Shock News: Life-saving equipment donated to Milestone!
Waverley Care is Scotland’s HIV and Hepatitis C Charity

From our five bases across Scotland, our work is making a positive difference to the lives of people affected by HIV or Hepatitis C.

Across Scotland we’re:
- reducing new infections
- challenging stigma
- getting people diagnosed
- providing support

Our services

- Advice & Information
- African Health Project
- Befriending
- Children & Families
- Community Outreach & Support
- Condoms by Post
- Gay & Bisexual Men
- Group Support
- HIV & Hepatitis Testing
- HIV & Hepatitis Training
- LGBT Support
- MY Voice FGM Project
- One-to-One Support
- Peer Support
- People Affected by Drug Misuse
- Poz Youth
- Prevention, Education & Awareness
- Residential
- Self Management
- Sx (Gay & Bisexual Men’s Project)
- Women

To find out more about our work, our services and to get involved, contact us at info@waverleycare.org, or visit www.waverleycare.org.

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Front cover image: Life-saving defibrillator donated to Milestone. Photo credit: Greg Macvean.
Decision due on PrEP

At the start of March, the body responsible for assessing new treatments for use on the NHS in Scotland will consider the case for the HIV prevention measure, PrEP.

PrEP involves the use of HIV drugs by those without the virus as a means of preventing infection. A series of high profile studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of PrEP and there is a belief among campaigners that it could make a lasting difference in reducing new cases of HIV.

In the build up to the Scottish Medicine Consortium’s (SMC) consideration in March, we have worked with partners to gather the views of people who may benefit from PrEP. This has included community conversations across Scotland and an online survey. This work has resulted in a joint response to the SMC making a strong case calling for PrEP to be made available.

The Scottish Medicines Consortium will publish its decision in early April.

Charities team up for defibrillator project

Staff at Milestone unveiled a new piece of kit recently as we took delivery of an Automatic Emergency Defibrillator.

Donated by St John Scotland as part of an Edinburgh-wide campaign, the easy-to-use units can prove vital in the event of someone suffering a heart attack. When used shortly after someone enters cardiac arrest, use of a defibrillator can greatly increase the chances of survival.

Our Milestone Residential Support Centre provides intensive support to vulnerable people living with HIV or Hepatitis C and, in an emergency, access to the defibrillator could be the difference between life and death.

It’s also a great facility for the wider community. We want to reach out to the schools and community groups we already work closely with to make sure they know the defibrillator is there and how to use it.
Foodbank Partnership

We have recently teamed up with the C7 Church in Glasgow to help our service users access support from the City Care Foodbank.

Provided by C7, the foodbank distributes food parcels to people at risk of poverty and exclusion.

HIV and Hepatitis C continue to affect some of the most vulnerable people in our society. We work with people affected by issues such as homelessness, unemployment, immigration and access to benefits.

Access to the foodbank has had an immediate, practical impact on service users we work with in Glasgow, and we are proud to be working in partnership with C7.

Change at the top

Recent months, have brought some changes to the team on our Board of Directors.

We’re delighted that Ian Arnot (above), has taken on the role of Chair, while his predecessor, Ann Park, will continue as an ordinary board member.

Meanwhile we’ve welcomed some new members to the team, Janet Andrews, Lee Thorburn, and Jimmy Quinn, and said farewell to another, Brian West.

The board is responsible for the overall running of Waverley Care and we’re fortunate to have such an experienced team to provide direction and guidance.

You can find out more about our team online at www.waverleycare.org/about-us
How long have you worked for Waverley Care?
I started in January 2015 – so just over 2 years now.

What inspired you to come and work for Waverley Care?
I was impressed by the organisation’s openness to new ideas. I’d previously worked in a role that was quite constrained. Here it’s very service user focused and I can provide more flexible support to meet people’s needs.

What does your role involve?
It’s really varied. I deliver testing for blood-borne viruses, provide outreach support to high-risk groups and individuals, and co-ordinate our free condoms scheme. I also deliver training around lots of different topics from HIV and Hepatitis C awareness to sex and relationships. This could be with anyone from school groups to health professionals.

