newcastle + sunderland prides
outdoor lads come north
get your skates on
britain’s 1st pride
olympics ‘team gay’
world pride power list
obama + gay marriage
men ‘cured’ of hiv

plus lots more lgbt news and...
out! a-z + scene listings

out! icon

luke anderson
SERVICES
FOR GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN,
INFORMATION AND SIGNPOSTING FOR THE LGBT COMMUNITY

PHONE INFORMATION AND ADVICE
MEETING SPACE AND GROUPS MEETING AT MESMAC
ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT AND DROP IN SERVICE
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Email: all@mesmacnortheast.com
Website: www.mesmacnortheast.com
Welcome to out! northeast, the region’s favourite LGBT read. Another jam-packed issue free for you to enjoy!
newcastle's sunny pride & joy

Picture the scene, its noon on Saturday 21st July the sun is blazing down on Newcastle’s civic centre - backdrop to a sea of rainbows. 3000 excited members of the LGBT community and their friends await the go-ahead to march with pride through the heart of the city centre.

As Newcastle Pride celebrates its 5th birthday participants went to extra effort in donning their finest march attire. There were fancy dress, feathers, flags and fun accoutrements. With an electrifying atmosphere mounting, it’s clear the crowd means business.

Labour leader of Newcastle city council Nick Forbes and chair of Northern Pride Peter Darrant said a few words of support to revellers eager to get going - wishing everyone a great day.

Led by the beat of bangshees, the march begins and people of Newcastle pause their Saturday shopping on Northumberland Street. Aligning the streets to admire the pride parade as it weaves past the Monument, along Percy Street and up Claremont Road. Throughout, supporters cheered, applauded and beeped their horns. The parade screamed ‘we’re here, we’re queer and boy are we going to have a fun day.’

With a last minute route change, the parade concluded at Exhibition Park, a new venue for 2012 where a record 23,000 gathered to join in the celebrations.

The atmosphere around the park was bigger than ever as thousands enjoyed an afternoon of fabulous entertainment. Taking to the main stage were Eurovision favourites Scooch, local lad Sam Dickinson, Totally Gaga, X-Factor’s Diva Fever, Horse, The Cheeky Girls, Kelly Wilde and 80s superstar Sonia.

The glitziest all singing-all dancing entertainment however, was at Eazy Street’s cabaret tent where showbiz acts Tess Tickle, Plopalina of Swansea, Vicky Paris and Miss Lucy wowed the crowd.

Drag queen Frenchy Kiss co-hosted the tent and told us “My highlight was most definitely Ushwaki, an all-male dance troupe who perform in high heels. They look like something GaGa would have dance behind her. Super sexy and they can move, Phwoar! And I got to meet the Cheeky Girls again - they’re a guilty pleasure of mine”.

This year the out! northeast women’s tent debuted, a women only area offering alternative entertainment to the main stage. Women were treated to all-female music, poetry and comedy. The area proved a great addition to Newcastle Pride.

Another important change to Pride this year was the renaming of the health zone to the Steve Paske Health Zone. So called after local LGBT activist and advocate who died at the end of last year.

Inside the tent, on-site screenings were on offer. out! northeast columnist Ophelia Balls showed her support, declaring the sexual health area a taking point. “I felt I needed to support it so volunteered to have the works - pee in a pot and everything. I know the numbers who got checked were great and it certainly upped awareness of the issues.

When pride-goers weren’t soaking up the rays or enjoying the acts, they could partake in a funfair, or there was a sea of stalls to shop at and plenty of bars to get tipsy in. All of this amounted to Newcastle Pride’s biggest ever party.

Actress and comedian Crissy Rock was seen mingling in the crowds “I love Newcastle Pride because it’s fun, it doesn’t matter how old or young you are, or what gender or sexuality you are, here everybody’s the same”.

Around 6pm the park began to empty of punters and stallholders, leaving a group of wonderful volunteers to clear up the mess. Thank you so much guys! Hats off to the organisers of Newcastle Pride 2012 for a fantastic day. Can’t wait to do it all again next year! ■
This year for the very first time, Newcastle Pride allocated space for an out! northeast women's tent - where visitors soaked up a sunny Saturday afternoon in the park and feasted on an eclectic mix of local female talent.

After leading the Pride march to Exhibition Park, women's drumming band bangshees, kicked things off to a great start in the women's tent garden bathed in glorious sunshine.

The feel-good atmosphere built as the crowd enjoyed a pint and good company, while music from Kimberley Brown, Dotty Ellis, Vicky Brewster, Iceni, Stevie Wonderful and Gem Andrews played. We were even treated to a special guest appearance by Horse who had played earlier on the main stage. Manchester's Clare Mooney who performed and compered the first out! northeast women's tent had this to say, "2012 was my first Newcastle Pride and what a treat! I was impressed by the dedication of the organisers and volunteers. Highly professional performances and stage management coupled with a friendly, community spirit determined to have a celebration. The whole event seemed to be full of goodwill. Long may it continue".

After the Pride march, the team - led by Sam Hawkins and Gem Andrews played. We were even treated to a special guest appearance by Horse who had played earlier on the main stage.

Leading up to Pride day, the team - led by Sam Hawkins - organised a night of live music to help raise funds and awareness of the intended new women's area. A full house at Secrets bar in May saw the return for one night only, of comedic 80s lesbian feminist quartet Friggin Little Bits, accompanied by local band Ask Ruby. Both went down a storm.

The only real downside was the long queues for the loos - which unfortunately was the case all over the park. But amazingly even that didn't seem to dampen spirits. Although a place to buy a cuppa would have been nice - next year.

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Also at the tent, Take 5 poets Jenni Pascoe, Al McKenna, Marjorie Pickering, Dani Quist and Sky Hawkins treated us to a little refined spoken-word and a hilarious set from the Suggestababes had everyone in stitches.
The Wearside event will consist of a march through the city which leaves the civic centre in Sunderland at 12 noon. The hour long procession will end in Park Lane where entertainment from the likes of headline act Envy a West-Life tribute band, along with boy band Rewind, Sam Dickinson, Jade Saunders as Jessie J, The Steps Experience and a performance from Totally Gaga.

Sunderland Pride 2011 host and queen of the Sunderland scene Miss Trixie will also perform a spot of cabaret on the Pride 2012 stage while fabulous hosts and comperes Miss Lucy, Ophelia Balls and radio legend Lee Finan will tie the events of Sunderland Pride 2012 together.

Alongside all this, stalls will provide organisations including Ben Hoare Bell, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service and MESMAC, a chance to meet with attendees.

There’s entertainment on the day until 6pm when evening events start to take place across the city’s scene at Arizona, Passion, Room 24, Lola’s Bar and Gatsbys, along with special entertainment provided by Pride 2012 bar sponsors Chase and Tonic - both incredible supporters this year.

Sunderland Pride’s Ryan Houston said “This year’s event is jam-packed with entertainment for all and we really hope everyone across the region comes to enjoy what the team have put together”.

Human rights activist of 40 years, Peter Tatchell became Wearside’s latest lgbt ambassador. He said he was very honoured to become a patron of Sunderland Pride and urged members of the public to keep campaigning for lgbt dignity, respect and human rights - in Sunderland and worldwide.

Sunderland Pride is a free event and would like to continue to be so. Readers can donate by texting ‘SunP12 £3’ to 70070.

If you’d like to get involved as a volunteer get in touch via the website www.sunderlandpride.co.uk.
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Dr KP McKeever BDS (Ncle 1999)
PG Dip Health Services (Ncle)
getting checked on teesside

We all know that in terms of sexual health, prevention is better than cure. But ask yourself what if?

What if you’ve put yourself at risk? What if you are worried, even frightened about what you may have? Or importantly, you don’t want to be judged when you go to a clinic. Where do you go?

Have you ever considered sexual health screening in a community setting? A place where testing and pathways for treatment are explained properly in a friendly and understandable way. A free and confidential service in a safe space with a range of testing options including rapid hiv, chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis and pregnancy tests. If you live in Teesside and want no nonsense advice, condoms, lubes and dental dams, then Teesside Positive Action (TPA) at 15 Baker Street is the place for you!

Support worker Anthony Young, told out! northeast “It’s amazing that there are still so many myths about STIs. These raise questions about who is actually at risk. What the signs and symptoms are. What really happens in a clinic. Will it hurt? Can I treat it myself?” He went on to say that “The only truth is that your sexual health is your responsibility. If you are sexually active and have unprotected sex - in a relationship or not - you could be at considerable risk. Bad things do happen to good people. If you have symptoms or not, the only way you’ll know for sure is to have yourself checked out at a place like TPA where no one is going to judge you”.

Call 01642 254 598, email, email@teessidepositiveaction.org.uk or pop into 15 Baker Street, Middlesbrough, TS1 2LF to find out more.

OutdoorLads is a charity set up and run by gay and bisexual men that organises a range of sociable outdoor activities all over the UK - things like hiking, hostelling, climbing, camping, biking, canoeing, navigation, sailing and skiing. They even do social events down the pub!

One thing that characterises every OutdoorLads event is the friendly and welcoming nature of the guys you meet. They all muck in to make sure everyone has a good time and that events run smoothly.

In a recent survey of its members 85% of group members said OutdoorLads had a very positive impact on their lives. 68% said they made loads of new friends. And 78% say they are able to try loads of new things because they are part of the group.

So far the north east has been one of the quieter regions with regards to activities on offer but all this is about to change. The lads made their first appearance at Newcastle Pride this year and local members have been developing a regional programme to show the rest of the UK what the area has to offer - the sheer beauty of the Northumbrian coast, dynamic historic cities, the open spaces of the north Pennines, the wilderness of the Northumberland National Park and the North York Moors to name but a few.

They want more local lads to join in - so go along to an event, let them know what kind of activities you want to attend and perhaps even get involved in leading events! Whether you have loads of experience, want to try something new, get fit or just want to get out in the countryside and meet new people OutdoorLads could be for you! Colin Dilks, who is leading a northeast posse said, “Let’s show our region off to all those gay lads who have never been fortunate enough to visit the north east”.

For more information and a list of forthcoming events visit www.outdoorlads.com

MESMAC has received a Department of Health ‘You’re Welcome’ accolade - a quality accreditation for making health services young-people-friendly.

Young gay / bi men under 26 years, unsure of where to go or who to ask for sexual health advice, fear not, MESMAC is at hand. If they can’t help, they will find someone who can.

MESMAC offers a number of vital services including a weekly GAP group - a friendly safe place to make friends, socialise and be yourself. The group is open to all young gay / bi men aged 13 - 19.

