

# LGBT Health and Wellbeing Annual Report 2016-17



## 2016-17 AT A GLANCE

### OUR WORK WITH LGBT PEOPLE



3,972 PEOPLE ACCESSED GROUPS

In Edinburgh, Glasgow and Fife



637 INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED 1-1 SUPPORT



1,049 HELPLINE CALLS



109 VOLUNTEERS

22 COMMUNITY GROUP LEADERS SUPPORTED



34,015 WEBSITE VISITORS



2,502 FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

5,173 TWITTER FOLLOWERS

# OUR CAPACITY BUILDING WORK



256 ENQUIRIES

from service providers



999 TRAINING PARTICIPANTS



16 STRATEGIC FORA



10 FOCUS GROUPS & CONSULTATIONS



8 PUBLICATIONS & FILMS

produced or contributed to



4,173 E-BULLETIN SUBSCRIBERS

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# Chair's Foreword



I'm delighted to append my foreword to this report, which highlights another year of strong delivery that has made a tangible difference to the lives of LGBT people in Scotland. There have been a number of highlights, including the ever growing range of fantastic work we're doing in Glasgow; the bedding in of the partnership with Waverley Care to co-deliver the SX sexual, physical and mental health service in Edinburgh; our continual ability to develop new and exciting partnerships with key decision makers and services; and – most importantly – our ability to reach into and work with communities with empathy and humanity to help improve their lives.

As with every year, we have seen change in the organisation with projects coming to an end, new ones commencing and staff coming and going; those who depart go with our very best wishes, and we welcome our new people and the fresh energy and enthusiasm they bring.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I'd like to place on record my sincere thanks to the Chief Executive, the staff and volunteers - their commitment to delivering better outcomes for LGBT individuals and communities in Scotland continues to be an inspiration.

Our Board has been relatively stable over the past few years, and we now looking to freshen that mix with an injection of new perspectives and experiences through the recruitment of new Trustees over the autumn. My thanks to all those Trustees – those who have more recently joined, been with us for many years, and 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.

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 outcomes for LGBT people. We look forward to working with everyone to take forward our ambitions over the coming year.

Trevor Owen  
**Chair, Board of Directors**

# Chief Executive's Foreword



Although Scotland is continuing to become more tolerant and comfortable with diversity, it is clear that there is still a strong need for a sense of connection, belonging and acceptance within our communities. Over this year we've seen an unprecedented number of people engage with our organisation. Our services continue to evaluate strongly and, as many of the quotes in this report testify, individuals report they feel affirmed and empowered through their engagement with the organisation. We can confidently say that we are living up to our name, and contributing significantly to people's health and wellbeing.

Our staff and volunteer teams, and the tremendous energy, dedication and hard work everyone contributes, are of course key to the organisation's impact, and I can't thank them enough.

Over the last year we have continued to focus on our work across Scotland. Alongside the delivery of a successful pilot project in Fife, we have seen our service delivery in Glasgow continue to grow, with new funding secured to deliver a much-needed intergenerational LGBT social programme, as well as mental health support and a programme for LGBT parents. Meanwhile a range of services continue to be delivered in Edinburgh, as well as us undertaking the further development of existing initiatives, such as the counselling service.

In relation to our 50+ LGBT Age work, this year has been marked by an unprecedented level of community engagement and delivery in both Glasgow and Edinburgh, and we've seen fantastic initiatives like Coffee Posse and the collaborative LGBT Cabaret project. However, sadly, funding for the befriending service has come to an end, leaving us with much more limited capacity to support this often-overlooked section of the LGBT community.

It has also been a year of consolidating our strategic work, with our engagement in a wide range of fora enabling us to provide a strong, informed and credible voice for the interests of LGBT people. We are increasingly recognised as a 'go to' organisation in relation to LGBT issues, and in 2016 we were invited by the Scottish Government to become one of its strategic intermediaries in relation to LGBT equality.

Looking ahead, given the wider financial climate, the organisation continues to face considerable challenges in securing the funding needed to sustain and further develop its many programmes. However, having successfully established a presence in Glasgow, we expect to see our community reach continue to grow, and we are well placed to play a key role in promoting the health, wellbeing and equality of LGBT people in Scotland.

Maruska Greenwood  
**Chief Executive**



# Introduction

LGBT Health and Wellbeing promotes the health, wellbeing and equality of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland. We provide support, services and information to improve mental and emotional wellbeing, reduce social isolation and promote community development and volunteering.

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

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

“ IMPROVED MY MENTAL HEALTH BY GAINING MORE CONFIDENCE IN MYSELF. I FEEL MORE CONNECTED AND HAVE MADE LOADS OF NEW FRIENDS. THIS IS THE FIRST PLACE I HAVE LIKED WHERE I FEEL THERE IS A COMMUNITY. GIVEN ME THE CONFIDENCE TO COME OUT TO MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND THIS HAS MASSIVELY IMPROVED MY QUALITY OF LIFE. I NO LONGER FEEL DISCONNECTED FROM OR ALIENATED FROM SOCIETY AND I FEEL THAT THE GROUPS MAKE ME FEEL VALUED. I NO LONGER HAVE ANY SENSE OF SHAME REGARDING MY SEXUALITY AND MY SELF-ESTEEM HAS MASSIVELY IMPROVED. ”

**The organisation's key 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 are responsive to their needs.

“ WHAT I VALUE IS A SENSE OF BELONGING; SUPPORT TO EXPLORE MY IDENTITY AND TO GROW IN MYSELF AND IN MY RELATIONSHIPS; I HAVE LEARNT HOW TO BE MORE RESPECTFUL TO MYSELF AND OTHERS THROUGH THE SAFE SPACE POLICY AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT CREATED BY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS; HAVE BEEN GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES TO BE CREATIVE AND SHARE THIS WITH OTHERS; FRIENDSHIP AND COMMUNITY; THE VALIDATION AND SUPPORT TO FINALLY COME OUT LATE IN LIFE; A SENSE OF PURPOSE AND HOPE; YOU HAVE LITERALLY BEEN A LIFE-SAVER. ”

“ I HAVE MADE FRIENDS THROUGH GROUPS AT THE LGBT CENTRE. I'VE ENJOYED ACTIVITIES I'VE TAKEN PART IN. I NOW KNOW I AM NOT ALONE, THAT THERE IS SOMEWHERE I CAN GO IF I NEED HELP WITH GENDER OR SEXUALITY ISSUES. MY MENTAL HEALTH IS BETTER AS A RESULT OF USING THESE LGBT SERVICES. ”

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.

\* Quotes used throughout this report are taken from our November-December 2016 Service Evaluation and from other written feedback received over the course of 2016-17.

# Our Work with LGBT People

Over 2016-17 the organisation engaged with a large number of LGBT community members across its programmes in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Fife:



**3,972 PEOPLE ACCESSED GROUPS**

1,528 GLASGOW beneficiaries    204 FIFE beneficiaries



**637 INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED 1-1 SUPPORT**



**1,049 HELPLINE CALLS**

**95 ONLINE ENQUIRIES**  
on our national Helpline



**109 VOLUNTEERS**

**22 COMMUNITY GROUP LEADERS SUPPORTED**



**4,173 E-BULLETIN SUBSCRIBERS**

Beneficiary numbers have increased very significantly across many of our programmes, largely due to the increase in delivery in newer geographical areas, especially Glasgow. Calls to our national LGBT Helpline saw an increase of 22% over this 12 month period, whilst those accessing one-to-one support increased by 39% and attendance at our groups and events was up 30%.



# Mental Health Projects

Our mental health projects support individuals experiencing poor mental health and, through the evaluation of this work, continue to build our knowledge and understanding of the mental health needs of LGBT adults and how to address these most effectively.

“ I’VE BEEN SO GRATEFUL TO HAVE A SPACE TO BE ME AND MEET OTHER PEOPLE. I THINK IT HAS BEEN MORE BENEFICIAL THAN I REALISED. ”

Many of the activities delivered as part of these projects are made possible through extensive partnership work and the provision of substantial in-kind support from mainstream mental health practitioners and organisations.

“ THE RECENT MENTAL HEALTH EVENING MOVED ME DEEPLY. I FELT HEARD, VALIDATED, INCLUDED, VALUED. I LEAVE ENTHUSED, INFORMED AND INSPIRED. SO SO POSITIVE FOR MY MENTAL HEALTH. ”



Sex Health Wellbeing  
For Gay & Bisexual Men

Improving the sexual, physical  
and mental health of gay and  
bisexual men, and all men  
who have sex with men.

Visit us at: [www.s-x.scot](http://www.s-x.scot)  
or call 0131 652 3250

SX is provided by Waverley Care in partnership with LGBT Health  
Waverley Care - Scottish Charity No. SC393600  
LGBT Health and Wellbeing - Scottish Charity No. SC234216



Through our 3-year contract with NHS Lothian, our Lothian-based Helpline and Counselling Service teams have been working closely with Waverley Care in the co-delivery of the new SX project, which aims to improving the sex, health and wellbeing of gay and bisexual men, and men who have sex with men, in Lothian. The SX project launched in June 2016 and has its own masculine, sex-positive branding and website.

Within this partnership LGBT Health is particularly focused on delivering the mental and emotional wellbeing support, whilst Waverley Care, Scotland’s HIV and Hepatitis C charity, is more focused on providing support around sexual health and prevention. The partnership allows SX to draw on the experience and expertise of both organisations in providing a holistic range of services.

# LGBT Helpline Scotland

## LGBT Helpline Scotland

Tuesdays and Wednesdays 12-9pm

0300 123 2523

Email Support:

helpline@lgbthealth.org.uk



Information and support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, those questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity and their families, friends and supporters.



