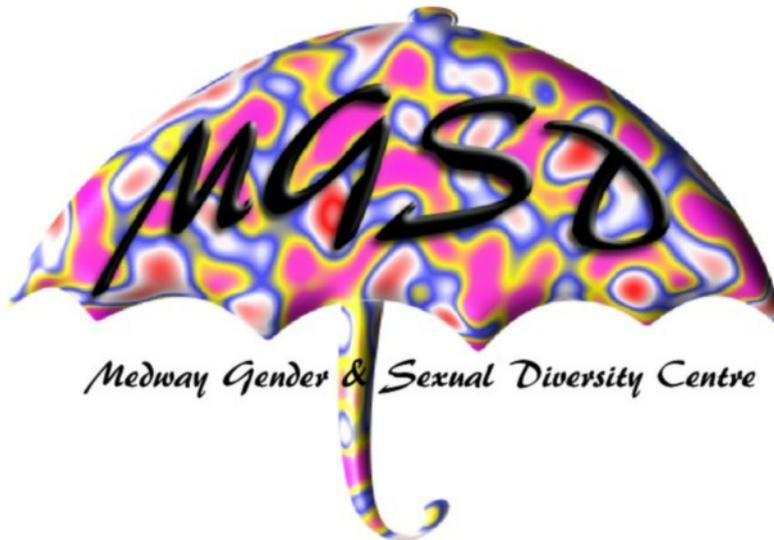


South East Gender Initiative Medway Gender & Sexual Diversity Centre



Annual Report 2016 /17

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Supporters
Including private donations



Annual report 2016/17

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Chairs Statement

Hilary Cooke, Chair of the management team 2017.

This Annual Report is published on behalf of the South East Gender Initiative (SEGI) and Medway Gender & Sexual Diversity Centre (MGSDC). It covers the actions and activities carried out during the period April 2016 - April 2017, to achieve its aims and objectives.

Firstly I would like to thank all the people and supporters who have helped support and run SEGI / MGSDC over the years. The idea behind a Medway based transgender support project was developed by Jacqui Alyn-Stacey and her partner Martin Weeds, with Hilary Cooke and Peter Moorcraft. They formed the management team to begin the project, and through their voluntary donations of time and funding they moved the project from an idea to a functioning support organisation. We must also thank all our financial supporters who kindly donated funds or provided grants. As well as donations from individuals and organisations, they included a grant for counselling from Medway Council and a grant to set up our youth group from the Kent Community Fund (KCF) Brook Trust.

The South East Gender Initiative was formed in October 2011 with the coming together of the management committee. SEGI is a Constituted Not For Profit Community Group also known as the Medway Gender & Sexual Diversity Centre (MGSDC) based in Rochester, Medway, Kent. The members of the management committee come from a diverse background and have direct experience of, and working with, lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender* people, people with gender dysphoria, people who have or are undergoing gender reassignment, health promotion programs for LGBT people, transgender awareness training to organisations i.e. Kent Police, NHS, counsellors and other health professionals and providers of health and wellbeing services.

The Equality Act 2010 has provided a duty on public bodies and organisations working on their behalf to engage with service users to ensure that those with protected characteristics, including gender identity and sexual orientation are not discriminated against. This act has brought awareness of transgender people and the issues they face to the fore and media interest and broadcasts on transgender issues have and will increase the number of people who may seek help to understand and come to terms with their own gender identity.

SEGI / MGSDC promotes awareness of and provides practical services for Transgender* / Transsexual* and Non-Binary* Gender people in Medway and Kent through peer support, mentoring and advice, delivered from the Rochester based drop-in facility, the Medway Gender and Sexual Diversity Centre (MGSDC) 331 High Street, Rochester, Medway, Kent ME1 1DA. The MGSDC was the first Transsexual/Transgender orientated drop-in centre based in Medway Kent.

SEGI / MGSDC Mission

The South East Gender Initiative (SEGI) / Medway Sexual Diversity Centre (MGSDC) exists to promote and improve the health and wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual / Transgender people and those Questioning their Gender Identity or Sexuality through

Support, Education, Training and Information

SEGI / MGSDC provides a place where LGBTQ people their families and friends can meet in a safe environment to enable them to receive peer support, education, training, advice, and information, signposting opportunities for service users to access services with partnership organisations and other service providers.

