



# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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33 Regent Quay, Aberdeen, AB11 5BE

Registered Charity Number: SC046667

*four*  
**Pillars**

supporting Grampian's LGBT+ community

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# REFERENCE & ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Charity Name	Four Pillars
Charity Registration Number	SC046667
Contact Address	33 Regent Quay Aberdeen AB11 5BE
Trustees	Rachael Beedie(Chair) Skara Bowie (Secretary) Steven Watt (Treasurer) Fiona Hughes (Trustee)  Colin white (Chair from August 2019-August 2020) Adam Perry (Trustee August 2019 – March 2021) Steven Webber (Trustee May 2019 – August 2020)
Senior Management Team	Deejay Bullock
Auditors/Independent Examiners	Mint Accounting 56 King Street Aberdeen AB24 5AX
Bankers	Bank of Scotland The Direct Business Bank, Bank of Scotland PLC, Pentland House, Edinburgh

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

## Partnership Overview

Four Pillars has continued to maintain partnerships throughout Grampian and consistently aims to seek out new organisation where partnerships can form. It's hard to remember a time before the pandemic. COVID-19 has taught us a lot about the way in which we work with partners. Having meetings online has meant we have been able to connect with more organisations outside of Grampian, and allowed us to form relationships that will benefit our service users in the coming years.

## Projects overview

We had many projects available to the community before the pandemic and had to quickly adapt those services in order to reach people during extremely difficult times. Four Pillars successfully moved all support and social groups online at the start of the 2020 financial year, and created new services which allowed us to reach more people who were isolating and experiencing mental, emotional & physical health problems. Towards the end of 2020 we were made aware of an increase in sexual health issues across the region and set up outreach services in early 2021 to educate online and deliver condoms and lube directly to people's doors.

## Positives

I am proud to say that Four Pillars team stepped up in the face of the pandemic, they have continued to work tirelessly over the past year to increase our reach, improve services and deliver on promises. The team, from trustees to volunteers, have come together and built something amazing in our services. Over the past year we have seen a lot of challenges, and everyone has come together to better the charity and its delivery to the community. Four Pillars continues to grow from strength to strength.

## Challenges

Four Pillars has struggled over the last year, through the pandemic. Our main office was closed when the landlords went into administration and although in lockdown at the time, it left the charity with no home and no future. Our team stepped up once again and found us a new home. Whilst it has been extremely challenging getting the new hub safe & practical for use, ready for the public, it was a challenge to keep going with dwindling funds and no source of donated income due to lockdowns.

## Going Forward

Next Year (April 2021 – March 2022) we are aiming higher than ever. With new staff, a new amazing purposed home, we aim to offer new groups to those that need it most, post COVID, and improved services within our existing projects. It is our goal to increase awareness of Four Pillars across the region and support more people in their hour of need. We aim to have a dedicated team of staff and volunteers taking Four Pillars out in the community and reaching rural areas across Aberdeenshire. With a dedicated team we are able to reach new goals and improve the overall reach of our organisation.

Deejay Bullock  
CEO

# STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## Governing Document

Four Pillars is a charitable Trust and governed by its Trust deed.

## Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The Board is responsible for the governance of Four Pillars and for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations e.g. Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland ) Act 2005, the Companies Act 2006, OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator), and Companies House. The Board consists of not more than 7, and not less than 3 persons drawn from the voting membership. If through resignation or other cause a vacancy occurs on the elected membership of the Board, the Board may appoint a new trustee to fill the vacancy by way of a majority vote. Four Pillars voting membership is drawn from individuals and representatives of organisations in the Grampian area (Four Pillars' 'area of benefit') interested in supporting the work of Four Pillars. Four Pillars continues to pursue expansion of its Trustees to reflect the needs of the organisation, our partners and the diverse communities who depend upon our service. The elected members of the Board, the honorary Chair, honorary Treasurer and the honorary Secretary of Four Pillars are chosen by means of a vote at the annual general meeting by the voting members of Four Pillars. All trustees are elected annually and hold office until the conclusion of the next annual general meeting. Subject to their annual renewal of commitment to Four Pillars every individual member nominated in writing to serve on the Board or in any honorary office is asked to accept the nomination in writing within 14 days of the closing date for nominations, which is 28 days prior to an AGM, and to sign a declaration stating that they will seek to promote the objects of Four Pillars, and fulfil their share of the responsibilities in the operation of Four Pillars. All members who have been full individual or affiliated members of Four Pillars continuously for a period of six months prior to the election are eligible to be nominated for election to the Board and to any honorary office, and nominate for and to vote in such election. The trustees are responsible for administering and managing Four Pillars, in accordance with relevant legislation, in a manner consistent with Four Pillars' purposes, and compliant with the duties placed on them by the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

New Trustees receive an Induction Pack and training for Charity Trustees.

