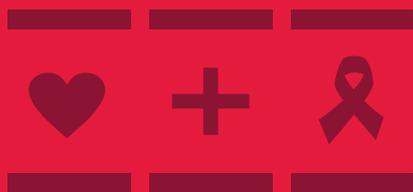


# GEORGE HOUSE+ TRUST

HIV POSITIVE LIVING

Annual Report  
*2017-2018*

George House Trust  
exists to ensure  
that no-one has  
to face HIV alone





Where has this last year gone? It seems like only yesterday that we were awarded the contract to deliver HIV prevention and support services as part of the Passionate about Sexual Health (PaSH) partnership with BHA for Equality and LGBT Foundation.



However, after initial celebrations, we began dealing with the significant impact of the reduction in the contract value. Unfortunately the Trustee Board had to make difficult decisions, which sadly resulted in some redundancies and a much smaller staff team. True to form the team rose to the challenge, and have developed more streamlined services resulting in better outcomes and experiences for our service users. Because, after all, service users are at the heart of everything we do.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the unique Governance structure of the organisation, where the majority of Trustees are Members (service users and/or active volunteers). During the last 12 months we have reviewed the Membership process, thus increasing the number of active Members - all of whom have the opportunity to stand for election as a Trustee. We have elected new Member Trustees, and reviewed the roles of co-opted Trustees (non-Members who are recruited to fill any skills gaps on the Trustee Board).

The role of Trustee (whether Member or co-opted) is more than just attending meetings. To support our development as individuals, and as a team, we have held training sessions and Away Days throughout the year. In addition to team building, these Away Days enable the Trustee Board to make key decisions about the future of the organisation. This year we have focused on developing our Fundraising Strategy for 2018/19, and the following project aspirations:

- U=U campaign: bringing the ground breaking message that "Undetectable equals Untransmittable" to a wider audience
- Age+ Project: providing tailored services for people in the 50+ age group (the fastest growing group of people living with HIV), and providing HIV awareness training to residential and domiciliary care services.
- Life coaching: supporting people to identify and achieve life goals
- Positively Speaking HIV Awareness Training: continuation of the programme where trained "Positive Speakers" talk about life with HIV in order to raise awareness and increase knowledge and understanding.
- Children and Young People: Peer support and one-to-one work from childhood and adolescence, through to transition to adulthood.

It has been a period of highs and lows but, thanks to the amazing work of staff, volunteers, Members, Trustees and supporters, we end the year in a stronger position, with more realistic and optimistic plans for George House Trust in the future.

I would like to end on a personal note. In September 2015 I became the first ever co-opted Chair of Trustees – a major decision for the Members. I still feel the weight of responsibility for the trust that Members have placed in me, especially when attending Member meetings to report on the actions of the Trustee Board. I am passionate about the work of George House Trust. I am proud of what we have achieved this year. I am overwhelmed by the seemingly endless commitment of staff, volunteers, Members, Trustees and supporters. And, as I approach the end of my three-year term, I am incredibly honoured to have been asked to continue for a second term of office.

Thank you to everyone who has supported George House Trust this year. Your contribution means this amazing organisation will continue making a positive difference to the lives of people living with HIV.

*Jo Hancock*  
Chair, Trustee Board





2017/18 has been a year of celebration, change and opportunity for George House Trust.

## The PaSH Partnership

Passionate about Sexual Health across Greater Manchester

**BHA**  
for equality  
in health  
and social care

**GEORGE  
HOUSE TRUST**

**LGBT  
foundation**

After celebrating our contract success in April 2017 to deliver the HIV prevention and support services contract across Greater Manchester as part of the Passionate about Sexual Health (PaSH) partnership with BHA for Equality and LGBT Foundation, our priority for the early part of the year was managing the operational impact of the impact of the contract value reduction and the subsequent organisation restructure.

Some of our long-serving staff opted for redundancy and a career change whilst we then had to recruit staff to new posts and create new teams, before quickly entering the contract mobilisation period. We settled into working more closely with our PaSH partners, got to know each other better and formally launched PaSH in November 2017, along with a fabulous dedicated website: [www.gmpash.org.uk](http://www.gmpash.org.uk).

The PaSH Partnership has continued to flourish, and has really shown that the voices of three leading voluntary sector sexual health providers are much louder than one, giving us the opportunity to be much clearer about the prevention needs of people who may be at risk of acquiring HIV and the needs of those living with the virus.

