YOUR IMPACT

2025-2026

How your support has made a difference to our LGBTQ+ community



LGBT Health and Wellbeing



“Our monthly meetings have become a special opportunity to socialise, connect and simply spend time together.”

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WELCOME

It feels a bit repetitive to introduce this year's Impact Report with a statement of pride, but how could I not? Looking back on the year there is, once again, so much to be proud of.

Throughout the year, thousands of LGBTQ+ people connected with us in different ways: looking for information, finding community, speaking with someone when things were difficult, accessing counselling or wellbeing support, or finding a space where they could safely be themselves. Making all of that possible is our incredible team of staff and volunteers, who continue to show up for our community with enormous care, skill, and commitment.

To say that it's been a difficult year for many in our community is an under-statement. The increasing hostility, fearmongering and anti-trans rhetoric is taking its toll. We never would have imagined that in **2026**, our trans siblings would have their ability to fully participate in society so severely restricted. Some-thing as basic as using the bathroom has become a source of ambiguity and anxiety. But the volume of those opposed to trans equality should not be mistaken for the views of the majority. IPSOS polling in **2025** found that **71%** of people in Great Britain believe that trans people should be protected from discrimination in employ-ment, housing, and access to businesses. Whilst click-bait headlines will continue to feed the outrage economy, it's worth us all remembering that most people share a simple view: trans people should be able to live their lives free from discrimination.

As demand for our services continue to increase, I'm proud of how our staff and volunteers have responded. Many of us are part of the same communities we support, experiencing the same uncertainty and hostility, while turning up every day for others. Along with responding to immediate need, we've created spaces for people to find each other and build community, provide support when things have been difficult, and made sure that the experiences of LGBTQ+ people are heard by those with the power to change things. This approach, supporting people today whilst working for a better tomorrow, is an increasingly important part of our new strategy.

> **"We never would have imagined that in 2026, our trans siblings would have their ability to fully participate in society so severely restricted."**



“We have continued the shift away from thinking about our work as a collection of separate projects, towards one connected organisation, with services that can work together around the needs of our communities.”

This year also saw us continue to progress strengthening the organisation behind our services. We have continued the shift away from thinking about our work as a collection of separate projects, towards one connected organisation, with services that can work together around the needs of our communities. We have invested in better systems, further strengthened our leadership and governance, and completed the first year of our Sustainable Services Strategy. In an increasingly difficult fiscal and political environment, we're committed to being here for LGBTQ+ people for the long term, and that means ensuring that the organisation is as strong and sustainable as possible today.

There are already some encouraging signs. Our income grew during the year and donations more than doubled, from **£37,929**, to **£86,203**. This is part of our work to build a broader base of people, organisations, and funders who believe in this work and want to be part of its future.

Perhaps what stands out most for me this year is the collective effort behind LGBT Health and Wellbeing. **174** volunteers gave more than **6,000** hours of their time during **2025-2026**. Alongside our **23** staff (**18.8** FTE), casual workers, funders, donors, and partners, they make the impact described in this report. I am incredibly grateful to all of them.

And finally, to you, our reader: if something in these pages moves you, inspires you, or makes you want to help, please do! You might donate, volunteer your time, fund or partner with us, or help more people know that we're here. You'll find ways to get involved on page 29. Whatever part you choose to play, we'd love you to be part of it.

Mark Kelvin
(he/him)
Chief Executive



Who We Are

OUR VISION

A Scotland where all LGBTQ+ people are healthier, connected, and able to live well.

OUR APPROACH

Of, for and by LGBTQ+ communities

We work with LGBTQ+ people and communities: building connection and community, providing support when it's needed, and using what we learn together to create wider change.



OUR VALUES

Collaboration

We build bridges. Together with partners and community members we create change that benefits us all.

Inclusion

Our services are affirming, intersectional, and accessible. We centre those who've been historically excluded.

Equality and Diversity

We celebrate the full spectrum of LGBTQ+ identities. Our team reflects our community, and our work uplifts every voice.

Respect

We value everyone and treat people fairly. We are open, accountable, accepting, trustworthy, and supportive.

Participation

Our work is co-created. We empower our community to lead, shape, and grow the support they need.

Excellence

We strive for high-quality, innovative services that make a real difference in people's lives.

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

87p

in every £1 donated goes directly towards our work



582

LGBTQ+ people seeking sanctuary supported through New Scots



2146

counselling sessions provided



24

grassroots community groups supported across Scotland



115

volunteers contributed 5,841 hours



2,629

helpline contacts received



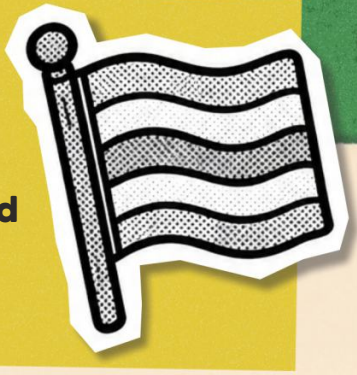
255

events delivered



450

people accessed specialist trans support



We're Making Real Difference

91%
of LGBTQ+ people accessing out wellbeing support felt more able to cope with day-to-day life.

90%
of trans people felt more connected to their community when engaging with our specialist trans support.

91%
of LGBTQ+ New Scots felt less lonely after accessing support.

84%
of LGBTQ+ elders felt less lonely through our support.

