



# ***ANNUAL REPORT***

## ***2014-2015***



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# Chair's Foreword



This year has been seen another record of strong delivery and building the organisation's sustainability. Our Glasgow presence is developing apace, with a focus on further community development to complement our ground-breaking LGBT Age work. Back in the east, we continue to deliver Scotland's only national LGBT Helpline, as well as a range of services that support some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people in our community of interest. Our ambitions have not been restricted to Scotland's cities – we have also started to undertake a successful needs assessment of the LGBT community's needs in the Kingdom of Fife. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I'd like to place on record my sincere thanks to the Director, the staff and volunteers - their commitment to delivering better outcomes for LGBT individuals and communities in Scotland continues to be an inspiration.

The main change at Board level has been the resignation of our Vice Chair Amanda McKay – my thanks to her for her wise and thoughtful counsel, coupled with energy and commitment to the ideals of the organisation. The wonderful Bridget Cameron has replaced her in that role. We have been joined by a number of other new faces – Jon Dye and Zach Anthony have been co-opted over the year. My thanks to all those Trustees – whether recently joined, or who have been with us for longer, who continue to give up their time to make such a valuable contribution. Over the coming year, we will continue to focus on guiding the organisation's strategy, ensuring good governance and maintaining robust financial scrutiny.

I have no doubt that LGBT Health and Wellbeing has a critical role to play in addressing the very real health inequalities that continue to persist amongst LGBT communities in Scotland, and we will continue to strive for better. We look forward to working with the staff team and others to further develop our work over the coming year.

Trevor Owen  
Chair, Board of Directors

## Director's Foreword



The last year has been another eventful one for the organisation, and this Annual Report touches on some of the key developments and celebrates some of our many achievements. Thanks to the very hard work and commitment of our staff and volunteers the organisation has over the last year continued to be in a strong position to support and make a difference to the lives of a great many LGBT people. We have also remained a strong voice and influencer to ensure that the health inequalities faced by LGBT people continue to be addressed.

Importantly, the geographical expansion that started in 2012 with the launch of the Transition Support Service has continued, and 2014 saw the expansion of our 50+ work and the establishment of our Glasgow office base, which constitutes another very significant step in our journey to becoming a Scotland-wide organisation.

Looking ahead the organisation's financial position looks relatively healthy and, alongside the challenge of securing funding to sustain some of our programmes and initiatives, we also continuing to identify and strive to address gaps in service provision. Importantly, all our work remains very firmly rooted in the communities we serve and will continue to be informed by what people tell us they need and want from us.

Maruska Greenwood  
Chief Executive

# Introduction

LGBT Health and Wellbeing (LGBT Healthy Living Centre) was set up in 2003 to promote the health, wellbeing and equality of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland. It provides support, services and information to improve health and wellbeing, reduce social isolation and stimulate community development and volunteering.

LGBT Health and Wellbeing's strategic objectives, as outlined in our Strategic Plan, are to:

- ★ Build capacity to achieve better health and wellbeing within the community
- ★ Develop the ability of services to respond to the needs of LGBT individuals
- ★ Build collaborative partnerships
- ★ Build a positive, proactive organisation.

Some of the key organisational achievements and developments over this period are highlighted in this report, together with some of our plans to build on those successes.

The organisation's key operational objectives are to:

- ★ Provide a programme of activities which tackle the life circumstances that contribute to the ill-health of LGBT people
- ★ Reduce levels of isolation and social exclusion experienced by LGBT people
- ★ Strengthen the capacity of the LGBT community to promote the health of individuals
- ★ Support individuals to adopt and sustain healthy lifestyles
- ★ Ensure that LGBT people have equity of access to mainstream health services and information which is responsive to their needs.

## What people told us were their favourite things about our programme\*

*"An amazing organisation, which has done a huge amount for my well-being, as well as that of many other people."*

*"Appreciate the reassurance that I'm not alone, that something is being done about LGBT rights, and a place where I can have fun and be myself."*

\* Quotes used throughout this report are taken from our November-December 2014 Service Evaluation and from other written feedback received over the course of 2014-15.

# Establishing the Glasgow base

The year has seen us make a really significant steps towards expanding our impact not just in Lothian but also, in response to the dearth of services for LGBT adults, beyond to other parts of Scotland. That geographical expansion started in 2012, with the launch of the Transition Support Service, and was followed in 2013 with our second national service, the LGBT Helpline Scotland. In 2014 the Big Lottery-funded LGBT Age Scotland Project sees the expansion of our 50+ work and the establishment of our Glasgow office base, which constitutes another very significant step in our journey to becoming a Scotland-wide organisation.



Launch at Glasgow City Chambers (October 2014)

This geographical expansion is also supported by core funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, enabling us to maximise on the opportunity of a Glasgow base to develop work there in a number of key areas such as mental health and trans-specific work. We now have a 4-strong team based in Glasgow, working to deliver our 50+ services in Glasgow and Edinburgh as well as building LGBT Health's reputation in the West of Scotland. The team initially took up residence in Robertson House, and in late 2014 moved to a more permanent office base in Queen's Crescent where LGBT Health is co-located with Waverley Care.

The organisation held a well-promoted launch event at Glasgow City Chambers in October 2014. This well-attended event raised awareness of LGBT Health and the LGBT Age Scotland Project.

