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OUTNORTHWEST

ISSUE 116 JUNE-JULY 2013 FREE!

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Ending Homophobia,
Empowering People
www.lgf.org.uk

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CHALLENGING HOMOPHOBIA!

AMAL FASHANU

"I WANT MY UNCLE JUSTIN'S STORY TO
INFORM, INSPIRE AND ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO
SPEAK UP AND STAND UP FOR EQUALITY."



PLUS! YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE NW SUMMER OF LOVE!

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IT STARTS WITH ME





OUTNORTHWEST

ONW

EDITOR'S LETTER JUNE-JULY 2013



A Summer Of Love (and Kisses!)

As you'll see on page 26 of this issue, Summer is well and truly upon us and with it a whole host of Pride and LGBT friendly events.

The first one is very close to publication of this issue - the Manchester Day Parade on Sunday 2nd June. If you missed out on the Kiss Hate Goodbye flashmob The LGF hosted in Manchester City Centre in May (see page 6 for the pics!), this is your next opportunity to pucker up. We're looking for people to join us on the parade, and you'll find full details on how to take part on page 26. Whatever event you decide to attend this Summer, have a great time - and remember to save some of your energies for Manchester Pride in August, too!

We're very proud to carry an interview with Amal Fashanu in this issue of ONW. Amal is the niece of Justin Fashanu. Justin was this country's only out professional footballer,

who tragically committed suicide in 1998 due to prejudice within the game. No other footballer has come out since. Amal has been a passionate campaigner against homophobia on the football terraces and the changing rooms. I'd encourage you to read Amal's heartfelt interview, starting on page 12.

Believe it or not, the next issue of ONW is our bumper Manchester Pride edition! We're proud to be an official media sponsor for Manchester Pride, and we'll be pulling out the stops once again to give you exclusive access to interviews, listings, guides and the official site map. Look out for our next issue from Wednesday 7th August.

Enjoy the Summer!

Grahame



VOICE & CHOICE

The Lesbian & Gay Foundation's LGB&T Voluntary and Community Sector Conference took place on Saturday 20th April 2013 at the LGF Community Resource Centre.

The conference was a learning and sharing event for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans individuals, groups, organisations and those working on behalf of the LGB&T community. The focus of this year's conference was 'Voice & Choice' and provided an opportunity for the LGB&T voluntary and community sector, the public sector and the wider community to share, learn, innovate and shout about the work that they do, demonstrating just how many inspiring projects are happening around the North West.

Thanks to everyone who contributed. Look out for more events at: www.lgf.org.uk or sign up to our weekly eBulletin: www.lgf.org.uk/register



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ADVERTISING

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Or e-mail grahame.robertson@lgf.org.uk



IF YOU DO ONE THING THIS WEEK END HOMOPHOBIA AT YOUR OLD SCHOOL!

Were you bullied and teased at school because you were lesbian, gay or bisexual? Imagine you could go back to your old school and make it safer for those young people who are suffering the same today. You can. For a small donation of only £20, the LGF's Enough Is Enough campaign will send a 'Safer Schools Pack' to your old school on your behalf. You can even send a personal message with the pack. To find out more, visit www.lgf.org.uk/enough today.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!
ACTION against Homophobia
www.lgf.org.uk/enough

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TAKING ACTION

HOW YOU ARE TAKING ACTION AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA

PUCKER UP & KISS HATE GOODBYE!

Huge thanks to everyone who came along to our Kiss Hate Goodbye Flashmob in Manchester City Centre on 18th May! Here's just some of the pics!





LIKE US!
Search for **'Enough Is Enough! Action Against Homophobia'** on Facebook.



TWEET US!
Follow us and get involved in the conversation on Twitter, **@lgfoundation**

OPINION



FRANKIE SAYS



HATE CRIME VIGIL

Manchester held its first Vigil against homophobia, biphobia and transphobia on International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO). On May 17th The LGF hosted the Vigil in Sackville Gardens to pay tribute and respect all those who have suffered intolerance and prejudice because of sexual orientation or gender identity. Speakers included: Prossy Kakooza (Lesbian Immigration Group), Jen Yockney (Biphoria), Darren Batey (AKT Outpost), Dawn Pomfret (Transforum), Rev. Hayley Matthews (Chaplain, Media City) and The LGF's Rob Cookson. We'd like to thank everyone who came and supported the event and we plan that this will be an annual tribute to mark IDAHO. For more on IDAHO go to: www.dayagainsthomophobia.org



KISS HATE GOODBYE!



Don't worry if you missed out on your chance to Kiss Hate Goodbye at our Flashmob. There's plenty more opportunities to get involved!

Why not join our Parade entry for this year's Manchester Day Parade? It all takes place on Sunday 2nd June, and it's going to be a great afternoon - it's one of the highlights of the Manchester calendar - and we'd love if you could join us on the parade!

If you're interested, drop an e-mail to Andrew at The LGF - andrew.gilliver@lgf.org.uk

www.lgf.org.uk/kiss

Mental health - what comes to mind when you read those two words? The issue of mental health undeniably provokes a mixed reaction amongst people and unfortunately, even in 2013, it is still treated as a taboo subject. Mental health is no different to your physical health. Yet where we wouldn't think twice about neglecting our physical health, many of us are guilty of ignoring the significance of positive wellbeing and just how fundamental it is to our being.

Despite the change in attitudes and understanding, there is still a great deal of prejudice surrounding mental health and talking openly about it. Although keeping your wellbeing private is wholly respectable and not indicative of self-neglect, there is still a huge amount that needs to be done to encourage more people to talk openly about the issue. This is why Time to Change and their campaign is so important, as it aims to end mental health discrimination by encouraging more people to talk openly about their experiences. You can find out more about this fantastic campaign and the personal stories people from across the UK have shared via the campaign's website, at www.time-to-change.org.uk

The LGF and Creative Curve have received funding from Time to Change to deliver a project called 'Can You Hear Me?' The project aims to highlight the often over looked experiences of lesbian and bisexual women experiencing mental health problems. An exhibition will be created over the course of 12 workshops, where the women involved will create their own kitchen installations and record their personal experiences, which will be played aloud via a radio in each kitchen. The idea behind this is to encourage visitors to the exhibition

to explore each of the spaces, listen to the recordings and then sit down to speak to the participants about their experiences. So if you are inspired by Time to Change and its message I would really encourage you to come along and experience 'Can You Hear Me?' The exhibition previews on 26th-27th July, with the official launch taking place in the run up to Manchester Pride from 20th to 25th August, at the LGF's Community Resource Centre. Also, keep an eye out for details of an additional Pride Fringe event The LGF will be hosting in conjunction with the project.

Another engaging voice speaking openly about their experience is Eleanor Margolis, and her article for the New Statesman is an excellent account of breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health. In her article she openly discusses her personal experiences of depression and how sharing such experiences has often proved challenging. Yet despite facing prejudice Margolis rightly stands true to the importance of challenging such stigma: 'I've come to realise that I can't allow other people's misconceptions about mental illness to silence me. I'd rather be labelled "another crazy lesbian" than treat my mental health as taboo.' You can read Margolis' article in full on www.newstatesman.com/lez-miserable.

Last week I learnt of the sad news that someone I knew at University had taken their own life. Unfortunately, suicide isn't uncommon. But as the Time to Change campaign and Eleanor Margolis' article emphasise, there are numerous ways to access support and successfully manage positive mental health. My memories of Rachel were of a kind and genuine person, and I'd like to dedicate this column to her.

In memory of Rachel Howell (1986 - 2013).

Frankie Stevens
frankie.stevens@lgf.org.uk

IN BRIEF

HEALTHWATCH GET INVOLVED!

You don't have to live in Greater Manchester to have your say in how health services are run either.

You can help shape services where you live and improve awareness of the issues that matter to you by sharing your own stories, giving your evidence and making sure that your experience as a gay man, lesbian or bisexual man or woman helps to inform services for both you personally and other LGB people, wherever you live. You have a right to tell your healthcare providers what really matters to you and what you expect from NHS services and let them know what they are doing well and what they are getting wrong. There are independent Healthwatch networks in: Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Bolton, Bury, Calderdale, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Cumbria, Knowsley, Lancashire, Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Sefton, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Warrington, Wigan and Wirral.

To find out more go to:

www.healthwatch.co.uk

MANCHESTER PRIDE ANNOUNCE NEW ACTS

As we went to press, Manchester Pride announced more acts who'll be performing at The Big Weekend (23-26 August). Highlights include Brit Award winner Kate Nash, electro-wizard Patrick Wolf, and The X Factor semi-finalist, and local girl, Misha B. Local acts will be highlighted too, so look out for Manchester boy-band The Mend, and the wonderful and always popular Rowetta. Host of the Big Weekend launch night will be Amy Lame. The launch night features a performance from The Feeling.

The next issue of ONW is our bumper Manchester Pride special, look out for it from 7th August. To keep up to date with Manchester Pride announcements, visit:

www.manchesterpride.com

YOU CAN BE A LEADER!



Registered Charity No.1070904



Brand new project gives you the opportunity to be a voice for our communities

When it comes to health and social care why shouldn't lesbian, gay and bisexual people be able to access the best services we can get?

Whether we only need access to these services when we are sick or need support, or if we depend on regular health services to improve the quality of our lives and sometimes even save our lives, we can and should feel able to make a real difference to the way our health services are run. This is especially important if we think we haven't been listened to, or our needs as lesbian, gay and bisexual people haven't been taken into consideration in the past, or our voices are not currently being heard.

That's why The Lesbian & Gay Foundation has been funded for the next three years by The Department of Health to empower and support at least 40 LGB Community Leaders across Greater Manchester. These Community Leaders will work on behalf of our community to help to ensure that health and social care services are designed and

commissioned around the real needs of LGB people. This new project is a fantastic opportunity for lesbian, gay and bisexual people from all parts of Greater Manchester to make sure an authentic LGB voice is heard to ensure that service providers have the information they need to better cater for the needs of LGB people.

