



2022  
2023

Impact Report

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Our mission is to promote equality, diversity and social inclusion in rural communities in Northern Devon. We work with the community to eliminate discrimination and promote strong, positive community relations through our range of services and activities, which challenge discrimination, help change attitudes and celebrate diversity.



Pictured: Ukrainian Hub, Barnstaple

In 2022 we refreshed our Strategic Development Plan with goals outlined in the following areas:



**Expanding existing and developing new services:**

Our focus will be to develop services and resources, especially geared towards schools and colleges.

**Building our organisational capacity:**

We plan for a clearer focus to roles and we will prioritise our marketing and communication and partnership development.

**Securing resources for service delivery and long-term sustainability:**

We will be developing and implementing a Funding Strategy reflecting long term ambitions and targets, with a goal to further diversify our funding sources.

**Increasing awareness of our work and services:**

This will take place alongside our further development and implementation of a marketing and communications plan.

**Increasing our influence:**

We will be furthering close partnerships to identify key agencies to address shared interests in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).

**Strengthening our relationships:**

Our focus this year will be to promote diversity with medium to large sized businesses, including those likely to have a diverse workforce.

## Chair's report

This has been a challenging year for Sunrise Diversity but one where the combination of the staff team, a growing group of volunteers and dedicated trustees have risen to challenges we've faced.

The war in Ukraine has been an overriding influence through the year but supporting Ukrainian refugees in addition to many others has stretched our capacity but also helped us learn and grow. The scale of the issue and the positive and welcoming reaction of many of the public has given us an opportunity to educate more widely, using positive examples. We've worked in concert with other organisations to provide support and strengthened our relationships and profile as a result. We've also learned how needs can change swiftly over time through the arc of the crisis and have adapted our services accordingly and have embraced new volunteers from the body of people we support which has been a wonderful development.

While we've witnessed great acts of kindness, we've also had to deal with members of the public behaving in a less positive way when their stressed community has been stretched to the limits and they have reacted against new overnight arrivals on their doorstep with no warning or explanations. Balance has been key.

Gender identity issues have also dominated the year and have come to the fore in local communities through opinions in the world of sport. We've intervened where there have been prejudiced and unreasonable reactions and looked at ways to work with the community to promote better understanding and support.

Our unexpected learning has perhaps come from coping with situations caused by the actions of other parties in the mix. We've learned to challenge more strongly where we see other organisations not carrying out the duties which are within their power, and we've seen the need to hold local and national government to account.

Our CEO left us early in the year for a new role with more time for her family and it gave us the opportunity for a restructure. Trustees have stepped up to provide additional support during this time which has been much appreciated. We've been very pleased to appoint Ana as our new CEO who has developed her career while at Sunrise and is now proving to be an empathetic but strong leader of our team.

*Annemarie Shillito*

## CEO Introduction

In 2022 the war in Ukraine saw the arrival of refugees via Homes for Ukraine, as well as increased numbers of asylum seekers through dispersal schemes. The Census data released this year shows an increase in cultural and sexual diversity in Northern Devon, with LGBTQ+ and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller data recorded for the first time.

We celebrated 50 years since the first Pride, relaunched our in-person LGBTQ+ group after Covid, met an increased need for English classes, and provided support to many new clients from a range of diverse backgrounds.

This year saw the Nationality and Borders Bill become law, with further acts of hostility towards diverse individuals including the trans community. We responded to incidences of discrimination and hate crime in the community.

We have seen new opportunities as well as challenges regarding staffing, with long-standing staff moving on, and my appointment as CEO in the summer. We have welcomed new staff and volunteers and continue to work towards increasing our commitment to lived experience within Sunrise.

*Ana Gabriela Lodge*

# Impact Spotlights

**"All staff very helpful. All staff very kind. I like very much Sunrise because I learned everything in Sunrise."**

**"This group is a lifeline to our community in North Devon and needs help to expand."**

This year



we supported

**192**

beneficiaries across all services including 115 new people



16+ languages  
19+ countries of birth



majority from Barnstaple, Bideford and Ilfracombe with others from 17 smaller towns and villages.

