

EVALUATION

YEAR FOUR

2022-2023



YEAR FOUR: DECIDING TOGETHER

SAND

SAFE AGEING NO DISCRIMINATION

CIC NUMBER: 09592142

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INTRODUCTION

Once again, we highlight our two sets of key stakeholders for this project:

- Older and old LGBT+ people themselves (for the purposes of the project we describe the age group as being aged 50-100+)
- Service providers – organisations and individuals working in health & social care and related sectors

In this Year Four Evaluation Report, we have taken a deeper dive into the *Whole Systems Approach to Tackling Inequalities in Health for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) People**. We have been taking this approach to our project since it began and should now be in a position to judge the efficacy of the approach.

We believe that we have completed the first three blocks of the Whole Systems Approach in our first three years of the Project and so have just included a brief overview of key information relating to each group of our main stakeholders:

1. Creating Momentum: Creating and cultivating a moment where EMBRACE captures the imagination of key partners, the need for action becomes clear and opportunities identified.
2. Building a Guiding Coalition: Guiding, coordinating, communicating and working with the change effort. By engaging people with passion, commitment and influence; setting up guidelines to work together; utilizing creative involvement; continually building relationships
3. Agreeing a Clear Vision: Clarify how the future will be different from the past and how you can make that future a reality through strategies/initiatives linked directly to the vision.

In this Year Four report, we give the main focus to the following four blocks:

4. Enlisting allies
5. Considering barriers to change
6. Demonstrating that change is possible
7. Sustaining acceleration

*As outlined in our original project proposal, we have been taking a 'Whole Systems approach' based on Kotter's 8 golden elements for successful transformational change. We are now reporting on all of these elements, threaded throughout the report. Whole systems approaches demand that policy makers, politicians, commissioners, service providers and community members work together to identify the challenges that LGBT people face, and act on them in concerted and coordinated ways. National LGB&T Partnership, June 2018 [<https://nationallgbtpartnershipdotorg.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/a-whole-systems-approach-lgbt-toolkit.pdf>].

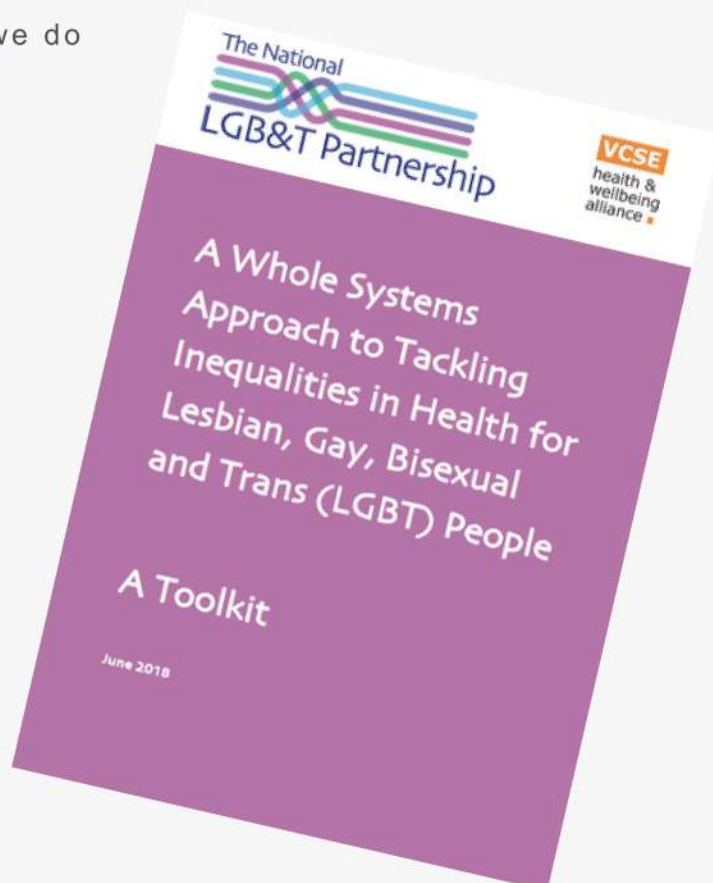
We are leaving the final block for our final year report:

8. Instituting change

It has been – and remains – an interesting process to work with the *Whole Systems Approach*. Like any framework, it needs to flex and twist to be a useful tool rather than a hinderance. In this report we have found that shifting the focus from the first three blocks has changed the way in which we report on similar things. For example, where our reports on posting relevant, informative publications to our website have previously been mentioned under Chapter one (Creating Momentum), they are now referred to under Chapter seven (Sustaining Acceleration) which, in itself, gives them a whole new function! This process also helps with our movement up Arnstein's Ladder of Participation (see page 13) as, in Year Four, we have moved towards much more collaborative working which shares power.

We use the National Lottery Community Fund Evaluation guidance to inform the content of each chapter:

- The story of our project so far
- How we've involved people from our community
- The differences we're making
- What we've learned
- How we're changing what we do



IMPACT SUMMARY

Of the In the Café group which currently consists of 12 – 18 older and old LGBT+ individuals meeting monthly – one of them now has regular domiciliary care provision; one is looking at residential care provision for their partner; one reports on the friendships he has made through the group and another is considering Extra Care housing.

Individuals have approached us with questions – one wanting to ensure their partner is financially secure should anything happen to them; another wanting to review local care homes; another wanting to combat loneliness and identify support.

As a result of SAND's work, some older and old LGBT+ people in the county have:

- chosen to have a civil partnership specifically to ensure that their relationships and wishes are more secure
- started exploring housing and care options, including home care and extra care
- completed their wills
- come out to the care staff where they live
- been talking to organisations about what they can do to be more inclusive
- started talking to each other about their concerns and ideas about ageing well
- taken part in events to understand more about what they can do to help themselves
- shared examples of both good - and less good – experiences
- established themselves as a self-sustaining group, meeting regularly
- engaged with each other and established friendships
- begun to feel safer

this is the safest I have ever felt in a group situation
[In the Café participant]

SAND's conversations with service providers definitely start at a different point these days. In Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin there is a growing recognition that LGBT+ people get older – we are not just a young phenomenon and that as we age, we face some specific issues which can be addressed via more inclusive practice. This is a huge shift for us!