We aim to address health inequalities by ensuring that services are more relevant to our communities and that LGB people feel more able to access services when they need them, not leaving it too late when serious illness means that our health is compromised.

LGB Community Leaders will be supported to champion all health inequalities experienced by LGB communities. There will be particular emphasis on issues such as: sexual health, drug and alcohol use, mental health, cancer and smoking.

If you live in Greater Manchester and want to find out more about how you can be an LGB Community leader, contact: andrew.gilliver@lgf.org.uk

ARE YOU THE NEXT FANNY CRADDOCK?

Grab your oven gloves and your self-raising flour, it's time for The Great Village Bake-Off!

The Village Bakers are inviting you to show off your baking prowess and enter their Great Village Bake Off.

Simply enter one of the categories found on their events page, bring along your baked entry and await the results show. There will prizes to be won for each category and celebrity judges picking over the crumbs.

So if you have the Best Rainbow Cake, Tartiest Tart, Firmest Buns or the Campest of Cupcakes, then join the Village Bakers on Sunday 18th August at The Molly House for the first annual Great Village Bake Off.



Full details will be available on [Facebook.com/villagebakers](https://www.facebook.com/villagebakers) or email villagebakersmanchester@gmail.com

WHO ARE YOUR HOMO HEROES?



Voting is now open for The LGF's fabulous Homo Heroes awards 2013. We want YOU to tell us who your Homo Hero is, whether it's Community Champion of the Year, Volunteer of the Year or Business of the Year. The Homo Heroes Awards give you the opportunity to say thank-you to the individuals, groups and businesses that have made a real difference to the community in the last 12 months. **Get nominating and make sure your heroes are recognised! Visit www.lgf.org.uk/hero**

FANTABULOSA!

Your Polari Mission... should you chose to accept it!

A fantabulosa evening is in store... the Polari Mission is coming to The LGF!

Artists Jez Dolan and Joseph Richardson want to save the Polari language from extinction and your mission, should choose to accept it, is to come along to this free interactive and

fun session to learn more about Polari as well as brush up your linguistic skills! Get to know yours orbs from your onk and sort the bona from the meese, this experience is not to be missed! Taking place on 28th June 6 – 8pm, free refreshments!

More information at www.lgf.org.uk/history

BE YOUR OWN BOSS!

A practical planning session for budding entrepreneurs

Do you have a burning idea for a business? Perhaps you have specific skills that you want to use to make a bit of extra cash? Or you're thinking of going freelance and wondering where to start?

of going it alone then this is the workshop for you. Join StartupOut for a practical session, enabling you to write an outline business plan. This workshop is FREE and is open to anyone. It will take place at The LGF on June 13th between 6-9pm. Places are limited so pre-booking is essential.

If you fancy becoming your own boss and need someone to talk you through the basics

Email Alex or Lee at hello@startupout.org or call 0800 808 5 688 to book.

PRIDE GAMES 2013

Taking place throughout June Pride Games is an annual international LGBT sport festival for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their friends. With a range of sports held at various venues in Manchester, it's the perfect opportunity to try a new sport, re-awaken old talents or brush up on current skills...have loads of fun and meet new people!

More information at www.pridesports.org.uk

MEET ADRIAN

ADRIAN PALMER is The LGF's new Community Development Worker for Rochdale...

Adrian has started at The Lesbian & Gay Foundation as the LGB&T Community Development Worker for Rochdale. Adrian will be supporting various organisations with their sexual orientation monitoring and encouraging members of the LGB&T community to be more involved in helping shape policies and procedures, to reflect the needs of the community.

He will also be delivering drop-in sessions across the Borough (Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale) to talk about issues of concern and signposting individuals to further support.

Why did you want to work for The LGF?

The LGF is an organisation whose vision of a fair and equal society is something that I also personally believe in. There is a wealth of knowledge from all the staff and volunteers at the LGF who want to make a difference to the lives of LGB&T people. With their support, I want to be able to assist the LGB&T community of Rochdale to achieve their full potential and be recognised for the contribution they makes.

What does a usual day entail?

At present it's about networking and identifying various agencies to look at ways in which we can work together for the benefit of the LGB&T community. There's also a lot of reading and getting to understand the needs of the community.

What is the best part of your job?

I really enjoy working in the communities and meeting new people. If I can assist someone, no matter in how small a way, that has a direct benefit for that person, then I feel I have achieved something.

What is the hardest part of your job?

Red tape. It sometimes seems that people and or organisations put barriers in the way of wanting to make a difference. I know that there are budget constraints and policies



and procedures that have to be followed but there seems to be far too many of them, I want to make a difference now.

What or who inspires you?

I was very inspired after watching the Paralympics last year, so many athletes who, despite losing limbs or having some form of disability, still had the courage and conviction to want to represent their country and participate in sports. There is nothing that can't be achieved if you have the will power and yes, support from others, if you truly want to make a difference.

What keeps you awake at night?

Insomnia. I don't sleep a great deal at night, it's not because of things on my mind, usually it's my partner's snoring, but I've probably said too much there already!

Your top tip for a work /life balance?

Win the lottery and give up work! But if you can't do that just make sure you spend as much time as possible with your loved ones. Life's too short, make the most of the time you have together or whatever you passion is.

Your plans for your role in the future?

I would like to try and establish a LGB&T focus group that wants to make a difference to not just their own lives but for the wider community too, working in partnership to allow everyone the same life chances.

Adrian will be based at CVS Rochdale, Partnership House, Sparrow Hill, Rochdale OL1 6 1QT. You can contact him via email; Adrian.palmer@lgf.org.uk or on 07739 756178

NEW COLUMN!

17th MAY 2013

IDAHO

On 17th May thousands of you flew the rainbow flag for IDAHO (International Day Against Homophobia), marking the date that homosexuality was removed from the International Classification of Diseases of the World Health Organisation.

More images can be found at www.lgf.org.uk/flag



Connie
Lingus

"My name's Connie Lingus and I am going to be your personal own Clit Whisperer for the foreseeable future! Les-Bi honest now, we all love women and I personally love loving women, inside and out (if ya know what I mean). The folks at ONW have decided to let me in to beat the cobwebs off the bush of sex with women! I mean, c'mon, we all do it, so why not talk about it?"

I'm going to be no holds barred, covering everything from lube to lesbian bed death, from dildos to sex no-nos, even whips and chains if you so desire! Whatever you want, I will selflessly divulge, because I am that much of a saint.

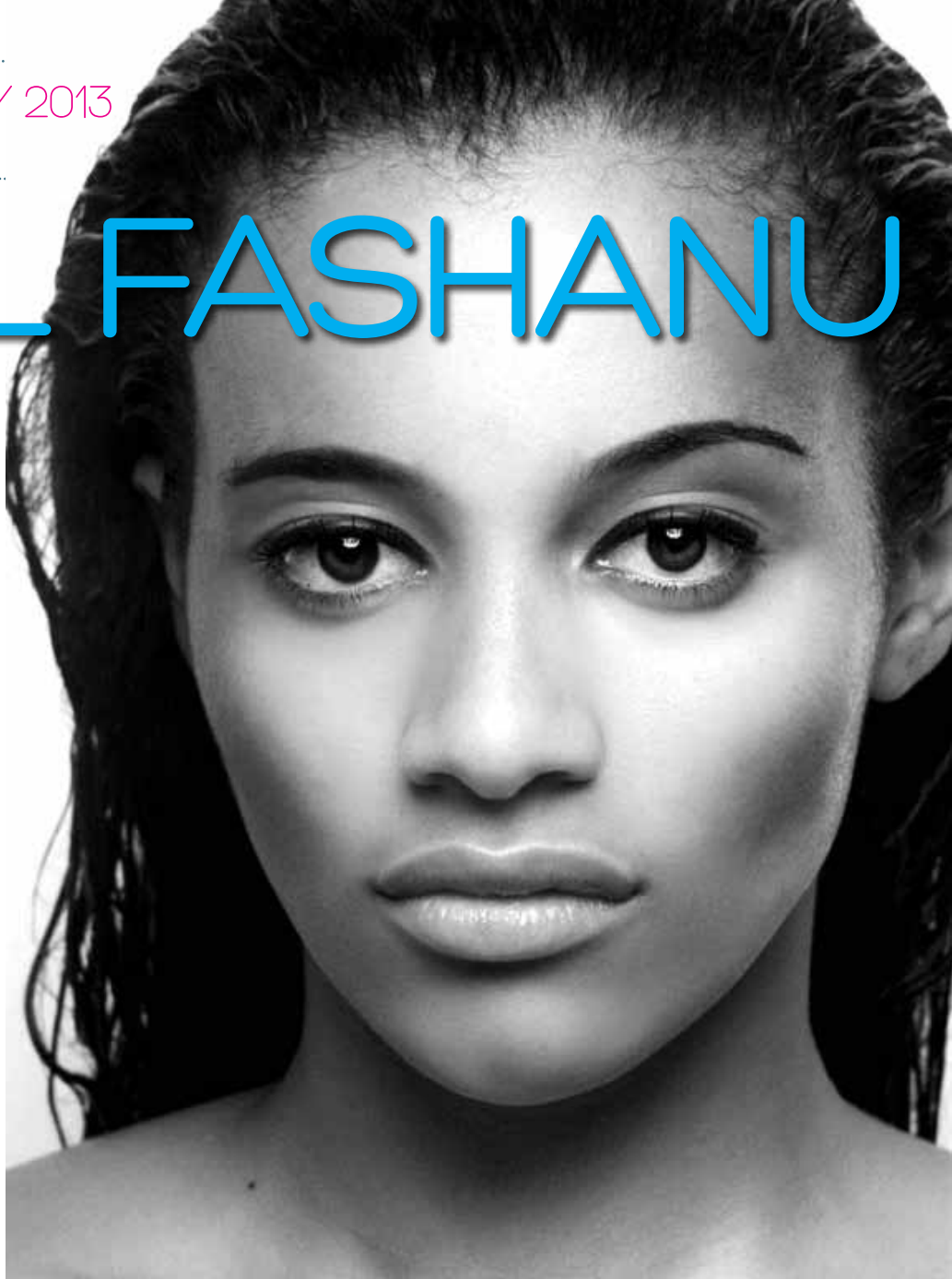
I'll also be covering topics such as first dates (and I have many awkward ones to recall!), how to broach the much loathed "what are we?" conversation and even the crappy side of relationships, such as cheating and dealing with your significant other's friends (who you secretly hate with all of your lady-loving heart and only put up with because the sex is so good!)

