



LGBTQ mental  
health service

Lesbian,  
Gay,  
Bisexual,  
Trans,  
Queer  
mental health  
service

Annual Report 2017-18



LGBTQ mental  
health service

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**our vision:** a world where the mental health of LGBTQ communities is a priority, free from stigma, respected and recognised.



MindOut is working towards the following five strategic outcomes:

<p><b>Improved mental health wellbeing</b> for LGBTQ people</p>	<p><b>Reduced social isolation</b> in LGBTQ communities</p>	<p><b>Reduced suicidal distress</b> in LGBTQ communities</p>	<p><b>Reduced stigma</b> associated with mental health</p>	<p><b>Improved mental health services</b> for LGBTQ people</p>
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MindOut sets off a virtuous circle of improved confidence and reduced social isolation enabling service users to access other services.

**We are passionate about:**

- Community and individual empowerment
- Mental wellbeing
- Co-production and client participation
- Staff wellbeing, performance and development
- Challenging stigma and discrimination
- Transparency
- Quality, excellence and innovation
- Diversity and inclusion, respecting individuality
- Meeting the needs of LGBTQ communities.



**CEO and Chair's Report 2017-18**

This year we have provided much needed services to more people than ever, launched a new counselling service and had excellent results from our external evaluation.

**Helen Jones, CEO and Alison France, Chair**

MindOut continues to be a very successful small charity. We are delighted to report on a year of growth and development and very positive feedback from people who use our services.

Last year we were asked by community groups to consider setting up an affordable LGBTQ counselling service. With the assistance of LGBTQ Switchboard, with the financial backing of the Rainbow Fund and the fundraising talents of Bear Patrol we decided to go ahead.

The MindOut LGBTQ counselling service opened last October and we are delighted to say that it is running very smoothly, with minimal waiting times and excellent outcomes for the people who complete the 12 week offer.

“MindOut is a hugely personal, wonderful organisation full of amazing staff and volunteers who you know will help and support you whenever you need it. You can never feel alone or isolated at MindOut or unable to ask for help because everyone there is so kind and caring and will go so far to make it a safe environment where you can be open and where everyone is willing and able to help each other.”

At MindOut we work constantly to improve the quality of the services we offer and how to refine, develop and refresh how we run. This year we have reviewed our peer support group work service, made some changes in consultation with service users and we are launching a new programme this autumn. Our work in partnership has been very effective this year, especially the corporate partnerships we have built on. Lloyds Bank Rainbow network have been incredibly supportive and through our work with them we have made contact with other corporate donors.

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.

We are living in uncertain times, especially where contracts are concerned. We are waiting for more information about re-tendering for our LGBTQ and Trans Advocacy Services and our Peer Mentoring and online chat services.

Both of us would like to thank the staff and volunteers at MindOut for all the expertise and passion they bring to running the innovative, responsive, accessible mental health support services we are renowned for.

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.

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 the 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.

**1,710**  
people benefitted from our work this year

## The range of services “acts like wraparound care”.

“Because a lot of the services are peer-led, MindOut listens to what we want and how we feel the person should be dealt with and they put that into practice rather than the medical kind of place, where they might have a set plan.”

## Our services

### Advocacy

**This year our advocacy team supported 572 people with 774 advocacy cases.**

Advocacy brief interventions and long term case work is provided by qualified, independent mental health advocacy workers and includes specialist trans, housing, older peoples and urgent need advocacy services as well as weekly online advocacy sessions, instant response drop-in advocacy support, group and collective advocacy, peer advocacy groups and advocacy related training and workshops. The service has also run a food bank offering food parcels, vouchers and toiletries to service users experiencing financial crisis and food poverty.



### Peer support group work

**Peer support groups were attended 1,412 times by 131 people, on average 11 sessions each.**

We ran themed closed groups, social groups and drop-ins for LGBTQ migrants refugees and asylum seekers, BAME, bi, non-binary, queer, GBTQ men, LGBTQ women, people under 30. We ran Work it Out for people in paid employment and Out of the Blue for people with experience of suicidal distress and a trans and non-binary OOTB group.



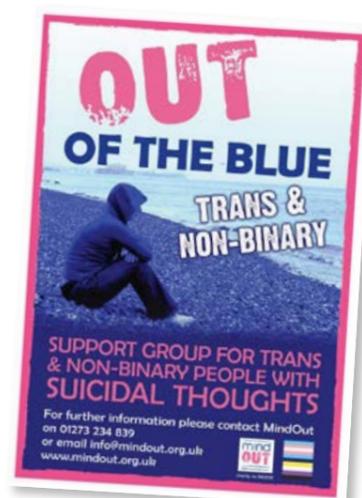
**1,412**  
peer support  
group attendances  
this year



### Peer mentoring

**22 volunteer peer mentors offered peer mentoring to 33 Mentees.**

Peer mentors have shared lived experiences, expertise, knowledge and ideas with their mentees around issues of identity, exploring options, trying new things, coping strategies, learning new skills and planning for the future.



