

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2024-25





Lancashire and
South Cumbria
Integrated Care Board



The
Henry Smith
Charity

founded in 1628

Supported by players of



Awarded funds from



Onward

Creating positive spaces

Thanks to our
Funders



**Thanks to our
Supporters**



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“Lancashire LGBT do amazing work in supporting the community, especially in recent times when the LGBT community has been under particular stress.”

(support beneficiary)

CEO and Chair Review

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This year 1199 people received direct support from us, and we expanded our mental health and wellbeing support provision as a response to increased demand.

Our one-to-one- Support work was funded by grants from NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria, Comic Relief and the Postcode Neighbourhood Trust. This meant we could increase our capacity compared to last year by 43%.

We were also able to increase our provision of counselling with a 79% increase in beneficiaries compared to last year, with more counselling volunteers. We also increased our volunteer group facilitators.

We continued providing an information service, with more people accessing our self-referral form on via our website, where people can contact us in detail about their support needs and with external agencies now able to submit a third-party referral form to us.

We also continued our work with NHS Workforce Development as part of the NHS Mental Health Transformation programme by delivering our LGBTQ+ mental health awareness training to Mental Health professionals.

Working in partnership with Public Health Blackburn with Darwen, Lancashire and Blackpool, we launched the Trans and Gender Diverse Health Needs Assessment, the first of its kind in the North-West. This is important as there is very little evidence of the health needs of this section of the population.

We held the sixth Trans Gender Diverse Residential weekend with workshops led by our volunteers with lived experience as well as the Gender Outreach Workers for Leeds Gender Identity Service.



Neil Darby, Chair of Trustees



Dr Lewis Turner, Chief Executive

About Us

Founded in 2009, we are the pan-Lancashire charity supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer/'Questioning' people (LGBTQ+).

Our core work focuses on improving mental health and well-being and reducing social isolation.

Our mission is for all LGBTQ+ people, their family members and carers to be happier, healthier and better connected.

In 2025-2026, we will be celebrating 15 years as a registered charity.



Our Values

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Compassion

We provide a person-centred compassionate approach informed by the lived experience of LGBTQ+ people.

Inclusivity

We are inclusive of all LGBTQ+ people.

Empowerment

We empower LGBTQ+ people and allies. We engage with organisations and promote LGBTQ+ equality and inclusion.

Integrity

We work with integrity and hold ourselves accountable to the highest standards in everything we do.

Our Services

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Counselling



One to one support



Peer support groups



Activity groups



Information service



Mental Health Hour
webinars



Training &
Consultancy



Partnership with Leeds &
York Partnership NHS
Foundation Trust

Scale of the Issue

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There are an estimated 42,195 Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual people aged over 16 living in Lancashire (ONS, 2021). The estimate for Trans and Gender Diverse adults in Lancashire is 5575 (Cumbria and Lancashire Public Health Collaborative, 2025)

Mental Health and Wellbeing: It is well documented that LGBTQ+ people are at a higher risk of experiencing poor physical and mental health compared with the general population. The risk of suicide and self-harm for people who identify as gay or lesbian, bisexual or another sexual orientation (LGB+) is more than twice as high as for their heterosexual peers, (ONS, 2025)

Barriers accessing healthcare: LGBTQ+ people also experience barriers to accessing healthcare (fear of discrimination; lack of understanding about health needs), leading to worse outcomes than the general population (NHS England, 2025). As our research with Healthwatch Lancashire (2014, 15 & 16) shows, many LGBTQ+ people in Lancashire experience barriers accessing mainstream services because of a perception that there is a lack of sensitivity to LGBTQ+ identities and some LGBTQ+ people have had previous bad experiences.

Social Isolation: LGBTQ+ people experience disproportionate rates of social isolation due to a variety of factors, including family rejection, discrimination, and the lack of inclusive social networks. LGBTQ+ people aged 55+ are more likely to be living alone, with little connection to their family of origin and are more likely to be single (National Lottery, 2022)

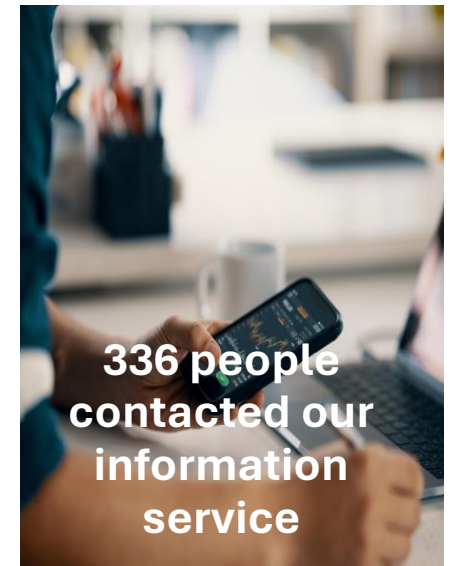
Additional support for trans and gender diverse people: The waiting list for trans people with a Gender Identity Service is now up to 7 years from referral to first assessment. The mental health and wellbeing of Trans and Gender Diverse people has been hugely impacted by the negative and polarised environment in the mainstream media and social media, with many feeling intimidated and unsafe outside their homes (Trans Actual, 2025)



