

Hastings Voluntary Action Membership Information and Criteria



Introducing Hastings Voluntary Action (HVA)

HVA is a Council for Voluntary Services set up and run by local voluntary and community groups who form our membership. Our overall aim is to enhance the quality of life of people in Hastings by supporting, promoting and developing the principle and practice of voluntary action by both individuals and organised groups. We do this by:

- Providing a range of support services to voluntary and community groups.
- Supporting the development of local initiatives to meet community needs.
- Developing effective links between organisations and groups within the community.
- Working in partnership with other sectors and ensuring that the voluntary and community sector has a strong voice.

We are an independent organisation, which is a registered charity, and a company limited by guarantee. We aim to offer high quality services which truly reflect the needs of our members.

Our statement of values and equal opportunities

HVA recognises that Hastings is a diverse town and that everyone has a contribution to make and a right to equality of opportunity. We believe that:

- No person should suffer oppression or lack of opportunity based on race, gender, belief, sexuality, disability, age or class.
- All people should have the opportunity to collectively play an active part in their community.
- All people have rights to social justice and to participate in decision-making processes and local action.
- Priority should be given to working with people whose full participation in society is limited by economic, political and social disadvantage.

HVA is committed to challenging oppression and inequality and will positively promote these core values in all areas of its work and structure.

Our membership criteria

Membership of HVA is open to all voluntary and community groups who are working for the benefit of people in the Hastings area and whose commitment to equal opportunities is consistent with HVA's statement of values and equal opportunities. Membership reflects the diversity of the voluntary and community sector and includes groups working in the fields of health and social welfare, environment, arts, leisure, education, community action and self-help.

In addition to the above members must have:

- A clearly defined purpose
- A set of rules or a constitution
- A clear decision making mechanism e.g. a committee
- A bank account in the name of the group or organisation and keep financial records if they have access to funds.

Membership is not open to any group or organisation which can be demonstrated to have aims and objectives relating to party politics.

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Why join?

HVA is an influential voice for the local voluntary and community sector and provides a unique overview of local voluntary action through our contacts with over 300 local groups. We actively promote the special contribution of the voluntary and community sector in enabling individuals to contribute to public life and the development of their communities, and its role in helping to alleviate poverty, address health inequalities and involve the socially excluded.

In addition to the services and support we offer HVA also provides members with:

- A channel of communication with policy makers at a local, regional and national level.
- A larger platform for advocating voluntary and community sector interests and enabling groups to represent the interests of the communities and beneficiaries they serve.
- Opportunities for groups to work in partnership to address local issues and shape the community we live in.

Membership gives voluntary and community groups a legal right to vote and stand for the Management Committee of HVA, which sets the direction and agrees the policies of the organisation.

Where HVA charges for services, members are charged a reduced rate.

Membership of HVA is free.

How to join or re-affiliate

Please complete and return HVA's Membership Application or Membership Renewal Form (depending which is relevant to your organisation) , making sure that you confirm you wish to become, or continue to be, a member of HVA and that you meet all the membership criteria.

Decisions on membership are at the discretion of HVA. Applicants which do not meet with the approval of the Management Committee will be informed and have the right to make representations in writing or in person at the next available Committee meeting.