Alongside the LGBT Age work, the organisation will try to secure funding to develop a range of additional projects, namely: a core social programme, a mental health-specific project and trans specific support. Alongside these key core activity areas we will also pursue opportunities to secure smaller pots of funding to deliver other specialist initiatives, either working along thematic lines (e.g. community safety, sports and physical activity, sexual and general health) or with particular sections of the LGBT community (e.g. LGBT people with learning disabilities, LGBT parents).

The lack of funding for new LGBT work has meant that by necessity our service delivery in Glasgow has to date been limited. We have however done much work in raising the profile of LGBT Health, promoting the organisation's services, including non-geographic initiatives such as the LGBT Helpline Scotland, at events like Glasgow Pride, by running some events at Pride House (see LGBT Social Capital Programme section), as well as by continuing to run T time Glasgow (see Transgender Support Service section).

At a strategic level, LGBT Health has also worked actively with the West of Scotland LGBT Forum to support the setting up of an LGBT Centre in Glasgow. Following extensive community consultation which demonstrates strong support for this venture, a business plan has been drawn up and initial approaches made to Glasgow City Council and to the Big Lottery Fund to seek their support.

# Our Work with LGBT People

Beneficiary numbers have increased across a number of programmes, including our national LGBT Helpline, as well as our LGBT Age services which are now being delivered in both Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Over 2014-15 the organisation continued to engage with a large number of LGBT community members across its range of programmes:

- **2,700 individuals accessed our group activities** and programmes (social programme, drop-ins, mental health, trans and community groups)
- **500 individuals accessed 1:1 support** (helpline, mental health service, advocacy, befriending)
- **1,500 enquiries** from LGBT people responded to
- **115 individuals volunteered** their services
- **2,300 individuals** received regular up-to-date LGBT health, equality and community related information.

## Mental Health Project

Much of the organisation's mental health work was previously delivered through our 3½ year Scottish Government-funded LGBT Mental Health Demonstration Project; this funding however came to an end in March 2014, leading to a significant reduction in our core specialist mental health delivery.

The Mental Health Project supports individuals experiencing poor mental health and, through the evaluation of this work, continues to build up knowledge of the mental health needs of LGBT people.

The delivery of a wide range of activities as part of this Project is often made possible through extensive partnership work and the generous provision of in-kind support from mainstream mental health practitioners and organisations.

*"Every interaction I've had with LGBT Health has helped to 'normalise' what I was finding absolutely terrifying and your positive approach is helping me to start to think how I can turn this situation into something positive for our family."*

*"It was a very positive, affirming and humanising experience. I'm really glad I came. I feel like 'me' again and just like everybody else, like my problems are just like the experiences that normal people have."*

*"The LGBT centre get it so right. I was reminded today that the centre was the only thing I had when I moved to Edinburgh and it still remains central to my growth and it is truly a gift that suits with my values and will always be close to my heart. Thank you. It is here that creativity blossoms for me."*

## Addressing suicidal thought and self-harm

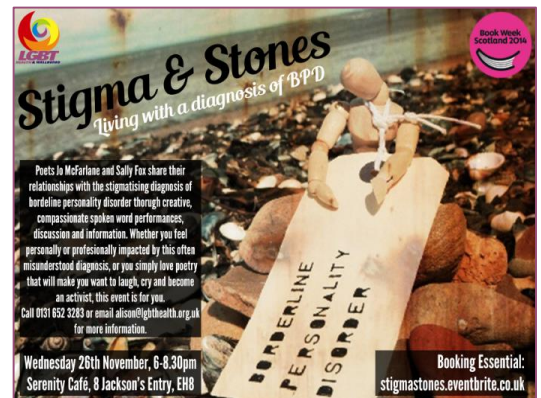
Suicidal behaviour and self-harm is much more prevalent among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people when compared to the general population. Around 2 in 5 people who use our services indicate that this is an issue for them.

Our evaluation indicates that around two in five of beneficiaries reported feeling less likely to self-harm and/or that their suicidal thoughts had lessened as a result of receiving support through our Mental Health Project.

## LGBT Headspace

The Lothian-based LGBT Headspace Programme is part of the Mental Health Project, and provides culturally sensitive services to help redress the critical levels of poor mental health, including:

- **One-to-one support:** assessment appointments and ongoing individually tailored support.
- **Workshops:** information and taster sessions such as GP information session, art therapy, handling anxiety, living life to the full and drama.
- **Courses:** addressing specific mental health issues in more depth, including handling anxiety, living life to the full and drama.
- **Groups:** time limited and ongoing groups such as art therapy weekends and women's and men's wellbeing groups.
- **Exhibitions and events:** one-off events aimed at increasing awareness and building community resilience.



*"This course has given me a range of tools I have already begun to practice and share with others. I have become more aware of the start of anxiety and able to identify the specific types that affect me."*

*"Despite several years of mental health support this was the most education I have received for trigger responses and so am more aware of them and their impact."*

*"The course got me out of my flat and being social in a group of likeminded people, gave my wellbeing a lift and confidence a boost."*

*"At times scary and challenging and emotionally draining but worthwhile as it brought me powerful revelations about how far I have progressed."*



## Lifelines Intergenerational Storytelling and Poetry Project



This Project was a collaboration between LGBT Headspace and the LGBT Age Capacity Building Project. A number of workshops were held (storytelling, poetry, visual stories, and performance) at which participants got an opportunity to build their skills, as well as the option to share their writing and images at a celebratory event held in October 2014 as part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival and Luminate, the festival of creative aging.

