

Breaking the Silence

Recommendations

1) improving community safety

1. Action on homophobia needs to link into mainstream crime and disorder work. An Anti-homophobic crime Partnership should be established and integrated into the Crime and Disorder partnership, developing a workplan & engaging with the community & local venues to develop accountability. It should receive regular reports from schools, housing bodies (not just council) and safety bodies on homophobic incidents.
2. Homophobic crimes are not being reported. The Crime & Disorder partnership must ensure adequate systems for reporting, counting and mapping homophobic crime. This includes third party reporting for victims to report anonymously through friendly groups/LGBT venues.
3. Trust in the police is too low. Confidence building measures, such as joint events, need to be undertaken to build relationships between the local lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities and authorities involved in community safety. These should be visible to all.
4. Many LGBT people experienced domestic violence. Domestic violence work undertaken within the borough needs include the issue of same-sex domestic violence.
5. Isolation breeds fear of crime. Developing the LGBT community should bring with it a lesser fear of crime. Where LGBT groups meet, and LGBT people gather, crime prevention measures should be considered.
6. Homophobic crimes are as damaging as racist crimes. LBBB Housing Directorate should include homophobic incidents in its harassment response.

2) overcoming parenting discrimination

1. LGBT people are often invisible. Staff training in agencies dealing with children locally should ensure issues of discrimination against LGBT people and challenging homophobia is visible and actively included.
2. Many LGBT people would like to foster or adopt. LBBB Social Services should actively seek LGBT adoptive and foster parents from the LGBT community following the recent legal changes, and seek to work with agencies like the Albert Kennedy Trust in supporting lesbian and gay young people at risk.
3. LGBT people are not seen as a specific group with separate cultural needs. LGBT clients of social services should be consulted to measure the understanding of, efficacy of and confidence in policies, services and procedures impacting on them.
4. The invisibility of LGBT clients should not lead to an assumption that they do not exist.
5. LGBT parents and their children are under added pressure due to society's attitudes. The Council should investigate how it could support LGBT parents through local groups and groups such as Pink Parents

3) overcoming financial discrimination

1. LGBT people find their partners are cut out of the local government and nhs pension schemes. The Council should support proposed changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme and be flexible were possible in recognising same sex couples.
2. LGBT people can't marry. The Council should recognise the GLA register of gay and lesbian partnerships where evidence is required and support the proposed partnership law for LGB couples.
3. Trading Standards should bear in mind the common advice by financial institutions for gay men to lie in forms

4) overcoming employment discrimination

1. LGBT issues are often invisible. LBBD's Personnel section should ensure homophobia is specifically included and explained in its harassment and grievance procedures, and should analyse cases annually.
2. LGBT staff often feel excluded. They should continue to be included in the Staff Attitude Survey to measure the understanding of, efficacy of and confidence in personnel policies, services and procedures impacting on them.
3. Employment contracts offer security. The Council should ensure its employment contracts includes adherence to the equal opportunities policy referring to sexuality.
4. The Equal Treatment Directive becomes law December 2003. Personnel should begin preparations for the implementation of the EU Equal Treatment Directive
5. LGBT people are often invisible in training courses. Personnel department should undertake a review of its training courses and policies and procedures (such as compassionate leave) to ensure that discrimination against LGBT people and the issue of challenging homophobia is visible and actively included.

5) equality in service provision

1. LGBT people are often invisible. The Council should improve visibility of LGBT in its communications, ensuring that LGBT issues are promoted in the same way as those of other minority groups, in news releases, internal and external documents including the Citizen.
2. LGBT demography is a developing area. The Council should use the new census question on partnership to identify numbers of cohabiting gay and lesbian couples (in comparison with other boroughs), identifying areas of residential concentration within the borough, profiling the ethnicity, age etc of the identified couples,
3. LGBT people have different needs. The Council should consult formally with LGBT communities on specific issues, and examine where services might be better provided in a targeted way rather than in a generic and mainstreamed way.
4. LGBT people have different needs. LGBT issues must be highlighted within any equalities action plans, ensuring the visibility of these issues within equalities work and publications in the borough.
5. Events can tackle invisibility. Events of specific interest should be celebrated/marked as appropriate ensuring the visibility of the target groups. (Pride, World AIDS Day etc).

6) promoting health and well-being

1. Gay men's sexual health issues must be tackled appropriately. In HIV health promotion there should be appropriate weighting for gay men in terms of resources for service provision and promotion, bearing in mind the needs of other excluded communities.

