussex](#)



Context

"the assets within communities, such as the skills and knowledge, social networks and community organisations, are building blocks for good health"
(‘A guide to community-centred approaches for health and wellbeing’, Public Health England 2015)



Key Information

- Making it Happen is funded by East Sussex County Council Public Health
- Delivered in partnership by 5 local voluntary sector organisations
- Initially targeted in 17 neighbourhoods spread across the Districts and Boroughs