



Birmingham **LGBT**



**News from the Ageing Better LGBT Hub
April 2018**

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The last word . . .

If you would like to receive these newsletters electronically, please get in touch and I will add you to the emailing list.

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Ageing Better LGBT Hub is run by and from Birmingham LGBT.

The Ageing Better in Birmingham programme is managed by BVSC and funded by Big Lottery Fund

LGBT Hub News

Birmingham Pride 2018

The LGBT Hub is working with a number of community groups to prepare for the Parade at Birmingham Pride this year. Ageing Better in Birmingham is sponsoring an 'Ageing Better' float and we will be organising decorating the float, riding on it, and walking with it.

If you're interested in getting involved, please contact **Maria** on **0121 643 0821** or **mariahughes@blgbt.org**

We will keep you posted on Pride plans and activities in future newsletters.

If you want to register your group as a walking group in the parade, you can find details here: <http://www.birminghampride.com/get-involved/enter-a-float-or-walking-group-in-the-parade/>

Maria's Diary

I've been doing a lot of networking with other organisations recently and I hope this will benefit the groups we work with. Here's what I've been up to:

You're never too young to plan for the future

At the LGBT Hub, we've been thinking a lot recently about LGBT people's needs as they mature into later life, and their concerns about housing and care. If you're in your 50s, like me, you may think you can put off planning for retirement, making a will, saving for residential care or thinking about what to do with your house if your relationship breaks down or your partner dies. You don't want to think about the future – about 'ageing' – because it doesn't necessarily feel like something to look forward to. I don't even think about all the things I'll be able to do when I retire from work, because I've no idea whether I can afford to retire, never mind being certain about what my official retirement age will be then.

But planning, researching and saving now can lead to much more power and choice in the future, and being determined to continue to enjoy life, even if some things change, is a more positive outlook.

I've been talking with Lynne from **Beth Johnson Foundation**, "a national charity dedicated to making a future for all ages". She's been working on a training programme for people to help them plan for the future and focus on the positive aspects of ageing. 'CLAIM Your Happy Retirement' (Connect, Learn, be Active, be Involved, be Mindful) has been piloted in a number of areas and has given participants resilience, confidence, better connections and a sense of purpose. Now, they would like our input to see if this is the kind of course which would benefit the LGBT community, whether it's suitable and what changes could be made to take into account the specific needs of the LGBT communities. Lynne and I will set this up as a workshop in the next couple of months.



I was contacted by **Black Country Housing Group** and they were invited to come along to a Rainbow Bridge coffee morning. They are looking at how they can ensure LGBT people feel properly cared for and safe to be open and 'out' in their retirement facilities: 'Our LGBT Promise'. Rainbow Bridge members were able to discuss the draft Promise document and offer their opinions, and Rainbow Bridge has been invited to hold a coffee morning at one, or both, of the retirement homes.



Another housing association which is reviewing its commitment to the LGBT, and



other, communities is **Castle Vale Community Housing**. I was invited to their quarterly Equality & Diversity Advisory Group meeting, which they hold with their partners Compass Support (providing health & wellbeing, family, employment and training support). We discussed the importance of equalities monitoring and how they can connect with their tenants and surrounding communities by organising cultural events. Compass Support runs the Tyburn Hub of Ageing Better in Birmingham, so we can look at working together to organise activities welcoming to LGBT people, away from the city centre; I've already met one of their service users who is trans and introduced them to the LGBT Centre, so I hope we'll see more referrals like this too.

I received an invitation to visit **Bourn View** care home in Selly Oak. The manager, Lianne, is interested in ensuring LGBT people feel their



needs will be met in a sensitive way, that they can be 'out and proud'. We discussed the public perception of 'care homes': that they are horrible, or the nice ones too expensive, or people should feel guilty for putting someone 'in a home'. Bourn View is like a luxury holiday resort, organising lots of events onsite and trips to other places, and they would welcome a visit from Rainbow Bridge too! I hope to visit again and talk to more of the staff.

Hospices also struggle with their public image of being gloomy places, but Mark at **John Taylor Hospice** is keen to dispel that myth. They have a lot of fun and laughter at their hospice, which is in Erdington, and they are always willing to meet new people and show them round – cue another invitation for Rainbow Bridge! Mark is working on their 'Engagement & Community Development Strategy' to widen access to hospice care to different communities,



recognising the specific health needs of LGBT communities (from Birmingham LGBT's research, amongst other sources), barriers to accessing care and feeling safe to be 'out'.

