



MindOut Annual Report 2016-2017

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**LGBTQ mental
health service**

Registered charity number:
1140098

OUR VISION

A world where the mental health of LGBTQ communities is a priority, free from stigma, respected and recognised

OUR MISSION

To improve the wellbeing of LGBTQ people who experience mental health issues, reduce mental health stigma, and promote positive mental health amongst the LGBTQ community.

WHAT WE SEEK TO ACHIEVE

MindOut is working towards the following five strategic outcomes:

- Improved mental wellbeing for LGBTQ people
- Reduced social isolation in LGBTQ communities
- Reduced suicidal distress in LGBTQ communities
- Reduced stigma associated with mental health
- Improved mental health services for LGBTQ people

OUR SERVICES ARE

- Provided by and for LGBTQ people with lived experience of mental health issues
- Person-centred
- Free at the point of delivery
- Non-judgemental
- Recovery oriented

MindOut is committed to making our services accessible to anyone who has information or communication needs relating to, for example, impairment, disability, sensory loss or where English is not your first language. If you would like this report in an alternative format that is easier to read, or in another language, please do let us know.

'We have worked hard on making our organisation as sustainable as we can in hard times and are delighted with some key achievements and with another year of providing services which are more in demand than ever'

Helen Jones, CEO and Alison France, Chair



CEO and Chair's Report

At MindOut, the CEO, Trustee Board, staff and volunteers have spent the year working as hard as ever to provide good quality, reliable, responsive and welcoming services. At the same time we have been reviewing our organisational structure and developing the range of sources of funding we receive in order to continue to run and develop our services.

To this end we have appointed a Business Development Manager, developed partnerships with local and national businesses, increased our community fundraising and our sales of training and consultancy.

This year we were successful in our bid to the Big Lottery Help Through Crisis Fund and we launched a new partnership with Allsorts Youth Project to provide Urgent Need Advocacy across the age range. This 5 year grant is a major boost to LGBTQ mental health provision in the city. Also in partnership with Allsorts we were successful in securing Brighton and Hove City Council Third Sector Investment, a major local investment in our sister organisations and in the work we do.

This year we achieved the Advocacy Quality Performance Mark, which we gained with distinction, a much deserved accolade for our professional, effective and very well run advocacy service.

'With national Mind we published a good practice guide for LGBTQ mental health, which has been distributed far and wide, including at a parliamentary reception. This is the achievement of a long held aim.'

We developed a new 5 year Strategic Plan and have already achieved some of the priorities we identified. For example, our development has been hampered for some time by inadequate office space. We searched Brighton and Hove for alternative venues but have now secured more offices and more meeting rooms at Community Base.

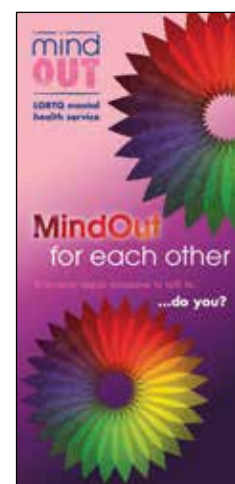
We come to the end of a large grant this year and are busy planning how we will manage that. At the same time there is local uncertainty over NHS contracts which affects some of our services. We continue to look for alternatives, to develop and adapt to the ever changing health climate.

Every year for the last 6 years since we became an independent charity we have ended the year having had a huge impact on the lives of the people we have the privilege to work with. We continue to learn and develop alongside our service users, our volunteers and our communities.

Helen Jones, CEO and Alison France, Chair

'I would like to thank Helen, The Board, all paid and unpaid staff who have and continue to work tirelessly in order to ensure that the awareness of issues and the provision of services in order address and support the needs of people who experience the effects of mental health within the LGBTQ communities. It has been an absolute privilege to work on behalf of MindOut and I wish you all continued growth and development as demonstrated in the past 12 months.'

Andrew Breary, Out-going Chair



Caroline Dinneage MP
with Helen Jones

628

Advocacy services cases were worked on for 476 people

1,342

people benefitted from our work this year

332

people attended our training workshops and courses

What we achieved – our service delivery

All MindOut services are run by and for LGBTQ people with lived experience of mental health issues, our services are independent, non-judgemental, person-centred and empowering.

'I absolutely love MindOut and thank them for all the help they have given me. It is a service I wish was available everywhere'

'I have been able to see the light at the end of the tunnel and feel better within myself. I feel heard by the mental health services and I feel more confident. I began to live life the way I wanted to again'

Advocacy

Advocacy services worked on a total of 628 cases for 476 people.

