

Northern Ireland's
only HIV charity



Back to Derryvolgie

Annual Report 2021/2022

20
Derryvolgie Avenue



A word from our CEO

While NI as a whole saw a slow and stuttering return to a semblance of normality throughout 2021 following Covid, I'm delighted to report that things were anything but slow and stuttering at Positive Life!

In terms of **public affairs**, we maintained a consistent level of engagement with local elected representatives, developing the dialogue around the need for a NI Sexual Health Strategy, a consistent approach to Relationship and Sexuality Education and investment to ensure a positive society for people living with or affected by HIV in NI.



Being nominated as one of MLA Kate Nicholl's Charity during her tenure as Lord Mayor of Belfast went a long way to supporting our **awareness raising** work as we held a spot at the Christmas Market.

At the Christmas Market we also had a chance to raise our asks with the then Secretary of State, Brandon Lewis.



Along with this, the opportunity to present at the Westminster All-Party Group in November 2021 on the issues faced by women living with HIV in NI dovetailed nicely too with our long-sought success in having Stormont light up red to mark World Aids Day on 1st December 2021 – definitely one of the year's highlights for me.



Effective **service delivery** is always a priority for the team at Positive Life and 2021 was no different. The numbers are impressive, **3881** one to one contacts and **over £106,000** in previously unclaimed benefits secured!

That said though, it's probably best to let the folk we work for be the judge of how we're doing so we've shared some feedback throughout the report - pretty successful, I think you'll agree!

The issue of sustainability and **income generation** is never too far away and is an ongoing concern particularly in the current economic climate, so we were delighted to secure £30,000 from Ulster Garden Villages to support our Community Engagement and Training work.

Additionally we received an award of almost £100,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund Dormant Accounts to establish our NI Buyers Club which will support our work to build relationships with corporate partners, roll out our HIV Awareness Training in the NI business community ultimately busting myths to improve lived experience for anyone affected by HIV, and securing the longer term sustainability of Positive Life.

So another busy year for us, and as we begin delivering on our new **2022 – 2027 Strategic Plan**, we're mindful that NI attitudes still have a way to go before we can rest easy so we'll keep the conversation going and look forward to reporting on progress next year.

The Numbers

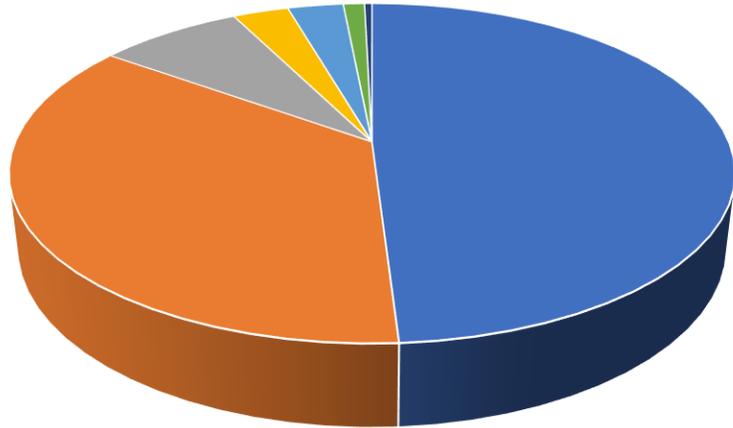
Positive Life received income of **£434,952** during 2021/22 with expenditure of **£388,793** resulting in an increase to reserves of **£46,159**

Funding sources are detailed below. Positive Life's accounts 2021/22 were independently verified by chartered accountants and registered auditors Exchange Auditing Ltd.

Full copies available on request.

Income received 2021/22

DOH	97,168
PHA	165,554
Nat Lottery Community Fund	121,227
Nat Lottery Dormant Accounts Fund	25,854
Estee Lauder (MAC)	10,000
Ulster Garden Village	10,000
Collections/Donations/Gift Aid	3,822
Other Income	1,327
Total	434,952