SEGI / MGSDC also provides a resource to other organisations, public bodies and private companies to enable them to understand the needs of the LGBTQ community in the South East of England.

LGBTQ Needs Assessment

The published evidence about the needs of Transsexual/Transgender people nationally is growing, and it all continues to point to poor levels of support in all areas, leaving the transgender community feeling discriminated against in the work place, by service providers, and by health care providers. This leads to poor mental health and wellbeing outcomes with a high rate of transgender people attempting suicide due to lack of support. A lot of good work is going on to change the way transgender people are treated by society, with better representation within the media and by political initiatives to highlight the issues and improve the lives of transgender people in the UK. The evidence about the needs of transgender people living working or socialising in Medway, Kent and the surrounding south east area is limited but reflects the national picture. Most of the research carried out included Transgender people within a larger LGBT group. Questions asked in LGBT surveys were in the main aimed at the LGB community therefore little data is available regarding the needs of the Transgender population.

There have been three surveys of the LGBT community in Medway and Kent:

Medway Health Promotion survey - Many Voices Medway LGBT Consultation 2005
Metro Centre - Branching Out Kent & Medway LGBT Needs Assessment 2008
Metro Centre - East Kent Needs Assessment 2010

These assessments all point to the needs of LGBT people in Medway & Kent.

Mental Health and Wellbeing - 82% of respondents to the 2005 survey felt emotionally or mentally distressed as a result of issues related to being LGBT.

Social Acceptance – 32% of respondents to the 2005 survey said there were places they avoided because of homophobic / trans phobic reaction from others.

Bullying in School and College – 71% of respondents to the 2005 survey advised they though not enough was being done to tackle bullying in school or college.

Crime, Harassment and Community Safety – of respondents to the 2005 survey:

- 60% advised they had been verbally abused
- 37% advised they had been physically attacked
- 17% had been attacked with a weapon
- 17% had property damaged
- 47% had been threatened with 'outing'
- 33% were subject to graffiti
- 7% had offensive mail

The latest national surveys also confirmed that Mental Health, Social Acceptance, Bullying and Hate Crime are all still of concern to the LGBTQ community.

METRO Centre Youth Chances Survey reported in 2014

Almost half of young gay people have contemplated suicide over their sexuality and 50 per cent have suffered with mental health issues. A new report published in January 2014 warned that a generation of lesbian, gay and transgender people are facing a mental health crisis prompting concerns that schools and health services are failing gay teenagers.

The Youth Chances project 2016

England's largest social study into the lives of young LGBT people , warned that schools neglecting the issues affecting gay teenagers contribute to a climate of fear and hostility. Led by METRO Charity in collaboration with Ergo Consulting and the University of Greenwich, the project questioned more than 7,126 young LGBT people between the ages of 16 and 25 in England in a five year groundbreaking research project funded by the Big Lottery Fund, making it the biggest and most representative study of its kind.

The project found that

- 52% of those questioned had self-harmed,
- 42% had sought medical help for anxiety or depression and
- 44% reported having thought about suicide.

One of the key findings found that "Trans young people face the greatest levels of disadvantage and discrimination and report lower overall satisfaction with their lives.36% of trans respondents agreed with the statement 'In most ways my life is close to my ideal', compared to 47% of LGBQ respondents and 51% of heterosexual non-trans respondents."

<http://www.metrocharity.org.uk/research/2016/nov/10/national-youth-chances>

Stonewall - LGBT in Britain - Trans Report

Based on the experiences of more than 800 trans and non-binary people who took part in our research with YouGov.