The Induction Pack covers:

1. Introduction to Four Pillars and its Services
2. Four Pillars Trustees Duties & good practice advice
3. List of Current Four Pillars Trustees
4. Guidance for Charity Trustees – 'Acting with Care and Diligence'
5. Copy of Four Pillars' Trust Deed and any appendix
6. Copy of Four Pillars' most recent Annual Report
7. Four Pillars' map
8. Copy of Four Pillars' most recent business plan

## **Organizational Structure**

The Board conducts its business through regular meetings (normally every 3 months). Certain responsibilities are delegated to the management team and volunteers as appropriate. In addition, sub-committees can be set up for specific purposes. Such as that of the Grampian Pride committee. The sub-committee has all powers to implement its purposes in line with the Trustees wishes, which is outlined in a TOR (Terms of Reference). Any Sub-committee is chaired by a Four Pillars trustee or representative of the Boards choosing.

The Responsibility for the day-to-day running of Four Pillars is delegated to senior staff members. 'Teams' have been setup within the structure to allow "working groups" to carry out duties which will better the charities aims. Each team is comprised of an elected trustee or senior management member and various volunteers. There is no limit to the size of each team. Elected members are responsible for feeding back to the board for further review and guidance on matters arising and/or budgets.

# OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Following the closure of the Aberdeen Market and other factors we moved our community hub to a new property at 33 Regent Quay. This new hub will open to the public 01.05.21.

## Four Unity

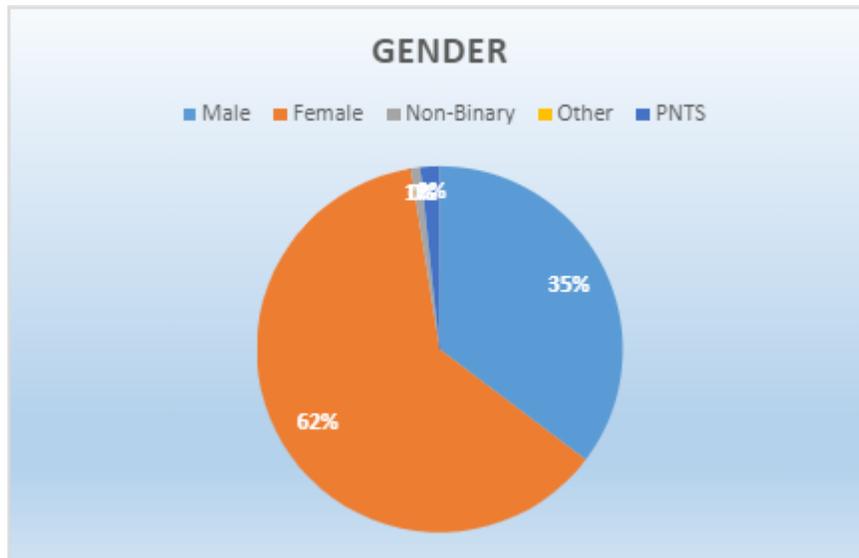
This year started in a Nation-wide lockdown due to the COVID-19 outbreak, this as well as other factors led us to move Four Unity to our new property at 33 Regent Quay. Due to lockdown and getting our new property ready to open has meant Four Unity has been closed for a year. We are confident that 2021-22 will be a big year of growth for the charity as our new property has far more space, is more private and we can dictate our own opening hours, this allows us to provide a safer environment for service users and volunteers. Four Unity will reopen to the public 01.05.21 with measures in place to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers and service users.

The following data has been recorded through 3 quarters (September 2020 – March 2021) Therefore it is not possible to get a fair and accurate average throughout the year. It is also important to note that our abilities to collect the data was limited, as previously we had relied on gathering the data in person which has not been possible this year, we have used these limitations to rework how we collect data about service users so that moving forward we can have a more comprehensive dataset to analyze. Throughout the start of the year, we were not collecting data of our online services, we also were not able to gather data regarding online events like the gaming livestream etc. Although our data shows a significant decrease in the amount of users we provided services to, we have spent the year expanding our base of users and gaining more awareness of our charity. We expect to have much higher figures in 2021-2022 once lockdown restrictions are lifted. This data also relies on people filling out the survey.

- a). every time they come into contact with Four Pillars services and
- b). correctly.