What are the main challenges of providing support in the Highlands?
On a practical level, just getting around is difficult. The Highlands cover a larger area than Belgium and parts of it have snow for a few months of the year. Social isolation is also a real issue. Many of our service users experience stigma from family, friends, or even strangers, and the impact is often heightened in small rural communities.

What do you do away from work?
I’m quite active so enjoy going to the gym regularly, mountain biking, especially through woodland, photography, gaming and binge watching box sets!

What three items could you not live without?
I have a Chocolate Labrador called Coco who is 3 and beautiful. She’s so well behaved and I definitely couldn’t live without her. I’m always listening to music, and usually attempting to sing along, so something to listen to music on. Lastly, it would definitely have to be coffee!

What’s your favourite meal?
This is difficult because I’m a massive foodie! I would say pizza BUT it has to have a thin base!

Where’s your favourite place to visit on holiday?
There’s a beautiful fishing village called Fornells in the north of Menorca, I was fortunate enough to work close by in 2011 and it’s stunning! I really want to go to Assos in Kefalonia though, it looks tranquil and zen!

Who inspires you?
I don’t really have a person who inspires me. However people showing kindness to one another is really inspiring and heart-warming, and I find the seasons and nature quite inspiring too!
Health in Faith Conference

In November we gathered in Glasgow with African Faith Leaders and members of the community for a conference to celebrate our Health in Faith work.

Part of our African Health Project, Health in Faith recognises the important role that African churches can play in supporting HIV prevention work in Scotland.

Since 2010, we have worked with over 60 African-led churches, building strong relationships with Faith Leaders, and delivering HIV awareness workshops and testing. Through this work, we are challenging the cultural and religious barriers that still exist around discussing HIV in African communities.

Our Health in Faith work is funded by the Scottish Government in recognition of the fact that HIV continues to disproportionately impact African communities.

Feedback from the conference will be brought together in a report with recommendations to help our Health in Faith work to develop and move forward.

Photo credit: Bob McDevitt
How long have you been living with HIV?
I was diagnosed in March 2008. I’d been ill with pneumonia a few times, was really underweight and kept getting sores on my skin. At first they thought there was something wrong with my liver but the test came back OK. I was sent to the Royal Infirmary for blood tests and they came back HIV positive.

When the doctor told me it didn’t register. I didn’t understand it. My mum was brilliant the whole way through she would come up for visiting at the hospital every day.

What have been the main challenges of living with HIV?
Initially, the medication was a big issue. I started out on nine huge tablets a day and I hated having to take them. Over time, it got easier and now I’m on two pills a day. They’re smaller and much easier to keep on top of.

When did you first become involved with Waverley Care?
I started coming to Milestone in 2010. I was referred by my nurse who thought it would be good for me to take part in the groups and stay when I needed extra support.

What difference has working with Waverley Care made to your life?
It made a big difference. Before, I would just sit in the house all the time but at Milestone there were always things going on. Just coming up here, talking to the staff and other service users was amazing. You can relate to people who are going through the same things, you can ask them questions, and share your own experiences about what’s going on in your life. Coming here was a godsend, it really was.

What positives do you take from living with a long term condition like HIV?
With the medication I’m taking now, I feel as healthy as I ever have, I’m back to a healthy weight and I’ve got really great support around me. Right from the beginning I’ve been open about my status and people have really respected that. I feel that I can help people going through the same sorts of things. I’ve had people talk to me about HIV and asking about getting tested. It feels good to help people.

What would you say to someone who was considering supporting Waverley Care?
I’d say go for it. It’ll be the best thing you’ve ever done, definitely.

Tell us a little more about you. What do you like to do in your spare time?
I like to spend time with my grandkids. I see them nearly every day and I love it. They keep me young. I’ve got seven in total, the oldest is 13 and the youngest almost one. I’ve always had the support of my family. My mum, two of my brothers and my two sons all live nearby and we’re a close family. I’ve also got three brothers in America and was over visiting last October.

