Making Waves
Promoting sexual health in Highland

Sexual health education and information for young people in Highland
wavehighland.com
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)
- Wave (Sexual Health Education)
- Women

To find out more about our work, our services and to get involved, contact us at admin@waverleycare.org, or visit www.waverleycare.org.
At Waverley Care, we know that a balanced diet can make a huge difference to the health of people living with HIV or hepatitis C.

Over the last few months, our Glasgow team have been delivering workshops to give service users the confidence and skills to cook low cost, healthy meals while reducing food waste.

The ‘Eat Well, Waste Less’ workshops have focused on short, easy to follow, healthy recipes for people to make at home. The workshops also supported people from different cultural backgrounds, particularly through our African Health Project, introducing them to Scottish ingredients and giving them the confidence to try new foods.

The project builds on our existing partnership with Fare Share, a charity that collects and redistributes excess food from businesses like supermarkets, saving it from going to waste.

At the end of last year, we officially unveiled Wave, a new project to get young people thinking and talking about their sexual health and relationships.

The new project, funded by NHS Highland, aims to provide young people with clear, relevant information about sexual health, and give them the confidence to make safe, healthy choices.

The project offers interactive workshops in secondary schools across Highland and, since launching, has had some great feedback from pupils. In the coming months, the project will also start to offer targeted education programmes to support vulnerable young people.

To help inform the development of Wave, our Highland team conducted an extensive survey of young people across the region. In total, 1,195 young people aged 12-24 took part, to tell us what they thought good sexual health education should look like.

A big thank you to all of the young people who have contributed through surveys and consultation events to get us to this point.

A new website has been launched to support the project. Visit www.wavehighland.com to find out more.
Our Promise

Along with other service providers, we recently developed **Our Promise**, a shared set of commitments to ensure that support services are welcoming and inclusive for gay and bisexual men.

Last year, almost half of all new HIV diagnoses in Scotland were among gay and bisexual men, despite the fact that they make up only around 1% of the population.

Research has found that discrimination based on sexuality remains a significant concern for many men in Scotland, and that health inequalities exist around issues such as alcohol and drug use, and mental health.

In setting out **Our Promise**, we want to encourage more men to access support so that we can begin to challenge the health inequalities they face.

CheckPoint testing service launched

We recently launched a new testing service in Lothian with the ambition to reduce new HIV and hepatitis C infections in the region.

CheckPoint offers appointments throughout the week, plus a weekly drop-in clinic, for anyone who wants to know their status.

Around one in seven people living with HIV and four in 10 people with hepatitis C have never been diagnosed with their condition. These people aren’t able to access effective treatments that can control HIV and cure hepatitis C, and are more likely to unwittingly pass the conditions on to others.

CheckPoint is about making testing more accessible with options that fit in with people’s lives. When people come in, we can give them all the information they need about testing, and can provide information, advice and support, regardless of the outcome.

Links2Life

We got a warm welcome in Thurso as we made the trip to work with students at North Highland College.

We were on campus to talk to students about all things HIV and hepatitis C, and to offer a drop-in session where they could talk to us about any aspect of their sexual health.

The visit was part of the college’s Links2Life initiative which promotes positive health and wellbeing among students.

Working with the colleges that make up the University of the Highlands and Islands is a great way for us to reach out to young people across the region and we look forward to visiting again soon.

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Introducing...

Rachel Smith

Rachel joined Waverley Care in September as our Head of Income Generation. We caught up with her to find out about the role, about comparisons with Bridget Jones and about dressing as a pantomime horse...

What attracted you to Waverley Care?
Within the charity sector, Waverley Care has a fantastic reputation so I was delighted to have the opportunity to join the team. I’m also passionate about supporting and standing up for people who are often marginalised and isolated from society so joining Waverley Care was an absolute no-brainer for me.

What exactly is a ‘Head of Income Generation’?
Basically, I’m in charge of ensuring enough money is coming into the charity through various sources, including funding from Government and the NHS, from charitable trusts and through fundraising events and individual giving. I’m also responsible for sourcing new funding opportunities and managing our fabulous fundraising team.

