



# Free2B Alliance CiC Impact Report 2022-23



# FREE2B ALLIANCE

[www.free2b.lgbt](http://www.free2b.lgbt)

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## **An introduction from Lucie Brooke Chair of the Board of Directors**

It has been another busy year for Free2B with our ongoing offer alongside additional trips, events and activities and some wonderful new partnerships.

It is sadly important to acknowledge the climate that we are operating in, with an increasingly negative rhetoric against the LGBTQ+ community and in particular against our trans communities. And this is in addition to the long-term impact of Covid that continues to affect our members' mental health.

Our amazing team have worked hard to ensure our members are supported with a focus on queer joy, wellbeing and resilience. And as an organisation we continue to explore ways to support each other through peer supervision, team days and reflective activities.

We have had some changes to the team, with Em welcomed to our Board of Directors and JC welcomed to our youth service team. We were also delighted to have Babs the trainee therapy dog join our school forums to help her gain her full accreditation. After 7 years of dedicated service we said a sad farewell to Colin who retired from our board - with huge thanks to Colin for everything he has contributed to Free2B. And we said our farewells to Nicki who stepped down from her parent worker and community roles, but she continues in her role as a non-executive Director.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support of our vital work.

Best wishes



Lucie Brooke

Report period: Sept 2022-Aug 2023

## **Free2B Evolution Lambeth Listens LGBTQ+**

Alongside our support provisions, this year we were commissioned by Lambeth Together to conduct a comprehensive survey to explore what LGBTQ+ young people want to see in their borough. And we additionally provided LGBTQ+ awareness training to Lambeth schools and organisations.

The project was carried out by our support worker Zari, who delivered 'safe space' focus groups within schools and community settings.

**52** organisations and **35** schools and colleges were contacted throughout the consultation period.

**65** young people took part in an online survey which was co-created with the Rainbow Power youth council.

**57** young people attended safe space focus groups in schools and community settings to explore emerging survey themes in more detail, and to gather qualitative data.

Key themes emerged from the consultation and these have been reported back to Lambeth Together who are now exploring next steps.

Emerging themes:

- Promotion / Information Sharing
- Inclusion in schools
- Allyship
- Reporting HBT incidents



## SUPPORT SERVICES

We have had a jammed packed year including events, trips and new projects, supporting **350** young people through our groups and 1:1 provision.

With Covid restrictions fully lifted, it was the first time in 3 years that we have been able to deliver our annual LGBTQ+ careers event in person, with role models joining us from the Wimbledon Foundation and Roehampton University.

We celebrated the Gap's 13th birthday with a fabulous party joined by special guest star RuPaul (well a cardboard cutout at least, but budgets are tight!).

We also launched a new drama programme, kicking off with a queering fairytales project and then joining forces with other youth groups to take part in a Battersea-wide project tackling negative stereotypes.

### The Gap Youth Club

The Gap has supported **71** young people and provided a wide range of activities. With thanks to Wandsworth Care Alliance this year we have been able to provide healthy food each week and deliver a range of interactive workshops supported by our volunteer community health champions.

### Gap Wellbeing

We delivered a weekly wellbeing group online. **21** young people accessed the sessions with topics including: queer joy, sleep hygiene, happiness, gratitude, well-being poetry and seasonal self-care.

### Gapsters

Our junior group has welcomed **14** members over the past year and offered a range of activities, with jewellery making a firm favourite. And the group joined up with our Rainbow Power youth council for a hilarious festive Taskmaster style event!

## Trans Wellbeing

Sessions are run during school holidays providing a safe space for trans and non-binary young people to support each other and access targeted workshops.

**15** young people have attended with session topics including: trans joy, boxing for wellbeing, time capsules, wellbeing first aid and healthy relationships. And we explored the difficult topic of past family photographs and discussed positive ways to navigate this.

We also ran our first ever Trans Wellbeing trip to the seaside with a fabulous day out to Eastbourne.



### Free2Talk 1:1 Support

Free2Talk has three core client aims:

- ◆ Increase self-esteem
- ◆ Develop greater personal resilience
- ◆ Reduce social isolation

Over the past year our Free2Talk service has supported **68** young people.

Progress is measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing 35-point Scale (WEMWS) with an average score increase of 4.2 points.

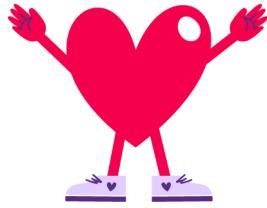
### School forums

Since the Covid restrictions have been lifted we have seen a significant increase in the number of young people accessing our school forums. And they are particularly important to young people who are not out about their identity and therefore cannot access our out of school provisions.

Our 3 Community Support Workers have collectively delivered forums to **8** schools, supporting **214** pupils.

## Proud Parents

Our Proud Parents meet fortnightly online and this year it has been fantastic to be able to invite their own children and our youth service members to attend as guest speakers alongside external guests. So far we have had 5 youth speakers joining sessions to share their journeys.