Our national helpline is co-funded by NHS Lothian and the Scottish Government.

It provides information, support and referrals in relation to sexuality and coming out, gender identity, relationship, sexual health, community safety and emotional wellbeing issues.

“ IT'S BEEN SO AMAZING TO BE ABLE TO TALK TO ANOTHER TRANS WOMAN ABOUT WHAT I'M GOING THROUGH. I'VE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE SOME REALLY POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE DECISIONS BASED ON YOUR ADVICE AND SUPPORT. ”

Now in its fourth year of providing a Scotland-wide service, the helpline saw its calls increase by 22%. A total of 1,050 calls were answered (up from 865 in the previous year); 3 out of 4 of these calls involved emotional support. In addition to answering calls, the team also provide support via email and through online profiles on Grindr and Gaydar, which enable us to target support at men with concerns around sexual health. 95 enquiries were responded to online.

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

In order to achieve its national reach, the helpline is promoted via widely distributed posters and fliers and through a presence on health websites and social network sites, as well as being advertised prominently in all the organisation's various communication tools, such as our e-bulletins.

“ I WOULDN'T HAVE FOUND THE CONFIDENCE TO OPEN UP TO MY GP AND PSYCHIATRIST IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU. AFTER SUFFERING WITH DEPRESSION FOR 28 YEARS, I CAN FINALLY FEEL MYSELF TURNING A CORNER, AND A LOT OF THAT IS DOWN TO THE SUPPORT YOU HAVE GIVEN ME. ”

“ USING THE HELPLINE PROBABLY STOPPED ME FROM HARMING MYSELF THAT NIGHT, IT REALLY WAS A LIFELINE. ”

“ I HAVE TRIED GETTING SUPPORT THROUGH EVERY SINGLE SERVICE I CAN THINK OF, AND YOU'RE THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO REALLY LISTENED TO ME AND HELPED ME SOLVE MY SITUATION [AROUND ONGOING HATE CRIME]. WE HAVE NOW GOT KEYS TO A NEW HOUSE FROM THE HOUSING ASSOCIATION AND WE'LL BE AWAY FROM THIS AREA WHERE WE'VE EXPERIENCED SO MUCH HATE AND ABUSE — AND IT'S ALL DOWN TO YOU GUYS. ”

# Feedback from Helpline callers

A caller survey was undertaken between January and March 2017. 36 callers responded to the survey. Their responses illustrated the breadth of topics the helpline deals with, the wide geographical spread and diversity of its callers and the impact of the services on those who use it.

We found:

- 2 in 5 callers indicated the helpline was the first service they turned to for information and support
- 3 in 5 callers were signposted to local sources of support, including social groups, mental health projects, LGBT organisations and health services
- 4 in 5 callers indicated their emotional health had improved thanks to using the service
- 7 in 10 reported their knowledge or awareness had improved and they felt able to make more informed choices.

Feedback received included:

I'VE OPENED UP TO A STRANGER AND THAT'S A REALLY BIG DEAL FOR ME. I'M READY TO ACCEPT MYSELF AS A LESBIAN AND TO START A NEW CHAPTER, AND YOU HAVE BEEN REALLY HELPFUL.

REALLY GOOD TO TALK OPENLY TO ANOTHER GAY PERSON - HELPFUL TO GET THINGS OFF MY CHEST AND TO TALK WITH SOMEONE WHO GENUINELY CARES AND UNDERSTANDS.

BEING PUT IN TOUCH WITH YOUR SERVICES HAS HELPED ME START TO ACCEPT MYSELF AND EMBRACE MY TRANS IDENTITY. I AM BECOMING MORE CONFIDENT IN MYSELF.

YOU ARE SWEET, GENTILE, A GUARDIAN ANGEL - YOU'VE BEEN SO HELPFUL! YOU ARE CARING, LOVELY PEOPLE WHO REALLY DO GO THAT EXTRA MILE. NOTHING HAS IMMEDIATELY CHANGED FOR ME AS I'VE ONLY JUST CALLED BUT I WILL FOLLOW YOUR ADVICE. I AM JUST SORRY THAT I HAVEN'T CALLED YOU EARLIER.

YOU HAVE BEEN A GREAT SUPPORT TO ME WHILE I'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH A BREAK-UP WITH MY PARTNER. I'D HAVE REALLY GONE UNDER WITHOUT YOUR COMPASSION AND UNDERSTANDING.

YOU ARE AN ABSOLUTE LIFELINE FOR ME. THERE'S REALLY NOTHING LGBT IN MY AREA AND CALLING YOU MAKES ME FEEL SO MUCH LESS ISOLATED, ESPECIALLY AS MY DISABILITIES KEEP ME STUCK INDOORS MOST OF THE TIME.

# Edinburgh Counselling Service

Thanks largely to a new contract from NHS Lothian we are able to deliver a specialist counselling service to work with gay and bisexual men and transgender people. This donation-based service is managed by a part-time Counselling Coordinator who carries out the initial assessments, with counselling delivered through the generous in-kind contribution made by our team of trained volunteer counsellors.

As with our other mental health support, it's clear that the fact that this is an LGBT service is a major reason for people referring. Demand for the service is high, both because other voluntary counselling services are being stretched, as well as mainstream services not always being equipped to deal with LGBT people.

We are currently seeking funding to enable us to extend this service to lesbian and bisexual women. A small one-off grant from the Women's Fund for Scotland will enable us to address this service delivery gap in the short term.

## COUNSELLING FOR GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN AND ALL MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN



### Need to talk to someone? We're trained to listen

Our Counselling Service provides a confidential space where you can talk, free from judgement, and find ways to improve how you feel

- Edinburgh-based
- Daytime/Evening appointments
- Monday-Friday



**Sx** Sex Health Wellbeing For Gay & Bisexual Men

“ AFTER FINISHING ALL OF MY COUNSELLING SESSIONS I HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED ANY PANIC ATTACKS, AND ALSO HAVE HAD A REDUCED LEVEL OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION FOR THE MOST PART. WHILST THESE ISSUES HAVE NOT GONE AWAY ENTIRELY, AND MAY REQUIRE FURTHER WORK IN THE FUTURE, I WOULD SAY THAT COUNSELLING HAS BEEN ONE OF THE TOOLS WHICH HELPED ME TO CURB THEM TO AN EXTENT THAT I COULD GET ON WITH THINGS MORE EASILY. ”

“ WHILST I HAVE BEEN TO SOME COUNSELLING BEFORE I TENDED TO EITHER AVOID TALKING OPENLY OR DROP OUT ALTOGETHER. THIS WAS MY FIRST EXPERIENCE OF HAVING A GENUINE AND OPEN RELATIONSHIP WITH A COUNSELLOR, AND FOR THAT I AM VERY GRATEFUL. ”

“ I FELT MY ISSUES WOULD BE BETTER UNDERSTOOD FROM AN LGBT PERSPECTIVE. I ALSO FELT MUCH SAFER BEING IN AN LGBT ENVIRONMENT. THE COUNSELLING HAS BEEN VERY POSITIVE AND INCREDIBLY BENEFICIAL WITH REGARD TO SELF-UNDERSTANDING. ”



# Edinburgh LGBT Headspace

The long-established Lothian-based LGBT Headspace Programme is part-funded by NHS Lothian, with additional funding over this period from The Robertson Trust and Awards from All. Some of the larger scale events are made possible through the support of the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival and Scottish Book Trust.

The Programme provides culturally-sensitive services to help redress the critical levels of poor mental health experienced by LGBT people. Activity strands include:

- **One-to-one support:** assessment appointments and ongoing individually tailored support.
- **Workshops, groups and courses:** providing tools to address mental health challenges including coming out courses, discussions on suicide prevention; sex, relationships and intimacy; art therapy weekends and a women's wellbeing group.
- **Exhibitions and events:** one-off events aimed at increasing awareness and building community resilience, such as the Wellbeing Mela delivered in partnership with other third sector agencies, as well as more regular events such as our confidence café, LGBT space at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital and men's film events.

“ IF I DIDN'T HAVE THE SUPPORT I HAVE RECEIVED FROM LGBT H&W, I HAVE TO BE HONEST IN SAYING I'M NOT SURE I WOULD HAVE SURVIVED. I REALISE THIS SOUNDS DRAMATIC. BUT THE REALITY IS I MOVED TO EDINBURGH NOT KNOWING A SOUL, BUT THROUGH ATTENDING GROUPS AND OTHER SERVICES AT LGBT H&W I RECEIVED THE SUPPORT AND FRIENDSHIP THAT I NEEDED FOR MY MOVE TO BE A SUCCESS. I RECEIVED ART THERAPY WHICH WAS INCREDIBLY POWERFUL, ATTENDED A WRAP COURSE AND NUMEROUS OTHERS WHICH HAVE HELPED BUILD A TOOL KIT THAT HELP ME SELF-MANAGE MY MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS. NOT ONLY THAT. I HAVE ATTENDED WRITING & ART WORKSHOPS WHICH HAVE LED TO ME HAVING POETRY PUBLISHED AND ART EXHIBITED IN SEVERAL EXHIBITIONS. WHICH HAS AN INCREDIBLE IMPACT ON ONE'S SELF ESTEEM. ”

**International Day Against Homophobia**

**Suicide Prevention**

In partnership with **LGBT Youth Scotland & Choose Life**, join us to creatively explore how we can collectively prevent suicide in the LGBT community


**Thursday 19th May, 7.30-8.30pm**  
LGBT Youth Scotland, 40 Commercial St, EH6 6JD  
Doors open at 7pm  
Accessible to 16+