Our more streamlined delivery approach has enabled more seamless referrals between the organisations, resulting in better experiences and outcomes for our beneficiaries. We look forward to seeing this partnership strengthen further in the future.

The restructure has meant that there is reduced staff capacity, with contracted hours being reduced for infrastructure posts in particular. This means we are having to be more resourceful in the way in which we work and prioritise more effectively. Whilst the transitional period has been challenging we are now in a stronger position and both more realistic and optimistic about the future plans for George House Trust in the medium to long term.

During the year we have also had other successes too. George House Trust has a long history of involvement with the annual Manchester Pride event and the Candlelit Vigil and always puts a lot of effort into making sure our entry in the Pride parade is something attractive and memorable as the event reaches over 800,000 and is a very public platform from which we can raise awareness of HIV.





Our theme for 2017 was education and the hugely significant Undetectable=Untransmittable (U=U) message. The result of our creativity and the commitment of our wonderful volunteers who walked, performed and danced for over 2 hours in the parade won us 1st prize in the Community Entry category. More importantly though, it was an opportunity to highlight to the wider public the work of George House Trust and the importance of maintaining the spotlight on HIV. A massive well done and thank you to everyone who was involved.

We have also had success with our advocacy work this year. After hearing about a man living with HIV in Manchester who had been refused a tattoo after sharing that he was HIV positive, we took up the issue, on his behalf, with the Local Authority department responsible for the licensing of tattoo parlours on the basis that this was unlawful practice.

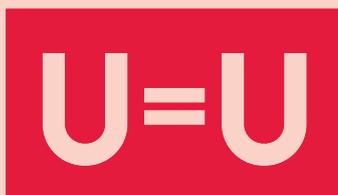
As a result, every licensed tattoo parlour in Manchester was contacted by the Local Authority to advise that to refuse someone living with HIV a tattoo would be unlawful. This raised the broader question of how tattooists across the remaining boroughs of Greater Manchester respond if a person shares information about HIV status – we are still working with the various Local Authorities on this and are optimistic that the other boroughs will take the same approach as Manchester.

I end on a note of sadness. In the New Year we unexpectedly lost one of George House Trust's long term supporters, Nana.

Nana was a key figure on the Manchester drag scene and was a stalwart supporter and advocate for George House Trust. Nana was with us when we won with our Manchester Pride entry in 2014, leading our entry on a spectacularly colourful trike. Nana's funeral was, like her, a colourful celebration of her life and memories. We were all particularly touched and would like to thank Nana and her family who chose George House Trust as their charity organisation for any donations. Although this could be viewed as a small thing for George House Trust, this final generous gesture means that Nana leaves a legacy which will go on, ensuring that we continue to provide HIV support for many more years to come.

Thank you to Nana, and everyone who has made even the smallest donation to George House Trust this year. Your contribution means our work can continue, where it is needed, working with people living with HIV.

*Steph Mallas*  
CEO



UNDETECTABLE = UNTRANSMITTABLE



Facts and Figures



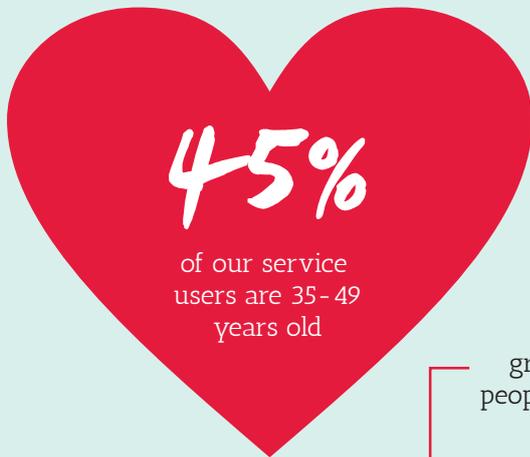
**68%**

of our service users are male



**32%**

of our service users are female

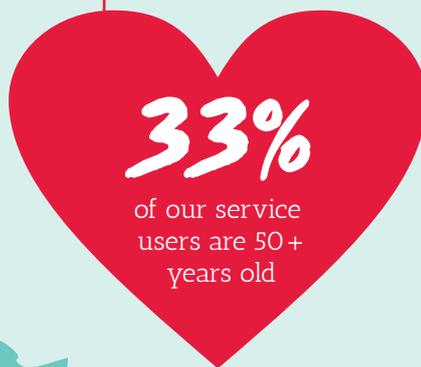


the fastest growing group of people living with HIV



**22** destitute service users received

**619** food parcels



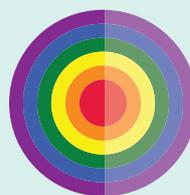
**33%**

Almost 33% of our service users are Black African



**299**

service users received grants from our Welfare Fund of clothing, white goods or other items to help improve their HIV health or wellbeing



