

Update for 2011

Rotherham Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGB&T) Inter-Agency Group



Positive Communications

Developing positive communications is an important means of celebrating the achievements and contributions of LGB&T communities and tackling prejudice and stereotyping.

- Displays promoting the achievements of LGB&T people, including sporting stars, were on show in several venues across the town during LGB&T History Month.
- A case study showcasing the successful LGB Young People's Group was published. http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/4301/lesbian_gay_and_bisexual_youth_group-case_study
- TranSupport posters and posters for the LGB Youth Group have been circulated to GPs and health centres which may help to generate more contacts for the groups.
- Victim Support have developed new LGB&T branded materials to use at Prides and other events and staff have participated in national LGB&T conferences.
- Health partners are working on increasing LGB&T information and images in their literature and on the websites, linked to work on the Equality Delivery System.

Engagement

One of the main aims of the group is to strengthen effective involvement with LGB&T people in Rotherham to inform future service development to be inclusive of LGB&T people's needs.

- An on-line questionnaire and discussion with the young people's group canvassed views on holding a pride event in Rotherham. Further views were sought at Rotherham Show and the overall response was a very positive one with people supporting the idea and several volunteering to help to organise one. A meeting will be set up for early 2012 with view to holding a Rotherham Pride in 2013.
- The Council and NHS Rotherham consulted local people on the Council's budget and spending priorities and on health inequalities. A workshop for LGB&T people was held in November 2011 where some good points were raised by the community and fed back.
- Following a request through TranSupport the Equality Manager in 2010 and an Area Housing Manager attended a meeting at the local Gender Clinic to discuss various issues around safety and access to Council housing for Trans people who may be experiencing abuse or in danger.
- For Idaho Day (International Day Against Homophobia) a safe spaces session to discuss potential interest in forming a specific Tenants and Residents Association was held following publicity through our networks and posters displayed in Rotherham College of

Arts and Technology (RCAT). There was a limited response, although some good in-depth discussion took place around issues such as training and safety.

- RMBC's Community Engagement Team worked with Environment and Development Services to carry out consultation on the Local Development Framework and a workshop for LGB&T people was held in July. Discussion focused on the town centre; public transport; safety for road users and pedestrians; jobs and training; and the importance of infrastructure such as schools, health and community facilities.
- As a result of recent surveys we now have a confidential contact list (email/phone) of over 60 LGB&T people.

Events

The group delivers an annual programme of events to celebrate the contributions of Rotherham's LGB&T communities and to bring people together from diverse communities.

- Rotherham celebrated LGB&T History Month with a launch event for partner agencies, a conference (details below under awareness raising) and a lively music and drama event "The Good As You Do" at Bramley Young People's Centre which brought together over 70 young people from various communities.
- In keeping with the national theme of sport for both 2011 and 2012 in the build up to the Olympic Games, a five-a-side football tournament at Thomas Rotherham College (TRC) on 6 March jointly celebrated LGB&T History Month, Comic Relief and Fairtrade Fortnight. Trophies and medals with rainbow ribbons were presented to the successful teams, with over 80 young people taking part.
- A series of events aimed at all young people were held during Sexual Health Week.
- "Rotherham's Rainbow Road" was the group's stall in the One Town One Community partnership tent at Rotherham Show. It featured positive messages and images, a mini survey, eye-catching art work by the LGB youth group and a wish tree. Children and young people helped to create a vibrant, original piece of art over 10 metres long called "Rotherham's Rainbow Road" which is on display in the top corridor of Rotherham Library and Arts Centre during February and March 2012.

Awareness Raising and Training

Raising awareness of LGB&T equality issues, including challenging heterosexism, through training and information is a key element in delivering service improvements. This was one of the main areas that emerged from the survey in 2010 to ascertain the views of local LGB&T people about services and facilities for LGB&T people, and prompted the conference during LGB&T History Month.

- **LGB&T History Month conference "Real Life Experiences"**
50 people attended the conference at RCAT aimed at raising awareness of LGB&T equality with workers and professionals. This was a good example of partnership working with many agencies involved as organisers and workshop facilitators and RCAT did a great job as hosts. The conference included the opportunity to learn from people's real life experiences and discussions on how to improve access to services for local LGB&T people of all ages. There was also a series of drama-based scenarios which highlighted the ways in which service providers can make improvements for LGB&T people by having a greater understanding of their needs. The results of the online survey carried out in 2010 were presented. Delegates were asked to make a

commitment to produce two changes in their own work areas and this has been very positive with some thoughtful responses given covering a range of issues.