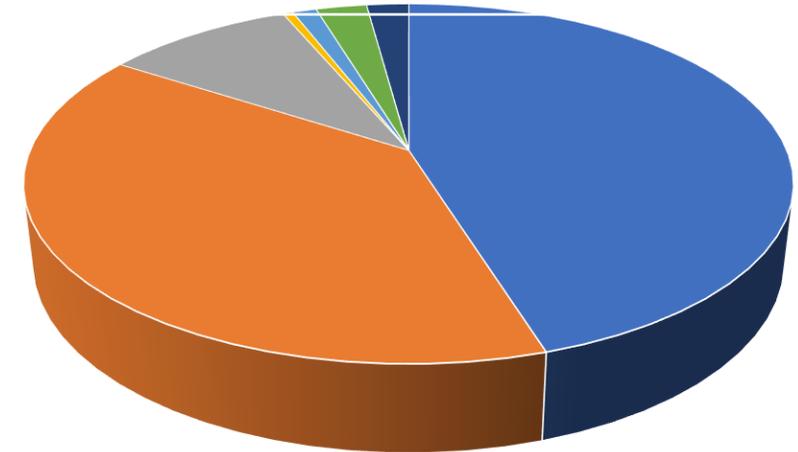


- PHA
- Nat Lottery Community Fund
- Nat Lottery Dormant Accounts Fund
- Estee Lauder (MAC)
- Ulster Garden Village
- Collections/Donations/Gift Aid
- Other Income

Expenditure 2021/22

Positive Life Core Services	77,735
Positive Life Support programme	140,529
NLCF+ Family Life Project	121,227
NI Buyers Club	29,515
Positive Life Condom Distribution programme	1,572
HIV+ Parent & Toddler Support programme	3,724
Positive Living for a Positive Life programme	7,914
Positive Peer's Project	6,577

388,793



- Positive Life Support programme
- NLCF+ Family Life Project
- NI Buyers Club
- Positive Life Condom Distribution programme
- HIV+ Parent & Toddler Support programme
- Positive Living for a Positive Life programme
- Positive Peer's Project

The Past Year

Way back in April 2021, the **+Family Life Project** was successful in securing two years additional funding from the National Lottery Community Fund which allowed us to continue our partnerships with Relate NI and Advice Space.

**advice
space**
support & guidance

relate
Northern Ireland

Alongside the stats on counselling and support sessions throughout the report, you'll have read in Jacque's note that service users have benefitted from **over £106,000** recovered in underpaid benefits or benefits which the individuals did not realise they were entitled to – collaboration is clearly key to positive outcomes.

The last year has also seen Positive Life collaborating with **HIV Ireland** and **Pos Now** in Dublin on a new Peer Support service. Over the year pilot programme was rolled out aimed at providing local and effective support. The training has now been developed and has been accredited by the Open College Network, meaning that all Peers who complete the training have the opportunity to receive a nationally recognised Level 3 qualification in Peer Support.

ocn
northern ireland

PositiveNow
All-Ireland Network

**HIV
Ireland**



2021 also saw the start of a new relationship with **Kridyom.UK** coach, and mindfulness expert, **Maria Garvey**, who facilitated our residential. Participants were supported as they explored the fears, worries and insecurities so commonly associated with an HIV diagnosis. Such was the feedback and experience of participants that we're excited to be developing a series of day retreats at Maria's beautiful base in Rostrevor.

