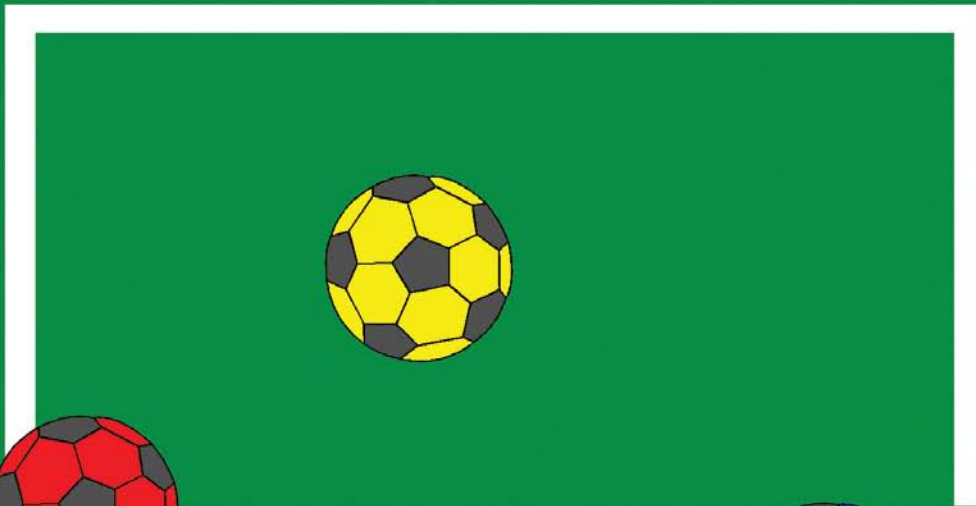


Bristol 2009

OUTtalk



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OUTtalk is the newsletter of the Communication Workers Union's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Advisory Committee.

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the union, the committee or the editorial team.

If you have any items you would like published in the newsletter, please send them to:

CWU, Equal Opportunities Department, 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RX or e-mail: equality@cwu.org

Edited by **Duncan Strivens**.

ED'S TALK

Welcome to this Bristol edition of *OUTtalk*, to co inside with the CWU's Annual LGBT Conference.

I was saddened to read of the death of Stephen Gately. Stephen was a member of a high profile boy band, and took the brave decision in 1999 to come out as gay in an interview with the Sun newspaper. While I'm no fan of Boyzone or their music, what Stephen has shown is there are LGBT people in all walks of life.

While being OUT in the music world is becoming more common, however to be an OUT high profile footballer is a different story, Fevzi Hussein shows us in his interview (Centre Fold) with Chris Basiurski, Chair of the Gay Football Supports Network, the problems that are faced within the football community.

On this subject, at this year's TUC conference, a meeting was held to discuss tackling homophobia and transphobia in sport. It is good to see a subject that this union started tackling 3 years ago has now reached TUC level, and that other major trade unions are now taking part in the campaign.

As I write this, US president Barak Obama, is in the news again over the US policy of "Don't Ask Don't Tell". This is the ban on being openly OUT in the US military service. Obama has pledged to gay rights campaigners that he will end the ban; he stated "we should not be punishing patriotic Americans who have stepped forward to serve our county". Since its inception in 1993, almost 13,000 service-members have been dismissed under the Law.

Obama went on to say " you will see a time in which we as a nation finally recognize relationships between two men



or two women as just as real and admirable as relationships between a man and a woman" However he has *NOT* set out any timetable as to when these events might happen within his presidency, watch this space?

Thanks again to my colleague John Monk, for supplying us with a comprehensive report (page 8) on this years TUC LGBT Conference held in July. I should also like to apologise to John for spelling his name wrong in the last edition of *OUTtalk*.

Also in this edition, Gary Williams's reports on the Faith, Homophobia, Transphobia and Human Rights Conference (page 10) and you'll find one of my maps and LGBT venue guides for Bristol on the back cover.

Have a good conference.
Duncan Strivens Editor

The CWU Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Advisory Committee 2008/2009

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CHAIR'S TALK

Welcome to the 2009 LGBT Conference edition of *OUTtalk*, and following our now well-established policy of taking our conference around the country, after visiting London, Newcastle, Glasgow, Manchester, Belfast and Swansea in past years, this time the venue is Bristol.