Our professional, independent mental health advocacy service includes specialist trans, housing and urgent need advocacy projects as well as an instant response drop-in advocacy service, peer advocacy support groups, collective advocacy and online advocacy sessions.

'...you (advocacy worker) saved me, you saved my life. I look back and almost can't believe that I am not only still alive, but I am safe and clean and warm and happy. I have a roof over my head and food in my belly and that is because of you!'

Peer Support Groups

Peer Support Groups were attended 1,296 times by a total of 130 people, an average of 10 sessions each.

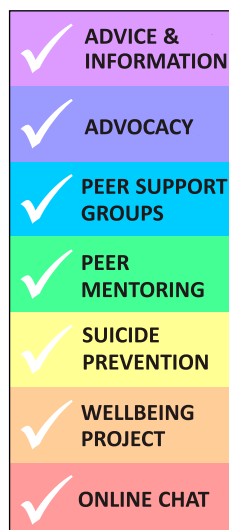
We ran weekly drop in and social groups, Out of the Blue (for people with experience of suicidal distress) and a trans and non-binary suicide prevention group, Work it Out (for those in paid employment), a non-binary group, an under 30s group, an over 50s group, groups for LGBTQ women and LGBTQ men, a BAME group and a bi group.

68 people received support from both group work and advocacy services

'Having a group where I can drop in and share experiences with when I need to means I feel less trapped. I am no longer feeling so alone or stupid. Feeling accepted and listened to. Relieved.'

'I am much less suicidal, thanks to you I now have more social support.'

'Peer support gave me the confidence to get back into work.'





Peer Mentoring Project

46 volunteer peer mentors offered 233 sessions of peer mentoring to 30 mentees.

The service has provided opportunities for people with similar or shared life experience and/or identity to exchange tips, ideas, develop coping strategies, share feelings, learn new skills, try new activities, explore options and plan for the future.

'Everything I have done and achieved as a MindOut service user and volunteer has been instrumental in my mental health recovery. Peer mentoring has allowed me to do things that I didn't think I would ever be able to do – not in a million years.'

'I feel much more confident in myself, also, I feel something inside me has changed, I'm listening more to my gut feelings. I feel more positive and hopeful about the future.'

Online Support Service

Online Support Service had 24 volunteer online support workers offering a total of 466 contacts to callers wanting advice and information, emotional and crisis support.

The service is open regularly outside office hours and at weekends. We run additional themed sessions for BAME, trans and non-binary, younger people and for advocacy enquiries.

We have improved our use of social media with 1,051 likes on Facebook, 3,189 followers on Twitter and our website was visited a total of 20,415 times by 13,499 unique users.

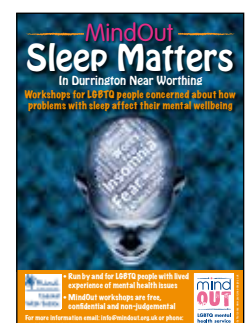
Wellbeing Workshops and courses

We ran 9 workshops/courses attended by 46 people. Topics this year were:

- Assertiveness for LGBTQ women
- Coping with winter blues
- Depression and anxiety x 2
- Managing stressful lives
- Mindfulness Meditation
- Living well as trans and non-binary
- Managing stress for trans and non-binary people
- Dealing with discrimination for trans and non-binary people
- Self-advocacy
- Living well on a low income

Training courses

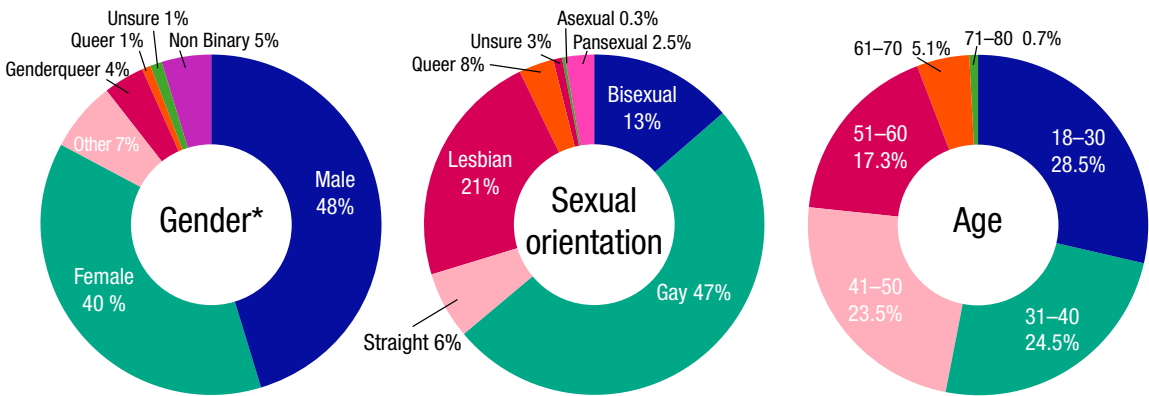
332 people attended training on LGBTQ good practice, LGBTQ mental health awareness, Trans Awareness, Introduction to Advocacy, and came to two Living Libraries. We launched a national LGBTQ mental health Good Practice Guide, in partnership with national Mind.