Me and my mum used to fall out all the time. But since I was diagnosed we haven’t. It’s brought us a lot closer together.

What is your favourite food?
I love a good steak, or a spaghetti carbonara. I like cooking for people, particularly family. If I have them all in for tea time, I can usually rustle something up out of wee things here and there.

What are your favourite TV shows?
I’m soap crazy, especially Eastenders. I love Danny Dyer!

Who would play you in the movie of your life?
Sheridan Smith, I think she’s a brilliant actress.

What is your favourite book?
I don’t really read books, but I’m wanting to write one. I want to write about living with HIV, my personal story.

Where do you like to go on holiday?
I love Turkey. I’m going to Icmeler in September for a fortnight with some pals. I’ve been going for a few years. It’s a beautiful place and the people are so friendly, they can’t do enough for you. We go to the same places so people recognise us – they call me the mad Scottish one!

Do you have plans for the future?
I just want to get on with my life. A normal life like anyone else.

Who inspires you?
My grandkids. I have low points and suffer from depression but those kids put a smile on my face every day. They inspire me to keep going the way I have been.
Fundraising Roundup

Despite long winter evenings, there’s been plenty of sparkle about our Fundraising team. Here we take a look back at the highlights.

We brought a touch of tartan to the Hub in Edinburgh for our Tartan Ribbon Dinner at the end of November.

The black-tie event, sponsored by our friends at Meridian Productivity, brought together over 200 of our supporters for an evening of celebration, entertainment and, of course, fundraising.

There was an impressive menu of donated prizes on offer – from sun-soaked holidays to money-can’t-buy experiences - sold under the hammer of Bonhams auctioneer, Katherine Wright. All in, the event managed to raise an amazing £20,650 to support our work.

Proceedings were overseen by award-winning comedian, Stuart Goldsmith, who also treated guests to a short stand-up set. Throughout the meal, students from St Mary’s Music School provided musical entertainment while Elliot Henderson baffled them with a little magic.

Finally, as evening turned into night, there was music and impressions courtesy of the hugely talented Jess Robinson, and dancing with DJ Michelle.

We are incredibly grateful to Meridian and the Tartan Ribbon Dinner Committee for their support with the event, to all the wonderful companies and individuals who donated prizes, to Katherine Wright at Bonhams, to our hosts at the Hub, to all of our performers and, last but not least, to all of our amazing volunteers, supporters and guests.

Clueless at the Keys

Colin Sell, the much maligned pianist from BBC Radio 4’s I’m Sorry I Haven’t a Clue, joined us in Edinburgh recently for a fundraising evening of entertainment at Colinton Parish Church.

Colin shared music and anecdotes from a career working with some of the top names in British comedy – raising an amazing £1,250 towards our work.

A huge thank you to Colin, and our other musical guests from Firrhill High School and the Tartan Ribbon Choir, for putting on a fantastic show!
Fundraising Roundup

Bucket List
As 2016 drew to a close, our amazing bucket shakers were out in force.

To mark World AIDS Day, we had volunteers from the City of Glasgow College, Glasgow Clyde College and Barclays collecting across Glasgow. Meanwhile, the M·A·C Cosmetics teams at Harvey Nichols in Edinburgh and the Metro Centre in Gateshead had in-store collections. All in, these collections raised £535 to support our work.

Later in the month, we were delighted to be invited by Edinburgh’s Christmas for six nights of collecting at the Street of Light. Thanks to matched funding from Lloyds Banking Group, our volunteers collected an amazing £5,100 at the event.

Hitting the high notes
Music has been a major feature of our winter fundraising with some fantastic events.

Back in December, 130 singers joined us at St Mary’s in Haddington for Come and Sing: The Messiah, led by Susan Hamilton. This was followed by Joy to the World, a Christmas concert with the Scottish Chamber Choir and Richard Holloway.

Bob Chilcott helped us kick off 2017 with another immensely popular Come and Sing workshop at St Cuthbert’s, attended by 270 singers.

Thanks to everyone who helped make these events such a success, raising over £6,000.