And in doing a bit of background research I came upon what at first sight seemed to be a wonderful, positive and heart-warming piece of news from Bristol – the National Lottery has made a grant of nearly £400,000 to the local branch of EACH (“Educational Action Challenging Homophobia”) an award-winning charity dedicated to combating homophobic bullying. Surely good news that no reasonable person could find fault with?

But, unfortunately, things are never that simple.

Richard Eddy, leader of the Conservative opposition on Bristol City Council said, “I think this is a mistaken and misguided, outrageous waste of money. Sadly, it seems to be further confirmation that the Big Lottery has long since ceased to impartially distribute lottery cash to worthwhile and respected causes, instead it seems obliged to dole out punters’ money to a raft of politically correct lobbies which clearly sit within the Labour Government’s priority.”

Councillor Eddy has a bit of previous in equality matters – or in his case “doesn’t matter!” – and has been photographed with a “life-sized” goliwog which he adopted as the official mascot of Bristol Conservatives. And what was his response to criticism? He saw “nothing wrong with it.”

David Cameron’s new cuddly, gay-friendly Tory Party has made much of its overtures to the LGBT community, and its heartfelt apology for Section 28. But I suspect that Councillor Eddy is still far more representative of the party, and what we can expect if they come to power next year, than “honest” Dave. I think it safe to assume that Mr Eddy didn’t attend the well-publicised LGBT event held in Manchester’s Canal Street during the recent Tory Party Conference.



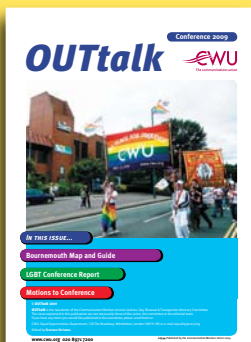
The Bristol Evening Post, owned by the *Daily Mail*, showed where it stood by asking “... so you call this equality?”. And some of the comments posted on its website were from the usual right-wing, racist, sexist, homophobic types who seem to haunt these sites.

Not too many years ago similar comments to Eddy’s would have been made in regard to dealing with racism. Thankfully, attitudes to racism have changed and it is good to see that in some quarters the same is happening as regards homophobia. The effects of racism are similar to homophobia, with the same disastrous consequences for individuals, families and society in general.

There were plenty of Bristolians who not only had no problem with the lottery grant, but showed their disgust at such remarks.

I guess that it’s not for nothing that Eddy is leader of the Opposition Conservative Party on Bristol City Council – long may they remain in opposition both in Bristol and in the country as a whole.

Dave Daniel LGBTAC Chair



OUTtalk is produced on a regular basis and is now sent out as a PDF version via Email to members and branches on the LGBTAC mailing list. Hard copies are still available on request. If you are not already on the mailing list or your details have changed, please contact the CWU Equal Opportunities Department at Headquarters at:

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e-mail: equality@cwu.org

The mailing list is completely confidential.

This **OUTtalk** and previous editions are available on-line at **www.cwu.org** follow the links from the front page to the LGBTAC

INDIAN COURT REPEALS GAY SEX LAW



Indian court repeals gay sex law thanks to CWU LGBT committee!

On Sunday May 17th members of the union's LGBT committee and I assembled at the Indian embassy in London. We were there to celebrate International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO day). Our choice of venue was deliberate as our purpose was to present a letter to the Indian ambassador protesting at Section 377 of the Indian constitution which criminalizes gay sex between adults.

Section 377 became law in 1860. It punished and criminalized anyone who "...voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal" or anyone who indulged in a range of sexual acts from fellatio and anal sex to mutual masturbation.

Unfortunately the door to the embassy was locked so I posted the letter through the letter box and we all went home after saying farewell and thanks to the twenty or thirty police who were protecting us.

On July 2nd I was informed that High Court in Delhi had ruled that the ban on gay sex between adults violated fundamental human rights. The ruling said: "As it stands, Section 377 denies a gay person a right to full personhood which is implicit in notion of life under Article 21 of the Constitution."

It would be nice to think that a letter of protest from the CWU contributed to the repeal of an archaic and inhuman piece of legislation in another country. The decision in the Indian High Court certainly came after a long legal fight started in 2001 by the Naz Foundation of

India and supported by writers, film makers, lawyers and many organizations including Human Rights Watch, the Indian Health Ministry who saw it as a deterrent to fighting HIV/AIDS, and more recently the CWU.