UNDERSTANDING OUR REACH

Some people connect with LGBT Health and Wellbeing in more than one way. Someone might contact our Helpline, join a community group, and later access wellbeing support. During **2025-26**, we continued our ambition to implement a database that will enable us to better understand our reach and people's journeys through our support ecosystem and beyond. We are proud of the progress we have made in developing the database to date and are excited to implement it in **2026-27**. For this report, we share service activity and engagements, rather than combining these figures into a single number of people supported.



HOW WE CREATE IMPACT

Throughout **2025-26**, we continued to deliver essential specialised LGBTQ+ services, including mental health and wellbeing support, community events, and safer community spaces. These are delivered in person and online, offering LGBTQ+ people throughout Scotland opportunities to connect, build community, and find belonging.

Throughout our **23**-year history, we have embedded an intersectional, person-centred approach to mental health support and service delivery. As a community-led organisation we recognise that factors such as gender, race, disability, age, immigration status, and socioeconomic class can create additional barriers to accessing support from mainstream services.



Working with our community, we design and deliver services that are welcoming, accessible, and responsive to the diverse and changing needs of our communities. For **2025-26** this included:

BUILDING CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY

Creating spaces, relationships, and opportunities that reduce isolation and strengthen belonging.

PROVIDING SUPPORT WHEN IT IS NEEDED

Offering LGBTQ+ informed practical, emotional, and therapeutic support.

CREATING WIDER CHANGE

Using community knowledge, evidence, and lived experience to influence policy, practice and systems.

BUILDING CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY GROUPS



Our new Dundee Community Hub

In **2025-2026**, we expanded our Community Groups programme beyond Edinburgh and Glasgow, responding to growing interest and need from LGBTQ+ communities elsewhere in Scotland. Alongside supporting existing groups, we helped establish several new groups, ensuring more LGBTQ+ people could access connection, peer support, and community closer to home.

This year saw the launch of our new **Dundee Community Hub**, creating a base from which to nurture and support a range of volunteer-led social groups and community activities.

Our Community Groups are led by **45** dedicated volunteers known as Community Group Leaders. Together, they facilitate a diverse range of activities that reflect the breadth of our communities' interests – from **Queer Boardgames**, **Rainbow Ukes**, and **QTIPOC** (Queer, Trans, Intersex People of Colour) **Writers** to **LGBT+ Autism**, **Narcotics Anonymous**, and more.

We support our volunteers by providing free access to meeting spaces, practical guidance and opportunities to connect with others in the community. All volunteers receive learning and development opportunities and comprehensive training – including Safeguarding, Responding to Risk, and Creating Safer Spaces training.

Investing in volunteer leaders and grassroots community organising throughout Scotland is, as we see it, essential to creating safer, healthier, and more connected communities of LGBTQ+ people throughout Scotland.

EDINBURGH

- **14** groups offering over **30** hours of social space a month
- Over **200** meetups a year

GLASGOW

- **5** groups offering over 15 hours of social space a month
- Almost **100** meetups a year

OUR NEW NEIGHBOURHOODS

- **5** groups offering over **15** hours social space a month
- Over **50** meetups a year

Impact Story

For more than a decade, LGBT Health and Wellbeing has supported **Edinburgh Trans Women**, a peer-led community group that offers a welcoming and affirming space for trans women to connect, share experiences, and build friendships.

When the groups' long-standing volunteer leaders stepped back, four new volunteer Group Leaders came forward, Ensuring the continued delivery of this important space.

One of these volunteers, Pip, describes how becoming a Group Leader has impacted both her and the wider community.

"Being part of the group gives me the opportunity to meet women with very different stories and experiences. While I hope that I can inspire and support others, being surrounded by people who are walking similar paths also makes me feel understood and represented."

Through volunteering, Pip has helped create opportunities for members to connect, share experiences, and support one another. From exchanging clothes and accessories to offering advice and encouragement, the group provides practical and emotional support at different stages of people's journeys.

For Pip, one of the most rewarding aspects has been seeing the transformation that can happen when people find a community where they feel accepted.



Thanks to the commitment of its volunteer leaders, Edinburgh Trans Women continues to provide a vital source of connection, belonging and peer support for trans women in Scotland.

"Something that really stands out to me is seeing how some women arrive feeling lost, discouraged or unsure of themselves and then, month by month, begin to flourish. You can see them becoming more confident, happier and more comfortable in their own skin, almost as if they are gradually letting their light shine."

"Our monthly meetings have become a special opportunity to socialise, connect and simply spend time together. Seeing the connections and confidence that have developed since then has made me feel that even small contributions can make a real difference."

PROVIDING SUPPORT WHEN IT'S NEEDED

Our support ranges from community-based wellbeing and practical help, to specialist counselling. Different people need different forms of support at different times, and the stories in this report show how people can connect with and move between multiple parts of our organisation as their needs change, accessing the right support at the right time.

MENTAL WELLBEING

549
engagements

Improving the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people is at the heart of all that we do. **Our mental health and wellbeing support is, at its core, LGBTQ+ informed, affirming, and person-centred** – designed to meet people where they're at and provide support that works for them. We offer a diverse range of emotional and practical support in both one-to -one and group-based settings, helping LGBTQ+ people to improve their wellbeing, build resilience, reduce isolation and develop meaningful connections within community.

This year we ran **50** mental wellbeing group activities, welcoming over **550** community members in person, online, in doors and in nature. Our programme included every-thing from foraging sessions and gallery tours to our **Winter Wellbeing** event and LGBTQ+ informed courses designed to support people in managing stress, anxiety and improving emotional wellbeing – like our **8**-week online **Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy** group.

Within our mental wellbeing offering we continue to deliver tailored support for unwaged LGBTQ+ carers – including online peer support spaces for individuals who can't attend events or sessions in person.