For more information, contact  
E: [alison@lgbthealth.org.uk](mailto:alison@lgbthealth.org.uk)  
T: 0131 652 3283

ChooseLife  
LGBT Youth Scotland  
LGBT

“ THANKS FOR ORGANISING THIS SUICIDE PREVENTION EVENT. IT WAS GREAT TO TALK ABOUT SOMETHING THAT PEOPLE USUALLY FEEL SHAME OR EMBARRASSMENT ABOUT. I LOVED BEING ASKED FOR MY IDEAS ON WHAT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ”

THIS COMING OUT COURSE HAS MADE ME FEEL MORE POSITIVE ABOUT MYSELF. IT IS JUST WHAT I HAVE NEEDED FOR A VERY LONG TIME. YOU CREATED A SAFE, FRIENDLY AND EMPOWERING SPACE TO EXPLORE HOW WE COULD COME OUT. I NOW FEEL LESS ANXIOUS ABOUT MY SEXUALITY AND SURE THAT I WANT TO COME OUT. I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE LOVELY FRIENDS WHOM I HOPE TO STAY CLOSELY IN TOUCH WITH. COURSES SUCH AS THIS ARE VERY IMPORTANT AND CAN CHANGE LIVES. HAVING ESTABLISHED CONTACT WITH OTHER LIKEMINDED PEOPLE, I NOW FEEL MORE CONFIDENT ABOUT ATTENDING OTHER LGBT GROUPS AND EVENTS. ”



**ART THERAPY WEEKEND**  
**'The Self and Others'**


Explore your own identity in relation to others during an in-depth weekend workshop facilitated by Art Therapists  
No experience with art required

**Booking essential at:**  
[www.tinyurl.com/arttherapyself](http://www.tinyurl.com/arttherapyself)

Saturday 12th | Sunday 13th November, 11am-5pm  
LGBT Health, 9 Howe Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6TE

Website: [www.lgbthealth.org.uk](http://www.lgbthealth.org.uk)  
f/lgbthealthy @LGBTHealthy

Contact:  
[alison@lgbthealth.org.uk](mailto:alison@lgbthealth.org.uk) | 0131 652 3283



THE ART THERAPY WEEKEND HAS HAD A REALLY POSITIVE IMPACT ON MY MENTAL WELLBEING AND HAS IMPROVED MY OUTLOOK ON LIFE. I'M HUGEY GRATEFUL FOR THE EXPERIENCE, AS IT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMATIONAL, ESPECIALLY HAVING THIS WEEKEND IN A LGBTI GROUP SETTING. THERE IS A SHORTHAND OF SHARED EXPERIENCE THAT ALLOWS FOR A DEEPER EXPLORATION OF FEELINGS. IT'S BEEN HUGEY ENJOYABLE, ENERGISING AND SATISFYING.

THE WHOLE IN CONVERSATION WITH... EVENT WAS THOUGHT PROVOKING AND INTERESTING. AS A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL JUST BEGINNING MY CAREER IT WAS INCREDIBLY INFORMATIVE AROUND LGBT IDENTITIES AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES. MADE ME REALLY RE-THINK THE THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP.

## Glasgow LGBT Mental Health Projects

We initially received funding from See Me to deliver a small-scale pilot Mental Health Project. Through this pilot project we provided space for LGBT people with lived experience to explore the impact of stigma and what actions can be taken to combat mental health stigma and promote mental wellbeing and resilience.

The successful delivery of the pilot project helped us to demonstrate the need for a specialist mental health service in Glasgow. This led to two more substantive multi-year funding awards to enable us to further develop support services. The Alliance has provided funding for a programme of group work activities aimed at supporting individuals to self-manage their mental health issues; this programme was launched in April 2017. In addition, the Henry Smith Charity has provided funding for counselling and one-to-one support; this support has been available from June 2017.



THROUGH THE GLASGOW LGBT MENTAL HEALTH GROUP I FEEL LESS ISOLATED AND MORE CONNECTED TO PEOPLE, KNOWING THAT MY MENTAL HEALTH EXPERIENCES ARE SHARED BY SO MANY IS HELPFUL. A REALLY LOVELY, OPEN SPACE. NICE TO SEE PEOPLE BEING LISTENED TO, RARE!

THE GROUP HAS PROVIDED A SAFE, QUIET SPACE TO INTERACT WITH PEOPLE. SOMETHING I WILL GET OUT OF THE HOUSE FOR, HELPS ME STAY AFLOAT AND REDUCES MY STRESS.



# LGBT Social Programmes

Our social programmes provide LGBT people with opportunities to meet with peers away from the gay commercial scene. The organisation has continued to provide a vibrant LGBT Social Programme in Edinburgh. In addition, thanks to new funding, we were able to deliver a 1-year pilot programme in Fife, as well as build on our pilot events in Glasgow to deliver a more robust social programme with a number of different activity strands.

## Edinburgh LGBT Social Programme

Our year-round programme of social activities, events, volunteering and capacity building support to community groups in Edinburgh is supported through core funding from City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian.

The programme of community social events, delivered with the support of a volunteer Events Team and a small team of sessional workers, includes some annual fixtures, such as our Pride Breakfast, Summer Fete and Winter Concert, alongside recurring sporadic events such as the ever-popular LGBT Roller Disco (delivered with the support of the Activcity Fund). These sit alongside one-off events, such as the Coming In collaboration with OurStory Scotland and our collaboration with the National Library of Scotland's Connecting Scotland's Sounds Project.



“ THE PRIDE BREAKFAST WAS THE FIRST LGBT EVENT I’VE EVER ATTENDED AND BOY AM I GLAD I DID. IT’S A WHOLE WORLD OF PEOPLE I DIDN’T KNOW WERE OUT THERE AND I REALLY DIDN’T FEEL SELF-CONSCIOUS AFTER I SETTLED. NICE FOOD TOO! ”

“ SO SO HAPPY YOU WENT TO THE TROUBLE TO PUT THE QUEER BI NIGHT EVENT ON. IT’S RARE TO BE WITH SO MANY BI PEOPLE IN A ROOM AND TO FEEL LIKE THE MAJORITY! LOVELY PERFORMANCES AND HIGH QUALITY TOO. JUST A BRILLIANT NIGHT. THANK YOU VERY MUCH. ”

Quarterly community discussion evenings provide the community with a platform to discuss community issues. These are delivered in collaboration with a range of partners able to contribute on the specific topic. This year’s evenings were focused on LGBT teachers (with General Teaching Council for Scotland, Education Institute of Scotland, National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers and Scottish Workplace Networking for LGBT people); Brexit and its impact on the LGBT community (with the Scottish Government Minister for Negotiations on Scotland’s Place in Europe and the Equality Network) and hate crime and community safety (with Police Scotland).



“ THANK YOU FOR ORGANISING THE BREXIT AND BEYOND EVENT YESTERDAY, I THOUGHT IT WAS REALLY GREAT AND APPRECIATED THE ABILITY TO BE IN A SAFE SPACE TO TALK ABOUT THESE TOPICS. INTERESTING TO HEAR FROM THE MINISTER, BUT ALSO GOOD TO BREAK OFF INTO GROUPS FOR MORE IN-DEPTH DISCUSSION. ”

This year also saw us continue to run the successful Language Café and deliver a session of LGBT swimming in partnership with Edinburgh Leisure.



“ THE BEST PART OF THE LGBT SWIMMING WAS THE ABILITY TO USE THE POOL IN A COMFORTABLE AND RELAXED ENVIRONMENT, AND TO USE THE GYM WITHOUT FEELING LIKE I'M BEING JUDGED. VERY EMPOWERING. ”

“ THE LANGUAGE CAFÉ IS A GREAT WAY TO LEARN ENGLISH HAVING FUN, AND MEETING FRIENDLY PEOPLE. IN MY OPINION IT IS REALLY IMPORTANT TO HAVE THIS KIND OF PLACE, COMMUNITY WHERE FOREIGN PEOPLE CAN LEARN AND FEEL WELCOME IN THE CITY. IT GIVES A CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW MEMBERS OF THE SCOTTISH AND OTHER NATIONS LGBT SOCIETY. I FEEL MORE INTEGRATED IN SCOTTISH SOCIETY AND LOVE THIS COUNTRY MORE. ”

## Glasgow LGBT Community Programme

The findings from our 2015 community consultations indicated a strong need for social activities and LGBT community spaces. We continued to use these findings to run pilot and one-off events such as Pride Breakfast and to deliver Rainbow Spoon, a monthly informal intergenerational social get-together. These events enabled us develop a more nuanced understanding of the needs of the community, evidence those needs and shape our service delivery response.

Thanks to 3-year Big Lottery Fund funding for a Glasgow community project we have, since late 2016, been able to build on our pilot social events to deliver a more robust programme with a number of different activity strands, namely social activities, drop-ins and community discussions. The project has a big focus on volunteering and community engagement and involvement in creating a social programme and social spaces for the community to come together; delivery is being supported by a volunteer Events Team, as well as sessional staff.



Activities delivered as part of the new programme include the monthly LGBT Language Exchange, which provides a space for people looking to improve their English or hoping to learn a new language, as well as one-off social activities such as a stand-up comedy event and a roller disco.