Organisations want to talk to us when things go wrong and identify what they can do to improve. They are keen to identify the specific points of failure and work with us to do something about it.

Some health and social care providers across the county have:

- seen more of their staff coming out
- been working on their Covenant action plans
- collaborated on issues with other organisations
- talked to people in their organisations
- worked with SAND to produce useful resources
- undertaken training in LGBT+ awareness
- trained people within their own organisations to increase their LGBT+ awareness
- identified LGBT+ Champions within their organisations
- created visibly inclusive displays in their buildings
- understood more about the emerging Skills for Care (LGBTQ+) in Later Life Learning Framework
- accessed SAND videos and resources to learn more about LGBT+ lives and experiences
- reported back on their actions and progress towards being a more inclusive organisation

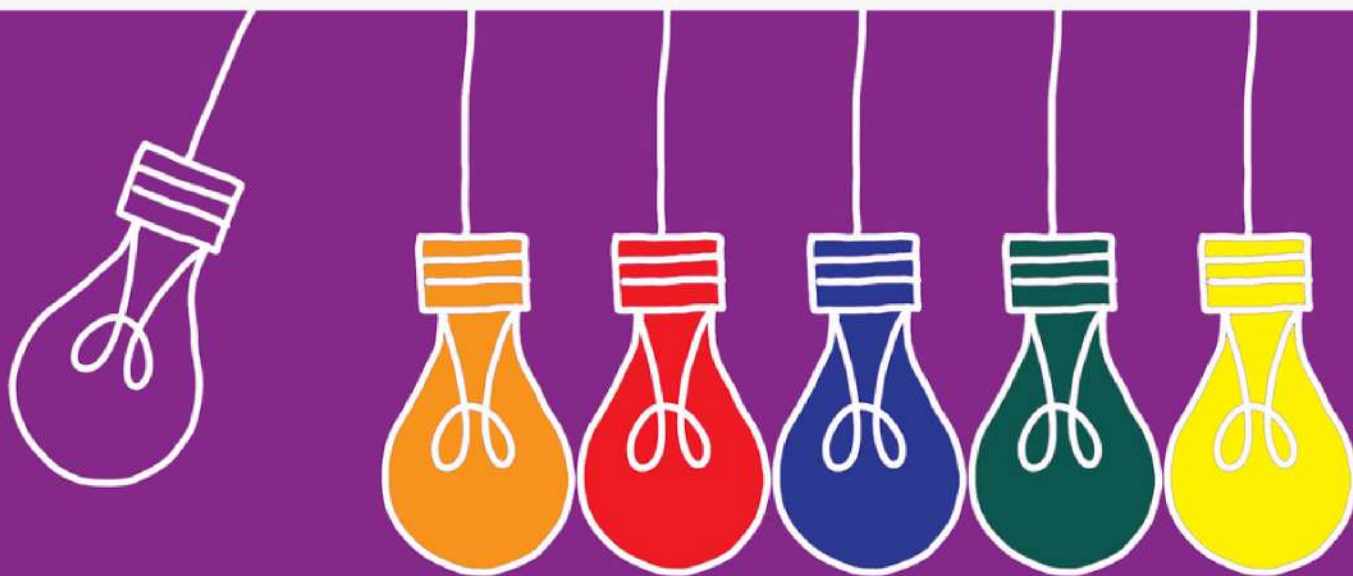
The project, EMBRACE A Culture of Inclusion, brings together individuals from different organisations, in different job roles and sectors; people who had never met before, have not linked with each other's organisations – and they all feel the benefit.

*My heart was definitely full coming home yesterday and I am just grateful for
XX to share their experiences with me Thanks so much for this
opportunity
[Facilitator Training participant]*

Over the four complete years of EMBRACE, £115,995 of voluntary time has been given to the project.

We are attracting good levels of match funding, exceeding our targets for training delivery and grants from other sources. Overall, we were just £30 short of our original target.

CHAPTER ONE



THE PROJECT HAS CREATED MOMENTUM



Key information: 1

Over the course of the project to date, we have logged 1043 personal contacts with older and old LGBT+ people (not unique).

People got involved

- This year, two of the regular In the Café group members have taken a lead on organising the group. Towards the end of the year they agreed a constitution and began the process of opening their own bank account.
- LGBT+ professionals are working with SAND: Daniel Lloyd – Design; Tom Hayes – Curation; Ming de Nasty – Photography; Helen Juffs – Consultancy; Hannah Quinn – Film-making & Research; Giselle Ryan – social media; Beth Prior – song-writing.

The importance of allies

We have ongoing commitment from allies with invaluable skills, knowledge and commitment, including our Treasurer and the CEO of AgeUK Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin.

Key information: 2

Over the course of the project to date, we have logged 1135 personal contacts with staff or volunteers working with and for service provider organisations.

As part of this number, 13 people, from 10 different organisations have taken part in our Facilitator Training and continue to connect and network, sharing practice and experience.

I'm buzzing so need to share! ... I had a meeting with XX with regard to rolling out the training at XX. I went with a sensible proposal with the why, how, when, and resources I need, I talked about the positive impacts, and suggested internal & external publicity [They] said Yes to everything I suggested, along with a promise of on-going support with the project. It couldn't have gone better!

[Facilitator Training participant]



People approach us, for example:

- Coverage Care requested resources to promote LGBT+ History Month within their homes and requested opportunities to visibly promote their commitment to inclusion
- AgeUK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin suggested using their prominent position to host a window display during the Shrewsbury LGBT+ History Festival
- Cruse Bereavement Services asked us to co-produce a leaflet with them
- Radfield Home Care asked for our help over wording their revised care assessment process
- Sure Care approached us about activities for Pride Month.

CHAPTER TWO



THE PROJECT HAS BUILT A GUIDING COALITION



Key information: 1

Our SAND Action Group continues to be led by LGBT+ people (75%) and those over the age of 50 (50%).

Three members of the SAND Action Group played key roles in the first tranche of our new Facilitator Training – two developing and delivering the content and the third, Betty at age 93 being self-termed 'Exhibit A', adding huge value to the experience.

Betty has been really helpful and enlightening. The format and resources have been excellent.