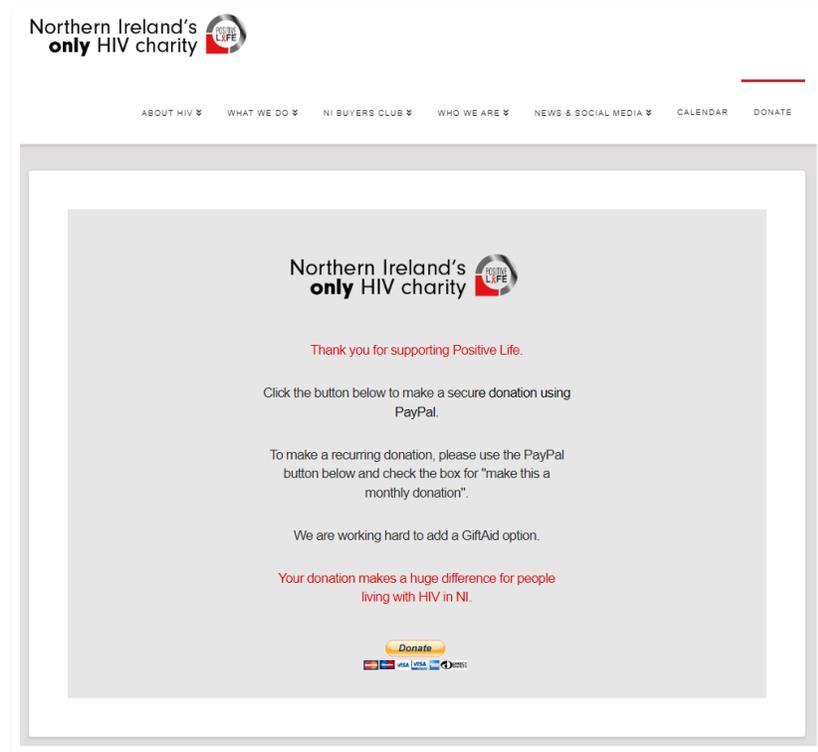
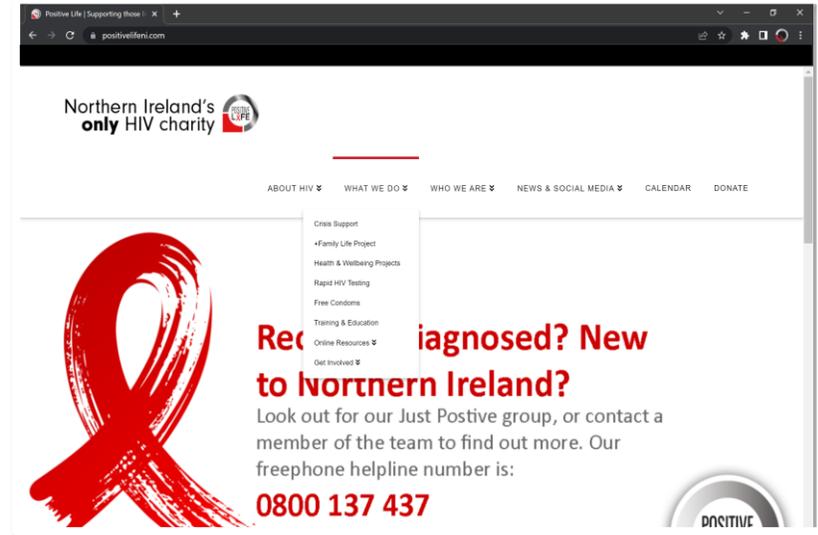
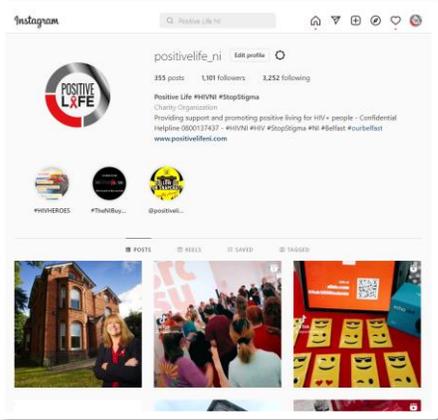
During the lockdowns the staff team adapted quickly and became used to working remotely and connecting with service users using digital platforms. As we have returned to the office, we have maintained a digital presence which has improved access for folk from all over Northern Ireland who can now join events from wherever they are without all the travel issues – another positive outcome.

And as we return to post-Covid service delivery there are only slight differences - we still ask service users to confirm that they have no Covid symptoms before entering the building.



But apart from that and a wee bit of extra cleaning to ensure the premises are as safe as possible, things are pretty much back to normal and we'll continue to work towards positive outcomes for everyone involved!

Social Media & Engagement



Here you can see just a few examples of some of our online work over the last year or so.

You'll notice that our logo has had a small makeover, and our website, and social media channels have had a major overhaul including the addition of online donation facilities via PayPal. We really hope they are super user friendly and full of useful information which we will be continually updating so you can stay on top of the facts surrounding HIV in Northern Ireland.

You can visit our website at www.positivelifeni.com

Service User Feedback

As a responsible organisation, we of course have to be mindful of the numbers – both financial and quantitative – as we're accountable for these to our funders. Outcomes though, are the most important measure of success for us and these are demonstrated in this sample of feedback received from some of the folk who avail of our services.

“ I wanted to express my feelings towards my experience due to Positive life. This organisation is worth its weight in gold for me personally and the team members have taken the time to listen to me, empathise, offer support, and give me mental strength and hope. Our conversation sessions have impacted me greatly and I feel so encouraged to say I'm not going to let this virus (HIV) get the better of me.

“ I enjoyed the (Day Retreat) workshop we did.....and would attend again given the opportunity and would encourage anyone and everyone of the Centre's clients to avail of this golden opportunity to meet, get to know and spend time with folk with whom they can share their experiences. This day was a complete tonic for me and I left with a feeling of positivity.

“ You have been an absolute blessing to me from when I've known you and I can't thank you enough for everything.

“

Thank you so much... you have been the only person who I have been able to trust and talk to about things. I have never felt comfortable [sic] or even wanted to talk to anyone about before... you have let me see that not everyone in this world is bad...thank you so much.