“I don't think many people come in knowing exactly what they need... I think MindOut is very good at helping you to find out whether services within MindOut are right for you and, if not, they can suggest other places and services.”  
(Volunteer)

### Online support

**Online support workers have offered support to 987 contacts seeking advice, information, emotional and crisis support.**

The service has been during the week out of hours and at weekends throughout the year. We have run themed sessions for young people, BAME people and trans and non-binary people as well a weekly advocacy session.



### Wellbeing services

**We ran 51 sessions including outreach, stalls and workshops, including:**

- Living well on a low income (x2)
- Mindfulness Meditation
- Sleep Matters
- LGBTQ Self Advocacy
- Self-Advocacy for women
- Trans and Non-Binary self-advocacy
- Two living libraries.

“Benign ignorance is not enough! The course helped me to justify to the team (and world) that this is important to know about.”

### Training courses

**We ran 8 training courses attended by 80 people.**

Our very first consultation meetings with service users highlighted demands for all professionals to have had training in LGBTQ issues. We are passionate about helping organisations and professionals to become more confident in supporting LGBTQ people to get the help they need to build resilience and wellbeing. We can offer bespoke courses in addition to ‘Responding to LGBTQ Mental Health needs’ and Trans 101.

“Trans 101 helped me understand the struggles faced by trans people and helped me be more open – there is no short cut to understanding.”

## Counselling Service

This year we set up a new LGBTQ low cost counselling service, with support from the **Rainbow Fund** and **Bear Patrol**, an entirely community funded service.

Counselling offers a safe, confidential and non-judgemental place to talk to a LGBTQ counsellor about anything that is troubling, no matter what it is.

We opened in November 2017 and have received 90 applications for counselling. On average clients wait just 4 working days from the point of application to being seen for an initial assessment and 6 working days from the point of assessment to attending their first counselling session.

We offer 12 weekly sessions. All clients make an affordable contribution, based on their income.

We have a team of qualified and trainee counsellors, who between them offer 54 counselling sessions a week. Two of our counsellors identify as BAME and 4 are aged 50+ and two are Trans or non-binary, 4 are male.

**Clients have given us some great feedback, including:**

“This was so easy to organise, it was my first good experience of counselling in the last 10 years!”

“I have been able to be more confident in being myself, I am happier in myself and proud of who I am”

“This has been a life changing experience for me”

“I am thinking more and asking questions about myself”

“This has been very helpful I trusted my counsellor a lot”, I felt cared for”

“Opening up to people was difficult for me, this experience has changed that for me”

## What is the impact of MindOut's work?

We asked people what is the most significant change as a result of using MindOut services, these are some of the replies:

- No longer feeling so alone – normalised how I felt, and gave the space / time / support to address it, as well as being more part of LGBTQ community.
- Learnt to cope with pressure better without going into a meltdown.
- I have not lost my job. More confident, assertive. Connected. I have friends.
- I have felt supported and secure.
- Space to heal and move forward.
- I feel less isolated and also far more empowered as a person.
- Retained employment. Not got sacked. Not suicidal.
- Much more relaxed talking about my depression / anxiety.
- Much happier in general.
- Improved self confidence.
- I feel I understand that part of my personal confusion is due to bi issues not mental health issues.
- Feel more comfortable being bi.
- It keeps me alive.
- A little bit of confidence.
- Learning from others.
- Improvement in depressive and social anxiety symptoms. Increased self-worth.
- More energy.
- Feeling less alone.
- I've been able to talk about my situation without holding back.
- Feeling more accepting of myself.
- I have more confidence with other people.
- Real, strong, connections/ engagement.
- Being with others facing similar issues and feeling less excluded.
- Made me feel 'normal' after a long period of feeling frustrated that I could not describe to people close to me how my anxiety and depression was controlling my life.
- Lessening feelings of self-harm / suicide.
- I am more open about my suicidal thoughts.
- More settled and calm.



“This is what's so good about MindOut: it's not about fixing people; it's more about just understanding me and being there for me and just knowing that there's people there that care, and not judging me and not giving up on me. That has been really important to me... (The reason I contacted them) was about emotional support rather than practical actions.”



## Wellbeing outcomes

60% of people attending support groups, workshops, courses and peer mentoring showed significant improvements to their mental wellbeing.

### People who attended our peer support groups are:

- More optimistic about the future
- More confident
- Deal with problems better
- More relaxed
- More cheerful

### People who use our Peer Mentoring service are:

- Feeling better about themselves
- More interested in new things
- More confident
- Better able to deal with problems.

“I find it hard to do things for myself, to look after myself but, if you're doing something that you know is for someone else or helping someone else, you somehow find the motivation to do that where you wouldn't find it to help yourself.”