The Lifelines Event was hosted at Edinburgh's Scottish Storytelling Centre as a celebratory culmination of the workshops and included visual art, poetry, storytelling and music. Participants also had the opportunity to have their images or writing used to enrich and inform the resources being produced by the LGBT Age Capacity Building Project for training and distribution to professionals working with older people.



*The Invisible woman by Siân Lovell*

### Feedback from the workshops:

*"I overcame self-doubt to find my own voice and hearing and being inspired by other people's stories."*

*"It has built my confidence and made me feel better about being an LGBT person and a performer."*

*"I feel more positive about the future than I did before. I feel more confident about being able to change a negative life script and how to change how I react to people. I really enjoyed the course and feel it has made a huge difference to my train of thoughts about myself and various relationships."*

*"The workshop made me think about the things that hold me back. It was good to have someone give me a different interpretation on what I had to say. I feel freer in my body after explaining how I feel."*

*"The workshops definitely impacted me hugely. I was able to not only see past traumas in a different light but also found forgiveness and acceptance for myself and others that I never thought I would."*

### Feedback from the event:

*It was really nice, one of the nicest evenings of my life (no exaggeration)."*

*"My favourite thing was that people who are not professionals can perform their work in front of a sympathetic audience – great experience."*

*"It was enjoyable, genuine and inclusive."*

### Counselling and Self Management

The Alliance-funded Counselling & Self Management Initiative delivered a specialist counselling service and a programme of therapeutic groupwork.

A total of 9 volunteer counsellors and 2 art therapy students were able to provide 74 individuals with one-to-one therapeutic support. In addition, facilitated women's and a men's therapy groups were run, as well as therapeutic workshops focusing on a range of issues of relevance to LGBT people, such as families, relationships, identity and self-management.



**Counselling Service**

Both daytime & evening sessions available, at 9 Howe Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6TE

Anyone from the LGBT+ community can self-refer for an initial 8 sessions of free one-to-one counselling at LGBT Health and Wellbeing

Call Alison on 0131 652 3283 or email [alison@lgbthealth.org.uk](mailto:alison@lgbthealth.org.uk) to find out more or request counselling.



### **Feedback on the one-to-one counselling demonstrates the huge impact this individual support can have:**

*"A great help. I wasn't able to cope when I started, couldn't work or see friends. I am now in employment and have taken control of my life. The skills learnt here will always be with me"*

*"Thank you for giving me the opportunity to have therapy in the first place. During this period of therapy I have also made some personal discoveries that are really life changing. A big statement I know... but by looking at my core beliefs, the ones that keep me stuck and trapped in a cycle of worthlessness and invisibility. I realise that I don't actually believe them. I feel hopeful, empowered and proud of the work I have done with the counselling service."*

## LGBT Helpline

Our national helpline, co-funded by NHS Lothian and the Scottish Government, launched in May 2013. The helpline provides information, support and referrals in relation to sexuality and coming out, gender identity, relationship, sexual health, community safety and emotional wellbeing issues. In its second year it saw its calls increase by 34%. 820 calls were answered; 4 out of 5 of these calls involved emotional support.

The helpline service is delivered two days a week (Tuesdays and Wednesdays 12 noon to 9pm) by a part-time Helpline Coordinator supported by a team of 11 highly trained volunteers.

In 2014 we produced an Impact Report on our experience of the first year of delivering the LGBT Helpline Scotland. The Report outlines the delivery model, the extensive publicity and promotion campaign, our caller profile and the impact of the service. Future developments include the rolling out, thanks to financial support from the Scottish Government, of a small-scale Domestic Abuse Campaign, as well as expanding our email and online service.



*"I want to thank you for last week. I was so close to ending it all and think I would have done if it wasn't for your kindness and patience. It made me feel like somebody actually cared about what I'm going through."*

*"You've been really good listening to me talk about this. It's such a difficult time in my life. You're the only people who I can talk to."*

## Community Safety

Hate crime is recognised as being a key mental health risk factor. We therefore also provide a small scale programme aimed at increasing community safety and improving the reporting of hate crime. This programme provides a monthly police surgery, community safety events (e.g. hate crime in rural areas, domestic abuse), information and third party reporting facilities.

*"The police were actually really good. It was someone who's been at the police surgery before and they were saying "no this shouldn't happen"."*

## LGBT Social Capital Programme

The organisation has continued to deliver its LGBT Social Capital Programme of social activities, events, volunteering and capacity building support to community groups; these are activities that help build social capital, promote community resilience and reduce health inequalities.

*“A lovely evening and absolutely touching and inspiring to be here with so many LGBT people. [As Pride film shows] We’ve come a long way but have so far to go. This makes me feel good about the future though!”*

This programme is delivered in Lothian by a Community Development Worker, supported by a team of volunteers, and is sustained primarily through core funding from City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian.

### Social Programme

*“Getting out of my house to do something I enjoy, has been so beneficial. Even when I didn’t want to go. I knew support was there. I’ve been elsewhere a couple of times but couldn’t keep it up due to feeling paranoid about people’s reactions. These swimming sessions have been a God-send, I thought they were perfect.”*

*“A very warm welcome, wonderful acts, delicious rainbow cake, all a useful incentive for personal progress. This is the first time I’ve been dressed [as a woman] leaving my own house.”*

The organisation provides a year-round programme of social events in Edinburgh that offer a vibrant alternative to the gay commercial scene. The regular drop-ins provide a welcoming and inclusive social space and a good gateway to the organisation’s many other programmes.