“ SINCE THE AGE OF 11 YEARS I HAVE BEEN HIDING MY SEXUALITY FROM AN UNCARING SOCIETY. DOING SO HAS TAKEN ITS TOLL IN SO MANY WAYS OUT OF ME. THIS PAST RECENT WHILE AND BEING ABLE TO MEET UP WITH LIKE-MINDED FRIENDS AT RAINBOW SPOON, WHERE THERE IS NO JUDGEMENT, NOTHING BUT A COMMON FRIENDLINESS, UNDERSTANDING AND LOVE, HAS MADE UP FOR ALL THESE PAST YEARS. I CAN ONLY THANK EVERYONE, ALL THE FACES I DON'T KNOW BUT I KNOW WE ARE UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER. ”

“ IT'S REALLY NICE THAT THE RAINBOW SPOON CAFE SPACE EXISTS OUTSIDE THE CLUB SCENE, WHERE PEOPLE CAN REALLY COME TOGETHER AND RELAX AND BE THEMSELVES. IT'S A SAFE SPACE TO MEET PEOPLE IN A FRIENDLY INCLUSIVE ATMOSPHERE. ”



“ I ENJOY THE EXCHANGE OF CULTURE. HAVING AN LGBT LANGUAGE EXCHANGE IS GREAT. I AM NEW TO GLASGOW AND DON'T KNOW A LOT OF ENGLISH. THIS WAS A NICE WAY TO MEET PEOPLE. ”



“ PRIDE BREAKFAST WAS A LOVELY START TO THE DAY, GREAT ATMOSPHERE, FRIENDLY COMPANY, ENTERTAINMENT WAS FABULOUS AND BREAKFAST TOO, WHAT A PLUS! THANK YOU VERY MUCH ”

The Glasgow Village Voices e-bulletin, which launched in early 2016, helps enable individuals to be more connected into their community; subscriber numbers have continued to grow rapidly and by March 2017 had nearly reached 700.

# Fife LGBT Support Programme

We obtained funding from the Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance and the Scottish Government to deliver a 1-year pilot Support Programme in Fife. This pilot responded to the findings of the Fife LGBT Needs Assessment (*LGBT Health, February 2016*), that highlighted a lack of social activities, support and information available to LGBT people in Fife.

The support programme had a strong focus on reducing social isolation and providing local opportunities for LGBT people to meet with peers. 28 events were delivered as part of this pilot, and through these we engaged with over 200 people. In addition individual support was provided to nearly 100 individuals.

Our 1-year pilot project clearly demonstrated that there is need for a specialist LGBT service in Fife. People want to engage with other LGBT people with shared experience in a safe and non-judgemental environment. This has been proven both through the feedback received from the people who have engaged with the project, and as the interest and support received from other professionals.

A future project should ideally have greater capacity for offering one-to-one support, including around poor mental health, as individuals often did not feel that they could access existing mainstream mental health services in Fife.

We have learned that LGBT people in Fife are not just geographically dispersed, but also often hidden due to negative societal attitudes and internalised feelings of shame. This was highlighted both in our Needs Assessment research project and during our Support Programme pilot. There therefore needs to be a recognition that it takes time to build community engagement, that considerable effort has to go into promoting any future initiative as widely as possible and that one-to-one support is needed to enable those experiencing low confidence to more easily participate in group activities.



“ THE FIFE SOCIAL EVENTS HAVE BEEN AN ABSOLUTE GODSEND TO ME. IT’S GIVEN ME THE CHANCE TO BE MYSELF OUT IN THE REAL WORLD AND TO HAVE AT LEAST SOME SORT OF SOCIAL LIFE. I’VE MADE NEW FRIENDS, AND LOOK FORWARD SO MUCH TO US ALL GETTING TOGETHER. I HONESTLY DON’T KNOW HOW I WOULD COPE NOW THAT IT’S STARTED UP. THE THOUGHT OF RETURNING TO THAT PRE-GROUP LONELINESS FILLS ME WITH DREAD. ”

“ THIS IS SUCH AN IMPORTANT PROJECT. JUST GIVING PEOPLE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ‘BREATHE’ AND THE T TIME+ GROUP GIVES PEOPLE A FEW HOURS TO DROP THE ‘PROTECTIVE ARMOUR’ THAT WE WEAR 24/7. ”

## Edinburgh Community Groups

The organisation has continued to host and support a range of identity, interest and support-based community groups in Edinburgh. Over this year we supported 8 community groups, ranging from well-established groups such as Edinburgh Trans Women, who recently celebrated their eighth anniversary, to more newly established initiatives, such as the New Beginnings group for people who are coming out later in life, or making changes to their life circumstances in relation to their sexuality and/or gender identity.



I WAS REALLY NEEDING SOME FORM OF COMMUNITY WHEN I APPROACHED THE ORGANISATION LOOKING FOR A GROUP TO GO TO THAT COULD CONNECT PEOPLE LIKE ME WHO WERE COMING OUT LATER IN LIFE. I WAS ENCOURAGED TO START MY OWN GROUP, AND A GREAT DEAL OF EFFORT AND HARD WORK WENT INTO HELPING ME PULL IT OFF. LGBT HEALTH IS AN AMAZING RESOURCE, AND I FEEL SO BLESSED TO HAVE HAD THEIR HELP IN ALL THE STAGES OF MY COMING OUT, AND THE SUPPORT IN HELPING ME GET THE NEW BEGINNINGS GROUP STARTED.



Over and above LGBT Health's own programmes and their direct beneficiaries, these affiliated weekly, fortnightly and monthly community groups held around 150 meetings and engaged with over 500 people, including some 200 new members. These community-led groups thus clearly play a crucial role in further helping to improve the social networks of LGBT people by providing regular informal opportunities for LGBT people to connect with their peers.

We provide the group leaders of these affiliated groups with tailored and responsive support not just with setting up, running and promoting a new group, but also ongoing support around how to build capacity and further develop their group. The quarterly Community Group Leaders' Forum, which we coordinate and host, provides community group leaders with the opportunity to meet other group leaders, share ideas and experiences, discuss best practice and help highlight areas of development in terms of leader's skills, confidence and knowledge. Regular training is provided in response to those needs, and over the last year included sessions on working with groups and dealing with tricky situations.



REALLY GOOD TO MEET EVERYONE AS THERE IS ALWAYS SO MUCH EXPERIENCE IN THE ROOM. IT IS USEFUL TO HEAR ABOUT THE OTHER GROUPS AND CHALLENGES THEY'RE FACING, INCLUDING AROUND ISSUES LIKE SAFE SPACE, AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM. THE LOTHIAN COMMUNITY GROUP LEADERS' FORUM HAS REALLY HELPED US THINK ABOUT WHAT ELSE WE AS GROUP LEADERS WE NEED TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER. THE ONGOING SUPPORT FROM LGBT HEALTH IS MUCH APPRECIATED.



## Glasgow Community Groups

The organisation has now also started to provide support for community groups in Glasgow. Over the last year we have supported volunteer community group leaders from two more established community groups, BiScotland and LGBT Unity, which provides peer support for LGBT refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants, and we have supported the setting up of a new LGBT Autism Group.





“ SINCE BEING WITH LGBT HEALTH AND WELLBEING AND BECAUSE OF OUR DRAMA SKETCHES AT THE SPOON CAFÉ AS PART OF BI VISIBILITY DAY BISCOTLAND (GLASGOW) HAS BEEN ABLE TO INCREASE ITS MEMBERSHIP. ”

“ IT'S BEEN SO HELPFUL TO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF LGBT HEALTH. LGBT UNITY NOW HAVE A SECURE MEETING PLACE, HELP WITH MEETINGS AND SUPPORT WITH PROMOTION. I ALSO ATTENDED A TRAINING THAT HELPED ME TO BE A BETTER CHAIR IN MEETINGS. ”

## 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, project support and publicity, as well as on the Board of Trustees. We provide a regular rolling programme of induction and ongoing training for volunteers, run in both Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Our 2016 Volunteer Survey was completed by 33 volunteers. Overall, the results were encouraging: 93% of respondents reported that they would recommend our volunteering opportunities to a friend; 58% rated the volunteer induction as 'excellent' or 'very good'; 73% rated support from their supervisor as 'excellent' or 'very good'. Since starting to volunteer with LGBT Health, all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they have made a difference to people's lives. The key motivation for volunteering continued to be the desire individuals had to support a cause they believe in.



“ LOVE THE SUPPORT AND EXPERIENCE OF WORKING HERE. IT'S HONESTLY BEEN THE BEST MOST TRANSFORMATIVE VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE IN MY LIFE! ”

“ I JUST THOROUGHLY ENJOY THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT PEOPLE. BEING AWARE THAT I CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE LGBT COMMUNITY AND HOPEFULLY MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE FOR SOME OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY IS REALLY IMPORTANT TO ME. ”

This wide-ranging voluntary contribution from 110 individuals amounted to more than 7,000 hours. The often very specialist contribution volunteers make conservatively equates to over 4 full-time members of staff, or around £130,000 (based on salary and associated costs for a Development Worker), and thus very clearly significantly increases the organisation's capacity, as well helping to ensure we reflect the diverse communities we work with.



# LGBT Age Project

Our Big Lottery-funded LGBT Age Project, now in its third year, achieved increased community reach and engagement. The project delivered a varied programme of social events, information sessions and one-to-one befriending, in Edinburgh and Glasgow, aimed specifically at LGBT people over 50; beneficiaries range in age from 50s to 90s. In addition, the project has also provided a strong platform for consultation and for the voices of older LGBT people to be heard in order to help counter the lack of awareness of the life experiences and needs of older LGBT people.