MESMAC also offer 1-2-1 support and plan ahead. You can even take a friend for support.

For the slightly older guys MESMAC run an under 25s drop-in on Monday afternoons at their Newcastle city centre premises. Call in for a cuppa and a chat or to get support and advice - and just chill.

If you are interested in any of the services or would like any support please call 0191 233 1333 or email all@mesmacnortheast.com www.mesmacnortheast.com

spaces for young men
Roller derby is a grass-roots roller skating sport. It’s fast and it’s fierce - and not for the faint hearted!

Newcastle Roller Girls (NRG) have been enjoying the recent UK roller derby boom and are now the largest derby team in the northeast. Founded in 2009, its ranks are swelling and demand for rookie courses are greater than ever. This, and the hard work everyone puts into the league means that NRG now have 3 teams - The Canny Belters (A team), The Whippin’ Hinnies (B team), and Tyne & Fear (The Mens’ team).

“The Olympic motto is ‘Citius, Altius, Fortius’ - faster, higher, stronger. For us it would have to be faster, harder, stronger. We’re out to prove that although roller derby isn’t an Olympic sport (yet!), our skaters train like athletes to embody those values and be the best. We are really proud of our male counterparts who held their first ever home bout in April and played at the Men’s European Championships in August”, said NRG Captain Brie Larceny.

Even though the women’s game is the most well known in this part of the world, men’s derby is also growing in popularity. Consequently the Tyne & Fear team are currently recruiting fearless new skaters.

If you fancy a taster, the next NRG home bout is at the Walker Activity Dome (formerly Lightfoot Centre) NE6 3BR, on Saturday 22 September - when The Canny Belters face-off against the mighty Middlesbrough Milk Rollers. And on Saturday 20 October, Tyne & Fear face Sheffield’s The Inhuman League, with an opening game featuring The Whippin’ Hinnies.

For details on how to get involved or to get skater profiles and bout details go online...

Women’s teams
www.newcastlerollergirls.co.uk

Men’s team
www.tyneandfear.co.uk

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**If you are under 26 and would like to be interviewed about your experiences as a LGBT Christian, read on...**

Newcastle-based Dr Ria Snowdon is undertaking research led by professor Yvette Taylor of The Weeks Centre for Social and Policy Research at South Bank University.

‘Making space for queer-identifying religious youth’ aims to explore young LGBT people’s understanding, uses, and experiences of religion - and is looking for young Christians (16-25 years old) who would like to be interviewed.

If you would like to know more about the project or would like your views heard. The research is completely anonymous. Email snowdonr@lsbu.ac.uk visit http://queerreligiousyouth.wordpress.com or Facebook ‘Queer Religious Youth’.

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**New policing is on its way**

Major reform of policing will see the election of the UK’s first police and crime commissioners (PCCs) which will replace police authorities throughout England and Wales.

Following elections this November, police and crime commissioners will set police priorities for the next 5 years. There will be one for each police force area, shaping the police’s work and having a big role in community safety. They will replace police authorities in England & Wales.

According to research by Victim Support, in the north east, there is significant under-reporting of crime by LGBT victims and that there are major barriers to them getting help. They recommend that PCCs do more for LGBT and other victims by making sure the police engage more with minority groups.

In the north east there are three police forces - Northumbria: covers Northumberland and Tyne & Wear. Durham covers Co Durham and Darlington and Cleveland covers Hartlepool, Stockton, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland.

PCCs will be accountable to the public through the ballot box later this year. This is a chance for LGBT people to have their say about the services they need.

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**LGBT thefed gateshead housing**

Since 2008 arms-length management organisation The Gateshead Housing Company - responsible for the day-to-day running of more than 21,000 council properties, has attended and co-sponsored Newcastle Pride.

This year’s event complements their summertime ‘Opportunity Knocks’ programme, which to date has involved more than 5,000 customers. Year on year Newcastle Pride has given the company invaluable access to LGBT views on housing, and allows the company to talk to attendees about its work as a positive employer.

This year the involvement team focused on customer service, both in and outside of the workplace, speaking to people about their positive and negative experiences. Results are currently being collated and will be used to help shape services and future training.

If you would like to have your say, talk about your housing experiences in Gateshead or provide feedback, the team would like to hear from you. Text 07624 804 167 (keyword INVOLVE), email involve@gatesheadhousing.co.uk or call 0191 433 5357.

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**Gateshead Housing**

**Young, LGBT and Christian?**

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**So what do you think their priorities should be? Do you want to know what the candidates are saying? Do you want to ask them questions or have your say? This is the time to speak up.**

The Fed wants to make sure that the voices of LGBT communities across the north east are heard when policing plans are set. They have organised a ‘hustings’ event so that LGBT people from across the north east can meet and ask questions of the Northumbria area candidates.

The Fed is asking people to submit questions by email ahead of the event. Your comments will also be used at other hustings events in each of the three areas, to ensure that LGBT voices are heard right across the region.

For more information about The Fed, the Northumbria candidates event or other hustings events across the region, email mail@lgbtfed.com or visit their website at www.lgbtfed.com.
If you’re interested in making the world more lgbt-friendly, we’d love you to bring your skills to the table.

The Fed works to unite lgbt individuals, groups, organisations and communities across the northeast.

We undertake research and develop self-sustaining activities that aim to change attitudes and behaviours towards lgbt people.

We hold regular meetings for information sharing, support and socialising, and organise lgbt events.

If you’re interested in making the world more lgbt-friendly, we’d love you to bring your skills to the table.

mail@lgbtfed.com
A few months on, and the venture is proving a success with a growing clientele. Director John Harrison said “It’s been an awesome journey so far at Pride Café. We’re receiving ongoing support from a growing number of loyal customers and volunteers, and we’ve received messages from celebrity well-wishers”.

The establishment on Scotswood Road - which is independent of the north east LGBT charity Northern Pride - offers casual dining in a relaxed and stylish environment for LGBT people. Space immediately above the cafe acts as a community hub for the region’s LGBT groups to use. And on the floor above, an office suite (with only two remaining rooms) can house up to nine local LGBT-friendly organisations.

Pride Café is open 11am ‘til midnight. For more details or to enquire about hiring hub space, call 0191 232 9444 or visit www.pridecafe.co.uk.

Lady Boys of Bangkok are back with more glitz, glamour and giggles packed into 105 minutes of cabaret than ever!

Returning to Newcastle for their eighth year with ‘Carnival Queens’ from 7 September to 6 October. Get your tickets from £14. Visit www.ladyboysofbangkok.co.uk.

MESh meets on Tuesday afternoons in Pride Café and is open to men and women who identify as LGBT. As well as sexual health and HIV testing you can find out about the services available in the region. You can talk about the scene, LGBT groups, events, STIs, sexual health, relationships, counselling and much more. If you would like to know more, call 0191 233 1333 or visit www.mesmacnortheast.com.

Research at De Montfort University is investigating gay and lesbian experiences of the adoption assessment process.

Social work student Rose Garrett is conducting the research, exploring the experiences of couples who have been through the process - and finding areas for improvement. “Ideally, I hope to get my findings published and used to inform social workers who work with gay and lesbian couples”, said Ms Garrett.

The research involves answering a few questions on your experiences via email. All information is confidential and anonymous. Anyone wishing to participate please email rose.dmu@gmail.com.

This September MESMAC (for gay & bi men) and SHINE (for L/bi women) start working together to promote LGBT sexual health as MESH!

By post: 55a Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HN
By email: fiona@fionahallmep.co.uk
By phone: 0191 383 0119

Please get in touch if there’s anything I can help you with.

Best wishes,

Fiona.
Gentoo is about improving something it calls ‘the art of living’. It does this by investing in people, planet and property. The Group’s whole ethos is about believing nothing is impossible and finding ways to challenge conventions, even if this means sometimes shaking things up a bit and doing things differently.

Drawing on different perspectives adds value to the way we do business. So regardless of your age, disability, race or ethnicity, gender/gender identity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or other personal circumstances, you will feel welcome, respected and valued.
This summer marked the 40th anniversary of the first gay pride march in Britain, when 700 people marched from Trafalgar Square to Hyde Park to demand ‘gay liberation’. This year’s WorldPride march in London was led by veterans from that first pride parade.

An estimated 25k people took part in this year’s WorldPride march in London. It’s biggest turnout ever. Afterwards, hosts Dusty Q, Gok Wan and Stephen K Amos introduced performances in Trafalgar Square to a capacity crowd, from artists such as Boy George and Deborah Cox - and speakers including human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell who helped organise Britain’s first pride parade. He speaks here of that time...

“In 1972 we decided to organise a gay pride march, with the theme of being out and proud. This was a very controversial idea. In those days, nearly all LGBT people were closeted. Few dared publicly acknowledge their gayness, let alone march for LGBT rights. Homosexuality was viewed as an illness, lesbian mothers had their kids taken from them by the courts, LGBT people were witch-hunted out of the armed forces and the police arrested thousands of men each year for consenting gay behaviour.

Many of my friends were too scared to attend the parade. Those of us who did were swamped by a very heavy, aggressive police presence. They treated us like criminals. Confident and unfazed, we just smiled and chanted 2-4-6-8! Is that copper really straight? The march was carnival-style - we got mixed reactions. Back then, most people had never knowingly seen a gay person, let alone hundreds of queers marching to demand human rights. Aren’t you ashamed? one man shouted. ‘No’, we shouted back, as we blew him a kiss.

The 1972 march never demanded more equality. Our goal was social transformation, to liberate all of humanity. We stood in solidarity with the liberation struggles of women, Black people, workers and the movements for colonial freedom. Many of us veterans still strive to achieve these ideals.

Over the last four decades LGBT pride has grown from that one march to two dozen nationwide parades with a combined attendance of hundreds of thousands of people. Thanks to the efforts of Peter Tatchell and many other relentless campaigners, LGBT people in Britain now enjoy much greater freedoms. See www.petertatchellfoundation.org

London 2012 saw British equestrian Carl Hester, US midfielder Megan Rapinoe, and four Dutch lesbian field hockey players collect gold medals. All of these sportspeople are openly gay. But what about the many more who aren’t? Out of the closet, Team Gay could be pretty impressive.

‘London 2012’ was an incredible success in so many ways. A generally grey nation transformed into a sea of red white and blue, and almost everyone got in the mood in some way. The London games were welcoming to LGBT visitors, and LGBT volunteers were among its staff. There was even an official games rainbow pin.

Top of the gold medal leaderboard was the USA who took home 46 golds, China took 38 and the UK 29. Of the 11,000 athletes competing at the London games, the gay website Outsports.com could only count 23 who were openly gay.