But this column is more about you, so if you have any questions or topics you want me to cover then please email me at Connie.Lingus@LGF.org.uk. Don't worry gals, anonymity will be assured and no query is too big or too small for me to cover – if I don't know the answer I'll find someone who does! I'll also be bigging up a tweeter of the month so drop me a tweet [@lgfoundation](https://twitter.com/lgfoundation) [#connielingus](https://twitter.com/connielingus). I can't promise hoards of beautiful women of all shapes and sizes following you, but you never know...!"

Kisses! Connie Lingus xxx

AMAL FASHANU

Amal is the daughter of football legend John Fashanu and Spanish model Marisol Acuna. Her uncle was Justin Fashanu, Britain's first (and only) footballer to come out, who tragically committed suicide in 1998. Model, TV presenter and musician, Amal speaks out about how to tackle homophobia in sport and how she would like Justin's legacy to be remembered.



Why do you think homophobia in football in such an issue?

Shockingly, homosexuality is the last taboo still left in football. There are 5,000 professional, British footballers but amazingly, there are still no openly gay players. Britain's first and only footballer to come out, was my uncle Justin. But other people's prejudice within the game led him to tragically commit suicide. And no other footballer has dared to come out, since. I interviewed a host of experts and premiership stars including my father for my documentary, *Britain's Gay Footballer's*, to discover why this was.

There are numerous reasons, which we need to break down individually. For example, there is a pack mentality in the crowd which often focuses on what they know will upset a player the most, to disrupt his game. So they may heckle or bully a player for being

black, or for wearing glasses... or for being gay. It's bullying on a massive scale. Despite the fact that most of the biggest players are metrosexual, like David Beckham and Ronaldo, being gay is still a step beyond some player's acceptance, in an extremely macho sport which involves very physical and emotional bonding between players. Publicist Max Clifford told me he had been approached by gay and bisexual Premiership players, terrified that their sexuality would come out and petrified that this would mean the end of their careers. We need another brave footballer to follow my uncle's footsteps and come out... to set an example and lead the way for others.

I learned Justin was no angel, but he genuinely believed he was setting an example to other players. Sadly, it's an example no other gay player has felt able to follow in nearly 25 years.

What can be done to tackle it?

We need to end the silence on the subject. That's the first step. Matt Lucas is a comedian, avid Arsenal supporter and one of Britain's best known gay football fans, and interestingly, he told me that we do still need to have an element of irreverence and humour, rather than eerie silence, in order to start combating it. We're a country that created camp humour, so it's perhaps not surprising that there are innuendos and silly jokes. We don't want people to fear the subject, but there is a fine line between warm jokes and stinging attacks.

The PFA and Kick it Out have done fantastic work to combat homophobia in football, tackling it at the grassroots level in schools and educating young people, because ignorance is at the heart of fear and prejudice. It is also important to involve the LGBT community in football at every level.

Football needs to take more decisive action against homophobia in sport. There need to be more incentives to stop discrimination, incorporated into school programmes, employee orientations and also in sporting arenas. Prejudice creeps out from the terraces back to the school kids, who learn this behaviour from the adults.

Communities that are affected by discrimination such as Kick It Out, the Gay Football Supporters' Network, PrideSports, SchoolsOut, Show Racism the Red Card and the TUC have started to join forces to oppose prejudice, because together their voice is louder and can match even the most unpleasant voices in the football stands. They hold conferences and debates to make sure that the decision-makers and those who are most involved in the issue play a big part in the actions, partnerships and decisions which will gradually eradicate homophobia in the dressing rooms and out on the stands.

The Football Association, the game's main governing body and so often the target for criticism over its shortcomings and failings, are about to launch a four-year plan aimed at encouraging more gay players to participate at grassroots level.

How would you like Justin and his legacy to be remembered?

I'd like him to be remembered as a man who tackled two difficult challenges in a less understanding society, as Britain's first million pound footballer and the first footballer to bravely and proudly come out as gay. I hope that it wasn't done in vain and that he has opened up the door for other gay footballers to follow in his footsteps. In years to come, I'd like his legacy to be that of a man who put the wheels in motion for it to be totally acceptable to be gay AND a professional athlete.

What's next for you?

I am preparing to launch *Fash and U*, which was inspired by Justin, who wanted to use fashion to spread the fight for equality. I've been campaigning on TV and in print to continue my uncle's fight for equality and will now be using my fashion line to continue the fight, taking it to the catwalks and the highstreet. And I'll be donating money from the collection to a selection of pro-equality charities to continue this fight.

To find out more about The Justin Campaign, visit www.thejustincampaign.com. You can discover more about Amal and her Black Heart Label fashion line at www.amalfashanu.com

WOMEN'S EVENT

CAN YOU HEAR ME?



BRAND NEW CREATIVE PROJECT LAUNCHES FOR WOMEN WHO'VE EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.

The LGF have recently launched a creative project for lesbian and bisexual women, who have experienced what it's like, to live with a mental health problem.

'Can You Hear Me?' is funded by Time to Change and is being delivered in partnership with local arts company, Creative Curve. So far, we've had three of our 12 workshops and have around 20 women involved in speaking up and speaking out about their mental health. We've started to think about what words we do and don't like, that are used to describe mental health or mental illness and have gotten stuck into some creative activities such as screen printing.

Our Audio Technician has been working with some of the participants, to start recording their voices, talking and singing about their experiences, which will feature in our final exhibition.

Our project is currently working towards an exciting 'living exhibition' which will be previewed on 26th and 27th July, ready for

our final launch and main exhibition taking place between 20th and 25th August at The Lesbian & Gay Foundation.

The exhibition will feature a series of real-life kitchen spaces, created and designed by the participants, where you can sit down and learn about their experiences of living with a mental health problem and the impact that stigma and discrimination has had on them. We're hoping that giving people the opportunity to share experiences and learn about mental health, we'll be making the world a much more accepting place for lesbian and bisexual women who experience distress.

It's not too late to get involved! If you identify as lesbian, bisexual or questioning and have experienced some form of distress, and would like to use this to challenge negative attitudes then get in touch.

For more information visit www.lgf.org.uk or call us on **0845 3 30 30 30**.

REAL

VOICES

Each issue we want to dedicate this page to YOU, to the people who have used The Lesbian & Gay Foundation's services and want to share their story with the community. This time, we hear from Graham, Sarah and Tracey.

Graham, 40 has been a befriender since October 2012 and supports people who have mental health issues, are new to the area, have just come out of a relationship, or have just come out. The LGF's Befriending Service plays a crucial role in guiding people through difficult times.

"I'm a mature student nurse at the University of Manchester and one of the courses I take, the Manchester Leadership Programme, encourages students to get involved in volunteering. Shortly after starting on the course I spotted some LGF publicity for the befriending scheme and decided it was the ideal opportunity for me to give something back to a community that has been a big part of my life, so I applied to be a volunteer. The training opportunities you gain access to as a volunteer are excellent and are transferable to the world beyond the befriending scheme. It's an opportunity to meet lots of new people outside your usual work or social circle, including volunteers, LGF staff and the bidders themselves, and this gives you new perspectives on life. But

GRAHAM'S STORY

For more information about befriending visit www.lgf.org.uk/befrienders

more importantly it is really rewarding helping somebody achieve their goals or at least move a step or two closer to them. What has come as a surprise to me has been the positive impact that volunteering with The LGF as a befriender has had on me personally. I've always considered myself as an "out" gay man, comfortable with my

sexuality, but I had fallen into the trap of letting things ride when people made false assumptions about my sexuality or if I came across casual homophobia. Volunteering with the LGF has helped me to develop my confidence, self-esteem, and assertiveness and I feel empowered to challenge homophobia and unhelpful attitudes."

SARAH AND TRACEY'S STORY

Sarah & Tracey, from Preston and Blackpool, have been together 6 ½ years, and only came out to their families 3 years ago.

This year they decided to celebrate and cement their relationship by hosting a civil partnership in Cumbria, with just close friends and family present. And when to have it? IDAHO of course!

17th May also marked Tracey's 50th birthday and they celebrated in style marking the day with rainbow tea light favours, and a fabulous rainbow flag which featured in their wedding pictures, provided by The LGF. After the ceremony they jetted off to Tenerife on their honeymoon. Congratulations!

SHARE YOUR STORY!

We know the support we provide can change lives and we want to let more people know about how we can help. The best way to do this is to tell the stories of people who have used our services. If you've attended a group, counselling, a pop-in, legal or police surgery, or volunteered - we want to hear from you and your experiences. E-mail: voices@lgf.org.uk



THE PANSY PROJECT

Marking homophobia by planting a pansy at the site of an attack, PAUL HARTFLEET talks to ONW about why it's so important...