I FEEL THAT OLDER LGBT PEOPLE ARE MORE ISOLATED, AND HAVE BEEN MORE ISOLATED DURING THEIR LIVES DUE TO SOCIAL STIGMA AND GENERALLY A GREATER LACK OF ACCEPTANCE THAN THEIR YOUNGER COUNTERPARTS HAVE. THE COMMERCIAL SCENE IS GEARED TO YOUNGER PEOPLE WHERE OLDER PEOPLE ARE NOT ALWAYS MADE TO BE PART OF THE GROUP. LGBT AGE EVENTS GIVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO MIX WITH MY PEER GROUP AND HERE I FEEL LESS LIKE AN OUTSIDER.

The social programme, which is designed and delivered with community involvement, has continued to develop. One of the key new initiatives has been Coffee Posse, a community-run social get together. It started in response to a desire for an alternative to the commercial gay scene, a social space that was not youth-orientated and did not revolve around alcohol, but was instead informal and inclusive, somewhere people could go to meet and make friends. First launched in Glasgow, Coffee Posse has been really successful and is now also running in Edinburgh.



NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE AT PRIDE. WHAT A GREAT DAY! ENJOYED BEING PART OF RIDE WITH PRIDE AND BEING ABLE TO SIT DOWN AND STAND AT WILL, BOOGIE WITH MY DISABLED FRIENDS, AND GET TO MEET OTHERS LIKE US. THE WAVES FROM OTHER MARCHERS REALLY MADE US FEEL PART OF THE PRIDE MARCH.

I WANTED TO BE VISIBLE AS A GAY MAN AND TO HELP OTHERS BE WHAT AND WHO THEY WANT TO BE. COFFEE POSSE IS A FUN EVENING AND PEOPLE APPRECIATES IT BEING THERE. THAT MAKES IT REALLY REWARDING TO BE INVOLVED.

The LGBT Age Reference Group of older LGBT people has been instrumental in championing the issues of older LGBT people and spearheaded the Ride with Pride initiative, which saw us working with Pride organisers to provide a dedicated bus to enable older LGBT people, particularly those with health or mobility issues, to take part in the Pride march and community celebrations held annually in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

The Befriending Service also continued to develop. As the project became more well known, it saw a marked upsurge in referrals, both from individuals themselves and from agencies; more volunteer befrienders were also recruited to be able to meet this increased demand.

The service achieved the Quality in Befriending accreditation from the Befriending Networks, which is the only accreditation scheme specifically for befriending services.



“ THE BEFRIENDING SERVICE HAS BEEN GREAT. MY BEFRIENDER SUPPORTS ME A LOT, I COULDN'T MANAGE WITHOUT HIM. I USED TO ISOLATE MYSELF OUT OF FEAR BUT NOW I'M MORE COMFORTABLE. I NEVER FELT LIKE I BELONGED ANYWHERE BEFORE THIS. NOW I FEEL LESS CONFUSED AND ALONE. I AM PART OF SOMETHING NOW. ”

“ HAVING A BEFRIENDER MEANS I HAVE PURPOSE TO GO OUT. THERE IS NO ONE IN MY SHELTERED HOUSING COMPLEX THAT I CAN CALL A FRIEND AND I FEEL UNABLE TO SHARE MY SEXUAL ORIENTATION AS THIS MAY LEAD TO BEING EXCLUDED OR JUDGED AND FURTHER ISOLATED. MY LGBT AGE BEFRIENDER HAS ALLOWED ME TO BE WHO I REALLY AM. ”

“ I INITIALLY HAD AN LGBT AGE BEFRIENDER TO HELP ME SETTLE INTO THE SOCIAL EVENTS. I NOW REGARD THE PEOPLE AT OUR EVENTS AS FRIENDS, BECAUSE I FEEL SAFE WITH PEOPLE WHO ATTEND THE LGBT AGE EVENTS, I CAN MEET WITH PEOPLE MY OWN AGE AND ENJOY THEIR COMPANY. IF IT WASN'T FOR THE LGBT AGE PROJECT I WOULD BE LOST, A SHIP WITHOUT A RUDDER, WANDERING AIMLESSLY ABOUT, TRYING TO FIT IN WITH OTHER SOCIAL GROUPS AND MOST LIKELY NOT TO FIT IN AS USUAL. I TRULY CAN'T THANK LGBT AGE ENOUGH FOR GIVING ME A PLACE IN SOCIETY. ”

Sadly at the end of the 3-year Big Lottery funding the LGBT Age Befriending Service, which had been operating in Edinburgh since 2010 and in Glasgow since 2014, came to an end. However we were fortunately able to transfer some of the matches and referrals onto another befriending service for older people. Meanwhile we were delighted to be awarded Scottish Government funding to continue much of the LGBT Age Social Programme.

## External evaluation of LGBT Age

An external evaluation of LGBT Age was requested by the Big Lottery Fund to establish the impact of the 3-year project; this was carried out in late 2016.

The evaluation comprised a written survey, one-to-one telephone and face-to-face interviews with beneficiaries, volunteers and staff, along with discussions in two group settings with LGBT community members. Through these different means contact was made with over 90 members of the older LGBT community in Edinburgh, Glasgow and beyond.

“ I FEEL SOCIALLY AWKWARD AND GENERALLY ANXIOUS ABOUT BEING OUT BECAUSE I’VE HAD SUCH A NEGATIVE REACTION [FROM FAMILY AND FORMER FRIENDS]. HAVING SOMEWHERE TO COME WHERE I DON’T FEEL JUDGED, WHERE EVERYONE IS FRIENDLY AND WELCOMING, HAS MADE SUCH A DIFFERENCE TO ME AND PROVIDED ME WITH A REASON TO GET OUT OF BED IN THE MORNING. A REAL LIFELINE. ”

“ I DON’T KNOW OF ANY SERVICES THAT EXIST [FOR OLDER LGBT PEOPLE] OR MIGHT UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES LGBT AGE PARTICIPANTS FACE. GENERAL SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE CAN BE HOMOPHOBIC WITHOUT INTENDING TO BE. I DOUBT VERY MUCH IF I WOULD FEEL COMFORTABLE USING OTHER SERVICES. ”

“ I NOW FEEL MORE CONFIDENT SPEAKING ABOUT MY SEXUALITY AND MY EXPERIENCE. I NO LONGER TOLERATE JUDGEMENTS AND FEEL CONFIDENT IN CHALLENGING THESE. I FEEL MY VIEW OF THE WORLD HAS EXPANDED IN A POSITIVE WAY WITH SUPPORT AND FRIENDSHIP AND ACCEPTANCE FROM OTHERS AT LGBT AGE. ”

“ I VALUE THE FACT THAT I KNOW LGBT AGE PROVIDES SOMEWHERE YOU DON’T NEED TO EXPLAIN ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES. I CAN GO AND I’M HERE AND SO IS EVERYBODY ELSE. NO-ONE IS JUDGING US. I WAS A CHILD OF THE 60S AND 70S - I HAD A LOT OF HIDDEN LIVES. ”

The evaluation demonstrated the positive impact of the project on the health and wellbeing of participants. The responses indicated that:

- 87% of those who had used LGBT Age activities had experienced a positive difference as a result of them, with 31% saying this had been ‘a lot’.
- 73% said that their involvement had given them a stronger foundation for the future to some degree, with 18% saying that this was ‘a lot’.
- Notably over 60% of people using LGBT Age activities were feeling more integrated with the LGBT community and indicated having a greater level of social interaction.



## LGBT Age and Luminate collaboration

LGBT Age worked with Luminate, Scotland's creative ageing festival, to deliver the LGBTI Cabaret Project. The project involved a series of 12 workshops for older LGBT people delivered by the DIVE queer cabaret collective, leading to a public cabaret performance scheduled as part of LGBT History Month.

The 2017 History Month theme was heritage, which resonated with participants, who told their own stories of coming out, fear of the unknown, and struggles with acceptance and inclusion over the decades. These themes were creatively explored through music, poems, stories and dance.

LGBT Age staff promoted the project, were on hand during the workshops and supported participants throughout. For many participants, it was their first time being involved in an initiative of this kind and they had no previous experience of performing in public. Some people therefore struggled with issues of confidence and needed support to sustain their engagement.



WHAT EMERGED EARLY ON IN THE CABARET WORKSHOPS WAS THE BREADTH OF EXPERIENCES, THE DIVERSITY OF PEOPLE'S BACKGROUNDS AND PARTICULARLY THE HUGELY INTERESTING AND OFTEN ENORMOUSLY PAINFUL LIFE EVENTS THAT MANY WERE BRINGING TO THE NARRATIVE OF OUR SHARED LGBT EXPERIENCES. IT WAS THE TRUST THAT WE FOUND IN EACH OTHER THAT ALLOWED THESE STORIES TO BE TOLD THROUGH MUSIC, SONG, POETRY, MOVEMENT AND NARRATIVE. WE HAVE ALL HAD FULL LIVES AND HAVE SURVIVED THE EMOTIONAL TRAUMAS THROWN AT US OVER THE YEARS, DESPITE THE ODDS. IT WAS APPROPRIATE TO HIGHLIGHT OUR STORIES THROUGH CABARET DURING LGBT HISTORY MONTH.

I WAS NERVOUS TO JOIN THE INITIAL MEETING, BUT FROM THE MOMENT I WALKED IN, I FELT SAFE, SUPPORTED AND MORE 'OUT' THAN I'D BEEN FOR MANY YEARS! THE WORKSHOPS WERE LED CAREFULLY, SUPPORTIVELY AND WITH MUCH THOUGHT AND PREPARATION. WE WERE KEPT INFORMED AND ALWAYS FELT IN CONTROL OF OUR OWN PLACE IN THE PERFORMANCE. WHAT HAS STAYED WITH ME MOST WAS THE GROWING RESPECT AND TRUST BETWEEN ALL THE PEOPLE INVOLVED. WORKING WITH A MIX OF EXPERIENCED AND NOVICE PERFORMERS GAVE US ALL CONFIDENCE. BOTH PERFORMANCES WENT VERY WELL. BECAUSE I ENJOYED IT SO MUCH, I HAVE NOW DECIDED TO CREATE MY OWN SHOW, TELLING MY OWN STORY.