Of that 23, ten won medals, across a variety of sports. Cyd Zeigler of Outsports.com says, ‘If Team Gay was a country, it would have tied with Mexico and Ethiopia in total medals. Over a third of all out athletes won a medal, surpassing Team USA. They would have finished 21st (of 204) overall for their four golds’.

Statistics survey found that only 1.5% of respondents identified themselves as gay or bisexual. For a variety of reasons - many consider that an underestimate. All the same 23 out of 11,000 is only 0.2% - and we like our sport! Where the hell are we?

Only a handful of Olympic competitors have publicly identified themselves as gay, including Australian diver Matthew Mitcham (above left), Megan Rapinoe (above centre), Carl Hester (above right).

It is significant that there are only three men on Outsports’ list of 23. The most high-profile is Mitcham, whose Twitter biography makes reference to his sexuality. In order to identify him - ‘that gay, 2008-Olympic-gold-medal-winning diver dude’. Oh yes, the gay one.

Many athletes who come out say it has been a positive experience - and even performance-enhancing. Footballer Megan Rapinoe, who came out earlier this year, said “I guess it seems like weight off my shoulders. I’ve been playing a lot better than I’ve ever played before. I think I’m just enjoying myself and I’m happy”.

team gay
london 2012 olympics

out! northeast...
the guardian world pride power list

In July the World Pride Power List 2012 was published in The Guardian. It includes lgbt people from the worlds of business, politics, arts and entertainment - and it includes local politician Nick Forbes.

‘Homosexuality remains illegal in more than 70 countries. Penalties range from imprisonment to death. That’s why it’s important to celebrate those who are out, proud and successful now. From actors to Labour peers, the diverse nature of the leading lgbt campaigners should be a source of celebration for the community’, writes Lucy John in The Guardian.

“Young people today are the first generation to have gay people in the public domain as role models” said one of the judges Ben Summerskill, chief executive of Stonewall. “Drawing attention to these role models matters”.

Michael Fuller, managing director of UnitedHealth UK, Linda Riley, managing director of Square Peg Media and Cuc Vu, chief diversity officer of the Human Rights Campaign were the other judges.

To get to the final 100, a number of criteria were used, including influence, contribution and impact of nominees’ work over the past year.

The list is one of extraordinary variety, but there’s a single message behind it. Ben Summerskill sums it up, “If you are young and gay, realise this - there is no reason to ever underestimate your potential”. ➡

Jane Lynch, US actor, comedian and author - aka Glee’s ruthless cheerleading squad leader Sue Sylvester. The role crowned a 25-year career in comedy, film, tv, theatre and writing. She is a vocal advocate for gay rights. “Embrace the ever-changing, ever-evolving world with the best rule I’ve ever found. Say ‘Yes, and ... ’ ■

Lord Waheed Alli, media entrepreneur, businessman and both the youngest and the first openly gay peer in the House of Lords. Working for gay rights at the highest levels. Alli left school at 16 and later co-founded Planet 24 media. He was instrumental in both lowering of the age of consent from 18 to 16 and the repeal of Section 28. ■

Gok Wan, tv personality. Shy and obese as a child and now passionate about having a healthy body image, he found his calling in fashion styling. His warmth, humour and know-how on tv series How To Look Good Naked, first catapulted him to fame. Gok supports numerous charities, including hosting the Stonewall Awards. ■

Tim Cook, became CEO of Apple in 2011 after the death of founder Steve Jobs. Son of a shipyard worker, he previously worked at Compaq and IBM and is credited with helping to turn a once-ailing company into the largest company in the world with a market value today of £380 billion, “We’re always focused on the future”, says Cook. ■

Nick Forbes, Labour leader of Newcastle city council since 2011. Nick is a well known outspoken figure in the north east who always supports Newcastle Pride and has campaigned tirelessly to tackle inequalities including lgbt issues on Tyneside. ■

It is often more difficult for male athletes to be open about their sexuality. “I think there’s a lot of gay women in sports, and it’s widely known - without being open in the media” said Rapinoe. “But for men it’s not the same climate in the locker room”. There’s also the fear of losing lucrative commercial endorsements. Sponsors would never admit that they would drop an athlete who came out as gay, but few competitors would want to risk it.

Marc Naimark of the Federation of Gay Games says the International Olympic Committee should pressure countries to repeal anti-gay laws the way it once excluded South Africa for its racial apartheid policy and, more recently, succeeded in getting all competing nations to include female athletes on their teams.

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‘Homosexuality remains illegal in more than 70 countries. Penalties range from imprisonment to death. That’s why it’s important to celebrate those who are out, proud and successful now. From actors to Labour peers, the diverse nature of the leading lgbt campaigners should be a source of celebration for the community’, writes Lucy John in The Guardian.

“Young people today are the first generation to have gay people in the public domain as role models” said one of the judges Ben Summerskill, chief executive of Stonewall. “Drawing attention to these role models matters”.

Michael Fuller, managing director of UnitedHealth UK, Linda Riley, managing director of Square Peg Media and Cuc Vu, chief diversity officer of the Human Rights Campaign were the other judges.

To get to the final 100, a number of criteria were used, including influence, contribution and impact of nominees’ work over the past year.

The list is one of extraordinary variety, but there’s a single message behind it. Ben Summerskill sums it up, “If you are young and gay, realise this - there is no reason to ever underestimate your potential”. ➡
uk’s changing attitudes?

Three in five people of faith in Britain support same-sex marriage.

A poll of more than 2,000 people from England, Scotland and Wales has been conducted by YouGov for Stonewall. It has revealed that three in five people of faith support government plans to extend civil marriage to same-sex couples, despite a vitriolic campaign against the proposal by some faith leaders. Stonewall’s five-yearly polling of public attitudes for its ‘2012 Living Together’ report - shows that more than 80% of British adults under 50 now support same-sex marriage.

Interestingly the report also finds that more than 80% of people would have no objection if the first child - and heir to the throne - of the duke and duchess of Cambridge, grew up to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.

But the Living Together report also reveals, that in the last 5 years 24 million people have witnessed verbal homophobic bullying at work and 800k have witnessed physical homophobic abuse. Two thirds of people aged 18-29 say there was homophobic bullying in their school.

The full report is available at www.stonewall.org.uk/livingtogether ■

last place in europe

Cyprus was asked by the European Court to decriminalise consensual sex between adults in 1993, but the country’s political division leaves inherited British criminal laws in force in the north - including a ban on homosexuality.

At the beginning of August the European Court of Human Rights registered the case ‘HÇ vs Turkey’ to decriminalise homosexuality in Northern Cyprus - the last place in the Council of Europe where being gay is a criminal offence.

The case against Turkey - which is responsible for protecting and promoting human rights in the Turkish republic of Northern Cyprus means that Turkey, which does not criminalise homosexuality, must now defend this British colonial legacy.

The case has been brought on behalf of the applicant by the Human Dignity Trust - a UK based international human rights organisation which seeks to decriminalise homosexuality through litigation. The prosecution asserts that HÇ’s private life is violated by the existence of these laws and that the discrimination he suffers amounts to inhuman and degrading treatment.

Chief executive of the Human Dignity Trust Jonathan Cooper said, “Criminalisation of identity puts people beyond protection of the law. This is not an issue of gay rights but one of upholding universal human rights. More than 80 legal systems across the globe continue to criminalise homosexuality - almost half the countries in the world”.

www.humandignitytrust.org ■

trans forming domestic abuse

Trans survivors of domestic abuse with an interest in improving services are being invited to the Transforming Domestic Abuse conference in London on 22 September.

The aim of the conference, organised by the LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum (LGBT DAF) is to improve domestic abuse service provision for trans communities, by bringing together sector organisations, activists and trans people to identify gaps in provision, best practice and how best to address them.

The overarching themes will be transferable to organisations working throughout the UK.

The event is in partnership with Gendered Intelligence, Gender Matters and Galop.

Learning from the event will be circulated to all those who participate in further consultation with the intention of publishing findings and recommendations in 2013.

For further updates and how to apply or get involved in organising the conference, please email maria@stonewallhousing.org

LGBT DAF is a network of practitioners, activists, researchers, service providers, commissioners, funders and representatives from public sector departments working in or around the issue of LGBT domestic abuse.

It exists to provide individuals and organisations with support to develop, implement and improve services for LGBT people who have experienced domestic abuse. ■

What a weekend! The girls at L Fest 2012 sure know how to put on a show.

In a field in Shrewsbury, in the middle of July, incessant downpours, soggy ground and blocked loos. No worries, the team at L Fest had it all in-hand - and an amazing time was had by all. An outdoor main stage saw stars like Jill Jackson, Horse, The L Project perform along with a host of other female talent.

A striped circus marquee was the venue for a great silent disco, where northeast’s own DJ Blondie and others keep things jumping ‘til the early hours on Sunday morning. Later that evening guests were treated to a corker of a comedy line-up which included Annette Fagon, Bethany Black and Hannah Gadsby - Jeez. Stop the lights!

The Arts festival at L Fest continued by Helen Sandler was also something special with top-ranking authors Sarah Waters and Stella Duffy, joined by other rising stars. There was even a chance to try your hand at archery, wall climbing or speed-dating over the weekend.

A lesbian presence in the world is reinforced through music, literature, film, sport, and friendships - all these and much more were on offer at L Fest. Congratulations to the organisers - Cindy Edwards and her team - not least for their attention to detail. See www.lfest.co.uk to book for 2013! ■
**bme+gay!**

New research reveals difficulties faced by black and minority ethnic gay, lesbian and bi people - including assumptions that they are not gay.

A new report by Stonewall and the Runnymede Trust reveals serious failings in public services to meet the needs of Britain's estimated 400k black and minority ethnic lesbian gay and bisexual (bme lgb) people.

One Minority at a Time, based on detailed interviews with bme lgb people, exposes widespread assumptions that black people are heterosexual - with little effort made to correct this view. Many participants said this perception often leads to inappropriate and poor-quality responses from public services. One participant said, “I think that I can either be gay, or I can be South Asian, or I can be a Hindu. The fact that I can be all three becomes very difficult for people to comprehend”.

In August Stonewall also published a detailed briefing on the health of bme lgb people in Britain. The briefing reveals serious concerns about their mental health, attempted suicide rates and low uptake of health services. Both reports are available online at www.stonewall.org.uk/ethnicity

Stonewall chief executive Ben Summerskill said, “These reports show the concern and isolation felt by many bme lgb people. Gay black people contribute more than £14.5 billion in taxes to fund public services, but are systematically failed by service providers.

