

Case Study

Content warning - suicide

David, from West Lothian, is currently unemployed after being made redundant from his job as a project worker for a bank at the beginning of the year before the Pandemic hit. David also lost his long-term partner who sadly took his own life before Christmas.

Since the lockdown started back in March, David has found life a lot more challenging having already had a difficult couple of months before it happened. He felt very isolated and lonely during lockdown and this has had a knock-on effect on his state of mental health.

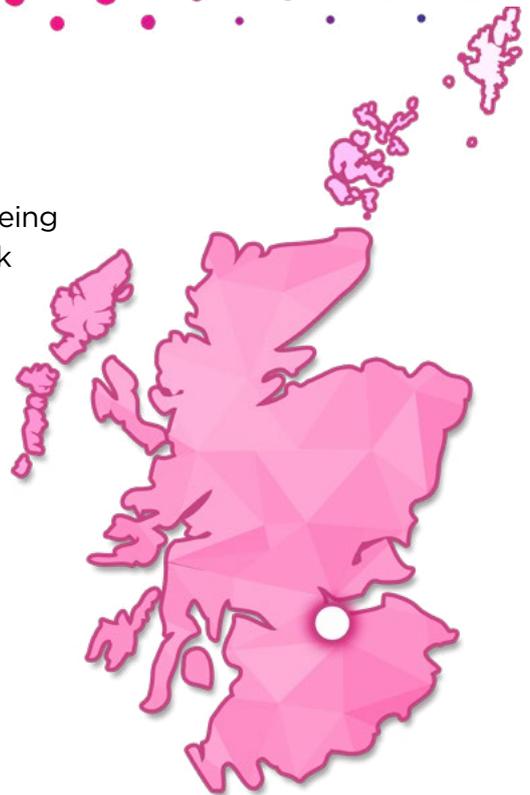
David has faced several challenges and barriers during the Pandemic:

- Being stuck at home on his own and not being able to see any of his friends or family. Only having face to face social interaction when taking his dog for a walk or going to the shop.
- Financial difficulties due to being made redundant.
- Not being able to see or visit family as they live down south.
- Weight gain from not being able to go to the gym and not being motivated enough to do home workouts.
- Having a friend at the time whose behaviour was having a negative effect on his mental health.

David said that he felt he couldn't use an online bereavement support group that he had found as he doesn't find this is the best or easiest way to get the support that he needs. He is hoping to be able to access face to face or telephone support and counselling services in the future, but there is a long waiting list for them.

Despite all this David has found some positive things to help him deal with life during the pandemic:

- Talking to friends and family
- Being able to access and take part in Scottish LGBT Zoom groups to meet new people.
- Started attending training for an LGBT inclusive rugby team in Fife where he felt welcomed and he enjoyed.
- Going along to outdoor exercise groups when they can happen.



David said that he co-parents two children and he feels that while there are support groups for gay parents already, he would like to see more cross over/intersectional groups for LGBT parents as co-parenting is still fairly new to a lot of people. He would also like to see this happen with other LGBT+ support services as well.

In the future David would like to see more support for the LGBT community with:

- Funding for more local LGBT support groups for rural areas of Scotland not just the bigger cities and urban areas. The assumption that people can/will travel to the bigger cities is not always fair or accurate, yet it's what some LGBT+ organisations or services expect.
- Online groups and services for the '25-50' age group who are often overlooked. Non-age specific groups would also be good.
- A bereavement support service for the LGBT community in Scotland at both a local and national level if possible.
- More inclusive awareness around physical health conditions or hidden disabilities faced by those from the Scottish LGBT+ community.
- Services currently being offered being promoted better and more often instead of last minute. He feels that there is often not enough notice given for people to sign up for things or allow themselves the opportunity to take part.
- LGBT+ organisations in Scotland working better to support each other and the work they do and helping to promote their services within their own networks.
- A national LGBT+ campaign for mental health and suicide prevention.