**50%**

of our service users are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender



**better  
together**

BUILDING YOUR HIV CONFIDENCE

*I am currently in the process of mentoring my first mentee and so far the experience has been incredibly positive.*

I first accessed the Better Together Peer Mentoring service in November in the immediate weeks following my HIV diagnosis. For me, having a mentor was instrumental in helping me to process the news, and being able to utilise the wealth of somebody else's experience was crucial to me gaining some perspective on my own narrative.

Being able to speak to someone who had lived experience of being HIV positive helped remedy many of the fears and anxieties I had about my future and the whole process was really empowering. I was able to have a frank conversation about my HIV status in a non-clinical environment, and by the end of my mentoring relationship I felt much more optimistic about my life and my future with HIV.

Once my own mentoring relationship reached its conclusion, I decided to put my name forward to go on the Mentor Training programme to become a mentor myself.

This proved to be equally revelatory, and being able to learn from other's experiences – all very different in many ways, but united by our shared experience of living with HIV – was incredibly humbling and cathartic.

I am currently in the process of mentoring my first mentee and so far the experience has been incredibly positive. Me and my mentee have gained a great deal – both in terms of our knowledge of HIV and also our understanding of ourselves.

I honestly couldn't recommend the Better Together Project enough.



## We couldn't do it without you!

Manchester AIDSline, later to become George House Trust, was started by 6 volunteers who felt the need to do something in response to early cases of HIV in Manchester and now, more than 30 years on, George House Trust is working with 83 active volunteers across 14 regular roles helping to provide support and services to people living with HIV.

Volunteers contribute to every aspect of George House Trust and without their involvement we would not be able to deliver the services we do.

Amongst a host of other roles, volunteers meet and greet visitors to our building, support our Services Advisers to facilitate groups and sessions, provide counselling and drive service users to appointments.

This is just a snapshot of what our volunteers have done in their 644 volunteer days this year.

We have just celebrated the Better Together Peer Mentoring Project's first birthday, which has seen volunteer Peer Mentors provide 80 hours of support to people living with HIV in 6 sexual health clinics across Greater Manchester.

Our Community Fundraising and Awareness Raising volunteer team have had a busy year challenging HIV stigma and spreading the powerful U=U message far and wide.

They have represented George House Trust at Pride events, raised vital funds as part of World AIDS Day and formed a strategic planning group where they have driven our involvement in Manchester Pride 2018.

Our fantastic volunteers brave all weathers to ensure that George House Trust is at the forefront of community events in Manchester. They work tirelessly to promote our services and challenge the misconceptions of people who do not understand what it means for people to be living with HIV today.

HIV stigma is still with us and so awareness raising really is high on the agenda for our volunteers - so much so that we have a group of Positive Speakers who volunteer to talk about their personal experiences of living with HIV. Our Positive Speakers are men and women, heterosexual and gay, young and old - all committed to raising awareness around HIV and challenging stigma. They are trained and supported to develop their personal stories and to run HIV awareness training sessions. Being a Positive Speaker has made a real difference to the lives of many of our volunteers, with many telling us that they now feel more confident about talking openly about life with HIV to family, friends, work colleagues and potential partners.

Volunteers with no previous experience of public speaking are now talking confidently about living with HIV to a wide range of groups and organisations. Positive Speakers have hosted the World Aids Day Vigil in Sackville Gardens and spoken at conferences and to the media. They have spoken to young people in schools and colleges and to doctors and other health care professionals at GP surgeries.

Our volunteers are key to the success of the Positively Speaking project and their enthusiasm, commitment and skill is playing a key role in challenging stigma and ignorance around HIV.

To all our volunteers, whatever role you play, thank you.