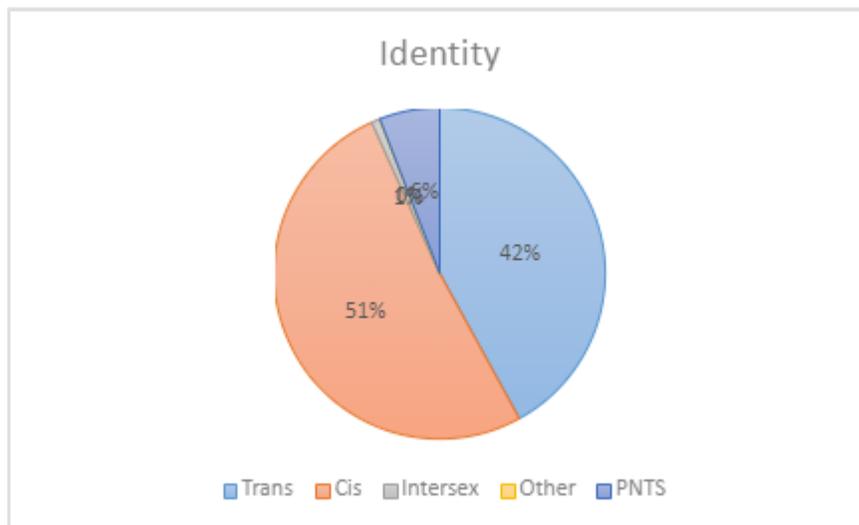
Between September 2020 – March 2021 119 individual responses to the survey. The results are below:

## Charts



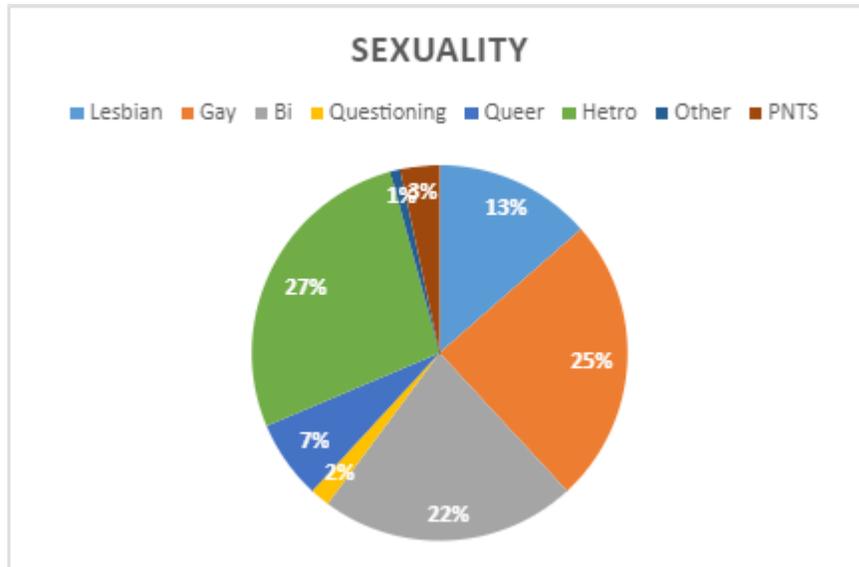
Gender

	Male	Female	Non-Binary	Other	PNTS
	42	74	1	0	2



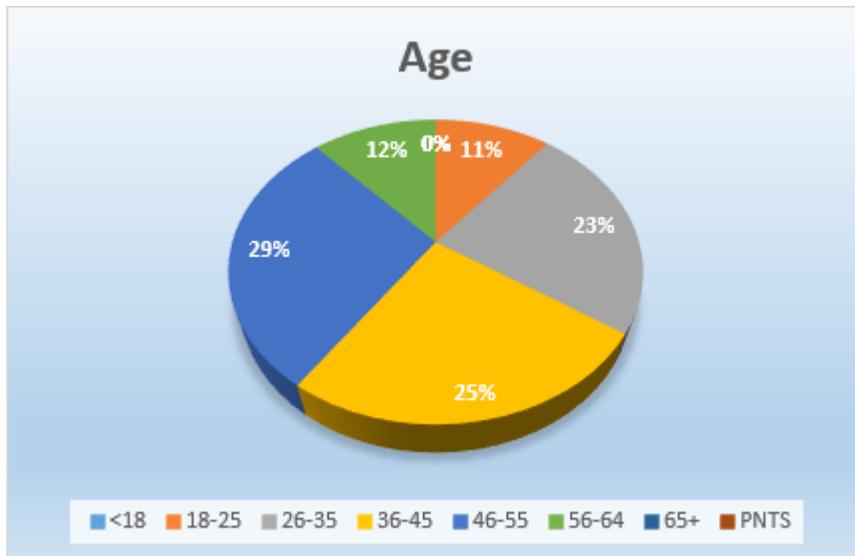
Identity

	Trans	Cis	Intersex	Other	PNTS
	50	61		0	7



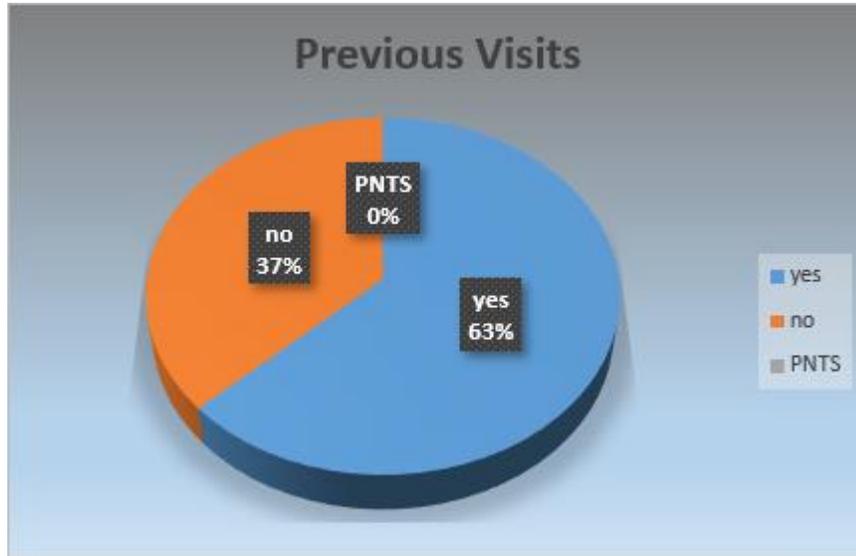
Sexuality

Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Questioning	Queer	Hetro	Other	PNTS
16	29	26	2	8	32	1	4



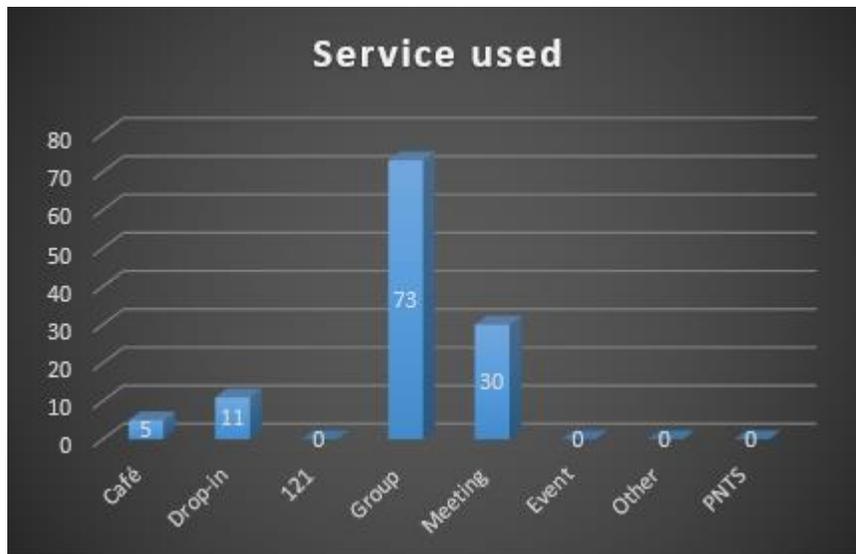
Age Range

<18	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-64	65+	PNTS
0	13	28	30	34	14	0	3