Our Impact At-a-Glance

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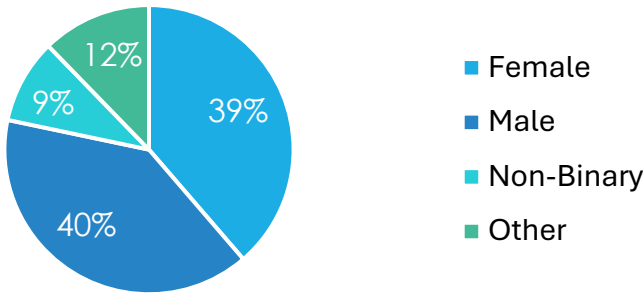
In 2024-25, Lancashire LGBT directly supported **1199 people**



Characteristics of Referrals

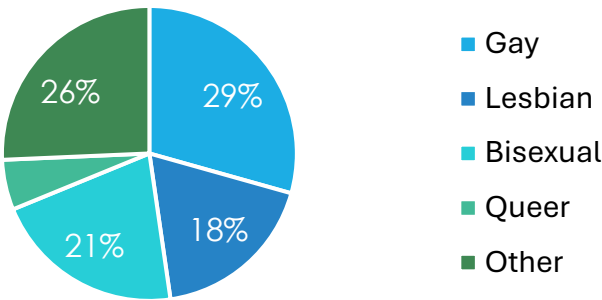
127 referrals were made to our counselling and one-to-one support services.
85% were self-referrals made by individuals, and 15% were referrals made by a third-party.

Gender

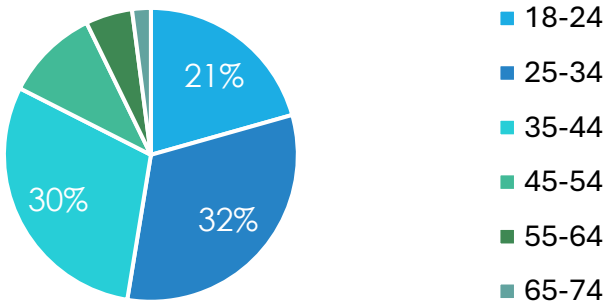


* 35% of all referrals identified as trans

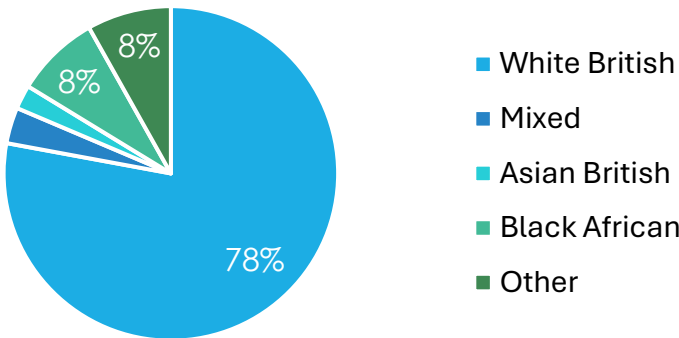
Sexual Orientation



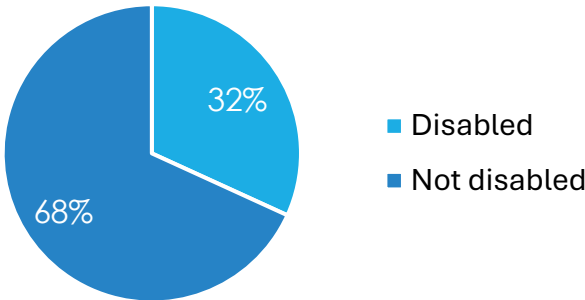
Age



Ethnicity



Disability



Counselling: In the past year, we enhanced our counselling service, by expanding our team of counsellors, and increasing the number of clients supported at any one time. We are proud to report we delivered 156 counselling sessions to 36 clients. That is a 20% increase in sessions delivered and a **79% increase in clients supported from the previous year**. These individuals received person-centred emotional and wellbeing support from a trained counsellor with lived experience of being LGBTQ+. **71% of counselling beneficiaries said their mental health and wellbeing had improved**

One to one support: A total of 288 one-to-one support sessions were delivered by our support worker to 36 individuals. That is a **43 % increase in sessions delivered** and a 5% increase in clients supported from the previous year. These individuals received support tailored to their support needs, focusing on various aspects of their wellbeing, including mental health, physical health and living situation. **83% of one-to-one support beneficiaries said their mental health and wellbeing had improved**

Raising awareness about LGBTQ+ mental health: We have created a unique collection of LGBTQ+ 'mental health hour' webinars, raising awareness about LGBTQ+ mental health, particularly with those with intersectional identities, which are free to view via our website. 582 people viewed these this year.