The cabaret evening in Glasgow's Tron Theatre was however hugely affirmative, empowering and well received. On the night, a total of 15 community members participated either in the performance itself or behind the scenes, with more engaging in the workshops. The project was deemed such a success, both in terms of impact on participants and of the audience's response, that a second performance later took place in April 2017 in Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre.

Media Co-op filmed the process from the beginning of the project until the first public performance, with many participants interviewed about the impact the cabaret project had on them. It was clear early on that the group were bonding, that people were very supportive of each other and friendships were being formed, which was a really positive outcome for participants.

LGBT Health and Luminate are keen to collaborate on a further project that explores awareness raising around the experiences and lives of older LGBT people and the role of the arts might play in challenging discrimination (and fear of discrimination).

# Transgender Support Programme

LGBT Health has continued to build on its strong track record of delivering trans-specific support programmes, in recognition that this is one of the sections of the LGBT community which experiences the most acute disadvantage and inequality. Our trans-specific programmes continue to experience a significant increase in demand.

Through our trans-specific programmes, LGBT Health provides group support, courses, workshops and social opportunities to meet with peers. These programmes experience a high level of demand, with over 550 individuals participated in these activities, including around 1 in 3 new beneficiaries this year.



“THE LGBT HEALTH AND WELLBEING CENTRE AND T TIME HAVE BEEN INTEGRAL TO MY BEING ABLE TO TAKE THE GREATEST STEPS OF MY LIFE. PRESENTLY I’M VERY CONSCIOUS OF BEING THE HAPPIEST I’VE EVER BEEN.”

“YOU ARE REALLY GREAT AT MAKING ME FEEL WELCOME AND AT HOME. THE INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS YOU HAVE PROVIDED THROUGH THE ONE-TO-ONE SESSIONS ARE REALLY USEFUL, AND TAILORED TO FIT MY NEEDS.”

Through this programme we also provide one-to-one tailored, individual support, both face-to-face, as well as by phone and email; this support was accessed by 310 individuals. The issues discussed as part of this one-to-one support are hugely wide-ranging, and demonstrate that individuals often have very specific support and information needs. The diversity and complexity of many of the enquiries demonstrates the need for and value of having a specialist service. Enquiries over the last year have included:

- Legal issues, such as change of name and Gender Recognition Certificates;
- Support available, including youth groups, online forums, community groups, trans-friendly hairdressers, mental health services;
- Coming out to family, friends, school, college and work and the impact on family members, friends and colleagues;
- Transitioning options, and what might be gained or lost;
- NHS services, including what is available on the NHS, waiting times, treatment pathways and what to expect at a gender clinic appointment;
- Treatment information, including information about hormone therapy, surgery, hair removal, binders and breast forms;
- Fertility, adoption, starting a family and family issues;
- Signposting to resources and information, including information for families, employers and schools;
- Loneliness, mental health, anxiety, self-harm and suicidal ideation.

Our T monthly e-bulletin is now distributed to around 800 individuals, with over 200 new subscribers added from across Scotland over the last 12 months alone. The e-bulletin is an important tool for sharing news and information about upcoming events to a very geographically dispersed community. Individuals continue to often travel from far afield to access support and services, due to a lack of service provision and social opportunities in their local area.

NHS Lothian now support our well-established trans work in Edinburgh, whilst the Rayne Foundation and Bank of Scotland Foundation funded our newer Glasgow programme over this period.

## Glasgow Transgender Support Programme

The monthly T time social has continued to provide crucial information, peer support and social contact. In addition, as part of the wider support programme, a series of workshops and courses aimed at building the confidence, knowledge and resilience of trans people was delivered, including a 2-day Transition Support Course. Community members are encouraged to contribute to programme planning through a quarterly Creative Team meeting.



“ THROUGH COMING TO THE TRANSITION SUPPORT COURSE IN GLASGOW HAVE GAINED CONFIDENCE, HAD QUESTIONS ANSWERED AND NEW INSIGHT IN SOME THINGS TRANSITION RELATED. I AM BEGINNING TO KNOW THAT I AM NOT ALONE. I FEEL A LITTLE LESS ISOLATED. MET AMAZING PEOPLE WHO ARE IN A SIMILAR POSITION OR NOT. I FEEL HAPPIER AND SO MUCH MORE CONFIDENT ABOUT MY FUTURE. I FEEL I CAN RELAX MORE. LIFECHANGING! ”

“ T TIME IS MY ONLY SOCIAL OUTLET AT THE MOMENT. THE PEOPLE ARE NICE AND IF I HAVE TO LEAVE THE HOUSE, IT'S THE ONLY SPACE I'M HAPPY TO BE MYSELF. ”

## Edinburgh Transgender Support Programme

As part of this programme a monthly drop-in is provided in Edinburgh, with optional activities running alongside this. In addition, confidence building workshops, gender service information session and a Transition Support Course were delivered.

“ I HAVE FOUND, THROUGH 2 YEARS OF ATTENDING T TIME EDINBURGH, THAT I HAVE GAINED THE COURAGE TO COME OUT TO MY FAMILY AND WORK COLLEAGUES, AND THE SUPPORT AND INFORMATION I HAVE RECEIVED THROUGH THIS FORUM HAVE REALLY HELPED! ”

People accessing the Lothian Transgender Support Programme were invited to take part in a photoshoot, to create some authentic images to use in our organisational publicity, including a new project leaflet. The individuals who took part in the formal photoshoot found working with the photographer and each other, to create a range of individual and group photos, a really positive and empowering experience.



“ I AM JUST SO GRATEFUL FOR ALL THE WORK YOU ARE DOING. I WOULDN'T BE THE SAME PERSON IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU. I HAVE RECENTLY PARTICIPATED IN A PHOTOSHOOT FOR LGBT HEALTH'S TRANSGENDER PROGRAMME AND THE FACT THAT I'M HAPPY BEING "THE FACE OF IT" SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK! ”



# Rainbow Families

Whilst LGBT people experience many of the same issues around parenthood as their non-LGBT peers, they can also experience challenges that are unique to being LGBT, such as how to start a family (fertility treatment, fostering, adoption, surrogacy), connecting with other LGBT parents, LGBT-friendly child care providers, advice on issues in school, support on 'coming out' to children and talking with children about gender and sexuality, children coming out as LGB or T and where to access LGBT-friendly family counselling.

The Rainbow Family project works with LGBT parents and their children, as well as prospective parents and the wider family. The project has been delivered in Edinburgh as part of our wider social programme since 2010. Now, thanks to funding from the Volant Trust, we have been able to further develop the Rainbow Families programme, including rolling out the programme to Glasgow.



“ THROUGH RAINBOW FAMILIES EVENTS MY KIDS ARE MORE CONNECTED TO THE LGBT COMMUNITY AND FAMILIES SIMILAR TO OURS. I THINK THIS WILL REALLY HELP THEIR CONFIDENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH AS THEY GROW OLDER. ”

The project delivers a programme of regular and varied family events, as well as ensuring some of our wider LGBT social programme events are inclusive of LGBT families. Rainbow Family events provide a safe and fun space for parents and children to socialise, share experiences and build community. The project also provides one-to-one support, information and guidance to parents or prospective parents in relation to fertility options, family planning and LGBT family issues.



“ CAN'T TELL YOU HOW MUCH IT MEANT TO MY SON BEING AT THE CRAFT DAY. THE RAINBOW FAMILIES GROUP IS SO IMPORTANT FOR HIM TO SEE OTHER FAMILIES LIKE HIS AND FEEL NORMAL. THE BOOKLET YOU KINDLY HELPED HIM MAKE WAS PROUDLY SHOWN OFF TO ALL THE FAMILY! ”

“ I HAD SUCH A LOVELY DAY — IT WAS PERFECT WEATHER FOR THE RAINBOW FAMILIES PICNIC. ALL OF US HAD A BLAST! THESE GLASGOW EVENTS REALLY HELP ME FEEL LESS ISOLATED AS A SINGLE LESBIAN WHO LIVES IN A RURAL AREA. ”

## Our Capacity Building and Partnership Working

LGBT Health engages not just with LGBT community members but, often equally importantly, it also works with a wide range of professionals to promote the interests of LGBT people. Over 2016-17 this capacity building and awareness raising work included:



**256 ENQUIRIES**

from mainstream service providers responded to



**999 TRAINING PARTICIPANTS**

in our training and awareness raising sessions



**16 STRATEGIC FORA**

participated in



**10 FOCUS GROUPS & CONSULTATIONS**

run or contributed to



**8 PUBLICATIONS & FILMS**

produced or contributed to



**LGBT, TRANSGENDER & 50+ E-BULLETINS**

distributed to wide-ranging audiences

“ THE TRAINING HAS PROVIDED ME WITH A GREATER AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF LGBT ISSUES. I WOULD NOW FEEL MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE SPEAKING WITH LGBT PATIENTS ABOUT THEIR NEEDS AND HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHERE TO SIGNPOST THEM FOR MORE SUPPORT. ”

# Our Influencing Work

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. LGBT Health is currently represented on 16 local and national strategic fora, in relation to community development, equalities, mental health, sexual health, community safety and older people. At these fora we raise awareness of the experiences, needs and inequalities LGBT adults experience, providing a strong, informed and credible voice for the interests of LGBT people.