Artist Paul Harfleet plants pansies at the site of homophobic abuse, finding the nearest soil to where the incident occurred and generally without civic permission plants an unmarked pansy.

The flower is then photographed and posted on his website, the image is entitled after the abuse. Titles like "Let's kill the Bati-Man!" and "Fucking Faggot!" reveal a frequent reality of gay experience which often goes unreported to authorities and by the media.

Paul began by planting pansies to mark his own experience of homophobia on the streets of Manchester though he plants pansies for others both on an individual basis and as part of various festivals and events. Perhaps most poignantly The Pansy Project also marks locations where people have been killed as a result of homophobic attack, for example a pansy for Michael Causer who was murdered in Liverpool in 2008.



What inspired you to set it up?

A string of homophobic abuse on a warm summer's day was the catalyst for this project. The day began with two builders shouting; "it's about time we went gay-bashing again isn't it?"; continued with a gang of jobs throwing abuse and stones at my then boyfriend and me, and ended with a bizarre and unsettling confrontation with a man who called us 'ladies' under his breath.

Over the years I have become accustomed to this kind of behaviour, but I came to realise it was a shocking concept to most of my friends and colleagues. It was in this context that I began to ponder the nature of these verbal attacks and their influence on my life. I realised that I felt differently about these experiences depending on my mental state so I decided to explore the way I was made to feel at the location where these incidents occur. What interested me was

the way that the locations later acted as a prompt for me to explore the memories associated with that place. I wanted in some way to manipulate these associations, in order to feel differently about the location and the memories it summoned. I became interested in the public nature of these incidents and the way one was forced into reacting publicly to a crime that often occurred during the day and in full view of passers by.

Why is it important?

My continued fascination with the work is my un-ending shock and awe that some people still are so threatened by the idea of homosexuality. It would be laughable if it's impact was not so insidious. Despite my own work in this area I am still emotionally troubled by public attacks and find it impossible to understand. I hope The Pansy Project has made people

think about the frequency of such attacks and the constant reality of homophobia. Fundamentally though I am an artist, my aim is to make critically engaging and relevant work that I hope adds something to the world.

What are your plans for the future?

The future of the project is ever changing. The one key fact is that I'll continue planting pansies until homophobia stops. So it looks like I'll be doing this for a long time. I hope to formalise the project and source funding that will support my mission to plant pansies across the globe, countries where homophobia is illegal and culturally unacceptable is where the project should also really live.

Find out more at

www.thepansyproject.com

VILLAGE PEOPLE

LOCAL BUSINESSES, CHARITIES AND THE COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER!

SPARKLING WITH PRIDE!



KAREN RICHARDS is a busy woman. She's involved with Manchester Pride, LGBT Rugby League team Canalsiders, and Manchester's trans pride event, Sparkle...

Karen Richards is a woman who loves a challenge. At the age of 16 years old Karen began working as a carpenter before moving on to become a Site Manager and running three business of her own.

Today she works in the construction industry as a health and safety advisor and as a consultant on equality and diversity issues. Outside work, Karen volunteers for Manchester Pride, and is well known for her work with Manchester Concord and the national transgender celebration, Sparkle as well as being involved in Manchester's LGBT Rugby League Club, Manchester Canalsiders.

Earlier this year Karen joined Manchester Pride as a director of its trading subsidiary, Manchester Pride Events Ltd. Karen helps

Pride around health and safety issues, attends board meetings and likes to raise her opinions! She's proud to be the first trans person to advise the Board of Manchester Pride and volunteered in 2012 to be night Site Manager for the whole festival to make sure that everything was safe and secure, "They gave me a AAA security pass," she says, "but I was so busy the only people I got to see where the bin men who helped clear the site every morning!"

Last year Karen was nominated along with Stuart Donnelly for Community Champion of the Year at The LGF's Annual Homo Heroes Awards for their joint work on the annual transgender event Sparkle. "I was a bit surprised by that nomination because I generally like to stay in the background but I am incredibly proud of Sparkle which has become Europe's premier trans event as it's all about trans people interacting with other communities, not just our own."

Karen is also involved in the world's first LGBT Amateur Rugby League Club Manchester Canalsiders. She explains the difference between rugby league as being "a game for gentlemen played by hooligans, as opposed to rugby union, which is the opposite". Canalsiders has only been running a few months but already is fully inclusive of LGBT and straight people, attracting involvement in either the men's or women's full contact teams or mixed touch rugby for those who wish a more gentle initiation into the sport.

"Team spirit is really important at Canalsiders and everyone has bonded so quickly considering we've only been playing for a few months. We were all out over The Great British Bear Bash on Canal Street and we realised that our teams really do reflect every aspect of the LGBT community". Inclusion and diversity is hugely important to Karen "It's so important that the whole community works together. We shouldn't lose our sense



“It’s so important that the whole community works together. We shouldn’t lose our sense of identity or purpose and we should all support one another whoever we are and whoever we represent.”

Thanks to Martin from Canalsiders for the pic!

of identity or purpose and we should all support one another whoever we are and whoever we represent”. 2013 looks like being just as busy for Karen as she is working with community groups and partnership sponsors.

For Sparkle Karen is in charge of fundraising and liaising with local business and has had support from almost every venue in Manchester’s LGBT Village to prepare for the expected 4-5,000 visitors to the event between Thursday 11th - Sunday 14th July.

Karen really wanted to share some BIG announcements with us but had to keep them under wraps until they are signed off so make sure you look out for some major news about Manchester Pride, Sparkle and Manchester Canalsiders coming together really soon.

www.manchesterpride.com
www.sparkle.org.uk
www.canalsiders.co.uk



A SUMMER OF PRIDES!

Matt Adams, Gaydio’s Pride Co-ordinator.

With the Pride season upon us Gaydio will be raising our flag at various Pride events across the North West and indeed the world.

For our first Pride event of 2013 we sent Chris and Emma packing off to Brussels for Belgium Pride. I’m not sure if it’s a coincidence, but it was the same weekend as Eurovision which added to the fun and excitement.

We have an action packed Summer of Pride coverage working with the two biggest Pride events in the North West - Manchester and Liverpool, but not forgetting some of the smaller events such as Cumbria and Oldham Prides. You’ll also find members of our team in London, Brighton, Cardiff, Brighton, Sheffield and Dublin over the summer.

Of course Pride events have a different meaning to each of us; some of us immerse ourselves in the fun and frivolities throughout the weekend - where as others participate in elements of it, be it the parade, some of the arts based activity or the club

nights. Covering so many Prides for Gaydio, we definitely get to see the best (and sometimes the worst) of some of the places we visit. A particular highlight for me last year was my first Liverpool Pride... yeah it rained a bit, but in true Liverpool style - we weren’t going to let it ruin our day. The other thing is that every Pride is different, from the crowds to the activities on offer to the people that go. I would encourage everyone to check out a Pride event they haven’t been to before.

We feel that covering Pride is important to us on Gaydio and we try to bring a flavour of the event to those around the region that may not be able to make some or all of the day. So if you’re still planning your calendar of Prides this year - pop us on and we’ll let you know what’s happening across Gay UK.

See you there!

Matt x

www.gaydio.co.uk



ALBERT KENNEDY TRUST MERGE WITH OUTPOST HOUSING

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) youth homeless charities the Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT) and Outpost Housing have merged to help meet rising demand and sustain vital services for young people.

TIM SIGSWORTH

How will AKT Outpost continue to meet increased demand to provide services for young LGBT people?

We recognise the need for more partnership working is key – hence the merger. We are exploring how we can meet need beyond Greater Manchester, the North East and London through developing remote service provision or through replication of our work by developing strategic partnerships in other areas.

Why is there such a marked increase in demand for AKT Outpost services?

We have seen a 20-30% increase in young people accessing our services and a marked increase in those presenting as street homeless. Several factors have contributed to this including: the recession especially where youth services have been cut or de-commissioned; in an environment where LGBT people have more rights we are seeing a generation of young people feeling more confident to come out at home and in some cases at a much younger age – unfortunately attitudes have not kept up with legislation, so many of our young people are experiencing rejection and abuse when they do come out; a third reason is the profile of our organisation has grown, making us more visible to young people – hence over 60% of our contacts are self referrals by young people.

What would you say to those who think that everything is much easier for young LGBT people these days?

Today we are seeing more cases involving: mental health and wellbeing issues, sexual exploitation, honour based violence, forced marriage, debt, difficulties in securing employment or being able to meet tuition



OUTNORTHWEST SPEAKS TO TIM SIGSWORTH, CEO OF AKT AND FOUNDER CATH HALL ABOUT THE MERGER

fees and also street homelessness. Alongside this the demographic of the people we support is getting younger. Imagine facing all this and coming to terms with your identity as an L, G, B or T person whilst facing the usual challenges of adolescence. I would say young people are actually facing a harder challenge today than previous generations.

CATH HALL

How do you feel about the journey AKT have been on and the work there is still to do?

When we started the AKT we were looking for solutions to the problems faced by homeless young LGBT people. They needed safe housing, good and strong role models and support to lay down foundations for the future. Over the years we have built the solutions into the support we can give to young people, it is ready and waiting for them, ready to swing into action when problems arise. I am extremely proud of the dynamic, positive and innovative people involved with AKT who have made this

happen. Our young people deserve nothing less.

What needs to change to help make sure that our young people get the help and support they need?

I never envisaged that we would still be necessary nearly 25yrs later. Many young people these days are aware of the people who are good role models for them, through television, education and through activists who have pushed for reforms through government. However, there is always a lot more to do and until every young LGBT person can live without fear, at home, on the street and in school there will be a need for safe havens like the AKT

How can outnorthwest readers help?

Donate to the merger appeal at www.give15.org or ask your workplace if they can provide sponsorship or pro bono support to AKT.

