Pleasance and Correct

Record breaking year at the Fringe
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.

Tartan Rainbow Ceilidh

Saturday 16 March 2019
Assembly Roxy, Roxburgh Place, Edinburgh
Tickets on sale late November

Visit www.waverleycare.org/ceilidh or email holly.rawlings@waverleycare.org for details.

Front cover image: Soaking up the Pleasance atmosphere with Rohanie, one of our Fringe Coordinator team.
**Year of Young People funding for Wave team**

Our Wave Highland project has been awarded funding to involve under 25s in improving local sexual health services.

The £10,000 award from the Year of Young People National Lottery Fund will be used to recruit and train a young people’s steering group, focusing on sexual health issues.

The group aims to give young people a voice in ensuring their sexual health and relationship needs are met by services. With Wave’s support, the group will have the opportunity to design and run their own campaigns and lead on work that is important to them and their peers.

Our Wave project provides sexual health and relationships education programmes to under 25s across Highland. The team recently published findings of a sexual health survey involving 1,195 young people from across the region, and this funding continues their community engagement approach.

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**Snapshot…**

A quick round-up of the latest news from across Waverley Care…

- Young people from our Poz Youth group volunteered at the AIDS 2018 conference in Amsterdam, also participating in a range of workshops organised by Youth Stop AIDS.

- Our Glasgow Hepatitis C team were in Bridgeton to mark Overdose Awareness Day. During a community event, the team offered hepatitis C information, advice and testing to members of the public.

- Milestone, our residential support service, was featured in BBC Radio Scotland’s documentary series, Our Story. The show featured interviews with staff and service users.

- Our Chinese Health Project has recruited a team of Community Ambassadors to help raise awareness of hepatitis B testing, treatment and vaccination among local groups.

- SX, our gay and bisexual men’s project, has received funding to deliver support services in NHS Forth Valley. In particular, we’ll be promoting good sexual health and encouraging men to access regular HIV and STI testing.
On World Hepatitis Day, we joined campaigners around the world in an effort to *Find the Missing Millions*. Nine out of 10 people around the world living with viral hepatitis are unaware of their infection - around 290 million men, women and children.

Here in Scotland the picture’s better (but far from perfect) with 15,500 people thought to be living with undiagnosed hepatitis C.

Along with HepCScot partners, including Hepatitis Scotland, we supported ‘three asks’ that were shared with First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon.

The asks were to support more people into testing and treatment, to ensure equal access to treatment, and to support harm reduction services such as needle exchanges and drug recovery services.

We recently welcomed the Scottish Government’s new Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing, Joe FitzPatrick MSP, to Waverley Care.

The visit was a chance for him to find out more about our work across Scotland, and particularly our prevention work, with staff from SX and the African Health Project.

Our work helps to inform, and is closely aligned to the Scottish Government’s strategy on sexual health, HIV and hepatitis C, and it was good to have the opportunity to update the Minister on how we are contributing to national goals.

We’d like to thank the Minister for taking the time to come and speak with us and we look forward to working with him more in future.
Introducing... Chris Ward

Chris joined SX earlier this year after supporting the Waverley Care project as a volunteer. We caught up with him to hear more about his work, supporting improved health and wellbeing for gay and bisexual men in Lothian.

How did you first hear about Waverley Care?
I was working at Starbucks in Edinburgh when Waverley Care became its local charity.

What inspired you to get involved?
I was interested in the charity’s SX project, and the approach it takes to engaging with gay and bisexual men in the community. It seemed fresh and exciting so I decided to volunteer. I started by helping at outreach events and then got the chance to join the staff team. The rest is history.

Can you tell us about your role?
I work with the community in Lothian through outreach, e-outreach and organising our volunteers. I’m currently working on a series of community-led events around Edinburgh. I’m trained to offer HIV testing and also develop the visual images that go out through our social media.

Why do you think the work of SX is important?
I think the key thing about SX is that we really listen to the community and create an environment that allows men to engage in conversations about their health and wellbeing. Through this, we’re able to challenge the issues that really affect men’s ability to improve their lives.

What do you enjoy most about your job?
Working with people. I can genuinely walk away smiling at the end of the day if I’ve made a positive change to someone’s life. I would also apply that to staff – collaboration is a big part of this type of work and I think the staff in Waverley Care really embrace that.

Away from work, what do you like to do in your spare time?
I can generally be found either in a café eating cake or on a beach somewhere in Scotland. I’m a big foodie and I’m also a really keen traveller, particularly around Scotland.

Where’s your favourite holiday destination?
You couldn’t find a better place than Berlin. The food, the music, the art, the nightlife and the general vibe of the place prevents it from ever becoming dull.

What are you reading at the moment?
David Bowie Made Me Gay. It’s about the past 100 years of LGBT music and it’s genuinely fantastic.

