

Liberate Annual Report 2016

Our mission

Our mission is to educate and inform on a wide range of LGBTQ issues and support those who identify as LGBTQ, their families and friends. We campaign to reform related laws and policies to ensure that LGBTQ people can enjoy the same freedom and protection as everyone else in the Bailiwick of Guernsey. We question social attitudes and behaviours which discriminate against LGBTQ people and we offer advice and support to help tackle discrimination, in all its forms, against LGBTQ people. We positively promote awareness of the LGBTQ community and encourage support from all social, professional and political entities. We host events where LGBTQ people can meet in a safe and supportive environment and we stage fundraising events to support specific projects.

The Liberate Committee

Liberate is an inclusive Group which welcomes everyone irrespective of their sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief, race or disability. We are a local charity and we were founded on 15th February 2014 in Guernsey. Six months later we assisted in the establishment of a separate branch of the charity in Jersey. Liberate is made up of a virtual rainbow of people from every gender and sexual identity imaginable. By having such a diverse crowd involved, we can operate on many different levels as we all bring something different to the group. The Chair is Pippa McCathie, Vice Chair is Ellie Jones, the Treasurer is Niall McCathie and, since Kara Budge stepped down as Secretary when she left the island, Lauren McSwiggan has taken up that role. Along with her role as Vice Chair, Ellie has taken on the paid post of part time co-ordinator, this was made possible by a generous grant from the Guernsey Community Foundation.

Goals and Objectives

The following is a list of on-going projects or projects that Liberate aims to put in place:

1. To continue to develop education programmes for Guernsey schools, working in conjunction with “The Hub” - to tackle homophobia, bi-phobia and transphobia and help schools to become LGBTQ inclusive. We visit schools

regularly, at their request, as an Approved Schools Support Agency. We also aim to develop peer led youth support networks.

2. To continue to deliver training to businesses and States Departments on equality and diversity and develop a 'kitemark' system whereby organisations can evidence that they have signed up to these elements.
3. To continue to work with the States to help shape policy. Develop further outreach programmes for LGBTQ people within the Island from youth to adulthood and through to old age - creating regular social days, clubs, groups, and events.
4. Ensure **ALL** members of the LGBTQ community can access our services, by increasing the work we do with other minority groups through the close links we have developed with the GDA (Guernsey Disability Alliance) and MIND.
5. To ensure that we have positive LGBTQ role models and allies who are visible in the wider community, especially within schools, sport and the government.
6. Develop strategies to help with the specific needs of the older LGBTQ population and their care. Organise fundraising and community events - including Channel Islands Pride in 2018 and 2020 - which create wider visibility and therefore acceptance of LGBTQ people in the community, and engage in other island events, to give a more visible presence of the LGBTQ community within the Bailiwick.
7. Continue to work with mental health professionals and charities, general practitioners and the HSSD, especially regarding the Trans* community, on inclusive care, and providing a clear, effective and comprehensive care pathway.
8. Continue to work with the LGBTQ liaison officers within the police, the prison and probation services that we introduced at the beginning of 2017.
9. Continue to develop our online resources, including webpages, social media and video blogs, to educate and support LGBTQ individuals, allies, friends, families and colleagues.
10. Liaise with government and professional services to provide training on the specific needs and requirements of transgender people, e.g. passport officials, doctors' surgeries, police and prison officers.
11. Offer a support system to LGBTQ individuals suffering discrimination or prejudice in the work place or within education.
12. Keep continuing pressure on and work with the States to reform laws and policies that discriminate against LGBTQ people, especially regarding outdated forms and procedures, e.g. continue to lobby for the States to introduce gender

recognition certificates, gender neutral forms and an intersex option on birth certificates.

13. Lobby and work with the States to bring in general equality legislation as part of a larger pressure group.
14. Implement marketing and awareness plans around the above projects.
15. Negotiate corporate sponsorship where needed for projects such as Channel Islands Pride.
16. Develop income streams through our training sessions, and via advertising on our website and social media pages to businesses wishing to connect with the LGBTQ community in Guernsey.

Highlights and achievements in 2016

Since the Charity's inception we have campaigned tirelessly for change and we have witnessed and helped to achieve several key changes. We have also staged events and provided essential support. Here are some of our achievements so far:

SAME SEX MARRIAGE:

The States of Guernsey voted to introduce same sex marriage in December 2015. Liberate, however, kept up the pressure and the law will be in place at the end of April 2017, a satisfyingly speedy result.

GUERNSEY PRIDE:

The Charity staged the first Guernsey based Channel Island's Pride event in 2016 which was an unqualified success, a joyous rainbow party for all sections of the community.

EDUCATION:

We are now an approved States of Guernsey School Support Agency. We have delivered diversity, equality and inclusion training to various organisations including States bodies, schools and other charities.

TRANS CLUB & PATHWAY:

We have worked with local organisations towards installing pathways to UK support and healthcare providers for gender reassignment treatment and we have seen the States of Guernsey change their policy and agree to fund this reassignment. We have also launched a dedicated Trans web resource and created a club, assisted by a professional counsellor, for our Trans community.

RECOGNITION WITHIN THE WIDER COMMUNITY:

Liberate was included in a shortlist of 3 charities for the Guernsey Community Foundation's Charity of the Year Award in 2015. We were nominated in this category for 2016, and shortlisted for Organising Committee of the Year for Channel Islands Pride, Guernsey, and our Vice Chair, Ellie Jones, was shortlisted for Outstanding Individual Achievement.

Support

Sad though it may be, because of some people's attitudes to, and lack of knowledge about, the LGBTQ community, those with questions about their sexuality and those who still haven't shared their orientation with their parents, family, friends, often need the support of someone who has been there. We at Liberate have worked to provide this support since 2014, both privately and publicly, to all who felt the need for it. We have provided this support to LGBTQ individuals, their family and friends through our confidential support service and online platforms, and by encouraging individuals from every walk of life to join the Charity and promote diversity within the wider community.