Improving Mental Health and Wellbeing

Counselling

- 71% reported improvements in their mental health and wellbeing

One to one support

- 83% reported improvements in their mental health and wellbeing

Peer support groups

- 75% said their wellbeing had improved since attending

Activity groups

- 75% said they felt healthier and fitter since attending

Mental Health Transformation Project with NHS

Lancashire and South Cumbria: Lancashire LGBT was commissioned by NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria to help tackle mental health inequalities experienced by LGBTQ+ people with a grant toward our one-to-one support service.

In this period, Lancashire LGBT were also commissioned to train mental health professionals on delivering LGBTQ+-informed mental health support, as part of their NHS Workforce Development programme. 263 people were trained and attendees reported a better understanding of the barriers which LGBTQ+ people may experience when accessing their services.

“Potentially the best training I have ever attended. It was really interesting and engaging. I enjoyed the content and pace. I enjoyed being able to ask questions in a safe space”
(training delegate)

Reducing the Barriers to Accessing Healthcare

In 2024-25, Lancashire LGBT provided training to **1008 people**



Our CPD accredited Gender Identity Awareness sessions for professionals

- Attendees reported an 80% increase in awareness of Trans and Gender Diverse issues

Bespoke LGBTQ+ Training

- Attendees reported a 78% increase in awareness of LGBTQ+ issues
- The trainer was rated 99% for knowledge and 98% for presentation skills

NHS Workforce Development Programme

- 100% of attendees said the training increased their awareness of LGBTQ+ mental health
- The trainers were rated 97% for knowledge and 94% for presentation skills

Peer support groups: Throughout 2024-25, we delivered monthly online sessions with our online peer-support groups. A total of 49 peer support group sessions were held, with 84 attendees. Those who attended received peer-support facilitated by trained facilitators and volunteer co-facilitators and reported an improvement to emotional wellbeing.

Activity groups: Toward the end of 2024-25, we saw the return of our much beloved walking group, thanks to Blackburn with Darwen Council, who provided in-person walk-leader training to our two new walk leaders. Our long-established swimming group continued. During this period, a total of 12 activity groups sessions were held, with 107 attendances. Those who attended our monthly walking group and our swimming group reported physical and wellbeing benefits.

“Feels like having a friend in difficult times. Very glad Lancashire LGBT do what they do.”

(group member)

Reducing Social Isolation

Peer support groups

- 75% said their belonging and community had improved
- 100% said the group was inclusive to different LGBTQ+ identities

Activity groups

- 75% said they had made friends since attending
- 100% would recommend the group to other LGBTQ+ people



Trans and Gender Diverse Health Needs

Assessment launched: This year, we worked with local Public Health Departments across 3 councils (Blackburn with Darwen, Lancashire and Blackpool) to undertake a much-needed Health Needs Assessment for the local Trans and Gender Diverse population- the only one of its kind conducted in the North-West region.

Lancashire LGBT collected local data by creating and launching the health needs assessment survey, which received 130 responses from local trans and gender diverse people.

We are now working with Health professionals on delivering on the action plan following the report.

