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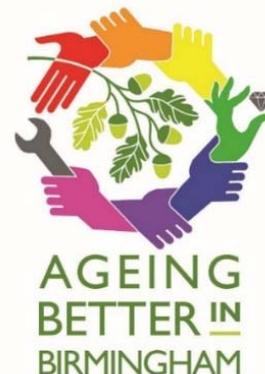
## The Last Word . . .



## LGBT Hub News Roundup

### What's new in the New Year?

The Ageing Better in Birmingham programme is now half way through its life, and everyone involved in running the programme has been reviewing how it has gone so far, and thinking about how we can do things differently to improve the impact and leave a lasting legacy.



Each 'Hub' of Ageing Better has its own ideas. In the LGBT Hub we are looking at how we can move into different geographical areas of Birmingham and test the appetite for locally-based LGBT groups. We appreciate there is still the need to hold some activities in the city centre, around the Gay Village and/ or at the Birmingham LGBT Centre, but we have aspirations for Birmingham as a whole to become more LGBT-friendly, and give the communities a chance to meet each other nearer their own doorsteps.

Plans are underway to set up events in Northfield and Kings Heath in the south of the city, and Erdington and Sutton Coldfield in the north - details will follow when they are confirmed. We will appreciate your help in spreading the word, and we are open to any feedback you may have - perhaps you know of an LGBT-friendly venue where you live? or you are willing to attend an LGBT-badged event in your area? Perhaps you feel your area is not safe to be 'out' - in which case, we are still interested in finding out why.

In the new year, I will be contacting all of the groups we work with to find out what they have got out of their involvement with Ageing Better, and what more we can do to support them, and encourage new groups into life.

So, if you have an idea for an activity, you'd like to start a group or just find out more about what's on offer, please get in touch. Contact me, **Maria Hughes** on 0121 643 0821 or [mariahughes@blgbt.org](mailto:mariahughes@blgbt.org).

# Ageing Better Groups Updates

## Proud Baggies: the 1968 Club



Proud Baggies, West Bromwich Albion's official Supporter Group for LGBT+ fans has launched a campaign to reach out to the over 50 LGBT+ community and in particular those who, for whatever reason, may have lost touch with their community. There is also the opportunity to participate in additional social events throughout the year.

The **1968 Club** is a fitting title since to be eligible you have to have been born before West Bromwich Albion won their 5th and most memorable FA Cup!

On 29th November, I went along to see members of Proud Baggies be interviewed for **MidlandsZone** magazine and talk about the 1968 Club, which is being supported by the Ageing Better Fund. We heard about how the two older members had faced a lot of discrimination and abuse during their lives, how their following of West Bromwich Albion had sustained them and what a difference the Proud Baggies group has made. They can get together with other people who they don't have to 'come out' to, and talk football and any number of other subjects: Dusty Springfield anyone?

I also heard about some of the future plans of Proud Baggies, which includes activities around LGBT History Month next February; this is also the month when Proud Baggies will be involved with Kick It Out campaign activities to tackle all forms of discrimination. There will also be involvement with a wider campaign to tackle isolation and loneliness.

You can find out more, and join the club, here: <https://proudbaggies.com/1968-club> or contact [info@proudbaggies.com](mailto:info@proudbaggies.com). If you don't have access to email, contact Maria and I will pass your details on, with your permission.

## *Baggies Buddies*

West Bromwich Albion are also introducing a new programme known as 'Baggies Buddies' as part of the club's efforts to tackle the growing issue of loneliness and social isolation in our communities. Whilst different to the 1968 Club, the aims are very much the same.

Baggies Buddies will play a leading role to create a friendly, social environment for fans attending matches alone. They will be available to meet them pre-match and make them feel welcome and will be sat in the Baggies Buddies section to accompany them during the match. Buddies will be rewarded with a small payment and a match ticket and will need to be available on home match days as well as other scheduled events when necessary. A enhanced level criminal records check will be necessary.

Anyone interested should contact **Martin Swain** at [martin.swain@wbafc.co.uk](mailto:martin.swain@wbafc.co.uk). There will also be a meeting at The Hawthorns on 18th December for any one who wants to find out more.

## Married Men's Group

The Ageing Better LGBT Hub is sorry to announce that Married Men's Group will not be meeting in the foreseeable future. The organiser sent us this message:

"Due to the very low numbers of people attending our meetings over the last 2 years, we have decided to cease meeting at the LGBT Centre. If anyone has any problems relating to their relationships then they can contact the Birmingham LGBT Centre for advice. If anyone just needs to chat with someone in the same situation then they can still contact us by email - [mmgbham@hotmail.com](mailto:mmgbham@hotmail.com)."

