

Women's Voice

Annual Accounts

for the period

1 September 2024 - 31 August 2025

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Hastings Voluntary Action
Jackson Hall
Portland Place
Hastings
East Sussex
TN34 1QN

**Organisational information for
Women's Voice
for the year ended 31 August 2025**

Name of charity & Number:	Women's Voice	1167373
Legal form:	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) - Association Model	
Governing document:		
Address:	7, The Leas Essenden Road St Leonards on Sea East Sussex TN38 0PU	
Trustees:	Patricia Hartley Louise Carlyle Carol Hughes Erica Jane Smith Catherine Allen Chiara Capraro Jane Caley	
Bankers:	HSBC, Hastings Branch	
Independent Examiner:	Laura Dawson, Independent Examiner HVA, Jackson Hall, Portland Place, Hastings, TN34 1QN	
Governance & Management	<p>The Charity is operated under the rules of its constitution and registered with the Charity Commission as a CIO on the 27th May 2016.</p> <p>The Charity is managed by a board of trustees which is responsible for the organisations strategic direction.</p> <p>The methods adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new trustees is laid down in the constitution. Trustees are appointed for a three year period, and retire by rotation. Trustees are recruited in a variety of ways: advertising, networking, personal invitation. All trustees undergo an induction into the organisation. To be a trustee Women's Voice recruits women who agree to commit to our aims and objectives.</p> <p>The Trustees hold monthly planning meetings to organise its day-to-day operation. Meetings are attended by the trustees with the development consultant and finance officer in attendance.</p>	
Aims & Objectives	<p>The object of the CIO is to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of women in particular the advancement of women's health and wellbeing and the promotion of equality and diversity of women resident in Hastings and surrounding areas by preserving and protecting their physical and emotional health and wellbeing, advancing their social inclusion. Facilitating their access to information which supports and relieves their need and advances their education with the object of improving the lives of said women.</p>	

Women's Voice

The Chair's Annual Report

for the period

01 September 2024 to **31 August 2025**

Chair's report 2025

Cultivating Community - formerly Making It Happen

We finalised this project in April 2025. In January and March we put on two events in Tesco Hollington's Community Room, one about feeling safe in public space and the other focusing on Women's Health and Wellbeing. We invited Active Hastings and ESCC public health staff to come along and talk to the public about the offers for support locally. Back in the town centre we held a session on Women's Health Making Yourself Heard, a creative workshop with artist and facilitator Phoebe Wingrove who uses her practice to raise awareness of women's health. This was an opportunity to come together to discuss their challenges with support from medical professionals and think about what they need to feel heard going forward.

The final event looking at sexism and misogyny was an online workshop with Laura Bates, author of *Everyday Sexism*. Laura shared what inspired her project and why naming everyday sexism matters. We discussed how these issues affect our town and how we can take action. It was an incredible opportunity to hear from one of the most renowned researchers in this field and she offered the session free of charge.

NHS Sussex Women's Health Hubs

Off the back of this work we also received funding from NHS Sussex who wanted to gather feedback about Women's Health Hubs locally. We disseminated a questionnaire addressing the subject and gathered 100 responses locally. Alongside this we ran a number of focus groups and a creative workshop to explore what a women's health hub would look like and include. This work was fed back to the NHS and the report is available on our website.

Neurodiversity Support Group

In January 2025 we launched our twice monthly Neurodiversity Peer Support Group meetings at the Community Hub and Mini Common Room. The further funding from Southern Water Goodwill Fund has enabled us to keep the sessions going and we changed the format to the 1st and 3rd Thursday evening of each month. We also invited local neurodiversity coach Amber Smith to be co-facilitator with originator Rhea Powell. This continues to be a strong support network for neurodivergent women consistently attracting new attendees and are looking into further funding to continue this work.

Women's Voice's

On-going events highlighting issues affecting women locally, nationally and internationally.

In February we programmed *Why is Climate Change a Feminist Issue?* To coincide with our AGM Facilitated by the Women's Environmental Network (WEN), we explored what a gender-just green economy could look like and reflected on environmental issues affecting women locally.

Our annual festival, *Hear Me Roar*, celebrated International Women's Day with over 500 attendees. Participants engaged with local community organisations, contributed to a collective banner, explored creative activities, and attended yoga classes. Special guests included Claudine Eccleston, KIN Choir, Naomi Wood, Marie, and Apsana Begum MP, who shared inspiring words about community, solidarity, resistance, and hope.

As part of Refugee Week in June we hosted a film Night screening *Fremont*, by Babak Jalali and a number of shorts curated by Other Cinemas.

May saw an event called *What is Happening to Women's Reproductive Rights?* We screened *Zurawski v Texas* and were joined by Dr Bethan Harris of Doctors for Choice, who illuminated the state of abortion rights in the UK and their implications for women locally.

In October researchers from Brighton and Sussex Medical School joined us for *Don't Fret the Frog*, an evening exploring the links between menopause and brain health. Attendees received information and support about peri-menopause and menopause, and enjoyed a buffet of menopause-friendly food created by local nutritionist Rae Edwards from Sunshine and Wellness.

Voicing Experience

We continued to develop our *Voicing Experience* resource cards in partnership with our local NEU branch, to help teachers explore challenging issues around sexual abuse and healthy relationships with their students. In 2026 we will launch a new pack for primary-aged children, alongside a set of lesson plans for teachers to accompany both the primary and secondary packs. We are also hosting a training session for local teachers with educator Anna Lincoln who developed the resources to practice using them with groups of students.