A volunteer Events Team supports staff in delivering a programme of wide-ranging and imaginative community social events, including regular yearly events such as our Pride Breakfast and Winter Concert, one-off events such as the popular LGBT Roller Disco, quarterly community discussions and Rainbow Families outings. This year also saw the return of our popular film event and LGBT swimming sessions.

Alongside the Edinburgh programme, we also in July 2014 delivered a couple of events at Glasgow’s Commonwealth Pride House, including one aimed at LGBT parents, which was used to scope interest in delivering support to parents in the West of Scotland.



## Community Discussion Evenings

LGBT Health has been running Community Discussion Evenings for a number of years now. The topics often come out of suggestions made by participants or reflect emerging community issues. During the booking process attendees can further help shape the discussion focus by outlining their own agenda and aims, thus keeping a firm community-led approach throughout.

These thought-provoking evenings provide a community platform for discussion. The use the format of a panel of speakers who give a short talk, before the discussion is then opened to the floor. Both the composition and size of audience varies according to the topic, but lively discussion is always generated.

These Community Discussions are often delivered in partnership with other LGBT organisations and community groups, such as LGBT Youth, Equality Network, Bi and Beyond Edinburgh and Non-Binary Scotland. There are also topics that invite engagement from mainstream organisations such as Scottish Women's Aid who approached us to co-deliver the forthcoming discussion on LGBT people's access to women's services.



An LGBT Community Discussion



**FRIEND OR FOE?**

Featuring panellist  
Katherine O'Donnell  
Night Editor of The  
Times Scotland

Join the discussion with a panel of media representatives

Bring along a media article that you **love** or **hate!**

Weds 6.30-9.30pm, 13th May  
Serenity Cafe, 8 Jackson's Entry, The Tun  
111 Holyrood Road, EH8 8PJ

Booking essential via: <http://bit.ly/1Jmyupz>  
Contact Jules for more info: [jules@lgbthealth.org.uk](mailto:jules@lgbthealth.org.uk)



Over the course of this year we ran discussions on Ticking the Other Box (focused on non-binary gender labels and sexualities), the Future for LGBT Equality in Scotland (reflections on the 2014 Scottish Referendum, the Equality Network's Equal Marriage campaign and equality issues for older LGBT people, people with disabilities and trans and intersex people) and Role Models (an inter-generational event run as part of LGBT History Month exploring the significance of role models for LGBT people as well as how LGBT people themselves are role models to others).

### Ticking the *other* Box...

LGBTQI Community Discussion Event  
Thursday 6.30-9.30pm, 11th September  
LGBT Youth, 40 Commercial Street, Leith, EH6 6JD

Featuring special guest speakers from Non-Binary Scotland & Bi & Beyond Edinburgh



Book your place at the next LGBT community discussion via:  
<http://bit.ly/lgbtotherbox>

For more information or to book in person contact Jules:  
Email: [jules@lgbthealth.org.uk](mailto:jules@lgbthealth.org.uk) Phone: 0131 523 1104



*"Great to hear other people's perspectives, especially as they're often so different to my own!"*

*"My favourite thing was how many trans people were involved in the conversation."*

*"Very interesting to hear from Equality Network about their future plans, though I'd be keen to hear more about their plans to include older people, as I don't feel the scope of inequalities that exist for older LGBT people are fully represented by campaigns such as Equal Marriage and Equal Recognition."*

*"I never realised how many people I know are actually my role models in my life. Thanks for tonight and thanks for making me think!"*

## Community Groups

The organisation has continued to host and support a wide range of identity, interest and support-based community groups in Lothian which improve the social networks of LGBT people. As well as providing tailored *ad hoc* support, we have supported volunteer leaders through the Community Group Leaders' Forum, and a regular programme of training sessions.

*"Really appreciate the session on social media and being able to discuss some of the issues we have encountered."*

*"Things are going steadily with the group but coming along to the Forum always gives me ideas for increasing numbers and better planning so I'm looking forward to trying some new things."*

The quarterly meetings provide crucial space for community leaders to come together, share skills and experiences, discuss risks and feel reassured about their role as group leader. Regular training sessions address specific needs highlighted via the forum. For example, this year we have focused on Events Planning, Upholding Safe Space and Trans and Intersex awareness.

The Forum has also proved to be a useful space to help shape and influence policy and guidance documents around Safe Space, which in turn helps to provide reassurance for group leaders who require the guidance to be user-friendly and relevant. Through their roles, community group leaders gain valuable insight into the needs, behaviours and interests of regular group members and therefore have provided extremely helpful feedback. Helping to shape a relevant and accessible Safe Space Commitment has empowered the leaders to use the document more frequently and feel a sense of ownership over it. Through reliable attendance and regular evaluation the Lothian Community Group Leader Forum provides a valuable and consistent form of support to individuals who devote time and energy to making their groups a success. Through their involvement in the forum they can develop, gain in confidence, feel a sense of achievement and be rewarded for their efforts.

## Volunteer Programme

The organisation has a strong commitment to providing LGBT people, and those committed to equality and human rights, with opportunities to volunteer with an organisation that represents their interests and concerns. Volunteers are involved in the organisation's work in a myriad of ways, including the development and delivery of social events, befriending, counselling, helpline, drop-ins, LGBT Age champions, project support and publicity, as well as on the Board of Directors. We provide a regular rolling programme of induction and ongoing training for volunteers.