In order to influence local and national strategy and commissioning, we also regularly contribute to consultations and publications, providing an LGBT perspective in relation to issues such as mental health, ageing, dementia and sexual health.



One of the key collaborations was our work with the Mental Welfare Commission to co-produce the LGBT Inclusive Mental Health Services Guide, which launched in April 2017, to coincide with World Mental Health Day. The guide aims to address inequalities in the support and treatment of LGBT people across Scotland's mental health services, and features a number of recommendations for making services more accessible and LGBT-friendly. Copies were sent out to all psychiatric wards in Scotland, as well as primary care and community services.

LGBT Health was invited onto the National Advisory Group on Dementia and Equality, which was convened to help inform the Scottish Government's third dementia strategy. Thanks to this involvement, the Dementia and Equalities Recommendations Report, published by NHS Health Scotland in August 2016, contains a substantive chapter on LGBT people and dementia and highlight a number of key recommendations in relation to LGBT people with dementia and LGBT carers. We were also subsequently asked to present the finding in relation to LGBT people at the Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Conference 2017.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or trans queer and/or intersex?

**What are YOUR first-hand experiences of cancer services?**

Join us at informal focus groups being held in **Fife** and **Edinburgh**, run in partnership with MacMillan to help improve cancer support services for LGBTQI people.

**Fife: Sat 4th March, 1.30-4pm**  
 Rothes Halls, Kingdom Shopping Centre  
 Glenrothes, KY7 5NX

**Edinburgh: Sat 11th March, 1.30-4pm**  
 The Melting Pot, 5 Rose St, Edinburgh, EH2 2PR

Book online: [www.tinyurl.com/cancersupportLGBT](http://www.tinyurl.com/cancersupportLGBT)

Contact Jules for information:  
 E: [jules@lgbthealth.org.uk](mailto:jules@lgbthealth.org.uk)  
 T: 0131 523 1104

**LGBT HEALTH & WELLBEING**

We welcome the entire diversity of the lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender, non-binary, queer, intersex and asexual communities.

“ IT WAS NICE TO HAVE THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING CONSULTED WITH BY MACMILLAN, AND GOOD TO REFLECT ON WHAT SUPPORT WAS IMPORTANT (OR WOULD HAVE BEEN USEFUL) AT THE TIME I MOST NEEDED IT IN MY CANCER JOURNEY. IT FELT POSITIVE TO BE ABLE TO SHARE MY EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS, AND TO THINK ABOUT WHAT LGBT PEOPLE SPECIFICALLY NEED DURING THIS TIME. ”

(LGBT Cancer Focus Group participant)



As a community development organisation, we are keen to ensure our capacity building work is anchored in the lived experiences of LGBT people in Scotland. We therefore coordinate consultation events and focus groups which provide community members with a platform to discuss a range of health, wellbeing and equality issues of concern, such as mental health treatment, hate crime, the experiences of LGBT teachers and Brexit. We use the findings from these events to feed into our wider capacity building work; for example, the focus group's discussions on the mental health strategy were used for our Mental Health in Scotland consultation response.

We are increasingly recognised as a 'go to' organisation in relation to LGBT issues, particularly in relation to older people and mental health. This is demonstrated not just by the range of fora the organisation is represented on, but also by the fact that in 2016 we were invited by the Scottish Government to become one of its strategic intermediaries in relation to LGBT equality.

## Working in Partnership

We are strongly committed to partnership work and work with an extensive range of individuals, groups and other LGBT, health and voluntary sector organisations at a local and national level. These partnerships are crucial in raising the profile of LGBT health and equality issues within mainstream agencies, as well as enabling us to tap into the expertise and resources needed to ensure we are well informed and our many programmes and services are developed and delivered to the highest possible standard.



“ THIS WAS ONE OF THE BEST EVENTS OF OUR 15-YEAR HISTORY. THE COMING IN EVENT WAS BRILLIANTLY MANAGED, WITH US ALL [NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND, OURSTORY SCOTLAND AND LGBT HEALTH] WORKING TOGETHER TO ENSURE THE EVENING WAS A SUCCESS. WE VERY MUCH LOOK FORWARD TO COOPERATING WITH LGBT HEALTH AGAIN. ONCE AGAIN MANY MANY THANKS FOR MAKING THIS GROUND-BREAKING EVENT HAPPEN - AND HAPPEN IN SUCH A VIBRANT AND POSITIVE FASHION. ”  
**(OurStory Scotland)**

In our efforts to ensure LGBT people are increasingly provided with more culturally sensitive and appropriate services, we respond to many information and guidance requests from mainstream professionals and organisations. In addition we delivered some 30 bespoke talks, training and awareness raising sessions to voluntary and statutory sector organisations, ranging from more general awareness raising around LGBT issues to specialist sessions on mental health, transgender and older people's issues.



“ I REALLY ENJOYED THE TRAINING AND ALTHOUGH I HAVE SOME EXPERIENCE OF WORKING WITH TRANS PEOPLE, I LEARNED A LOT OF NEW THINGS. THE TRAINING GAVE ME MORE OF AN INSIGHT AND AN EMPATHY FOR THE ISSUES PEOPLE MIGHT FACE. THE FRIENDLY DELIVERY STYLE PUT PEOPLE AT EASE AND MADE IT EASY TO ASK QUESTIONS. ”



The organisation produces and distributes a number of monthly e-bulletins, some with a primary community focus, but also containing content aimed specifically at professionals:

- Village Voices: focused on LGBT issues and events; monthly Edinburgh, Glasgow and Fife editions were produced
- 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 over 4,000 individual subscribers, with more than 1,000 new subscribers added over this 12-month period. Subscribers are primarily LGBT community members, but the e-bulletins are also circulated to around 500 professionals. These e-bulletins constitute a crucial 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.

We are committed to capturing learning both from our service delivery and our capacity building and community consultation activities. We regularly disseminate this learning through social media, e-bulletins and the online resources section of our website.

## Transgender Workplace Guide

In partnership with NHS Lothian, and guided by a Steering Group drawn from health, local authority, third sector and trans community members, we produced the Transgender Workplace Support Guide and associated resources, including Ten Top Tips posters aimed at employees and employers. The Guide aims to support transgender employees, managers and HR staff.

The Transgender Workplace Support Guide provides a comprehensive overview of transgender identities, relevant legislation, workplace policies, practicalities and signposting to further sources of guidance and support.

Quotes from the one-to-one interviews that we carried out with transgender employees and employers are included throughout the Guide and provide valuable insight into 'lived experience' and pointers to best practice.

The Guide is being widely disseminated, including through NHS Health Scotland's Healthy Working Lives workplace initiative.



“ UNFORTUNATELY THERE IS A LACK OF GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS ON HOW BEST TO SUPPORT TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACE, PARTICULARLY AROUND ENABLING GENDER TRANSITION. GENDER IDENTITY ISSUES ARE COMPLEX AND TRANSITION CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR BOTH EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES WHICH CREATE A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR TRANSGENDER EMPLOYEES, OVER AND ABOVE WHAT IS REQUIRED BY LAW, CAN HELP THE TRANSITIONING EMPLOYEE TO AVOID EXPERIENCING STRESS AND ALIENATION AND RETAIN THEIR EMPLOYMENT WITH THE ORGANISATION. ”

(NHS Lothian, Health Promotion Service)

# LGBT Mental Health Capacity Building Project

Evidence consistently suggests that LGBT people are worried about discrimination when accessing mainstream mental health services. Through our LGBT Mental Health Capacity Building Project, we worked to support mainstream mental health service providers to become more culturally competent in meeting the needs of LGBT people who use their services.

Through this small-scale Scottish Government-funded pilot project we worked with Glasgow Association for Mental Health (GAMH), NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Mental Health Services, Edinburgh Napier University Student Support Services and the Care Inspectorate. We offered these organisations both mental health-focused LGBT awareness raising training and bespoke capacity building support to enable mental health providers to work through the LGBT Mental Health Audit Tool and identify action that would enhance and demonstrate their LGBT inclusive practice.



“ THE TRAINING WAS VERY USEFUL AND AS A NEXT STEP I WANT TO CONSIDER HOW I CAN BEST INCORPORATE QUESTIONS ABOUT LGBT ISSUES AND SERVICE USERS INTO MY INSPECTIONS. I NOW FEEL I HAVE THE SKILLS TO BE ABLE TO ASK THESE QUESTIONS IN AN APPROPRIATE MANNER. ”  
**(Care Inspectorate)**

“ I BELIEVE I NOW WILL BE MORE AWARE OF DIFFERENT NEEDS AND FEEL I HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE TO BETTER SUPPORT LGBT INDIVIDUALS. ”  
**(GAMH)**

## LGBT awareness training

- 8 LGBT mental health awareness training sessions were delivered
- 156 professionals took part in the training
- 96% of participants found the trainings ‘useful’ or ‘very useful’ for their work

Training participants told us:

“ AS A RESULT OF THE TRAINING I WILL WORK TO FIND A WAY TO ASK PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR LGBT STATUS SO THAT THEY KNOW IT’S SAFE TO DISCLOSE TO ME, AND SO THAT I CAN THEN ENSURE I AM PROVIDING A SUPPORT SERVICE THAT BEST MEETS THEIR NEEDS. ”

“ I FEEL MUCH MORE EQUIPPED TO SUPPORT LGBT PEOPLE. I NOW HAVE THE RESOURCES I NEED TO TAKE FORWARD ISSUES I HAD BEEN UNSURE ABOUT HOW TO ADDRESS PREVIOUSLY. ”

“ EVERYONE WHO ATTENDED THE WORKSHOP HAS BEEN ABLE TO TAKE AWAY INFORMATION ABOUT LGBTI ISSUES AND DISCRIMINATION AND REALLY USEFUL INFORMATION THAT WILL HELP US TO DELIVER A MUCH BETTER, SAFER MORE WELCOMING SERVICE TO OUR STUDENTS. ”



# Evaluation of Performance

We are firmly committed to comprehensively evaluating the reach and impact of our services. Our rigorous organisation-wide annual Service Evaluation was carried out in late 2016 and for the third year covered services in both Edinburgh and Glasgow, as well as for the first time also covering evaluation of our pilot work in Fife. The evaluation questionnaire was made available in paper form and electronically and received 235 responses.