One in eight trans employees (12 per cent) have been physically attacked by a colleague or customer in the last year

Half of trans people (51 per cent) have hidden their identity at work for fear of discrimination

A quarter of trans people (25 per cent) have experienced homelessness

LGBT in Britain - Trans Report is Stonewall's new research, based on research with 871 trans and non-binary people by YouGov and highlighting the profound levels of discrimination and hate crime faced by trans people in Britain today

Key findings

- Two in five trans people (42 per cent) who would like to undergo medical intervention as part of their transition, haven't done so yet, because they fear the consequences it might have on their family life.
- Almost half (48 per cent) of trans people don't feel comfortable using public toilets through fear of discrimination or harassment.
- A third of trans people (34 per cent) have been discriminated against because of their gender identity when visiting a café, restaurant, bar or nightclub in the last year.
- More than a quarter (28 per cent) of trans people in a relationship in the last year have faced domestic abuse from a partner.
- More than two in five trans people (44 per cent) avoid certain streets because they don't feel safe there as an LGBT person.
- One in four (25 per cent) were discriminated against when looking for a house or flat to rent or buy in the last year. One in five non-binary people (20 per cent) have experienced discrimination while looking for a new home.
- When accessing general healthcare services in the last year, two in five trans people (41 per cent) said healthcare staff lacked understanding of trans health needs.
- More than a third of trans students (36 per cent) in higher education have experienced negative comments or behaviour from staff in the last year.

<http://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-trans-report>

House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee Transgender Equality First Report of Session 2015–16.

The Women and Equalities Committee The Women and Equalities Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Government Equalities Office and associated public bodies.

Summary

Fairness and equality are basic British values. A litmus test for any society that upholds those values is how far it protects even the most marginalised groups. Britain has been among the countries going furthest in recognising lesbian, gay and bisexual rights, but we are still failing this test in respect of trans people, despite welcome progress.

High levels of transphobia are experienced by individuals on a daily basis (including in the provision of public services)—with serious results. About half of young trans people and a third of trans adults attempt suicide. The recent deaths in custody of two trans women, and the case of a trans woman who was placed in a men’s prison, are particularly stark illustrations of the issues.

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmwomeq/390/390.pdf>

How have we worked to promote the Aims of South East Gender Initiative? ·

Within the established 'Medway Gender & Sexual Diversity Centre' at 331 High Street Rochester ME1 1DA we facilitate the provision of peer support for the transgender community.

During the 2016/2017 period we have successfully achieved the following:

- Online telephone and face to face support- practical advice, support, information to the trans community, peer support, support for family members and their supporters.
- July 2016 we began our Trans Youth Group. This has been very successful and continued to grow to 21 young members under 25. This is an area of support that is needed in Medway with young people currently needing help having to travel to other locations to access peer support services.
- In July 2017 we began a support group for the parents and carers of transgender children who meet on the first Thursday of each month.
- Continuation of our regular adult support group on Thursday evenings. We have regular drop ins of people looking for support and advice.
- Research project

Counselling - We also provide a dedicated counselling service to help with issues including gender identity and sexual orientation as well as general issues that affect peoples' mental health and wellbeing. This service is open to anyone who needs support, not just members of our support groups. We canvas members of our peer support group to assess what information and activities they require to help them improve their lives and life choices. We have provided information, education materials on topics of interest to the group as well as an opportunity for social interaction. Members of the peer support group have advised that they find the service very useful, that it has helped improve their lives. Peer support and counselling have given them a chance to explore the opportunities that are available to help them reach their potential and live happier fulfilling lives.

Education – raising awareness and understanding among health and social care professionals, schools, employers and public service providers, consulting with HR teams. Members of the SEGI Management Team sit on local advisory groups and/or work with other organisations to help inform on, and raise awareness of, the needs of the transgender community. These groups and organisations include: Kent Independent Police Advisory Groups. Kent & Medway Community NHS Trust, Sexual Health Patient Advisory Group,,Medway Council, Medway Community Voluntary Services, Metro Centre.

Training - working in partnership with other agencies, to provide a resource on Transsexual/Transgender issues. We continue to work to promote greater understanding of transgender issues among the wider community.

Information - encouraging greater integration-reduction of poverty, ill health, unemployment, mental suffering, risk of self-harm, reporting of trans phobic crime.

