

# The History

## Southwark LGBT Network.

Established in 2002, the Southwark LGBT Network is a social and support group of LGBT people and their friends who live and work in Southwark. The Network is run by volunteers from the LGBT community and aims to create a series of safe spaces for all LGBT people in the borough. It tries to ensure that its activities are not set in pubs or other alcohol related venues.

The Network aims are, to:

- Reduce the isolation felt by LGBT people in Southwark and create a diverse and vibrant community; and
- Enable the LGBT community in Southwark engage effectively with other agencies.

The Network works in partnership with the LGBT Community Development Worker at Southwark Council to organise events, social gatherings and newsletters to increase the membership of the Network and help create a vibrant and visible LGBT community in Southwark.

In 2002 a survey (Count Me In) took place in the borough and the findings helped gain insight into the experiences of the LGBT community and also helped shape the future work with the development of the following roles:

- LGBT Community Development Worker (Council)
- LGBT domestic violence and hate crime case worker (Bede House)
- LGBT liaison officer (Southwark Police)
- Support without prejudice project (Victim Support)

## Ethos and Mission

The principles of the Network which form the backbone of the role of the LGBT Community Development Worker are:

- Build capacity within Southwark LGBT network and the Southwark Anti Homophobic Forum.
- Enable the LGBT community in Southwark to engage effectively with other agencies.
- Reduce the isolation felt by LGBT people within Southwark, and
- Promote access to support services and LGBT social networks for victims of homophobic hate crime and same sex domestic violence

## Volunteering in Southwark.

The Network is run by volunteers and recognises and values the contribution that volunteers make via the Management Committee of the Network. The Network also recognises that volunteers can make a contribution to the organisation in a number of ways to benefit the local LGBT community.

The roles that volunteers can do.

The Network offers a range of opportunities that volunteers may wish to be involved with.

- Executive committees (of Management Committee)
- Welcoming people to events and meetings
- Newsletter production and/or writing articles
- Website design/ maintenance
- Event planning and delivery
- Working on specific projects (Pride, LGBT History Month)
- Resource design/ production

### What we offer volunteers

The Network offers volunteers the following benefits:

- Personal development opportunities
- Support and supervision
- Suitable training and induction
- A reference
- Out of pocket expenses to cover travel costs
- Consultation and involvement in the organisation
- Respect and fair treatment.
- That all volunteers will be treated fairly and will not tolerate discrimination against volunteers, and/ or members of the public based on a person's age, race, nationality, religion, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or HIV status.

### What we expect from volunteers

The Network will expect the following from all its volunteers, to:

- Share the Network's mission, vision and values
- Follow the organisation's Confidentiality Policy and any other relevant policies and procedures
- Represent The Network only when undertaking tasks assigned and approved by the organisation.
- Work constructively with other volunteers
- Offer suggestions and be involved with the development for volunteering and all services.

- Understand that there will not be agreement with all people all of the time and that all work should aim towards a common goal of delivering services to the LGBT community in Southwark.
- To offer a confidential service.

#### Volunteer code of conduct

All volunteers are expected to work within the guidelines of the volunteer code of conduct. This code ensures that the services that we provide meet an agreed standard. This also protects all staff; volunteers and service users from any potential abuse or danger. You are expected to have and understood this before you begin as a volunteer.

#### Being a volunteer.

All volunteers will be familiar with and work to the Ethos and Mission of the organisation.

Volunteers will be familiar with and abide by the following policies.

- Equal opportunities
- Confidentiality policy
- Disciplinary
- Grievance
- Expenses

All volunteers are expected to attend any training organised for skills development.

While it is recognised that personal relationships are a private matter, volunteers should not use their position to seek sexual relations with service users or staff.

A volunteer must not do anything, which may bring the Network and the Forum into disrepute.

A volunteer must not accept payment for the work they do as a volunteer.

## What next?

All potential volunteers should complete a 'Volunteer Application Form' which is available on the Network website [www.southwark-lgbt.org](http://www.southwark-lgbt.org) or available from the LGBT Community Development Worker, 020 7525 5659 [dax.ashworth@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:dax.ashworth@southwark.gov.uk)

- The application form will include two references for the applicant.
- All applicants will be interviewed.
- No volunteer will begin until the references are received.