Some religious and political groups have expressed outrage at the High Court ruling. Some have indicated they may appeal. Until they do we can only celebrate the repeal of a 149-year old statute which was the relic of the British Raj. It had been used by the authorities to detain, harass, blackmail, and rape lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals for years. . In fact Section 377 was used by the police in 2004 to arrest several members of the Naz Foundation.

My hope is that the repeal of Section 377 will lead to greater tolerance, acceptance of, and equality for, people of all sexual orientations in India.

Our aim as a union must be to continue to campaign for the end to what is effectively state sponsored homophobia in the 86 member countries of the UN where consensual same sex acts between consenting adults are criminalized.

In the 21st century it cannot be right that human beings are tortured, lashed, imprisoned, stoned, beheaded, hung, or thrown off buildings because of their sexual orientation.

After all, the sexual freedom of lesbians and gays is a measure of the freedom, liberty and equality of all in a society.

Linda Roy
National Equality Officer

Photos supplied by Laurie Smith

WELCOME FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Greetings to all the delegates, and visitors to the LGBT Equality Conference. As front-line activists, your work makes a vital contribution to the work of the whole of the CWU. Only by your activities can we guarantee that the union is paying sufficient attention in carrying through the struggle against homophobia in the workplace, and in society at large.

Recently we witnessed another small step in the long fight for equality. Lesbian couples who use IVF can now register both their names on the birth certificate. Congratulations to all those who have fought for this measure. Of course, such progress is met by disdain from some quarters and politicians, with suggestions that rights for lesbian parents are a further attack upon marriage, and even that this is "madness." Such responses remind us how hard won such victories are, and how fragile the victory if we let our campaigning stop.

Recently, Tory MEP Roger Helmer wrote that homophobia is "not so much a word as a political agenda", a "propaganda device designed to denigrate and stigmatise", which is aimed at "most people" (ie heterosexuals). There remain those who would reverse



all the gains that have arisen from struggles of the gay population. Keep up the fight to make sure they cannot be successful.

Have a good conference.

Billy Hayes
General Secretary

BOURNE FREE: BOURNEMOUTH'S PRIDE FESTIVAL

The CWU members and friends turned up for a wet but enjoyable weekend on Saturday 11th July with the banner getting it's annual airing (or wash) in Bournemouth. The parade took a new route this year encompassing more of the town. The parade was followed by music on stage and various stalls in the town's Triangle area.

Gary Williams
Solent



HOMOPHOBIA IN SPORT: FOOTBALL

OUTtalk thought it would bring to its readers attention to a different perspective in terms of raising awareness on issues relevant to our LGBT workforce.

Homophobia in sport [football] has been thrust into the spotlight recently and the CWU's LGBT have also had a working party dedicated to working in this area for the last couple of years. Fevzi Hussein (FH) caught up with Chris Basiurski (CB), who is the Chair of the prominent Gay Football Supporters Network (GFSN) to find out some more information about what this organisation has been up to.

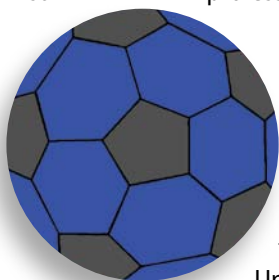


FH: What was the inspiration behind the GFSN being set-up?

CB: The GFSN was set up long before I was involved. In fact was set up informally more than 20 years ago. Gay football fans have been going to watch games for years and years and there was always an informal network for socialising. I believe it just evolved but the league sprung out of the GFSN. At our annual gettogethers in the earlier years people decided they needed a tournament to keep people out of the pub the whole time, teams were arranged by region, many of whom went home after and stayed together as teams, who eventually formed the league.

FH: Given the established gay football league set-up are there any gay footballers who have progressed on to greater things in terms of their football careers?

CB: There is one player who has actually gone on to play semi-professional terms and there are situations where we have had semi-pro football players step down into our league set-up. So it works both ways. We are still waiting for our first professional.



FH: What are the key reasons preventing professional footballers from 'coming out'?

CB: The situation is a bit ridiculous as clearly there are professional footballers out there who are gay. Unfortunately there is still a massive

stigma and players know that they will face ridicule from the terraces and ultimately their careers will be threatened. One thing I struggle to understand is why professional footballers who are gay and who have retired from the game still refuse to come out – but this is an indication of how big a problem we have with homophobic perceptions in football. These people should look at the example set by people such as John Ameochi, the ex-NBA basketball player and they will see that his post-pro career has been very well received.