What was your first ever fundraising experience?
Back in 1992 my best friend and I decided to enter a fun run round Arthur’s Seat, in aid of Waverley Care! Oh, and we did it dressed in a homemade pantomime horse costume.

Away from work, what do you like to do in your spare time?
I find baking very therapeutic – although no matter what time I start it always seems to be after midnight by the time I’m finished. Continuing the food theme – I also enjoy inviting friends over for dinner parties.

Where’s your favourite holiday destination?
I love Orlando in sunny Florida and especially enjoy visiting Universal Studios.

What’s your favourite meal?
After going to Japan last year my new favourite meal is sushi, followed by a big bowl of ramen.

What is your favourite film?
My all time favourite is The Money Pit (obscure 80’s film featuring Tom Hanks and Shelley Long).

Who would play you in the movie of your life?
The Bridget Jones version of Renee Zellweger – clumsy and enjoys a glass of wine!

What’s your favourite book?
My absolute fave book is The Crow Road by Scottish author Iain Banks. I also loved the 1996 TV adaptation with Joe McFadden, Peter Capaldi and Dougray Scott.

Any New Year’s resolutions for 2018?
I’ve signed up for the Edinburgh Half Marathon in a bid to get fit in 2018 – and raise money for Waverley Care of course.

Who inspires you?
As cheesy as this sounds, the more I hear about the amazing work carried out by my colleagues the more inspired and motivated I become. I feel so privileged to be part of the team at Waverley Care.
Chinese Health Project launched

We were at Monklands Hospital in Lanarkshire recently to launch an innovative new project to support local Chinese communities to challenge hepatitis B.

The NHS Lanarkshire funded Chinese Health Project will work with local community groups and businesses to raise awareness of the condition and support people to access testing.

There are an estimated 9,000 people living with hepatitis B in Scotland, with Chinese communities thought to be up to seven times more likely to be affected than the general population. The condition can cause serious liver damage and, although it cannot be cured, it can be managed with treatment and a vaccine is available to people at risk.

Through our outreach work, we’ll meet local groups to offer education workshops covering the basics of hepatitis B and encouraging people to access testing. These workshops will also cover other blood borne viruses like HIV, and we will be working to widen access to health services more generally for Chinese communities.

By taking a community approach, similar to our African Health Project, we hope to overcome the cultural and language barriers that often prevent Chinese people from accessing support to improve their health and wellbeing.

Our Chinese Health Project was launched at Monklands Hospital in December 2017.
Service User Profile

Steph* was seven when she first found out she was living with HIV. Her journey to adulthood has had plenty of ups and downs, but now her focus is on sharing her experience to help others. We caught up with her to hear her story.

When did you first find out you were living with HIV?
I was about seven years old. I was watching TV with my parents and there was a programme about young children living with HIV.

Apparently I asked if I was the same as them. Over the next few hours, mum got out all these books about HIV and spoke to me about what had happened.

I was born in Romania in the early 90s. At the time, infants who were unwell were given blood transfusions because the authorities thought it would make us healthier.

Unfortunately, a lot of the donated blood was infected with HIV and I was one of the children affected.

Can you tell us about how you found your way to Scotland?
At that time poor families in Romania were encouraged to put their children into orphanages, and basically that’s what happened with me.

My mum was a newly qualified nurse and was in Romania as part of a charity effort to help people. She did work in my orphanage and said I was always excited to see her. She decided that she wanted to adopt me.

She was single at the time and living at home. Imagine phoning your parents saying ‘oh, by the way, I might bring home a child, and not just any child, one living with HIV’. Was she brave or mad? I still don’t know!

How did you feel when you first found out about living with HIV?
I remember not caring at all! I was seven and at that age you don’t understand things. The next day I told a couple of friends at school and they were like ‘OK’.

I was so lucky. All my friends knew and, as I was learning about HIV, they learned along with me.

What have been the main challenges?
My teens and early 20s were really difficult. I was on a downward spiral. A couple of failed relationships had taken their toll and I hadn’t been taking my medication. Eventually my body was saying enough is enough.