See www.stonewall.org.uk and www.runnymedetrust.org

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**Quaker Marriage Anyone?**

As a number of mainstream churches have come out strongly against giving gay couples the right to marry in church, Quakers in Scarborough are emphasising that not all religious groups are so rigidly opposed.

Scarborough Quakers have welcomed the government’s move towards marriage equality but are questioning why they - and other forward-thinking religious groups - will still be banned from performing religious marriage ceremonies for lgbt couples.

Sophie Robson said, “Quakers - traditionally known for their progressive liberal attitudes - have been seeking a change in the law so that same sex marriages can be celebrated and are as legally valid as opposite sex marriages.

Quakers in Britain recently called on the queen to support the inclusion of same-sex couples in the definition of marriage, stating “We can see no reason, religious or otherwise, why marriage and civil partnership should not be equally available to all couples who wish to register their commitment”.

Since their foundation in the 17th century, Quakers - who see the light of God in everyone - have been outspoken in support of women’s rights, the abolition of slavery and many minority struggles - giving their first public statement in support of gay rights back in 1963.

Other religious groups such as Liberal Judaism, the Unitarian and Free Christian churches also state a wish to provide full religious marriages - regardless of sexual orientation.

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**HIV Testing Funding**

Multi-million pound investment in HIV testing outreach goes to the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) and the Family Planning Association (FPA).

At the end of July public health minister Anne Milton announced that almost £8 million is being invested in driving down HIV infections and providing information to improve sexual health as latest figures continue to show the largest increases in STIs were seen in men who have sex with men.

THT and their partners will receive £6.7 million to aid HIV prevention in men who have sex with men and people from African communities - the groups most affected by HIV in England. FPA will receive £1.13 million for their specialist sexual health information service for health and public workers.

There are nearly 100k people living with HIV in the UK with a quarter unaware of their status, meaning they are more likely to pass it on and are unable to benefit from effective treatment. In 2010, there were around 3k new diagnoses in men who have sex with men, the highest number ever reported in one year.

Ms Milton stated that “1 in 20 gay men and 1 in 20 black African men and women in England are HIV positive. In London this rises to 1 in 7. This money will help THT and FPA reach out to these communities”.

www.tht.org.uk  ■  www.fpa.org.uk

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**Legal rights and protections play second fiddle to love for civil partners.**

According to a study by researchers at The University of Manchester, same sex couples largely view themselves as ‘ordinary married’ couples like their heterosexual parents. For the most part, they assume monogamous sexual and emotional commitments and are strongly connected to the families they grew up with.

Based on in-depth interviews with 100 civil partners under 35, this research acknowledges the impact of growing up with a sense of the ordinariness within a lesbian or gay relationship. It will form part of a book by Palgrave later this year.

As a result of civil partnerships and other legal and social changes, many young couples have a feeling of being ordinary in a way previous generations never did. They subscribe to broader cultural beliefs about good marriages based on love, enduring commitment, mutual care and support, sexual exclusivity, equality and respect, communication and stability. “Recent attempts by senior religious figures to stop same sex marriage miss this point” said professor Heaphy who led the research.

For the majority, legal rights and protections were a secondary consideration to love in the decision to form a civil partnership. In addition, men were less likely to see parenting as part of their future. Immigration provided the impetus for eight couples to formalise their commitment, as did joint parenting for six participants.

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If you work in public or community services, join local lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members to stamp out discrimination and campaign for change.

As part of UNISON you:
- can tackle discrimination
- are less likely to be sacked
- have access to free legal services
- have better working conditions
- could earn more.

To find out more call Alison (LGBT Northern Region Lead) on 0191 245 0843 or email: a.chappell@unison.co.uk www.unison.org.uk/out

Join UNISON over a million voices campaigning for change

UNISON the public service union

Funded by UNISON’s General Political Fund
global workplace summit

Lesbian, gay, bi and transgender employees around the world face different circumstances yet encounter common challenges. What if we could work together for greater equality?

Out & Equal’s Global LGBT Workplace Summit took place in London, on 5-6 July. This event brought together people from around the world to consider ways of building greater equality at work. LGBT executives and employees found practical and engaging ideas to take home to transform their workplaces.

Tennis champion Martina Navratilova, IBM Europe chairman Harry van Dorenmalen, and organisational consultant John Armaechi were among the speakers.

The conference featured 24 workshops covering a broad range of topics focused on LGBT workplace issues across the globe. They provided rich opportunities to learn about best practices and successful efforts around the world - with plenty of time to network. There was also a closing gala reception and dinner.

Find out more about the summit at www.globallgbtworkplacesummit.org

chinese queer culture

Earlier this year leading figures from the Chinese gay and lesbian community spoke at The University of Manchester in the first event of its kind in the UK. Resoundingly, gay life is alive and well in China.

Activists, academics, and filmmakers shared their experiences with their European counterparts to correct misconceptions about being lesbian or gay in China.

Though homosexuality used to fall under general anti-hooliganism laws in China, it was decriminalised in 1997 and de-listed as a mental illness in 2001.

But while Beijing and other big cities are home to an increasingly long list of LGBT organisations and clubs, it is unusual for LGBT people to come out to their parents and employers.

The LGBT exchange was organised by anthropologist Dr William Schroeder from the University’s Centre for Chinese Studies, who said, “This event is about dispelling prejudices about gay life in China. It might be surprising to some that activists like these operate openly and rather effectively there. In fact communities thrive in many parts of the country, especially urban centres”.

Dr Schroeder, is currently researching how Chinese LGBT people build their communities through recreational organisations. “People in China often imagine that places like the United States are gay paradises and people in the West imagine being gay in China is horribly dangerous or illegal. But LGBT people don’t face the kind of targeted moral condemnation that their Western counterparts do. The move reflects officialdom’s laissez-faire attitude to the gay community, as long as it stays broadly out of the public eye”, says Dr Schroeder.

He added, “Inside China individuals and groups have long been working to create a vibrant scene and have been challenging conventions in their own way for decades. Many Chinese people have an ambiguous attitude to gay people rather than outright hostility - though some still believe being gay to be a mental illness. It’s most frequently seen though as a social ‘mistake’.

Many Chinese LGBT people lead a relatively open gay life - but those same people are reticent towards telling their families and workmates as having children is workmates as having children is effectively there. In fact communities thrive in many parts of the country, especially urban centres”.

While performing her MDNA show August 9, Madonna kept her promise and spoke out against a gag-law banning pro-lgbt speech in Russia - where much of the gay community remains underground as state-sponsored prejudice runs deep.

“We demand that she pay for moral damage suffered by St Petersburg residents as a result of her actions during the show”, say the Union of Russian Citizens. “We must defend our right to normal cultural life without propaganda of values and views that contradict the Russian culture”.

The St Petersburg law is the model for a bill submitted to parliament and is likely to be used to clamp down on LGBT people, by banning demonstrations - which in the past, have ended in clashes with anti-lgbt activists and police arrests.

Madonna sued for promoting equality

Madonna may face a fine of £6.7 million for encouraging LGBT equality during her recent St Petersburg gig.

10 Russian anti-lgbt activists are suing pop star Madonna for £6.7 million, saying she broke the recently introduced ‘propaganda’ law and insulted them when she spoke out for gay rights at a concert in St Petersburg.

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President Barack Obama has publicly declared for the first time this May that he supports marriage equality.

Human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell is the national coordinator of the UK’s Equal Love campaign. “Obama’s support will boost the worldwide campaign for marriage equality and, through media reporting of his support, raise awareness of gay marriage among billions of people in every corner of the earth. His change of heart was prompted by discussions with his family and friends, including gay White House staffers and gay parents at his daughter’s school. He was also influenced by the sacrifices of US lesbian and gay military personnel,” said Mr Tatchell.

Tatchell’s Equal Love campaign has filed a legal case in the European Court of Human Rights by four gay couples and four straight couples, in a bid to overturn Britain’s twin bans on same-sex civil marriages and opposite-sex civil partnerships. We want full equality in civil marriage and civil partnership law.

Same-sex couples are already allowed to marry in Canada, Spain, Portugal, Argentina, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Iceland and South Africa - plus several states in the US, Mexico and Brazil.

“Gay marriage is all about love. The love of same-sex couples is just as real, strong and committed as that of married heterosexual men and women. Prohibiting same-sex marriage devalues and denigrates the love of lesbian and gay couples. It signifies our continuing second class legal status, said Mr Tatchell. He went on to say, “Barring same-sex couples from civil marriages and opposite-sex couples from civil partnerships is as offensive as barring black or Jewish couples. It’s a form of sexual apartheid to have separate laws for gay and straight people.

A Populus poll in March found that 65% of the public agreed that gay couples should have an equal right to get married - not just to have civil partnerships - only 27% disagreed. See www.PeterTatchellFoundation.org for more information.

A new study conducted by the Boston University School of Public Health found that two thirds of lesbian, gay and bisexual adults in a representative Massachusetts sample experienced significantly less mental health and substance abuse problems if they received positive support from their parents after coming out.

“Given the high rates of suicide and self-harm among lgb youth and the high costs of treating mental-health and substance-abuse disorders, it’s critical that we understand what we can do to promote better health for lgb kids”, said Emily Rothman who co-authored the study. She added, “The way that parents treat their children when they come out is an important public health topic that has received too little attention”.

Interestingly, authors found that the act of coming out - instead of remaining closeted - was generally associated with better health for lgb women, but less so for gay and bi men. “In general, men may be able to conduct their sexual lives apart from their parents with less stress” said Rothman.

Published in the Journal of Homosexuality, researchers surveyed 5,658 adults between the ages of 18 and 64 in Massachusetts using a statewide surveillance system.

President Obama joined the British prime minister and the new French prime minister in backing same-sex marriage. It’s an unstoppable global trend, with more and more countries planning to end the ban on gay couples getting married.

Earlier Russia’s best-known gay rights campaigner Nikolay Alexeyev who has been campaigning for years on the matter, went to court hoping to overturn the city councils ban on gay parades.

President Alexeyev asked for the right to stage such parades for the next 100 years. He also opposes St Petersburg’s ban on spreading ‘homosexual propaganda’.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has already told Russia to pay him damages. Alexeyev said he would go back to the European court in Strasbourg to push for a recognition that Moscow’s ban on gay pride marches - past, present and future is unjust.

The Moscow city government argues that the gay parade would risk causing public disorder and that most Muscovites do not support such an event. The ban introduced earlier this year, remains in place.
men ‘cured’ of hiv

The first man believed to be ‘cured’ of hiv gives hope for the future at this year’s international aids conference. At the same time news broke of two more men now ‘hiv-virus-free’.