*"I really enjoy trying new things so thanks for letting me take on more responsibility. It helps with my confidence and encourages me to step outside what's comfortable."*

*"The Induction Training has given me lots of background information and a better insight of the different sexual orientations and gender identities, this will be very useful for my volunteering. Lots of food for thought which will all hopefully help my growth as a volunteer. Also really useful for meeting volunteers and staff from other parts of the organisation."*

This wide-ranging contribution from 115 individuals amounted to around 4,700 hours. The often very specialist contribution volunteers make conservatively equates to nearly 3 full-time members of staff or around £80,000 (based on salary and associated costs for a Development Worker) and thus very clearly has a crucial impact in terms of increasing the organisation's capacity.

### In the words of our volunteers\*

*"It is a worthwhile organisation and provides a welcoming and very supportive environment with lots of volunteering opportunities. I feel that I'm actually being useful and contributing to a community and cause I care about."*

*"Love the opportunity to be part of an amazing group of people that make a real difference to the lives of LGBT people in Scotland."*

*"I enjoy being part of the imaginative work done by the organisation and seeing the benefits the service has on people's lives."*

*"The opportunities to volunteer are quite varied so that people can help out regardless of their skill set, availability, level of extroversion and personality."*

*"Volunteering here is a rewarding experience for an excellent cause, I feel valued and great support is available."*

*"Really value the fact that I can give something back to the community I feel I am part of. Volunteering provides me with an opportunity to make a difference"*

*"Great to be part of the team and making a difference in the community."*

\*All quotes from our 2015 Volunteer Survey.

## LGBT Age Scotland

LGBT Health has been delivering a specialist programme aimed at LGBT people over 50 since 2010. In late 2013 the organisation was successful in securing three-year funding from the Big Lottery Fund to sustain and further develop its programme of social opportunities and one-to-one befriending and to deliver this specialist programme not just in Edinburgh and Lothians, but also in the Glasgow and Greater Glasgow area.

The decision was made to base the new four-strong team, who took up post between April and June 2014, in Glasgow. They first established themselves temporarily in Robertson House, and in November 2014 in a more permanent office base, a small suite of offices in Queen's Crescent, where LGBT Health is co-located with Waverley Care.

*When my partner was alive we were so insular, we didn't need anyone else so when she died I was suddenly alone, completely isolated. Meeting with a befriender has been a lifeline. I met someone likeminded who cared and I could talk about my partner and being a lesbian and that was accepted."*

*"I haven't been well recently and really didn't feel like leaving my house today but now that I'm here I've had a wonderful afternoon with friends, had a laugh and really enjoyed myself. I'm actually really glad I came."*

*"Befriending allayed my sense of insecurity and fears after coming out of prison. It's a neutral space where I'm not judged. I've overcome my sense of isolation."*

The LGBT Age service has a positive impact on beneficiaries across a range of measures. Beneficiaries reported 'feeling less lonely' (61%), being more 'able to talk about things that affect me' (68%), feeling 'more connected to my community' (45%) and said they 'feel better about myself' (52%).

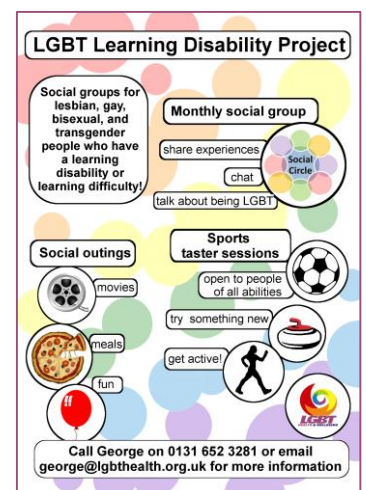
Alongside direct support services, since 2012 we have also delivered the LGBT Age Capacity Building Project which undertakes capacity building work with mainstream organisations working with older people to make these more accessible and inclusive. This Project is delivered by a Development Worker, and is supported by a small team of volunteer Community Champions.

LGBT Age e-bulletin, which was launched in August 2013, is sent out to nearly 300 recipients. It offers a platform for publicising social events, provides project updates, helps disseminate resources for professionals as well as including wider external and community news of particular interest to LGBT people over 50.

## LGBT Learning Disabilities Project

In late 2013, with funding from the Scottish Government, we launched our LGBT Learning Disabilities Project. The project builds on a pilot social group we had successfully run for LGBT people with a learning disability or learning difficulty. The Project provides both one-to-one support and social opportunities through the Social Circle group and the activities that accompany this (e.g. discussion groups, games afternoons), sports tasters and social outings.

We also produce an LGBT learning disability e-bulletin aimed primarily at professionals and we deliver LGBT training to professionals working with people with learning disabilities. Participants invariably report they find the sessions interesting and feel more able to support or respond to the needs of someone who is LGBT or exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.



As well as engaging directly with individuals, the Project also works to increase the capacity of learning disability organisations to meet the needs of LGBT people. Due to its unique nature, the Project receives enquiries from professionals across Scotland and beyond, in relation to issues such as accessible LGBT information resources and guidance on how best to support service users.