## Round-up

As part of Ageing Together Week, **Rainbow Bridge** and **BGLAD** are hosting Community First Aid training sessions - see the *Ageing Together Week* piece below.

**Rainbow Bridge** are holding their first **AGM** on Tuesday 8th January 2019, including elections to their new committee. For more details, contact [rainbowbridgelgbtq@hotmail.com](mailto:rainbowbridgelgbtq@hotmail.com).

**Acting Out** have been auditioning for their new production of Oscar Wilde's "**An Ideal Husband**", and now have a full cast. You can still join and take part in other aspects of the production: contact [actingoutchair@gmail.com](mailto:actingoutchair@gmail.com) to find out you can get involved.

**Ageing Better LGBT Housing Group** are working on their "Top 10 Priorities" to ask of housing providers, to meet LGBT people's needs. If you want to have your say, contact Maria on 0121 643 0821 or [mariahughes@blgbt.org](mailto:mariahughes@blgbt.org) to find out how.

**Sprung** will start their dance classes with tap and ballet on Tuesday 8th January at 6.30pm. To sign up, contact [sprungdancers@gmail.com](mailto:sprungdancers@gmail.com).

**Imaan** are holding a Merry Christmas Party on 22nd December. Contact [mohammad@imaan.org.uk](mailto:mohammad@imaan.org.uk) for more details.

*Full details of January's activities out soon!*

## Ageing With Pride



### How do you Keep Your Rainbow?

You may have seen last month that the Ageing with Pride campaign released a short film, "Keep Your Rainbow", making the point that "Getting older shouldn't mean fading away", and what it means to be part of the LGBT

community and continuing to socialise and take part in activities for two members of the community who are 50+.

This month, "How do you Keep Your Rainbow?" has been released, which goes into more depth and also introduces LGBT people of different age groups to widen the discussion and encourage better understanding.

These films are short (under two minutes) but very informative and entertaining.

Ageing with Pride has its own YouTube channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJbVCXnjQZF9IMsAoLUbL5A> where you can see both films - and also subscribe!

If you'd like more information about, or to get involved with, the Ageing with Pride campaign, contact Rico on 0121 643 0821 or [info@ageingwithpride.co.uk](mailto:info@ageingwithpride.co.uk) and visit the website <https://blgbt.org/ageing-with-pride/>.

# Ageing Better Programme News

## Ageing Together Week



St John's Ambulance have agreed to put on **FREE First Aid Training** for community groups during Ageing Together Week.

You are invited to attend the training taking place at **Rainbow Bridge** on **Tuesday 22nd January**, starting at 11am. Please contact **Jonathan** on [rainbowbridgelgbtq@hotmail.com](mailto:rainbowbridgelgbtq@hotmail.com) if you are interested, so we have an idea of numbers. If you can't email, call **Maria** on **0121 643 0821**.

If you are an LGBT Centre user and you can't make a daytime session, you can join **BGLAD** on **24th January** at 7.30pm when they are having their session. Please call **Maria** on **0121 643 0821** or email [mariahughes@lgbt.org](mailto:mariahughes@lgbt.org) if you would like to attend and you aren't already a member of this group.

## The Unsung Heroes Campaign

The **Unsung Heroes** campaign, led by Forward Carers, is to raise awareness and celebrate the role of family carers across Birmingham. The campaign is part of Ageing Better in Birmingham and funded by The Big Lottery Fund.



They are seeking **Unsung Heroes** from across the city, so they can tell their story. We want to champion their commitment, dedication and selflessness. This is an opportunity for carers to emerge from the shadows and be celebrated as the heroes they really are and give them a voice.

**Unsung Heroes** aims to emphasise and amplify the role of the carer and illustrate that they are not a homogenous group - their experiences of caring and social isolation are as diverse as their personal circumstances.

The **Unsung Heroes** Campaign would like to hear from LGBT carers and share their stories. Each carer has their own experience and they are hoping, by sharing their story, that this will show others they are not alone. It might feel like it sometimes, but there is help and support out there for those who ask.

Sylvia is the first Unsung Hero, read her journey here:  
<https://forwardcarers.org.uk/unsung-heroes/sylvia/>.

You can find out more about the campaign here:  
<https://forwardcarers.org.uk/unsung-heroes/>.

## Community News & Events



### Birmingham **LGBT** Christmas Party

Birmingham LGBT will once again open its doors on Christmas Day and welcome to our centre, LGBT members of all communities who might otherwise be alone.

Our Christmas Party is from 2-7pm and will include food, music, presents & festive fun!

Please get in touch to confirm your attendance, and to let us know if you have any transport needs: call Cecily on 0121 643 0821 or email [cecilystevenson@blgbt.org](mailto:cecilystevenson@blgbt.org).