Announcing the formation of a new aids foundation in his name at the international conference, Timothy Ray Brown told media in Washington that doctors have told him he’s ‘cured of aids and will remain cured’ reported PinkNews. The ‘Berlin patient’ was cured of the virus after receiving a bone marrow transplant in 2007 for leukemia while in Germany. Because his donor had a rare genetic mutation that disables a receptor known as ccrs - which hiv needs to gain entry into immune cells - not only was his cancer put into remission but his hiv-susceptible immune system was replaced with one that could thwart the infection.

Jason Warriner, clinical director at light health charity the Terrence Higgins Trust, said, ‘The experience of the Berlin patient gives us hope for the future. Since the start of the epidemic 30 years ago, our understanding of how the virus works has increased dramatically and has allowed us to develop drugs to manage the condition’.

Mr Warriner added, ‘The transplant procedure that Mr Brown went through was complicated and life-threatening and would only be used in extreme circumstances. It’s not the ‘cure’ we’re looking for. However, it does tell us that eradication of hiv cells is possible and the importance of that can not be under-estimated. Until a functional cure is found, consistent condom use remains the best way to protect yourself. The transplant procedure ends in death 20% of the time and finding an appropriate donor would be a long shot in most cases’.

‘Two other men unlucky enough to have hiv and cancer have also been seemingly cleared of the virus’, reported Maggie Fox of NBC News during the conference. Researchers are cautiously declaring the two men cured after receiving bone marrow transplants - since hiv cannot now be detected anywhere in their bodies.

These men are reminiscent of Mr Brown’s case. One patient is hiv-free after two years and the other three-and-a-half years.

Both men have endured multiple rounds of treatment for lymphoma, had stem cell treatments and stayed on their hiv drugs throughout. ‘We found that immediately before the transplant - and after - hiv dna was in the cells. As the patients’ cells were replaced by the donor cells, the hiv dna disappeared. The donor cells, it appears, killed off and replaced the infected cells. And the hiv drugs protected the donor cells while they did this. ‘They went through the transplants on therapy and it turns out that was key’, said Dr Daniel Kuritzkes of Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston.

Gay men around the world remain a high risk category for hiv infection. Brown’s, and now these two men’s landmark treatment is exciting researchers and health experts.

Dr Jay Levy, who co-discovered the aids virus with Robert Gallo in 1983, says any real cure could take years to become practical especially in poorer countries, where 97% of the people with hiv live. “Like the four minute mile, what we need to do is just show it’s possible” said Levy.

The conference also attracted speakers such as US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, President of the United Nations Ban Ki Moon, tycoon philanthropist Bill Gates and UK singer Elton John.

www.ads2012.org

trans forced sterilisation

If you are transgender in Sweden and looking to legally change your gender, you’ll be forced to undergo surgery rendering you permanently infertile.

The majority of the Swedish parliament is in favour of modifying this archaic law - but at the beginning of the year, prime minister Fredrik Reinfeldt was letting the Christian Democrats - part of the governing coalition - block this long overdue reform.

By mid February more than 77k people around the world had taken a stand, and together with activists on the ground, built international momentum that finally pushed prime minister Reinfeldt and party leaders to end this cruel practice.

All Out, where the petition letter to the Swedish prime minister was posted, pledges to work hard with partners in Sweden to make sure the formal change happens as soon as possible.

Love, a Swedish trans man involved in the petition said, “The Swedish government is forcing thousands of people like me to make an impossible choice. If I need to change the gender on my identity card to reflect my true self, just a small change from an ‘F’ to an ‘M’, my country will force me to be sterilized. I can either have my identity represented correctly or have my basic human rights violated. That is not a fair choice”.

Thanks to the attention and support drawn to the situation by the petition, Christian Democrats reversed course and announced that they now support a ban on the practice.

www.allout.org
out! icon

luke anderson
This summer trans man Luke Anderson aka ‘Luke A’ was voted by the UK public as winner of Big Brother 2012. Luke, who was born female told Brian Dowling, presenter of the Channel 5 reality show, “It’s great to feel acceptance. All my life I’ve been pretty much an outsider, until this”.

To top things off, Luke left the house victorious on his wedding anniversary to wife Becky – who he got to see for the first time since entering the notorious residence ten weeks earlier. He was so sure she was the one, that he told her he was transgender only a week after they met.

31 year-old Luke is a development chef, born in South Africa but raised, and now living in Wales. Until recently most people in his life were unaware he was born female. "My family and wife know, that’s about it" he confessed before going into the Big Brother house.

Luke dreams of someday having a body similar to that of sculptured housemate ‘Luke S’. "I want to have bigger guns and I want a six pack". He began gender transition four years ago, having surgery and regular testosterone injections - and hopes that being on the show helps trans guys see that leading a ‘normal’ life is possible.

Already aware of out! northeast magazine and eager to speak with us, Luke revealed that he’d done some chef training on Newcastle’s quayside about a year ago and loved it.

As things went, Luke A made a pretty sharp move by coming out in the first few days after entering the house. There’s a lot of paranoia in there as everyone is looking for the same ultimate prize. It’s a very intense environment. Luke told us how things progressed for him.

“I was gonna leave it a week or so to tell everyone - but it didn’t happen that way. It was all said and out in the open almost straight away. People could think what they liked - they probably thought I was a bit of a t**t anyway to be honest. But everybody accepted me so it didn’t really get in the way”.

When you came out victorious after the 70 day stint, how did that feel? "I WAS SHOCKED - I had no idea I could win because before we went into the Big Brother house, the producers kept warning us that this was not a popularity contest - but actually an unpopularity contest - so we knew not to expect to be adored.

When I won it was an amaazing feeling. Not only, not to have been unpopular and hated, but that I was actually popular and people like me for who I am. WOW! it was brilliant! I was very cautious at first but feel thrilled to be accepted by people”.

People can recognise a certain level of humility that is part of Luke’s charm but he is also a very brave man. To go on Big Brother knowing the ruthlessness of the voting public in order to stand up and be counted, takes balls.

“I would say to anybody, especially trans people, keep believing in yourself. No matter how bad you feel, keep going. Things will get better. There’s a big support network out there now for trans people. Youtube was a great help for me. There’s some very interesting and helpful stuff on there. A lot of it is American but content from the UK is growing. And the thing is, everyone’s really friendly. Check it out.

Luke explained what it was like as a young person growing up in the wrong body. “I always felt like a boy in a girl’s body. I was a bit of a tomboy really. All the same I was a pretty popular kid. I was into sport so that helped.

Everything went pretty well until puberty. Then things got a bit awkward with the body thing. I fancied girls but to try and fit in – like most people I guess - I did what was expected of me and dabbled with boys. For want of better phrase I tried to be ‘normal’ but the truth comes out (laughs).

It’s good to see a genuinely lovely man win. Just a shame he was robbed of the rest of the prize money - but that’s another matter. ‘The journey you have been on is inspirational. Today Mr Anderson... You are a very deserving out! northeast icon’.

As we were about to go our separate ways Luke’s parting words were, “Thank you for doing this. What you guys do is incredible - and all voluntary. It’s because of you guys that we all have a voice and that’s really important”.

Gee thanks “blush.”

out! northeast / issue 32 / outnortheast.com
The appalling treatment of Muscovite popsters Pussy Riot, has truly been a wake-up call for anyone taking our freedom of speech for granted in any way. I was righteously outraged by the announcement of the sentence against Maria Alyokhina, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Yekaterina Samutsevich - the three members of girl band Pussy Riot - who were arrested following their protest in the Christ the Saviour cathedral in Moscow this February. The women were protesting against what they deem to be repressive policies and directed their message at the Orthodox church’s support for president Putin.

Each singer made the sign of the cross and bowed to the altar before performing ‘Mother of God put Putin away’ in which they appealed to the church not to support Putin’s candidacy for the then upcoming presidential election.

What followed can best be described as an appalling abuse of power - and of the law. The women were arrested, denied bail and imprisoned for months.

In August they were charged with hooliganism and inciting religious hatred. Female Judge Marina Syrova sentenced them all to 2 years in a penal colony while the international community looked on in shock. We are now told that two of the three women are threatened with having their children taken into care.

There has been huge international condemnation of both the trial and the sentence. Amnesty International called the conviction ‘a bitter blow for freedom of expression’. Artists in the entertainment world - Beastie Boys, Yoko Ono and Bjork, to name a few, have expressed their support. During her August concert in St Petersburg, Madonna appealed for the band’s release. Thanks Madge!

Band members have been described as ‘stoic’, and have showed strength and defiance throughout. All three are political activists known for their allegiance to Greenpeace and lgbt issues.
good ol’ madge!

Staying with Madonna for a moment, the material girl has also attracted adverse attention in Russia. As she handed out pink wristbands to the audience at her Russian gig, Madonna urged fans to wear the bracelets to ‘show your love and appreciation for the gay community’.

In St Petersburg, the Russian equivalent of our long dead ‘Clause 28 is alive and well. Today, residents face fines for ‘promoting’ homosexuality.

Russia’s hard right rushed to join forces to file suit against Madonna, for promoting homosexuality to minors at the concert. They pleaded that they were shocked and horrified by her plea for tolerance - to the extent that £6.5 million worth of damages were in order.

I’m sure you will all join me in sending an arousing message to the Russian elite by singing a rowdy chorus of ‘Come and have a go if you think you’re hard enough’.

Can anybody believe what’s happening with Julian Assange? Are we in Mayfair or Moscow?

The official story is that Mr WikiLeaks himself is wanted to face allegations of rape sexual assault in Sweden. He is also wanted for ‘questioning’ in America.

Currently Assange is residing in a small office in London’s Ecuadorian embassy - having been granted asylum on 16 August. He had previously appealed against the UK high court’s ruling that he should be extradited to Sweden to face the sexual assault charges - but it is not Sweden he fears. So what’s all the fuss about?

Last year Assange’s WikiLeaks website exposed hitherto classified Pentagon documents particularly in relation to the war in Afghanistan. The hacked information was passed to WikiLeaks by US private Bradley Manning who had unprecedented access to massive amounts of top secret government information, while serving as an intelligence analyst in the US army.

Assange’s motive was that as a journalist, he felt the public had a right to know. One of the most embarrassing documents leaked concerned treatment of alleged terrorists at Guantanamo Bay.

An incensed US political right has described him as a ‘high tech terrorist’ and demanded that he be ‘prosecuted to the full extent of the law’. Our old favourite Newt Gingrich huffed that Assange should be ‘treated as an enemy of the state’ and my top fave gal, Sarah Palin has called for him to be ‘hunted down like Bin Laden’.