- TranSupport are now a well established group providing support for trans people and their families and delivering training for partner agencies – including facilitating a workshop at the LGB&T History month conference and an awareness raising session for staff at RHFT.
- Shield have a successful outreach programme including schools.
- Two interactive and interesting awareness raising workshops were delivered by SYP on IDAHO Day on 17 May - International Day Against Homophobia. Approximately 50 people in total from across the various partner agencies participated in a quiz and other exercises with very positive feedback from attendees.
- RCAT are developing an LGB&T Action Plan, linked to the Inter-Agency Action Plan and working to raise awareness of college staff. A number of additional learning support tutors have cascaded learning and information from the conference with other colleagues, resulting in some referrals to other support agencies.

Hate Incidents

More specific training aims to increase awareness about hate incidents, both with partners and with communities, to increase confidence in reporting homophobic and transphobic incidents. The 2010 survey showed under reporting of hate incidents by LGB&T people.

- RMBC's Hate Crime Officer gave a presentation for Victim Support volunteers at their area forum in Mexborough.
- Victim Support continue to provide a broad range of support for victims of crime, hate incidents, harassment etc. including a Victim Care Unit and a Witness Service. An LGB&T Domestic Abuse Development Worker is in post in the North East region.
- South Yorkshire Police (SYP) have been rolling out the latest hate incident training - covering processing hate incidents and accurate recording for race, religious, homophobic and disability related hate incidents. The training has also included the use of restorative justice/conferencing which tends to lead to quick resolutions.

Employment

Partners promote good practice in employment for LGB&T people, for example through monitoring, employee support and policy development.

- A recent publicity drive about RMBC's LGB&T worker representative group and an anonymous survey to determine the best day and time to meet has resulted in more people showing an interest in becoming involved.
- Following extensive consultation RMBC has developed a policy to support Trans employees working for the Council.
- RMBC's HR system has been updated to incorporate wider equality monitoring, including sexuality.
- SYP have a local LGB&T network run by LGB&T people which supports officers, support staff and special constables and links into the Gay Police Association. Its activities include confidential support, advice, buddying and socials for LGB&T staff; advice and

support for all SYP employees related to LGB&T issues; and being a source of advice, information and consultation for the force on policy and procedures.

- Victim Support nationally have been undertaking work on supporting volunteers and staff through gender reassignment.
- South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue (SYF&R) won an award at the LGY&H Making a Difference Awards for their work which originated from the joint staff group to mentor people to help them through organisational change and restructure, such as interview training, support and help with application forms. Management are now coming to the groups to seek their input on changes.
- In 2011 Rotherham Hospital Foundation Trust carried out a survey to gauge interest in establishing worker groups including one for LGB&T employees, the first meeting is due early 2012.
- South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE) are looking at developing new groups in-house to influence service provision.

Support for LGB&T groups

In addition to supporting employee networks the group supports local LGB&T groups and networks in Rotherham.

- Around 15 people attend the LGB Young People's Group each week and join in a range of activities, also receiving 1:1 support when needed. The group took part in the Nottingham Pride march with their banner, have been on telly with Gok Wan, and Betty Productions are due to come and do some filming shortly with the group about coming out. In November a journalist from Radio Sheffield came to talk to the young people about the issues they face. Work is well underway for their LGB&THM celebrations with a multi-media art exhibition planned.
- A young people's Trans group is in the early stages of development.
- TRC set up a new LGB&T group with support from the Youth Service. They also have links to the LGB Young People's Group and are networking and promoting the group.
- From our surveys a number of people showed an interest in developing a new LGB group or network for adults and TranSupport are leading on taking this forward.

Schools

Work is undertaken in schools to raise awareness of LGB issues for inclusion in the curriculum and to provide information about support.

- Schools are encouraged to use 'Pink and Proud', a resource containing card sorts, board games and case studies which aims to raise awareness of sexual orientation and homophobia through PSHE and Citizenship in Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Work on challenging homophobia has included CPD with PSHE leads in secondary schools and a resource for primary schools is being developed to coincide with Stonewall guidance.
- Rotherham Healthy Schools Spring term newsletter included an LGB&T history month article and links to tool kits for all age ranges in addition to primary resources from a Citizenship website.