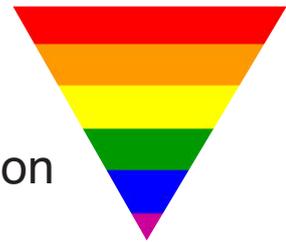




OLGA

Older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans Association
A Community Network



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Newsletter Issue 15

Mar-Apr-May 2012

Winter cheer from OLGA

Yes, we have a late Winter, at long last. We hope you are managing to keep warm at home and avoid falls out on the

icy roads. OLGA has invited a speaker from Scarborough Borough Council to talk to our members at a Tuesday Social on

different ways the Council can help us stay well and safe. More news when date confirmed.

What has OLGA been up to?



High kicks at OLGA Christmas Party!

December 2011

A big thank you to Age UK for sponsoring our Christmas Party, also thank you to our resident DJ Jess, Rewind Disco and all of OLGA's friends who gifted their time and equipment to make the day a great success.

The OLGA Christmas Party was great. The party gave some people the opportunity to dance in a relaxed way, and also to eat in a social setting, probably the only time they did so over the Christmas period. Remember, a lot of older LGBT people live alone, are isolated, and do not have the support of their family. But, OLGA helps them be part of their Gay Family. Some grant applications were made for improving our Socials, an office and more paid staff.

January 2012

Three new volunteers joined OLGA.

We gave a workshop to York NHS Link. We gave 2 workshops to a lovely Care Home in Knaresborough, run by a lesbian manager.

We were interviewed by two researchers one from Sue Ryder End of Life Care Department, Nottingham University and the other researcher was from Labrys Trust based in Bradford.

Two more funding applications submitted this month: The Peoples Health Trust - Healthy Communities Small Grants Programme - 2011/12

The Steering group adopt the strategic plan - this can be found on the website. <http://www.olga.uk.com/downloads-links/>

What has OLGA been up to? (continued)



Sue Mann, engagement officer, Age UK, organised the Leeds forum on 'Aids for Living'

Leeds. This was part of research about aids for living being paid for out of peoples' own money, eg. mobility vehicles, walking sticks, etc.

One more funding application submitted to North Yorkshire County Councils Innovation Fund, in partnership with Scarborough Whitby Ryedale MIND to further develop our befriending service. Project Co-ordinator spoke to Care Quality Commission in Newcastle, as part of LGBT History Month. We attended the Mental Health Equality Forum and the Independent Police Advisory Group, after which there was a Retirement lunch for Inspector Javid Ali (Scarborough Police), and Inspector Tim Hutchinson

February 2012

The Chair and Vice-Chair attended an Age UK Forum in

(Ryedale Police). We wish these two Officers a happy retirement. This OLGA work is in addition to the on-going weekly socials, befriending and admin, etc.



Mary, Project Co-ordinator' looking forward to speaking at a Royal College of Nursing event in Scarborough, soon....

A day in the life of a Male to Female Trans Person

The following article has been written by one of our members who is encountering ongoing obstacles from the NHS. She was born male and is desperate to start her transition as a female person.

A phone call wakes you up at silly-o-clock in the morning, you answer it and think "oh no, I'm still alive." Hung-over, you drag yourself begrudgingly out of bed and catch a glimpse of yourself in the mirror. Once you

do, you feel horrified. That beast isn't me.

You start to get dressed, and you realise that your clothes don't quite fit properly, not even close to the way you want them to look on you. You go to the

toilet, and you see the wrong equipment which is like looking at yourself and not seeing what you expect.

You go back to the mirror, and use an electric shaver that's supposed to be as good as a wet



shave, and it really isn't. You can't see the stubble that's there afterwards, but deep down you know it's there, another "confidence" boost they say.

Today will you use the hair straighteners and make yourself look presentable, or will you just not bother, because you don't pass anyway. More horrible decisions to make, and regardless they don't matter, because no matter how much you try, you will be misgendered often.

So you opt to make yourself look presentable, and you try your hardest to look how you feel inside, and when you feel pretty good about yourself, you drag yourself to your living room to wake up properly, perhaps a cup of tea, or some depressing music to further fuel the fire of despair in your life.

