

Hastings & Rother Rainbow Alliance

HARRA Newsletter

Issue 8

Spring 2013

Hastings & Rother
Rainbow Alliance
Working to support the
LGBT local community



Snippets

Look on our website and Facebook page for our new Blog .

Don't miss the next HARRA Bingay event! See our Facebook Page for details.

Facebook Page -
Hastings and Rother
Rainbow Alliance.

Website -
www.hrra.org.uk



*Dave Burke, Councillor
Bruce Dowling and Mary
Benton at HARRA AGM,
celebrating achievements
and looking to the future.*

HARRA looks to the future

Over 50 members and representatives from Hastings and Rother Council and the police attended HARRA's AGM at the Azur in November.

They were welcomed by Councillor Bruce Dowling, Deputy Mayor of Hastings, who said he was very pleased to support HARRA. The business meeting was followed by a buffet, raffle, disco and enjoyable entertainment by the local band 'Jiggery Pokery', encouraging many people to take to the dance floor. Members also heard about all the new activities that had taken place in the last year, and there was a lively debate on possible future directions for HARRA. Julie Eason, our new co-chair, spells out some of these:



"The Rainbow Alliance celebrates its 10 year anniversary this year, and we plan to do so in some style, with a big party. This is partly about meeting the demand for more social activity, and partly about raising funds, as we, like other organisations, are feeling the impact of the public purse being zipped shut. Whilst our running costs are low (we run on around £5,000 a year and all our work is currently done by volunteers), we would like to expand our work in the next decade, and ideally would like to have a staff member, even if part time, to support this aim. We are hoping to celebrate our 11 year anniversary in 2014, by running a pride event.

Whilst many of us love to party, we will not be forgetting the serious side to our work this year. Plans are afoot to set up a young HARRA section, and to set up a partnership project in our local schools to support their endeavours to eliminate homophobic bullying. A bereavement support group for lesbians who have lost their partners is being developed, and on the social side bridge and five-a-side football is mooted. Our LGBT History Project is flourishing. Our trans group is going from strength to strength, and there are plans to set up a support group for partners and significant others. We are also working with SEAP, one of the largest and longest established advocacy charities in the country, who have their head office in Hastings, to develop a project to provide advocates to support the trans community in accessing health services and to combat workplace based discrimination. There is a huge amount of work in hand, and lots more to do, but the committee is close to full strength this year, and facing the future with optimism and energy."

We now have 238 members. If any of you would like to start an LGBT group, social or otherwise, let us know. We're all volunteers - anything new requires someone to get stuck in organising it. Here's to our 10th year!

Trans Group News

The HRRRA Trans group has grown considerably, especially over the last few months with a core group of active members who are arranging a variety of social activities.

Via HRRRA, the group is being encouraged to get actively involved in the local NHS policies for transgender healthcare related services. Our members include those at all stages of transition and include those that have reached whatever stage they are comfortable at, those using the NHS and people using private services. Other members are coming to terms with the options available to them, and whether they are even appropriate for their own situation. Nobody is criticized for following or not following any particular path, recognizing that there are many ways to be content with who they are, and members support each other through whatever they decide. Members also include FTM and MTF, as well as sexual orientations of straight, gay, lesbian and bisexual.

The group meets regularly in Hastings on the last Friday of each month for discussion, planning events, sharing experiences, supporting each other through what are sometimes negative experiences, as well as for socializing and making friends. We also have a Facebook group, email list, and Twitter account for keeping in touch between meetings. The trans group planned activities are open to all trans people, and usually open to members partners, friends, and families - who are also invited (by open invitation) to meet up with other members of the group after the monthly meetings. Those who wish to typically go to a friendly local pub.

HRRAT members are also welcome to HRRRA events, and on 23rd March 2013 there will a HRRRA film club event, showing the Torch Song Trilogy, which has a trans theme.

A new group has just been set up for the partners, friends and families of transgender people; it plans to meet monthly and has already had the first meeting. The meetings are a safe place for members to discuss issues relating to the transgender people in their life and how it affects them.



In the pub



New Years Eve

The photos above are of recent social events attended by some of the Trans group; there are new events and outings currently being planned, and ideas include: seeing a London show, trips to Brighton and Eastbourne to visit night clubs and pubs, going to see some live football, and attending Sparkle 2013 in Manchester (which is the biggest UK trans event). Other suggestions and ideas are always welcome.

Something we are also considering is offering informal friendly feedback, tips and so on about clothing and make-up for those that want it. This might go as far as make-up lessons (for those that want to use it) or accompanied shopping trips for clothes. We've also had the offer of help from other members of HRRRA.

There is also consultation going on and a plan which has already achieved the first stage in the lottery funding process for a Trans Advocacy service which would support people with employment, health, housing and other issues that affect people when transitioning. The trans group is being involved in developing that service.

Please contact hrrat@hrra.org.uk to find out more about the group from the organizers, or see the group web page: <http://www.hrra.org.uk/hrrat.html>

How you can help HRRA

HRRA is a charity and relies on people giving their time and various forms of fundraising in order to carry out its activities and its stated aim of supporting the LGBT Communities of Hastings and Rother.