[Facilitator Training participant]

Our 2023 priority to outreach to older and old LGBT+ people is being overseen by a member of the Action Group who identifies as LGBT+.

By the end of Year Four, the In the Café group has become more established as one run by and for older and old LGBT+ people with a regular attendance of at least a dozen people. In addition to social connection, it has an ongoing function to disseminate information and knowledge to support people to age well, with members valuing this.

I think the danger might be that a more organic / free flowing arrangement would not allow people to plan and prepare the information, and so usefulness / relevance would decline
[ITC participant]

The group is also there to be consulted by SAND on appropriate matters. It is now self-sustaining, with AgeUK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin offering support if and when needed.



Key information: 2

We now have key contacts in each of the organisations signed up to The Covenant and have specific relationships with some of the early adopters who continue to help us test out different aspects of the project as they unfold. Of particular note are our relationships with:

- Citizens Advice Shropshire – who continued to help us pilot the action planning process for The Covenant and took part in our Future-Proofing panel debate
- AgeUK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin – whose CEO continues to be a member of the SAND Action Group and hugely valued partner and participant on the first tranche of the Facilitator Training. AgeUK also invited SAND to influence the marketing of their REACH (LGBT+ telefriending) service.

- Wrekin Housing Group – a member of their staff is now a Director of SAND, they gifted premises for our EMBRACE Facilitator Training (tranche one), took part in our Future-Proofing panel debate and commissioned six LGBT+ Awareness Training Courses. Two staff members also completed our first tranche of Facilitator Training.



- Radfield Home Care - took part in our Future-Proofing panel debate and invited our In the Café group to influence their care assessment process. Two members of staff also took part in the first tranche of our Facilitator Training.
- Cruse Bereavement Service – has co-produced a booklet specifically focused on LGBT+ people's experience of bereavement, raising some of the issues which may impact on them. Two volunteers also took part in the first tranche of our Facilitator Training.
- Shropshire Council Carers Support – read and précised a report focused on LGBT+ carers; took part in our Future-Proofing panel debate and took part in the first tranche of our Facilitator Training.
- Coverage Care Services - took part in the first tranche of our Facilitator Training and subsequently a resident in his 90s came out to the manager of his home and was supported to engage with In the Café and to be his authentic self at his home.
- Shropshire Partners in Care - has been sending out a leaflet highlighting key issues and encouraging people to watch some of the films that SAND has produced. They are also trying to incorporate these issues into everything they do and have starting with training around person-centred care and managing falls. They're also promoting SAND information in their regular news bulletins. Feedback has been positive and acknowledges that there is a knowledge gap in this area for many of their members.

CHAPTER THREE

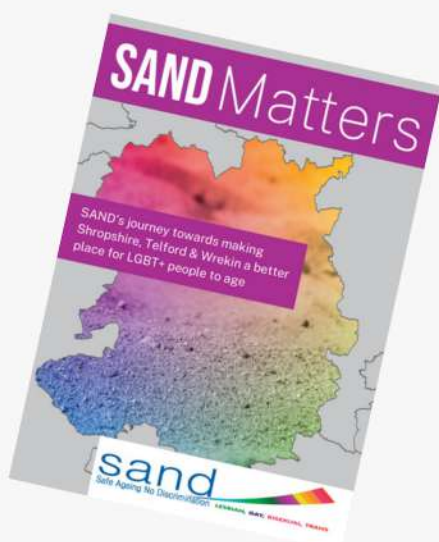


THE PROJECT HAS AGREED A CLEAR VISION



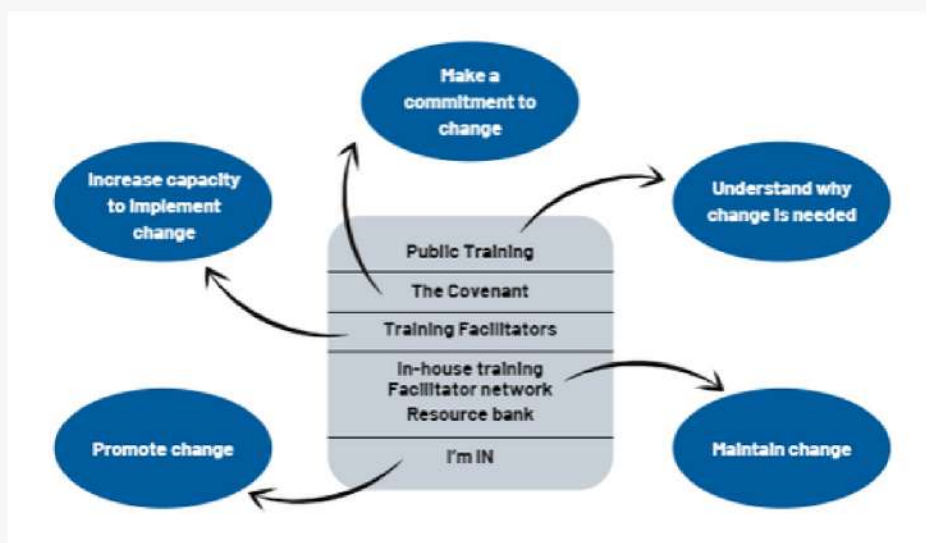
Key information: 1

Recognising that, as the project enters its latter stages, a success factor is to spread the word about EMBRACE as widely as we can to older and old LGBT+ people across the county. In response, we produced 'SAND Matters', a 16-page booklet designed to inform people about what has been happening, letting them know about achievements and inviting them to contribute to a Culture of Inclusion in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin.



Key information 2:

The Covenant commitments provide an increasingly clear pathway for organisations to engage in more inclusive practice.



At the time of writing, organisations signed up are:

Affinity Home Care
AgeUK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin
Bracebridge Care
Citizens Advice Shropshire
Community Resource
Coverage Care
Cruse Bereavement West Midlands
Energize
Healthwatch Shropshire
Integrated Care System
Morris Care
Much Wenlock & Cressage GP Practice
Positive Steps
Qube
Radfield Home Care
Robert Jones & Agnes Hunt
Safe Places Shropshire
Severn Hospice
Shropshire Council
Shrewsbury Homes for All
Shropshire Partners in Care
Springcare Limited
STAR Housing
Sure Care
Wrekin Housing Group

THE 5 COMMITMENTS

- Commit to providing the best possible quality services for older and old LGBT+ people
- Commit to learning what life can be – and has been – like for different LGBT+ people
- Commit to vocally and visually supporting groups working with and for older and old LGBT+ people
- Commit to creating meaningful opportunities for LGBT+ people and groups to 'influence' what you do
- Commit to assess and evidence change, including work carried out to engage LGBT+ people

... and we have a target list for Year Five.

