



North Midlands LGBT Older Peoples Group

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Registered Charity number: 1186844

Annual Report 2023

April 2022 - March 2023

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About Our Charity

North Midlands LGBT Older Peoples Group (OLGBT)

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Registered Charity 1186844

Trustees: Maurice Greenham (Chair), Andrew Colclough (Vice Chair), Joe Waring (Treasurer), John Miller (Secretary), Angie Boote, Stephen Malkin.

Object (paragraph 3 of Constitution) Certified 19 December 2019

The object of the CIO is the promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit by working with people who are socially excluded on the grounds of their gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation (in particular lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people) to meet the needs of such people and assist them to fully participate in society, in particular by: (a) providing a local network group that encourages and enables LGBT+ people to participate more effectively with the wider community and (b) increasing, or co-ordinating, opportunities for LGBT+ people to engage with service providers, to enable those providers to adapt services to better meet the needs of those people.

Combatting Isolation and Loneliness

In the reporting period from April 2022 to March 2023, the OLGBT group held 51 support meetings, of which 12 were in-person at Fenton Town Hall Café, the remainder online via Zoom. Our mailing list, which is open to all adults, increased significantly from 200 to 250 (25%). Similarly, the number of members and prospective members has risen by 20% (60). Sadly, one of our members and stalwart trustee died. Angie is fondly remembered and greatly missed.



Reclaim LGBTQI Mental Health Project



Members of the Group participated in RECLAIM – a mental health project organised in partnership with The Cultural Sisters and the ceramic artist Sarah Fraser. The project was successfully completed in April 2022.

The project explored connections between creativity and mental health through the transformation of clay. We used reclaimed clay to create objects together and explored the process of clay drying, dissolving and becoming soft and pliable again. As we created together we reflected on the emerging conflict in Ukraine. The project had a powerful impact on all involved.

A short film recording the project can be viewed on our website olgbtstoke.org.uk/2022-reclaim



Discover Digital

In 2022 we took part in a new local initiative called Discover Digital. This project aimed to boost “Digital Inclusion” in Stoke-on-Trent by helping people make the best use of the internet. Discover Digital was funded by the UK Government Community Renewal Fund distributed through Stoke-on-Trent City Council.

The Beth Johnson Foundation worked with OLGBT to support learning digital skills through engagements events and workshops including:

- An initial engagement event
- An online safety workshop
- A social media workshop

To support members’ ongoing learning we purchased a new smartphone and set up our own WhatsApp chat group.

We also obtained a Discover Digital grant from the Community Foundation which enabled us to comprehensively update and redesign our website including making it more accessible and mobile friendly.

The Discover Digital project was time limited but BJB have continued to work with us to offer support through a monthly “Tea and Tech” drop-in.





Tea and Tech session at Beth Johnson Foundation February 2023

Community Health Champions

The North Midlands LGBT Older Peoples Group is a partner of the Community Health Champions initiative co-ordinated by VAST.

Since participating in the NHS Community Health Champion scheme, the group now has four health champions who have overseen regular health messages delivered in-person by healthcare professionals, as well as digitally through our weekly mailings and monthly newsletters.

The first grant we received in 2022 enabled us to purchase a portable display board and folding table to help with health promotion. This was part of the re-launch of our in-person meetings following the end of the Covid lockdowns.

In 2023 we received a more substantial grant enabling us to extend our monthly meetings at The Café in Fenton to include a free buffet lunch and a speaker on a health related topic.



We continue to promote health and wellbeing through our online and in person meetings. We also post health messages in our WhatsApp chat and include information in our newsletter and other electronic mailings.



Photo of Community Health Champions with presenters on cancer screening at OLGBT meeting – March 2023 Newsletter

Communications

Website

Our website has been comprehensively redesigned and updated to better meet the needs of members and to promote our organisation.

Newsletter and Mailings

We have produced a Newsletter every month throughout the period and kept in touch with our members and prospective members through weekly emails as well as by phone and personal contact.

We include health information from Community Health Champions and tips from Discover Digital in every mailing.

Phone

We have a new mobile phone staffed by volunteers which we regularly check for voicemails, texts and WhatsApp messages.

Events and Activities

OLGBT group continues to engage with the annual Stoke Pride and other LGBT events such as LGBT History Month.



OLGBT Marching banner in the Stoke Pride Parade 2022

For the first time since the start of the pandemic, the group was able to organise a canal trip on the Caldon Canal.



Stop for lunch – canal trip on the Caldon Canal, August 2022

Thank you to all our members and supporters
We look forward to another successful year
