

Berkshire Older Lesbian and Gay Forum

Steering Committee Minutes

Tuesday, November 11th, 2003
Rupert Street Information Centre

Action

1. Attendees

Derek Rogers
Jenny Ward
Liz Hill
Maria Ottway
Nigel Tooke
Suzanne Khambatta
Wyndham Clampett

Also in attendance was Margaret Collins.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Lois and Rebecca.

3. Notes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14th October, 2003, were agreed as a true record with the following amendments:

Derek Rogers was present.

Posters had been taken to the Dove but had not put up. The management had felt that the tea dance would be competing with their event the following week.

4. Matters Arising from Last Meeting

a. **Joint Research with beYOU**

Jenny had met with Simon & Catherine from beYOU about the research proposal. **Jenny** would circulate any developments via email.

Jenny

b. **Removal of pop-up advert on the website**

Margaret was thanked personally for her kind donation.

c. **Email**

A question was raised as to who received emails addressed to info@bolgaf.org.uk. None of the members present were aware of the answer. **Margaret** agreed to ask **Rebecca**.

Margaret/
Rebecca

5. Chair's Report.

a. Opening Doors in Berkshire Conference

Jenny had received 15 or so emails, so far, from delegates who had attended the conference, telling us how much they had enjoyed it. We had also received 55 evaluation forms back (an unusually large number) and again these had been mainly full of praise.

There was a lot to do to follow up on the contacts we had made and with the work of raising awareness amongst service providers in the statutory and voluntary sectors.

22 people had signed up at the conference to say they wanted to know more about BOLGAF and to be kept informed of our activities. Jenny had emailed or written to all of those, and replies were beginning to come back from people who want to be on the Yahoo Group or whom we would have to contact by snail mail.

Jenny had arranged to meet with the other members of the conference planning group to have a debrief session on 5th December. If anyone else would like to come they would be very welcome.

Jenny suggested that we should send out a post conference report soon with some kind of follow up letter. Each of the speakers and **Rebecca** had agreed to prepare workshop reports within a month.

Rebecca

The Steering Committee expressed its special thanks to Jenny for the hard work she had put into organising the conference.

Suzanne recorded her thanks for our warm welcome to her on joining the Forum.

b. OLGA – next meeting

Jenny reminded those present that the tentatively named OLGA (Older Lesbian and Gay Association) had been born at the Networking Day in August. Although it was still in its infancy we had an exciting reason to be planning a second meeting. Amber Hollibaugh, Director of Development for SAGE (Senior Action in a Gay Environment), New York would be visiting Britain in the Spring of 2004 and had agreed to come and speak at the meeting. Furthermore Amber had heard about BOLGaF and wanted to stay all day to learn about what groups in this country were doing! Therefore a date had been set and agreed with Amber of 6th March 2004. It was intended to use RISC again and Jenny hoped that as many BOLGaF **members and supporter**s would come along, and help in planning the day. We would probably have even more groups represented than at the August Day as a result of contacts made through the conference. We were looking at trying to get some funding for this event but may have to charge.

Members
and
Supporters

It was agreed that it would be necessary to apply for funding to be able to constitute "OLGA" and get it up and running. One possibility was to apply for funding from Community Champions but this would need to be done by December!

There was a discussion about the relationship between "OLGA" to the Lesbian and Gay Consortium, in particular the question of whether it would duplicate, compete with or complement Lesbian and Gay Consortium activities?

c. **Christmas Chorus**

Wyndham, as Director of Reading Gay Men's Chorus, was organising a Christmas Chorus, which would be singing at each of the Lesbian and Gay venues around the Town. Closer to the time, details would be available from **Wyndham** on dates and venues. Volunteers would be needed to shake collecting buckets.

Wyndham

Wyndham and his fellow singers were thanked for including BOLGaF as one of the organisations who would benefit from the collection.

d. **Radio Broadcast**

On Friday 14th November, Jenny was to record a broadcast with Reading 107FM about the Forum which would go out on World Aids Day.

6. **Treasurer's Report**

Nigel had circulated a copy of the accounts prior to the meeting. The following points were made.

The balance stood at £903 but after expenses for the tea dance there would be £760, of which £338.22 had been set aside for training. This would not take into account any money made from the tea dance. Nigel noted that Wyndham was still owed £90.00 for the printing and display boards for the conference.