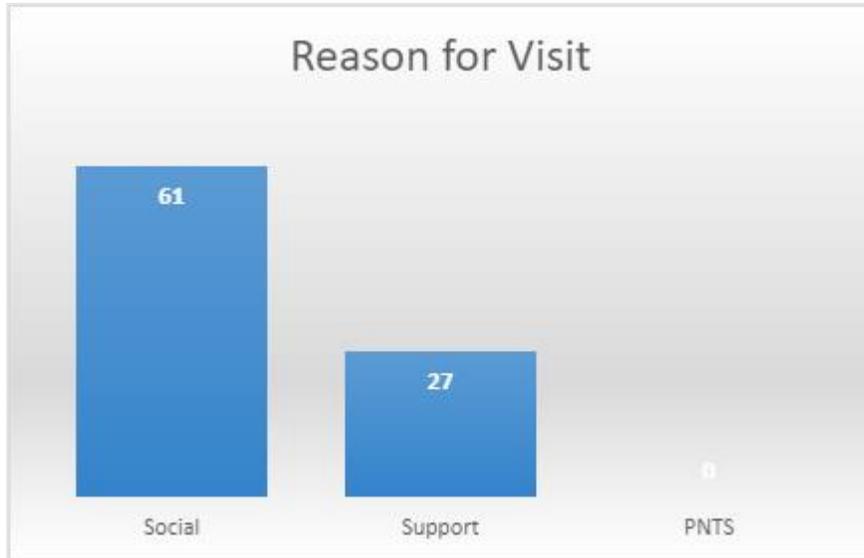
Previous visit

yes	no	PNTS
75	44	0



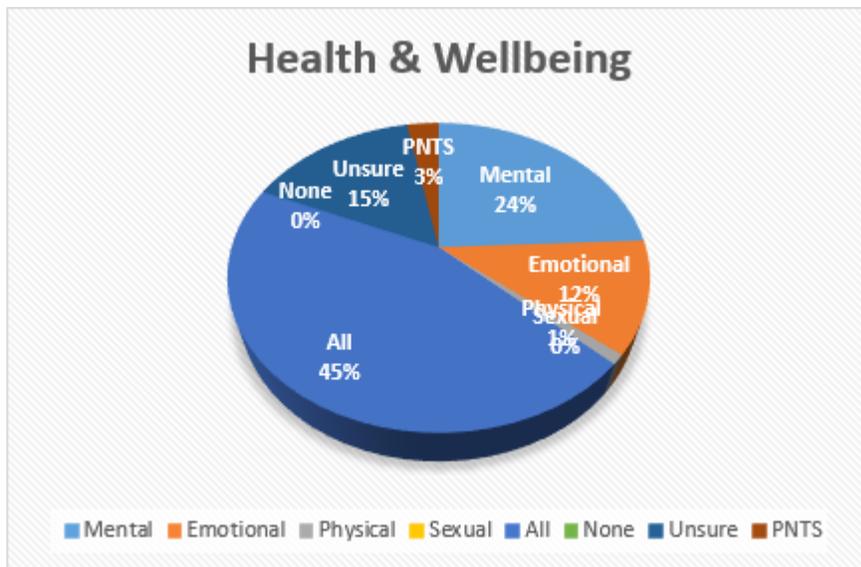
Service used

Café	Drop-in	121	Group	Meeting	Event	Other	PNTS
5	11	0	73	30	0	0	0



Reason for visit

Reason for visit	Social	Support	PNTS
	61	27	0



Health & Wellbeing

Health & Wellbeing	Mental	Emotional	Physical	Sexual	None	All	Unsure	PNTS
	25	12	1	0	0	46	0	3

With our lack of gathered data for this financial year it is hard to draw any conclusions or analyze trends throughout the year. The majority of our data was gathered from participants of our groups (61% of all responses were from users accessing group services), the popularity of our T-Folk group explains the 50/61/1 split of trans/cis/intersex which is a considerable increase in trans responses on the previous year. We saw a decrease in older users of our service with no responses of 65+, we feel this is due to all services going online this year, we are confident these users will return to us for services in the following year. We anticipated the decline in access to our services by individuals in the 50+ age range, we tackled this issue in our collaborative project with Pink Saltire and Foundation Scotland '4ever Friends' with the aim to help with technology inclusion.

## **Groups**

We restructured our groups as we felt we were separating the community too much with the number of groups we ran previously. We combined some groups with consent of members of the groups taking us from 9 groups down to 5, this new structure enables us to encompass the same areas of social and support as the old system however it allows the users of the groups to meet more people, increasing the efficacy of the groups and reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness by bringing the community together. We were also able to increase the frequency of groups with all 5 groups running online on a weekly basis throughout lockdown, this allowed us to support our service users to our highest capabilities and allowed them to interact with other group attendees during a time when many needed extra support. Between September 2020 and December 2020 we were able to return to in person groups in our new community hub, this allowed service users to get out of the house and access our services, while letting them see and explore our new space.

## **4 Inclusion**

(previously Out + About, Pink Granite, Positive Peers and Out + About Plus)

'4 Inclusion' is a social group for all those who identify under the LGBT+ umbrella and therefore hosts a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. The group aims to enable members to build relationships, grow confidences and improve their overall quality of life, and allow individuals to meet others within the community they otherwise wouldn't. Meeting twice a month on the 1st & 3rd Thursday from 6pm – 8pm, it will allow members to attend regularly and build better relationships. The group partakes in various activities from coffee, meals, and museum visits to hill walking, bowling, and much more.