We were once again delighted to secure a total of **£11,000** for ten members of our community as a result of our referral partnership with **Turn2Us Edinburgh Trust**.

After accessing our mental wellbeing support:

- **91%** felt more able to cope with their day to day lives
- **87%** felt safe and secure in their identity
- **84%** of people felt better about themselves

Impact Story

Sal first came along to one of our events after a particularly difficult period in their life. They were caring for their mother, who had recently experienced a stroke, while also navigating challenges around their own identity and wellbeing.

Sal shared that they were transgender and that their mother was the only member of their family who knew. Through many conversations, Sal's mother had gradually come to understand and accept their identity. Following her stroke, however, Sal found themselves carrying a great deal on their own.

Family, friends and colleagues were unaware that Sal was trans, leaving them without people they felt able to speak openly with about their experiences. Feeling isolated and alone, they came to **Walk n Talk** hoping to find connection, and support.

After meeting Sal, our Mental Wellbeing Development Worker introduced them to a range of community groups and services, including **T-Time**, **Queer Connections** and **Edinburgh Trans Women**. They also arranged one-to-one wellbeing support sessions, giving Sal a dedicated space to talk about the challenges they were navigating, and explore ways to support and improve their wellbeing.



"LGBT Health and Wellbeing has been the one place where I've truly felt supported and understood. It's a calm, welcoming space where I can talk openly and be met with real care, not judgement. The staff and community make it easy to relax and actually feel listened to, and that's given me grounding, confidence, and a sense of connection I haven't found anywhere else. My experience with them has been genuinely positive and has helped me move forward in my journey."

Over a few months, Sal became involved in community activities and began regularly attending both T-Time and Walk and Talk events. Within these spaces, they began meeting other LGBTQ+ people, building connections and forging friendships.

In one-to-one sessions, Sal reflected on how much things had changed; they felt less isolated, less lonely, and were enjoying the opportunity to make new friends and connections. Crucially, they were beginning to feel part of a wider community.

Sal later shared that they had chosen to make a donation to LGBT Health and Wellbeing. They wanted to show their support and recognise how transformative the support of the organisation has been to their wellbeing and quality of life.



COUNSELLING

LGBTQ+ informed and affirming counselling continues to be a core part of our mental wellbeing support offering. **All community members receive 11 private sessions with a counsellor** who is carefully matched to their needs. Our counsellors use a range of therapeutic approaches including person-centred, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Psychodynamic Therapy, Gestalt and more. Creating safer, affirming spaces where LGBTQ+ people feel seen, held and accepted for all that they are is crucial to the delivery of our counselling service.

The impact of this support is evident. Almost all community members (**98%**) reported a reduction in distress following their counselling sessions with average levels of distress decreasing from the "moderate to severe" category to the lower end of the "moderate" category. These improvements reflect not only reduced levels of distress, but also greater confidence in managing day-to-day challenges, improved emotional wellbeing, and increased capacity to navigate personal circumstances more healthily and sustainably.

Alongside one-to-one counselling, we also offered therapeutic group work, including our **Bi Therapy Group** and our **Coming Out Group**. Such groups provide opportunities for people to explore shared experiences in a safe and supportive environment, reducing isolation and enabling community members/group participants to connect with other people with similar journeys and/or experiences.



Impact Story



Alex is a 32-year-old gay man who referred himself to our counselling service after seeking support from his GP for anxiety and panic attacks.

At his initial assessment, Alex spoke about experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety, difficulties sleeping, and panic attacks which felt frightening and overwhelming. As his anxiety increased, Alex found himself drinking more alcohol, leaving him feeling less in control of his life and mental wellbeing.

Alex grew up in a strict, conservative household and although he had experienced relationships with men in the past, he had never felt able to be open about these with family, friends or colleagues.

Alex was initially hesitant about contacting an LGBTQ+ organisation because he wasn't sure he "qualified" for support. While he had attended counselling during university, he never felt comfortable discussing his sexuality, **meaning an important part of his life and identity remained unexplored**.

Over time, Alex began to talk more openly about his family relationships and the impact that growing up in an unpredictable environment had on his sense of self. Through counselling, he developed a greater understanding of how these experiences had shaped the ways he coped with difficult emotions, helping him view himself with more compassion and understanding.

> **"It has helped me open up to a lot of things I'd been suppressing and work through those, which whilst difficult to do, I believe has helped long term. I have been able to use what was discussed and what I learned about myself during the sessions after they ended and this has resulted in a noticeable improvement to my experience of situations which I previously would've tried to ignore."**

Having a space where he could talk openly about his sexuality and identity without fear of judgement was an important part of the process. As counselling progressed, Alex reported **feeling more in control of his life**, noticed a significant reduction in panic attacks and anxiety, and felt increasingly able to be open with friends about who he was.

HELPLINE SUPPORT

LGBT Health and Wellbeing inherited our Helpline in **2009**. First launched in **1972** as "**Edinburgh Gay Switchboard**", the helpline has supported LGBTQ+ people consistently through decades of social and political change. Dedicated volunteers have been answering calls and providing support during pivotal moments including the **decriminalisation of homosexuality**, the **HIV/AIDs epidemic**, the introduction and repealing of **Section 28** (**clause 2a**), and more recently, supporting survivors of conversion practices, trans people through the rise in discrimination and attempts to reduce the rights held by trans and non-binary people, lack of access to trans healthcare and increasing anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment both online and in public life.