Who inspires you?
I’m really inspired by ACT UP [an international advocacy campaign raising awareness of HIV and AIDS]. Their commitment to challenging the status quo gave marginalized groups a voice. In 1,000 years, when people are talking about LGBT history, I think ACT UP will still be looked on as the community’s finest hour.
A new project is set to offer on-street support to vulnerable people, in a bid to tackle the continuing HIV outbreak in Glasgow.

Funded by the Big Lottery Fund, our street support project will offer access to HIV testing and support for people who inject drugs.

Since 2015, 133 people have been diagnosed with HIV linked to drug use - more than trebling the previous average of 10 per year.

Our project will work with people on the street, providing one-to-one and peer support to make it as easy as possible for them to access HIV testing, treatment and prevention information, alongside recovery services.

We know that the people we’re trying to reach are also vulnerable to issues like homelessness and poor mental health, and the project will help them to engage with services that can provide support.

The project will work closely with NHS partners - Senior Manager, Claire Kofman (left) with NHS Glasgow HIV Programme Manager, Louise Carroll.

The project is one part of the response to the outbreak, complementing actions being taken by the City Council and NHS, and we are looking forward to working with partners to take it forward.
Stephen* first came to Waverley Care in 2017, more than a decade after being diagnosed with hepatitis C. We supported him as he recently completed his treatment and now he’s training to become our first Hepatitis C Peer Mentor. We caught up with him to hear his story...

When did you first find out you were living with hepatitis C?
It was 2006. I’d just stopped using drugs at the time and wanted to get tested.

Can you remember how you felt when you first found out?
It took me a couple of months to get my head round it to be honest. I tried to kid on that it wasn’t happening. I didn’t really know what hep C was or whether there was any treatments or cures for it. But then it just came to me, and I thought I need to find more about this.

How do you think living with hepatitis C affected your life?
Living with it didn’t really affect me in terms of my physical health, but there was an effect on my mental health and it knocked my confidence.

I was working in warehouses at that time, and the work meant I’d usually have cuts on my hands. I’d walk about with plasters in my pocket all the time and had nightmares, wondering what would happen if I had an accident and somebody came over to help. I didn’t want to put anyone else at risk.

When did you first come into contact with Waverley Care?
It was towards the end of last year. I’d been getting some support through Addaction [a mental health, drug and alcohol charity] working on recovery skills and they put me in touch with Waverley Care for support around hepatitis C.

What kind of support did Waverley Care offer?
It was practical support mainly. They helped with going to the hospital and things like that. Sometimes doctors talk to you and what they’re saying goes over your head, so it was good to have somebody there who knew the system and could help me take it all in. Just having someone who was there for me helped me to relax.

You recently went through hepatitis C treatment. How was your experience?
I was anxious about it at first. I never went for it before because I’d heard all the stories about the old treatment – a year of injections and side effects that led to lots of people getting sick.

When I heard about the new treatments, I jumped at the chance. Now it’s 8-12 weeks of tablets and the side effects are far less of an issue. During the treatment I had a couple of sore heads and was a bit more tired than usual, but it wasn’t anything unmanageable.

You recently found out that you have cleared hepatitis C. How did you feel when you found out?
I was just happy it was a success, it felt like I could put that part of my life behind me.

Now I want to focus on building back up my confidence and maybe getting back into work. I’m not really at that stage yet but I’ll get there.

You’re thinking of becoming a peer mentor volunteer at Waverley Care. What made you want to get involved?
Just to help other people who are going through the same things. I know what it’s like when you’ve got nobody to talk to.

I feel that being able to talk to someone who’s actually been through the treatment would be a huge support for someone living with hepatitis C. You bring experience that doctors and support workers can’t.

My project worker, Christine told me about it after Waverley Care got lottery funding to offer peer support. I’m the first person to get involved. It’s a little daunting, but I’m up for the challenge.

What do you like to do in your spare time?
I’m a bit of a geek, I’m online all the time and am into computers, coding and programming. I’m self-taught and am trying to read up on it. Some of it you have to read a few times so that it sinks in.

When I was still using drugs, things like this got pushed to the side, so it feels good to get back into something that I’m really interested in. It’s just messing about really, kids stuff, but I enjoy it and it keeps me occupied.

What would your message be to anyone who was thinking of supporting Waverley Care?
I would say definitely go for it. It’s a great organisation that helps a lot of people.

*Name has been changed to protect individual’s privacy.
It was another landmark year at the Pleasance, as our long-running partnership broke through the £500,000 barrier.

This year, volunteers collected a record breaking £48,565 with matched funding still to come courtesy of Lloyds Banking Group and Ernst & Young.

