

# Berkshire Older Lesbian and Gay Forum

## Steering Committee Minutes

Wednesday, September 2nd, 2003  
Rupert Street Information Centre, Reading

**Action**

### 1. **Attendees**

Bill,  
Derek Rogers,  
Jenny Ward,  
John Wood,  
Maria Ottway,  
Nigel Tooke,  
Rebecca Ballard

### 2. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Jane, Lois, Pat and Wyndham.

Pat has resigned from the Steering Groups. She was thanked for all her hard work.

### 3. **Notes of Last Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, July 30th, 2003, were agreed as a true record with the following amendments:

Item 5 to read "There was **no** formal report from Nigel".

Item 6a, second paragraph – there was a stray bracket.

### 4. **Matters Arising from Last Meeting**

#### a. **Constitution**

Wyndham had made the amendments to the Constitution as per the comments at the previous meeting. Many thanks to Wyndham.

#### b. **Civil Partnerships**

It was agreed that we would liaise with beYOU over replies to the Consultation Paper. One possibility would be a joint reply. However two separate replies might carry more weight.

### 5. **Treasurer's Report**

Another £300 been gratefully received from Berkshire Community Foundation towards stationery for the conference.

The costs for the networking day had been £110 for the food and £48 for the room. There was some money left over from the Community Champions money. We agreed to pay Margaret £75 in thanks for her facilitating the day.

The night before the conference, the speakers are staying at the Moat House hotel. We agreed a £50 float to buy drinks for them.

**Nigel** will put together a full financial report for next meeting.

**Nigel**

## **6. Chair's Report August**

### **a. Networking Day**

We had a very successful day on Saturday 30th August, with 11 groups and 25 people attending. The groups represented were: Age Concern England; Age Concern Oxford; the Affinity Trust; the Alzheimer's Society Lesbian and Gay Carers Group; Berkshire Older Lesbian and Gay Forum; Brighton Older Lesbian and Gay Men's Forum; the Older Lesbian Project (AGLOW); Polari; the Pimpernel Group; Opening Doors in Gloucestershire and Opening Doors in Thanet. Each group gave a presentation about their work in the morning, with flip charts and leaflets from many groups.

We have received lots of positive feedback about how well run the event was; what a friendly bunch we are and the good lunch.

In the afternoon Sally Middleton from Opening Doors in Gloucestershire gave a presentation on Brian Heaphy's (Nottingham Trent University) research. Sally also circulated a paper summarising the results of the research. She further identified some important ways in which this research can greatly assist groups in making funding applications.

Later in the afternoon session we broke up into groups and looked at what we want to do, and then all together examined ways in which we are going to achieve this.

Some key points from the day are:

1. Strategic action to further political change and facilitating social activities were seen as equally important.
2. The need for a Knowledge Bank - as a central resource accessible to all.
3. Communications - the need to use the local and national media for awareness raising.
4. Making use of existing resources: don't reinvent the wheel, co-operate and synergise.
5. The need for a national body - this was seen to be crucially important and as a sign that the LGB community was no longer on the margins but ready to step into the mainstream.
6. The importance of creating intergenerational groups where this is appropriate.
7. Provision of training for service providers/organisations.

One of the key quotes from the day - "Never underestimate the psychological and social significance of your mere existence."

The action points will be circulated to the attending groups and then forwarded to Liz Barker who is organising Age Concern England's Working Party on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual issues. Sally's report will be circulated at the end of September. She's also going to do a matrix of what each group is doing.

## **b. Conference Planning**

We are now up to about 78 for the conference. There is still a lot to do, and we expect to get pre-conference papers out to delegates week commencing 22 September. They will have to return a form to state they are attending and which workshop they want to attend (first and second choice). The forms are to be returned by 13th October so that shortly after that we will know exactly who is coming and be able to allocate people to workshops.

The facilitators for the workshops are all confirmed now. Each Workshop leader will need at least one other scribe for each workshop.

Age Concern have offered 2 admin staff to do the "meeting and greeting" of participants. They will be able to carry on this function for late arrivals, allowing Forum members to participate.

By mid October we will need to have all the papers ready for the day and have a "stuffing" session, putting sets of papers into the binders - **volunteers** will be needed for this please. Most of the papers have been printed off already.

**Volunteers**

**Wyndham** and **Liz** are helping with preparing many of the items for the day and also **Wyndham** is preparing the art work for some display boards and revising our leaflets so they have the new aims and objectives as agreed for the constitution.

**Wyndham  
Liz**

**Lois** is busy recording all the applicants and from that she will produce a delegates list for the day. We will also use her database to make the name badges.

**Lois**

Nearer the time we will need to sort out who is doing what on the day.

## **7. Main Business**

### **a. beYOU research proposal**

Maria outlined the background to beYOU's research proposal, namely to complement the research already undertaken into the needs of young lesbians, gays and bisexuals in Reading for ReachOut. The original draft had specified the needs of people of working age. This had been changed to "adults".

One of the key things we have wanted to do as a group was to carry out research on the needs of older LGB's in Berkshire so being involved with the project at the early stages when we can influence its development would be very useful.

We agreed, in principal, to a joint project proposal. Jenny will be our liaison person for putting the brief together. Amongst other things she would point out that older LGBs are not a "minority"

## **8. Social Events**

### **a. Cliveden**

So far, six people have expressed a wish to go on September 28th.

**b. Meal Out**

Maria had not received any positive response to her suggestion of a meal out. We wondered whether a Sunday lunch would be more appealing than an evening meal. We agreed not to move forward with an evening meal out at this time.

At the networking meeting, a number of the groups had lively social groups (primarily made up of people of retirement age) which met on a an evening and afternoon basis. We talked about how we might start such a group in Reading. **Bill** agreed to contact the Friends meeting house about the possibility of meeting there.

**Bill**

**c. Tea Dance**

We agreed to have another tea dance on 16th November, at Earley Crescent if possible. **Maria** will ask Wyndham to do some posters as last time and to put them up in strategic places. and ask him to put up posters.

**Maria**

Jenny will book the venue and the dance teacher, and will print tickets. She will publicise it within Kenric.

**Jenny**

John will publicise it through BGL.

**John**

**d. Christmas Lunch**

We wondered whether it would be possible to organise a Christmas lunch.

**Next meeting**

We agreed to talk about this at the next meeting.

**9. Dates of Future Meetings**

We agreed to **change the date of the next meeting** to allow for arrangements for the conference. The next meeting is to be held on Tuesday, October 14th, 2003, at Rupert Street Information Centre (instead of the 21st).

The following meeting will be on Tuesday, 11th November.

The meetings will start at 8.00pm.