## Fundraising highlights

This year we managed to raise a fabulous £67K to support and sustain our services. This came from a variety of sources – **£25K came from LGBTQ communities**, which was a mix of individual donors, groups, people doing challenges and our own events such as **MindOut for the Laughs** and a sponsored **Firewalk**. £14K came from Trusts and Foundations who awarded us money to run groups, support our work with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and to run workshops.

£12K was donated by our corporate sponsors – most notably we were a chosen charity for **LLoyds Bank Rainbow Network** and the **Coop Community Fund** chose MindOut to be one of the local causes they support this year.

This year we were one of the **Brighton Marathon's** local charity partners which gave us 10 free places and lots of publicity.

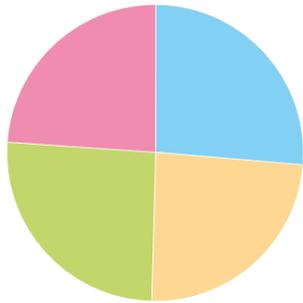
Thank you to **Danny Dwyer** and local networking group **Bear Patrol** who fundraised a whopping £7,500 for MindOut's LGBTQ counselling service.

We have improved our website and social media presence to highlight the impact of our work in order to increase the number of regular monthly donors, vital to providing a consistent income for MindOut. We now have 10 monthly donors.

**We are so grateful to have this dedicated and generous support enabling our vital services to continue to save lives, reduce loneliness and put wellbeing and resilience at the heart of our communities.**

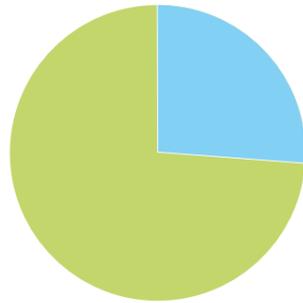
# Who uses our services?

Age



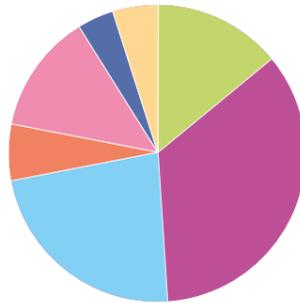
- Ages 18-30: 26%
- Ages 31-40: 24%
- Ages 41-50: 26%
- Ages 50+: 24%

Ethnicity



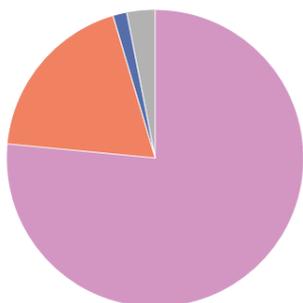
- BAME: 26%
- White British: 74%

Sexuality



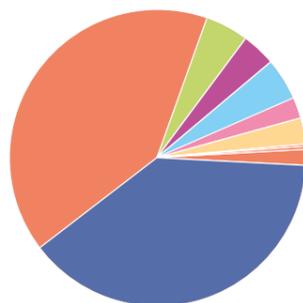
- Bisexual: 14%
- Gay: 35%
- Lesbian: 23%
- Other: 6%
- Queer: 13%
- Straight: 4%
- Unsure: 5%

Age, 50+



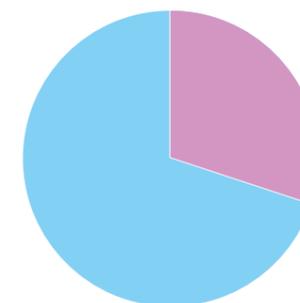
- Ages 51-60: 77%
- Ages 61-70: 19%
- Ages 71-80: 2%
- Ages 80+: 3%

Gender



- Female: 41%
- Gender queer: 4%
- Male: 39%
- Non-binary: 5%
- Other: 7%
- Queer: 2%
- Unsure: 3%

Trans Identities



- Cisgender: 70%
- Transgender: 30%

**26%** of clients are BAME, black, asian and minority ethnic

“MindOut is there if you need further support. Having someone to talk to someone about it helps you stop a crisis amplifying.”

## You Said...

## We did...

MindOut strives to be a flexible and responsive service. We work to improve our services all the time. Everything we do is based on a co-production ethos of listening to service users. 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:

- Set up peer advocacy sessions for trans and non-binary people and for people who are BAME and LGBTQ
- Improved our food bank resources and provisions to include fresh produce, pet food, toiletries and specific dietary requirements
- Developed peer support and advocacy for people over the age of 50
- Set up a low cost LGBTQ counselling service
- Responded to demand for suicide prevention by appointing a Suicide Prevention Worker
- Raised concerns and complaints about the lack of support, understanding and treatment of LGBTQ people with mental health concerns at welfare benefit tribunals and medicals
- Raised issues of concern to trans feminine prisoners
- Worked to get concessionary travel for people using community mental health services
- Opened our online service daily
- Raised collective issues about the provision of endocrinology services to trans and non-binary people
- Developed a wellbeing themed peer support group programme

**40%** of clients are trans/non-binary/genderqueer

“MindOut is invaluable. The staff don't realise how huge a difference they make to people's lives. I've heard it from other service users as well. They do an amazing job.”