Playhouse Partnership
We are proud to be an official charity partner of the Edinburgh Playhouse.

In 2016, the theatre raised an amazing £9,000 for Waverley Care through a mix of bucket collections, quiz nights and other events. Thank you to all the team!

Raising a Cup of Cheer!
Branches of Starbucks in Edinburgh have been supporting us in recent months, raising a fantastic total of over £1,600 through collecting cans.

In December we also benefited from a £1,000 donation through the company’s Red Cup of Cheer campaign. Thank you for your support!

Coming up in 2017...
Without people like you, we simply couldn’t achieve all that you read about in Positive Interest. Your support has the power to change people’s lives!

How might you help us in 2017? Could you run, walk or cycle for us? Organise your own event, or shake a bucket? You could also attend one of our many music or comedy events. Check out the Events Diary on the back page.

Please visit our website for details and more ideas on how to get involved:
www.waverleycare.org/getinvolved
Focus on: HIV and Ageing

Today in Scotland, a person living with HIV and on treatment can expect to live a long, healthy life. It’s a remarkable achievement but as the first generation to grow old with HIV emerges, so will new challenges and support needs.

Across the UK, around one in three people living with HIV are now aged 50 or over. With more people on treatment, and a steady increase in the number of people being diagnosed at an older age, this proportion will inevitably increase in the years ahead.

A recent survey, published by the Terrence Higgins Trust identified three key areas where increased support will be needed – healthcare, poverty and social isolation - areas we are well placed to help address.

Living healthily in older age is a key concern with an overwhelming majority of older people with HIV reporting at least one additional health condition. Through our services we support people to lead healthier, more active lifestyles, looking at issues like diet and exercise to promote good physical and mental health into older age.

We also work with healthcare professionals to improve knowledge about HIV. For example, through our Caring Conversations training resource, we are supporting GP practice staff to have person-centred conversations with people living with long-term conditions to improve both patient and staff experiences. We are developing this work so that professionals feel better equipped to talk about issues around ageing.

Ageing with HIV raises the question of how the condition interacts with other, age-related, conditions such as dementia or heart disease. It is important, for example, that we understand how HIV treatments will respond to other types of medication. We continue to contribute evidence to the Scottish Government’s HIV response, which recognises the need to address these issues.

With HIV continuing to disproportionately impact some of the most vulnerable people in our society, the survey unsurprisingly found that poverty in older age is a significant concern for many. There are clear links between poverty and poor physical and mental health, which makes managing conditions like HIV or Hepatitis C all the more difficult.

Through our information and advice service, we work with people affected by issues such as housing and homelessness, unemployment, immigration and access to benefits in order to reduce the inequalities associated with poverty, and allow individuals to focus on their health and wellbeing.

Social isolation emerged as another key theme with many older individuals living with HIV reporting loneliness. The fear of stigma linked to HIV is often a major factor in social isolation, regardless of age, making it difficult for individuals to reach out to friends, family and support.

We are involved in a number of initiatives that help to challenge this, giving individuals living with HIV an opportunity to meet and talk to new people. For example, our befrienders project links service users with volunteers to spend time and share common interests. We also offer a variety of opportunities for peer and group support. These are important as they give service users the chance to meet others who are going through the same kind of experience.

The fact that HIV can now be considered a manageable, long-term condition is cause for celebration. However, the emerging needs of an ageing population act as a reminder that there is no room for complacency.

As an organisation, Waverley Care has a history of being able to adapt to meet the changing needs of our service users. We are confident that we will continue to evolve to meet emerging needs as people living with HIV grow older.
The Last Word

Trainspotting was unapologetically bold and aggressive, but behind the swagger, it shone a light on issues that continue to affect deprived communities to this day.

Grant Sugden, Chief Executive

Can it really be 21 years since the thumping drums of Iggy Pop’s ‘Lust for Life’ announced the arrival of Trainspotting to the world?

Two decades on, scenes from the film stick in the mind as vividly as ever, as does the debate it stirred over the supposed glamorization of drug use.