*Rachel Purvis*  
Volunteer Coordinator





## The Calabash



When I first came to George House Trust I was introduced to the Calabash, a group for HIV positive African men.

The Calabash was initiated to help African men living with HIV interact with each other and has done a good job for me and my African colleagues.

It is widely understood that, because of the stigma surrounding HIV, it is difficult for some groups of people to come out and accept that they have or are living with HIV, fearing that their families and/or communities might disown them. African men often find it difficult to talk about living with HIV.

At the Calabash, I felt at home - we shared our personal life experiences, including our experiences of living with HIV.

There was always a sense of belonging whenever we met and an atmosphere of togetherness just like one family.

We encouraged and supported each other by talking openly about issues affecting us as HIV positive African men and discussed ways of overcoming the stigma and helping other colleagues come forward and get the help available.

Advice from colleagues of the same background gave me confidence and I came to realise that living with HIV is not the end of the world.

As a group, our regular meetings bonded us a lot to the extent that we now interact like one family.

With the help of George House Trust, the Calabash has raised my own awareness. I can now live my life confidently like any other human being.

The Calabash helped us to realise our weaknesses and in that, I managed to get to know more about how to face and overcome them. Meeting, and listening to, people from different cultures and with different values helped me solve some of the personal problems I was facing.

At the end of the Calabash's funding, I was privileged to be amongst a group of African men who had attended the Calabash group who enjoyed a residential weekend in Cumbria where I benefited more by sealing the bond with my African colleagues.

I am now a proud African man living positively with HIV and willing to help other African men come out and get the help I received and which was so helpful to me.

*I can now live confidently like any other human being.*



great manchester  
run

*I'm really proud  
of myself for  
having done the  
run - and very  
happy that I was  
able to raise  
some money for  
George House  
Trust at the  
same time.*



Jacob's Fundraising Story

I knew, as soon as I was registering myself for the Simplyhealth Great Manchester 10K run in November of last year, that the charity I wanted to run for was going to be George House Trust.

Not only is it a local charity in a city I am proud to call my second home - hence the Manchester bee tattoo on the inside of my right arm - but also, as a gay man, I understand the impact HIV has had, and continues to have, on the community I'm a part of, and wanted to make a difference by fundraising for, and representing, George House Trust in the Manchester 10K.

The event itself was absolutely phenomenal! The weather was beautiful, the atmosphere was electric, and hearing the commentator at the end cheering my name when I crossed the finishing line made the blood, sweat and tears worth the while!

Knowing how much support there was, from people sponsoring me to good luck messages to spectators cheering you throughout, really motivates you to carry on when you feel like giving up.

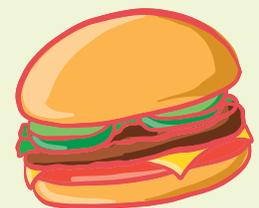
I'm really proud of myself for having done the run - and very happy that I was able to raise some money for George House Trust at the same time.

If you really want to challenge yourself, I'd definitely recommend doing the 10K - you'll be smiling afterwards when you're treated to a lovely pint of beer and a well-deserved Sunday roast!





THE  
**difference**  
*fundraisers*  
**can make**





Following the launch of Friends of George in 2016, we continued to expand our circle of friends throughout 2017. To become a Friend of George, you simply make a regular donation to George House Trust – its easy to set up by going onto our website. A regular donation can start from £5 a month up to as much as you can afford and every donation really does help George House Trust continue the work of supporting people who are living with HIV.

Friends of George are included in our quarterly prize draw. Increased promotion via social media and on our website has brought about an increased interest in the work of George House Trust and we look forward to making even more friends in 2018.

We had some brilliant and dedicated fundraisers during 2017-2018, with people taking part in marathons, 10k runs, Tough Mudder, talent competitions and even a charity boxing match. People also supported our work with donations from their weddings and birthday parties, and it's an honour for us to be able to share these special days with our supporters.

We had a huge turnout for World AIDS Day and Manchester Pride, which not only allowed us to raise an incredible amount of money but also enabled us to spread the massively important U=U message.

The last year has seen some changes at George House Trust and with continuing funding cuts it's vital that we continue to work closely with our fundraisers – their invaluable support means that we are able to continue to provide high quality frontline services to people living with HIV.

