

LGBT+ & Ageing

Supporting older and elder LGBT+ people

On Tuesday 24th January and Thursday 26th January 2023, The Diversity Trust hosted two webinars exploring the experiences and challenges faced by older and elder LGBT+ people in the UK.

The project was delivered in collaboration with Somerset Equality Officers Group, Southern Brooks Community Partnerships and South Gloucestershire Council.

The events were chaired by Ian Boulton of South Gloucestershire Council, and included talks from three key speakers:

Dr Paul Willis, from the University of Bristol, presented a discussion on the barriers faced by older and elder LGBT+ people and breaking down the assumptions and myths which underpin issues faced in later life and care settings.

Dr Wenjing Zhang, from the University of Kent, presented preliminary findings from the Better Care Moves project, exploring the challenges faced for older LGBT+ people, carers, and staff, when moving between care settings, and identifying inclusive practice models and what practice guidance is needed to improve support.

Cheryl Morgan, from The Diversity Trust, delivered the final talk of the sessions on her experiences and



perspectives as an older trans woman, highlighting the barriers to care faced by older trans people, including managing risks around cancer, the lack of research around trans healthcare needs, and the impact of reduced social support on wellbeing.

The events were open to people working to support older and LGBT+ people from a range of services including, healthcare, social care, voluntary organisations, and community groups. Attendance numbers across the events came to a total of 45 people, with 28 attending for the session on Tuesday 24th January, and 17 attending for the session on Thursday 26th January.

Sign-up for each of the sessions came from a variety of sectors and organisations, including South Gloucestershire Council, the NHS, Victim Support, Somerset Council, SARI, universities around the UK such as the University of York and the University of Surrey, and care services for older people such as Alzheimers UK.



Feedback

At the end of each webinar, we provided our evaluation link which contained three key questions about the event, to gather qualitative evidence about the events. Below are the responses we gathered.

What's one thing you enjoyed about the webinar?

- I really enjoyed the talk on Trans experience in social/healthcare settings.
- Hearing about lived experiences.
- Interesting topic of conversation.
- Filling gaps in knowledge.
- Understanding how it feels from a trans perspective.
- Listening to the speakers as they were very interesting.
- Paul's presentation put the wider picture of understanding LGBTQ + issues in the wider context.
- Covers an important topic.
- Great to hear about research that's been completed and to also hear from those with lived experience.
- Hearing Cheryl's journey and experience.
- Lived experience and research links.
- Hearing about the experiences of trans people- not enjoyed because it was hard to hear the extent of discrimination but it increased my understanding greatly.
- Opportunity for interesting discussion.
- Learning so much about how age so affects LGBT+ people.
- Hearing about lived experience and

- Very informative and particularly good to hear from someone who has lived it ie Cheryl.



- I enjoyed Cheryl's talk about transgender issues and ageing, and the deep insight she was able to offer.
- The thought provoking nature of the topic - i hadn't considered things like the various health issues that trans people may face and the MH impact of things like a prostate exam or a smear test for someone who has transitioned.
- The variety of speakers and research discussed.

What's one thing you'll take away from the webinar?



- There is a lot to be done in care settings to improve the quality relating to the ageing LGBTQI community.
- That there are not many services that people can be referred to regarding their gender and to be aware that waiting lists are huge.
- All the information was practical and can be utilised in practice.
- Challenges for LGBTQ+ patients and how they are still adversely affected by historical ways of thinking and perceptions.
- Understanding how we can support people from this group better.
- More up to date information on LGBT+ Ageing.
- That professionals do want to improve the provision for LGBTQ + users.
- That there are people who are interested in the wellbeing of LGBT+ people who are ageing.

understanding the challenges faced by LGBT+ people.

- Listening to lived experience.
- All of the presenters offered a different lens on the topic.

- Greater awareness of struggles for trans people in particular.
- Greater insight into what and how the older LGBT community interface with care home culture.
- Sharing the feedback.
- Being person-centred. Listen and find out what matters to people.
- My research is in line with others.
- That many older people still don't allow themselves to recognise themselves as non-binary.
- Understanding around the concerns and practicalities of care home settings for LGBT+ people.
- When I'm thinking of pulling example guides I will think how inclusive I am being and ensuring all people are visible and seek lived experience to inform guides.
- I will have a discussion as part of the ageing well work in public health to build awareness around staff having those conversations.
- I will be looking at our membership forms to ensure they are LGBTQ+ friendly as they are over 20 years old I believe, I think the things Cheryl said about how the Trans community feels has prompted me to think about this.
- That older LGBTQ+ people will not necessarily resonate with modern terminology and concepts, so it's important



(stigma).