The total will continue to grow, with proceeds to come from our Tartan Ribbon Comedy Benefit, hosted by the wonderful Stu Goldsmith, and Amusical, with Jayde Adams leading a crew of comedians to swap stand up for show tunes.

Meanwhile, 2,000 people joined us at the Edinburgh Playhouse for our Off the Kerb Comedy Gala, with hosts Tom Allen and Joel Dommett. The ticket proceeds will be added to almost £1,600 raised in bucket collections.

A late addition to the Fringe programme, we were delighted that our friends at Austentatious returned for a one-off performance for Waverley Care. Over £200 was collected after the show, with ticket sales still to be added.

Among the international acts at the Fringe, there were a few familiar local faces performing. Loud & Proud, performed a Scottish mix spanning Burns to the Proclaimers, collecting £615 to be added to ticket sales. Meanwhile, The Bohemians gave their take on a mix of musical hits, collecting £330, and Captivate Theatre’s production of RENT raised £1,200.

Edinburgh’s student radio station, Fresh Air, once again got in on the fundraising act with their 24hr Fresh Fringe show raising £435.

Finally, following a chance encounter with one of the team, a group of LGBT acts offered to collect for us at the Greenside venue, collecting £350.

There are far too many people to acknowledge here, but we would like pay a huge thank you to all the venues, performers, organisations and volunteers who have supported us this year.

As the Fringe packed up, and Edinburgh heaved a collective sigh of relief, we reflected on a record breaking Fringe for Waverley Care!
Come and Sing Bob Chilcott

To kick off our Autumn fundraising, we welcomed Waverley Care Patron, Bob Chilcott to Edinburgh to lead our latest Come and Sing.

Over 180 singers came along to St Cuthbert’s Church, where they had the opportunity to learn and perform music spanning Bob’s composing career in the company of the ever-popular Inverclyde Schools’ Junior Choir.

An amazing day of music helped to raise £4,500 to support our work, and we’d like to thank Bob, musicians Morley Whitehead and Alasdair Rankin, the Inverclyde choir and everyone who came along.

Tartan Ribbon Dinner

We’re incredibly excited to announce that the amazing Susan Calman has been confirmed as the host of our upcoming Tartan Ribbon Dinner.

Susan, best known as a regular on comedy panel shows for BBC Radio 4 and as a contestant on last year’s Strictly Come Dancing, will oversee proceedings, entertaining our guests and encouraging them to give generously for Waverley Care.

This year’s black-tie dinner takes place on World AIDS Day (1 December) in the spectacular surroundings of The Hub on Castlehill in Edinburgh. It promises to be an entertainment-packed night, with other acts still to be announced.

On the night, there will be a range of ways for our guests to support fundraising, including a live auction and raffle. We will also be hosting a special online auction, which will be open to the public, with some amazing prizes to be announced.

The online auction will go live on 1 November. After this date you’ll be able to view the prizes and make bids by visiting www.tartanribbon.org.

We still have some tables available for the dinner, which is a great opportunity to gather with friends, staff or clients for a fantastic night out. To find out more, visit waverleycare.org/tartanribbon dinner.

Looking ahead to World AIDS Day

Every year on 1 December people around the world come together to mark World AIDS Day, an internationally recognised day to raise awareness of HIV and remember those who have died as a result of AIDS.

In Scotland, advances in medication mean that HIV is now a manageable long-term condition and we’ll be fundraising to ensure Waverley Care can continue to support those affected in whatever ways they need.

Whether you organise a dress down day at work or school, volunteer as a bucketshaker or join us at the Tartan Ribbon Dinner, we’d love you to get involved. Every pound you raise will go towards making a positive difference in the lives of people affected by HIV or hepatitis C across Scotland.

Visit waverleycare.org/fundraise or get in touch to find out more. Email holly.rawlings@waverleycare.org.
Focus on: African Health Project

In 2018, our African Health Project celebrates 15 years of working with local communities to improve the health and wellbeing of all Africans in Scotland. Here we take a closer look at the work of the project, and how it has developed.

The African Health Project was first launched in Edinburgh and Lothian in 2003, in response to the needs of the growing African population in Scotland. In the years that followed, the project added additional teams in Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Forth Valley, alongside some Scotland-wide work.

Despite a lack of specific figures for Scotland, we know that HIV disproportionately affects African communities and that late diagnosis, which can lead to health complications, is common.

These inequalities are largely driven by HIV stigma and a lack of awareness about the condition, which can sometimes be reinforced by cultural and religious beliefs. For Africans living with HIV, this stigma can lead to isolation from the community, a breakdown of relationships and negative impacts on their physical and mental health.

We are there to provide support to Africans living with HIV, helping them understand and manage their treatment, meet other people living with HIV for peer support, and talk about the condition with their family and friends.