It was my sisters that inspired me to turn things around. They’re a lot younger and I hated the thought of them growing up thinking I didn’t love them enough to try and fight. I had to put my demons aside so I could focus on getting better.

When did you first come into contact with Waverley Care?
I was about 15. My mum was concerned about how I was coping and the staff at the Western General put us in touch with Waverley Care.

They’ve been there for everything. One part that sticks out has been the Poz Youth group. There, I met other young adults and would go away on activities which was actually very therapeutic. You were in a safe group with people the same as you.

You recently spoke about your experience in the Scottish Parliament. What was the main message you wanted to get across?
It was a fantastic experience to be a part of, listening to people’s stories and their views on stigma. I guess the message I wanted to put across was about the mental health side of things.

That’s something I’ve always struggled with – accepting HIV, feeling mentally strong enough to take the medication and carry on a fairly normal life.

The struggle I felt growing up was when I’d go to the GP and say ‘I need help’. Simply saying here’s the tablets, off you go – that’s never going to be enough.

You’re a keen photographer. Can you tell us what got you interested?
My mum always liked photography so growing up that was something I admired. Even when I was really ill, photography was something that made me happy.

I’ve always got a camera in my hand. I think you can always create something beautiful, even in your darkest moments. I signed up for a college course and learned a lot. Now that I’ve got the basics, I’m trying to keep learning by practising and I’m taking photos pretty much every single day.

Who inspires you?
A few years ago, I saw a quote saying ‘Be the hero that you need’ and I thought ‘OK, I’ll take each day, trying to be better than I was the day before’. Now I have the opportunity to share my story and I hope that can help to inspire others who have gone through similar things.

*Name has been changed to protect individual’s privacy.
Fundraising Roundup

With 2018 already well underway, we take a look at what’s coming up in a year of kilts, comedy and music!

As this issue of Positive Interest goes to print, last minute preparations are well underway for what will be our biggest ever musical event.

We’re expecting over 500 people to join us at St Cuthberts in Edinburgh, for Come and Sing ABBA. Fingers-crossed the event, conducted by the amazing Ben Parry, will help us raise lots of Money, Money, Money!

If you missed out this time but have a penchant for musical theatre, fear not! Ben will be back in Scotland in June, this time at Mayfield Salisbury Church, bringing his effervescent personality to our Come and Sing Musicality – a mixed bag of showstoppers from the likes of The Sound of Music, Mary Poppins and Grease, to name a few. Tickets on sale now!

As our thoughts turn to spring sunshine, how about topping up your Vitamin D by challenging yourself to a sponsored run, cycle, walk or bungee jump? There are lots of opportunities to get involved and you can find an event to suit you – visit www.waverleycare.org/events.

Over the next few months, we’re particularly excited to be promoting the Kiltwalk. With three distances (6, 13 and 26 miles) and four locations (Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee and Edinburgh) there’s something for everyone. The best news of all – the Hunter Foundation will add a further 40% to every penny that you raise for Waverley Care!

Always a highlight of our fundraising year, we’re already on the starting blocks for all things Fringe, with dates already firmed up for the Tartan Ribbon Comedy Benefit, the Off the Kerb Comedy Gala and our Loud & Proud concert. See the Events Diary on page 12 and keep an eye on our website for Fringe updates.

We round things up for 2018 with the return of our biennial Tartan Ribbon Dinner in the magnificent surroundings of The Hub – see opposite for more details!

(top) Ben Parry leads the crowd at a recent Come and Sing event.
(below) The fundraising team are raring to go for the 2018 Kiltwalk season.
Centre stage for Playhouse partnership

We caught up with our friends at the Edinburgh Playhouse at the beginning of the year to celebrate our charity partnership passing the £50,000 mark.

The landmark total includes audience collections at all kinds of shows and, appropriately enough, the £50,000 barrier was broken on World AIDS Day.

Our relationship with the Playhouse stretches back to the early 2000s and, in late 2014, we joined CHAS as an official charity partner of the theatre.