Who uses MindOut services?

We ask service users whenever possible to give us some information about themselves.

‘MindOut has helped me to feel comfortable with myself and my identity as a queer person by providing me with support in a non-judgmental environment. My mental health has been helped a great deal by being listened to and validated by people who care about my wellbeing.’



‘I can explore my experience of being black in the BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) group where we are all from different cultures... This has been so supportive, because when I step outside the door you can’t see my mental health problems, you may not even see that I have a physical disability... but there is no doubt that I am black.’

Faith/ Religious belief

Agnostic	28	15%
Atheist	37	20%
Buddhist	12	7%
Christian	42	23%
Hindu	3	2%
I have no particular religion	1	1%
Jewish	4	2%
Muslim	3	2%
Other	28	15%
Other philosophical belief	8	4%
Pagan	14	8%

24%

of our service users were transgender

27%

of our service users came from black, asian, minority ethnic communities

*Some of our service users identify as more than one gender which takes our gender percentage over 100%



What we have achieved – impact

*'Peer support is lifesaving. MindOut services are lifesaving!
I'm still suicidal, I'm not out of the woods, but with the support from
my group (Out of the Blue) I am getting there. I have hope!'*

80%

of group members reported
significant reduction in the frequency
and intensity of suicidal thoughts

60%

reported significant improvements
to self-injury

*'I really enjoyed coming to, speaking at, and being involved in the MindOut AGM/
celebration evening. It was a fantastic night for all!'*

This year group members reported consistent improvements in their wellbeing, the most significant have been:

- reduced suicidal distress
- improved sleep routines
- improved anger management
- reduced self injury
- reduced feelings of isolation
- feeling more informed and empowered

*'At first I wouldn't say much but the group worker invited me to speak –
that permission was amazing and I burst into tears. I didn't feel judged
and the group made me feel validated and "normal"'*

*'I have only positive things to say about Mindout. I have been involved
as a service user and a volunteer and they have made a huge contribution
to my life.'*

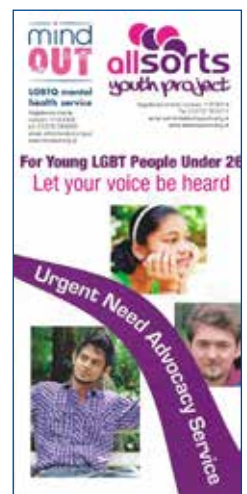
Advocacy Service clients reported that they:

- feel more positive
- feel less isolated
- have maintained independence
- have more control over their situation
- the care they receive has improved
- feel less depressed / anxious
- their emotional wellbeing has improved
- their independence has increased
- they have increased knowledge of local services

*'They listen, they hear you, they don't make assumptions,
and when they make mistakes, they learn from them.'*

*'My mental health has improved due to their open, trans affirmative support
and as a result of the opportunity to be involved in their work as a volunteer.'*

Quotes from The Rainbow Fund Community Consultation



Compared to last year, this year we have seen:

232% 209% 400%

increase welfare rights issues

increase in housing issues

increase in immigration/
asylum issues

'Since coming to MindOut two years ago the advocacy support I received has helped me survive financially but more than that, I now feel much less depressed and less suicidal and finally like I belong somewhere.'

Prevention and mental health

'The open group was so important... I gained huge insight into my difficulties. I got through my mental health crisis and eventually stopped attending, but I know the group will be there to support me again if I became unwell. It is the one place where I don't have to put on a fake smile and pretend everything is ok!'

