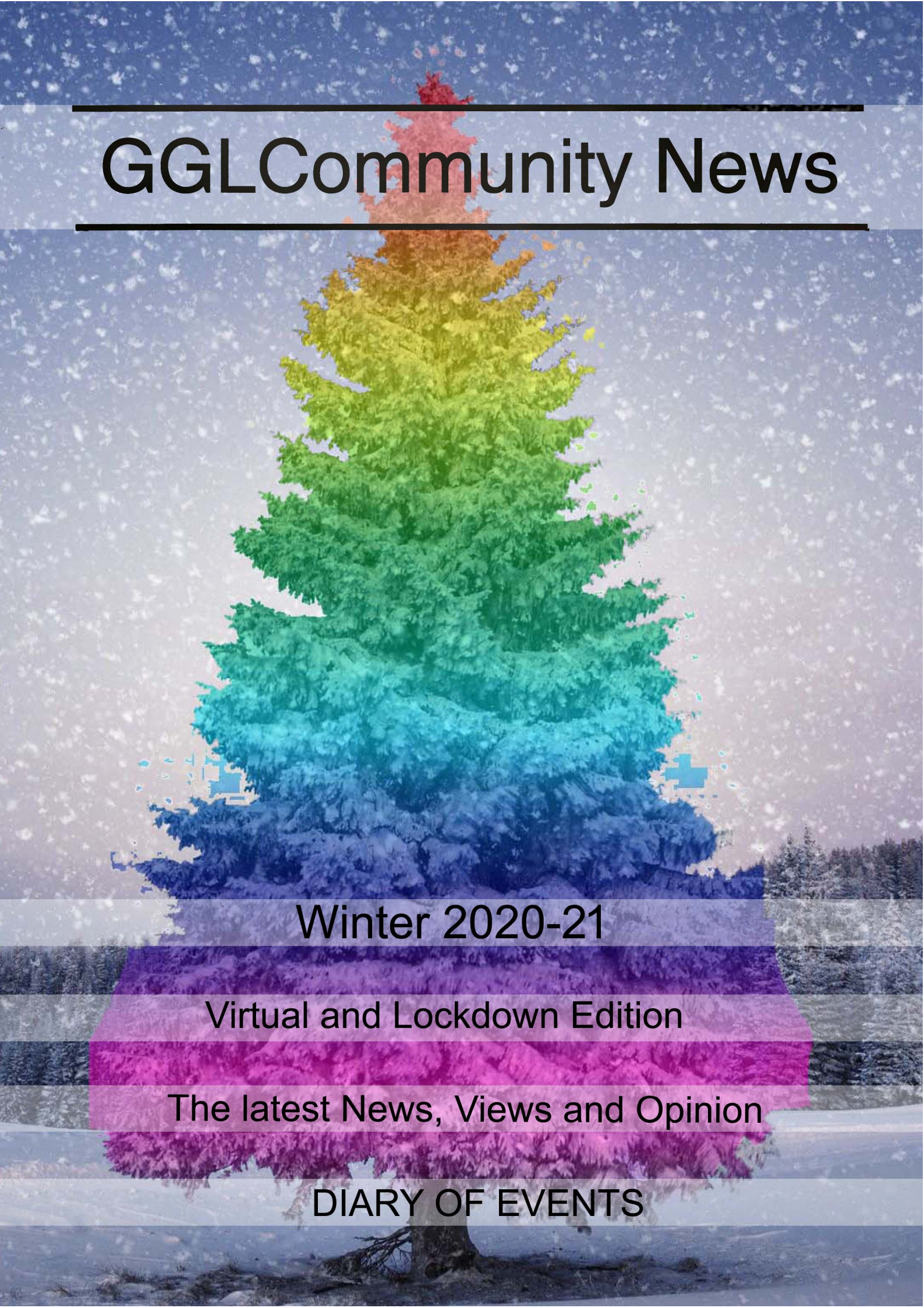




GGLCommunity News

Winter 2020-21

Virtual and Lockdown Edition

The latest News, Views and Opinion

DIARY OF EVENTS

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



Hi Friends,

It will be nearly be 2021 when this reaches you, so all best wishes from myself and the Committee for the New Year.