With that in mind, we're looking forward to 2018! We want to make even more Friends, increase our engagement with our long term supporters and continue to do whatever we can to support the challenges that our amazing fundraisers take on.

2018 will also see George House Trust hosting our very first Black Tie Gala event and launching our new and exciting fundraising pack. The pack will help fundraisers to really get their fundraising efforts off the ground and is full of hints, tips and ideas. The pack is, of course, only the beginning of the fundraising journey and the George House Trust fundraising team are always on hand to answer any questions or offer any extra support or advice.

To every one of our supporters, thank you so much for all of your fundraising over the last year - it is very much appreciated and a welcome endorsement of the work we do.

*Samuel Clarke*  
Community Fundraising Organiser



## Thank you to all our supporters

### Charitable Trusts

Manchester Pride Community Fund  
Our Manchester - part of  
Manchester City Council  
Co-op Local Causes  
Manchester Relief In Need Charity  
Big Lottery Fund  
Comic Relief  
M.A.C. AIDS Fund  
Gilead Sciences  
ViiV Healthcare UK  
Transport for Greater Manchester  
Schroder Charitable Trust  
Pat Newman Memorial Trust

### Ambassadors

Michael Atkins aka Cheddar Gawjus  
Lee Baxter  
Ady Blake  
Philip Collinson  
Nick Curtis  
Christian D'Arcy aka Misty Chance  
Mark Geary aka Billie Jean  
John Hamilton  
Iain Scott  
Lord Lieutenant of Manchester  
Dr Ash Sukthankar  
Daniel Wallace aka Anna Phylactic  
Adam Zane

### Public Health Teams

Manchester City Council  
Salford City Council  
Bolton M.B.C  
Bury M.B.C  
Rochdale M.B.C  
Trafford M.B.C  
Oldham M.B.C  
Tameside M.B.C  
Stockport M.B.C  
Wigan M.B.C

It would be impossible for George House Trust to support people living with HIV in the way that it does without the unwavering support of the village venues and of the Manchester Drag Community, who all use their considerable talents and influence to do so much to raise awareness of the vital services that George House Trust continues to provide.



## Village Venues

Bar Pop, Churchill's, Clone Zone, Company Bar, Cruz 101, Lock 87, Eagle Bar, Eva, G-A-Y, Iconic, Kiki, Napoleons, New York New York, Oscars, Richmond Tea Rooms, Taurus Bar, The Goose, The Lodge, The Molly House, The New Union, On Bar, The Rembrandt, Thompson's Arms, Tribeca, Vanilla, Via and Velvet, Club Bloom, No. 1 Canal Street

We would not have been able to do as many of our community fundraising and awareness raising activities throughout the year without the support of the following:

Ali Saeedian, Annies, Arrow Global PLC, BNY Mellon, Book People, Boom Bang a Bang, Canal Street Manchester, Contact Theatre, Corptel UK, Europhoria, Fit4Less, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, Frog Flowers, Gaydio, Gendertronic, Holier Than Thou, Hope Theatre Company, House of Mint, MAC Cosmetics

Counters, Make a Scene Film Club, Manchester City Football Club, Manchester Creative and Media Academies, Manchester Frontrunners, Manchester Roller Derby, Manworx, Miriam Vaughn, Newman RC College, Pendleton College, RCNQ, Roger Whitehead, Roy Jackson, Salford University School of Nursing & Midwifery, Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Sparkle, The Manchester College, The Midland Hotel, The Village Off-Licence and Village People Weekend, Totem Wolf, Trafford Centre, Unite the Union, University of Manchester School of Nursing & Midwifery, Village Hair, Village's Got Talent, Virgin Money Lounge

## Prides

Bolton, Didsbury, Stockport, Oldham, Salford, Trafford, Bury & Manchester.

We would also like to thank the many generous individuals who donate to George House Trust on a regular basis.

*Your support for our work means so much.*



# GEORGE HOUSE+ TRUST

HIV POSITIVE LIVING



George House Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales (No. 1143138) and a registered company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (No. 07575379)

Our audited accounts for 2017-2018 are available on our website.

Registered office:  
75-77 Ardwick Green North  
Manchester M12 6FX

T: 0161 274 4499  
[www.gh.org.uk](http://www.gh.org.uk)

 /GeorgeHouseTrust  
 @GeorgeHouseTrst