Specific issues for Trans and Gender Diverse People

Trans and Gender Diverse Residential

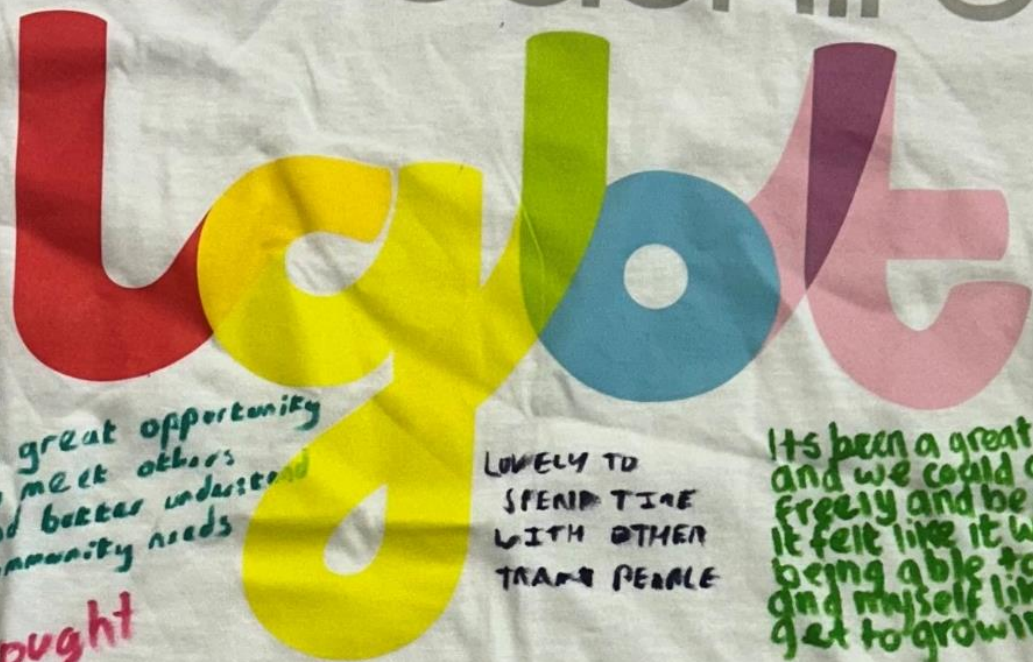
Lancashire LGBT held its sixth Trans and Gender Diverse Residential in Borwick Hall, Carnforth on the 26-27th October 2024

The Trustees of Lancashire LGBT agreed that we should host another trans residential weekend in 2024 – particularly because in the last 5 years we have witnessed a significant increase in hostility towards trans people

It was attended by 18 delegates and facilitated by staff members, volunteers and Gender Outreach Workers. During the residential, delegates attended a series of workshops led by people with lived experience, which covered topics in mental health, wellbeing, gender identity and healthcare



Lancashire



It's been
AN AMAZING
weekend with
so many
people



A great opportunity
to meet others
and better understand
community needs

LOVELY TO
SPEND TIME
WITH OTHER
TRANS PEOPLE

It's been a great weekend
and we could all speak
freely and be accepted.
It felt like it was healing
being able to be carefree
and myself like I didn't
get to growing up.

Really brought
together the
community
:3

WWW.LANCSLGBT.ORG.UK

One of the most
Uplifting experiences
of my life. I felt sounder-
stood, so seen and everyone
was so nice. Thank you so much!!!

I LOVED being around
pretty people.

The trans residential
was exciting
met others like
me. I felt free.

It's a special
time

An amazing and enjoyable
weekend with all the

SHARED WITH
GREAT
PEOPLE!

Additional Support for Trans and Gender Diverse People

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We have had an important partnership with Leeds and York Partnership Trust since 2017.

This involves their two full-time Gender Outreach Workers who have lived experience, working as part of our team out of our offices in Preston complimenting our support services.

They support local trans and gender diverse people who are either on the waiting list for the Gender Service or who are already on the care pathway.

Jane's story

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'John' was living as male but was facing severe struggles with their gender identity, isolation, and mental health. They were under the care of the NHS mental health team and regularly met with a mental health nurse due to suicidal ideation and multiple suicide attempts. At their lowest point, the beneficiary was presenting at A&E up to four times per week due to repeated overdoses and expressed a sense of hopelessness.

Over the course of eight in-person, one-to-one support sessions with Lancashire LGBT, 'John' was engaged in open discussions about their identity, mental health, and overall wellbeing. The sessions emphasised fostering self-understanding and self-compassion and acceptance, helping 'John' build a stronger sense of identity. 'John' also attended Lancashire LGBT's trans peer support groups, which provided a safe and inclusive environment to share their struggles and connect with peers.

'John' reported improvements in several areas, including mental health and wellbeing, confidence, self-esteem, their ability to manage issues and struggles more effectively, and improved support network. Over the three months following the sessions, suicide attempts, and A&E visits decreased from up to four times per week to only once in three months. The mental health nurse supporting 'John' recognised their limited experience with trans patients, so they attended the LGBTQ+ awareness training, delivered by Lancashire LGBT. This training improved the nurse's understanding of the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ people and equipped them with tools to better support 'John', now Jane.

Jane decided to pursue gender transition. They were provided with comprehensive information about transitioning gender to help them make an informed choice, by getting support from the Gender Outreach Workers for the Leeds Gender Identity Service who are based at Lancashire LGBT's offices in Preston. They are now on the waiting list for the Leeds and York Gender Identity Service.

Jane recently took her first solo holiday since socially transitioning and is learning Spanish to pursue her passion for travel.

“Lancashire LGBT has helped me get back on my feet after a period of severe mental illness. They are always professional, available and supportive. They care passionately about their work for the community.”

(support beneficiary)

lancashire **lgbt**



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