Working with and for the transgender community we have encouraged trans people to socialise and integrate with the wider community, to help reduce isolation, depression and mental suffering. Provided a dedicated counselling service to combat mental health issues. Held regular meetings with Kent Police Local Community Liaison Officers to build confidence in reporting Hate Crime

Profit & Loss For Period Covering 01/04/2016 to 31/03/2017

Revenues

Income

<i>Interest Income</i>	£0.00
<i>Other Income</i>	£1.37
<i>Grants</i>	£5,000.00
<i>Sales</i>	
<i>Use of Rooms</i>	£7,374.38

Total Revenue **£12,375.75**

Expenses

Expenses

Insurance

Liability Insurance £129.32

Miscellaneous £440.00

Office Supplies £32.34

Professional Fees Counselling £1,557.50

Rent

Evolution £7,410.00

Repairs

Computer Repairs £113.45

Travel

Travel / Counselling Costs £739.20

Utilities

Electric £678.00

Internet £454.73

Phone £315.12

Water £506.09

Total Expenses **£12,375.75**

Net income for Period **£0.00**

Management Team

Trustee / Chair Hilary Cooke..... T
Trustee / Treasurer Kim Ricketts.....
Trustee / Members Peter Moorcraft.....
Trustee / Secretary Karen Seymour-Jones

The SEGI / MGSDC is a not for profit community group managed by a team of 4 individuals. The management team is bound by the constitution document. The SEGI / MGSD Centre based in Rochester Medway provides a safe place where LGBTQ people can discuss the issues that affect their lives and access information to help them move forward in their life. Members of the SEGI / MGSDC management team have worked with the LGB and Transgender community in Medway since the late 1980's, providing advice and information via Medway NHS Health Promotion Service, Medway Gay Men's Health Project and XESGEN Project. This work included providing health & wellbeing / HIV prevention information, peer support and advice to Transsexual/Transgender people, providing diversity training to Kent Police, NHS Staff, Counsellors and other health professionals / organisations. They have also been involved in health and wellbeing initiatives to reduce smoking and alcohol consumption.

Trustee / Chair / Secretary - Hilary Cooke, Dip TGBE, MGBT, HABC-NADT

Hilary is an Equality & Diversity Trainer and a founder member of XESGEN Project SEGI / MGSDC. She provides Gender Awareness and Equality & Diversity training on behalf of SEGI / MGSDC, as well as helping to facilitate peer support groups. Hilary also represents the transgender community on Kent Independent Police Advisory Groups, and works with other groups & organisations and the wider LGBTQ community

Trustee / Treasurer - Kim Ricketts

Kim has acted as Treasurer for SEGI / MGSDC since April 2013. Kim has worked in adult education providing training to counselling students as well as diversity training. Kim is a qualified Counsellor specialising in gender and sexuality issues.

Trustee / Member - Peter Moorcraft

Peter is a founder member of Medway Gay Mens Project, SEGI / MGSDC and a Professional Consultant on Human Sexuality & Gender Diversity. Peter has worked with NHS and Public Health to promote sexual health and wellbeing initiatives and works with other LGBT groups & organisations.

Trustee / Secretary – Karen Seymour-Jones BSc (Hons) Psych (Open)

Karen joined us having volunteered for the Metro Charity, initially to help with the hair removal research project. She then continued to help and run the youth group and accepted the position of Secretary. Having recently gained a first class honours degree in psychology from the Open University, Karen has a special interest in gender and sexual equality and has been an LGBT ally for many years. Karen has also supported and raised money for the Terrence Higgins Trust and Metro Charity.

Looking Forward 2018

In the coming year SEGI / MGSDC will continue to provide its peer support and counselling services to the LGBTQ population of Medway & Kent. We will also continue to work with other organisations to promote greater awareness and understanding of the issues that affect transgender people.

We will continue to run our popular youth group and parent's group.

Contact Details

The South East Gender Initiative is based in Rochester and can be contacted as follows.

Postal address:

**South East Gender Initiative
Medway Gender & Sexual Diversity Centre
331 High Street
Rochester
Medway
ME1 1DA**

Telephone: **01634 408668** (Confidential Answering Service)

email: **info@mgsd-centre.org** **info@genderinit.org**

Website: **www.mgsd-centre.org** **www.genderinit.org**

Facebook: **www.facebook.com/MGSDC** **www.facebook.com/genderinit**