Whether you think what happened is whistleblowing or terrorism, let’s not lose sight of what is happening in the UK, where secretary of state, William Hague has suggested ‘storming the Ecuadorian embassy’ to arrest Assange. This has resulted in anger towards the UK across South America.

Hague has proposed to use the little known Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act (1987), which conveniently allows the British government to decide that a particular embassy is not ‘sovereign’ for a particular issue where ‘material considerations and in particular public safety, national security and town and county planning’ are concerned.

It is hard to see how any of that could be invoked in relation to the possible removal of Assange, given that it came into being in the wake of the 1980 Iranian embassy suit in which serving British police officers lost their lives.

Assange has publicly stated that he has no objection to answering criminal charges in Sweden, given that once in Sweden he will be extradited to the USA, to face the salivating jaws of the likes of Gingrich and Palin.

At the time of writing this it is hard to see how a compromise can be reached given that the Swedish authorities have declined to give assurances that Assange would not be extradited to USA.

We live in interesting times, indeed. We are not pussy rioters, nor is this Russia, but we cannot afford to let our guard down in case our rights get eroded away. Stay strong and keep the faith.
Research shows that walking 10,000 steps a day is really good for your health. Putting one foot in front of the other can build stamina, burn excess calories and give you a healthier heart.

Is it time to take the 10k challenge?

Walking can be done almost anywhere, at any time, in any weather. It’s also a great way to get from A to B, which means you can fit walking into your daily routine.

How do I know how many steps I’m taking?
The average person walks between 3,000 and 4,000 steps per day. 1,000 steps is the equivalent of around 10 minutes brisk walking. To find out how many steps you currently walk you can buy a pedometer for as little as £4. Clip it to your belt or waistband and it will measure every step you take around the house, across the office, window shopping, to college or the park. You might find that you already walk almost 10,000 steps a day, or that you walk less than you think. Whatever your results, knowing how far you can walk in a day will help motivate you.

How many calories will I burn if I walk 10,000 steps a day?
You’ll typically use between 300 and 400 calories by walking 10,000 steps. For sustainable weight loss, you should aim for a calorie deficit — that is, more calories used than consumed — of around 600 calories per day.

What if I don’t take any exercise at the moment?
If you aren’t used to being active, start slowly. No one expects 10,000 steps on the first day! If you’re worried about your joints or any existing health condition, talk to your GP. If your joints are a problem, you can see if your local swimming pool holds exercise classes. The water helps to support your joints while you move, and once you lose a bit of weight that will reduce the pressure on your joints for walking.

What’s the best way to start?
Using your pedometer, find out how many steps you take during a normal day. It could be as little as 900 or as much as 5,000 depending on what you do. Interestingly, city dwellers that use public transport tend to walk more than country dwellers. Aim to take your highest total number of steps daily for a week or so, remembering to keep track of the numbers every night in a diary. As soon as you feel comfortable, try to increase your steps to 10,000 a day.

10,000 steps sounds like a huge amount. How do I fit all that walking into my busy day?
Try these tips for getting more steps into your life:
- Get off the bus early and walk the rest of the way home or to work.
- Walk to the station instead of taking the car or bus.
- Walk the dog.
- Walk up and down stairs a couple of times every time the adverts come on the telly.
- Go for a lunchtime walk at work.

I find walking boring. How can I make it more fun?
- Find a walking partner so you have someone to chat to as you walk.
- Get a mp3 player and listen to your favourite tracks or podcasts as you go.
- Remember how much good you’re doing for your health by walking.
- Enjoy the scenery, shops and people you see.

How long do I have to keep walking?
The rest of your life! It takes a while for a regular activity to become a healthy habit, so just keep going and it will become second nature. You’ll soon find yourself doing many more than 10,000 steps some days.

Is walking enough? Or should I think about other exercise as well?
The amount of exercise that is recommended depends on your age. Adults between 19 and 64 should get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity - such as fast walking or cycling - per week. Once you’re feeling the benefits of 10,000 steps a day, you’re bound to start thinking about other forms of activity.
stress balls and all!

Well readers, since our last communication it came to the attention of the Olympic organisers that I am now a member of Northern Frontrunners. I was put on hold in case they needed a pacemaker for Mo Farah for the 5k but as it turns out he did pretty well without my help.*

Despite this I managed to get along to Newcastle Pride at Exhibition Park along with several colleagues from Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Northumberland County Council, to show our support and get your views on what we could do to become beacons of LGBT employment in the north east.

295 of you came up trumps and completed our questionnaire giving us some very useful and positive feedback about what we need to do to make ourselves more attractive to potential LGBT employees - and I don't think it was just the squeezy stress balls and rainbow biscuits that attracted you all!

There were a lot of suggestions but top of the pops were:

- Make sure LGBT issues get included in your equality and diversity training programmes
- Ensure there are inclusive policies that don't make assumptions about people's relationship or family status
- Show an obvious commitment to your LGBT employees by developing and profiling LGBT role models within the organisation
- Sponsor and attend events like Pride to show commitment to LGBT staff and service users
- Develop social and professional support networks for LGBT staff.

Some of you were also kind enough to compliment our social care and nursing staff on the excellent job they had done in supporting you and your families when accessing services recently in North Tyneside and Northumberland. What reassures me massively is that you were treated with respect and dignity and were included in decision making about care plans in recognition of your status as LGBT partners, parents and carers.

At Pride, a number of Trust and Council employes helped out at the stall - including some from our staff network group, the Trust’s director of human resources, an associate director from adult services and one of the Northumberland councillors. This is indeed much appreciated and evidence of a real commitment to LGBT equality for our staff and service users.

We were all kept busy right to the end of the day and had almost nothing to pack up when we left. Result!

Until next time friends...

* Organisers actually called me to take part in the dressage but when I pitched up in my party outfit ready for action they gaped disapprovingly and popped a bridle on me! I won't be making that mistake again, haha!

As part of a commitment to improve the working experiences of LGBT employees, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with Northumberland County Council has set up a **staff network group**.

The group is for LGBT staff working in the Trust and the Council. We meet regularly to develop activities and support for LGBT staff at work. The meetings are informal and focused on delivering tangible outcomes for staff.

If you would like to be involved or receive updates on our work contact **Patrick Price**

01670 394 431

patrick.price@nct.nhs.uk
a-z community listings

To get your community, public or voluntary sector service listed here free, email listings@outnortheast.com

ARCH - Hate Crime Tyne + Wear
Report hate crime. If you or someone you know has been the victim of homophobic or transphobic hate crime, or transphobic harassment in Tyne + Wear, 24/7 service.
0800 032 32 88

Newcastle + North Tyneside - freephone
0800 077 88 (Sunderland - freephone)
0191 433 2648 (Gateshead-landline)

bangshees
Women’s drumming band. Meet Thurs 7-9pm in Newcastle. All women welcome. info@bangshees.com

Berwick Community Support
Monthly social group
07799 598 843

Big Up North
North east social group for gay men + chasers. Meets weekly in Ncl & N Tyneside. Coffee meets, trips away, cinema + more.
bigjohnuk@hotmail.com

Blue Sky Trust (North-East Aids Care)
Confidential help for people with HIV/AIDS. Provides transport, help with DIY/decoration, shopping, laundry, sitting + befriending.
info@blueskytrust.org

Body Positive NE
Confidential info, advice + support for people infected/affected by HIV/AIDS, Advocacy, holistic therapies, benefits advice, housing referrals + respite care. Computer/Internet access daily, tuition available.
byme@btinternet.com
www.byme.org
0191 232 2855

Community Alcohol Service
Confidential 1-2-1 support, info, advice + treatment for 18+ affected by alcohol in Co Durham. Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm.
0191 375 6620 (Stephen LGBT)

Club T @ GADD
T5 + TV info, socialising + advice. 1-2-1 counselling, help-line, promoting awareness of issues of sexuality. 1-2-1 work to encourage personal, social + educational development.
0191 374 4144 (Sue)

DISC
Working across Durham + Darlington with 15-25yr olds, offering a range of health + wellbeing support around LGBT issues, including access to other services.
lgbt@disc-vol.org.uk
www.disc-vol.org.uk
01325 731 160 (office)
07826 872 756 (Billijean)

Durham University Students LGBT Association
Meets weekly during term-time plus additional functions and trips out. Drop-in and support. Open to students from other local unis and colleges, and non-students.
lgbts@dur.ac.uk
http://durhamliblta.org.uk
0191 374 1772

Dykehikes
Walks for lesbians 18+ in + around north east. Meet Sundays once or twice a month. dykehike@hotmail.com
www.dykehikes.org.uk

Engage (All Age Concern) For lgbt 50yr+ in Durham. Monthly social meetings for consultation, to ensure voices of older people are heard, and inform, policy and services.
engage@ageconcern-durham.org.uk
0191 383 9750 (Clare)

Estwick Women and Girls
Group for girls and women. Young lesbian, gay and trans support. 1-2-1 support available.
0191 273 4942

The Fed
Bringing together lgbt organisations to act as one regional lgbt voice. Regular meetings across region + volunteer opportunities.
mail@the-fed.co.uk
www.the-fed.co.uk

Friday Men's Group
Gay and bi men meet Friday evenings in Darlington, 7-9.30pm.
admin@gayadvisedarlington.co.uk
01325 355 551

GAY Youth
Group for 16-25 yrs. www.gayadvisedarlington.co.uk
01325 355 551

GAP
For all gay / bi young men 16-19. Meets weekly. Safe space to discuss coming out, gay men and the law, HIV, safer sex, relationships. Also social activities.
0191 233 1333 (Mesmac)

Gateshead LGBT Young People's Forum
Under 20s support + social group meets fortnightly in Gateshead. 1-2-1 support. lgbtgatesheadyoung@ gateshead.co.uk
fb LGBT Gateshead Youth

Gay & Bi Men's Service
Support, info & advice in Durham. 07825 401 987 (Colin)

Gay & Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous
01670 354 576 (Tony - from 10pm)

Gay Men Tyneside
Social alternatives to the gay scene for gay / bi men 20+. Wednesday evenings in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.
info@gay-men-tyneside.org.uk
www.gay-men-tyneside.org.uk
07857 837 319

Gay Outdoor Club
National organisation with regional and specialist groups - caving, cycling, swimming. Walks organised for many weekends in the UK and abroad.
goc.org.uk

Gay Police Association
Northumbria branch offers lgbt police officers, special constables and staff opportunites to network, mentor + support. gpa@northumbria.pnn.police.uk
www.gay.police.uk

Gender Trust
Information and counselling service for Transsexual, Gender Dysphoric, Transgender or affected by gender identity issues. gendertrust.org.uk
0845 231 0505