## Languages supported:

Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese, Hungarian, Jola, Kurdish Surani, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Thai, Ukrainian, Vietnamese + more

## Countries of birth:

Afghanistan, Albania, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Dominica, England, Lithuania, Myanmar, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, Venezuela + more

# Support & Advocacy

"I felt stressed and unsettled, now more relieved now there's an improvement- there was a lot of papers to be filled out and confusion, now I know the reasons I am calm about it. I feel comfortable and confident about what is next." Sunrise client

we supported

**42**

families and individuals through advocacy

Issued

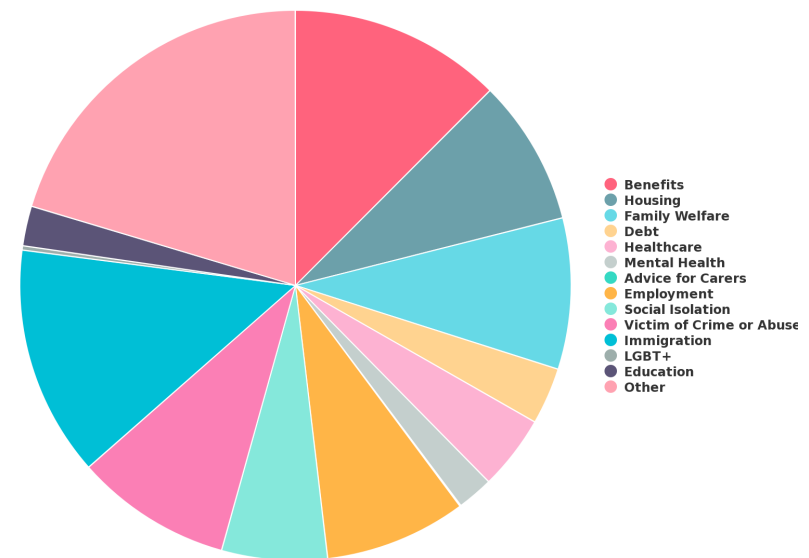
**57**

foodbank vouchers

and provided

**476**

support sessions



**Our advocacy clients reported improvements in emotional and personal wellbeing, and a decrease in loneliness.**

## Case study

We were contacted by a family friend who was concerned about Luisa, who is from a country in Eastern Europe. She was diagnosed with terminal cancer and had been sleeping on the sofa with her family for over a year. Her living conditions meant she had no private space while she was coming to terms with her diagnosis, and was struggling with her recovery from chemotherapy.

We started by offering home visits to discuss what she wanted. She didn't know about the housing process in the UK, or that she would be a priority. We organized a home visit with a Housing Officer, completing an "At risk of homelessness assessment" and a Devon Home Choice application.

We also supported her with arranging taxis for hospital appointments, the process of claiming back travel expenses, and spoke to Care Direct for her support at home.

Luisa was grateful to have someone to talk to as she was not confident in making decisions, she wanted to be independent and make her own choices.

Not long after she was placed in Temporary Accommodation, she was offered a permanent property within an independent living complex, which she is settled in. What presented as a difficult and heart-breaking situation, was resolved through our case worker and their liaison with many compassionate workers across different agencies. Luisa is now much happier she has somewhere she can call home.

## Evaluation

We commissioned the University of Exeter to introduce an evaluation system for Advocacy cases. This includes emotional wellbeing, personal wellbeing, and loneliness. Caseworkers speak to clients about how they feel at the beginning, middle and end of their journey with us.



World Food Day, Barnstaple

**"I really appreciate everything you have done for me. It is not just a ticking box exercise you really care and it means a lot"**  
Sunrise client

Caseworkers have developed Action Plans which cover goals and deadlines, outline possible barriers and challenges, and finally outcomes and achievements.

