

True Colours – Annual Report 2025

A community organisation supporting LGBTQ+IA people in Lowestoft and surrounding areas

1. Overview

True Colours is a small, volunteer-led LGBTQ+IA community organisation based in Lowestoft. Our core purpose is to provide safe, inclusive and affirming spaces where LGBTQ+IA people can connect, feel supported, reduce isolation and access relevant information and services.

During 2025, we continued to grow our reach, strengthen partnerships with local services, and expand our programme of social, educational and outreach activities. Our work remained focused on wellbeing, community connection, visibility and inclusion.

2. Regular Community Provision

Throughout 2025, True Colours successfully delivered **monthly Thursday evening meetings** at the Kirkley Centre. These sessions provide a consistent, trusted and non-judgemental environment for LGBTQ+IA people.

Key features of our monthly meetings:

- Held in a private meeting room at the Kirkley Centre, offering a calm and safe space
- Free tea and coffee provided by the Centre
- Additional refreshments supplied by True Colours (cold drinks, biscuits and snacks)
- Average attendance of **15 members per session**
- Open, inclusive atmosphere with no requirement to disclose identity or personal details

Members consistently report that these sessions reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation and provide vital peer support and friendship, particularly for those who lack LGBTQ+IA-affirming networks elsewhere in their lives.

3. Educational & Partnership-Based Sessions

Alongside social support, we delivered **educational and awareness-raising sessions** through visits from local and national organisations, helping members access accurate information and professional insight.

Guest speakers and partner organisations included:

- Macmillan Cancer Support – opening important conversations about inclusive healthcare and hospital experiences for LGBTQ+IA people
- Local police representatives – discussing safety, hate crime reporting and community trust
- Sexual health professionals
- LGBT+Project Staff Network
- Oasis

These sessions enabled members to ask questions in a safe environment and helped build confidence in accessing statutory and voluntary services.

4. Social Activities & Wellbeing

True Colours also delivered a wide range of social activities designed to strengthen relationships, build confidence and improve mental wellbeing.

Examples of activities included:

- Quiz nights
- Cooking nights
- Themed discussion evenings
- Murder mystery night
- Bowling
- Theatre trips (including *Sweeney Todd* and *An Audience with Sue Pollard*)
- “Walk and Talk” outings
- Halloween boat trip around Lake Lothing
- Christmas meal at Springtide

These events were particularly valuable for members experiencing social isolation, anxiety or low confidence. Many participants reported forming new friendships and feeling a stronger sense of belonging within the local LGBTQ+IA community.

5. Pride & Community Outreach

In 2025, True Colours maintained a strong public presence to improve visibility, promote inclusion and connect with new members.

We hosted stalls at:

- Lowestoft First Light Festival
- Bungay Pride
- Beccles Pride
- Lowestoft Pride

These events enabled us to:

- Provide a visible safe space for LGBTQ+IA people
- Meet potential new members
- Share information about local support
- Sell small amounts of merchandise to support sustainability

We also attended:

- Norwich Pride
- Great Yarmouth Pride

This outreach strengthened regional links and increased awareness of LGBTQ+IA support provision in coastal Suffolk.

6. Impact Summary

In 2025, True Colours delivered:

- 12 regular monthly community meetings
- Multiple educational sessions with external professionals
- Over 15 social and wellbeing activities
- Outreach at 4 Pride and community festivals
- Engagement with hundreds of festival attendees
- Ongoing support to approximately **40-50 regular and occasional members**

Key outcomes included:

- Reduced loneliness and isolation
- Increased confidence and social connection
- Improved access to LGBTQ+IA-affirming information and services
- Greater community visibility and inclusion
- Strengthened trust between LGBTQ+IA people and local agencies

7. Plans for 2026

True Colours will continue to expand our activity programme and deepen our community impact.

Planned activities include:

- Theatre visit to *The Wizard of Oz*
- February: Games night
- March: Soup and quiz night
- Additional “Walk and Talk” sessions
- Coffee and breakfast meet-ups
- Continuation of monthly Thursday evening meetings

We aim to further develop partnerships with health, social care and voluntary sector organisations and to increase support for individuals facing isolation, discrimination or mental health challenges.

8. Funding & Sustainability

True Colours operates on a very modest budget and is primarily volunteer-led. Funding and small-scale fundraising directly support:

- Room hire and refreshments
- Activity costs and accessibility
- Outreach materials and merchandise
- Transport and event costs
- Guest speakers and specialist sessions

Continued funding will enable us to:

- Maintain our core monthly provision
 - Expand educational programming
 - Increase outreach and visibility
 - Reduce barriers to participation for low-income members
 - Support the long-term sustainability of LGBTQ+IA community provision in Lowestoft
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9. Closing Statement

True Colours plays a vital role in supporting LGBTQ+IA people in a coastal town with limited specialist provision. Our work directly improves wellbeing, reduces isolation and strengthens community connection.

With continued funding, we can build on our strong foundations and ensure that LGBTQ+IA people in Lowestoft continue to have access to safe, inclusive and life-affirming community support.