People tell us how the helpline helps them feel **'less lonely'** and has given them **'breathing space'**. It has supported them to **'think through issues in a clear and constructive way'**. People also often highlight the fact that we are **'Scottish-specific'** as important and helpful.

More than **50** years since the first volunteers answered calls, our helpline continues to show up for LGBTQ+ people in Scotland as a vital source of information, support and connection for our community.

Helpline provided

2,629

contacts across phone, email and webchat:

1,599
phone calls

525
webchats

505
emails

After contacting our helpline:

- **85%** felt more confident in seeking support
- **82%** felt less lonely
- **81%** felt more able to say about things that affect them
- **82%** felt more confident and secure in their identity

Impact Story

Peter is a gay man is his late 50s who has experienced challenges with his mental health and wellbeing throughout his life. When Peter first contacted our Helpline, he described feeling both very lonely and isolated.

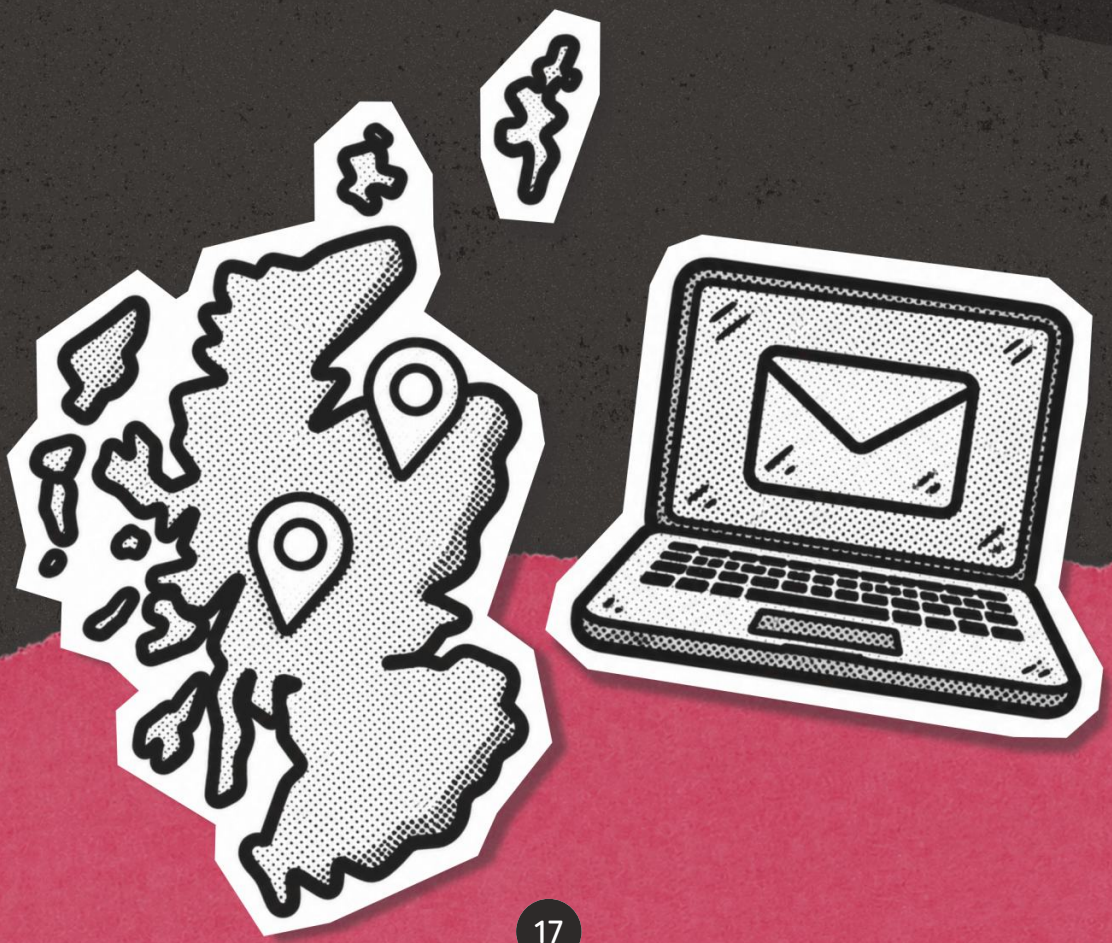
Peter first reached out to our Helpline through our **LiveChat** function as this felt like an easier and more manageable first point of contact for him. As his confidence grew, he began calling the Helpline, building a stronger connection with our volunteers thus sharing more about his life, experiences and circumstances.

Peter spoke with our volunteers about the difficulties of coming out later in life, and shared that he had been feeling disconnected from other people and from the wider LGBTQ+ community. **Our Helpline provided a safe, non-judgemental space where Peter could explore his feelings, feel heard and be understood.**

Our volunteers talked Peter through our service offering, including counselling, community groups and other social opportunities to connect with LGBTQ+ people in Scotland.

Attending new social spaces was complex for Peter given he had spent many years isolated and disconnected from community. Our volunteers supported Peter in exploring this, offering reassurance and exploring options which felt manageable if attending a social group felt too difficult at this time.

Over time, Peter told us that having a non-judgemental, understanding and affirming place to turn **made a real difference**. Knowing there was someone that Peter could talk to helped ease some difficulties he was having and gave him confidence to begin taking steps towards greater connection with others in the LGBTQ+ community.