FH: What role do you feel the media have played in helping to develop this perception?

CB: Undoubtedly they have played a big role. They seem very obsessed with this issue.. What we need are a series of reasoned sensible discussions on this subject to dispel the myths that exist. Max Clifford has admitted in the past to having being hired by clubs to help create false profiles

in the media for players. I don't like the practice but don't blame him, he is doing his job.

FH (CWU comment): If you look at programmes like Soccer A.M, while on many levels it can be perceived as being very funny it is also very macho and laddish in its outlook – this hardly sets the scene for any tolerance to be built around accepting the LGBT lifestyle.

FH: Are the Football Authorities doing enough to support the work of your organisation, if so how?

CB: In comparison to other football authorities around the world it is fair to say the English FA is streets ahead. However, I think I can say they should be doing a lot more. On a plus point I don't think there are any national FA's that are in a positive dialogue with groups such as ours. Our aim has to be to get people to accept that homophobia is no different to racism. It is a hate crime – with the help of specialist groups such as Kick It Out we hope that one day we will be able to look back on similar successes. The GFSN offered volunteers to act as liaison officers for the clubs to help them implement the new ground regulations, some were welcomed enthusiastically, others not.

FH: How virulent is the problem of homophobia in sport/football and how seriously are clubs taking this issue?

CB: There are obviously still big problems on the terraces and in the chat rooms. You only have to look at the Sol Campbell incident when Spurs fans were arrested for very obscene chanting towards him and the songs had lots of negative connotations (inc. gay ones). However there are some great examples too. Manchester City are definitely leading the way in this area. Spurs have also responded very well to the Sol Campbell saga. The onus is on the clubs to recognise, deal with and then to prevent homophobic incidents from happening. Our organisation is here to help any club and we hope more of them will tap into the expert help and guidance we are able to offer.

FH: Is there anything that trade unions can do help the GFSN?

CB: The CWU has been a has been very proactive on this issue and you have pushed us and Kick It Out along. We have recently attended a fringe meeting at the TUC too so this all bodes well for future trade union engagement. I think it is fair to say that the CWU have been very positive on this front.

FH: What has been the most successful action achieved by the GFSN to date?

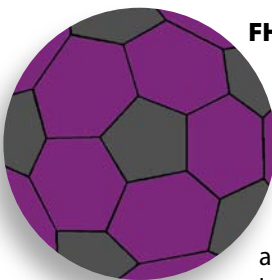
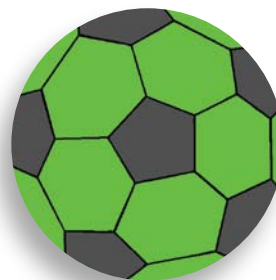
CB: One of the things that automatically spring to mind was the liaison officer programme to assist the clubs in

implementing the amendments to the ground regulations that apply to every single professional football club in the United Kingdom which now puts homophobia alongside racism in terms of importance. Some notable clubs did not want to co-operate on this project and suggested that 'there was no gays or gay related problems at their clubs (Chris stopped short of naming them!).

FH: If I said to you what message you would like to convey to all football fans, irrespective of their sexual orientation what would you say?

CB: We are not trying to stop the spontaneous nature out of football, or for fans to stop having a good time. What we want to do is to create a safe and tolerant environment where everyone can feel welcome and inclusive regardless of sexual orientation or any other factor. There should not be any barriers in football.

Fevzi Hussein
Equality Department



TUC LGBT CONFERENCE 2009 REPORT



On 2nd and 3rd July 2009 I joined members of the LGBTAC and the Equalities team at Head Office at the 10th annual TUC LGBT conference held at TUC Congress House in London. Conference was opened by Bev Miller from Unison who introduced the first two speakers, Sheila Bearcroft the TUC president and Brendan Barber, the TUC General Secretary. Sheila described how LGBT issues are now firmly integrated into TUC policies and congratulated conference for the work it had done ensuring LGBT issues were integrated. However she reminded us our 'enemies' are still a 'real threat' following the election of BNP MEP's. As Sheila said 'the agendas of the far right here and in Europe is homophobic and transphobic'. Full legal equality is still not complete and an 'injury to one is an injury to all'.