- Giving providers a real insight of the issues faced by trans people especially those with anomalous bodies.
- LGBT+ people and mental health.
- Neurodiversity.
- I was interested to know there is supported and independent housing for the LGBT+ community around the country. I would like the topic of advanced care in care homes to be covered in more detail.
- Developing support for trans people while waiting for services! But obviously we in the LA need to be pushing for funding and support for this!
- The idea about place and how seeing/ knowing others like you are nearby, or not, affects the degree to which you can be yourself as an LGBT+ person - I guess Brighton tells us many people feel they have to move to be able to do this.
- More of LGBTQ+ and other topics combined.
- I'd like to see topics about trans and non-binary people and ways in which healthcare workers can make their navigation of healthcare systems easier.
- Dementia and LGBTQ+ (the impact and any studies) Suicide and LGBTQ+ - any information to help reduce the potential for someone to attempt or complete suicide.
- A session on disabled LGBTQ+ and Trans people.



to recognise that when engaging with them; particularly in a healthcare setting where they may already feel very anxious or overwhelmed.

- The need for consideration of MH training in care homes and care settings.
- Lots of tips about how to better support LGBTQ+ and Trans older people.

Is there a different topic you would like to see developed in the future?

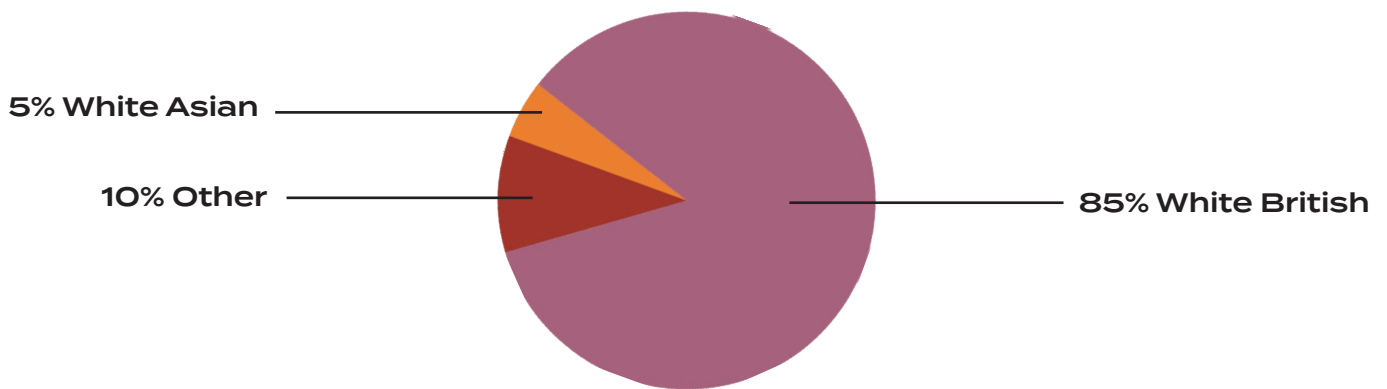
- Older people and the impact of HIV

How did you learn about the event?

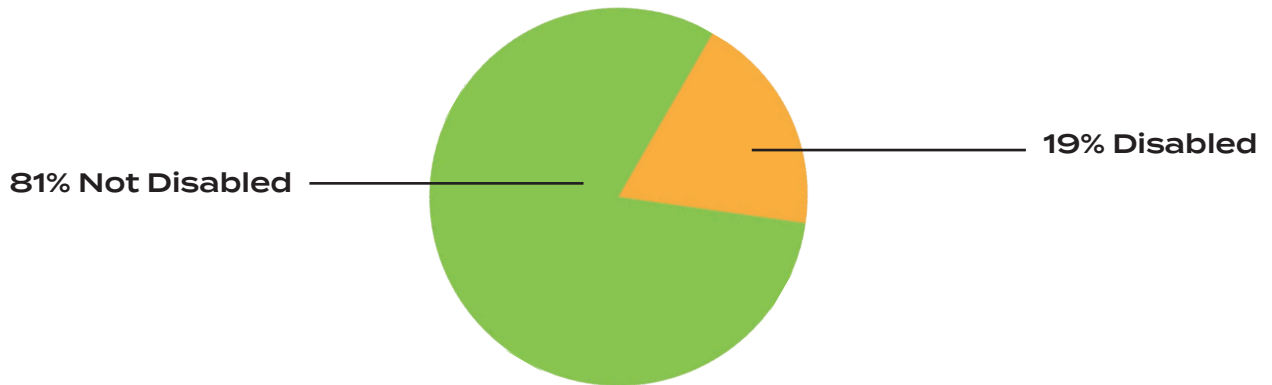
- Eventbrite
- South Glos Equalities Network
- Abbotswood Community
- Social media
- The Diversity Trust
- Twitter
- Work network
- Through work
- By email
- Forwarded from a colleague at work
- South Glos over 50s forum
- North Bristol NHS Trust
- Southern Brooks
- Through work colleagues