2. Gay men's sexual health issues must be tackled appropriately. The Council should stress the importance of targeting Hepatitis C through health promotion to relevant bodies and in any sexual health promotion it undertakes again with similar weighting based on those affected.
3. LGBT people and issues can often be invisible. Professional training offered to those working within social services should include a full equality agenda including issues around homophobia and heterosexism.
4. LGBT people are often under more mental stress. Mental health services should examine providing or supporting targeted assistance for the LGBT communities.
5. LGBT people and issues can often be invisible. Training for carers, social workers and other staff should include the needs of LGBT clients.
6. LGBT people require resourced support groups in the borough. The council should discuss with the health authority the provision for support groups in the borough and how they can best be supported and developed.
7. LGBT people need to have GPs they can trust. The PCT should examine solutions to the problems that many local LGBT people are having in registering with a GP, and in finding a GP they feel they can trust
8. LGBT people and issues can often be invisible. For each client group social services should consider the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender clients.

7) growing up safe and secure

1. Most people realise their sexuality while at school. LEA/School counselling and support services should be fully aware of issues of developing sexual identities and be ready to provide appropriate services to students requiring it.
2. Young LGBT people require support. The Youth Service should ensure an active and flexible approach to providing support and development opportunities through a specific lesbian/gay /bisexual/ transgender focussed programme supporting the work of, and working in partnership with other lesbian and gay youth projects.
3. Support for young LGBT people needs to be appropriate. LGBT students in schools, the sixth form college and local universities should be consulted to measure the understanding of, efficacy of and confidence in policies, services and procedures impacting on them.
4. Section 28 leads to many misunderstandings and restricts action. Until such time as Section 28 is amended the LEA should ensure that schools understand that they are not hindered by it, and that it only applies to the LEA and other council departments.
5. LGBT people and issues can be invisible. LEA advice and guidance on preventing and dealing with bullying should include a range of issues affecting children that are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
6. LGBT parents and their children are under particular pressure. LEA guidance to schools on working with parents should make particular reference to the potential homophobia that could affect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parents.

8) greater security in housing

1. LGBT people have been discriminated against in housing policies. Allocation and Tenancy policies in the council and in other social landlords should not discriminate against LGBT couples who cannot marry, it is important for key staff to be aware of this.
2. LGBT people and issues can be invisible. The council and other social landlords should undertake a review of its housing training courses and policies and procedures to ensure discrimination against LGBT people and challenging homophobia is visible and actively included.
3. LGBT people are often excluded by fear from participating openly in public consultation. LGBT tenants and users of the social landlord housing service should be consulted to measure the

understanding of, efficacy of and confidence in policies and procedures impacting on them, co-ordinated by the corporate equalities function.

4. Work with private sector landlords and other social landlords should include the promotion of the council's equal opportunities principles.
5. Young LGBT are more likely to be made homeless at a vulnerable time than other young people. Social landlords should consider including vulnerable young LGBT people in their homelessness policies.

9) inclusion in regeneration

1. LGBT issues have been absent from the regeneration debate. The Council should ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups are included in regeneration bids to build a community that supports all diverse sections (such as lesbians, Asian lesbians and gay men, transgender people etc)
2. The council has great power to affect change. The council should look as how it can intervene in the local LGBT economy to bring about the development of provision, focusing on possible LGBT-friendly areas.

10) celebrating diversity, promoting culture

1. LGBT people and issues can be invisible. The Cultural Strategy should be inclusive of LGBT people and aim to overcome the invisibility of the communities.
2. LGBT people and issues can be invisible. Key events, such as Pride, should be marked by arts events and exhibitions
3. LGBT people may not feel able to ask for specific books. A consultation exercise and stock review in libraries should be undertaken to ensure that adequate materials of interest to LGBT people are available.
4. LGBT sport is a growing area. Sporting activities targeted at these communities (in association with local and London groups and the international gay games bodies) should be undertaken and supported.

11) supporting stronger communities

1. The LGBT voluntary sector is undeveloped. Community Development staff and other community development functions should work with other bodies to see whether appropriate lesbian/gay etc voluntary sector groups exist to provide identified services
2. The LGBT voluntary sector is undeveloped. Community Development staff should ensure that grant applications from groups representing lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender people are encouraged and supported where appropriate
3. The council may be funding groups that are homophobic in their service delivery. The Council should, through its Third Sector work, explore how compliance with its equal opportunities policies can be ensured by groups contracted.

12) establishing partnership rights

1. Until such time as a partnership law is passed, the GLA register is all there is. The council and other public sector bodies should support the GLA's partnership register & use where appropriate
2. The council and other local public sector bodies should support changes to the law, and participate in the Governments proposed consultation in 2003, to enable full legal partnerships to take place.
3. The council and other local public sector bodies should recognise that in order to support stable partnerships in the borough there needs to be a strong lesbian and gay infrastructure.