Brendan Barber's address to conference reflected on the real advantages made for LGBT people in the UK as well as the challenges we still face. He was delighted with progress made in the education field since last year's conference, with some movement with the Government on the issue of homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools; the work the TUC was doing to gain full statutory rights for equality reps in the workplace; the work done from the two Faith, Homophobia, Transphobia and Human Rights conferences; and the unions' responses to the single equality bill. However, there is still a wider societal battle with trying to change social attitudes

from those chanting homophobic abuse on football terraces to eradicating violent hate crimes against LGBT people. Mr Barber described how the political landscape was changing in the UK and Europe and that our opponents are stronger than they have ever been before.

Maria Exall from the CWU also addressed the conference as Chair of the LGBT committee who highlighted the work the committee had done throughout the year whilst representing the interests of LGBT workers in different sectors. The Equality Bill agenda has been foremost in the mind of the committee, particularly in relation to pensions equality and ambiguities in the bill relating to trans people. The committee had also met with the Education Minister and concerns were raised about faith schools still being allowed to teach that gay and lesbian relationships are wrong; about the appointment of Joel Edwards as a commissioner to the EHRC. Other issues taken up by the committee this year have been related to blood donation, international issues, treatment of LGBT asylum seekers and LGBT History month.

For the main conference business a high number of motions were debated, a number of which were related to the Single Equality Act which called upon the TUC to campaign to ensure the single equality act is equitable for LGBT people; the failure to recognise equality reps and facility time for reps

within the framework of the act; the engagement of union members in all workplaces to identify and oppose all forms of homophobia and transphobia.

Linda Roy, our Equalities Officer, spoke on Proposition 4 which called upon the TUC to continue to press for workplace equality representative to be given statutory rights. Linda expressed our disappointment that the issues of equality reps hadn't been addressed in the proposed bill and called upon other unions to respond to the consultation exercise and give their views. Proposition 5 from the University and College Union raised concern that despite equality gains we've made in recent years, some 'key liberation campaign issues have not been realised'. The proposition called for an event to focus on diversity within the LGBT communities and difference to heterosexual cultural norms and for the formal report of proceedings to be published. The CWU opposed this proposition as the proposition asked for each separate strand of LGBT to identify their own issues when we felt this would cause some division and caucuses into the TUC. The proposition was lost on a hand vote.

Maria Eagle MP then addressed conference. Maria was a late replacement for Harriet Harman, but as Equality Minister in a previous government role, with responsibility for disability issues, was delighted to address conference. Maria highlighted the improvements and changes over the current life of the labour government such as the eradication of Section 28, plus the introduction of the Gender Recognition Act; the equal age of consent; recognition of LGBT in the armed forces; the Civil Partnership Act, and adoption rights for same sex couples to name a few. Maria spoke on the issue of the Equalities Bill, the difficult task they faced bringing nine individual pieces of equality legislation into one; and the creation of one single public sector equality duty. The bill will allow positive action to be used to address imbalances in recruitment. Maria advised that we should expect the act to be on the statute books in early 2010 and before the next general election.

Bob Cant then gave a lively address to conference about the Millthorpe Project, a TUC sponsored trade union oral history project. Laurie Smith moved the CWU's proposition on Faith and Homophobia which raised concern about the growing number of legal cases where faith is just as a justification to challenge provision of goods and services to LGBT people. Conference unanimously supported the proposition.

Other propositions backed by Conference were related to supporting LGBT workers in the workplace and ensuring they are not targeted by employers during the recession; the sensitivity of monitoring of sexual orientation by public bodies. Maria Exall spoke on the motion about supporting LGBT people in the workplace and described how some of companies that lobbied really hard against some of the improvements for LGBT workers in the equality bill are the same companies that pay into Stonewall and appear on their Top 100 Employers Index.

Tony Crawley spoke on a proposition regarding the impact of homophobic bullying on vocational choices and reminded conference that transphobic bullying is very much prevalent in the manifestation of heterosexism in vocational and post 16 choices for young people at school choosing future career paths.

Dave Daniel supported a proposition about homophobia in sport which called upon the TUC to support and publicise the annual pride games and to challenge LGBT related inequality in sports with the Government, UK Sport and the International Olympics Committee. Dave reminded conference about the working party set up by the CWU with Kick it Out and the Gay Football Supporters Association Conference also had a plenary session about LGBT hate crimes with speakers from the Metropolitan Police, the Crown Prosecution Service and GALOP, as well as a talk from Alberto Roque from the Cuban LGBT organisation CENESEX who spoke about their work in domestic violence, sexual health, HIV prevention and counselling services in Cuba. Conference was also addressed by Bradley Brady from the EHRC who's major focus has been on the Equality Bill working with stakeholders and the Government.