We explored the difficult topic of past family photographs and we were able to share the amazing ideas developed by our Trans Wellbeing group.

The group enjoyed a pride picnic before joining the march at Trans Pride London. And even the drizzly weather couldn't dampen their spirits!

Alongside the online sessions our parents also have a thriving WhatsApp group where they can safely share their triumphs and challenges and provide peer support to each other.

And in response to member feedback, this year we have additionally created a new members only webpage as a place to store useful resources and links, and where appropriate, session recordings for those unable to attend to be able to watch back in their own time.



It's helped me so much, most especially how to navigate the best way forward for my child.

## VOLUNTEERS

We want to take this opportunity to thank our amazing team of volunteers.



This year we were delighted to be able to nominate our amazing team in the LGBT Consortium's first ever volunteer awards and we were absolutely delighted that our operations team won in their category.

## NEWS FLASH!

Our wonderful Rainbow Power youth council encouraged Wandsworth Council to run a Pride Month art competition across their mainstream youth clubs.

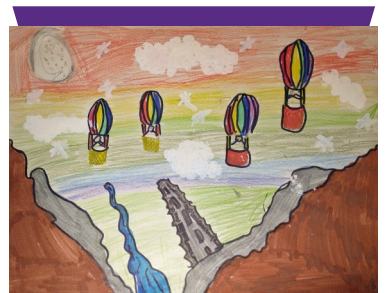
Rainbow Power then judged the amazing entries and announced their winner and 4 highly commended entries. All of the entries can be seen on our dedicated webpage:

<https://free2b.lgbt/art-competition-2023/>



*"We are so delighted to be able to nominate this fabulous bunch as their work goes unseen outside of our own team and it's wonderful to be able to shout about their contributions!"*

*Through their dedicated hard work, they help us to ensure everything runs smoothly and effectively, and they do so quietly in the background - which is why we'd like to shine a huge spotlight on them to say THANK YOU!"*



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS 2022-23



**11** Volunteers  
Over **300** hours  
given

**15** Organisations  
received LGBTQ+  
awareness  
training



Over **350** recipients  
Average evaluation  
rating

**8.5** out of 10

**100** Total youth group members

**151** Recorded outcomes achieved

**16** Accredited qualifications awarded



## Annual impact survey:

91% now have a wider network and feel part of a community  
86% stated it has positively impacted on their wellbeing /  
confidence

# 17 Parents supported



Annual impact survey:

93% now have a wider network and feel part of a community

79% stated the sessions and guest speakers have improved their understanding of gender issues

# 68 Young people received 1:1 support to:

- Increase self-esteem
- Strengthen personal resilience
- ◆ Reduce social isolation

## School Forums

**214** pupils supported across **8** schools in Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth.



## Members' feedback

I feel I'm not alone - I have a sense of belonging and being accepted.  
Proud Parent

I have gained a lot of information on how to feel confident of my sexuality and learnt not to hide myself because of the fear of judgement. I also have got tips on how to come out to people as I struggled with that a lot. Youth service member

I get to meet new people in a safe environment. Gapster

What I enjoy the most is having a safe space and knowing that I am valued and accepted for being me. School forum member

I definitely have gained more friends and have felt more confident and comfortable with expressing who I truly am to others without being afraid of getting judged for it :) Youth service member

It's the only place people understand my children's and my situation.  
Proud Parent

# TRAINING

We teamed up with members of the Wandsworth LGBTQ+ Delivery Network to co-create and co-deliver training to Wandsworth Council commissioners on how they can make their commissioning processes more LGBTQ+ inclusive. We then reconnected with the delegates approximately six months later to talk through how they were getting on and it was extremely positive to hear about the changes they had already implemented and those in progress.

We delivered advanced CPD training to Streatham Wells Primary School in January 2023 and they subsequently worked through our LGBTQ+ school audit and shared their review with us. As a result, in July 2023 we were delighted to be able to award them our Inclusivity Benchmark.



## Average evaluation rating 8.5 out of 10

### Delegate feedback in response to what changes they will implement as a result of our training:

I will add my pronouns to my email signature. I will also speak to our CEO about visibly promoting our organisation as an LGBTQ+ friendly/safe charity.

Ensure all staff and volunteers have a good understanding of different pronouns and what they mean and how to manage situations.

I would like to encourage my schools to have a gender neutral bathroom, even if they do not have any openly trans students. As discussed during the training, visibility helps to demonstrate an LGBTQ+ environment. I hope that in doing this more young people who are trans or exploring their gender identity would feel seen in their schools.

Displays to make our commitment to inclusion more visible.

Adding pronouns to our website.



# EVENTS

We've had a fabulous year attending a range of events, engaging visitors with fun educational activities.

We took part in youth wellbeing events at Southborough High School in Surbiton and at Heatham House in Richmond.

During Pride Month we enjoyed an afternoon at the Harris Academy Battersea pride party and returned to Heatham House for their Out 'N' About event which invited schools from across Richmond Borough. And we were honoured to be invited to a pride reception hosted by the Mayor of Wandsworth.