NEW SCOTS

3,854
engagements

Since its foundation in **2020**, the New Scots service has offered LGBTQ+ informed, specialist support to LGBTQ+ people seeking asylum here in Scotland. Our service offering includes information sessions, one-to-one wellbeing support, community activities and events and volunteering opportunities. As **Scotland's only LGBTQ+ specialist support service for New Scots**, we provide essential practical and emotional support to individuals navigating the complexities of the asylum system whilst rebuilding their lives following experiences of significant persecution, discrimination and displacement.

Alongside tailored support, we provide opportunities for connection, community building and belonging - providing New Scots with a safer space to be themselves, build confidence and become a valued part of Scotland's LGBTQ+ communities.

Throughout **2025-2026**, the rise in anti-LGBTQ+, anti-asylum rhetoric, alongside the visible rise in far-right politics, has contributed to heightened distress and anxiety around safety, security and belonging for LGBTQ+ people seeking asylum. **The tailored spaces and support we provide for LGBTQ+ New Scots have become increasingly important** in a challenging social and political climate, offering connection, community and refuge.

All the while, the number of LGBTQ+ people seeking sanctuary accessing our services continued to grow. Delivered by our staff team and **18** committed volunteers, the service provided tailored support to **582** New Scots.

After accessing our New Scots service:

- **94%** of people felt safe and secure in their identity
- **94%** felt more connected to their community
- **91%** felt less lonely
- **85%** felt more able to talk about things that impact them



Impact Story

C is a gay man who first accessed our New Scots support one year ago. As an LGBTQ+ person seeking sanctuary in Scotland, he experienced significant challenges connected to both his sexual orientation and his asylum status. This included feeling **unsafe to be himself in Home Office shared accommodation**, a lack of access to mental wellbeing support that understood his experiences as a queer man and a person seeking asylum, and limited opportunities to connect with others without fear of judgement or discrimination.

Having experienced persecution due to his sexual orientation in his country of origin, C arrived in Scotland hoping to build a safer future. However, the reality of navigating a new country proved challenging both practically and emotionally. C faced barriers to accessing services, felt isolated from both the wider community and other LGBTQ+ people, and struggled to find spaces where he could be open about who he was without fear of repercussion from his peers.



Cumulative experiences had a detrimental impact on his mental wellbeing, with C experiencing periods of suicidality.

> **"The New Scots Project has helped me become more confident in who I am. It has supported me in developing self-acceptance, exploring my sexuality, understanding myself better, and feeling less afraid of being visible as a gay man. Most importantly, it has helped me feel that I belong in Scotland."**

Through the New Scots Project, C was accessed one-to-one support to help manage his wellbeing, alongside accessing our LGBTQ+ affirming counselling service. C also attended information sessions, social events and community meetups designed specifically for LGBTQ+ people seeking sanctuary to connect with other LGBTQ+ people with shared experience.

Engaging with the New Scots project, receiving support for his wellbeing and being welcomed to community social events helped C to **feel less isolated and alone**. Support from our staff team meant that C could safely build his confidence exploring his identity, surrounded by people who understood and accepted him.

TRANS AND NON-BINARY SUPPORT

Over the past year trans and non-binary people have continued to face rising hostility in the media, online spaces and in public life. At the same time, many of our community members report worsening mental health and wellbeing, increased isolation and growing barriers to accessing the support and healthcare that they need.

Throughout **2025-26**, our **Trans Support** service provided practical support, community connection, information and opportunities for personal development to trans and non-binary people across Scotland.

Our service offered practical and emotional one-to-one support, monthly socials paces for trans and non-binary people, online community gatherings, wellbeing-focused activities and confidence-building workshops. We also delivered our annual **Transition Support Course**, a Fringe Festival wellbeing focused event for trans and non-binary staff and performers, creative skills and sewing workshops with partners **Edinburgh Remakery** and more.

We were proud to continue the delivery of **Scotland's only Trans and Non-binary Sexual Health Clinic** which provides an essential public health service to trans and non-binary people who, due to significant barriers, often feel unable or unsafe to access sexual health screening elsewhere.

At a time when trans and non-binary people are experiencing significant uncertainty and exclusion, our service continues to provide something increasingly important: **opportunities to connect with community, access informed and affirming support, and find belonging** in spaces where people are respected and valued.

1,225
engagements

After accessing the Trans and Non-binary Sexual Health Clinic people told us:

> **"I have never felt that I was treated with as much respect from a doctor as I was here. I travelled over an hour to come because I was too afraid to speak to my own GP, and this doctor put me right at ease. This is such an important program."**

After accessing our Trans Support:

- **94%** felt more confident in seeking support
- **90%** felt more connected to their community
- **88%** felt less lonely

Impact Story

Jen became involved with the **Glasgow Trans Support Project** through our regular **T Time** social group and associated community events. These included a trans history walking tour of Glasgow, a community dog walk in Queen's Park and practical support sessions focused on legal name changes and gender affirmation processes.

For Jen, T Time provided far more than a social gathering. As a member of a small and often marginalised community, **finding spaces where she could be herself without fear of judgement was invaluable**. The group offered a welcoming environment where trans people could come together, build friendships and share experiences with others who understood the realities of navigating life as a transgender person.

Through regular attendance, Jen developed meaningful peer relationships that helped reduce feelings of isolation and strengthen her sense of belonging. Having access to a supportive community became particularly important during a period of significant personal change.



Through conversations with peers and connections made at T Time, Jen gained access to information, resources and lived experiences that helped her make informed decisions about her transition.