CHAPTER FOUR



ENLISTING ALLIES

To take the Campaign forward in different ways, in different sectors, on many fronts.

By bringing people together, recognising everyone's own content, equipping people and motivating engagement.

The story of our project so far

In Year Four, we moved forward apace with sign-ups to The Covenant. At one level, we progressed conversations with decision makers in those organisations as they made a commitment to older and old LGBT+ people across the county and developed their action plans. At a more operational level, we also trained and networked other key personnel who are in a position to roll out training and learning opportunities focused on raising awareness of issues impacting on LGBT+ people.

Participants taking part in the first tranche of Facilitator Training elected to network via a Facebook Group once the training completed, supporting each other to access and understand how this might work. In practice, this choice proved difficult as some organisations do not allow their staff to use this social networking platform. In the end the network reverted back to an email group (initially with a monthly circular from SAND), and bi-monthly meetings (alternating Zoom and face-to-face).

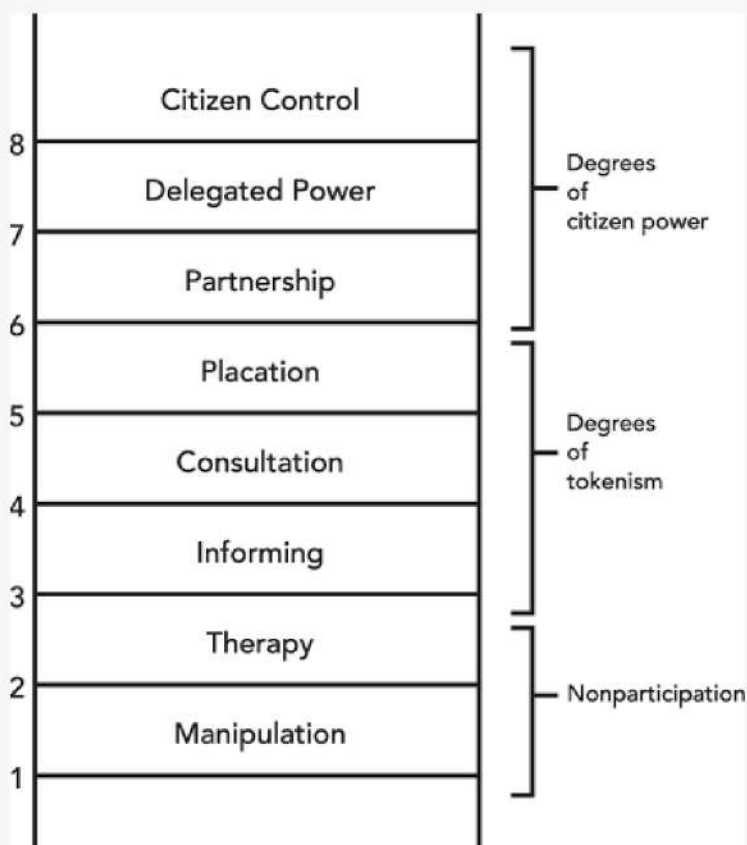
Demand for our half-day Awareness Training has increased and we delivered 12 courses this year. We were also pleased to attend the launch of the Skills for Care (LGBTQ+) in Later Life Learning Framework, alongside 350 others (including representation from Shropshire Council and Morris Care).

How we've involved people from our community

In Year Four, we planned and began to implement a 'Roadshow' (later called our 'Outreach Project') to connect more widely with older and old LGBT+ people across the county. Central to this was the production of the SAND Matters booklet, telling the story of SAND and featuring the key role of the project to EMBRACE A Culture of Inclusion. The idea was to print many hard copies and circulate them liberally. In Year Four, we distributed 732 to individuals or locations where we best believe they will reach our target group. An additional 182 digital versions of SAND Matters have been downloaded.

Since the start of our project, we have been tracking levels of engagement using a modified/simplified version of Arnstein's Ladder of participation (see below). Whilst in previous years, we have reported back on the numbers of LGBT+ people and the numbers of service providers engaging with the project, we have not to date reported back on any change in their levels of engagement. Now we have completed our fourth year, this seems like the time for this reflection.

Arnstein's Ladder of Participation



In our simplified model we have been working to:

Influencing (YR 5)

Deciding together (YR 4)

Working together (YR 3)

Consultation (YR 2)

Information giving (YR 1)

We have kept records every year and so year one provides us with a baseline.

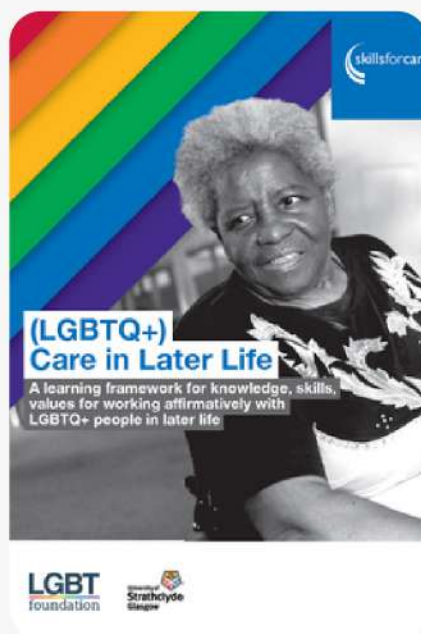
In Year One, we counted 199 engagements with LGBT+ people and (excluding members of the SAND Action Group), these were all either at a Level 1 (information receiving), notably with existing local organisations, for example: Telford LGBT, Oswestry LGBT, Ludlow Pride or – as with our own Grains of SAND research and story-telling outreach - at Level 2 (bringing together/consultation).