We were also delighted to co-host a stall with the Wandsworth LGBTQ+ Delivery Network at the Summer in Battersea Park event. And the whole team took part in the Wandsworth Big Play Out event with families taking part in our 'stamp out bullying' activity.





## RAINBOW POWER

Our youth council have been busy as always, working on their social action projects which they agree as a team at the start of the academic year and then develop and co-create during their weekly council meetings.

### Rainbow Handbook

The group have developed and designed a wonderful Rainbow Handbook to help LGBTQ+ young people and allies wanting to learn about the community. They divided the book into 3 sections covering gender, sexuality and wellbeing and it includes quotes, affirmations and top tips in each section. They also created 6 characters who are featured throughout the handbook to help explain the topics.

### Pronouns Project

The members felt that education around pronouns was really important for their peers as well as for professionals and so they developed an animation in partnership with The Open University. They developed the script ensuring that the information was clear and easy to follow and then worked with The Open University team to choose the style and approach for the animated elements. We are extremely proud of the amazing animation they have co-created:

<https://youtu.be/k9CSWILezqs>

And to launch the project, they went along to Wandsworth Southside Shopping Centre wearing giant pronoun badges to ask members of the public about pronouns.



### Youth Club Promo!

The group felt that our previous promotional video was very out of date and didn't reflect the youth club spaces that we offer. They therefore worked on a new script and approach to update our promo. They identified a key issue in that the footage becomes out of date as soon as people featured in the film move on from the club. They came up with the brilliant solution of shooting extreme close-ups so that individuals cannot be seen (also enabling all members to participate safely) and they included a photo album section that can be easily updated with new photographs to ensure the film remains current.



### Accessible Toilets

Rainbow Power worked on a mini project to support organisations to provide accessible toilets with a focus on gender identity. They created a webpage with downloadable signage: <https://free2b.lgbt/toilets/>

Whilst the initial focus was on gender inclusion, the group also felt it was important to provide information around disabled access and so they included some fantastic resources developed by [Euan's Place](#).

And as a direct result of their intervention a local fast-food restaurant fixed their missing emergency red cord in their accessible toilet.

# THANK YOU

With huge thanks to our key **GRANT FUNDERS** for supporting our work and enabling us to extend our reach and provision:



**The London  
Community  
Foundation**

**CITY  
BRIDGE  
TRUST**



And a special thank you to every individual who has made a donation. There are too many amazing people to mention here, but we would like to at least acknowledge those who have fundraised on our behalf:

- Christ's School donated £353 raised during their Pride Month activities.
- The Commando Temple Gym organised a Pride in Strength event and donated ticket sales raising £720.
- We were delighted that Make It Clear named us their charity of the year 2022-23 and raised £700 through their fundraising activities as well as booking all staff to attend our training.
- Merlin Primary School raised £120 through a Pride Month bake sale.
- Our very own Proud Parent Helena ran the London Marathon and raised £632.

And we are delighted to have been named charity of the year 2023-24 by Edwin Coe LLP.

A huge thank you to all of our wonderful **regular donors**, everyone who has bought a Rainbow Lottery ticket for Free2B, donated to our Christmas appeal and everyone who raised funds for us by sending Free2B e-cards through [Don't Send Me a Card](#).

Please see back page for details of how to donate or visit [www.free2b.lgbt](http://www.free2b.lgbt)

# Management Accounts

2022-23

(2021-22)

## Income

Training income	32,000	6,224
Restricted funds	150,657	138,382
Unrestricted funds	7,987	8,898
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>190,644</b>	<b>153,504</b>

## Expenditure

Staff costs	-126,035	-113,355
Premises costs	-6,796	-7,107
Core costs	-9,709	-7,063
Project costs	-14,751	-11,757
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total</b>	<b>-157,291</b>	<b>-139,282</b>



## 2022-23 Rainbow Power Youth Council Members

Frankie            Kamil  
Eli                 Cameron  
Michael            Louise  
Spencer

## Management Board

**Executive Director**  
Lucie Brooke

**Non-Executive Directors**  
Amish Poonyth  
Em Cookson-Williams  
Nicki Ryan

**Operational Services (Volunteers)**  
David Carr - Treasurer  
Michelle Peattie - Payroll Administrator

## Please support our work and help us achieve LGBTQ+ equality through inclusion

Despite recent victories for LGBT equality, in reality many people still struggle daily against discrimination and bullying.

If you would like to support our work you can make a regular or one-off donation.

Please visit our website or contact us for further information:

[www.free2b.lgbt](http://www.free2b.lgbt) | [hello@free2b.lgbt](mailto:hello@free2b.lgbt)

Here are just some examples of how different donation amounts can help us:

- £10 covers basic refreshment costs for a youth club or parent group session
- £25 pays for a youth worker to deliver a youth club session
- £35 pays for an online wellbeing group session
- £300 pays for a local educational day trip for up to 10 young people
- £2500 pays for a weekend educational residential for up to 10 young people



Free2B Alliance Community Interest Company  
Registered address:  
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