Overall, I found the TUC LGBT conference to be an excellent, thought provoking conference with lots of lively debates. My only criticism would relate to the unimpartial chairing of the conference. Sitting at the back of the hall I noticed how some delegates are always called to the rostrum despite having spoken many times before, whilst some delegates are called, only to be told they were not called at all and sent back to their seats.

The full agenda to the conference can be found at the following link: <http://www.tuc.org.uk/extras/lgbt09.pdf>

John Monk
North West London



FAITH, HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE



The Institute of Education, London, 16th May 2009

The conference was opened by Peter Purton of the TUC who said that people resisting progress towards rights for all have stolen the language of religion. He was followed by Rev Sharon Ferguson MA, Chief Executive of the Lesbian & Gay Christian Movement. The first speaker of the day was Reverend Giles Fraser, Vicar of Putney, a regular contributor to Radio 4 and a Guardian columnist. He explained some of the internal issues in the Church and stated that homophobia dressed up as religious belief is still homophobia. He compared it with someone who set up an all white church and stated that was their belief – would that be allowed? As a well practiced speaker he was both informative and amusing.

The second speaker was Maria Eagle, Parliamentary Under Secretary for State at the Ministry of Justice. She spoke on the new Equality Bill which is currently going through its second reading in the House of Commons, and how it would bring all the current equality strands together and deal with the ongoing discrimination people still face.



Maria Eagle MP

There followed a question and answer session on topics such as the conflict between sections of religious organisations and LGBT

rights. Rev Fraser pointed out that we needed to be careful with language as comments about religion v LGBT people should contain the word 'some'. "Some religious groups are homophobic, others are not."

The morning plenary session opened with additional guests, Michael Rubinstein, lawyer and publisher of the Equalities Review, Julia Neal, President of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, and Celia Gardiner, lawyer and member of the Roman Catholic Caucus of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement. Questions ranged from the importing of homophobia from Anglican churches abroad, particularly Africa; the dual discrimination that black and ethnic minority LGBT people face; the lack of training on LGBT issues for teachers and school governors; and the need for clear guidance on the new bill. Laurie Smith, CWU delegate, pointed out that there is no "right" to discriminate and it is unhelpful for people to talk about a right for religious people to discriminate. No such right exists; what religious groups have is an exemption put into the LGBT rights.

The session ended with the presentation of the Sappho in Paradise Book Prize Award, by the International Lesbian and Gay Cultural Network. This award recognises groups and organisations that have made a contribution to LGBT people living in difficult circumstances, whether it is with printing books, magazines, poetry or other mediums. The prize was awarded to Labrys, Kyrgyzstan and was made originally in 2006, but it has proven to be very difficult to get anyone from that mountainous and inhospitable region to the UK and with the problems as well of being identified as LGB or T in Kyrgyzstan. The session ended with an urgent update on

breaking news that the attempt by LGBT people in Moscow to protest the banning of pride had been broken up by the police and the LGBT protesters arrested.

There were a series of morning workshops; I attended the one on working in Europe on LGBT rights. There was an interesting presentation on the current position in Eastern Europe and the opposition from the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant evangelical churches to any attempt to bring in rights or anti-discrimination legislation for LGBT people. There was some debate around the reality that many Catholic people do not follow the teachings of the Holy See on every matter and whether Catholics should remain inside the church and fight the homophobia. There was news on the Catholic churches different ways to oppose LGBT protection; in the UN they are quite vociferous, while in European institutions they are less vocal and work more behind the scenes with their various political supporters. One thing of interest was the fact that many of the eastern European religious groups are working with right wing nationalists and using the threat to their culture, families and way of life to prevent LGBT people getting any rights.