The committee meet on a monthly basis in order to run and organise the charity but many other people volunteer their time in order to further the aims of the charity. For example the 'What's On' Mailing list is run by one of our members and we are very grateful that this is the case as the committee time is limited. In addition a number of members help out when we have a stall at a community event. We are always looking for members to offer to help out in these circumstances and also to come up with new ideas that can help towards our stated aims.

Another area in which our members can help is by donating to the Charity. Our core costs were previously funded by the council, but in these times of austerity with government cuts this source of income for us has ceased. We have managed to obtain funding from various organisations over the last few years to cover our core costs, but this is becoming more difficult. We have also been able to obtain grants to cover one off events such as 'Out and Proud' and our History Event, however these do not generally cover the core running costs of the charity.

Tribute to Fran Mckeown



Hastings and Rother Rainbow Alliance were devastated to hear about Fran's tragic death. She worked as a community development officer at Hastings Voluntary Action. She gave invaluable support to HRRA over the years, particularly at a transition time five years ago, when she attended meetings and helped us look at how we could re-energise and rebuild the organisation. We will miss her vitality, creativity and warmth and always be grateful for her unswerving enthusiasm for equality.

We are therefore appealing to our members, if they are able, to contribute a small amount on a regular basis (or a one off amount) to the charity to enable us to continue to support LGBT people in Hastings and Rother. As a charity we are able to claim Gift Aid where relevant on donations and this means that the government will contribute an additional 25% of any amount donated.

Enclosed in this newsletter is a Gift Aid donation form to set up a regular gift. If you would like to give, but are reading online or don't have the form please email info@hrra.org.uk and request a form.



Please fill in the enclosed Gift Aid form and help HRRA work for you!

Bingay nights

HRRA held a very successful Bingay evening in December at the St Leonard pub. This event was a sellout, providing much needed funds from the sale of tickets and raffle. Timberlina compered the evening with great panache and it was a great night out. Big thanks to Erica Smith, St Leonards pub and the Post Office Tearooms for their help with organisation. We hope Bingay will become a regular event.



Bingay - Great night out! Don't miss the next one!

HASTINGS & ROTHER RAINBOW ALLIANCE

Address

HRRA c/o Ore Community Centre
Ore Centre
455 Old London Road.
Hastings, TN35 5BH

Email: info@hrra.org.uk

Telephone: 07505 819344

Website: www.hrra.org.uk

HRRA ACTIVITIES

Walking Club



“Enjoying the views from the windmill on a walk round Icklesham. Great way to relax and make new friends.”

We walk about four or five miles on the 3rd Sunday morning of each month, and finish up at a pub for lunch. All LGBT welcome.

Contact Barbara@hrra.org.uk for details.

Celebrate LGBT History Month!

Join us on Sunday 24th February 3.30 to 6.30pm at Electric Palace Cinema, 39a, High St, Hastings, TN34 3ER, for screening of LGBT films including ‘After Stonewall’. We will also have Music and a Pay Bar.

This event is free to HRRA members.

To find out more about our HRRA History Project email Abi@hrra.org.uk or Barbara@hrra.org.uk

New HRRA Film Club Starting! First meeting Saturday evening 23rd March. Film showing of ‘Torch Song Trilogy’. Email: Gary@hrra.org.uk or Barbara@hrra.org.uk for details.

New support group for lesbians who are bereaved or have been in the past. For details email: nadine.west@virgin.net

Trustees

Trustees are elected by you, the HRRA members, at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Current Trustees/Officers were elected at the last AGM on 9th November 2012:

Dave Burke and Julie Eason	Co - Chairs
Mary Benton	Secretary
Ben Sallows	Treasurer
Barbara Martin	Publicity/Communications
Abigail Luthmann	Saffy Walton
Gary Rolfe	Rachael Young
Nadine West	

Not a member yet? Do you want to join HRRA?

It is free to join! Download a membership form from our website or email info@hrra.org.uk or write to us c/o Ore Community Centre, or telephone us on 07505 819344

Hate crime reporting

Have you been the victim of a hate crime?

If so, report it! Hate crime is any incident which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, but which you believe to be motivated by prejudice or hate because of your sexual orientation or gender identity.

Contact numbers for reporting: HRRA 07505 819344 or Gay Helpline 07941 014013.

Please let HRRA know about your past or present experiences of reporting a hate crime.

Regular events

HRRA Lunch and Supper Club. Sociable meals in local restaurants. Contact: supperclub@hrra.org.uk for details.

HRRA Women’s Book Group in Hastings. We meet on the first Tuesday of the month. We read and discuss books chosen by members from the whole range of lesbian literature – novels, thrillers, romance, biography, history etc. New members welcome. Contact Barbara: 01424 440928 email: martinbarbara@btinternet.com

Ladies Afternoon Tea/Coffee 1st Thursday of every month 3pm - 5pm. Cafe at De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill. Come along for some fantastic sea views & good company. Look out for a likely looking group of 15 to 25 women.... usually found seated in the 2nd/furthest part of the cafe.

Every Sunday - **Local LGBT people** meet from 1pm at the **Azur Bistro**, Marina, St. Leonards on Sea (downstairs, sea level entrance). Snacks are available, and from 12pm a roast meal can be purchased for £5-95. Open to all LGBT.

Keep up to date with all local LGBT events: Register for the weekly “What’s On” email by contacting Pam, email: hastingsrainbow@btinternet.com