## MindOut Mental Health Awards 2017

Each year at our Celebration Event we give awards to individuals, groups and organisations who have gone the extra mile for LGBTQ mental health. This year awards were given to:

- The Clare Project • Gary Smith • Kate Wildblood and Queen Josephine
- Brew Dog • Danny Dwyer and Bear Patrol • Sophie Cook and Latest TV
- Kris Auld and the Lloyds Bank Rainbow Network.

## Finances

We have had another successful year with funding bids alongside increased community fundraising. Many thanks to our Finance Worker Lorraine Heaysman, our Management Accountant Steve Early and Chris Tyler who prepared our annual accounts. Please do contact the office if you would like a copy of our accounts.

<b>Total income:</b>	£360,797
<b>Total expenditure:</b>	£362,130
<b>Overall deficit:</b>	£1,333
<b>Restricted funds to carry forward:</b>	£21,963

## Introducing our new MindOut T-shirt range

Get your unique T-shirt designed exclusively for MindOut by local award-winning artist, filmmaker and human rights campaigner Fox Fisher.

Buying one of our T-shirts will ensure that your money is spent on supporting our LGBTQ communities locally and promoting positive mental health.

To buy a T-shirt go to [www.mindout.org.uk](http://www.mindout.org.uk)

## Volunteers

We have the most wonderful teams of volunteers running projects including Peer Mentoring, the online support service and the counselling service. This year we have recruited, trained, supervised and supported no less than 56 amazing individuals. As well as making a huge difference to peoples' lives through the work they do, volunteers also bring a massive amount of experience, skills and knowledge to the organisation and help us develop and progress.

### Many, many thanks to:

Aaron Lawrence, Adam Crowther, Alex Catena, Amalabandu Chandler, Andrew Baker, Andy Barber, Anna Roscher, Becca Devlin, Carlie Pottington, Chris Campen, Christine Berk, Ciara Lochore, Dan Stewart, Darren Flint, Davey Shields, Di Robinson, Dorothy Jones, Ed Borgars, Ed Lepper, Ed Whelan, Elaine Moore, Ellis Johnson, Emmie Propser, Eros Biasiolo, Frankie Roake, Clare Gravenell, Hannah Creedon, Janette Bryan, Jo Tompkins, Joanna Woods, Judith Galloway, Karen Dresback, Kevin Terry, Kylie Okoro, Liv Edwards, Liz Ansell, Lorna Simm, Luc Raesmith, Maeve Devine, Moira Vincent, Nezy Evans, Nicki Heywood, Paul Jaymes, Paul Vigg, Poppy Gale, Ren Delmar, Ruth Rose, Scott Sharp, Silvio Grasso, Sonia Anderton, Sonia Savin, Sophie Barnes, Steve Ashfield, Subira Wahogo, Tony Larkin, Vince Lane, Wendy Quelch.

### Staff Team

#### This year the staff team were:

Helen Jones CEO, Jason Saw Service Manager, Kate Webb Business Development Manager, Emma Crossland Senior Practitioner Advocacy Services, Si Campbell Senior Practitioner Wellbeing Services, George Tidey Counselling Coordinator, Phil Brooke Advocacy Worker/Suicide Prevention Worker, Ellis Johnson Trans Advocacy Worker, Dawn Hayes Housing Advocacy Worker, Edward Whelan Administrator, Darren Flint Administrator, Alfie Sheppard - Group Worker, Kitty Clucas - Group Worker.

### Trustee Board

Alison France (Chair), Kate Wesson (to Sept 2018), Charlie Bel James, Sharon Munnings, Sonia Anderton (to Aug 2018), Andy Barber (to April 2018), Kris Auld, George Eastman, Eleanor Hope, Nicky Cambridge (to May 2017), Andrew Breary (to May 2017).

“MindOut is a hugely personal, wonderful organisation full of amazing staff and volunteers who you know will help and support you whenever you need it. You can never feel alone or isolated at MindOut or unable to ask for help because everyone there is so kind and caring and will go so far to make it a safe environment where you can be open and where everyone is willing and able to help each other.”

## The year ahead



We have recently set up a new **Suicide Prevention Project** offering group work, case work, awareness raising, events and workshops.



We are starting a new project to focus on the needs of **older LGBTQ communities** including peer mentoring/befriending, events, workshops and anti-stigma initiatives.



Next year is our **20th anniversary** and we are planning various celebrations.

## Thank you to our funders



**56** people volunteered for MindOut this year