Following lunch there was a second series of workshops. I attended the one on the situation in Iraq for LGBT people and asylum. It was a shame that such an important topic was not very well attended, but the speaker from Iraqi LGBT group said he had found that many LGBT people in the UK have no interest in what is happening in other countries and a lack of political interest or knowledge. He said it felt as if LGBT people in the UK now felt they were okay so they didn't have to worry and had forgotten that it was not so long ago that they were being persecuted and the work previous generations had done to gain equality and rights. He spoke about the Iraqi government-backed pogrom against LGBT people, that over 600 LGBT Iraqi's had been murdered because of their sexuality or gender identity since 2004. Both the US and UK governments continue to deny what was happening, despite all the evidence, and that Iraqi LGBT people claiming asylum were either being told it was safe for them to be returned, or that if they were 'discreet' they would be okay. He ended with a plea to people to raise the issues and to help with funding Iraqi LGBT to help them with their work in Iraq, as due to lack of money they had now had to close three of their four safe houses where they had been offering shelter and food to people trying to escape the police and militia death squads. (See the previous edition of OUTtalk (Conference 2009) for news and the contact details of Iraqi LGBT group).

The afternoon speakers started with Amanullah de Soudy, Islamic Studies, Glasgow University and Assistant Professor in World Religions at Ithaca College, USA. He spoke on the work he has been doing on the history of Islam. He talked about how that historical context shaped the views on LGBT people, that worshipping God was paramount and that someone who follows the fundamentals of Islam knows that it encourages diversity and different opinions.

He was followed by Marilyn McCord Adams, Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford. She gave a comprehensive talk on various issues between religion and LGBT people, saying that because we are fallible we are not entitled to make undermining other people's lifestyles our ends or chosen means, but we have to accept that it may be a known but unintended side-effect of putting our conscientious convictions into effect. She said sometimes the Church needs the 'spirit of this present age' to liberate it from the spirits of so many past ages. Let's thank God for human rights and so draw a line under the harm that religions can perpetuate by giving ancient taboos divine authorization. Unfortunately her speech overran which meant the question and answer session had to be curtailed and the next speaker brought in.



Trevor Phillips

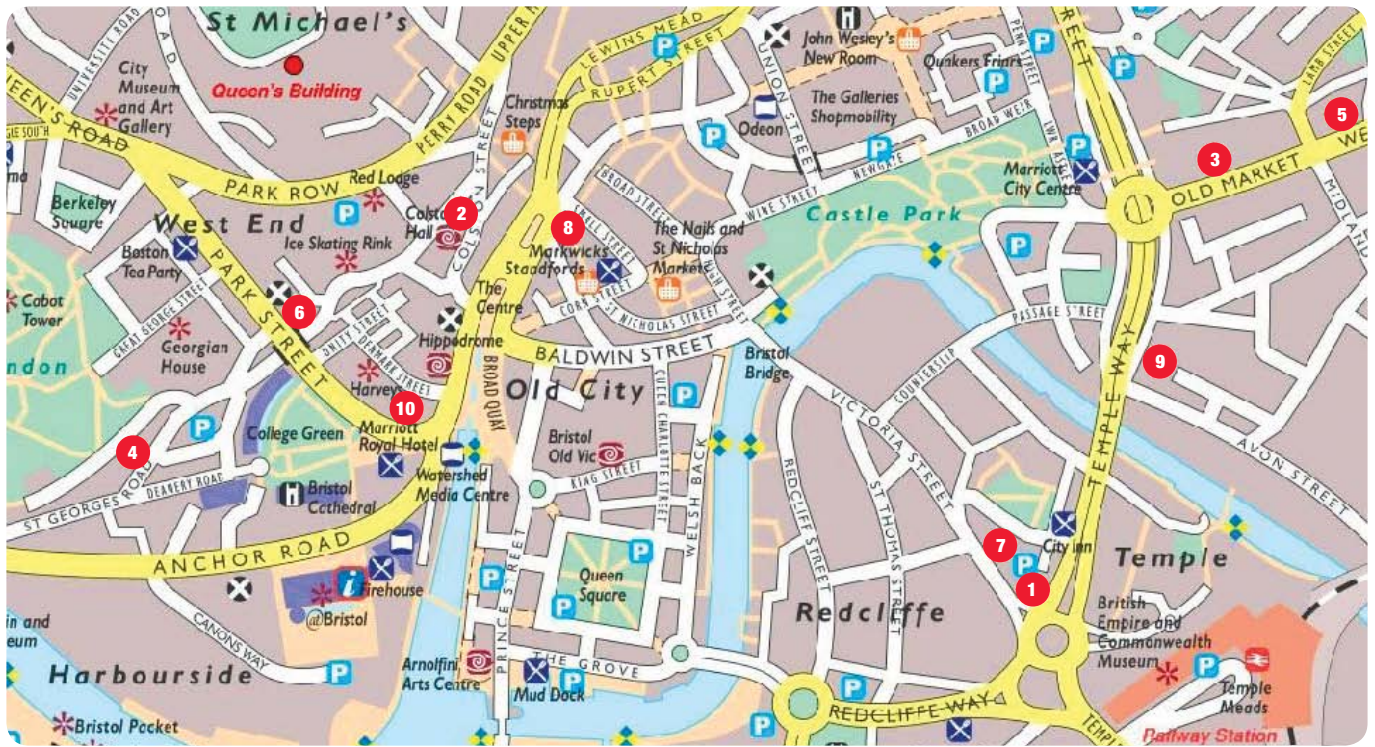
Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission spoke next and started with an apology over the handling of the appointment of Joel Edwards, ex-head of the Evangelical Alliance and outspoken opponent of LGBT rights. He explained that he had no knowledge of Joel Edwards' criticism of LGBT rights, and that Edwards was chosen because he was the most prominent Black church leader in the UK. He was a