> **"Through these events, I have not only found friends and community members who understand my journey and, in some cases, struggle. I have also found through the relationships built there, the resources to start HRT and have facial feminisation surgery. This would have been far more difficult if I did not have the support of my community and friends that I have found through T Time and related activities."**

The practical support provided through the project also played an important role in her journey. Attendance at a **Statutory Declaration drop-in session** gave Jen the confidence and knowledge needed to begin updating her legal documents, including her passport and banking records. Having access to trusted information within a supportive environment helped reduce the stress and uncertainty associated with navigating these processes.

Today, Jen views T Time as a cornerstone of Glasgow's trans community. Her experience demonstrates the importance of spaces where trans people can access practical support, meaningful social connection and a sense of belonging.

LGBTQ+ ELDERS

229
engagements

Our service designed for LGBTQ+ people **60** and over provides a range of support allowing Scotland's first openly queer generation to age with dignity, pride and unapologetic visibility. **Many LGBTQ+ older people continue to face barriers to accessing appropriate support**, and can experience loneliness, isolation and concerns about how their identities will be understood and respected as they age. Our service creates opportunities for people to build connections, maintain ties to community and access support that promotes positive health and wellbeing.

Over the past year, we increased our offering for LGBTQ+ elders, creating more opportunities for people to meet others, develop friendships and take part in activities that support positive wellbeing. Alongside reducing loneliness and isolation, **these spaces provide opportunities for LGBTQ+ older people to celebrate their identities, share experiences and remain connected to their communities**.

Our Elders Development Worker began important work on our Inclusive Care Standard – Scotland's first quality standard to ensure all LGBTQ+ people have access to dignified, informed and affirming health and social care support as we age. Working alongside LGBTQ+ older people and partners from across the health and social care sector, this work will help drive improvements in care and support for generations to come.

Throughout **2025-26** we offered a variety of wellbeing activities such as **Chair Yoga**, social opportunities including trips to museums, galleries and seaside towns, in-person one-to-one wellbeing support, and regular telephone support via our **Telefriending** service.

After accessing our elders support:

- **91%** felt more confident in seeking support
- **88%** felt better about themselves
- **84%** felt less lonely
- **81%** felt more connected to their community





Impact Story

When Karen first engaged with LGBT Health and Wellbeing, she was experiencing **significant social isolation**, **poor mental health and low confidence**.

Although Karen had long known she was a trans woman, she did not feel able to express her identity openly. Fear of judgement, difficult family relationships and limited support networks meant she kept this part of her life largely private, only occasionally attending trans community gatherings. This had a significant impact on her mental health and wellbeing.

Karen first came to LGBT Health and Wellbeing during a particularly difficult period in her life. She attended one of our social groups and initially found even travelling to the group and entering the building daunting. The welcome she received from staff, volunteers and other group members helped her feel comfortable and accepted.

Through regular attendance at **LGBT Age** and **Coffee Posse** groups, Karen developed friendships and became part of a supportive community.

Having spaces where she could be herself without fear of judgement reduced feelings of isolation and helped build her confidence. Activities that had previously felt challenging, such as visiting shops, cafés and other public spaces, became easier as her confidence grew.

Alongside peer support, Karen also accessed our counselling service. Through **11 weeks of one-to-one counselling**, she was able to explore her identity, work through difficult emotions and develop a greater understanding of herself. This support contributed to improvements in her mental health and wellbeing and helped her feel more confident about the future.

As her confidence increased, Karen became more involved in supporting other trans people. **Karen continues to be an active member of her community.** Her experience highlights the role that social connection, peer support and counselling can play in reducing isolation, improving wellbeing and helping people build confidence.

WORKING FOR CHANGE

Through our **Work for Change**, we strive to create lasting improvements in health and wellbeing for LGBT+ people across Scotland. Alongside delivering essential services to our communities, we also work to challenge the structural barriers that drive inequality, particularly for those most marginalised in our community.

We use the **knowledge, insight, and lived experience** shared with us to inform and influence decision-makers, including government, public bodies and local authorities, mainstream services, academics and researchers. By amplifying experiences too often unheard and advocating for systems-level change, we aim to build a more just, inclusive, and equitable society.

Raising Queer Voices

In **2025-26** we engaged **221** LGBTQ+ people directly in our collaborative systems change work – this included participatory research, consultation events, community conversations, and opportunities for people to share their experiences directly with **Ministers, MSPs and other decision-makers** with the power to influence policy and practice.



221 LGBTQ+ people



PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH



ENGAGEMENT WITH MSPs



COMMUNITY CONSULTATION



MENTAL HEALTH

We continued to work closely with the **Scottish Government's Mental Health Directorate**, contributing to the Mental **Health and Wellbeing Leadership Board** and collaborating with **Suicide Prevention Scotland** on LGBTQ+ specific approaches and resources to personalised risk and safety management. We co-delivered a workshop at **Creating Hope Together**, Scotland's national suicide prevention conference, and continued to advocate for equitable approaches to suicide prevention and mental health care that understand inequalities experienced by our communities.

NEW SCOTS

We work collaboratively with LGBTQ+ New Scots on the issues that matter most to them, sharing their experiences to inform and advocate for meaningful change. Our work with the **Queer Asylum Coalition** continues, and we contributed via a **Home Office** working group to improve safe-guarding processes for LGBTQ+ people in asylum accommodation. We also engaged **60 New Scots in a creative participatory research project**, exploring what it means to be a queer New Scot and identified key lessons for policy and practice.

HEALTH

In collaboration with the **Glasgow Centre for Population Health**, we published our second report **LGBT+ health and wellbeing in Scotland: A landmark census analysis** which offered new insights into the significant health inequalities experienced by LGBTQ+ people living in Scotland.