I don't think anyone would experience "undiluted pleasure" in seeing the old year out. We lost some Members of the Gay Community to Covid-19 and our thoughts go to all those who are bereaved.

The Pandemic will be with us, in some form or another, for some time yet and we must get used to living with it. We need to be strong and inventive in working our way around it and not letting some bug get the best of us.

Many Members have been so glad of the virtual meetings we hold. These online get togethers have been a lifeline for some and a great way to keep in touch. For some unknown reason I volunteered to compile the next quiz!

It is a time of many 'firsts' -. Our Annual Dinner was held virtually, with some members sat at a candlelight table in dinner suit and others a take away in a T-Shirt. As a surprise, we sent all those who said they would attend a £10 M&S Voucher to treat themselves. It went down very well. We met for a cocktail before going off to cook (or in our case, reheat) our meal!

For those who are feeling sad, lonely or bored – do something about it before it becomes too bad. I know how debilitating Depression is, so don't get to that point. There is always someone in the Group to talk to, even if just for a chat.

If you get stuck, are in isolation and need help, do call on us. If someone can assist you they will. That is what it means be being part of Community .

With all best wishes a good, happy healthy year ahead

Michael

Chair

A Time to Remember

This has been a difficult year for most, including, as noted in this issue, the loss of respected and valued members of our own community. It has been a year of deep divisions, sudden changes to our ways of life, disappointment in our leaders and the feeling things could not get better.

But despite the crisis that still confront us, there are glimmers of hope ahead, with new vaccines being approved, some certainties returning to the political field (whether we like them or not, there is a resolution), and the possibility some of our old ways of life will be back soon.

We can also take comfort in the memories of those we have lost, learning from the examples they set us for compassion, understanding, inclusion and, when it was needed, the strength to stand up for what they believed.

This coming year will hopefully be a better one, but the best way to make it better is to learn the lessons of this past year. The examples where communities have come together to help each other, the individuals whose actions have prompted more people to contribute to others positively, they are the ones to emulate and follow, not the self-serving and divisive.

Remember the best of this past year, and take strength.

Graham V., Editor

GGLC Membership Payments

GGLC members have 3 choices when paying their membership,

- 1 BACS
- 2 CASH
- 3 Cheque

Our preferred method of payment is via BACS for those who use internet banking, this way we get our money promptly and the members don't have to wait for their cheques to clear the bank.

Cash and cheques can be paid in person at any meeting, however due to us only meeting once a month now, cheques may not be paid into our bank very quickly and could possibly take a few weeks before they clear the member's bank.

Pay-Pal is being phased out as it is rarely used and by using this method GGLC lose a percentage of the money through administration costs. So please pay by BACS if you can or cash at our meetings.

Many Thanks, Craig, Treasurer.

Membership Update

We have 50 GGLC members which is one up on the previous newsletter report Summer/ Autumn 2020. Kenji K, George S, Roger T and Abdul A are all new members to the Group, and we welcome them.

I consider that under the circumstances of the covid pandemic the group numbers are being maintained better than I anticipated they would be. When we have held group meetings prior to the pandemic, it has been easy for some members to renew and for new members to apply at a meeting, rather than applying online or post. We do hope that sometime during 2021 that meetings in Gloucester will resume.

The Google virtual meetings that we have been holding for many months have been, and will continue to be, a very enjoyable experience for many. If you have not already joined a meeting please think about giving it a try. You will continue to get a reminder of the meeting dates and a link to join in on the evening of the meeting.

Rob P

Membership secretary

Google Meet

We have been holding regular Google Meet meetings for some time now. You can join on any computer, tablet or phone (you may need to download an app). On the evening of the meeting a link is sent via the email you have listed with our Membership Secretary (if you have not been getting the link, let him know what your current email is, or check your junk mail folder!).

The links are sent between 19:30 and 19:45, and you will be able to join the meeting between 19:45 and 20:00, with the meeting officially starting at 20:00. The meetings are held fortnightly, mainly because those of us that host them can just about keep track of two weeks.

When you join, your microphone will be muted as default, point or tap at the bottom of the screen which should show a white band with the mic crossed out, click that and you will be heard!