So once you're awake, you've got clothes on, you look fairly respectful, your hair looks nice, the next challenge you will face is actually leaving the house because of the fear of what others will think of you. Will today they inappropriately call me "sir", or ask "am I a girl or a boy?" or

just laugh at me because I'm a bit different?

No, you don't want to leave the house. You can't leave the house, but you must. You have things to do. You have to try and be constructive.

The next problem you face once you have actually managed to leave the house, you need the toilet. You instantly assume "female" because that's what you are. You use them, and then you get told off by management of wherever you are. Going to the toilet after this becomes a source of anxiety and despair, which no one should have to experience, just for needing the toilet. What is the only solution? Use the Disabled Toilet.

The problem with this "solution" is that people will then be looking at you trying to figure out what your "disability" is. This is made worse for any hope of passing if for example, you're a male to female, and the disabled toilet is located on the access corridor to the gents, or if you're female to male, the disabled is on the access corridor to the Ladies.

If you go to a place without a disabled toilet, what do you do? I've found two options, both which stab the meta-physical knife into my heart again. One is approach the staff and ask them which toilet you should use, and you are told you must use the Gents. The other, is sneak off somewhere and hide in a bush. Both are too much effort for something I really don't have any control over.

Some places are accepting at first, allowing you to use the toilet appropriate to how you identify, but when they receive complains, the access is withdrawn.

So after what seems an eternity doing what you do during the day, for me, its learning, you're just that sick of yourself so you check into the nearest bar and start drinking. And drinking. And drinking. Until you forget who you are, destroying yourself because it's so difficult.

Then you go to sleep, and have more tortured nightmares about yourself and how much of a freak you are.

Repeat - Go back to start.

OLGA, being an all-inclusive group, is firmly of the belief that people's sexuality is not necessarily fixed. So, in ones lifetime, depending on opportunities and experiences, we may be at one time heterosexual, at another time gay or bisexual.

Gender identity is very

misunderstood. Gender is about being male or female. Gender and sexuality are two separate subjects. Trans people will be heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual just like anybody. Gender identity under the Equality Law 2011 is the gender that you feel you are regardless of your biological gender.



OLGA people

This is a regular feature in our Newsletter. This time we will hear from a Volunteer, Karla.

Q. What do you do at OLGA?

A. I am a Befriender of lgbt people who are in hospital or a care home. I always befriend with another volunteer, as this is a big feature of OLGA's work

that we support each other.

Q. What do you enjoy most about OLGA work?

A. I enjoy listening to people's stories about their past lives. Listening is an important skill in befriending, and of course the Gay or Trans person can relax completely when we befriend them.

Q. What do you not enjoy about OLGA work?

A. I am a bit sad when I see people in a care home, as they

miss their own home.

Q. How do you like to relax when not working for OLGA?

A. Going to the theatre and movies.

Q. Where would you like to see OLGA in the future?

A. I would like to see OLGA with its own office and more paid staff and most of all, I would like to think more lgbt people will be out in social care and health venues.

Mary's health, social care & legislation section



Inspire to Support



OLGA steering group, volunteers and staff at AGM 2011. Yes we do have men, they missed the photo shoot, busy swapping phone numbers!

In the last Newsletter we appealed to the Gay and Trans community for other people to do similar work to what OLGA is doing. We believe we are still the only lgbt group going in to Care Homes and Hospitals, delivering awareness-raising workshops.

The good news is, our National 'End of life Care' work with Nottingham University's - Sue Ryder Care Centre for the Study of Supportive, Palliative, and End of Life Care - has resulted in OLGA's work being researched for two years, then our work will be published.

Also, because we need other lgbt people to be involved in Health and Care issues, we are attending a forum in London, which will be attended by lgbt campaigners. We hope to involve some of these people in what is a massively under-addressed area of work.

We will help any group or organisation or individual who wants to start work in Care Homes, Hospitals, etc.

The Care system in this Country is in crisis anyway, so it is vital that we have our message delivered. We have the same health and care needs as the heterosexual community. But, in addition we have problems caused by our sexuality. Do we disclose and fear the poor response or abuse after we disclose? Or, do we continue to live a secret, invisible life? We have probably spent all of our life disclosing to a gay-friendly audience. So, the decision to disclose to a health and social care provider is a gigantic leap of faith, and a very brave thing to do.