Working together **with 11 Bi+ women we undertook a creative participatory project** to explore disproportionate health in-equalities and highlight priorities for change. Our report **Between, Beneath, Beyond** brings together participants reflections on health, wellbeing and visibility while highlighting their recommendations for improving policy, services and support.

LGBTQ+ ELDERS

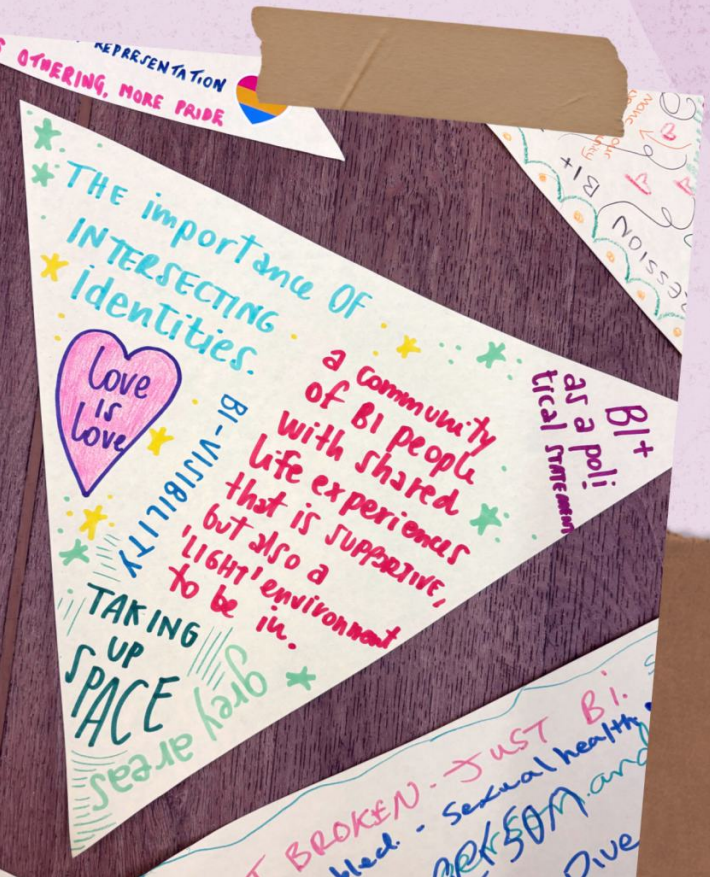
In 2025-2026 we continued our work to improve outcomes for LGBT+ older people. We engaged LGBTQ+ people in focus groups to inform the development of the **Inclusive Care Standard** – Scotland's first quality standard designed to improve inclusion in health and social care settings. Additionally, we continued to create opportunities for LGBTQ+ elders to share their views, priorities and experiences directly with decision-makers – including hosting the **Minister for Equalities** for a roundtable exploring what older LGBTQ+ people need to ensure we can age with dignity, safety and respect.

TRANS RIGHTS

Over the past year we've worked with organisations throughout Scotland and the rest of the UK to challenge harmful attacks on trans rights and encourage inclusive, rights-based approaches to policy and practice.

TRANS HEALTHCARE

Access to healthcare for trans and non-binary people continues to be limited, with long wait-lists and restricted provision throughout Scotland. Our workshops **Navigating Healthcare** worked with a group of trans and non-binary people to document community knowledge and identify community-based approaches to support, including peer support and organisational provision. This work is being **developed into a resource to share learning and strengthen support** for trans and non-binary people through-out Scotland.



ENDING CONVERSION PRACTICES

We continued to encourage the **Scottish Government** to bring forward draft legislation to end conversion practices whilst working with them on non-statutory measures to support survivors.

SUPPORTING DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

We worked in collaboration with organ-isations across Scotland's LGBTQ+ sector to develop the **LGBTQIA+ Manifesto**, setting out key actions needed from political parties to advance equality for LGBTQ+ people. We also co-hosted an **LGBTQIA+ Hustings**, providing an opportunity for LGBTQ+ people to put their questions directly to political candidates and engage in discussions about the issues affecting our communities.

OUR TEAM

Our work is powered by an extraordinary team of staff and volunteers who bring skills, compassion, and commitment to LGBTQ+ people across Scotland every day.

Whether answering a call from someone who needs to be heard, creating a welcoming space where people can find connection and community, providing one-to-one wellbeing support or counselling, or working 'behind the scenes' to keep our services running, our people make an enormous difference.

During **2025-26**, **23** staff members and **174** volunteers brought their time, experience, and energy to our mission. Together, they supported thousands of people and helped create spaces where LGBTQ+ people could feel heard, valued, and be themselves. **Our volunteers alone contributed more than 6000 hours during the year** - an incredible way to show up for our communities!

This has also been a demanding year. Our team has supported people through an increasingly difficult environment for LGBTQ+ communities, while responding to growing demand for our services and navigating continued pressures across the third sector.

The vast majority of our team are part of the communities we serve, making their resilience, care for one another, and continued commitment particularly meaningful.

At the same time, our staff played an important role in successfully delivering our **Sustainable Services Strategy**. They embraced new ways of working, developed new partnerships, shared ideas, strengthened services, and helped us build a more sustainable organisation for the future. We are enormously proud of them.

We want LGBT Health and Wellbeing to be a place where people can do their best work. Alongside consistently reviewing our pay and conditions, we invest in regular support and supervision, offer two annual **Wellbeing Days**, flexible and hybrid working, an enhanced **Employee Assistance Programme**, and ongoing learning and development.