## **Including Families**

(TransParent group expanded to all parents of LGBT+ children)

'Including Families' is a support group for parents, partners and siblings of the LGBT+ community. This group offers peer support and education to all members, and shares information on learning about what it means for their family members who are LGBT+ and how best they can support their kin. The group will meet on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month and will run from 6pm – 8pm and offer a drop-in service, meaning members can arrive after work (even if this is before 6pm).

## **Grampian T-Folk**

'Grampian T-Folk' offers a peer social group for those who identify under the transgender umbrella. The Group will meet monthly and offer opportunities for members to find themselves, grow confidences, and building relationships in a safe and welcoming setting. Partake in educational activities, best practice advice and professional visits to the group (i.e voice coaching, equality officers etc). Meeting: First Sunday of the month in Four Pillars from 1pm

## **4 Survivors**

4 Survivors is a collaborative group set up by Rape Crisis Grampian and Four Pillars and offers group support for LGBT survivors of Domestic Abuse, Sexual Assault and Rape. The group meets monthly and provides individuals the opportunity to share their story, receive support and build friendships in a safe setting, allowing individuals to increase confidences and move forward. Meetings are the last Tuesday of each month at RCG

## **XDG**

XDG is a group for those that cross-dress. This group is run as a private online Facebook group and is aimed at supporting the cross-dressing community through difficult and quite often lonely times. Members will be able to share and learn together. Express and be themselves whilst gaining reassurance and confidence to move forward. Four Pillars staff will keep an eye on the group and signpost individuals to ongoing support or other services as required.

## **Outreach and PR**

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak Outreach and PR events have been limited, we quickly adapted to the restrictions and set up a series online quiz events which allowed users to socialize with other service users, reducing feelings of isolation and boredom. We successfully engaged with individuals through Virtual Grampian Pride, a 24 hour gaming livestream History Month and news articles covering our move to 33 Regent Quay as well as online events such as our WAD livestream. We have continued to expand our social media presence, this has been essential in a year where in person events have not been possible. While this has been a slow year in terms of engagement, we are confident as lockdown lifts and we reopen Four Unity we will be in good standing and our expansion and outreach projects will pay off.

## **Collaborations**

This year's biggest collaboration is 4ever Friends, a befriending service set up in collaboration with Pink Saltire & Foundation Scotland. This project allows users to be set up with a 'buddy' who they can contact when they are lonely, the service also provides a phone to use if needed. This allows our volunteers to stay in contact with users providing emotional support and advice, assistance with groceries, sexual

health provisions and more. A key aspect of this project was to make those that are less technologically literate feel able to access services to reduce their loneliness during lockdown when in person service was not possible.

26 individuals accessed the service, with 6 of those being in the 50+ age bracket and 6 of the 26 being in the under 25 age bracket. The even distribution across age brackets highlights that our efforts towards technology inclusion were successful.

We also collaborated with GREC and Progress in dialogue for the 'Nostalgic Aberdeen' event. This was an online event for individuals to share and learn about Aberdeen's LGBTQI+ heritage, with a focus on stories about people, places and events that have shaped Aberdeen's LGBTQI+ history.

### **Virtual Grampian Pride**

This year due to lockdown restrictions we were unable to host an in-person Pride event like in previous years. In the first two months of lockdown, we were able to organize an online event that went ahead on May 30<sup>th</sup> 2020. This event was successful, we used the limitations on in person events to expand our knowledge surrounding online virtual events, this is a skill we aim to use going forward as it enables us to expand our awareness beyond Aberdeen and Grampian as a whole. The knowledge we gained from Virtual Grampian Pride 2020 is allowing us to organize a bigger, more ambitious online pride celebration in May 2021.

\*Full report attached as appendix 1

### **4Pride**

Due to the closure of the hub for much of the financial year, sales in the 4pride shop have been minimal. The closure of the hub for 1 year has allowed us time to revamp our 4Pride store with new displays and merchandise while also making our store available online. We have used the time spent closed to the best of our abilities to help provide the best services we can for the community and increase our own revenue streams. A new display is front and center in our new hub, we also have increased the variety of stock available in the shop encompassing not just rainbow pride flags but also trans flag, bisexual flags etc. With the reopening of our Hub scheduled for May 2021 we expect to see an increase in sales as we are confident that our new and improved stock at 4Pride will be popular with the community, with sales expected to increase even further in the run up to Virtual Grampian Pride 2021 in May.