We have around 10 to 16 people attending, and they are nice relaxed gatherings. If there are two or more in a household, it's worth using just one connection, as we have sound feedback when two nearby connections are used.

We have had discussions, quizzes, notices, the normal things we have at our usual meetings, so come along and join in!

Graham, Editor

Hope House Sexual Assault Referral Centre

We had an email from Ava, who is a Crisis Worker at the Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Gloucestershire.

They are looking to raise awareness of the service so that others know where to come to, if they have been raped or sexually assaulted.

They offer practical and emotional support, as well as medical care, to anyone who has experienced sexual violence; regardless of gender, disability or sexual orientation- and you don't have to have reported to the Police in order to receive their care. The team are made up of male and female crisis workers who work around the clock to offer tailored support to victims who access the service. The advice line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (0300 4218400).

If you would like to find out more about the service:

Phone: 0300 4218400

E-mail: hopehousesarc@glos-care.nhs.uk

Website: www.hopehousesarc.nhs.uk

Facebook: @GloucesterSARC

Twitter: @HopeHouseSARC

Instagram: HopeHouseSARC

Young People's Social Group

GAY-GLOS Aims to provide a safe meeting place for LGBT young people (and those exploring their sexual orientation) aged between 14 to 18 years old in the county of Gloucestershire.

We meet 12:00 midday to 3:00pm every second Saturday in Gloucester. The group is free to join and we are able to help those who need it with transport costs.

Contact via our Website www.gay-glos.org or email to youth@gay-glos.org or leave a message on 07903 472899 and we will call you back.

Raffle

The raffle has not taken place since our in-person meetings have been put on hold. Thankfully, our outgoings have also gone down, so although this is one of the few ways we raise money for the Group, we are still solvent! Do put a few things aside for when we can get back to normal, or as normal as we ever are, then we can have a great raffle, something to look forward to,
Graham, Editor

Food Bank Contributions

The Committee consulted with Members at a November online meeting. Michael, the Chair, suggested it would be an ideal year to help the wider Community, over the Christmas Season. A donation to Foodbanks in the County was quickly agreed. We sent £50 donation to each of the main Foodbanks in Gloucestershire - Gloucester, Cheltenham, Stroud, Tewkesbury, Cirencester, Forest of Dean, Cotswolds . It's good to know we could help some people most in need at this time. Thank you all.

M

TDOR

GGLC is here today in solidarity with our trans friends. We were pleased to have been able to help last year with a venue. This year we meet virtually and, although not the same, is most important nonetheless.

Since that tragic day on November 28th 1998 when Rita Hester was murdered in Massachusetts and the first transgender day of remembrance the following year trans people and their allies have come together like we have tonight to remember those who have died and to continue the struggle for a better world for us all.

In June this year a report by the European Commission considered the procedure established in the Gender Recognition Act of 2004 is among the worst in Europe and lags behind International Human Rights standards. You are not alone in your fight to change a system which is still cruel and unfair.

GGLC abhors (not too strong a word) the vilification and hatred that still exists towards trans people. We are sickened by the murders that still happen throughout the world and stand together with you in your just cause to be who you are as I have fought to be myself as a gay man.

Howard

Adverts and Information in the Newsletter

You will notice there are still adverts and notifications about other organisations throughout the Newsletter, as usual. Realistically, those involving meeting up are not going to be going ahead, but they are being kept in with the hopes we will be back to usual sometime in the future, and they will be back in business.

The passing of John Jurica

I am so sorry to learn of the passing of John – it should not have happened.

To put you in the picture from my point of view:-

When I was 27, working in Gloucester and living in Cheltenham I did not know there was a gay world out there. Well, what do you expect coming from Cardiff!

At work the manager had a go at one of the salesmen (who I really fancied) about the advert in the Gloucester Echo for the local C.H.E. Group. I had never heard of anything like it. I had to furtively go out, purchase a back issue and look through the classified advertisements at last I found it. With pounding heart, I wrote a letter, and I received a response from John with his telephone number. It took me a big amount of courage to make the phone call to him. It was arranged that we meet in Cheltenham one evening. We did and he was so kind, open and welcoming. I was told of the C.H.E Group in Gloucester and one Monday night I stayed in Gloucester (making sure no one from work saw me there) – yes, I was that scared. It was held in a café in Southgate Street. I entered and was welcomed by John who introduced me, and I was made to feel so welcome. It was a new world to me, and it was then that I purchased a copy of Gardener's News – yes that is how things were then. John was always supporting others and without his support I would never have become the telephone contact for the group for almost three years. That certainly was an experience including one call at 05:00 a.m. asking me where the red-light area of Cheltenham was!