Research by Age UK and Stonewall still confirms there is discrimination and abuse of lgbt people in care. So why would we risk disclosing? We may decide we are fed up hiding our same-gender partner away when carers come to our home. When we are in a care home we will want to put our photos in our room, showing our same-gender partner and our gay family. We will hope the care staff can chat to us about our photos, in the same way as they will chat about heterosexual people's photos.

But, THE BIG PROBLEM is how do we register our contact person? How do we get past the question, 'Who is your next of Kin'? We know that blood

family can interfere in health decisions, and funeral arrangements, even not allowing the surviving gay partner to attend. From our workshop experiences in care homes, the well managed staff receive on-going in-service training. They understand that they will contact the person who we nominate. This means that when we die, the care home gives the nominated contact person, the Death Certificate. Also from our experience, in poorly managed care homes the staff are unsure about this, they still think that blood family should get the Death Certificate.

Lots more training needed.....

Lots of work to be done by lgbt people.....

HOW TO BOOK an OLGA WORKSHOP or FIND OUT MORE info@olga.uk.com or telephone 07929 465044 in confidence.

Court of Appeal to uphold a landmark court ruling

Like Stonewall, OLGA also welcome a decision by the Court of Appeal to uphold a landmark court ruling in favour of a couple refused a hotel room by the owners of a hotel in Cornwall.

Civil Partners Martyn Hall and Steven Preddy had been turned away from the Chymorvah Hotel near Penzance in 2010 by owners Peter and Hazelmary Bull. In January 2011 a judge at

Bristol County Court ruled that the Bulls' behaviour amounted to direct discrimination, and awarded a total of £3,600 damages to Mr Hall and Mr Preddy.

Ben Summerskill, Stonewall Chief Executive, said: 'We're delighted that the Court upheld the judgment. The Court's decision vindicates Stonewall's hard lobbying to make it illegal

to deny goods or services to someone just because they happen to be gay. That obviously includes hotel rooms for many gay holidaymakers, which can only be a good thing in a Jubilee year. I hope Mr and Mrs Bull will now feel content to go home to do God's good work as Easter approaches, instead of relentlessly pursuing a happy couple through the courts.'



There is a growing body of research indicating that Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual (LGB) people face a wide range of issues in their lives and are more likely than their heterosexual peers to suffer from poor mental health, poor sexual health, problems with substance misuse, social isolation, discrimination and hate crime.

Pride in Practice will ensure that LGB people have increased access to the appropriate services they need. It will also address possible shortfalls in GP surgeries, and also meet the needs of the LGB people we jointly serve, whatever their health issues or concerns.

Further to this, displaying the Pride in Practice plaque will demonstrate that your surgery is LGB affirmative. This means that LGB people will be more likely to provide health care professionals with accurate information earlier on. As a result, they will be able to address health problems and unhealthy lifestyles without fear that divulging certain information, which could be needed by the health professional (such as sexual history, or specific issues relating to mental health, for example), will result in prejudice or discriminatory treatment.

What do GPs and their surgery get?

To support obtaining the Pride in Practice Charter Mark, surgeries will be provided with an information pack.

Along with this pack surgeries will also get direct access to the LGF specialist staff team that will provide them with support and guidance on all areas of LGB patient care.

Lobby your GP and for more information get them to contact:

Dennis Baldwin, GP Project Manager, The Lesbian & Gay Foundation

Call: 0845 3 30 30 30 or Email: dennis.baldwin@lgf.org.uk

Future Events

March 2012

Sunday, 4th - East Coast Walking Group, Contact Jackie on 07548532276

Tuesday, 6th- OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Tuesday, 13th- OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Creative Writing Workshop Session 1 – Subject ‘Coming Out’ (organised by one of our Members)

Tuesday, 20th- OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Tuesday, 27th- OLGA Social 1pm to 4pm

Creative Writing Workshop Session 2– Subject ‘Coming Out’

April 2012

Sunday, 1st- East Coast Walking Group Contact Jackie on 07548532276

Tuesday, 3rd - OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Tuesday, 10th - OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Creative Writing Session 3, Subject ‘Coming Out’

Tuesday, 17th - OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Tuesday 24th - OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

May 2012

Tuesday, 1st - OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Sunday, 6th - East Coast Walking Group Contact Jackie on 07548532276

Tuesday, 8th - OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Tuesday, 15th - OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Tuesday, 22nd - OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Tuesday, 29th - OLGA Social, 1pm to 4pm

Deadline on Public Sector Equality Duty

The 31st of January 2012 is the day public sector organisations have to publish details of how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This means hospitals, large schools and all other establishments

within the public sector will have to demonstrate what they are doing to promote equality of opportunity and to protect members of the nine characteristics – including gender reassignment and sexual

orientation; whether by means of an equality impact assessment or a report and action plan. It is – in short – a landmark in the development of equalities legislation.