Data Monitoring

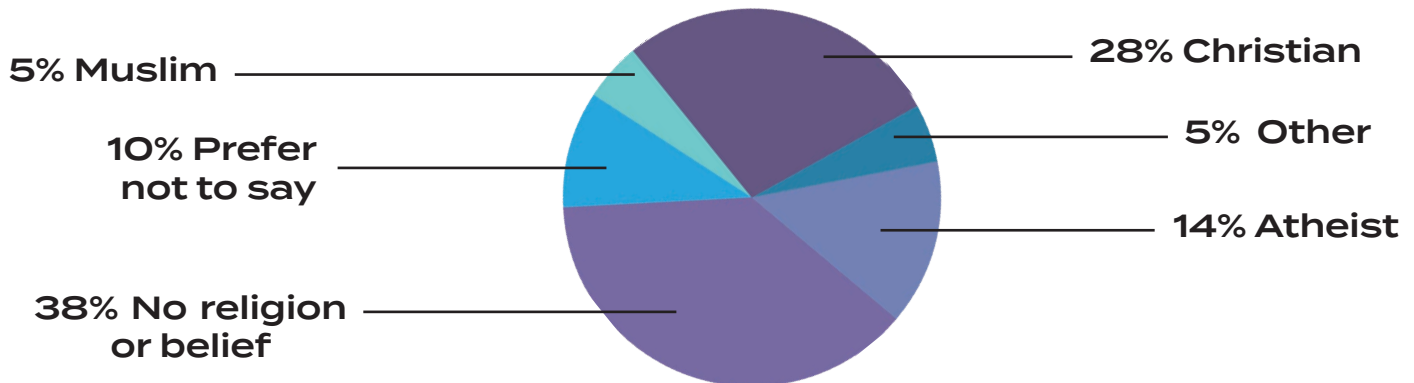
Ethnicity



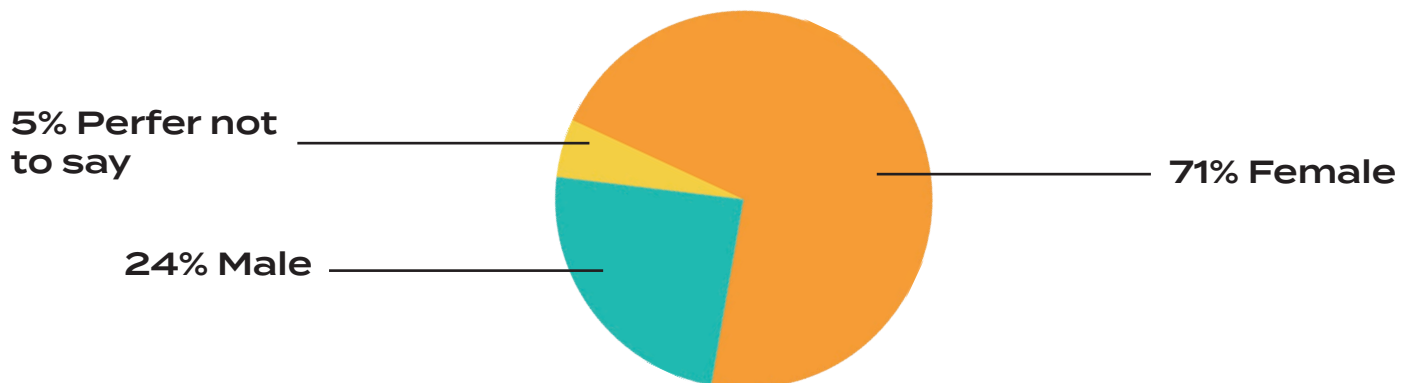
Disability Status



Religion or Belief

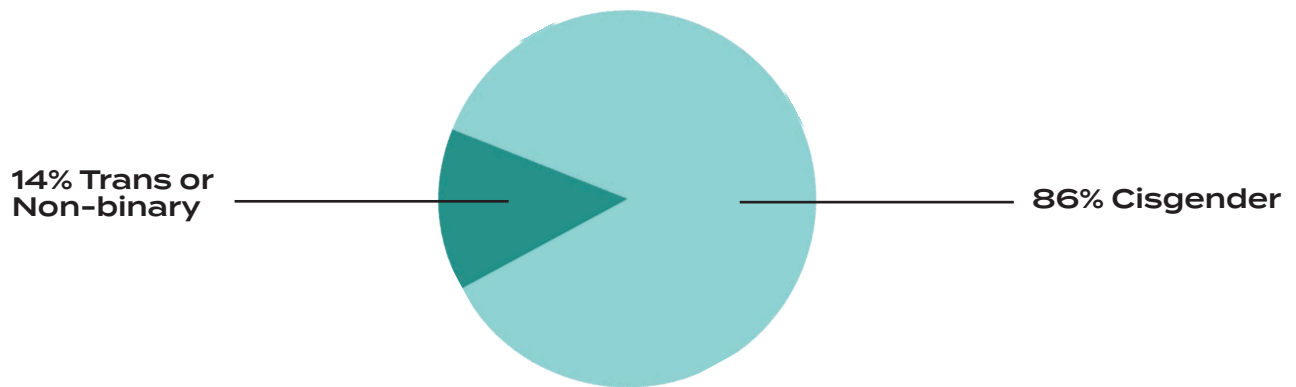


Sex

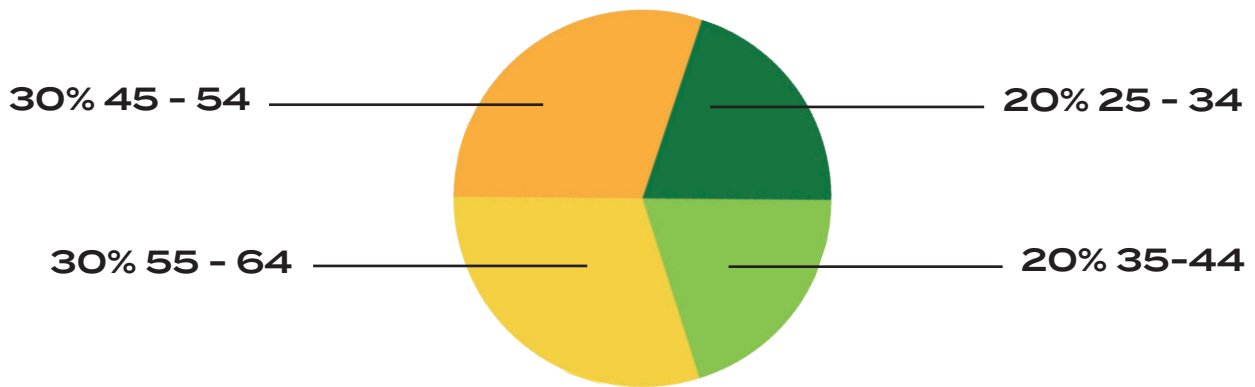


Data Monitoring

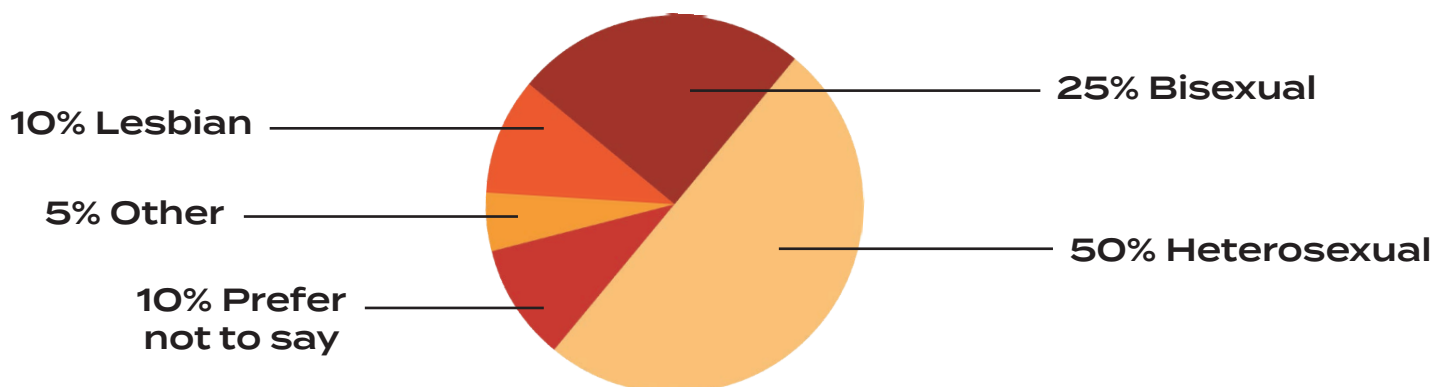
Gender Identity



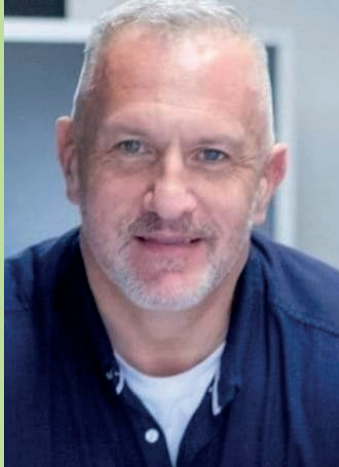
Age Range



Sexual Orientation



Ian Boulton
South Gloucestershire Council



Ian has 30 years' experience of working with all levels of the private, public, charitable and voluntary sectors. He is a Councillor on South Gloucestershire Council where he represents Staple Hill and Mangotsfield and is the Deputy Leader of the Labour Group. Ian is the Chair of the South Gloucestershire LGBT+ Equality Network and sits on the South Gloucestershire Independent Advisory Group for Avon and Somerset Police. He is a Bristol Ambassador for Alabaré and a Trustee of Bristol and South Gloucestershire Girl Guiding.

"It is always a privilege to work with the Diversity Trust and these events have been no exception. The expert speakers were engaging and the attendees shared their own insightful experiences. I'm sure everyone who was involved will recognise how this is a ground breaking subject that can have positive and genuine impact on the lives of our LGBT+ elders."

Ian Boulton
Chair of South Glos LGBTQ Equality Network

Dr Wenjing Zhang
University of Kent