*"It was my first time at gay pride. Enjoyed talking to people. I liked that I could enjoy myself and be myself. I was able to meet new people. I would come again."*

*"I liked being part of a group that I belong to, feeling included. Enjoy chatting to staff and getting ideas from other group members of things that I could try in the future."*

*"Liked trying something new and was able to make something and to show off skills in arts and craft. And meet friends and any new people."*

*"Finding out various definitions and how isolated and confusing things can be for people with learning disability was really useful. I am now more aware of the fact people may be keeping their sexuality hidden and know more about resources and how to find information to be able to support someone, including signposting to the LGBT Helpline."*

*"Think I would approach situations/people with more understanding and awareness, including the challenges the person may face and their need for support. Now recognise the benefit of being more open with the people I support and the importance of including straight/gay as norm when discussing relationships."*

## Transgender Support Services

Our Scotland-wide Transition Support Service, funded by Big Lottery Fund, which we launched in April 2012, came to an end in June 2014. The Service has been a resounding success, achieving good engagement and demonstrable impact. Due to this funding finishing some areas of service delivery have had to be scaled back or stopped. We were however able to secure funding from the Edinburgh and Lothian Health Foundation to continue the work in Edinburgh. Similar funding applications were submitted to continue the work in Glasgow but proved unsuccessful. In spite of this the organisation decided to sustain delivery of T time Glasgow and of the monthly trans-specific e-bulletin. T monthly is distributed to over 500 recipients, and serves to keep trans individuals, community support groups and professional contacts up-to-date with developments across Scotland.

In 2014 we produced an Impact Report, available on our website and distributed to key stakeholders, of our experience of delivering the ground-breaking Transition Support Service, as we wanted to capture not just its impact, but also the organisational journey and significant learning undergone and create a roadmap for other organisations wishing to undertake similar work.

*"This vital service has been such a huge help to me, giving me a positive outlook for the future. The drop-ins are a great way to get to know others in a similar boat to you."*

*"This has been great! I've been able to get info I didn't previously have and meet new people in a nice relaxed and welcoming atmosphere."*

## T time Glasgow

In spite of the lack of funding the organisation decided to sustain delivery of T time Glasgow, as it was recognised that this service provides crucial support and social contact to one of the sections of the LGBT community which experiences the most acute disadvantage and inequality.

This monthly drop-in provides a much needed safe and affirmative space where individuals can meet with peers without facing prejudice, harassment and discrimination. Our new premises at Queen's Crescent have provided a friendly and homely environment for these social events, which attract an average of around 15 participants each month.



## Lothian Transgender Support Programme

As part of this programme a monthly drop-in is provided in Edinburgh, attended by nearly 50 beneficiaries over the course of the year. Optional activities are provided alongside the drop-in and in addition confidence building and practical skills workshops and courses were delivered. One-to-one support and information is also provided to individuals in relation to gender identity issues, to ensure they are linked in to the most relevant sources of support, including our own counselling and mental health support, as well as NHS and other provision.

# Capacity Building and Partnership Working

The organisation engaged not just with LGBT community members, but also with a wide range of professionals to promote the interests of LGBT people. This capacity building and awareness raising work included:

- 250 enquiries from mainstream service providers responded to
- 675 participants in our training and awareness raising sessions
- 14 focus groups and consultations run or contributed to
- LGBT, trans and learning disability bulletins distributed to a wide-ranging audience.

*"We do a lot of training, and this is the best training session we've ever had. The next day we were all buzzing with it, talking about the things we had learned and what we might do."*

*"The training was informative and helpful in a non-threatening way for someone coming to the course with no LGBT awareness training behind them."*

*"I enjoyed the open and insightful discussion and the useful tips and resources will definitely help me support people more effectively and in signposting where someone needs more specialist information or support."*

*(Participants in LGBT training)*

**LGBT Age**

**Resources**  
for professionals & organisations  
working with older people

**Audit Tool**  
An easy-to-use tool to help you come up with practical strategies for including LGBT people in your service or organisation.

**Documentary Film**  
'Are we being served' is short film with workshop notes. LGBT community members reflect on their experiences of services and their hopes for the future as they get older. A great training tool.

**Ten Top Tips**  
Practical actions and background info, illustrated by writing and artwork from older LGBT people; also includes a useful glossary, and links to further resources.

Available free online at [www.lgbthealth.org.uk](http://www.lgbthealth.org.uk)

For more information, email [lgbtage@lgbthealth.org.uk](mailto:lgbtage@lgbthealth.org.uk) or call 0131 523 1100

We are strongly committed to partnership work and we work with an extensive range of individuals, groups and other LGBT, health and voluntary sector organisations to develop and deliver our many programmes and services.

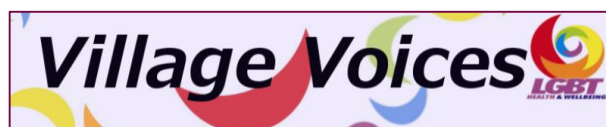
We have close links with other initiatives working in the community development and health inequalities field, including through our involvement on the Executive of the Lothian Community Health Initiatives Forum. This has included working with NHS Lothian, City of Edinburgh Council and other Community Health Initiatives to develop shared indicators to

enable the measuring of impacts in relation to addressing health inequalities across a range of projects and initiatives. This work for the first time provides statutory funders in Scotland with a way to measure the third sector's contribution to addressing health inequalities in both geographical areas and communities of interest.

The organisation directly contributes its expertise on LGBT issues to a wide range of individuals and organisations, including by participation in a number of steering and advisory groups coordinated by statutory agencies. We also regularly both coordinate focus groups and host and promote groups; these provide community members with the opportunity to contribute an LGBT perspective to local and national consultations on a wide range of health, wellbeing and equality related issues.

The organisation responds to many information and guidance requests from mainstream professionals and organisations. It provides bespoke training to voluntary and statutory sector organisations, ranging from more general awareness raising around LGBT issues to specialist sessions on mental health, transgender, learning disability or older people's issues. This work is key to our relationship-building with mainstream organisations and to ensuring that LGBT people are increasingly provided with more culturally-sensitive and appropriate services.