This year we have learnt from service users that specific MindOut interventions have helped to prevent crisis from happening or worsening. Specific feedback from Work it Out and Out of the Blue peer support groups, advocacy clients, peer mentees, online support service users and beneficiaries of our food bank have told us that the support they received helped to prevent:

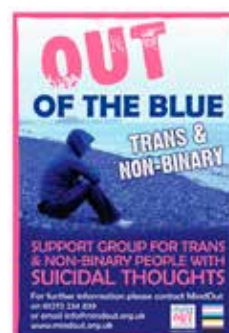
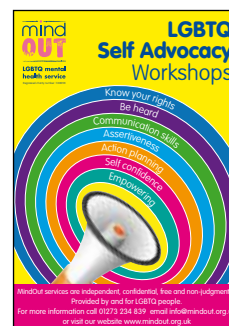
- unemployment
- homelessness
- street homelessness
- suicide
- serious self-harming behaviour
- debt
- food poverty/hunger
- hospital admission
- detention and deportation
- mental health worsening
- bankruptcy
- loss of tenancy/eviction
- utilities being disconnected
- isolation

'If mental health is a ship on the ocean of mental ill health... most people have sea-worthy vessels but I have a rubber dinghy with holes in it. I patch it up as best I can and MindOut has provided stronger duct tape and a lifejacket.'

80% of LGBTQ and 90% of trans and non-binary service users spoke to us about lived experience of suicidal distress.

'People in the group really encouraged me to apply for some paid work, the group talked me through the application process and my first interview in 20 years and I gained the confidence to go through with it, and I was offered the job!'

'Just the fact that MindOut is there and that I can attend twice a month helps me cope. I might not be here without the Trans Non-Binary Out of the Blue group and I'm grateful....'



You said we did

MindOut strives to be a flexible and responsive service, within the limits set by our constitution, our strategic plan and the requirements of our funders. Our service users tell us what is needed and we do our best to respond to demand and to service user requests. Directly in response to service users' suggestions we have:

- developed a programme of self-advocacy workshops
- set up an ongoing BAME LGBTQ peer support group and a weekly BAME LGBTQ online support session
- delivered workshops for trans people to offer support with mental health and social transitioning as well as running a regular trans online support service
- launched a regular drop-in duty advocacy service to improve access for people without any means of communication
- run a regular online, instant access advocacy service
- improved our knowledge and resources about the rights and needs of LGBTQ refugees and asylum seekers
- set up a peer advocacy support group for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers
- run a non-binary peer support group
- run specific online support sessions for people who are HIV+, suicidal, bisexual, women, experiencing hate crimes
- developed our outreach and community participation work supporting our ambitions to make our services more accessible, approachable and responsive
- improved access to our services for people with communication or information needs

Finances

We have had another very successful year with funds for our main services, and funds for new, innovative work as well.

Many thanks to Lorraine Heaysman, Steve Early and Chris Tyler.

Total Income: £370,170

Total expenditure: £302,672

Restricted funds to carry forward: £34,749

Net income: £32,749

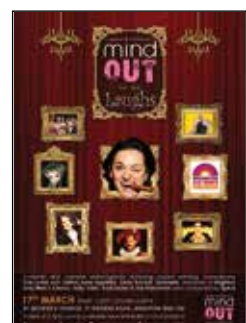
Fundraising

Aaron Lawrence, is nothing short of a fundraising genius. Spending every single day for a year in a different fancy dress outfit, he raised an astonishing £16,000 for MindOut. In his new role as MindOut Community Ambassador he continues to raise our profile locally on the Scene and fundraise throughout the year at specific events in collaboration with the wonderful Bedford Tavern. Aaron's efforts on behalf of MindOut have helped draw new supporters to fundraise for us as well as bringing the issue of LGBTQ mental health to the forefront of people's minds. Aaron is swiftly becoming a community activist of great influence impacting positively on the lives of LGBTQ people.

This year we were delighted to add a new role to the staff team: Business Development Manager. Kate Webb is working hard to raise unrestricted funds to help MindOut become more sustainable over the medium to long term.

'Many thanks to everyone who has donated or sponsored us this year. All contributions are very much appreciated, we really could not manage without your support'.

We are delighted to be one of the chosen charities for the LGBTQ colleague network within Lloyds Banking Group – the Rainbow Network – and we look forward to collaborating with them in the future.



Half Marathon Team

Many thanks to the incredible efforts of our 10 strong Half Marathon team, this year they were:

Michael Gaunt, Matt Hassell, Julian Dean, Jason Saw, Andy Cook, Nerissa Haskic, Sarah Mckinnon, Steven Elliott, Ben Wilkins, Danny James

Brighton Marathon 2017

Congratulations and many thanks for running the Marathon to: Liam O'Shea, Kevin Westgate

Swim-a-thon

On 1st April (just in time for the annual report!) our amazing swimming team in the annual Swim-a-Thon were: Phil Brooke, Alison France

Volunteers

'I'm proud to be a volunteer!'