Christmas Party fundraising page:  
<https://mydonate.bt.com/events/christmasday/478843>.

## Culture Club

In January 2019, MAC (Midlands Arts Centre) will be running a monthly arts club for over 65s called **Culture Club**. This free club will offer opportunities to try out lots of different art forms including photography, painting, dance and drama.



Sessions will run from 10.30 until 1pm (including refreshments) and the first one, a getting-to-know-you event with some musical fun, is on **Monday 21st January 2019**. Please reserve a space by calling **Lucy Rix** on 0121 446 3261 or emailing [lucy.rix@macbirmingham.co.uk](mailto:lucy.rix@macbirmingham.co.uk).

Alongside Culture Club, MAC will also be running four themed tea parties a year, complete with entertainment. These events are free and will start in February 2019. More details will be available in the new year.

## Shared Lives

*This is an extract from a longer piece about Shared Lives reaching out to the LGBT community. You can read the full article here: <https://blgbt.org/shared-lives/>.*

After giving a presentation to the Ageing Better LGBT Housing Group at Birmingham LGBT Centre, CVT Shared Lives (part of the national charity, Camphill Village Trust) are keen to explore the possibility of recruiting Shared Lives Carers from within the LGBT communities, primarily across Dudley, but also the surrounding the Black Country/West Midlands area.

As a starting point, Shared Lives is sometimes described as 'foster care for adults with additional and complex needs', but there is so much more to the role. As a Shared Lives Carer, you are 'carefully matched' to support a person from within your own home, to develop the practical skills to have greater independence, encourage new social networks, build confidence and lead the same ordinary domestic life at the heart of the community as everyone else.

If you want to find out more about becoming a Shared Lives Carer, then please call the team on 01384 597 264, visit: <http://www.cvt.org.uk/sharedlives> or follow us on Twitter: @CVTSharedLives.



## Stay Warm Get Smart: December 2018 Newsletter

Stay Warm Get Smart is a project funded by Smart Energy GB to work with over 60's with no personal access to the internet and over 65's to reduce fuel poverty, improve energy efficiency resulting in better health and wellbeing.

<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/westmidlands/Pages/stay-warm-get-smart>.



## Get Involved



### “Looking Back - Moving Forwards”

#### RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS WANTED

Women & Theatre is an award-winning company that uses theatre to shine a light on a wide range of contemporary issues. We are currently working with Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust's LGBT network to develop a new performance piece that presents diverse experiences of older LGBT people.

We will look back to the past - at how things were for LGBT people coming out, going out, at work and with family, and drawing connections with their experiences now as well as with the experiences of younger LGBT people today.

The piece will premiere at BSMHFT's LGBT Celebration event in February 2019 before touring to in patient settings.

All of our work is developed from in depth research and we are interested in speaking to LGBT people aged 55+. Interviews could take place at people's homes, in BSMHFT settings, at W&T's office in Moseley, or at another mutually convenient location.

W&T is experienced at developing new theatre from research using a respectful conversational approach and ensures no research participant is identifiable in the resulting performance piece.

We aim to carry out the majority of our research in December 2018 - including an interview day on **Thursday 20th December 2018** at W&T's Offices at **The Old Lodge, Uffculme Centre, 50 Queensbridge Road, Birmingham, B13 8QY**.

For more information, to arrange a research appointment or to email any experiences you wish to share, please contact **Jess Pearson** at **Women & Theatre** on **0121 449 7117** or [jesspearson@womenandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:jesspearson@womenandtheatre.co.uk).

## The Last Word . . .



### QUEER CHRISTMAS

It's the festive season, Hip hip hooray!  
Now's a good time to be happy and Gay  
This time of year can be lonely and cold  
So get out those glad-rags, be daring. Be bold

Try a new lipstick, buy a sprig of mistletoe  
Tune into the season, its ringing Go Gay Go!  
Dry clean that jacket. Put on that bow tie  
If you feel like snogging, don't think why?

Christmas time can be stressful and fraught  
Overspending, overeating, doing what you ought  
So relax and smile a little, look around you, it's free.  
Enjoy the many pleasures of our Community

Be kind, be nice, it is the seasonal mission  
Spread love and goodwill, I give you my permission  
Just one more thing to say before I go  
I wish you a Merry Xmas, with lots of Yo, Ho, Ho!

**Trudy Howson, LGBT Poet Laureate**

<http://www.lgbtpoetlaureate.org.uk/queer-christmas/>



The Ageing Better LGBT Hub newsletter is produced by Maria Hughes.

If you would like to receive these newsletters electronically, please get in touch and I will add you to the emailing list: call 0121 643 0821 or email [mariahughes@blgbt.org](mailto:mariahughes@blgbt.org).



**Birmingham LGBT**

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

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