Due to the complex nature of cases and frequent use of interpreters, it has been challenging to implement the Wellbeing questionnaires. We are pleased to see positive results from the first year, in a pilot of 12 individuals, and this is an area of our advocacy evaluation that we will continue to develop.

**92% reported improvements in personal wellbeing**  
**83% reported improvements in confidence**  
**67% reported improvements in connection to others**

A closure form has been developed which allows workers to offer referrals to rights and entitlements after their main reason for support has been completed. For example, Fire and Rescue Home Visit, Wiser Money Budgeting.

These are in the early stages of being trialled and will complement the Wellbeing Evaluation Questionnaires.

## Increasing wellbeing and reducing isolation

This year we have delivered three regular social groups in person: Meet & Do, LGBTQ+ group, Ukrainian Hub to over 70 people.

**"We feel comfortable and protected. Very friendly staff here, delicious food. Thanks for the good things that will be useful to us in everyday life." -Sunrise Ukrainian Hub attendee**



Partners attended: Eddystone Trust, Libraries Unlimited, North Devon Council Housing, DWP/Jobcentre, Pickwell Foundation, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

**"I recently attend a hub hosted by Sunrise for those Ukraine's nationals who had had to flee their country, this was a very inclusive club where I spoke about finding accommodation in the Private Rented Sector. All attendees were made to feel very welcomed and listened too. The feedback I received from the guest was very positive about the group and most stated it enabled them to meet others and integrate within the local community." -Sarah Bentley, North Devon Housing**

**"Sunrise Social is essential to the LGBTQ community in North Devon as there really is no other support available. Staff are friendly and I have met such lovely people through this group."**

**"I can express myself openly without being judged, I think that's important. Sometimes you can help someone else in the group, or they can help you, we all help each other. It is a good resource for information, I have learnt many things from other people."**



As a group facilitator, I can see the positive impact the LGBTQ+ group has had on attendees. One of the main affects I have observed is how it facilitates social connection and allows attendees to meet other queer people within their community that they normally wouldn't interact with. Providing a safe space in which attendees feel comfortable enough within themselves and one another to be their true selves allows authentic connections to be made. I believe friendships have been formed that now exist outside the group too!

It is so important for marginalised communities to have a platform to share their experiences and stories to know they are not alone and that there are other people around them who can understand and relate to their experiences. I have observed these interactions and seen attendees take comfort in sharing their similar stories and circumstances, and also being open and eager to learn from their differences too to be able to better understand the diverse experiences of other queer people.

## Volunteering at Sunrise

**"Volunteering for me is gratuitous help to people and society, a lot of positive emotions and memorable moments. Volunteering is a way of life. Volunteering makes the world better and kinder, thanks to it I change for the better." -Ukrainian volunteer**

We actively reach out to people who want to volunteer in their own local community, and 5 volunteer applications this year came from group attendees.

Our volunteers support English classes in particular providing capacity to support complete beginners. Volunteers also support and develop activities and groups. Because of their kind gift of time, our work is truly embedded, coming from people who understand what is needed.

**"As someone who's moved from London, I was finding it hard to connect with my queer community. This group has given me the opportunity to meet new friends and be part of an organisation fighting for equality for all. I'm looking forward to building this group and providing a safe space for my LGBTQ+ friends."- Sunrise Volunteer**

**"I felt really well supported in my time as a volunteer with Sunrise. I was led through training and each of my sessions by friendly and supportive staff and really enjoyed the camaraderie and sense of community I felt at Sunrise!" Sunrise Volunteer**



## English Classes and Skill & Knowledge sessions

**70+**

students attended English classes

**180+**

hours of English delivered

**6**

volunteer-led classes set up in rural villages and towns



**The steep increased need for English community classes and employment/skill sessions has been an opportunity to develop. We have met this challenge by employing an additional sessional worker, however this aspect of our work needs to be developed further to improve our offer and the cohesion of local provision.**

# 100%

English students report the following outcomes:

- I feel happier
- I feel more confident
- I can access other services without help

**"Helps you gain more knowledge, understanding of the English language and gain confidence. I like Sunrise" - Sunrise Student**

Students told us how we helped them with English and what they think of Sunrise:

**"Improved my grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, reading abilities and speaking."**

**"Sunrise helped me to start to learn English, even in my age I'm interested in studying."**

**"Very impressed with the quality of teaching. Grace knew all attendees' names."**

**"I like the way they teach and treat the students. They are good teachers and worthy of respect."**

## English Case study

Our English teacher, Grace, spoke to one of our students. She attended classes every week, including skill sessions from the NHS, Fire Service, and Driving Theory. She is currently studying a foundation degree (Level 5) in Psychology at college with the intention of doing a top up degree level 6.

### Why did you move here?

I moved to England because my situation at home wasn't the best and I wanted to change my life and I decided the best was to move away and learn another language.

### What was your experience of the classes?

Join the class was super easy, I wasn't expecting to be that accessible, I literally joined the class a couple of days after I arrived to England.

### How would you describe your time with Sunrise?

Sunrise did really helped me to improve my confidence talking to people in English. I joined the class for almost two years and then I started college and I had to stop going every week as I had college at the same time. I actually found one of my best friends now a days because of Sunrise and I will always be thankful for that.

### Has coming to Sunrise helped you?

When I came to England, my English was pretty bad and because of the lessons I think my English became good enough to start college in English so that's another think I'll be always thankful. Thank of Sunrise I got so much confidence talking with people and now I find really easy to make friends outside Sunrise.



## Working with people in the wider community

This year we raised awareness, celebrated diversity and challenged discrimination in communities across North Devon and Torridge through a number of events and activities. Involving the wider community is part of what we are here to do and is a natural element of our programme.

# 350+

reached through  
Community Awareness  
Activities

# 40+

local organisations  
engaged

We attended the Bideford Diversity and Pride festival and North Devon Show, held Hate Crime awareness stalls with the Police in Barnstaple and Torrington, organised 2 World Food Bring & Share events, Ukrainian Independence Day, as well as Barnstaple LGBTQ+ Pride March and 50 years of Pride Film Event in Torrington, International Women's Day in PETROC College.

## Making a difference in the community

Feedback from Hate Crime stalls in the community:

**“I WILL REPORT IT. I have just reported it today because of talking to you”**

**“I recognise we all have a shared responsibility for making Devon a more tolerant place”**

‘Sunrise Diversity have supported ARC with several projects and events over the past 2 years. They have helped us expand our reach to minority communities not already accessing our sport facilities and in turn have helped us achieve some of our own charitable goals. The team have been really supportive and a pleasure to work with.’

**Tom Vinall, General Manager, Atlantic Racquet Centre**



International Womens Day @ PETROC

## Better Together for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Northern Devon

We launched and held two Better Together forums bringing together over 20 professionals across organisations in Northern Devon to promote the understanding of issues that arise from Equity/equality, Diversity, and Inclusion and the need to communicate and solve issues relating to Diversity.

Building on feedback from attendees, we will offer Executive/Senior Leaders in key organisations such as Housing, Police, Social Care etc, a dedicated EDI workshop and more opportunities to collaborate.

### Attendees told us their next actions/priorities:

We are looking at making sure there are flags in our patient record system to include areas of irregularity.

Raise awareness in the local community.  
Support their voices, raise up their voices,  
raise awareness of sunrise the role they play.  
Talk to the community in their voice.

Enhance psychological safety to share. Open the discussion. Create learning culture.

# sunrisediversity.org.uk

## Team

Ana  
Ally  
Grace  
Karen  
Natali  
Sophie  
Mags

## Trustees

Annemarie, Chair  
Roy, Secretary  
David, Treasurer  
Sophie  
Rose  
David

## Donate now



Thank you to our  
Supporters and Funders,  
with your support we are  
able to serve our local  
community.

### Sunrise Diversity

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