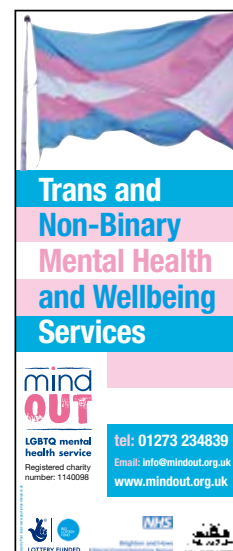
We regularly recruit and train volunteers to work on a number of projects including Peer Mentoring and on online support. This year our volunteers were: Alex Catena, Andrew Baker, Andy Barber, Anna Roscher, Ben Coomes, Christine Belk, Chrissie Catanni, Dan Stewart, Drew Mason, Chloe Foster, Choi Kok, Chris Campen, Cindy Jenkins, Dorothy Jones, Ed Borgars, Ed Lepper, Frankie Roake, Jamie Foster, Janette Bryan, Karen Dresback, Kevin Terry, Kylie Okoro, Liz Ansell, Moira Vincent, Nezy Evans, Nicki Heywood, Paul James, Phillip Bremner, Poppy Gale, Ren Delmare, Rhys Dower, Rob Stokoe, Rum T. Franco, Sam Oliver, Sharon Rennie, Silvio Grasso, Sonia Anderton, Steve Ashfield, Tony Larkin, Tracey Clarke, Vincent Lane.

'Just being part of MindOut has been amazing – everyone is welcoming and fall over themselves to thank you for your volunteering. I feel so appreciated, but more than that I feel part of MindOut.'

The year ahead

The next 12 months at MindOut are looking very exciting, we aim to:

- Sustain our existing advocacy, peer support, group work and online services
- Continue to develop and promote our LGBTQ counselling service, launched in October 2017
- Run a successful recruitment drive for volunteer online support workers, counsellors and peer mentors
- Develop and promote the role of our service user representatives
- Develop our knowledge and expertise in supporting LGBTQ migrants, refugees and asylum seekers
- Build a team of runners and fundraisers to run the Brighton Marathon and Brighton Half Marathon 2018
- Continue to develop our partnership work with Allsorts Youth Project, Brighton & Hove LGBT Switchboard, The Clare Project and Mind in Brighton & Hove
- Run two living libraries at the University of Brighton
- Further develop our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Panel
- Continue to build on our food bank resources and provide food parcels for LGBTQ people experiencing food poverty and hunger
- Build on the successes of the Community Volunteer Ambassador role and explore developing the CVA team further.
- Prioritise the following areas for development should funds become available:
 - BAME-specific advocacy and group work projects which work to address the specific mental health and wellbeing needs of BAME LGBTQ people





- A benefits advice service to ensure that where service users are on benefits, they are supported to claim their full entitlement
- Develop an advocacy service for people over the age of 50, ensuring that the specific wants and needs of older LGBTQ people are voiced and acted upon
- Build on the successful pilot of the our volunteer led peer mentoring project.

MindOut Mental Health Awards

Each year at our Celebration Event we give awards to the individuals, groups and organisations who have gone the extra mile for LGBTQ mental health. This year, awards were given to: Aaron Lawrence, The Bedford Tavern, Debra Jane Appleby, Alison Gaywood, The Marlborough, Rainbow Chorus, Rory Finn.

Thank you to

Veronica Salowne and Ayodele Otimayin for providing service user consultancy re: asylum issues; Recon, Scuff, Wapo and Wapa for support with social networking; GScene magazine for publishing our mental health articles; Radio Reverb; Latest TV.

'I feel proud and like I'm making a difference. It's not just MindOut for mental health, or for being LGBTQ - my wrist band says "MindOut for each other" and MindOut truly does that.'

Staff team

This year the MindOut staff team were:

Helen Jones CEO, Jason Saw Service Manager, Si Campbell Senior Practitioner Wellbeing Services, Emma Crossland Senior Practitioner Advocacy Services, Phil Brooke Advocacy Worker, Ellis Johnson Housing Advocacy Worker, Maeve Devine Trans Advocacy Worker, Kate Webb Business Development Manager, Alfie Sheperd Group Worker, Yasmin Kapadia Group Worker, Edward Whelan Administrator, Darren Flint Administrator.

Trustee Board:

Andrew Breary Chair (to May 17), Alison France Chair (from May 17), Kate Wesson, Charlie Bel James, Sharon Munnings, Sonia Anderton, Andy Barber, Nicky Cambridge.

Thank you to our funders

Big Lottery Fund, Brighton & Hove City Council, Brighton & Hove NHS, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Rainbow Fund, Sussex Community Foundation.





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