Get Real
Weekly lgbt social group in South Tyneside.
lesbifriendsne@live.co.uk
0191 483 5606 (lgbt)
0191 416 2234 (Dave)

Good As You
Group for lgbt young people 16-24 yrs. Meets weekly in Sunderland city centre. 07866 728 531

Hart Gables
Advice, support, social groups, trips out and events for lgbt people in and around Hartlepool. Teesside hate crime service.
joanne.fairless@hartgables.org.uk
sallyitfcrush@btinternet.com

HIV+ Men's Group
Discrete service for HIV+ gay and bi men, meets weekly in central Newcastle. Offering support and social activities.
ali@mesmacnortheast.org.uk
0191 233 1333 (Mesmac)

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ali@mesmacnortheast.org.uk
0191 233 1333 (Mesmac)

Mesmac North East
Promotes sexual and mental health. Offers 1-1 counselling, general support and support groups for gay / bi men.
0191 233 1333 (Newcastle)

Mesmac LGBT
01429 236 790

Lesbian & Gay Parents
Coffee Group
For lesbian and gay parents, parents-to-be, or those considering parenthood. Meet for coffee and chat about all things parent related in Middlesbrough.
missingubrokemylife@hotmail.com

Lesbian Friends North East
Facebook support and friendship.
lesbianfriends@live.co.uk
www.lesbianfriends.bitik.com

LesBi-Sexy & Healthy
Website for LB women covering health, wellbeing + sex.
heidi.hansen@newcastle.gov.uk
0191 277 2048

Let’s have a heated debate!
lgbt discussion group 7-9pm on 3rd or 4th Tuesday of each month until September 2012, in central Middlesbrough.
www.teesidespositiveaction.org.uk
www.teesidespositiveaction.co.uk
01642 254 598

LGBT North East
Virtual employment, community + engagement network for lgbt people in NE region.
www.lgbtnortheast.com

M-Tags
(M/borough Trans And Gay Soc) LGBT 18+ social group in Middlesbrough. Meets Anne’s Bar for quiz nights, day trips, fund-rasiers + more. 7.30pm, 1st + 3rd Thurs every month.
m-tags@hotmail.com
fb ‘M-TAGS’ (in groups)
07940 318 146

Married Men’s Support
1-2-1 support + advice on topics such as the law, safer sex, and relationship difficulties.
www.gayadvisedarlington.co.uk
(National) 0191 233 1333 (Mesmac)

Maze
Independent ecumenical group in Durham. Meets monthly to celebrate + develop lgbt Christian fellowship through worship, music, art, discussion, meditation + food.
sallyitfcrush@btinternet.com or dsj. austin@hotmail.com

MesH
Meets Tuesdays afternoons in Pride Café. Opens to lgbt men + women. Sexual health + 1 hour HIV testing, lgbt groups + events, discussion + counselling.
0191 233 1333 (Newcastle)

MESMAC
Promotes sexual and mental health. Offers 1-1 counselling, general support and support groups for gay / bi men.
0191 233 1333 (Newcastle)

ID Young Trans
Meet with others with similar issues in safe spaces. Confidence building activities for young trans people 16-24yrs. Opportunities to exchange info + seek support.
lgbt@disc-vol.org.uk
07826 872 756 (Billijean)
01325 313 888 (Deb)

Iraqi LGBT
Raise public awareness and support refugees leaving Iraq because of persecution based on sexual orientation + gender identity.
http://iraqilgbt.org.uk

L. Birds
For women in Hartlepool aged 21+. Self esteem, confidence building + sexual health advice. Get involved in arts + crafts, or just socialise + meet new friends. Thurs 7-9pm sarahhartgables@gmail.com
www.hartgables.org.uk

Facebook support and friendship.
lesbianfriends@live.co.uk
www.lesbianfriends.bitik.com

LesBi-Sexy & Healthy
Website for LB women covering health, wellbeing + sex.
heidi.hansen@newcastle.gov.uk
0191 277 2048

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MESMAC
Promotes sexual and mental health. Offers 1-1 counselling, general support and support groups for gay / bi men.
0191 233 1333 (Newcastle)
Out North East Lesbian + Bi Women's Group
Age 16-25, lesbian, bi, or questioning. Talk in confidence. Meet weekly in central Ncl. Issue-based group work + social activities. 07540 896 121
Northumberland Proud Voices
North east LGBT+ friends choir. Meets Thursdays, 7-9.5pm at St James URC, Ncl. northernproudboyes@gmail.com
019 296 3445 (anytime + voicemail)
Northern Region Gender Dysphoria Service
Outpatient service for transgender people experiencing gender discomfort in the NE + N Cumbria. Provides assessment, psychosexual therapy, voice therapy + referrals for surgical treatment. GP referral req’d.
dawn.tiernan@ntw.nhs.uk
019 566 7170 (8.30am Mon + Fri; 8.30am-5pm. Answerphone at other times)
Northumbria University LGBT Forum
Meets during term for the ‘Annele’. Open to non-students. Social events, speakers, support, trips out. Confidential.
019 217 3737 (Students’ Union)
Northumberland College LGBT
Meets Wednesday afternoons for socialising and support - in conjunction with Trinity + Changemakers.
07790 885 171
Northumberland Young People
Support + social activities across county.
debwalker@trinityyouth.org.uk
01670 531 943 (office)
Outlook (Lifeline)
For adults in Ncl who need / had problems with drug use. Safe attitude-free environment to take part in various activities.
019 281 1828
Outpost
Support, advice, information & accommodation for young LGBT people aged 16-25.
admin@outpostproject.org
www.outpostproject.org
019 281 0099
Parents Enquiry NE
Advice and support group (meets every 2 months) for parents of LGBT people.
penejoan@supanet.com
www.parentsofboys.org.uk
019 455 2868 (loan)
0164 370 230 (All after 6pm)
PLUS+
Group for young LGBT people under 25 yrs. Tuesdays 6-8pm in central Gateshead
pam.douglas@stow.nhs.uk
0800 422 0200 (Press Option 5)
Positive Living
Support services for HIV+ people, partners, family and carers in Darlington / Durham.
admin@gayadvicedarlington.co.uk
01325 252 522
Pride Radio
Gay radio for the north east. Listen 24/7 on www.priderradio.co.uk, iTunes Radio (in the Electronica section) + on smartphones through Tune In Radio.
info@priderradio.co.uk
www.priderradio.co.uk
PRISM
Social group for over 18s. Meets Wednesdays 5-30pm in Stockton.
lgbt@teesidepositiveaction.org.uk
www.teesidepositiveaction.org.uk
01642 254 598
R2B (Right to Be)
Facilitated user-led LGBT youth group meets Hartlepool, Mon 5-8pm, 1-2 available 8-9pm
jack.hartgabriel@gmail.com
www.hartgab.org.uk
01429 236 790
REACH
Help for men + women who’ve been raped or sexually assaulted, and were aged 16 or over when the assault occurred.
reach@northernbnp.pnn.police.uk
www.reachcentres.co.uk
019 221 9222 (Newcastle)
019 565 3725 (Sunderland)
The雏
Hate Crime Teenese
Confidential incident reporting in Teenese.
www.reportthatetrime.co.uk
0800 138 1625 (9/7)
Room4Durham
Meets every Tuesday, 7-8pm for coffee + a chat. Then on to the Black Horse (top of Front St, Chester-le-Street). Family + friends welcome.
room4durham@gmail.com
07502 388 841 (lesbian)
07984 097 876 (gay man)
South Tyneside College LGBT
lgbt@stc.ac.uk
STaG
Confidential sexuality + safer sex advice + info for gay / bi men in Gateshead + 5 Tyneside. Scenario alternatives, access to resources. Mon from 7.30pm in Gateshead.
stag@stow.nhs.uk
0800 422 0200
Street Level
Support group for HIV+ people, partners, family + carers of HIV+ + Bi Women’s Group.
info@streetlevel.org
www.streetlevel.org
019 145 3027
Sunderland Pride
Advice, support + training. Safe + friendly space for smoking cessation, chlamydia testing + sexual health advice. 226A Chester Rd, Mon-Fri 10-4.
info@sunderlandpride.co.uk
019 447 2131
Sunderland University LGBT Society
Meets: Wednesday evenings 7.30pm at the Bonded Warehouse.
su.lgbt-officer@sunderland.ac.uk
019 514 5512
T-Time
@ Hart Gables. Social support + activities. 1-2-1 available. Meets Tuesdays 7-9pm
jack.hartgabriel@gmail.com
www.hartgab.org.uk
01429 236 790
Tea with Dorothy
For people 50+ looking to meet other LGBT people in a relaxed, social environment.
Newcastle - 3rd Monday of month, 5-7pm
07917 979 279
Sunderland - 2nd & 3rd Wed of month, 5-7pm
goodneighbour@agehusk.org.uk
019 514 8321
Teesside Positive Action
Support group for HIV+/AIDS affected people, partners, family & carers. Also complementary therapies + education.
01642 254 598
Teesside Uni LGBT Society
lgbt@tees.ac.uk
01642 342 234 (lgbt officer)
TUC LGBT Network
Confidential help + support for LGBT people at work. Non-union members welcome. Meets Newcastle, 1st Friday each month.
info@tuc.org.uk
www.tuc.org.uk/equality
Tyne Trans
Run by trans people for trans people. Support, advice, signposting + socials as well as access to campaigning. Safe + supportive space to talk + make new friends. Meets monthly in Newcastle.
www.facebook.com/TyneTrans
Tyneside Rape Crisis Centre
Info, support + counselling for women + girls who have experienced sexual violence. Also training, education + outreach.
www.tynesiderecce.org.uk
019 222 0272 (enquiries)
019 232 9858 (helpline hours: 8-5.30pm)
Tyneside Young Lesbians
Social + support group for 18-39 yrs meets in safe environment in central Newcastle, Mondays 6-8pm.
07507 702 878
UNISON LGBT
Regional LGBT+ Union members meet in Newcastle.
www.unison.org.uk/out
019 245 0806
WeAr Out!
Socialising, help + support in Sunderland
Wellness through creativity group - meets alternating Mondays 4-6pm
Older men’s group - meets alternating Thursdays 6-9.30pm
LGBT + bisexual women’s group - meets alternative Tuesdays 7 – 9pm
019 514 5953 (office)
074 750 546 (Deb Walker)
info@trinityyouth.org.uk
www.trinityyouth.org.uk
Transgender group - meets Bridge St, 6-9.30pm, 2nd + 4th Mon of each month.
07711 091 219 (10am-10pm all days)
Women4Women
Social group for LB women in north east.
Meets regularly in Newcastle.
www.women4womenuk@hotmail.com
www.women4womenuk.net
FB ‘womenforwomen northeast’
07722 718 232
WOW (Women On Women)
Based in Darlington, covering County Durham & North Yorkshire. Support, friendship, discos + social activities for LB women.
07939 946 645
01325 462 418 (Sandy)
Your Homes Newcastle LGBT
Are you or someone in your family a LGBT+ council tenant or leaseholder? Give views on housing services. Meets Newcastle Central Library every 2 months.
getinvolved@yhn.org.uk
www.yhn.org.uk
019 278 4391
Lesbilicious hosts its next comedy night in Newcastle on Monday 22 October at the Stand. For more information visit www.lesbilicious.co.uk.