Women's DIY - Do Your Ideas

We were invited by Do Your Ideas a new creative carpentry studio at Beeching Road Studios in Bexhill, to pilot a new DIY course for beginners. We worked with studio founder Adam Burton for six sessions learning practical DIY skills to use around the home. Adam is keen to work with us to raise funding for further projects supporting different groups of women in the community.

Community Stalls and Volunteers

We had stalls at St Leonards Festival, Trans Pride Fest and Love Music Hate Racism. These were supported by a new group of volunteers who have been supporting us at different events throughout the year. It has been an on-going challenge to assimilate volunteers within the way we work and we will continue to develop this offer over the next year. Erica Smith also stitched us a wonderful embroidery square which is part of Hastings in Stitches a new community quilt which was on display in Hastings Museum and will be in permanent residence in the Town Hall.

Campaigning

We continue to stand in solidarity with our trans friends making sure they know Women's Voice is a fully inclusive space after both the Supreme Court ruling in April and the article from Women's Rights Network in August in HiP Hastings independent newspaper. We also stood with Queers for Palestine at Hastings Pride after they were not allowed to march with their supporters in the main procession. It is important on-going work in what is a divisive time.

Fundraising

In order to raise funds for our Hear Me Roar 2025 festival we held a fundraiser dance night in January called *Queen of the Decks* with an all women line up of DJs from across generations - Debbie Golt, Wendy May, Lemur Beats and DJ Chabala at The Printworks. This was a sold event with over 100 people attending and we raised £1000 for IWD. We have plans to make this an annual event.

Unite Brewery made a donation from their International Women's Day brew and Unison, NEU and Hastings Trades Council all made small donations for Hear Me Roar. Later in the year we were also offered a charity partnership with gallery Unit 2 in St Leonards whose incredible *Battleaxe* exhibition raised £350 for us.

Finally we raised £4214 from a grant to Southern Water Goodwill Fund for the continuation of our Neurodiversity Support Group.

In 2026 our aim is to apply for National Lottery Awards for All and pursue further local partnerships including working with The Hastings Project on a fundraising event.

Website

We launched our new website designed by Pebble Media. We are grateful for all the support she gave us to create this brilliant new platform for our work. An archive of all our events will be added in 2026.

Development

Strategy - we have updated our mission, vision and objects in line with discussions throughout the year. These have been based on all the activity that we have undertaken since 2023 and will be sent to the Charity Commission. Our policies and procedures have also been updated and signed off by trustees.

Our aim in 2026 is to apply for National Lottery funding to support the capacity of our team of trustees and volunteers. This work is consistently hard to do with small amounts of funding so we would like to think about how we can meet our vision, maintain the strands of work we have and build new partnerships going forward.

Women's Voice

Receipts & Payment accounts

for the period
01 September 2024 to **31 August 2025**

All funds are unrestricted

	2025	2024
<u>Receipts</u>		
Donations	5,014.00	757.21
Events	1,652.40	811.66
Grants - Chalk Cliff Trust	5,000.00	-
Grants - Sussex Community Small Sparks	-	3,750.00
Grant - Making it Happen Grow Grant	-	13,500.00
Grant - Groundwork	2,000.00	-
Collections	-	412.40
Sundries/ Invoicing	1,625.50	160.11
Bank Interest	-	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS	15,291.90	19,391.38
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Advertising/Promotional/Design	2,242.12	-
Computer Costs	-	-
Consultant	8,436.64	-
Insurances	232.97	-
Meals & Entertainment	-	783.12
Office/General Admin Exps	1,537.44	-
Printing, Postage and Stationary	630.91	590.68
Raising Funds	210.00	-
Travel	17.40	-
Venue Hire	1,536.00	1,082.45
Volunteer Expenses	-	-
Workshops	1,799.08	-
Food	456.74	-
Instructor	-	-
Materials	87.68	-
MiH Project Work	-	-
Social Media	-	403.39
Speakers/Facilitators	4,174.84	4,759.26
Bank Charges	-	60.80
Accounts	-	326.60
Misc/Sundry	-	272.19
TOTAL PAYMENTS	21,361.82	8,278.49
 Net surplus/		 11,112.89
 Fund balances b/f	 15,589.20	 4,476.31
	<u><u>9,519.28</u></u>	<u><u>15,589.20</u></u>

Women's Voice
Statement of Assets & Liabilities
as at
31 August 2025

			2025	2024
Current assets				
Current Account	@	31/08/25	9,496.18	15,566.10
Cash in hand	@	31/08/25	23.10	23.10
Debtors				-
			<u>9,519.28</u>	<u>15,589.20</u>
 less Current liabilities				
Uncashed cheques			-	-
			<u>9,519.28</u>	<u>15,589.20</u>
 Represented by:				
Accumulated Fund b/f			15,589.20	4,476.31
Surplus/deficit of receipts over payments			- 6,069.92	11,112.89
			<u>9,519.28</u>	<u>15,589.20</u>

Charity Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which comply with the regulations set out in the Charities Act 1993. The trustess have elected to take advantage of the provisions that apply to small charities and have prepared a Receipts and Payments account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

Approved by the Trustees on 3 February 2026 and signed on their behalf by

Louise Carlyle Louise Carlyle

Erica Jane Smith Erica Jane Smith

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Committee of
Women's Voice**

I report on the accounts of Women's Voice
for the twelve month period ended 31 August 2025 which are set out on the previous pages.

Respective responsibilities of committee & examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act), and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the supporting documentation presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Acthave not been met; or
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Laura Dawson
Finance Manager
Hastings Voluntary Action
Jackson Hall, Portland Place, Hastings, TN34 1QN

Dated:

10/02/26