The organisation produced and distributed a number of monthly e-bulletins, some with a primary community focus, but others aimed specifically at professionals:



- **Village Voices:** focused on LGBT issues and events in Lothian.
- **LGBT Learning Disabilities:** Scottish e-bulletin aimed at those working in the learning disabilities field.
- **T monthly:** Scotland-wide trans-specific e-bulletin.
- **LGBT Age:** aimed at LGBT people over 50.
- **Rainbow Families:** aimed at LGBT parents.



Our e-bulletins have a circulation list of nearly 2,300, mostly community members, but are also circulated to around 400 professionals. These e-bulletins constitute a key communication tool not just for promoting our services and sharing information about other key community events and developments, but also for the dissemination of involvement, participation and consultation opportunities.

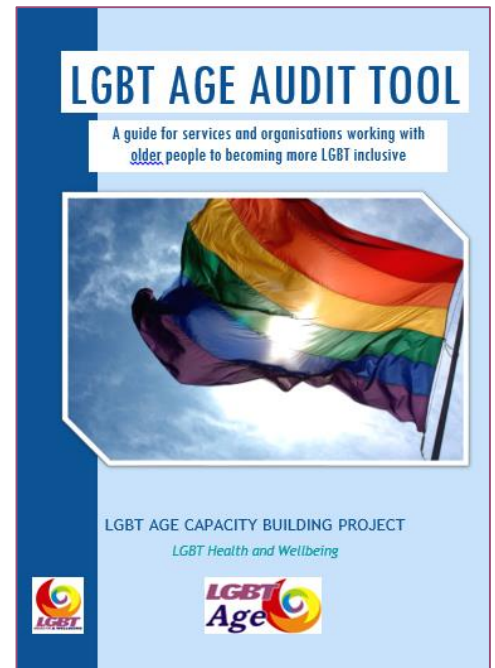
## LGBT Mental Health Capacity Building Project

Following the successful delivery of the 3½ year Scottish Government-funded LGBT Mental Health Demonstration Project, LGBT Health and Wellbeing established the small-scale pilot LGBT Mental Health Capacity Building Project in October 2014. The pilot builds on the learning from the National Demonstration Project to support mainstream mental health service providers to become more culturally competent in meeting the needs of LGBT people who use their services.

The project has three interlinked activity strands:

- LGBT Audit Tool: ongoing development of this practical tool and the creation of written guidance to support service providers to use the tool.
- Support to organisations: provision of bespoke capacity-building support to mental health providers to enable them to work through the Audit Tool and identify action that would enhance and demonstrate their LGBT inclusive practice.
- LGBT awareness-raising training: delivery of mental health-focused training on LGBT issues tailored to the specific needs of agencies.

The Audit Tool has been updated and is now available to download from both LGBT Health and the Scottish Recovery Network's websites. Considerable work has also been undertaken to identify potential partner organisations wanting to work through the Audit Tool and/or undertake LGBT awareness raising training. Given the organisation's new base in Glasgow it was decided to largely focus the capacity building work in Glasgow.



## LGBT Age Capacity Building Project



The LGBT Age Capacity Building Project works with mainstream organisations to increase understanding and enable them to better meet the needs of older LGBT people and comply with the Equality Act's general equality duties. The voice and experiences of older LGBT people themselves take centre stage in this awareness raising work. The Project finished in June 2015; in its final year, the focus of much of the work has been on creating a lasting legacy.

In September 2015 the Project was awarded the national LGBTI award for Equality Initiative of the Year.

*"Your project has had a real impact. As a result of the training you provided we have made changes to some of our service specifications in the commissioning process, requiring providers to create a welcoming environment for all people and to deal effectively with intolerance".*

(Planning and Commissioning Manager, City of Edinburgh Council)

## LGBT Age Capacity Building Resources

A range of resources have been developed to support professionals to make their organisation or service as inclusive and welcoming as possible for LGBT people. These cover topics like key issues and language, the experiences and hopes of older LGBT people and how to run your own LGBT awareness training.

These resources were developed in consultation with older members of the LGBT community and professionals who work with older people. They include:

- Ten Top Tips for becoming more LGBT-inclusive: a booklet that provides an introduction to the issues that older LGBT people face, alongside a wealth of practical things that organisations can do. Includes poetry, prose and visual art created as part of our Lifelines intergenerational storytelling project.
- Five tips for providing services to older transgender people: an info sheet which provides specific, practical tips for supporting older transgender people.
- LGBT Age Audit Tool: aimed at individuals and teams providing direct support services to older people, this tool is designed to help identify practical steps towards ensuring LGBT-inclusive practice.
- Top Tips Poster: poster for staffroom noticeboards highlights four key tips for supporting older LGBT people along with practical actions that everyone can do right away.
- Community Consultation Executive Summary: findings of our 2013 survey of 182 older LGBT people regarding their needs in terms of social opportunities, information and support.



All these resources are available as hard copies and can also be downloaded from the online resources section of LGBT Health's website.

## Evaluation of Performance

Alongside working to achieve greater financial security to enable us to deliver a diverse range of programmes and services aimed at promoting health, wellbeing and equality, there has also been an ongoing focus on reviewing operational policies and practice guidelines to ensure high quality service delivery. Alongside this there has been much work to strengthen our communication tools, including the development of a new website which launched in November 2014.