By the end of Year Four, we have counted 1043 engagements, with notable connections at Level 3 (working together) or Level 4 (deciding together), particularly through the now established In the Café group.

In Year Three we wrote and produced the film *70 Years through LGBT+ Eyes* which provided a vehicle to tell many of the stories that have been shared with SAND by older and old LGBT+ people. Five composite characters are central to the film which leads the viewer through eight decades of socio-political change. In Year Four, the Facilitator Training required all participants to view the film, and we also programmed a screening of it into our public training courses.

To date, the film has been viewed 356 times. It is available to watch here: <https://vimeo.com/662939836>

The launch of the *Skills for Care (LGBTQ+) in Later Life Learning Framework* was also attended by Shropshire Council staff and SAND coordinated them, plus 3 other professionals who had taken part in our Facilitator Training, to come together to discuss how the framework could support inclusive work in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. Following this discussion, SAND then continued to work closely with Shropshire Council's Training officer to ensure that the Awareness Training we deliver via Joint Training (Shropshire Council) overtly covers distinct sections in the Framework.



Using the Amber and Green of the RAG (Red, Amber, Green) system, we mapped the content of the *Skills for Care (LGBTQ+) in Later Life Learning Framework* against:

- the viewing of 3 key video resources (*70 Years through LGBT+ Eyes*, Dignity Day and the Gen Silent Trailer)
- the Care Skills Academy (*LGBT Aware for Care*) E-learning
- SAND 1/2 day *LGBT+ Awareness Training*
- Joint Training

Results of current analysis (Green = will deliver this subject, perhaps with minor adjustment. Amber = could be easily adapted to deliver the subject):

TIER 1 and 2	3 FILMS	CARE SKILLS E-LEARNING	SAND INTRO COURSE	Joint Training
DOMAIN A: LGBTQ+ Awareness and Affirming Practice				
AD1: Awareness of LGBTQ+ history and culture				
AS2: Language, terminology and communication				
AS3: Legal framework, human rights and ethics				
DOMAIN B: Health and Wellbeing in Later Life				
BS4: LGBTQ+ inequalities in later life				
BS5: Family, kinship, communities and networks				
BS6: Challenging discrimination, oppression and violence				
BS7: Participation, user involvement and co-production				
DOMAIN C: Personalised Care and Support				
CS8: Intersectionality in LGBTQ+ ageing				
CS9: Support and care for LGBTQ+ individuals with dementia				
CS10: LGBTQ+ Carers				
CS11: Sexuality and intimacy in later life				
CS12: Trans and Non-Binary affirming care				
CS13: HIV and LGBTQ+ ageing				
CS14: Safeguarding LGBTQ+ adults in later life				
CS15: End of life care				
DOMAIN D: Leadership, Education and Service Development				
DS16: Providing inclusive and affirmative care environments				
DS17: Improving services and practice based on research evidence and evaluation				
DS18: Leadership and transforming service for LGBTQ+ individuals and communities				
DS19: Creating inclusive learning environments.				

The differences we're making

As a result of SAND's work, some LGBT+ people in the county have:

- chosen to have a civil partnership specifically to ensure that their relationships and wishes are more secure
- started exploring housing and care options, including home care and extra care
- completed their wills
- come out to the care staff where they live
- been talking to organisations about what they can do to be more inclusive
- started talking to each other about their concerns and ideas about ageing well
- taken part in events to understand more about what they can do to help themselves
- shared examples of both good - and less good – experiences
- established themselves as a self-sustaining group, meeting regularly

Some health and social care providers across the county have:

- seen more of their staff coming out
- been working on their Covenant action plans
- collaborated on issues with other organisations
- talked to people in their organisations
- worked with SAND to produce useful resources
- undertaken training in LGBT+ Awareness
- trained people within their own organisations to increase their LGBT+ awareness
- identified LGBT+ Champions within their organisations
- created visibly inclusive displays in their buildings



In the period 1st June 2022 – 30th May 2023, SAND Action Group members, volunteers and web-developers, clocked up 453 voluntary hours, translating to £17,967 worth of time. As the EMBRACE Project constitutes the majority of our work, we can reasonably assume that at least 80% (£14,375) is invested in EMBRACE activity.

Over the 4 complete years of the project, this now totals: £115,995 of voluntary time given to the project.

In relation to our original outcomes and this aspect of enlisting allies, we considered 2 specific outcomes for LGBT people who engage with SAND and service providers

- Opportunities to develop a resource that works best for them and have a stake in the development of inclusive practice.
- Opportunities to contribute towards improved practice to meet and exceed national health and social care values.

Our Year Four indicators to achieve these were:

- LGBT+ people feel confident that they can access particular services and will feel, included, comfortable and safe
- LGBT+ people are involved in testing of resource

What we've learned

Over the life of the project to date, we have learned that it is hard for SAND to engage with older and old LGBT+ people in vast numbers, to ask people to think about and plan for ageing. People need to understand what SAND is trying to achieve before we can even start to ask them to play an active role in creating change.

We have also learned that the initial vision, for a collectively created 'resource' to educate service providers about issues impacting on older and old LGBT+ people and to offer ways forward for more inclusive practice, is too simplistic in practice. Health, social care, housing and related sectors are busy responding to repeated crises: floods, pandemic, cost of living.

Also, to embed meaningful change in the county without creating a dependency on SAND means an increased focus on embedding change-makers within those organisations.

SAND, as a nimble CIC, is in a position to respond, adapt our approach, be more iterative than big organisations and use our own capacity to support development.



How we're changing what we do



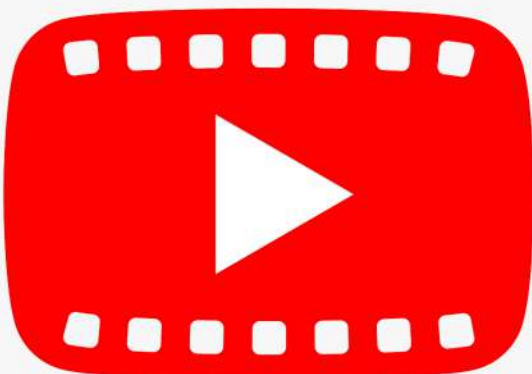
In January 2023, we launched our Outreach Project, prioritising engagement with older and old LGBT+ people across the county for the calendar year of 2023.