MEET & EAT SOCIALS

OLGA will arrange 1 per month – details to follow, as we usually contact our Members by phone.

CIRCLE DANCING

Last Saturday of every month, at St. James' Church, Scarborough. 7pm to 9pm

LGBT & FRIENDS PUB NIGHTS OUT SOCIAL EVENTS

Alternating Fridays & Saturdays

Contact: Karla 07792893350 for details

Useful contact information

SEXUALITY

OLGA Tel: 07929 465 044
Email: olga@mypostoffice.co.uk www.olga.uk.com
PO Box 458, Scarborough YO11 9EH

MESMAC Yorkshire. Tel: 01904 620 400
PO Box 549, York. YO30 7GX

MENTAL HEALTH

Crisis Call Tel: 0800 501 254 (telephone support)
01723 384644 (crisis response, resolution and
home treatment) (Free from landlines. Mobiles -
cost for initial message and Crisis Call will call
you back, which is free)

Samaritans Tel: 01723 368 888
Samaritan House, 40 Trafalgar Street West,
Scarborough YO11

Survivors Mental Health Resource Centre
Tel: 01723 501 049
9 Alma Square, Scarborough YO11

Mind Tel: 01723 588008
Drop in Centre at Queen Street Methodist Church,
Fridays 12.30 to 3.30pm.

HOUSING

Housing Support Tel: 0845 872 7374
North Yorkshire County Council
www.northyorks.gov.uk

Stonham Homestay Tel: 01723 366 566
Scarborough & Ryedale Homelessness Prevention
Email: scarborough@homegroup.org.uk
Tenancy Support Services
Roscoe Street, Scarborough YO11

Yorkshire Coast Homes Tel: 0845 065 5656
Gladstone Road, Scarborough YO11

SOCIAL CARE

Social Services
North Yorkshire County Council Tel: 08450349410

SOCIAL

OLGA Tel: 07929 465 044
Email: olga@mypostoffice.co.uk
www.olga.uk.com
PO Box 458, Scarborough YO11 9EH

Albion Pub & Cabaret

136 Castle Road, Scarborough Tel: 01723 379068

Gay Scarborough Tel: 01723 375 849

Bacchus Night Club Tel: 01723 373 689
7a Ramshill Road, Scarborough YO11

York Lesbian Social Group 18+ Tel: 07963 414434
Email: yorklsg@talktalk.net

GENERAL ADVICE

Customer First Tel: 01723 232 323
Scarborough Borough Council (General Enquiries)
St. Nicholas Street, Scarborough YO11

OLGA Tel: 07929 465 044
Email: olga@mypostoffice.co.uk
PO Box 458, Scarborough YO11 9EH

Age UK Scarborough Tel: 01723379058
39 Aberdeen Walk, Scarborough YO11 8D

Advocacy Alliance Tel: 01723 363 910
Allatt House, 5 West Parade Road, Scarborough
YO12 5ED

Citizens Advice Bureau
Tel: 01723368710
2 Roscoe Street, Scarborough YO11

Police

Tel: 999 (Emergency/Crime Being Carried out)
Tel: 101 (Non-Emergency)
Tel: 0845 606 0247 (Police attendance is required)
Tel: 0800 555 111 (Crime Stoppers/To pass on
Information related to any Crime)
Tel: 01723 384 444 (Anti-Social Behaviour)

www.olga.uk.com

The website will be used as a way of keeping in touch with what OLGA is up to on your behalf.

We will also use it as a way to share with you local national and international news that we feel you may be interested in. You must let us know if we are getting this right, or not. Or, if you have seen something you would like to share; please let me know:

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