For more information contact tim@akt.org.uk. For volunteering opportunities, contact darren@akt.org.uk.



RECOGNITION FOR LANCASHIRE PC

Lancashire Constabulary, the winners of the LGF 'Homo Heroes' Award in 2012 for Public Sector Partner of the Year, has rewarded one of their police officers who has strived to promote and support LGB and T issues within the police service, both locally and nationally.

PC Ian Ashton who has been a police officer for 20 years is the Co-Chair of their LGB and T Staff Support network and works within their Diversity Team based at Police Headquarters. Over the past few years Ian has actively encouraged members of the LGB & T community to join the police service and he's introduced a new Transgender and Gender Reassignment policy. Ian has hosted the first LGB & T National Police Conference for many years, which led towards the re-establishment of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) LGB & T Steering Group. He's helped introduced new guidance on policing cruising sites, which involves Ian hosting an official profile on websites where members of

the cruising community can contact Lancashire Constabulary and report incidents, hate crime and seek advice.

Ian has also supported a Trans group in Blackburn called Cygnets2Swans. The group meet every month there and Ian appears on their website as their single point of contact.

He has supported the Constabulary Force Major Investigation Team, on complex enquiries involving LGB and T issues, most recently the tragic story of Anthony Stubbs who recently lost his life. Ian is working with Anthony's family to look at promoting the subject of homophobia and other forms of discrimination in schools.

Ian is also involved in coordinating the Police Chaplaincy service and is currently involved in the planning of Police with Pride, the North West Police entry to the Manchester Pride parade.

Ian.Ashton@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

FOCUS

GAY FARMERS

Farmers and friends is a group for gay and lesbian farmers, or people involved in rural industry, who feel isolated or who are struggling with their sexuality. Gay Farmers offer a confidential hotline for anyone who wants to call and talk to someone who understands what it's like to be in the farming community and gay. **So if you or someone you know is a gay farmer who feels isolated and needs help, advice or just someone to talk to then contact 07837 931894 or join the facebook group 'farmers and friends' or visit: www.gayfarmer.co.uk**

LIVERPOOL QUEER GAMES & ADVENTURE



Liverpool Queer Games and Adventure (LQGA) is a community group for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender people and their friends with any level of skill and / or with a disability to get involved with sports, games and adventure activities through social or charity events in the North West of England. The group currently have over 200 members and is open to all ages over 16 years old. **Visit: www.lqga.org.uk**

THE ISAAC HITCHEN PROJECT

Lancashire LGBT launched The Isaac Hitchen Project at Preston North End FC on May 17th, International Day Against Homophobia & Transphobia.

This innovative community development project, which received funding for three years from the Big Lottery Fund, aims to strengthen Lancashire's LGB&T community. The Isaac Hitchen Project will train and empower volunteers to develop LGB & T community activities and work to provide opportunities for LGB&T men and women throughout Lancashire. The Project will also train volunteer befrienders

to reach out and support isolated men and women across the region.

If you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans man or woman aged 18 or over living anywhere in Lancashire and you would like to get involved visit www.lancslgbt.org.uk

You can also view the Facebook page 'The Isaac Hitchen Project' and follow the project on twitter @IsaacHitchenOrg. Tel. 01772 717461 or e-mail: lewist@lancslgbt.org.uk

TELL US WHAT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY OR GROUP IS UP TO. DROP AN E-MAIL TO:
andrew.gilliver@lgf.org.uk



A NEW TWO YEAR LONG NATIONAL HIV PREVENTION CAMPAIGN CALLED 'IT STARTS WITH ME' AIMS TO FOCUS ON TESTING, TREATMENT AND CONDOMS TO CURB THE SPREAD OF HIV. WITH THIS IN MIND:

"What can YOUR role be in preventing HIV?"

THE HIV POSITIVE PERSPECTIVE



**PATRICK
ITALO
ETTENES**

"Well with the arrival of this new campaign ('It Starts With Me'), I'll continue to write articles promoting safer sex and be more proactive within the community, and hopefully one day we'll all achieve our objectives - less new infections and more people empowered to look after their own sexual health.

I still believe more can be done, personally within ourselves, in our families, in our schools, and we can all take ownership of our lives in general. We shouldn't need to be reminded about looking after our health only when a new campaign comes along. It's something that should be on our minds all the time and talked about, told almost as a story to the younger generation with targeted lessons to students and reminders to the general public to take responsibility for our own sexual health and to know the risks involved with unsafe sex and not knowing your HIV status.

As time changes so do our attitudes to sex, and sexually transmitted infections, but this comes with new risks. I personally believe that as a whole, all charities working in health issues should realise this. The NHS and private health care should also actively search for, and provide more information for men who have sex with men and make themselves aware of the needs of our communities, so we can understand why so many people are having unsafe sex and educate everyone to practice safer sex and get tested regularly.

This is my message and always will be, so yes 'It Starts With Me!'

THE HIV NEGATIVE PERSPECTIVE



**SEAN
GORDON**

"We can all do our bit to help with HIV awareness and prevention, but the pivotal question that you need to ask yourself is 'Do I know my HIV status?'

With 8 in 10 gay and bisexual men having acquired HIV by someone who isn't aware of their status, knowing your own status will significantly reduce your risk of HIV transmission to other people and give you a better understanding of your own sexual health. Sex is fun. It's intimate, and there are scientific studies to suggest that sex can regulate the serotonin levels in the brain to make you a happier person. There's always a risk though, however small. Knowing how to keep yourself protected from that risk is the key, and there are many ways to do that. Carrying a condom at all times is a great way of ensuring you are prepared for anything! Condoms are still the most effective way of preventing the transmission of all STI's including HIV.

Having regular sexual health check ups is also another way to be aware of your own HIV status, however this can be factored by how many sexual partners you've had. If you consider yourself to be the 'promiscuous' type, then a regular full screening is recommended once every 3 months. If your sexual activity is confined to a monogamous relationship or your sexual partners are few and far between, then it is recommended that you get yourself tested once a year.

You are in charge of your own sexual health and behaviour, you are the only one that can keep yourself protected, so taking the necessary precautions will significantly reduce your chances of contracting HIV and other STI's. It Starts With Me... and you!"

www.startswithme.org.uk

GAY & BISEXUAL MEN

SAME DAY HIV TESTING

**EVERY WEDNESDAY
12.00PM - 2.00PM*
AT THE LGF
NUMBER 5 RICHMOND STREET
MANCHESTER**

*BUT GET HERE EARLY, THE LAST TEST IS AT 1.30PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL US: (10AM-10PM)

0845 3 30 30 30



Manchester Mental Health 
and Social Care Trust



The Manchester Centre for Sexual Health
at The Hathersage Centre
280 Upper Brook Street Manchester M13 9PL

Central Manchester University Hospitals 
with Hathersage Trust

**DO YOU
KNOW YOUR
HIV STATUS?**
www.lgf.org.uk/testing

OUTSPOKEN

WHO'S RACHEL?

“ Rachel Mann is a Church of England vicar and writer based in South Manchester. She is also trans and lesbian, and her bestselling autobiography *Dazzling Darkness* (Wild Goose 2012) has been described as 'both a revelation and a celebration'. A regular broadcaster, she also writes about rock music and popular culture and is Poet-In-Residence at Manchester Cathedral. ”



Sum yourself up in three words...

Frabjous, Passionate, Infuriating

What's your guilty pleasure?

Watching old (and sometimes not so old) Agatha Christie movies. Miss Marple is my hero!

If we gave you £1 million, what would you do with it?

Probably stick it in a suitcase and give it right back, asking you to donate it to someone more deserving. If you insisted I have it, there are a number of charities I love. They'd get a fair whack. I'd love to treat my family and friends and to give my parents a bit of the luxury they deserve. Anything left would go on my underground super-villain hideout.

What food could you not live without?

Having aggressive Crohn's Disease means I often can't eat much, so can I have coca-cola? It's bad for me, but I can stick away gallons. And it has to be full-fat. I'm a Coke junkie! (That sounds bad doesn't it!?)

Do you have a favourite quote / motto?

'The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom' – William Blake

If you could change one thing about the world what would it be?

Eek! Get rid of the lazy way we can all judge and dismiss others on the basis of gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity, religion etc.

Which animal you would most like to be and why?

A sloth. You get to sleep lots, move at an easy pace, watch the world go by and hang out in trees. What's not to love?

If you were a biscuit, which one would you be?

A Custard Cream – comforting, satisfying and not very grown up.

If you were a superhero, what would be your super-power?

To enable people to see the world through other people's lives and experiences (in the

hope they might be less judgmental and more understanding).

Where is your favourite place in the world?

Tempted to say 'bed', but probably standing on a clifftop on the north Cornish coast on a warm summer's day, staring at the sea.

Tell us a secret about yourself...

I wrote a very bad and silly sub-Twilight vampire romance five years ago, centering on the life of a lesbian vampire vicar and her partner. It got very close to being published. I'm kind of glad it didn't now!

The best thing about being a woman is...

Apart from having instant access to the deepest nature of the universe, I'd say it's always being right.

For more information on Rachel, visit www.rachelmann.co.uk



WE CHANGING THE WORLD!



Are you ready to take on the world? We can help you!

One of the missions of The Lesbian & Gay Foundation is 'empowering people', and with the new Active Citizens part of our women's programme we are aiming to do exactly that: empowering lesbian and bisexual women to make their voices heard.

Over the next few months we'll be running fun workshops which enable lesbian and bisexual women to get vocal about the issues that matter to them – whether that's related to their sexual orientation or not. We'll be offering suggestions of how you can get involved in changing your local community...or in changing the world!

The next 'Active Citizens' workshop will take place on Saturday 13th July from 2pm and is a writing workshop with the fabulous For Books' Sake. The workshop takes place the day before Emmeline Pankhurst Day, which marks the birth of one of Manchester's most inspirational daughters, who led the fight for votes for women.