To every member of staff and every volunteer who gave their time, knowledge, energy, and care this year: thank you. **Our impact is thanks to you.**



FINANCIAL REVIEW

87p

in every £1 donated goes directly towards our work

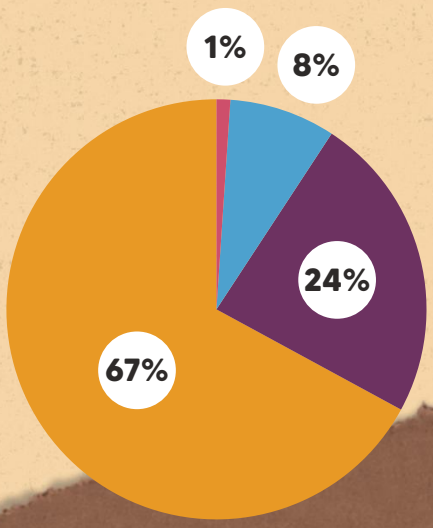
In **2025-26**, our income grew to **£1,209,906,** an increase of **5%** (**£58,413**) on the previous year. We continued to manage our resources carefully, ending the year with a surplus of **£90,942**. We're proud to have continued to operate efficiently, ensuring any expenditure on essential overheads remains considered and controlled. **87** pence of every **£1** spent went directly to supporting LGBTQ+ people across Scotland, with the remaining **13** pence contributing to essentials including rent, lighting, heating and insurances.

This was also the first year delivering against our **Sustainable Services Strategy**, our five-year plan to build a more financially resilient organisation by further diversifying our income. We are already seeing progress. Donations more than doubled from **£37,929** to **£86,203**, and the number of funders providing service and core funding increased from **13** to **15**.

Recognising that building sustainable new income streams takes time, our **Trustees** have designated **£100,000** of our unrestricted reserves to support the strategy, providing flexibility to invest in service development, income diversification, and organisational resilience.

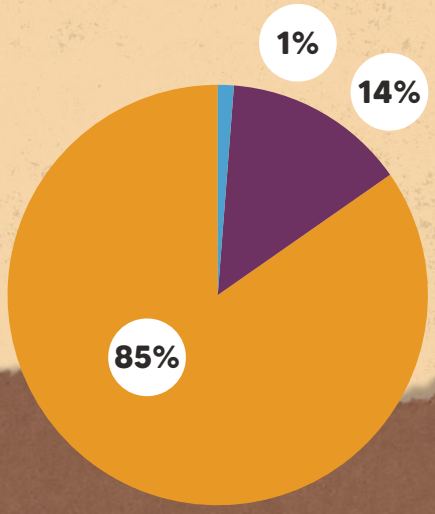
Financial sustainability is ultimately about protecting the support that our communities are increasingly relying on. A broader mix of income - from trusts and foundations, corporate partners, earned income, and increasingly individual supporters - gives us greater freedom to respond to changing needs and **invest where our communities need us most**.

Every donation, grant, and partnership helps us build an organisation that can be there for LGBTQ+ people that need us now, and in the years ahead.



Income

- Statutory funders: £810,967
- Trusts and foundations: £286,284
- Other income (incl. donations): £99,856
- Investment income: £12,799



Expenditure

- Activities: £947,752
- Office: £157,419
- Fees: £13,793

SUPPORT OUR WORK

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

There are many ways to support LGBT Health and Wellbeing and help us continue to provide vital affirming, specialist support for LGBTQ+ people across Scotland. Whether you give your time, raise funds, make a donation or help shape our work, your support helps build safer, healthier and more connected communities.

VOLUNTEER

Much of our work and impact is made possible thanks to the **generosity of our volunteers** in sharing their skills and time. If you are interested in volunteering, please drop us an email to **admin@lgbthealth.org.uk**

"Fundraising is a great way to support our work while bringing people together. Our team is here to help!"
- Paige



FUNDRAISE

There are so many ways to fundraise, and we are here to provide support and the tools to maximise your efforts.

Fundraise at work

Get the team together for a bake sale, quiz or raffle – fundraising with your colleagues is a great way to connect over a shared cause.

Dedicate your special day or event

Whether you are getting married or celebrating your civil partnership, having a birthday or hosting a community event, asking your guests to donate to a charity you care about is a great way to celebrate your shared values.

Please get in touch with our team at **fundraising@lgbthealth.org.uk**

PLEASE DONATE

We are sincerely grateful for the generosity of our donors. Whether a one-off, monthly or annual gift, or including us in your will, every donation helps us to continue to support LGBTQ+ people in Scotland. Donations can be made online:

lgbthealth.org.uk/donate

£10

could help someone find the information and support they need, when they need it.

£25

could help create a safe, welcoming space where LGBTQ+ people can connect and find community.

£50

could help provide one-to-one practical or wellbeing support for an LGBTQ+ person.

£100

could help someone access LGBTQ+ informed and affirming counselling.

£250

could help sustain specialist support for people facing some of the greatest inequalities, including trans and non-binary people, LGBTQ+ people seeking asylum and LGBTQ+ elders.





Working towards a Scotland where all LGBTQ+ people are healthier, connected and able to live well.



LGBTHEALTH.ORG.UK

Scotland's LGBTQ+ health and wellbeing charity.

We welcome the entire diversity of our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, including non-binary, queer, intersex, asexual people and all identities under the LGBTQIA+ community.

@lgbthealthy

LGBT Health and Wellbeing

The LGBT Healthy Living Centre (known as LGBT Health and Wellbeing) is recognised as a charity by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, no. SC034216.