We are firmly committed to comprehensively evaluating the reach and impact of our services. Our rigorous annual Service Evaluation was carried out in November to December 2014, and for the first time covered services in both Edinburgh and Glasgow. The evaluation questionnaire was made available in paper form and electronically and received 210 responses, by far our highest response rate to date.

The service user profile information again demonstrates that a really wide range of individuals of all ages (from 18 to 92) who identify right across the LGBT spectrum – and beyond – engage with LGBT Health’s programmes and services.

The survey not only seeks to evaluate our services, but also asks for suggestions for improvement. Our 2014 survey responses focused on a number of key areas:

- Desire to see us provide support in other parts of Scotland: our LGBT Age (50+) project and T time are now fully established in Glasgow. In addition we are committed to trying to set up other services in the west coast, as well as to identify the needs in other parts of Scotland, such as through our current Fife LGBT Community Needs Assessment.
- Greater accessibility and inclusion: we continue to work to deliver more of our activities in accessible venues. We will also continue to convene a staff working group to look at accessibility and are committed to ensuring our services are inclusive and responsive to the needs of our diverse communities.
- Better publicity: in late 2014 we launched our new website and have revamped our e-bulletins. A further review of our other publicity tools will also be undertaken over the coming year.

The wealth of suggestions provided for new or repeat activities will also be invaluable when planning our programme of activities over the coming year.

*“If this organisation wasn't around to support me and my partner our lives would be much diminished. LGBT Health provides a healthy, fun and fulfilling alternative [to the club scene] that connects us with our peers.”*

*“The staff and volunteers are excellent, very friendly, approachable and supportive.”*

**When asked what they most enjoy and value, respondents told us:**

*“Sense of belonging - connection to LGBT community. Meeting new people.”*

*“Friendship and fun”*

*“Sense of community”*

*“Welcoming and accepting environment”*

*“Wide range of activities”*

*“Support and information”*

*“Improved wellbeing”*

## How beneficiaries evaluated our services

Service Evaluation respondents rated their experience of our services as follows:

- 3 in 4 rated our staff and volunteers as excellent
- 2 in 3 found the quality of our services excellent
- 3 in 5 rated their overall experience of the organisation as excellent.

The evaluation responses contain lots of positive feedback about the work that we do, the friendliness, approachability and dedication of the staff and volunteer team and the value of engaging with the organisation.

Responses strongly demonstrate the impact of our services on people's lives across a range of health and wellbeing outcomes:

- 1 in 2 reported feeling more connected to their community
- 2 in 5 have more friends as a result of using our services
- 1 in 3 reported their mental or emotional health is better
- 1 in 4 reported feeling more in control of their life.

## Financial Review

The organisation was started in 2003 as a Healthy Living Centre with 5-year funding from the Big Lottery Fund. 2008 saw the end of that period of secure funding but, after an initial significant contraction, the organisation has successfully made the transition to more diversified funding and the delivery of a much wider range of programmes and services both in Lothian and increasingly beyond.

The organisational growth experienced over the last few years has been possible thanks to its success in attracting funding, leveraging in substantial grants from national and local statutory funders, as well as from Trusts and Foundations. The Director's role has a strong focus on income generation and strategic relationship building with key statutory partners and funders.

Alongside securing funding to enable the organisation to continue its existing projects and programmes, we were in 2014 successful in securing additional core funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to support the organisation's geographical expansion.

### Finance Summary April 2014 – March 2015

Income		
Big Lottery Fund	141,685	27%
NHS Lothian	102,181	19%
Scottish Government	57,998	11%
CEC	47,647	9%
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	47,185	9%
Other Grants	125,262	23%
Donations & other income	11,665	2%
	<b>£533,623</b>	

Expenditure		
Staff Costs	410,171	74%
Office Costs	77,992	14%
Programme Costs	63,137	11%
Professional Fees	5,710	1%
	<b>£557,010</b>	

This geographical expansion, as well as a focus on key infrastructure work such as ensuring the development and embedding of robust policies and practice, has necessitated some reserve investment. The organisation however continues to exercise sound financial management and to critically examine all aspects of expenditure to identify useful savings. Thus, with the support of both its staff and volunteers, the organisation's total net assets at 31 March 2015 were at a healthy level at £263,222 (down from £286,609). This includes, alongside unrestricted reserves, £36,811 in restricted project funding in relation to underspends or early payments received for particular projects or initiatives (LGBT Age, Mental Health Project, Domestic Abuse Campaign and Fife Needs Assessment) which are expected to be fully spent in the coming financial year.

## Our Funders and Supporters

We very much appreciate the ongoing support of NHS Lothian, City of Edinburgh Council and more recently the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, who have provided the bulk of the funding for our core activities.

The support of Trusts and Foundations and statutory funders continues to be crucial in supporting the delivery of some of our more specialist services, such as the Counselling Service and our LGBT Age Capacity Building Project. The key Trusts and Foundations who have supported our work this year have been the Big Lottery Fund, the Alliance, Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation, EVOC's Innovation Fund and the Robertson Trust.

We also remain grateful to all our donors for their vital support and would like to thank all the individuals who made donations to the charity.



**Legal Status:** The registered name of the organisation is the LGBT Healthy Living Centre, though it has historically operated as the LGBT Centre for Health and Wellbeing, and more recently as LGBT Health and Wellbeing.

The organisation is a company limited by guarantee, number SC246290, and is a registered Scottish charity, registration number SC034216