Bucket collections are a staple of charity fundraising, and the team at the Playhouse have always been hugely supportive. Alongside running bucket collections with their amazing Front of House team, they’ve helped us to arrange interval announcements to tell audiences about our work, and have even provided free tickets for our service users.

World AIDS Day

Each year, World AIDS Day on 1 December is a great opportunity for us to raise awareness about HIV. But it’s also become an important part of the fundraising calendar.

2017 was our biggest World AIDS Day yet from a fundraising perspective, bringing in an amazing £6,400 to support our work. We had everything from student ceilidhs and club nights to caroling and collections, and comedy and cabaret.

There was even an added bonus as the Waverley Care team came a creditable second in an epic pub quiz!

With such amazing support, there are far too many people for us to thank in this small space! But head over to the Waverley Care website for the full run down of our World AIDS Day awareness and fundraising activities! www.waverleycare.org/wad2017

Tartan Ribbon Dinner returns for 2018

Later this year, we’ll be bringing a touch of tartan to the Hub in Edinburgh, as our famous Tartan Ribbon Dinner returns for 2018.

The black-tie event, kindly sponsored by our friends at Meridian, will bring together over 200 guests for an entertainment-packed evening in aid of Waverley Care.

Last time out, in 2016, the event managed to raise £20,650 – money that has helped us to make a positive difference to the lives of people living with HIV or hepatitis C. This year’s event is taking place on World AIDS Day (1 December) and fingers crossed that will be a good omen for another amazing night of fundraising!

Majoring on fantastic food and fabulous comedy entertainment, this night is simply not to be missed! Booking is now open. To find out more, contact Karen in the fundraising team on 0131 556 9710, or visit www.waverleycare.org/TartanRibbonDinner

We visited MAC Cosmetics in Edinburgh on World AIDS Day to talk to staff about our work.
Focus on: Prison Link

Among the general population in Scotland, around 1 in 150 people are living with hepatitis C. Among our prison population, it’s 1 in 5.

It’s a stark reality, and one which we are trying to understand and address through an innovative Prison Link pilot project.

Launched in late 2016 and funded by AbbVie, the Prison Link project works with prisoners who are living with hepatitis C and approaching liberation from HMP Barlinnie. Our project worker, Billy, meets with people to listen to their needs and to support them to develop liberation plans.

While much of the support relates to peoples’ health and hepatitis C status, it’s about more than that. It’s about addressing the other challenges that could get in the way of people continuing to access support – whether that’s homelessness, addiction, social isolation or poverty.

Billy continues to support people once they are back in the community, helping ensure that they have a support network that allows them to manage their health, clear hepatitis C and move forward with their lives.

The project is helping to address a very specific issue that helps to explain why hepatitis C rates in prison remain so high. Services to support testing and treatment for hepatitis C are already well established both in prison settings and in the community. But it’s the transition between the two that often proves to be the stumbling block.

The first year of the project has had promising results with a majority of prisoners referred to us continuing to engage with support services after liberation as they prepare for and progress through hepatitis C treatment. Following this success, we’ve recently expanded the project to cover a second prison, HMP Low Moss.

At the end of 2017, we marked the first year of the project by inviting the Scottish Government’s Public Health Minister, Aileen Campbell, to Barlinnie. During the visit, she met with Waverley Care and NHS staff to hear how we are working together to support people.

The hope is that we can demonstrate the effectiveness of this work, and expand it to more prisons across Scotland to challenge the disproportionate impact that hepatitis C has on this very vulnerable group.
Grant chairs a roundtable discussion on hepatitis C elimination which helped inform the Parliament report.

Did you know that there are more pandas in Edinburgh zoo than there are globally eradicated infectious diseases? It was a surprise to me too.

In the entire history of humanity, smallpox stands alone as the only disease to have been successfully fought on a global scale. It’s hard to imagine how it must have felt on that day in 1980 when scientists were able to announce to the world that a condition which had killed 300 million people in the twentieth century alone was no more.