It’s not difficult to imagine how some quarters of the media came to such a conclusion. The film’s promotion was unapologetically bold and aggressive, while its release coincided with, and tapped into, the breaking wave of ‘Cool Britannia’ and Britpop.

However, behind this youthful, rebellious exterior, the film, and Irvine Welsh’s original novel, provide a gritty commentary to some of the major issues that our society faced in the 80s and 90s – unemployment, lack of opportunity, spiralling drug use and concerns about HIV and AIDS.

Amid the media circus that has surrounded the recent release of the film’s sequel, T2 Trainspotting, one interesting aspect has been research looking at what has become of the so-called ‘Trainspotting generation’ – drug users who were the same age as the film’s characters in 1996 and are now in their late-40s and 50s.

One study conducted in Edinburgh spoke to hundreds of people who had accessed support for heroin addiction in the city since the 1980s. The research found that the majority still struggle with drug use, that many are now living with Hepatitis C and that poverty remains a key concern.

It’s a situation that many of our service users can relate to. We work with many individuals who are affected by drug misuse and who have experienced discrimination as a result. We understand how complex the issue is and that it is so often linked to issues like mental health, poverty and other social inequalities.

This is just one example of how HIV and Hepatitis C continue to disproportionately affect vulnerable people.

Through our work we are able to provide the information, advice and support that is helping people to change their relationship with drugs, to focus on improving their physical and mental health, and ultimately to live well with HIV or Hepatitis C.

Or, to put it another way, to choose life.

Robert Carlyle speaking at the premiere of T2 Trainspotting.

Edinburgh Marathon Festival
27/28 May 2017

Don’t miss the start line... Charity places still available
Sign up today!

For more information contact Lisa at lisa.morrisson@waverleycare.org or on 0131 556 9710

Please consider a gift in your will

Waverley Care
making a positive difference

Spring 2017 Positive Interest 11

Here today...

...and gone tomorrow
Thank you to...


Events Diary

- **Saturday 18 March 2017, 7.30pm**
  - The OUT Ball Ceilidh
  - Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh
  - The BIG springtime LGBT+ ceilidh is back at the glittering Assembly Rooms! Two ballrooms, one huge ceilidh, one lush disco!
  - Visit [www.outball.scot](http://www.outball.scot) for more information and tickets.

- **Saturday 17 June 2017**
  - Edinburgh Concert Band
  - Broughton St Mary’s Church
  - Save the date for this sparkling Summer Concert in aid of Waverley Care.
  - Tickets will be available nearer the time from [www.edinburghconcertband.net/concerts](http://www.edinburghconcertband.net/concerts).

- **Friday 4 – Monday 28 August 2017**
  - The Edinburgh Festival Fringe
  - After a record-breaking year for Waverley Care at Fringe 2016, we’re looking forward to another busy month. Check our website for events and opportunities this August.
  - Visit [www.waverleycare.org](http://www.waverleycare.org) for updates.

- **Tuesday 15 August 2017**
  - Tartan Ribbon Comedy Benefit
  - Pleasance, Edinburgh
  - Make sure to get this date in your diary! A top night of comedy in support of Waverley Care, guaranteed to be another fantastic line-up.
  - Tickets will be available nearer the time from [www.pleasance.co.uk](http://www.pleasance.co.uk).

- **Saturday 19 August 2017**
  - Loud & Proud on the Fringe 2017
  - St Cuthbert’s Church, Edinburgh
  - Loud & Proud, Scotland’s LGBT singing sensation, returns to the Fringe in 2017 with a fantastic show in support of Waverley Care.
  - Tickets will be available nearer the time from [www.waverleycare.org/events](http://www.waverleycare.org/events).

- **Saturday 14 October 2017**
  - Come & Sing with John Rutter
  - St Cuthbert’s Church, Edinburgh
  - Save the date for a rare opportunity to learn a beautiful selection of music with John Rutter.
  - Check [www.waverleycare.org/events](http://www.waverleycare.org/events) for updates.

For more details on all our events go to: [www.waverleycare.org/events](http://www.waverleycare.org/events)