Alongside support directly related to HIV, we also help people to address some of the broader challenges that can get in the way of staying well. This includes issues like immigration and housing, and breaking down the barriers to local services that don’t necessarily speak directly to African communities.

Alongside the impact on individuals, stigma also has an effect on the community as a whole, spreading misinformation about what it means to live with HIV and acting as a disincentive to accessing testing.

Through the African Health Project, we provide a range of workshops to local groups that provide the facts about HIV, get people talking about their sexual health, including condom use and PrEP, and encourage people to access community-based HIV testing.

The ambition is to ensure that more people are able to know their status earlier, helping to reduce new HIV infections and allowing those living with HIV to access treatment that can help them stay healthy.

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We invest a lot of time developing relationships with community groups and organisations to build trust in the service. Our staff all come from African communities, meaning they have knowledge and experience of the different cultures and can engage with communities in their own languages. Partners have said what a difference this makes in terms of trust in the information and support we provide.

One example of our community-based approach is our Health in Faith initiative, which recognises the important role that faith plays in African communities.

Pastors are important community figures, and we work with these faith leaders to take conversations about HIV and sexual health to the heart of communities.

This has allowed us to deliver a range of HIV awareness and testing workshops with congregations in churches – something that wouldn’t have been possible a few years ago.

As a result, this work is contributing to challenging HIV stigma, encouraging people to know their HIV status, and ensuring that people living with the condition can access the support they need to live well.
I’ve never really liked the word ‘outbreak’. There’s something sensational about it that evokes tabloid news coverage. But there are times when no other word really fits the bill.

Over the last few years, Glasgow has witnessed what has been described as the biggest outbreak of HIV anywhere in the UK since the 1980s – affecting a concentrated group of injecting drug users in the city centre.

Since 2015, the number of new diagnoses in the city linked to this group has trebled on previously low levels. However, in addressing the outbreak, we need to ensure that the challenges facing people who inject drugs are not reduced to unhelpful moral judgements.

Addiction is an incredibly complex issue, closely tied to social inequalities such as homelessness, poverty and a history of abuse. This mix of inequalities means that people are not only extremely vulnerable in terms of their health, but also left isolated from the very services that could help them improve their lives.

Our lottery-funded HIV Street Support Project [see page 6] wants to be part of the solution - an innovative project that reaches out to people in the community rather than waiting for them to come to us.

The project complements the broader response to the outbreak, and feeds into a general debate about how we support people affected by drug use. We believe in an approach that makes public health, rather than criminal justice the priority – with a focus on evidence-based, accessible services that can help people to turn their lives around.

For example, we have backed proposals for a drug consumption facility where people could access sterile injecting equipment, overseen by health workers, alongside help to find relevant services. The proposal, put forward by the NHS and Glasgow City Council, is backed by compelling evidence about the effectiveness of similar facilities around the world.

At a time when drug-related deaths in Scotland are at record levels, we need to embrace such innovative approaches. By doing so, we can move beyond the sensational language of outbreaks to recognise and address the vulnerability faced by people who inject drugs.
Thank you to...


World AIDS Day at Broughton St Mary’s

Community Gathering
Saturday 1st December 2018, 3pm
Broughton St Mary’s Church, 12 Bellevue Crescent, Edinburgh

An opportunity for remembrance, reflection and celebration. With music from Loud & Proud and the Tartan Ribbon Community Choir.

Free Event | All Welcome | Refreshments

Waverley Care, 3 Mansfield Place, Edinburgh EH3 6NB  Telephone: 0131 556 9710  Email: admin@waverleycare.org

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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.

Events Diary

Saturday 1 December 2018
Tartan Ribbon Dinner
The Hub, Edinburgh
For more details visit, www.waverleycare.org/tartanribbon-dinner

Saturday 16 March 2019
Tartan Rainbow Ceilidh
Assembly Roxy, Edinburgh
Save the date for the return of our big LGBT ceilidh in the company of the Veritable Ceilidh Club!
Register your interest, contact Holly: holly.rawlings@waverleycare.org or 0131 556 9710.

Sunday 28 April 2019
Kiltwalk Glasgow
Glasgow
Pull out your plaid, and join the Kiltwalk for Waverley Care. All fundraising topped up by 40% thanks to The Hunter Foundation!
Visit www.waverleycare.org/kiltwalk to find out more.

25 – 26 May 2019
Edinburgh Marathon Festival
Edinburgh
There is something for everyone at the Edinburgh Marathon Festival. Pick up your Waverley Care running vest and take on a 5k, 10k, half or full marathon.
Visit www.waverleycare.org/edmarathon to find out more.

Friday 27 September 2019
Ben Nevis Trek
With return transport from Glasgow, join Waverley Care into the heart of the breath-taking Western Highlands to conquer Scotland’s tallest peak!
Visit www.waverleycare.org/ben-nevis-trek to find out more.

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