The workshop will encourage you to write about inspirational women in your community and look at how we can celebrate and widen awareness of such women.

To find out more about the 'Women in Your Community' workshop, or to book a place, email women@lgf.org.uk or call 0845 3 30 30 30.

UPCOMING WOMEN'S EVENTS AT THE LGF



Do you want to have fun, meet new people AND learn a new skill? If so, and you identify as a lesbian or bisexual woman, The LGF's women's workshops are the place for you!

These fun and friendly sessions take place once a month, usually on the third Saturday, and are completely free to attend but places are limited so must be booked in advance. To find out more go to www.lgf.org.uk/women, email women@lgf.org.uk or call **0845 3 30 30 30**.

**SATURDAY 15TH
JUNE, 2-5PM**

Be sassy, safe and confident – self-defence and confidence building

**SATURDAY 20TH
JULY, 2-5PM**

Snap happy! – practical photography workshop

SPORTING SISTERS

We all know that we're meant to be getting regular exercise but it's not always easy to motivate yourself to get off the sofa! It's always easier to exercise with others to encourage you and we're really lucky in the North West to have lots of local LGB&T sports groups offering coaching, inspiration and a friendly welcome to all abilities. However, getting active can still seem a little intimidating, especially if you're worried you'll be the only woman in a group full of muscled men! So we asked some female members of local LGB&T sports groups to tell us about their experiences...

SUSAN GUY joined Manchester

Frontrunners in September 2011: "I'd never joined a sports club before and I was worried that my running wasn't up to speed. I was anxious about holding people back, but this wasn't the case at all. With over 30 members that turned up that Thursday night, I found a few people who ran at my pace. Frontrunners is warm, fun and gay-friendly, with a passion for running and a growing social calendar. With races organised in other countries, there's travel, meals out, weekend walks with a pub at the end and of course making shapes on the dance floor somewhere - it is so much more than a running club! The club offers beginners courses towards running your first 5k as well as offering training for those working towards a half marathon or even a full marathon, and there's cross country running if you like muddy good fun. With the encouragement of Frontrunners, I ran my first Marathon this year and that did warrant a celebratory drink or two! Come and join us."

To find out more about Manchester Frontrunners go to
www.manchesterfrontrunners.org

ELIZABETH HENSHAW is a member of Northern Wave swimming club:

"Northern Wave changed my life. There's no other way to put it. This time last year I was unemployed, living in the middle of nowhere



SUSAN

ELIZABETH

SOL

with my retired parents. Not ideal for anyone in their 30's. I went to stay with a friend in Manchester and she asked if I wanted to come to Northern Wave's women's swimming session with her. I said yes and I cannot say how glad I am I did. I was overwhelmed with how comfortable I felt, as a person talking to strangers (something I am not good at) but also about my body and fitness level. Then and there, surrounded by the nicest group of women I'd ever met, I decided to move to Manchester. Eight months later I have an amazing new job (largely through the moral support of the Northern Wavers!), I'm living in the greatest city in the world and have signed up for my first half marathon! I didn't think such a simple thing as swimming could make such a difference in my life, but it truly has. I would encourage anyone to get involved; you never know where it might lead you...at the very least to great new friends!"

To find out more about Northern Wave go to www.northernwave.org

SOL TAYLOR and KAYLEIGH RILEY both play basketball with Slam Dunkin' Divas:

Sol: "When I joined the Divas in February I hadn't done any sport since a serious accident 5 years ago, despite having previously been very active. Since joining and taking part in their ball again sessions everything has changed for me. I have become fitter, stronger and healthier. It hasn't all been about basketball either. I have made a great set of new friends. The girls are really welcoming and very encouraging. There are a lot of different skill levels from beginners to

very experienced players and we all support each other. It's a real team that works hard for each everyone else. I spent the last 5 years hiding from the world under my duvet. Now I'm finally starting to enjoy life again. Joining the Divas was definitely one of the best things I have ever done."

Kayleigh: "I joined the Divas at the end of November 2012 after searching for an interesting LGBT team to join. I'd never really played basketball before but the chair (Georgia) was more than happy to respond to my request for more information and invited me along to the training session in Chorlton. Being a Bolton girl I wasn't sure if the travel would be worth it, however after meeting the team and getting involved in the training I knew I was hooked. The friendly atmosphere and encouragement from the team and coaches has greatly improved my confidence as I didn't have any real connections to the gay community before this."

To find out more about Slam Dunkin' Divas go to www.sites.google.com/site/slamdunkindivas/

Why not run for The LGF? Turn to page 36 of this issue for more details!

To find out more about Manchester's many LGBT sports groups, go to www.lgf.org.uk/directory

Pride Games, Manchester's annual LGBT sports festival, takes place from 2nd-9th June, find out more at www.pridesports.org.uk

Joe Lycett was nominated as Best Newcomer at the Edinburgh Comedy Awards in 2012 and he's already made multiple TV appearances. He's also one of the few comedians who are happy to talk about their bisexuality on stage. SALI OWEN asked the questions.

JOE LYCETT BEING BI

What's the most common misconception you get when you tell people you're bisexual?

"They think it's a transitional phase," he says. They think I'm on the road to gay. I get that more from gay people. Although there are also gay comics who say, 'Why don't you just come out as straight?'"

"I saw you trying out new jokes about how you had sex with a woman," I say. "I have had sex with a woman before!" he laughs. "But I was like, oh right, I am capable of this! Maybe not very well at this point, but you know. It's like riding a bike. Until recently I considered myself as having a preference for males."

Has becoming more attracted to women changed things?

Joe nods. "I had a future vision of me with a man who's an architect and two adopted babies, and we'd all read 'The Guardian' and wear grey glasses. Now being with a woman could be a realistic life for me."

Does that scare you?

He considers this. "Even though I said I was bisexual, the reality hadn't occurred

to me. This seems dreadful, but the idea of settling down with a woman seems boring. Why go back and do what everyone else does? It feels quite scary."

Has being bi caused problems with partners?

He shrugs. "I've had partners who've said, 'You want what I can't give you.' That's a debate about monogamy not bisexuality. When anyone gets into a relationship they're not going to stop being attracted to people. You think, I would have sex with them but the greater good is that I don't." He pauses. "Also they probably wouldn't."

Do people assume you're equally attracted to men and women?

"Yes, or that I'm attracted to everyone," he replies. "I use that as a joke in my stand-up – I'm bisexual so you're all at risk!"

What makes you happy about being bisexual?

"My world is open," he replies. "I've got a group of straight lad mates and I can relate to them but I can also relate to girls. I'd like to think that in the future I won't have to address my sexuality as much because it won't be that big a deal. And it isn't that big a deal."

THIS IS THE SUMMER OF LOVE

PRIDES, PARADES,
EVENTS AND
FESTIVALS TAKING
PLACE ACROSS THE
NORTH WEST AND
BEYOND THIS
SUMMER! **IT'S NOT
AN EXHAUSTIVE
LIST, BUT THIS
LITTLE LOT SHOULD
KEEP YOU BUSY...**



MANCHESTER DAY PARADE SUNDAY 2 JUNE

The Lesbian & Gay Foundation will be asking people to 'Kiss Hate Goodbye' at The Manchester Day Parade. The holiday-inspired theme for the day is 'Wish You Were Here', so join in the fun and celebrate all things Manchester! We promise there will even be an opportunity to 'Kiss Me Quick'!

To register your interest e-mail: andrew.gilliver@lgf.org.uk
or for more information visit
www.themanchesterdayparade.co.uk

BLACKPOOL PRIDE SAT 8/SUN 9 JUNE

2013 sees this family-friendly free event move to the Winter Gardens as a two-day indoor festival. On Saturday 12 – 5pm The Queen's Variety Show sees Gareth Gates take to the stage in The Pavilion and on Sunday 1 – 5pm is the Festival Finale Show starring Black Lace and Diva Fever!

For more information visit www.blackpoolpridefest.com or follow @bpoolpridefest on Twitter.

L FEST STAFFORDSHIRE 9-22 JULY

L Fest is a unique weekend celebration of lesbian culture and community. It includes music, cinema, books and visual art; games and sport; dating and dancing. It's packed with fun, socialising and creativity. This year it's taking place at Uttoxeter Race Course in Staffordshire.

For more information and tickets visit www.lfest.co.uk

OLDHAM PRIDE SATURDAY 27 JULY

One World, One Heart, One Pride! As usual Oldham Pride promises to be an activity packed, fun-filled event! There will be a parade from Oldham Town Centre (assemble 11.45am) to Gallery Oldham. The main event, hosted by the fantastic Rosie Lugosi and Claire Mooney will take place from 12.30 - 4pm. The headline is X-Factor's amazing Kitty alongside favourites ABBAfusion and Cavali Jay.

For more information email oldhamlgbtevents@hotmail.co.uk or visit their Facebook page.

PEEL PARK PICNIC SALFORD SUNDAY 28 JULY

A family friendly event in the centre of Peel Park for Salford's LGBT community. This year there will be a main stage for performers, a beer tent, marquees for partner organisations and activities throughout the day.

For more information visit www.peelparkpinkpicnic.org.uk or follow @PeelParkPinkPic on Twitter.

SPARKLE MANCHESTER 12-14 JULY

The National Transgender Celebration will take place in Manchester's LGB&T Village and is open to everyone who sees themselves as Trans and their friends and families. See page 16 of this issue for even more information.

More at www.sparkle.org.uk

LIVERPOOL PRIDE SATURDAY 3 AUGUST

Liverpool Pride is expecting thousands to join this year's March, with the theme of 'Superheroes'. The marvel of caped crusaders will take flight at St Georges Plateau at 12pm, with participants asked to gather from 11am. The parade will finish in front of the main stage at the Pier Head, where the afternoon's entertainment will begin.