And as we strive to ensure that service users inform the work that we do and have a voice we continue to facilitate access to the Board – the feedback shared below would indicate that we've found an effective way of doing so.

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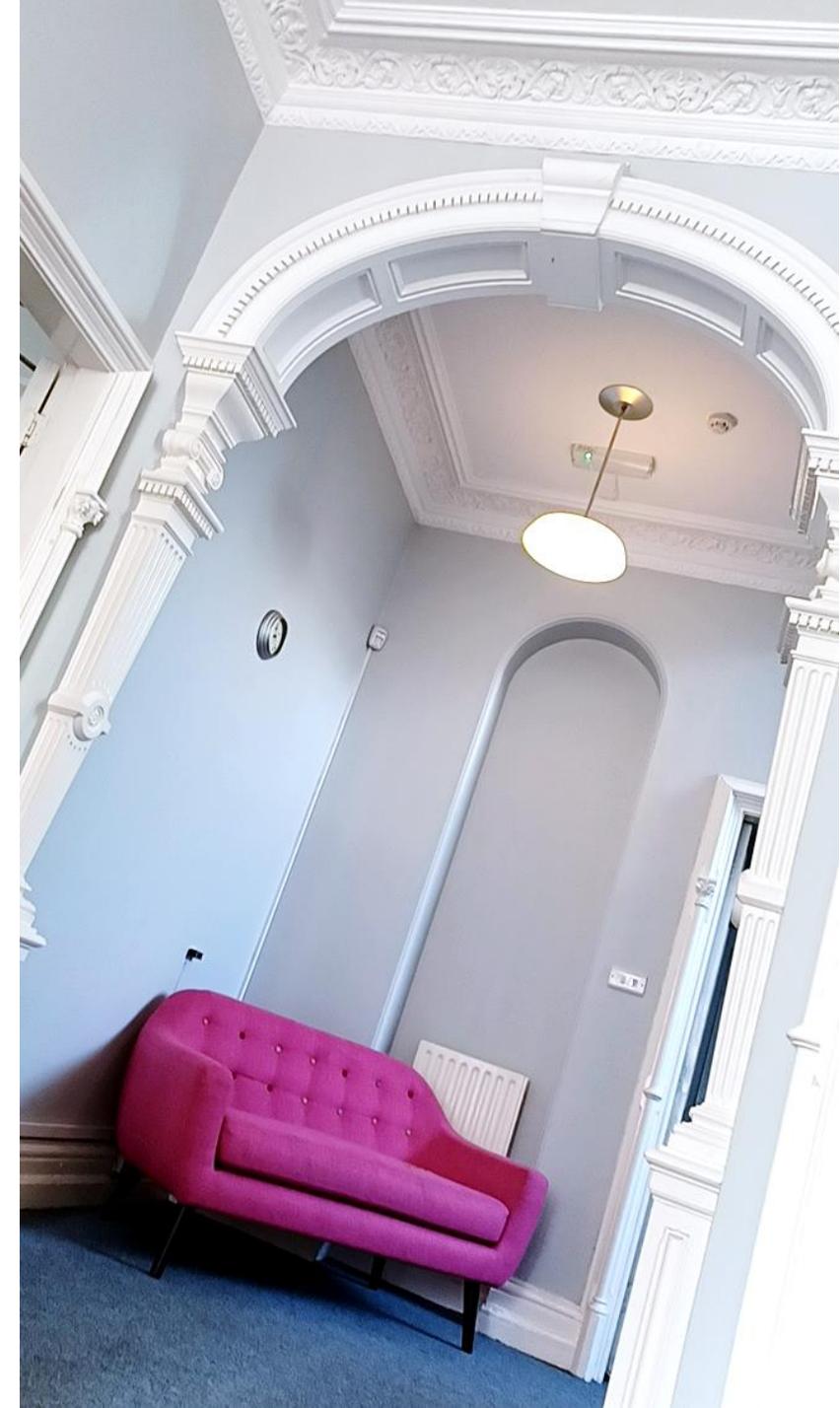
I really enjoyed meeting members of the board who were all so friendly, engaged and easy to talk to. You made it so comfortable for all of us and thank you for asking me to it. I hope they gained a lot from the meeting and I know that I did.

“

It was nice to meet and hear about the work that you are doing, that we know nothing about. If I can help in any way ask, I am more than happy to discuss what it's like living with HIV. Thank you for the invitation to come as well.

“

It was lovely to meet up last night. I found the conversation very encouraging and hopeful for the future.