A trained social worker, Wenjing is based at the University of Kent, pursuing her research interests in health and social care, ageing and social policy at the Centre for Health Services Studies. Prior to joining the University of Kent, she worked as a research and teaching associate at the University of Bristol. Her research interests focus on ageing and social care for older people, and she has worked across policy- and practice- oriented research projects including the Care Under the Rainbow Project alongside Dr Paul Willis and Berkeley Wilde of The Diversity Trust.

"The Diversity Trust has provided the great opportunity for us to share research findings into real people's experiences of social care in later life. It's a great communication platform to discuss, network and learn the importance of ageing related needs for older LGBT+ people in practice, policy and research. I look forward to having future collaborations and discussions with The Diversity Trust and partners."

Dr Wenjing Zhang
University of Kent

Dr Paul Willis
University of Bristol

Paul is a researcher and senior lecturer in social work with adults at the University of Bristol. Over the last 10 years, Paul has led and been involved in a number of research projects looking at ways of providing more inclusive care home services for older LGBT+ people in England and Wales. His research areas include: older men's experiences of loneliness and social isolation; sexuality, care and ageing; trans ageing and gender identity; inclusive care provision for diverse groups of older people; and; LGBT+ youth health and wellbeing.



“Once again it's been a great opportunity to share messages from research on a much-neglected topic through the valuable channels of the Diversity Trust. The Trust provides an excellent platform for disseminating research findings and the latest evidence and for promoting the needs and interests of older LGBT+ people in later life, helping to achieve a more equal world for minoritised groups of older people.”

Dr Paul Willis
University of Bristol

Cheryl Morgan
The Diversity Trust

Cheryl is a senior consultant with The Diversity Trust, specialising in transgender experiences and issues. Her lived experience as trans woman brings an invaluable perspective to the Trust's LGBTQ+ Team. In addition to her role as consultant, Cheryl has worked with government and charity sector organisations in the Bath and Bristol areas. She is a Co-Chair of Out Stories Bristol, and is a science fiction critic and publisher. A keen writer and historian, she lectures regularly on trans history and science fiction and fantasy literature.



“The lives of elderly trans people, particularly those who transitioned young and became elderly, as opposed to those who transition late in life, are very rarely studied in academia. Paul and Wenjing are amongst the few people in the world doing this work. I'm delighted to be able to contribute to their knowledge base, and that the Diversity Trust is helping push forward this important work.”

Cheryl Morgan
The Diversity Trust

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Somerset
Equalities
Officer Group

