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Inside high street shop where everything is FREE – see what is on offer

Maya Arnangeldiyev runs "Maya's Free Shop" in Herne Hill and urges everyone and anyone to come by and stock up on whatever they are short on as she wants to help where she can

NEWS | By Ruby Flanagan Money Reporter

Sun 28 Dec 2025

Maya says anyone can show up and claim the free stuff through Maya Arnangeldiyev / SWNS

Customers at one shop in Kent will notice that it is a little different from the usual high street store. This is because every item in there is completely free.

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Based in a former salon Maya's Free Shop in Herne Bay is stocked with a range of different items from clothes and handbags to food, pillows, candles and paintings which you can pick up without spending any cash.

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Maya Arnangeldiyev runs the free shop and urges everyone and anyone to come by and stock up on whatever they are short on.

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Anyone can show up and claim some free stuff but the shop is hoping to help Herne Bay's most vulnerable during the cost-of-living crisis.

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Maya has everything including food, shoes and clothes Image: Maya Arnangeldiyev / SWNS

The mum of three originally created the store after receiving a mass of donations to help families fleeing Ukraine.

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Volunteer staff at the store said once they received over 100 bags of donations in one day.

Alongside physical stuff, Maya also receives cash donations which she uses to pay for the space's rent and its energy costs.

Maya said that the shop was entirely funded through donations and cash from community interest companies.

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Alongside this, since 2015 Maya has also run a community café for the low-waged and homeless which her free shop actually started from.

Maya said: "It started off with me putting up a clothes rail in our community café for 20 items or so.

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10 of 10 Maya stocks customers through donations Image: Maya Arnangeldiyev / SWNS

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"People started bringing so much stuff that we had to open the shop. We don't want anyone to be ashamed of dressing up from a charity shop.

"All money that is donated to the shop goes towards our food bank."

Overall, Maya who is originally from Turkmenistan and has been in the UK for the last 15 years, has over 150 volunteers helping out between the free store and café.

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The generous shop owner urged people to visit and promised there would no judgement from her or her volunteers.

She said she was happy to help everyone and it didn't matter what their income or their circumstances were.

Maya added: "I don't ask any questions and we don't care about your income – anybody can use our free shop.

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"I don't care – if you need help, I will help you. There are no other shops like this."

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