Funders

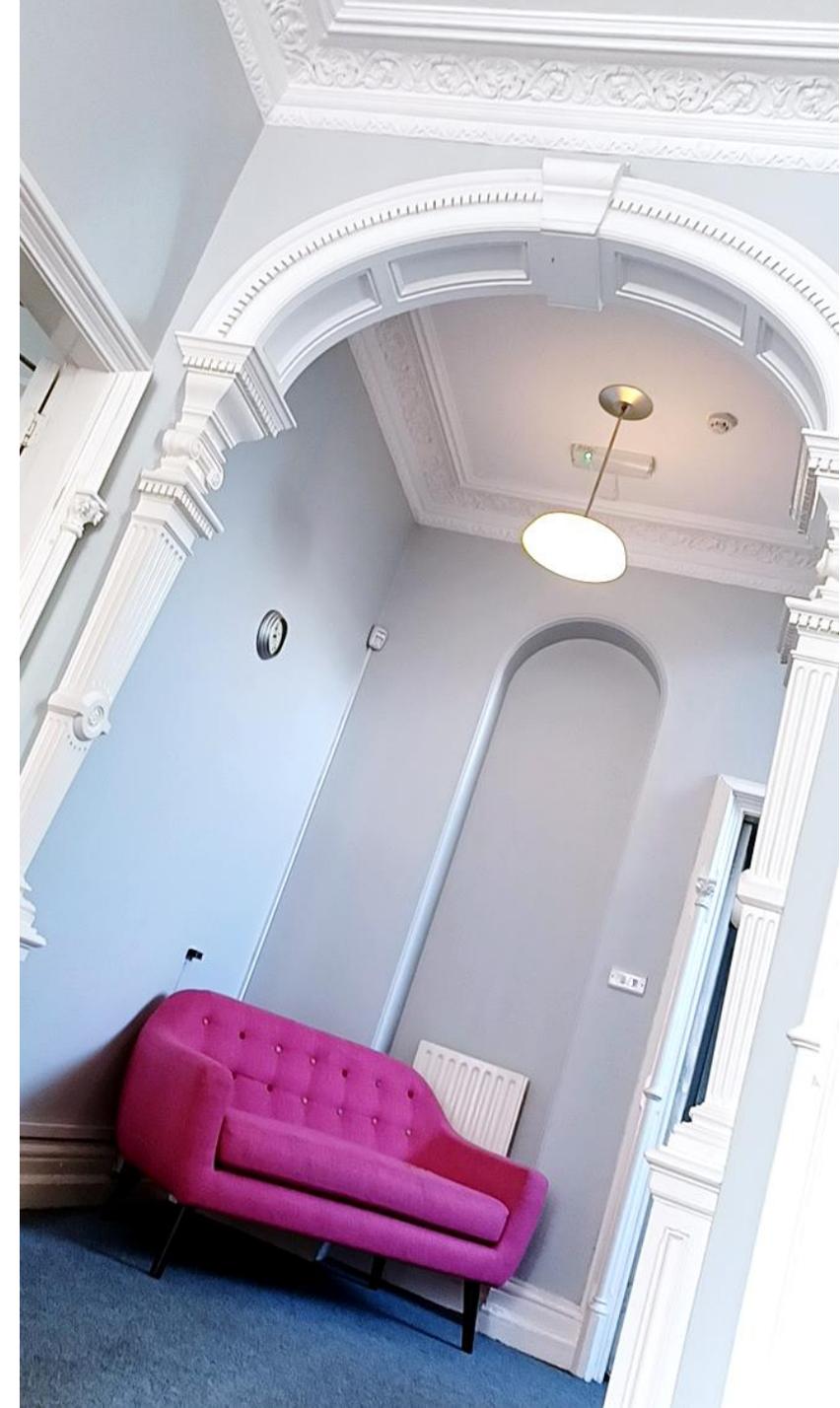
In spite of Covid restrictions we delivered: -

- 201 Advice Space Sessions
- 35 Public Awareness Sessions
- 76 therapeutic group sessions
- 15 new families registered
- 3881 psychosocial contacts
- 310 volunteer hours

None of this would have been possible without the ongoing support of our Funders who are detailed below



Delivered by
THE NATIONAL LOTTERY
COMMUNITY FUND





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Free & Confidential Helpline
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www.positivelifeni.com

Northern Ireland's **only** HIV charity



Our drop in services are available every weekday from 10am to 4pm.
We have disability access and there is plenty of onsite parking.

You can find us at: 20 Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast, BT9 6FN