The approach is about putting the SAND Matters booklet into their hands or making it available in spaces where they are able to access it, without the need to 'come out', to declare themselves or get directly involved with SAND – but they are encouraged to take their own action.

SAND dropped its own public training courses – recognising that we just do not have the marketing reach to make it viable. Instead, we now promote the courses commissioned from us by Joint Training. We have also started a process of re-tagging the resources on our website to marry with the *Skills for Care Learning Framework* suggested reading and associated guidance.

In Year Four we developed and delivered our Facilitator Training programme as a method to embed capacity within organisations.

We have maintained our interest in creative approaches to learning, sharing and engagement, this year with some audio tracks providing scenarios drawn from experiences of older and old LGBT+ people. These were used to prompt discussion and responses from service providers at our Future-Proofing event in October 2022.



Future-Proofing event – Scenario 1:
<https://youtu.be/IK1VPbBlg4M>

Future-Proofing event – Scenario 2:
<https://youtu.be/jenfaRR6LJM>

CHAPTER FIVE



CONSIDERING BARRIERS TO CHANGE

To recognise, remove or circumvent barriers that undermine the EMBRACE vision.

By considering at all levels of engagement; developing strategies to overcome these; working with everyone – providers and users/potential users/family/friends

The story of our project so far

We have moved a long way from the early days of

*We don't have any of those people here
We treat everyone the same*

- Traditionally, 'getting people to get that there is something to get' was our biggest barrier to change.
- Capacity is always an issue and always a barrier to change. Our own capacity at SAND, with the loss of key members of our team and the capacity of the organisations and individuals that we work with.
- Money is another typical barrier to effective working and SAND is no exception to this.

Rather than us trying to second-guess structural barriers to change, we asked Covenantees to identify these in their action plans. They said things like the following:

- Time and capacity to deliver change, work pressures elsewhere
- The work being driven by one individual and not owned by all
- Lack of understanding of the needs & lived experiences of older & old LGBT+ people and awareness there is 'something to get'
- Reluctance to 'ask the question' about "peoples" sexual orientation and identity
- Individual change resistance
- Poor or inefficient communication
- Lack of resources/time
- Change fatigue
- Organisation complexity
- Engagement to new learning approaches
- Evidencing change
- Difficulty in staff adapting to change
- Lack of knowledge or skills
- Very challenging circumstances particularly around staffing, may mean that providers are unable to free staff to attend training
- This may not feel like a priority
- Attitudes
- Open conversations about LGBT
- Resistance to change
- Capacity - other work pressures that result in not enough priority being given to deliver agreed actions

How we've involved people from our community

There is nothing quite like a story to get people on board.

In 2022, as a direct result of our Facilitator Training, one gay man living in a care home, came out to the care home manager. He is now open about himself, his sexuality and has taken part in a couple of events where he has met other older and old LGBT+ people.

I would like to say a massive thank you for yesterday it was really nice and XX enjoyed himself



Older and old LGBT+ people have generously shared their own experiences. In 2022-23, we were lucky enough to run a complementary project called 'The Wave Project'. The concept was to increase the visibility of older and old LGBT+ people by asking them to 'give us a wave' to camera, sending their photographs to us and then featuring these in a public exhibition – initially at Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery (with a parallel exhibition at Theatre Severn) and then potentially touring around the county.



SAND recognises the value of parallel creative projects like The Wave Project and we continue to run these alongside EMBRACE to encourage engagement and to produce impactful resources.

Our own capacity has been enhanced by the appointment of two new Directors, drawn from the existing team and the engagement of more freelance professionals to deliver aspects of the project in line with their own skillset.

In Year Four, we commissioned Hannah Quinn, trained journalist and freelance videographer to research the subject of LGBT+ carers, cared for and life after care. This first stage research is complete and the information gathered will be used to inform presentations during Carers week 2023. The intention then is to create a video-based resource in Year Five.

We also commissioned End of Life Doula Helen Juffs to create a resource specifically for LGBT+ people to understand better preparation for end of life (this has been delayed and will be delivered in Year Five).

SAND has been supporting our EMBRACE Covenantees talking through their action plans and providing update reports for them to share with colleagues. We are hosting bi-monthly gatherings of the Facilitator Network where the cohort of facilitators trained in 2022 now come together to share their implementation plans and practice. Their choice has been to alternate face-to-face and online gatherings.

The differences we're making

Older and old LGBT+ people are engaging with each other, and friendships are being made – tentatively and not in their masses, but they are engaging. The In the Café group is planning parallel activities, including a recent trip out to Much Wenlock.

*This is the safest I have ever felt in a group situation
[In the Café participant]*

SAND's conversations with service providers definitely start at a different point these days. In Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin there is a growing recognition that LGBT+ people get older – we are not just a young phenomenon and that, as we age, we face some specific issues which can be addressed via more inclusive practice. This is a huge shift for us!

We are finding a fine balance between supporting organisations by providing additional capacity and being mindful not to create a dependency. Our approach to this is to offer resources rather than people. It seems to work, as our videos are increasingly viewed and talked about. People have heard of SAND and are curious about The Covenant.



We are attracting good levels of match funding, exceeding our targets for training delivery and grants from other sources. Sponsorship continues to be a non-starter as the number of events we have delivered has been low and they themselves have been small scale. Overall, we were £30 short of our original target.

What we've learned

Interestingly – perhaps predictably – service providers in Year Four have seen our In the Café group as a potential ready-made focus group. We have been fiercely protective of this group, clear that the purpose is for them to have a forum to learn about different aspects of 'ageing well', at a pace which works for them. It has been a struggle to deter the enthusiasm of service providers. We have done this via specific invitations to individuals to attend, to discuss particular subjects; strong themes and a programme (however relaxed) for each session.

We have explored barriers to change within organisations with personnel taking part in the Facilitator Training.

Barriers include:

- Difficulty linking up for any form of joint learning in organisations where staff are spread across the county
- The formality of referring to 'training' may create the wrong environment right at the start
- Staff teams are already under pressure – perceived lack of time
- Defensive behaviour may arise if someone thinks they're being accused of not working in inclusive ways or of discriminating
- A lack of time at management levels to engage/broach new subjects/topics
- Own thoughts and feelings before engaging – am I 'saying the right thing'?