The service user profile information again demonstrates that a really wide range of individuals of all ages (from mid-teens to 80s), who identify right across the LGBT spectrum – and beyond – engage with LGBT Health’s programmes and services.

## How LGBT Health beneficiaries evaluated our services

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

- 74% reported feeling more connected to their community
- 69% feel better about themselves
- 58% reported their mental or emotional health is better.

“ APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET PEOPLE, BE PART OF A GROUP AND FEEL ACCEPTED AND NOT ALONE. HAS REALLY HELPED BUILD MY CONFIDENCE AND SOCIAL SKILLS. ”

“ THERE IS A GREAT SUPPORT NETWORK WITHIN LGBT HEALTH AND WELLBEING, GOOD TO FEEL PART OF SOMETHING POSITIVE AND EMPOWERING. ”

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

- 91% rated our staff as ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’
- 81% found the quality of our services ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’
- 79% rated their overall experience of the organisation as ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’.

“ THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK, DEDICATION AND SUPPORT. DON’T KNOW WHERE WE’D BE WITHOUT IT. ”

“ THIS IS AN AMAZING ORGANISATION THAT DOES EXTREMELY VALUABLE WORK. IT HAS HELPED ME IMMENSELY ”

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.

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

- Social interaction, friendship and fun
- Sense of community and community support
- Welcoming and accepting environment
- Wide range of information and support
- Improved wellbeing.

“ HAVE MADE FRIENDS. PEOPLE TO TALK TO WHO PROVIDE VALIDATION AND REASSURANCE. HAVE GAINED SELF-RESPECT. I LIKE MYSELF, I LIKE WAKING UP. ”

“ I’VE GAINED A WEALTH OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT, FEEL MUCH MORE CONNECTION TO THE COMMUNITY, NOW HAVE ACCESS TO INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES. ”

“ FRIENDS FOR LIFE, CONFIDENCE, A SENSE OF COMMUNITY. ”

“ SUPPORT, FRIENDSHIP AND ACCEPTANCE. ”

We also invited respondents to provide suggestions for improvement and the evaluation provided us with a wealth of suggestions for activities, both new and repeat ones, as well as suggestions around further developing publicity and promotion, access and inclusion.



We have continued to review operational policies and practice guidelines to ensure high quality service delivery, including in 2016 achieving the Quality in Befriending accreditation.

We also continue to work on strengthening our communication tools, with a greater emphasis placed on the use of social media, alongside promotion of our services via our website, e-bulletins and printed publicity. In 2016 our printed quarterly programme acquired a new more accessible and dynamic look to enable us to better promote our programmes in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Fife.

# Building our Organisation

Alongside the focus on service delivery, much work has also been undertaken to continue to build a positive, proactive organisation with strong governance, leadership and the ethos of health, wellbeing and diversity at its heart, where staff and volunteers feel confident, empowered and supported in delivering better outcomes for LGBT people in Scotland.

Our Board of Trustees is made up of a range of individuals from across the community who bring wide perspectives from different sectors of Scottish life and ensure that the organisation maintains a clear focus on our strategic objectives and vision. Alongside regular Board meetings, Trustees contribute their expertise to the organisation through the Trustee-led Marketing and Communication, People and Audit, Finance and Fundraising Subcommittees.

We recognise that our dynamic and skilled staff and volunteer team are our major asset, and therefore work to support, develop and empower them to deliver the organisation's mission. We underpin the health and wellbeing of our own staff through the ongoing development of a comprehensive people framework and a range of operational policies and procedures that support staff in carrying out their roles. We invest in the learning and development of our staff to ensure that they are able to fulfil their roles and continue to improve their skills.

Employee and volunteer surveys, as well as regular support and supervision, annual appraisals and exit feedback from employees and volunteers, enable us to proactively monitor performance in this area and serve to guide continuous improvement.

Our Employee Survey was run in September 2016. It had a good response rate (84%) and overall very positive responses, with an increase in the ratings across the areas of mission and purpose, team, environment and organisational management. A separate Sessional Worker Survey, with a focus on level of support, communication and induction, was conducted for the first time in January 2017. Whilst this received a lower response rate (45%), it again provided very positive feedback.

Our Volunteer Survey was run in June 2016 and, whilst again response rate was somewhat on the low side (42%), this showed high levels of motivation and satisfaction in our volunteers.

We have been working towards Healthy Working Lives (HWL) accreditation to help create a safer, healthier and more motivated workforce. As a first step, we undertook an initial employee survey to gauge employees' views on our current approach to creating a healthy workplace and help generate ideas around the sorts of health initiative that would be welcomed by the team. A working group, consisting of staff from across the organisation, was established to develop an action plan and progress this work. HWL bronze accreditation has now been achieved and a varied programme of health promotion continues to be delivered.



# Financial Review

Our 2016-18 Business Plan outlines the actions we intend to take over a 3-year period to achieve our strategic objectives. It identifies our short, medium and longer term priorities for our business objectives and key performance indicators, including in relation to securing funding to sustain and develop our work. The Business Plan contains a detailed financial overview and outlines our fundraising strategy, which places equal emphasis on securing statutory contracts and awards from trusts and foundations.

Over 2016-17 the organisation saw a very modest decrease in income (0.5%), when compared with the previous year (2015-16; £550,272). The organisation has however successfully continued to secure contracts with statutory funders as well as diversify its trusts and foundations funding to enable the delivery of a range of programmes. We received project and core funding from 19 funding streams, across 13 different funders. Of those 19 funding streams, 8 were short term or year-on-year funding, whilst the remainder were multi-year awards, mostly 3-year contracts. The organisation is thus continuing to report against a high number of work streams (during the previous year funding came from 21 funding streams, across 13 funders), as well as a great deal of organisational resource being required to re-apply for funding year on year, and to identify new funders when short term and multi-year awards end.

Each year fundraising is focused on meeting income shortfalls for the current financial year, as well as securing funding for future years. In the current financial year (at August 2017) our projected income is still 13% below projected expenditure. Funding is committed from 12 funders, across 16 funding streams, with further awards likely over the remainder of the year. Positively, we are increasingly seeing funders refunding us, or funding multiple projects; this is true for statutory funders (e.g. NHS Lothian, Scottish Government), but also increasingly for trusts and foundations (Big Lottery Fund, The Alliance, The Robertson Trust, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Bank of Scotland Foundation). The Chief Executive's role continues to have a strong focus on income generation and strategic relationship-building with key statutory partners and funders.

Our geographical expansion has necessitated some ongoing reserve investment. The organisation however continues to exercise sound financial management and to critically examine all aspects of expenditure to identify useful savings. Thus the organisation's total net assets at 31 March 2017 were at a healthy level at £256,639 (down from £266,381). This includes, alongside unrestricted reserves of £173,365, £83,274 in restricted project funding in relation to underspends or early payments received for particular projects or initiatives, predominantly for Glasgow projects (namely LGBT Community Project, Transgender Support Programmes, Mental Health Project and LGBT Age), which are expected to be fully spent in the coming financial year.

<b>Income and Expenditure April 2016-March 2017</b>		
<b>Income</b>	<b>£547,353</b>	<b>%</b>
Big Lottery Fund	193,726	35%
NHS Lothian	157,882	29%
City of Edinburgh Council	43,424	8%
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	30,011	6%
Rayne Foundation	20,000	4%
Scottish Government	18,216	3%
Other Grants	62,622	11%
Donations & other income	21,472	4%
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£557,095</b>	<b>%</b>
Staff Costs	421,875	75%
Office Costs	70,602	13%
Programme Costs	60,868	11%
Professional Fees	3,750	1%



## Our Funders and Supporters

In relation to our core activities, we very much appreciate the ongoing support of NHS Lothian, City of Edinburgh Council and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Our projects are largely funded through grants from trusts and foundations, although NHS Lothian is increasingly providing vital support for our service delivery, now funding a counselling service, trans-specific and mental health support, as well as co-funding the LGBT Helpline alongside the Scottish Government.

From trusts and foundations, we received ongoing valuable support from the Big Lottery Fund (LGBT Age), Robertson Trust (Lothian Mental Health Project), Rayne Foundation (Glasgow Transgender Programme) and Edinburgh and Lothian Health Foundation (Lothian Transgender Programme) to sustain existing service delivery. Smaller one-off awards were also received towards existing projects from Awards for All and EVOC (Lothian Mental Health Project).

Alongside this, new trusts and foundations funding was received from the Big Lottery Fund (Glasgow Community Project), the Alliance (Glasgow Mental Health Project) and Volant Trust (Rainbow Families) to enable us to develop new initiatives in Glasgow.

We are also grateful to the Fife Health and Wellbeing Alliance and Scottish Government for jointly funding our Fife pilot project.

In addition we are really appreciative of our donors for their 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, which operates as LGBT Health and Wellbeing.

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