The fact that smallpox remains unique almost 40 years on is a remarkable demonstration of the complexity of prevention work and a tribute to the global collaboration that made it possible.

It’s a path that scientists, health professionals and campaigners continue to tread for HIV, hepatitis C and countless other conditions, many of which fortunately no longer affect people living in the UK.

In recent months, the elimination of hepatitis C has made a welcome return to the top of the agenda in Scotland.

At the start of the year we were in Holyrood for the launch of a report from the Hepatitis C Trust and a group of cross-party MSPs. The report set out a range of recommendations to make the elimination of hepatitis C by 2030 a reality – from widening access to testing and treatment to ensuring government involvement to set targets and monitor progress.

At the launch, one campaigner summed up what hepatitis C treatment had meant to him saying, ‘after so long thinking you’re going to die, to be clear is unbelievable’. It was a powerful statement, not only on a personal level, but also because it shows us that elimination isn’t a million miles away.

The fact is that we already have effective treatments for hepatitis C that can clear the virus. The challenge now is to turn warm words into action and to make sure that everyone who needs treatment can access it. That means continuing to develop and deliver innovative services that support often vulnerable people to come forward for testing and treatment.

If we can achieve that, we will have taken a big step towards ensuring that the elimination of hepatitis C becomes a matter of ‘when’, and not ‘if’.

The Last Word

It’s hard to imagine how it must have felt to announce to the world that a condition which had killed 300 million people in the twentieth century alone was no more.

Grant Sugden, Chief Executive

Here today... ...and gone tomorrow

Please consider a gift in your will

Waverley Care making a positive difference

Edinburgh Music Theatre presents

Guys and Dolls

A Musical Fable of Broadway

Based on a Story and Characters of Damon Runyon
Music and Lyrics by FRANK LOEBER
Book by JO SWERLING and ABE BURROWS

edtheatres.com
Box Office 0131 529 6000 | Groups 0131 529 6005

Wed 2 – Sat 5 May
KING’S THEATRE
EDINBURGH

Spring 2018 Positive Interest
Thank you to...


Events Diary

Saturday 17 March 2018
The OUT Ball’s Big Gay Spring Prom
Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh
The OUT Ball LGBT+ ceilidh is back at the glittering Assembly Rooms! Two ballrooms, one huge ceilidh, one lush disco!
Visit www.outball.scot for more information and tickets.

Saturday 9 June 2018
Come and Sing Musicality
Mayfield Salisbury Church, Edinburgh
Ben Parry returns to Edinburgh to conduct Musicality – a miscellany of musical showstoppers.
Visit www.waverleycare.org/musicality for more information and tickets.

Saturday 16 June 2018
Edinburgh Concert Band Summer Sparkler
Broughton St Mary’s Church, Edinburgh
Save the date for this sparkling summer concert in aid of Waverley Care.
Tickets will be available nearer the time from www.edinburghconcertband.net.

Tuesday 14 August 2018
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.

Saturday 18 August 2018
Waverley Care Comedy Gala
Edinburgh Playhouse
Edinburgh’s biggest comedy event returns to the Fringe with an all-star line-up to be revealed.
Tickets will be available nearer the time from www.atgtickets.com.

Saturday 18 August 2018
Loud & Proud on the Fringe 2018
St Cuthbert’s Church, Edinburgh
Loud & Proud, Scotland’s LGBT singing sensation, returns to the Fringe in 2018 with a fantastic show in support of Waverley Care.
Tickets will be available nearer the time from www.waverleycare.org/events.

For more details on all our events go to: www.waverleycare.org/events

Glasgow 29 April • Aberdeen 3 June
Dundee 19 August • Edinburgh 16 September

Pull out your plaid, and join the Kiltwalk for Waverley Care!

6, 13 and 26 mile distances available
All money raised will be topped up by 40% meaning more money for Waverley Care!

Contact: rachel.smith@waverleycare.org
Or call 0131 556 9710 to get involved.

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If you no longer wish to receive Positive Interest, or want to update your mailing preferences, please contact the Fundraising Team on 0131 556 9710.