More information at www.liverpoolpride.co.uk/volunteer

SAVE THE DATE!

CUMBRIA PRIDE, SATURDAY 5TH OCTOBER. Acts still to be announced. For more information visit www.cumbriapride.org or follow @CumbriaPride on Twitter. **WARRINGTON PRIDE, SATURDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER** Last year saw Warrington's first ever Pride event. For more information and the latest news and updates visit www.lgbtwarrington.co.uk

In a new series of articles especially for young people, we're going to take you through the A-z of mental health and wellbeing.

A is for ANXIETY!

Anxiety is a really common problem, with around 5% of the population experiencing it at some point in their lifetime. This figure is significantly higher for people who are LGB or T.

Mysterious Pain

With her head hung low
and nowhere to go

She can't explain
this mysterious pain

It comes on so fast
How long will it last

Her heart is just pounding,
her head starts to spin
Please go away, she does
not want you in

She tries to explain
This mysterious pain

Poem by Peggy Stewart

You might recognise some of the feelings described in this poem; it's all about anxiety.

Anxiety can be similar to stress, we all have some levels of it and it can help us to get things done, but for some of us, it can become much more problematic and start to interfere with everyday life. For many of us, our first experience of anxiety might be during a particularly stressful time, such as coming out, taking exams or after the breakdown of a relationship. Here are some of the common things you might think and feel if you're anxious:

- Sweating
- Heart racing and palpitations
- Dry mouth
- Nausea and sickness
- Irritability
- Thinking the worst might happen
- Inability to concentrate or relax
- Feeling on edge
- Panic attacks

Anxiety is a really common problem, with around 5% of the population experiencing it at some point in their lifetime; this figure is significantly higher for people who are LGB or T. We tend to feel anxious when we're in a situation where there is some sort of threat or danger. This causes the body to release chemicals which can lead to you:

- Breathe faster (you might feel short of breath or find it hard to breathe)

- Notice your heart racing
- Have a dry mouth
- Sweat more – sometimes you might notice this on the palms of your hands

This is because of something called 'fight or flight' which is a natural response to threats or danger. Usually, when the threat eases, the symptoms start to disappear.

So if anxiety is something you think you might be struggling with, you can read more about it in our new Mental Health & Wellbeing Guide, which is also available at www.lgf.org.uk.

Here are some other useful websites:
MIND www.mind.org.uk
Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk

If you wanted to speak to someone about anxiety and where to get help, you can call us on 0845 3 30 30 30 or drop in and see us Monday – Friday between 10am and 8pm at Number 5 Richmond Street, Manchester M1 3HF.

We have a range of free services for young people which can really help you to cope with things such as anxiety and any other issues you might be worried about.

The service is confidential and to find out more information, you can visit our website, or call us on 0845 3 30 30 30.

A NEW NATIONAL HIV PREVENTION CAMPAIGN HAS LAUNCHED. **IT STARTS WITH ME** IS ALL ABOUT TAKING RESPONSIBILITY...



JOIN THE ME GENERATION!

It's all about you. YOU are the key to stopping HIV in your own life and in your community!

Not only that but you can be part of something that changes HIV history. At the end of April a brand new England-wide campaign was launched by HIV Prevention England (HPE) and for the next two years will be running a campaign, 'It Starts With Me', that will speak directly to gay and bisexual men, chiefly about testing and condoms.

The Lesbian & Gay Foundation (LGF) is proud to be a key partner in delivering the messages of this campaign across

Greater Manchester. Throughout the year we will be promoting 'It Starts With Me' by tying the campaign into our services and promotion around HIV Testing, Sexual Health Screening, and our Free Condom & Lube Distribution Scheme.

As with any campaign we can't do it alone and this campaign really does start with all of us empowering the men in our lives to take on board and help deliver the messages of campaign.

We know that the combination of regular testing, HIV treatment and condom use is the key to success in bringing down the number of new HIV infections and recognising late diagnosis in those unaware that they have HIV.

TESTING

Testing at least once a year makes real sense. Test negative and end worries and doubt. Test positive and you can enjoy a long, healthy life - by testing early and starting treatment in time.

TREATMENT

HIV treatment can stop the virus making you seriously ill. It can also make someone with HIV much less infectious. Treatment is free for everyone!

CONDOMS

Thousands of people have HIV without knowing. There are also people who know they have HIV but aren't yet on treatment. That's why condoms are still the best barrier against HIV.

GET TESTED!

LGF OUTREACH CLINICS (EVERY TUESDAY, 12-3pm)

Takes place in one of three locations on the first and third Tuesday of the month at Basement Sauna, second Tuesday at H2O Sauna and fourth Tuesday at The LGF. There's no clinic on any fifth Tuesday. The LGF Outreach Clinic offers full sexual health check-ups. Testing includes: Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea, Syphilis, HIV and Hepatitis B.

RAPID HIV CLINIC (EVERY WEDNESDAY, 12-2pm)

This service takes place at The LGF, Number 5 Richmond Street, Manchester between 12pm-2pm every Wednesday.

For further information about clinic times, dates and locations visit www.lgf.org.uk/testing



GET PROTECTED!

FREE GAY MEN'S SAFER SEX PACKS

The service has been running for almost 20 years and covers Greater Manchester. The LGF scheme distributes packs which contain two condoms and two sachets of water-based lube and also provides condoms and lube to saunas. For further information about venues which host our condoms and lube visit: www.lgf.org.uk or email: info@lgf.org.uk

DID YOU KNOW?

- Your life could be **10** years shorter if you delay testing for HIV
- **8 in 10** gay men get HIV from a man who doesn't know he has it.
- Most gay men test positive for HIV between **26-29** years of age.

IT STARTS WITH ME

Join the It Starts With Me community on Facebook, share it with your friends.

Follow @startswith_me on Twitter, retweet and spread the word.

Checkout our listings section for details of sexual health clinics around the North West

Call The LGF's Helpline for more information on 0845 3 30 30 30

www.startswithme.org.uk





BAREFACTS

We've been asking for your opinions on the 'trend' for unprotected sex.

A recent study by the Health Protection Agency has shown that gay and bisexual men are using condoms less in the sex that they're having. We have been asking you why this seems to be the case. In what circumstances would men not use a condom and do they always understand the risks they are exposed to when engaging in unprotected sex?

Throughout April, we asked 100 people what some of the reasons could be why men who have sex with men (MSM) don't wear condoms during anal intercourse. The answers we received were quite varied but it is worth pointing out that we found the vast majority of MSM are making a conscious effort to protect themselves when they are having sex.

There does seem to be, however, a definite trend of 'bareback' sex (sex without condoms) around at the moment with many people saying that they had seen people advertising bareback sex on social networking sites or on dating sites, in chat-rooms or on forums.

When asked why they thought people would prefer bareback sex, respondents identified that some people preferred the sensation of not using condoms, some people enjoyed the thrill of taking the risks and some people thought that the need for sex outweighed the need to stay safe and that perhaps they felt more confident in securing a sexual encounter if they were prepared to go 'bareback' than if they insisted on using protection.

The concept of the 'need for sex' is certainly an interesting one. Why would someone have a 'need for sex'? Often people who have low confidence or self esteem issues find that the attention received during a sexual encounter is incomparable in its ability

to defuse these insecurities and can be a powerful and most addictive experience. Many men feel that regardless of who they are with at the time, they are (at least for the short term) wanted, needed or even loved.

Then there's the more obvious conclusion that people enjoy sex! Gay and bisexual men's sexual behaviour has long been associated (often by the heterosexual community looking in from the outside) with a certain level of promiscuity, but we certainly can't tar an entire community with one brush.

Other questions identified the complacency of some people, with the younger generation being highlighted as the major factor here, and how adopting an attitude of 'it won't happen to me' can lead to all sorts of issues down the line. But before you youngsters get out your red pens to right the wrongs, the older generation seem not to be innocent either with respondents citing a lack of practice in safer sex (possibly because they have been in long term relationships in

FIND OUT WHERE YOU
CAN GET TESTED BY VISITING
www.lgf.org.uk/testing

the past and not needed to use condoms) as being a reason why they don't use them with new partners.

Issues around a lack of education in schools about the risks involved in not using condoms (especially in same sex encounters), religious beliefs, the lack of promotion of condoms in pornography, the embarrassment of carrying condoms or the inability to bring up the conversation of condom use were all other possible reasons given as to why MSM wouldn't play safe. It is easy to assume that all gay or bisexual men go out on the scene and can grab as many Safer Sex Packs as they like, but there are many men who live in rural communities who don't have that option, some may be married or in long term relationships who simply don't have access to condoms.

Some men identified that they find it difficult to perform when wearing a condom and the only way they can go all the way is to do it 'au naturale' and many of our respondents immediately blurted out the word 'DRUGS!' before analysing their response further. It is true that an excessive use of drugs or alcohol can lower judgement barriers and the need to stay safe may not be as apparent while under the influence. But through all these reasons, there was a common consensus that this 'trend' for bareback sex, and the desire to have it, is still very much one that exists in the minority. Some trends have the power to influence the behaviour of other more easily influenced members of a community. How many of us started smoking in our teens because our friends were doing it, even though we knew the health implications? Why should the same logic not be applied to condom use?

The most important message to remember is that using condoms are still the most effective way to prevent the contraction of sexually transmitted infections and diseases. YOU have the ability to practice condom usage and YOU have the right to say no to bareback sex. Some trends are not worth following as the effects they can have on your long term health can be severely detrimental.