personal friend and claimed that Edwards had a commitment to equality and was sure any personal feelings or opinions would not influence his work. He went on to apologise for the hurt he now realised he had caused by this appointment; he had been made all too aware by people, including Maria Exall CWU Executive, of the feelings over this appointment. He then went on to explain some of the work around religious and LGBT discrimination as well as the other equality strands. There followed a question and answer session. He was asked about how the Commission were dealing with the conflict between religious rights and LGBT rights and said that work was ongoing on this.

There was then an afternoon plenary session with Amanullah de Soudy, Marilyn McCord Adams, Trevor Phillips, Sue Rath Knan, freelance consultant and lecturer specialising in gender and faith issues, Jay Stewart, co-founder of Gendered Intelligence, and Dr Taj Harvey, Muslim historian and theologian and Imam of the liberal Summertown Islamic Congregation in Oxford.

The conference ended with the formulation of an action plan on positive alliances for equality and sexual diversity.

Gary Williams
CWU Delegate



LGBT BRISTOL 2009

CONFERENCE VENUE

1 Novotel
 Victoria Street, Bristol, BS1 6HY,
0117 976 9988

LGBT BARS, PUBS AND CLUBS

2 The Griffin
 41 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5AP
0117 908 6731
 Legend has it that The Griffin used to be the haunt for all of the luvvies that made the short walk or stagger up from the Colston Hall. Having a few years back become a bit of a dubious venue, The Griffin very recently underwent a lavish transformation, and sports furnishings that Carole Smilie would be proud of!

3 The Old Market Tavern
 29 Old Market Street, Bristol, BS2 0HD
0117 922 6123
 Attracting the office crowd during the day, offering a superb range of food and snacks. As the evening progresses The Old Market Tavern is the favoured venue for the local 'Bear' crowd and the more mature members of the community.

4 The Pineapple
 37 St Georges Road, Bristol, BS1 5UU
0117 907 1162
 The Pineapple, tends to be one of the more popular gay pubs, Recently redecorated, it provides a good gay grounding for a night out in Bristol. With a mainly younger crowd, perhaps weighted slightly toward the males and occasional live DJ's.

5 Flamingos
 23-25 West Street, Bristol, BS2 0DF
0117 955 9269
 Billed as Bristol's biggest gay club, Flamingos is the newcomer to the scene, and was launched after a massive refurbishment as part of the drive to make the Old Market area Bristol's Gay Quarter. With a capacity of 900 and regular big name appearances, this venue is giving the others a run for their money!

6 QueenShilling
 9 Frogmore Street, Bristol, BS1 5NA
0117 926 4342
 The QueenShilling is now one of the longest surviving clubs on the Bristol scene. Attracting a good mixture of young and old, The music tends to be recent popular type stuff with some old classics thrown in now and again.

EDITOR'S RECOMMENDED REAL ALE PUBS

- 7 Kings Head** (Next to Conference Hotel)
 60 Victoria Street, Bristol, BS1 6DE
- 8 The White Lion**
 Quay Head, Colston Avenue, Bristol, BS1 1EB
- 9 The Printer's Devil**
 10 Broad Plain, St. Philips, Bristol, BS2 0JP
- 10 The Bunch Of Grapes**
 8 Denmark Street, Bristol, BS1 5DQ