We also identified ground-rules for the Facilitator Training:

- Safe to admit don't know/understand
- Create a safe space where people can talk about experienced prejudices and those we may have ourselves
- Non- judgmental
- Think before we open our mouths
- Listen – be reflective
- Treat people with respect and kindness – link with asking curious/interested questions
- Recognise this is an emotive subject

In a conversation in November 2022, one of the SAND delivery team said

as is the SAND way, things are likely to change again tomorrow

This was a real eye-opener as they articulated the flexible responsive approach taken, albeit within a framework and with clear goals in sight! We know that working with human beings means that things change all the time, that working with organisations delivering services, that things change all the time. We see it as a real positive that we can bend and flex – but we have learned that it is difficult to articulate this to others in a meaningful way – they have to experience it and identify it for themselves!



We have learned that change relating to inclusion has to come from the heart. Our Facilitator Training programme does not teach by rote but rather is designed to equip individuals to relay information to colleagues on the most appropriate way for them to feel the impact of inequitable service, and to care enough to change what they do.

Embedding meaningful change across and throughout organisations is fundamentally difficult – we have had two incidents involving committed organisations which have worked hard with SAND to EMBRACE A Culture of Inclusion but which have both fallen at an early test when their services have been viewed – not hypothetically but in cases of real need.

How we're changing what we do

Feeling included – we have responded to comment that referring to our older and old age group as 50+ does not feel inclusive of those who are significantly older than this. By default they feel that attention may not really be given specifically to them. We have since amended our dialogue to refer to aged 50-100+

We went back to the National Lottery Community Fund to request Cost of Living uplift and a ringfenced budget for external evaluators. This secured our delivery team on a slightly increased rate of pay. It also equipped us to engage creative evaluators to collect and illustrate the journey of change throughout the life of the project.

CHAPTER SIX



DEMONSTRATING THAT CHANGE IS POSSIBLE

Use different vehicles to communicate the new vision and strategies for achieving it.

Use the guiding coalition to model the behaviours you want in the new world.

The story of our project so far

The In the Café group has received presentations and facilitated discussion from Radfield Home Care on the range of care services available to them; visited Extra Care housing provision managed by Wrekin Housing group; and learned about social prescribing from Social Prescribing Community Development Officers.

Our 'Future-Proofing' event was intended to be the first of a series, bringing together service providers with older and old LGBT+ people. Audience numbers were low and quality conversation was high. It felt like a good starter and individual LGBT+ people have started coming to us when things go wrong for them or when they are wanting to plan for ageing.

This year, we have also stepped up our involvement with Shropshire Council. Having started our connection with Adult Social Care, we began engaging other departments, notably Culture, Leisure & Tourism who have supported our Outreach Project through every library in the county.

We now have 342 people signed up to receive our monthly e-newsletter, 144 of these have joined in the past 12 months. Each month we feature a Covenantee, with information about how they are progressing their action plan under The Covenant. We started this in January 2023 and have featured: Wrekin Housing Group; AgeUK Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin; Radfield Home Care; Cruse Bereavement Support and Coverage Care Services.



Social media following – we now have 434 followers on Twitter and 479 on Facebook. Different social media platforms allow for different levels of analysis, so we can discover that 37% of our 459 Facebook following is over the age of 55.

Wowed by our increasing presence on social media, we have tentatively set up LinkedIn and Instagram accounts in Year Four.

Radio Features: Towards the end of Year Four, on 15 May 2023, SAND featured in a lengthy piece on BBC Radio Shropshire, with Coverage Care Services talking about their new LGBT+ Champions and their approach to inclusive practice and SAND talking about the role of The Covenant.

We are also pleased to see an increasing trend for our Covenantees to promote their status on their own websites and through the media:



Equity Diversity and Inclusion

When we say we are here for everyone, whoever they are and whatever their problem, we mean it - and we recognise that not everyone is the same. Equality, diversity and inclusion are in our DNA and therefore at the heart of our work.

Our advice is for everyone and we design our services to work for a range of needs, including those with the most complex problems or where the number of people affected is small.

As part of this work, we were the first organisation to sign up for "The Covenant" - a project from Safe Ageing No Discrimination (SAND).



**Citizens Advice
Shropshire**
Proud to support the
LGBTQ+ community



How we've involved people from our community

This is the year of the Outreach Project, which has involved gathering ideas from the SAND Action Group to gather ideas; attendance at LGBT+ focused events across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin as well as connection with other existing events across the county.

Invoice #71

To distribute information and promote the Outreach Project, we have connected with:

- organisations and groups where people aged 50+ may gather – for example: churches, community centres, u3a, 50+ forums, parish councils, patient participant groups, armed forces veterans.
- generic providers, for example: library services, mobile library, community transport services.
- Covenantees, including Wrekin Housing Group, AgeUK STW and Citizens Advice Shropshire.

Our targets are to:

- connect with 100 older or old LGBT+ people across the county (with an emphasis on outreach to different parts of the county) – providing information on SAND's work and connections with health and social care organisations and social prescribers
- collect photographs of 100 older and old LGBT+ people who live, work or play in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin 'waving' – all with appropriate signed permissions
- secure a cohort of 30 LGBT+ people to engage with opportunities identified by SAND – including educational films, visibility projects, consultations with service providers



We have been in touch with new (to us) groups and organisations, including: ShropDoc, Axis Counselling, Bracebridge Care, Grain Projects, Kicking the Bucket Festival, Market Drayton Patient Participation Group, Riverview Care and St Oswald's Church.

Informed by the ICS through their Covenant Lead, we also delivered LGBT+ Awareness for nine students and two staff from the nursing preceptorship.

The differences we're making

Of the In the Café group – one of them now has regular domiciliary care provision; one is looking at residential care provision for their partner; one reports on the friendships he has made through the group and another is considering Extra Care housing.

Individuals have approached us with questions – one wanting to ensure their partner is financially secure should anything happen to them; another wanting to review local care homes; another wanting to combat loneliness and identify support.