But this is about John not me.

Over the years he led the group so well and it blossomed – he persuaded me to contact the local M.P. and we ended up going to his house⁴ for “drinks” That is another story! The group flourished and is what it is today in a huge part to what he did tirelessly and achieved for which we all must sincerely thank him. He will be missed by so many people whose lives he changed forever for the better, especially mine without him I would never have lived such an amazing and fulfilling time.

I will remember John for his kindness, vision and caring about others and always be thankful of what he did for me – you have no idea how many lives he changed all for the better.

With Love,

Robert Garbolinski

Meg H.—A Friend

It was with great sadness I learned earlier this year that Meg had passed away, yet my memories of her will always bring me comfort, joy and peace.

I remember the first time I met her at the Group, I went over to introduce myself and welcome her. She smiled and invited me to sit, and we chatted for a while. When I got up to speak with some other newcomers, I realised I felt more welcomed than welcomer, Meg had spoken as if I was an old friend.

Always at the meetings I saw how Meg included everyone, knitting away as she not only chatted but listened. It didn't matter who you were, she was interested in what you had to say, and by extension, in you. That's not to say she wouldn't gently challenge you if you said something thoughtless or daft, but it was always in a way that made you think.

Meg had a wicked sense of humour, often catching me out with a dry witticism and a twinkle in her eye as I suddenly realised what she had said.

I never sat enough at her table, always I could see others gravitate to that position, obviously enjoying her company as much as I did, but when I did, I always left feeling uplifted, not by anything spectacular, but just from the warmth Meg gave out.

I shall miss her at the GGLC, and my thoughts go out to Dee and to everyone who knew Meg, she was a true companion and friend.

Graham V., Editor

PRISM

PRISM has recently relaunched. It is a group for LGBT+ people who work for the City and County councils. Gloucester City Council has unanimously passed a motion of all party support. GGLC has supported the setting up of PRISM.

NORTH SOMERSET LGBT FORUM

This group is a voluntary forum whose aims are to provide a voice for the LGBT Community of North Somerset and to be the “go” organisation for the LGBT for their community. They are looking at social activities and celebration of LGBT life and ideas of what the community would like to see happening, particularly in and around Weston Super Mare. If you can help or are interested please get in touch with Nigel at nigel.nslgbtforum@gmail.com

National AIDS Helplines

“You can ask what you want to ask”

0800567123

The LGBT + Partnership

Some years ago, I met with an officer from Cheltenham Borough Council who considered LGBT people were under represented in council services. We discussed what could be done to ensure LGBT issues were made more prominent and addressed in Cheltenham.

Other organisations then started to get involved such as Gay Glos, Cheltenham Borough Homes and the Wilson art gallery and museum. As more groups, organisations and agencies became involved, it was decided to set up the Cheltenham LGBT Partnership. It then became even larger and it was decided we needed to expand geographically. The publicity for the Partnership states “Supporting Cheltenham, Gloucestershire & beyond”.

The purpose of the Partnership is to:

Connect relevant organisations and individuals

Promote and advance LGBT+ equality, diversity and inclusion

Educate, inform and include key groups, allies, services and businesses

Focus activities and events on Cheltenham, Gloucestershire and connected areas

There are a number of objectives which include marking key events in the year e.g. LGBT History Month and Hate Crime Awareness Week. Other objectives are supporting the activities and events of individual groups within the Partnership, engaging through social media, communicating the Partnership’s purpose and presence and to understand each other as organisations, agencies, groups and individuals.

I am privileged and proud to represent the GGLC at meetings of the Partnership.

The GGLC has supported the Partnership at events which has also given publicity for the group. The group has donated financially and has benefited by being a member of the Partnership.