Some LGBT people like the idea of retiring to a purpose-built facility, with individual flats or houses but shared spaces, such as a communal kitchen, garden and meeting places. One group of older women achieved this goal, and OWCH (Older Women's Co-Housing) members were able to move into the homes they had planned and built in New Barnet in 2009.

'Co-housing' in the UK started to develop in the 1990s, but many people don't know much, if anything about it. So we are grateful to Mike of **Brum Cohousing**, who has offered to run a two-hour workshop for the Birmingham Older LGBT People's Housing Group on 13th April, which is open to LGBT people and allies of all ages.

If you are interested in any of the subjects or places given above, and want to find out more, please get in touch with me: **Maria Hughes, 0121 643 0821, mariahughes@blgbt.org**.

Neighbourhood Networks Scheme

The recent annual learning & sharing conference at Ageing Better in Birmingham included a presentation on Neighbourhood Network Schemes. NNSs are a way for Birmingham City Council to support and fund community-based action which will support their 'Prevention First' outcomes, i.e. improving citizens' health and wellbeing so that they are less reliant on health and social care services: "Citizens lead healthy, happy, independent lives within their own homes and communities".

I asked Austin, from the Council, what the difference is between NNS's Innovation Fund and the Ageing Better Fund. The Ageing Better Fund is more of a start-up for new groups (although existing groups can apply for new activities), whilst the Innovation Fund awards are for larger grants, over a longer time period. The NNS will also be based in hubs, in each constituency of Birmingham, and each hub will provide a first-point-of-contact for locally-based groups, services and activities. This initiative is still in development, and I will keep you updated.

LGBT Carers

I have been invited to speak about 'LGBT carers' at the Recognising the Needs of the Carer in an Acute Hospital setting conference on Wednesday 13th June organised by **Heart of England** and **University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trusts**.

The intention is to highlight the vital role in patients' welfare played by their carers, so that HEFT and UHB, providing healthcare across the Birmingham, Solihull and South Staffordshire areas, can best offer help and support to carers.

I have 25 minutes to speak, and want to make as big an impact as I can, so I need your help. I am asking if anyone from the LGBT community who has had experience as a carer, when their cared-for loved one has had to go into hospital, would be prepared to share their experiences with me. How did hospital staff make you feel valued and supported? What could have been done differently, or better? What support would you like to see hospitals bring in which is specifically tailored to your needs as an LGBT person?

If you can assist me, I'd be very grateful. Please contact **Maria** on **0121 643 0821** or **mariahughes@blgbt.org**.

Community News & Events

NEW: more FREE classes from Activate

There are new free classes in the Vault fitness studio at the Birmingham LGBT Centre starting this month:



Beginners' yoga for all at 12 noon on **Fridays 6th and 13th April** (and continuing the first two Fridays of the month)

Circuits for trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people at all levels of fitness on **Wednesdays 11th, 18th and 25th April**.

We're also very pleased to be promoting the "**Move in Movies**" dance project taking place at the Birmingham Royal Ballet - if you love music, dance or drama and can commit to the free sessions over 12 weeks, apply by Monday 9th for your chance to take part!



More info and application form at: <http://blgbt.org/moveinmovies/>

As well as all this excitement, of course, there's the usual programme of classes and activities at the Centre and plenty of sessions from the LGBT sports groups around the city: visit <http://blgbt.org/sport-and-fitness/>

You can email activate@blgbt.org with any questions. We hope to see you this month!

Elan Links: FREE Residential Retreats

Free retreats in the Elan Valley, Mid Wales, tailored to your group's needs.

The Elan Valley is a special place, with a unique landscape, story and history. Our reservoirs provide 360 million litres of water to Birmingham everyday.



Elan Links is a five-year, £3.3million scheme, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It aims to protect the heritage in the Elan Valley and boost the opportunities available. Our retreats are provided via this scheme. We want to encourage people from the Birmingham area to connect with where their water comes from. The retreats are available to organisations working with people from disadvantaged groups.