If you need advice on condom and lube use, the risks involved in bareback sex, STI's or testing services, you can drop in to our brand new service 'Something for the Weekend, Sir?' every Thursday from 4pm – 8pm at the LGF's community resource centre, visit www.lgf.org.uk/testing or call our helpline on 08453 30 30 30.

OPINION JAKEB ARTURIO BRADEN



PRICE TAG

With recent news stories of porn suicides, drug overdoses and rises in the numbers of gay men testing HIV positive, I've been thinking that now more than ever we need to be there for each other.

As individuals what can we do? Well, we can look at how we value ourselves. What does this mean? What's your price tag? What price are you willing to pay for a horny shag? A good night out? Acceptance from other gay men? Having fun in whatever form it takes is good, however not if the price is too high.

Are you not able to function at work, or are you phoning in sick as you've over done it the night before? Have you got so wasted that you forget what you've done, who you have had sex with and what you did? Maybe you had the sex you didn't want because you may not have had the chance of sex if you didn't?

So what is a healthy price tag? For me, it's valuing your physical, emotional, sexual and spiritual health over anything else, and having clear boundaries on what you will or won't do. It's about being able to claim these as much as you can, and get support when you feel you can't.

Do you drop your standards in order to feel sexy or attractive? Often when people feel low they may do things and take risks (especially sexual ones) that they wouldn't normally, and this is increased further if drugs and/or alcohol are involved. Even when you're in a good space and you've overdone the alcohol or the drugs, you can go too far and put yourself at risk.

As gay and bisexual men it can seem we're not really supported within our own communities to talk about these issues and often anyone seen as having a difficult time emotionally is seen as having "baggage" or "damaged goods".

"Often when people feel low they may do things and take risks (especially sexual ones) that they wouldn't normally, and this is increased further if drugs and/or alcohol are involved."

Well I've got news for you - at some time we've all had to wrestle with these issues and with better support from each other then maybe incidents of suicide, self harm, drug overdoses will start to come down. Talking to someone is key here, to get the support you deserve to raise your price tag and develop a healthier sense of self and self esteem.

In addition to this is the issue of regular testing for STI's and HIV. If you have an existing STI (and don't forget, some carry no symptoms) you're more at risk of HIV if you fuck without condoms. Recent research has indicated 8/10 new HIV infections are through men who didn't know their HIV status, so regular testing is also key to setting a healthy price tag on yourself, as well as asking for help and support when you need rather than engaging in risky behaviour.

Don't forget, you can call The LGF Helpline anytime you feel you need help. Just call 0845 3 30 30 30, visit the website at www.lgf.org.uk/men, or drop an e-mail to helpline@lgf.org.uk

You can find me here:
www.youtube.com/user/NorthernFella
www.theauthenticgayblog.wordpress.com/

Love and best wishes

Jakeb

THANK YOU FOR BEING A FRIEND!

A GROUP FOR YOU?

Does this sound like a group you'd be interested in being a part of? Email befrienders@lgf.org.uk for more information!

No, this is not an article about *The Golden Girls* (although that would be nice), it's an article about our amazing befriending service, which has gone from strength to strength over the past two years.

Aiming to increase the confidence and self esteem of our bisexual, lesbian and gay communities, the befriending service has helped individuals on their way to becoming the person they want to be, whether that's by building friendships and social networks, or learning a new skill. Here are some facts to prove just how amazing the service is:

- Befriending has matched over 30 people in the last year to a volunteer befriender
- Provided over 600 hours of support (that's a lot!)
- Recruited and trained over 30 individuals to become befrienders, providing



TXT UR SUPPORT!
ONWD13 £3

Last year, our services made a difference to thousands of lesbian, gay and bisexual people. We need your help to carry on. To donate text 70070 with the code ONWD13 followed by the amount you want to donate, for example, ONWD13 £3.

THE LGF BEFRIENDERS SERVICE GOES FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

opportunities for people to develop their skills and support others

- Helped individuals with a wide range of issues, such as; joining groups and building friendships, improving confidence and assertiveness, bereavement support, mental health support, applying for jobs and college courses, provided information about volunteering opportunities, anxiety, relationship breakdowns, sexual health and gaining independence
- All who accessed the service agreed that their wellbeing was improved, as well as their confidence and self esteem

Through funding from both Manchester City Council and The Rayne Foundation, the service has grown significantly. And we were also able to purchase much needed

mobile phones for the befrienders, as well as offer our volunteers training to help them with their role. Our Befrienders' Day which we held in April, was also a success – providing volunteers and service users opportunities to meet, socialise, take part in fun workshops (including African Drumming!), create and also gain confidence in social situations.

Everyone at The LGF would like to thank the funders for their much needed support, as well as our FANTASTIC team of volunteers, whose dedication to supporting people never ceases to amaze us! Let's hope the success continues!

If you would like to be befriended, and are over 25, please contact 0845 3 30 30 30 or email befrienders@lgf.org.uk for an application form.



The Lesbian & Gay Foundation

Ending Homophobia,
Empowering People
www.lgf.org.uk

NEW OLDER WOMENS' GROUP

The LGF are pleased to announce a new group for bisexual and lesbian women who are older (50 plus). Being older can be an isolating experience, and we believe that there is little out there for older LB women to meet, chat, explore and create, this is why we are launching this new and exciting group!

The group will be a social support group, which means there will be discussions that are relevant to the group, as well as fun stuff such as games, quizzes, crafts and also workshops.

The group will be on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month, 1pm to 3pm, but the start date is yet to be confirmed. We're really keen to ask people what they want from the group, so if you are interested in talking part and have some ideas, we want to hear from you! We are also looking for volunteers to plan and facilitate the group.

For information and suggestions, please email kate.hardy@lgf.org.uk



WANTED!

GROUPWORK VOLUNTEERS!

The LGF's support and social groups provide safe, non judgemental and positive environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning people to meet, talk, share, interact and socialise.

Each group has a specific unique aim, and, through structured and well planned facilitation from volunteers, group members gain the support and encouragement they need to be confident and feel less isolated.

All groups provide an opportunity to meet others and build friendships, as well as support networks beyond the group. With this in mind, we are now looking for a small team of volunteers to help plan and facilitate our groups. Working with existing volunteers, you will ideally have experience in group facilitation, as well as having a good understanding of the barriers that LGBT people may experience. You will be

working in a small team dedicated to one group, and will be taking part in planning, as well as facilitating group sessions and ensuring appropriate monitoring is taking place.

All groups happen twice a month in the evening, and you will also be expected to attend planning meetings with fellow volunteers as well as supervision meetings bi monthly.

Being a groupwork volunteer is a rewarding and fun role, and you will have the unique opportunity to support a wide range of people, and provide them with a positive environment, for which to improve their wellbeing, as well as being part of a team of enthusiastic volunteers. Full training is given, and we also provide expenses too.

For more information, details of specific groups and an application form, please email kate.hardy@lgf.org.uk or phone 0845 3 30 30 30

GET INVOLVED!



THANK YOU!

THE LGF'S CHALLENGERS TAKE ON 10K!

Wow! 24 people Ran Against Homophobia in the BUPA Great Manchester 10k run on Sunday 26th May. They were all cheered on by a very enthusiastic squad, and a much-needed buffet was enjoyed by all of the runners afterwards in Taurus Bar, Canal Street. Thanks to you all for taking on this challenge in the name of The LGF, check out the next edition for photos of the big day!

JULIET OLDFIELD TELLS OUTNORTHWEST ABOUT HER PRIDE IN RUNNING FOR THE LGF AT THE LONDON MARATHON THIS YEAR.

Juliet Oldfield, Fran Oldfield and Ali Travers all ran against homophobia in the Virgin London Marathon 2013. Between them, they raised over £3,500 – money which will be spent on supporting the many LGB people who experience homophobia and biphobia.

Juliet, actress in *Bronson*, *Borrowed Time* and *The Knot* told us "I had one of the most amazing days of my life, running with my sister for a fabulous charity. The support from the crowd and fellow runners was out of this

world. I got round the 26.2 miles due to a mixture of training, endurance, positive outlook and most importantly each time I spotted a smiley face from supportive friends and family in the crowd it spurred me on!"

We have just two places available to run in the extremely competitive and ever-popular London Marathon in 2014.

If you think you're up to the challenge, and can also raise lots of much needed cash for The Lesbian & Gay Foundation then just email claire.baldwin@lgf.org.uk to find out more.

Set realistic and measurable targets. Ideally you should measure progress every two-three months. This allows times to make considerable changes in body composition. Get advice from a qualified Fitness Instructor / Personal Trainer. Not only will a personalised workout help you to achieve your goals faster, it will also reduce the risk of injury.

Eat regular and balanced meals. Quality of food is very important so be sure to avoid convenience and processed foods.

www.purebodytraining.com

ROSS'S TOP TIPS!



SCAN
FOR MORE
INFORMATION

For all the different ways you can get involved and support The LGF, scan the QR code above or visit www.lgf.org.uk/fundraise

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Last year, nearly £3,000 was raised collectively for The LGF by people taking on their own challenges.

These ranged from going 'dry' for a month, to doing a zip wire over Salford Quays to walking the Yorkshire Three Peaks. Without people fundraising for us, we can't continue our work. The money you raise could help pay for befriending for an isolated, vulnerable and lonely LGB person, or face to face counselling sessions for someone experiencing depression. Each day, people tell us "Without being able to turn to The LGF in times of personal crises, I wouldn't have been able to overcome the problems I was facing", it is vitally important that we are here when people need us.

If you're taking on a challenge this year, please consider raising money for The Lesbian & Gay Foundation.

www.lgf.org.uk/fundraise



ONWD13 £5

TXT UR SUPPORT!

Last year, our services made a difference to thousands of lesbian, gay and bisexual people. We need your help to carry on. To donate text 70070 with the code ONWD13 followed by the amount you want to donate, for example, ONWD13 £5.