45 tickets had been sold already for the tea dance. This was enough for the event to break even after paying for the room hire, sound system and the dance teacher. Further sales would be profit.

7. **Tea Dance**

The following arrangements were agreed:

- **Maria** to buy tea, milk, biscuits, orange & lemon squash.
- Helpers to arrive by 2pm to prepare balloons.
- **Liz** to arrive after Christmas Chorus rehearsal to help clear up.

Maria
Helpers
Liz

Maria raised the possibility of alternative social events. It was agreed that this would be to be discussed at the **AGM**.

AGM

8. **First Annual General Meeting**

Jenny had booked the main room at RISC, from 7 to 11pm. We needed to put together an annual report and an agenda for the evening. Also arrangements were needed for food.

It was agreed that the meeting would start at 7.30pm and it should include a Treasurer's report, a report of the conference and website statistics if they were available.

It was agreed invitations would be issued via the Yahoo group, at the Tea dance and to beYOU. It would be made clear that only signed-up Forum

members would have voting rights. People would be able to sign up to the Forum on the night.

Maria agreed to organise cheese and wine for approximately 10 people.

Nigel was standing down as Treasurer (although intending to remain as a Steering Group member) so we would be looking for a replacement. Liz was nominated by Wyndham. This was seconded by Maria. This would be voted on at the AGM.

Maria

AGM

Jenny invited nominations for Chair. She is tired after the conference. There were no nominations. There was a discussion about making Jenny do less and Steering Group members doing more. There was a discussion about appointing a deputy for key posts to share the work.

Next Meeting

9. Where do we go from here? Planning for 2004

Members of the Steering Group were unclear whether the "Reading Pride" event was still going ahead happening on September 4th 2004.

Jenny reminded the Steering Group that we had met in June for "Our vision for the road ahead". We agreed 3 month targets to :

- Recruit people to organise social events -0 so far the only offer had come from Bill. We agreed that we needed more recruits to get a social subgroup functioning. **Maria** agreed to find out about discounted tickets to Oliver as an alternative event.
- Set 5 year plan
- Build network with beYOU, Kenric, BGL – we needed to continue to build links with BGL.
- Arrange a variety of social events - Derek agreed to continue to organise meals out. It was suggested that we work towards a list of places to advertise our events.
- Start arranging a conference in East Berkshire. This would need to be different to the recent conference in Reading. We would need to be very clear about its purpose. Local issues of importance to East Berkshire were the needs of people from ethnic minorities and asylum seekers. One possibility was to make such a conference more workshop-orientated in order to move forward what we had learned from the October conference.
- Have a Forum telephone number and a PO Box number.
- Have more organised publicity
- Identify needs and expectations of users – the research proposal with beYOU would go a long way towards this if funding could be found.

Maria

Derek

We discussed whether, in the light of these targets and our other plans, it was time for another grant application for a paid worker, probably part-time. Such a person could run a day-time drop-in, would have time to prepare publicity and be pro-active in contacting older Lesbian and Gay people throughout Berkshire. Jenny believed that Comic Relief funding might be a possibility under the criterion "Fighting for justice". There was I distinct possibility that the Forum could share office space with beYOU and a worker could be based there.

It was agreed that we would discuss this in more detail at our meeting on 7th January. We would need to be clear about how this would help us meet our basic aims & objectives. If we were to apply to Comic Relief, we would have to think about a submission in March or May. Comic Relief funded substantial projects for 3 years.

Smaller submissions could be made to Awards for All for a telephone number and PO box etc

10. Any Other Business

a. Thames Forest LGBT switchboard

We noted that the switchboard was due to be launched on Thursday, November 13th.

b. Expect Respect

Jenny had been contacted by "Expect Respect", a business promoting a kite mark for equal opportunities policies, including Lesbian and Gay issues. It was charging voluntary organisations £50 for signing up and was asking the Forum to endorse their service or give them contact details of organisations in Berkshire. It was agreed that we would not endorse an organisation that we knew nothing about and would not pass on contact details, since we did not know enough about their service or their credibility.

11. Dates of Future Meetings

The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, 7th January, 2004, at Rupert Street Information Centre. The meeting will start at 8.00pm.

Prior to that our first Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday, December 5th, 2003 at RISC.