Howard H

Vice Chair

LGBT Humanists UK www.lgbthumanists.org.uk/	OneBodyOneFaith Alan 0117 982 1512 www.onebodyonefaith.org.uk	Jewish Lesbian & Gay Help Line Mon & Thurs 020 7706 3123
Gay Bereavement Project Helpline: 020 7403 5969 Tuesday 7.30pm to 9.30pm	Beaumont Society (Transgender Issues) www.beaumontsociety.org.uk/	Transvestite Help Line Rita 0117 951 4481
Gay Girls of Gloucestershire 07561 067888 www.gaygirlsofglos.co.uk	Gay Men's Project West of England 0117 955 1000 Wiltshire and Swindon 01793 695 300	National LGBT Helpline 0300 330 0630 10am—10pm every day

Gay Outdoor Club

The national website is <http://www.goc.org.uk> so all you out-doors types log on and see what you could be getting involved in!

FORTHCOMING BIRTHDAYS

January

6th Ishmeal B
7th David L
8th Romeo V
19th Mehrdad R
25th Chris D
27th Julie S
29th John J.

February

6th Graham V
9th Abdul A
7th Sarah W
13th John B
13th Ian H

25th Mohammad G.

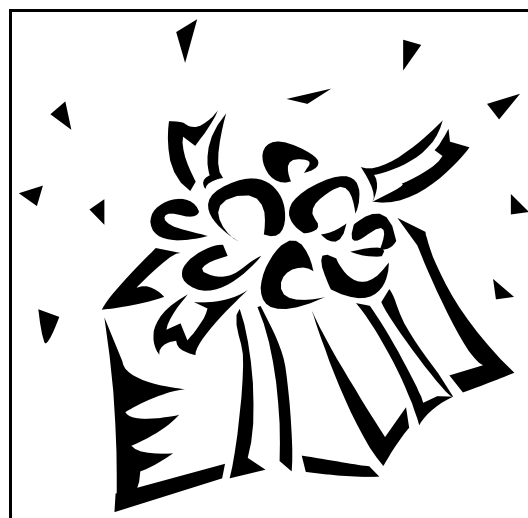
March

15th David C
18th Carolyn F
25th Sergio F
27th Kenji K
29th Andrew D
29th Trevor D
30th Michael C H.

April

2nd Paul L J
8th Alan R
9th Richard B
16th Michael W

18th Peter C
25th Peter W.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU ALL



GGLC's SOCIAL CALENDAR DIARY OF EVENTS

Well, bit of a puzzler this one, as we have no in-person meetings just now. However, we do have our fortnightly Google Meet virtual gatherings!

January

7th Google Meet

21st Google Meet

February

4th Google Meet

18th Google Meet

March

4th Google Meet

18th Google Meet

April

1st Google Meet

15th Google Meet

29th Google Meet

Advanced Warnings and Notes!

This can all change at short notice—please keep an eye on the web site and your email!

The diary is subject to change due to changes in circumstances, whim, Editor's insanity and attacks by Jellyfish Sprites.



GGLC



GGLC



GGLC

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
GAY & LESBIAN
COMMUNITY

c/o 50 Knowles Road,
Gloucester GL1 4TP

07050 627273

www.gglc-glos.co.uk
info@gglc-glos.co.uk

GGLC

CONTACTING THE GGLC

Gloucestershire Gay & Lesbian Community meets 1st Thursday monthly, from 7.30pm, in Gloucester city centre. A warm welcome is assured for everyone. For further details or directions please phone 07050 627273 or write to :-

The Secretary, GGLC, c/o 50 Knowles Road,
Gloucester GL1 4TP. (postal only)

We also have our own website www.gglc.co.uk and the email address is info@gglc.co.uk - several new members have contacted the Group this way!

Your Committee

Chairman: Michael C-H.

Vice-Chair: Howard H.

Secretary: Peter C.

Treasurer: Craig F.

Membership Secretary: Rob P.

Member: Julie S.

Member: David H. (co-op)

Newsletter Editor: Graham V.

If anyone knows of any new venues opening, please let us know.

HELPING HAND

Don't forget the Group is here to help one another. If you are unwell, still needing to self isolate or stuck, need groceries or medication, contact our Secretary or Membership Secretary. That will find someone who can help you.