One of the massive strengths of the Facilitator Training was bringing together individuals from different organisations and in different job roles and sectors. We had people who had never met before, had not linked with each other's organisations – and they all felt the benefit.

*My heart was definitely full coming home yesterday and I am just grateful for XX who shared their experiences with me (the novice), but hopefully not for much longer Thanks so much for this opportunity
[Facilitator Training participant]*

Organisations want to talk to us when things go wrong and identify what they can do to improve. They are keen to identify the specific point of failure and work with us to do something about it.

What we've learned

'Every bit is a bit'. Change may feel slow and small but in fact it is paced and steady. This project has huge ambitions and is absolutely seeing change happen. We have learned that, currently, we need to keep things bubbling, to keep all the plates spinning – communicating with all Covenantees at all times – but in ways which work for them. Everybody is busy, everybody has other priorities and this work on inclusion is just a very small part of what they do.

Having said that, things have shifted and the ambition to EMBRACE A Culture of Inclusion is now embedded within some organisational practice.

How we're changing what we do

Our job now:

- To get a copy of the SAND Matters Booklet into as many older and old LGBT+ hands across the county as we possibly can
- Alongside the continuation of encouraging sign up to the Covenant is to inspire organisations to share their successes and their learning

We are also planning a new booklet for Year Five – “Inclusion Matters”, which will be a directory of Covenantees, specifically for use by older and old LGBT+ people.

CHAPTER SEVEN



SUSTAINING ACCELERATION

Reinvigorate the change process with new projects and change agents.

Be relentless with initiating change after change until the vision is a reality.

The story of our project so far

From the very start of this project, we have been interested in meaningful change which is embedded in practice. We have always been clear that we did not want to create a dependency on SAND for organisations in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin to work in ways which provide a better experience for LGBT+ people as they age.



In 2022, our Funding Officer asked us what success would look like – great question.

This got us thinking and this is what we came up with:

- Hitlist of Covenantees achieved
- Action plans are embedded in practice and policy
- Organisations share inclusive practice (incl care plans)
- Champions in organisations
- Inclusion of LGBT+ issues/experiences in general discussion at meetings (usualised)
- Organisations support and 'challenge' each other
- Organisations train in-house on LGBT+ Awareness
- LGBT+ people know what SAND has done and they know who to contact within organisations if they have issues to raise
- The branding outlives the project!

We keep ourselves informed and our resource collection up to date. This year we have added many publications, including one which specifically flagged up the contributory nature of rurality to the potential isolating experience for older and old LGBT+ people.



How we've involved people from our community



We are mass messaging – developing and delivering the Outreach Project to get the message out to people about what SAND has been doing for the past ten years – and specifically what the EMBRACE Project is all about, the benefits it brings and how people can help to achieve more.

We developed an ‘elevator pitch’

For over ten years, SAND has been listening to LGBT+ people talk about their life experiences, hopes, fears and concerns about growing older, and growing old in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin.

People are worried about maintaining their whole identity, of being safe, of having others around them who truly care for their wellbeing.

SAND believes that those experiences, in reality, could be better and we have been busy talking to a range of organisations providing care, or housing, or information and advice about what they can do to address some of those fears and concerns - and the inevitable questions that arise.

Often, the experiences that we share sound shocking and service providers are surprised at the level of discrimination that LGBT+ people have experienced in earlier life and may still face today - and how this can affect how we feel.

SAND uses this heartfelt realization to help educate and support organisations to do things better - and it is working!

We are proud of how things are changing and we want LGBT+ people, friends and allies across the county to support this change - to speed things up and invest in a future which should be better for us all, as we age.

We developed a brief for our year of outreach in 2023, with aims:

- to tell LGBT+ people, of all ages and across the county, about the work of SAND and its specific focus on older and old LGBT+ people
- to encourage LGBT+ people to feel more confident about accessing the services they need, as their whole selves – and to be willing and able to complain if necessary
- to increase visibility and profile of older and old LGBT+ people
- to encourage older and old LGBT+ people to come together

The differences we're making

The SAND Matters booklet is being widely distributed, telling LGBT+ people of all ages and across the county about the work of SAND and its specific focus on older and old LGBT+ people.

Visibility and profile of older and old LGBT+ people is in the public eye with our parallel project of photographs on display in Year Five.

The In the Café group encourages older and old LGBT+ people to come together on a monthly basis. This is complemented in Year Five by a series of new monthly 'Heritage' workshops hosted by Grain Photography, meeting June – November 2023.



We already have some big-hitter organisations signed up to The Covenant and more on the way – including Midlands Partnership Foundation NHS Trust, whose CEO recently invited us to share with them the recent experiences of an LGBT+ person in their care.

Organisations are reporting back on their action plans, featuring in our newsletter and being updated on our website, some are also recording progress on their own websites.

Coverage Care Services is leading the way with LGBT+ Champions identified for each of their 12 residential care homes.

Cruse Bereavement Services has delivered in-house on LGBT+ Awareness; it is now mandatory at Radfield Home Care for employees to complete the LGBT+ Aware to Care (Care Skills Academy); and Coverage Care Services has recently purchased 1000 licenses for this same course.

People are coming out or, if already out, are more visible. This includes operational staff, senior managers and organisational leaders.

What we've learned

It is still difficult to reach older and old LGBT+ people!

Whilst the project has a momentum of its own, we still need to steer, to ensure that progression is forwards.

Some organisations sign up to The Covenant with good intention but then do not do anything – SAND cannot afford for this to be the case. Older and old LGBT+ people need to know that if an organisation is listed as a Covenantee, then they are indeed working towards more inclusive practice. They may not always get things right but there should be lines to accountability and recourse, and the service recipient should be able to trust that the organisation does want to change and is being proactive in achieving this.

How we're changing what we do

We have had offers from some Covenantees who work with volunteers across the county, to distribute the SAND Matters booklets wide and far. This will really help to expand our capacity to outreach in Year Five.

We are providing opportunities for Covenantees to promote their engagement (through use of their logo in SAND Matters reprint and on our website) or to 'reverse' their sign-up if they are struggling to engage at the moment. This has led to a spring clean and a list of sign-ups which continues to be meaningful in terms of working towards change.

THAT WAS YEAR FOUR



EMBRACE
A CULTURE OF INCLUSION

