



Pride Scotia, Edinburgh

On Saturday, 27th June, 2009 the GPA marched in uniform in the Pride Scotia Parade in Edinburgh. This was an historic occasion for Scotland as it was the first time this had ever been undertaken. Just under 70 NEC and GPA members together with partners and supporters took part, marching immediately behind the Parade leaders, taking the cavalcade down Edinburgh's historic Royal Mile, past the new Scottish Parliament building and back into to the City Centre. Leading the GPA contingent were ACC Fiona Taylor of Strathclyde Police, Chief Supt. Martyn Ripley, Commander for the BTP in Scotland, Supt. David Carradice of Lothian and Borders; Supt. Liz McAinsh who represented the HMICS; Supt. Gavin Buist of ASPS and Insp Michael Pearson from the Police Federation of England and Wales. The GPA would like to thank these officers for their visible show of support and hope that they found this experience enjoyable.

The GPA contingent gathered at the City Chambers for the pre-Parade briefing and on moving out into the Royal Mile were greeted by a great cheer and applause from the spectators and other Parade participants. The poor weather hadn't deterred the spectators and the GPA were greeted warmly and appreciatively by a good number of people throughout the length of the Parade.

Chief Inspector David Lyle the Secretary & Scottish Coordinator for the GPA was responsible for organising our attendance and has said "This was a tremendous and incredibly special day for all of us in the GPA in Scotland, and I'm immensely grateful to everyone who took part. I'd like to say a particular 'thank you' to the Scottish Coordinators and contacts who assisted

in making the day so successful and to all of our colleagues and friends from England and Wales, who made the Great Trek North and braved the Scottish summer weather to take part. This was a day that will be, for me, one of the highlights, not only of my time in the GPA, but of my entire Police service."



Pride Events throughout the UK

The Greater Manchester Police's gay support network has invited GPA members to participate in their local Pride marching-in-uniform event. Manchester Pride will take place on the 29th August 2009. If you would like to join in this event you should contact lgsa@gmp.pnn.police.uk.

Nottingham Police marched in their Pride Parade this year, and although the circulation of this E bulletin meant it was too late to advertise it, the NEC hope that it was a successful event that was enjoyed by all in attendance. Please remember that if you wish to march in uniform at any Pride Event then the standing authority by many Forces issued to the GPA will not cover these and individual permissions are required.

European Gay Police Association

A meeting of the EGPA took place in Amsterdam on the 29th April 2009, this forum was originally set up to encourage the creation of Gay Support Networks in police forces throughout Europe. This then

progressed into organising a biennial conference. The EGPA has made significant advances in these areas and the conferences have been an overwhelming success. With the exception of Luxemburg, Denmark, Greece and Belgium all of the Western European countries are represented in the EGPA.

At this meeting the successes of the past were acknowledged and it was agreed that the aims and objectives of the EGPA should now be progressed at a strategic level. The EGPA is seeking funding from the European Parliament and will be attempting to seek recognition from them as being representative of the Police Forces at a European level. This is likely to be lengthy process, however there is European diversity legislation in place that many countries choose to ignore and LGB issues need to be placed on the agenda for consideration. The UK will be hosting the next meeting which will take place on the 9th October 2009. Discussions also took place concerning the 2010 LGB Policing conference and it has been confirmed that this will take place in Vienna. Details of the program and confirmation of the date will appear in future E-Bulletins.

Website Update

The tendering process for the new website has now been completed and a company has been identified to undertake this work. We are waiting on confirmation and funding from the Home Office before this work can commence. The new website will be interactive with a reference sections as well as a member's area and an update on all current strategic projects. Whilst it is acknowledged that the website has taken some considerable time it is anticipated that the final product will be one that we can all be proud of.

Office of National Statistics

The ONS 'Sexual Identity Project' has been investigating the development of "a question (or set of questions) that can be used on social surveys for equality monitoring purposes". The current position is that no such question is likely to be included in 2011 census, meaning at least another decade will pass before such a question can be included.

The Chief Executive of the Equalities & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) indicated clearly that the EHRC's view was that such a question should be included in 2011 census. In keeping with the proposed Single Equality Act, it is the perfect time to add a question on sexual orientation to the census.

There is an electronic link to a 10 Downing Street Petition to include Sexual Orientation in the next Census. This petition can be found at.

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/lgb2011census/>

'Flying the Flag' initiative

Sunday 17th May 2009 was the 'The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia' (IDAHO) and this was one of the days which the Gay Police Association sought the co-operation of Chief Constables in flying the rainbow flag to mark this significant date and show their support for their local LGBT communities, both internal and external.

The Gay Police Association would like to publicly acknowledge the following police forces for demonstrating their commitment to equality in this way. The forces that raised the flag throughout the United Kingdom were:

Avon and Somerset Police
Cheshire Police
Derbyshire Police
Durham Police
Dyfed-Powys
Essex Police
Greater Manchester Police
Gwent Police
Lincolnshire Police
Merseyside Police

North Wales Police
Nottinghamshire Police
South Wales Police
Suffolk Police
Thames Valley Police

In response to the letter from the Gay Police Association, a number of Chief Constables voiced their support. The Chief Constable of Suffolk stated that he was "very much in support of flying the Rainbow Flag at appropriate times" as it makes a "clear statement regarding what I stand for and the values of our organisation".



Whilst the Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Police agreed that the flying the Rainbow Flag "is an important and simple gesture of support to the gay community".

The Chief Constable of Merseyside, Mr Hogan-Howe went one step further in his support of this campaign. Despite already flying the Rainbow flag for the last three years, this year a flag was raised at every police station throughout his force. In a bold step, Mr Hogan-Howe also lit up his Headquarters in coloured lighting depicting a rainbow. In his response to our letter he stated that this initiative "shows a visible commitment to the LGBT staff and local communities in Merseyside".

The National Executive Committee believe that undertaking this visible means of support is a strong indication of positive leadership towards changing the perception of the gay communities towards the Police and would urge those Chief Constables who did not take part this year to consider doing so next year.

Other initiatives have also been undertaken throughout the UK.

Cleveland Police have displayed the Rainbow Flag on the television screens in their police stations and placing rainbow flag stickers on front windows and doors to convey the message to their LGBT community that their Police Stations are a safe environment.

Confirming the importance of this initiative is the recent figures that have been released by the Metropolitan Police who have recorded a 9% rise in homophobic and transphobic crime (to April 2009). This trend is echoed by the Greater Manchester Police who have recorded a 63% increase. These figures are supported by the Crown Prosecution Service who have seen a 60% increase in prosecutions over the last two years. Hate crime of this nature is clearly still an issue that requires addressing and initiatives such as this continue to keep it in the public eye.

Legislation and Guidance

The Independent Police Complaints Commission issued new guidance on dealing with allegations of discriminatory behaviour. These guidelines replace those issued by the Police Complaints Authority and dictate how complaints and misconduct investigations should be undertaken. The GPA were part of the consultation process in developing these guidelines which can be found on the IPCC's website.

The NEC have also been asked by the Equality and Human Rights Commission to be a member of the Equality Bill Codes & Guidance Reference Group. We are being consulted on the writing of a guide to advise users of the new Equality Legislation how the Act will change existing legislation.

Contact Details

If you would like any information to appear in the next E Bulletin please E Mail ebulletin@gpa.police.uk with the relevant details and contact information.