### **Events**

As with every year we host a service for World AIDS day. This year was no different, although we weren't able to perform this service in person at our hub we did host a livestream vigil/concert online. This, along with a personal story from our Community Relations Manager about living with HIV and it's impacts, allowed us to break down barriers and remove rumors whilst tackling stigma. We will continue to host these events in future years. We also did a number of online events such as Quizzes and Gaming livestreams. These allowed us to engage with the community while fundraising for the charity. The gaming event was particularly successful.

### **Fundraisers**

Lockdown restrictions throughout 2020/21 allowed us to expand our services into the online sphere, an area we had previously underutilized. We hosted online fundraisers on platforms such as Zoom, Twitch and Facebook, of which our Gaming Livestream on Twitch was the most successful raising in excess of

£1,500. We aim to continue hosting online events and fundraisers in the future with the expansion of our website, this allows us to raise funds worldwide rather than relying solely on local donors. We raised funds to put towards opening our new hub by collecting sponsorships from an individual who climbed the stairs in their home amounting to the height of Mt Everest over a one month period.

### **Volunteers**

Four Pillars continues to be extremely well-supported by a diverse range of fantastic volunteers. During the period 2020-21 we had approximately 20 active volunteers involved in projects, mainly online, such as various groups, PR, fundraising events, administrative support and Virtual Grampian Pride. The total number of hours carried out by volunteers throughout the year is over 1,400 hours.

Four Pillars continues to be thankful to its volunteers and recognizes that our work could not be carried out to the degree it is without those volunteers. We have expanded on our in-house training program with the inclusion of Office 365 training which allows volunteers to learn how to effectively use the Microsoft administration package, a skill that can be added to their CV making them more likely to secure paid work in the future. Funding applications have been made to secure funds to hire a 'Support + Development Worker', this role will take on the responsibility of managing all volunteers and securing outside training opportunities for both staff and volunteers. We have seen an increase in volunteer numbers since the start of 2021 with many inactive volunteers offering their service once again and new volunteers joining bringing us to a total of 38 volunteers at the end of the financial year.

### **Feedback**

Every year throughout the month of March we ask our service users to complete a short, anonymous survey about Four Pillars, our services and their experiences. Due to COVID-19 we have not conducted the survey this year so feedback is limited to the feedback given on our LGBT+ awareness training sessions, of which all 30 participants over various sessions completed the feedback survey, and our Online awareness training.

Analysis shows the feedback from the LGBT+ Awareness training was overwhelmingly positive with only 6.66% of people having any further questions. We are pleased with the efficacy of the training program we are providing. The majority of answers to all questions are extremely positive, given this is our first year offering the service we hope that these positive results will continue in the future.

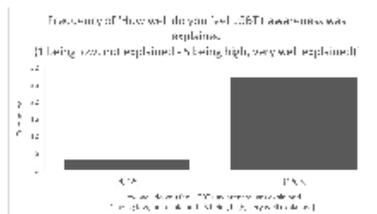
Below is a letter written by a service user and volunteer discussing their interactions with Four Pillars and the support we were able to offer in a time of crisis.

"I first contacted Four Pillars after experiencing isolation due to COVID-19. I was made redundant because of the virus and this had a huge impact on my mental health. I used their contact form to get in touch which made the process nice and simple. I received an email back with loads of advice and information on where to get support. From practical services such as c-fine for food as I was unemployed to emotional and mental health support from Four Pillars directly.

I first attended Out & about as I didn't fully admit to the mental health crisis I was going through. Upon attending the group I got to find out more about Four Pillars and the support it offered, I saw and heard how they had helped others. I wasn't the only new member that day which helped ease me in and older members, that have apparently been attending for years, help make things safe and welcoming and I soon felt part of the group. After attending that first group I found it easier to attend again.