The packages are delivered by Tir Coed, a woodland charity that delivers education, training and activities to improve woodland and benefit everyone. We will arrange bespoke activity sessions for your retreat.

The cost is covered by the Elan Links scheme. You will only need to organise your own transport and some meals. Stays can last between one and four nights.

Contact **Anna Georgiou**, Elan Links Volunteering and Training Officer on **07476 880 699** or elanlinks@tircoed.org.uk, or see website www.tircoed.org.uk

Ageing Better Fund

- Day trips to Blackpool, Weston-super-Mare, Hay-on-Wye Literary Festival.
- Visits to the Glee Club, Sutton Panto, Dudley Zoo, Gladstone Museum Stoke, Hanbury Hall.
- Events & promotions such as magazine advertising and leaflet printing.

These are just some of the activities made possible by the Ageing Better Fund, which can cover the costs of activities over a six-month period, up to a total of £2,000.

Any group, whether new or pre-existing, can apply, provided they meet the Ageing Better Principles, which include:

- Involving people aged 50 and over in the planning of activities
- Organising groups and activities which are welcoming to people aged 50 and over, but which can include all age groups
- Reaching out to isolated people – especially those aged 50 and over – to encourage them to join, make new friends and get better connected.

Unlike the requirements of a lot of other small funds, the group doesn't need to be 'formally constituted' or have a bank account. What it does need is a good idea which is costed out and the support of three or four people aged 50 or over who agree they would take part in the funded events.

I am available to help you discuss what you need and complete the application form. We can arrange an informal chat and I am also available to attend group discussions: please email mariahughes@blgbt.org or call **0121 643 0821** to arrange.

Forthcoming **deadlines** for applications to the Ageing Better Fund

- Friday 13th April
- Thursday 10th May
- Wednesday 13th June

You can also find out more about the Ageing Better Fund here:

<https://www.ageingbetterinbirmingham.co.uk/fund>, where you can also view a video made by people who have set up their own activities.

News & Research

Healthy homes: accommodating an ageing population (report) 08 Feb 2018

Despite the global perils of famine, accident, violence and infectious disease, most of us will die from a chronic or degenerative disease linked with old age.

<http://www.imeche.org/policy-and-press/reports/detail/healthy-homes-accommodating-an-ageing-population>

'This is the future of ageing:' Senior co-housing communities provide alternatives 7

March 2018

If Carmel Hara, 86, gets sick, there are a host of neighbors in her Oakland building ready to bring her soup. If she wants company, there's a common room with a library and a kitchen, and she puts in several hours a week helping to run the management office.

<http://www.berkeleyside.com/2018/03/07/future-aging-senior-co-housing-communities-provide-alternatives>

Over half of older people believe technology reduces risks of social isolation March

11, 2018

Video technology pitched as a 'lifeline' to supported housing providers to connect the unconnected.

<http://www.24housing.co.uk/news/over-half-of-older-people-believe-technology-reduces-risks-of-social-isolation/>

Pitting generations against one another will not solve the housing crisis 15 Mar 2018

The debate around housing is often characterised by the notion that an older generation of home owners are house blocking, but framing the issue in this way leads to misguided policy responses.

<https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/news/pitting-generations-against-one-another-will-not-solve-housing-crisis>

LGBT people need to rediscover their rage in this age of protest Mon 2 Apr

As the film 120 Beats per Minute shows, queer activism is at its best when it's angry and combative – and there's no shortage of causes to help

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/02/lgbt-people-protest-120-beats-per-minute>

Research request from Macmillan Psychological Scoping Project Birmingham and Solihull

Message from Dr Helen Guy:

I'm wanting to recruit LGBT people who have been affected by cancer, to carry out a survey. The survey aims to gather many people's views and experiences (patients, carers, and a range of healthcare professionals) of psychological support within cancer and / or palliative care services. We are recruiting people who live in Birmingham or Solihull. The survey is anonymous and the results will be used to inform service leads, clinicians and commissioners.

More information about the project is available through the survey link provided below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2H7787X>

Thank you

The last word . . .



"I think life is sweeter shared; and if anything were to happen to my partner, I would find it really hard without her because she's the perfect person for my life."

Miriam Margolyes

https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/miriam_margolyes_795862