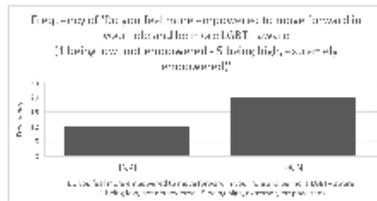
However, shortly after getting involved with Four Pillars and attending the group, probably due to recent work and life events I split up with my partner and this brought to light how severe my mental health condition had got. I suffered in darkness for days before reaching out to Four Pillars once again. I knew it was safe to do so, so I once again spoke with DeeJay who advised me to attend Talk Four. I've been

attending that group for 5 weeks now and from the very first day the facilitator of that group made me feel so welcome, safe and valid. I opened up to her and she supported me when I needed it the most. Upon receiving all this support and seeing the great work Four Pillars does in our community I wanted to give back. I knew Four Pillars were not so well known in my gaming community and wanted to highlight what they do and how they support our whole community. I spoke again with DeeJay and together we put on a fundraising and awareness online event. I was able to reach out to my friends on their behalf and build an online gaming event through friends and their friends. I think the event was a huge success with people coming together from all over the world to support me and of course Four Pillars. Through this we were able to promote the charity and highlight that great work. It also raised over £1,500 which I think is amazing and I know DeeJay is really pleased with it. I spoke with him and the money will go directly to supporting others like me in the future.”



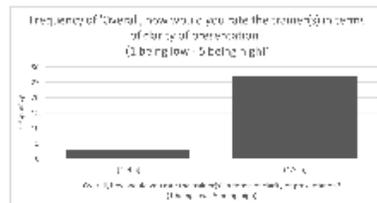
Row Labels Count of How well do you feel LGBT+ awareness was explained

5	27
4	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>30</b>



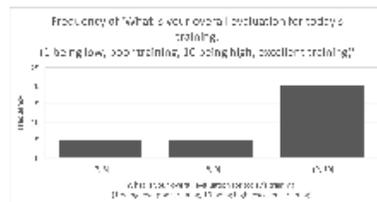
Row Labels Count of Do you feel more empowered to move forward in your role and be more LGBT+ aware

5	20
4	8
3	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>30</b>



Row Labels Count of Overall, how would you rate the training in terms of clarity of presentation?

5	27
4	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>30</b>



Row Labels Count of What is your overall evaluation for today's training.

5	5
4	3
3	20
2	2
1	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>30</b>

# STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

A charity trustee must act in the interest of the charity, operate in a manner that is consistent with the charity's purpose, act with due care and diligence and manage any conflict of interest between the charity and any person or organisation who appoints trustees.

Each Trustee must comply with the 2005 Act (specific Duties) which include:

1. Having the charity details on the Scottish Charity Register
2. Reporting to OSCR: making changes to your charity
3. Financial records and reporting
4. Fundraising
5. Providing information to the public.

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law.

Section 44 of the 2005 Act requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable trust and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable trust for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable trust will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable trust and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2005. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable trust and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable trust's auditors/independent examiners are unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors/independent examiners are aware of that information.

Accounting records must be kept by the charity for a minimum of 6 years from the end of the financial year in which they were made.

## **Statement as to Disclosure of Information to Auditors/independent examiners**

So far as the trustees are aware, there is no relevant information of which the charitable trust's auditors/independent examiners are unaware, and each trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make them aware of any audit information and to establish that the charitable trust's auditors/independent examiners are aware of that information.

# SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

## Income

Total income generated throughout the year was £70,754. The main sources of income were from Bank of Scotland Foundation, National Lottery & Robertson Trust which equated to 44% of total income. Unrestricted funds (Donations and fundraisers) equated to another 14% whilst other funds (grants) added 35% of our income. A further 7% came from other sources.

## Expenditure

The total resources expended during the year was £60,150. The main areas of expenditure were Four Unity set up and running costs (£23,589), which included support costs such as rent, insurances, supplies & services (£8,247) and governance costs such as auditors/independent examiners' remuneration, board expenses, specialist consultancy & legal fees (£395).

## Unrestricted Funds / Reserves

We received Unrestricted Funds of £12,240 through donations and fundraisers. As Four Pillars has grown substantially throughout the year, so has our regular outgoings and our 3 month running costs now total £15,000. Because of the rapid growth and need to spend income in order to make that growth happen we do not currently have adequate reserves in place. Something the board is well aware of and endeavor to correct going forward.

## Restricted Funds

Grants received this period from various funders were £58,012. Grampian Pride brought in a further £10,500 through sponsorships and donations, this is counted towards restricted funds. The total expenditure between Grampian Pride and other funded projects amounted to £19,428.

There is recognition from the Board of Trustees that there is a lack of long-term funding arrangements, with much of the funding received by Four Pillars based on a one-year, small project, commitment. A strategy to address this issue was approved by the Board and will continue to be taken forward during 2021-2022.

## Budget

The board have set a budget for 2021/22 of £140,000. This includes £70,000 for Grampian Pride, Staffing costs of £39,000, Rental at £12,000, insurance and contractual costs of around £9,000, governance, training and accounting £2,400 and misc expenses (volunteers, training, stock, events, fundraisers) £7,6000.