**Out! Takes...**

Lesbilicious hosts its next comedy night in Newcastle on Monday 22 October at the Stand. For more information visit www.lesbilicious.co.uk.

**Tuck Away a Pocket Book**

Noddy (Paul Taylor) is a young local lad who’s just compiled a short digital book of journal entries from a 5-day trip to NYC just after he came out.

“My book Tuck It Away is a true story about the life of me” claims Noddy Taylor, an eighties kid who was born and raised on Button Moon, Thundercarts, Dynasty, Transformers and He-Man. “Raised by a mother who constantly had me singing along to Cher, styling her jet black Superdrug dyed hair, or performing in drag to Whitney Houston’s Queen of the Night at the age of 10. I’m surprised it took me ‘til the age of 26 to finally get out of the closet” declares Noddy.

In this journal we join him as he is about to embark on a trip to the big apple, travelling alone for the first time. Here’s an excerpt... “Hope in time I am fully out and accepted by the people I care about most. mam, dad and Jessie I do love you! To all my mates - I hope you still treat me the same. To the family - we are strong, loving and close-knit and I do hope it stays that way. So there you have it - I’ve said it in public out loud to someone. I AM GAY!”

Find out more about Noddy Taylor’s short read at www.rucomingout.com/paul.html.

**Southern Scene Queen**

Hola chicas! After an extended holiday I’m back! What a busy few months it’s been. Ok, here we go, let’s start things off in good ol’ Middlesbrough...

Gem Andrews sings heart-achingly beautiful dark country ballads, filled with intoxicating romanticism and wrapped in haunting melodies.

Her much anticipated debut album Scatter was released in August. With contributions from Beccy Owen, Gabriel Minnikin and Sue McLaren, this collection pays homage to Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Lucinda Williams and Sue McLaren, this collection pays homage to Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Lucinda Williams and Sue McLaren, this collection pays homage to Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Lucinda Williams and Sue McLaren, this collection pays homage to Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Lucinda Williams and Sue McLaren, this collection pays homage to Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Lucinda Williams and Sue McLaren, this collection pays homage to Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Lucinda Williams and Sue McLaren, this collection pays homage to Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Lucinda Williams and Sue McLaren, this collection pays homage to Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Lucinda Williams and Sue McLaren.

Gem has taken her live act across the USA and Europe as well as playing extensively in the UK. When at home in the north east she performs and organises all-country gigs, including the annual Muma Moosnshine festival in Easington which celebrates and showcases lgbtq artists.

See www.gemandrews.co.uk for more details or to hear some of the tracks from the album.

**Gaijilicious!**

Gaijilicious at Joe’s Bar was fronted by Duchess Davinaya and one of my close friends - queen of the gutters Violet Brater! Release at Avalon had a fabulous fashion show by Leggs as well as chart topping mixes from djs Linsdey Stephenson and Daniel Collins!

Pick & Mix at Harveys was fronted by Paige Turner, Daisy Diamond and the stunning Emma Royd with a gorgeous soundtrack by dj Matt Nevin. Well done to all the Harveys team and customers who partied until 5am!

Over at Inside OUT & Seen, the Party Monsters took over the darkened halls as Gina Tonic, Lord Homo, Madgesti and Janice Dickinyporson were joined by the one and only Kerry Kalona! And we were treated to a campastic melody of madness by djs David Robson and Winner the Spinner!

Finally in Darlington Barbardi Cardi, Michael Hird and myself launched Pride at The Hub! With 2 rooms of fabulous tracks up until 4am! The Cheeky Girls took their shoesies off on stage and partied hard with yours truly!

The Hub will be opening it’s doors to the gay community once a month, each time with an amazing celebrity appearance! Check Facebook for our next events in September when we bring you Sclub 7!
If your life depends on it, contact the venues direct as information changes frequently.

middlesbrough

annie’s bar
97 litheroe road 01642 903 595
mon - thurs 4pm – 11pm free pool
fri 4pm - midnight karaoke - chubbs
wed + thurs 4 - midnight
karaoke - peter
sat 4pm - midnight jackie daniels
sun 8pm - midnight shelina blige
monthly appearances from kevin l
blu
albert road 01642 903 595
wed qtwo with dj lindsey
sat 4pm – free entry
satur-gay tees valley’s biggest gay nite
£6 / £4 q-jump before 11pm
boulevard
3-9 churchill street 01642 903 595
fri - sun 8pm - 11pm
pop shop with dj dai diamond
sun free entry 9pm - 3am
pop boudoir with duchess davinu + daisy
basement
albert road 01642 903 595
wed qtwo with dj lindsey
sat 4pm – 3:30am
£6 / £4 q-jump before 11pm
newcastle

@one
1 marlborough cres 0191 260 3841
5pm – 11am
the bank
12 scotswood rd 0191 230 3863
every day 11 – 2am
mon topkatz karaoke - miss kitty
wed + thurs penning arcade
fri & sat ruby reynolds
sat + sun from 9pm + dj + cabaret
boulevard
3-9 churchill street 01642 903 595
fri - sun 8pm - 11pm
the dog
15 westmoreland road 0191 221 0775
sun - thurs 1pm - 3am
fri - sat 1pm - 3am
the eagle
42 scotswood road 0191 230 4416
sun - thurs 5pm - 1am
fri 5pm - 2am
sat 5pm - 3am
easy street
8-10 westmoreland rd 0191 222 0606
all days 12 noon - 3am
mon 9pm - 3am students’ nite
tues, wed, fri + sat 9pm - 3am drag dj disco
thurs + sun 9pm - 3am cabaret
eclipse
48 clayton street west 0191 222 0183
11am – midnight
gossip
7-9 westmoreland rd 0191 261 6824
mon + thurs 5pm - 1am
tues + wed 5 - 10.30pm
fri + sat 2pm - 2am
sun 2pm - 1am
heaven’s above @ the yard
2 scotswood road 0191 232 2037
thurs - mon 8:30pm - 2am
powerhouse
15-19 westmoreland rd 0191 261 5341
mon thurs fri + sun 8pm - 4am
sat 8pm - 1am (6am, 1st + last saturday of month)
rusty’s
limes sq (centre for life) 0191 233 0144
thurs - sun 8pm - 3am
tues + wed 10pm - 3am
secrets
78 scotswood road 0191 260 3841
mon - thurs 11am - 12:30am
fri 11am - 3am
sat 12 noon - 3am
sun 2pm - 12:30 am
switch
4 - 10 scotswood road 0191 261 5341
wed + thurs 8pm - 2am
fri + sun 6pm - 2am
sat 8pm - 3am

so outrageous
market vaults 3 back silver street
1st + 3rd thurs of month from 9pm
durham’s first lgbt club night - drag queen,
eclectic music, cheap drinks.
next nites
6 + 20 sept / 4 + 18 oct / 1 + 15 nov
facebook ‘SoOutrageousDurham’
durham

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facebook ‘SoOutrageousDurham’

the scene

darlington (mondays)
gaylicious @ joe’s bar
imperial cte, grange rd 01325 464 642
mon - 7pm - midnight cabaret
the golden cock
12 tubwell row 01325 467 460
mon - 11am - 2am
inside out
beaumont street west
mon - midnight 3.30am
pick & mix @ harvey’s
mon - 9pm 2am 2 rooms
djs malt nevin paige turner + guests
the quays
5 tubwell row 01325 467 464
lgbt friendly all week with food served
sun 12 noon - 3pm mon sat 7am - 4pm
release @ avalon
8 blackwellgate 01325 469 977
mon - 8pm - midnight guest djs lindsey
stephenson + gina tonic
seen
beaumont street
mon 10pm - 2am dj chris
st mary’s
rubby terrace
mon 8pm - 1am karaoke with dj mike
alternatives

sunderland (tuesdays + thursdays)

arizona @ the point
the point - holidayside 0191 510 8680
tues - frt from 8pm til late
mwh - phelia balls + the lush crew
crisco disco @ ttonic
l2 vine place 0191 565 5755
tues 8pm - 2am miss trixie + dj lepton
chase
1-3 park lane 0191 567 0753
tues - tues 7pm - am jackie daniels + drageoke
gatsby’s
13-14 derwent st 0191 252 9272
tues gina nova
lola’s
l vine place 0191 561 1336
tues 10pm - 3am werq dj gerard
luma
15 – 17 derwent street 0191 514 3111
tues 9pm til late
luma-licious - vicky paris
project homo @ passion
holmeside tues 11.30pm - 4.30am
dj andrew + frenchy kiss
miss d’s
2nd vine place 0191 514 3808
tues from 8pm til late
andrew + ava divine

stockton (thursdays)

good as gold @ goldies
stockton high street
thurs 9pm - 3am
less lickle, emma royd + miss cara
djs lindsey stevensen + steve xile

hartlepool

sugar factory @ the studio
tower street 0191 295 111
monthly 9pm-2am house + electro with
djer in campbell free glowstick + lollipop

newcastle conhd

switched up
4 - 10 scotswood road 0191 261 5341
saturday loliad free entry
twist
limes sq (centre for life) 0191 233 0144
mon + thurs 11am - 12.30am
tues + wed 8am - 7pm
fri 9am - 1.30pm
sat 9am - 2.30am
sun 9am - 1pm
the yard
2 scotswood road 0191 232 2037
mon - thurs 4pm - 2am
fri + sat + sun 3pm - 2am

lesbilicious comedy
semi-regular comedy night for
lesbian/bisexual women + their friends
in newcastle. next night monday 22 october at the stand. for more info
see www.lesbilicious.co.uk

milk
funky house night for lesbians and their
friends. relaxed + friendly atmosphere.
sexay beats 9pm - 2am.
next nites
29 sept, 27 oct + 17 nov - at the globe,
railway st w w/ dj blonde: ±5 entry includes
free shot. facebook ‘milk-newcastle’ or email funky-milk@live.co.uk

poeke
alternative lgbt music night in
newcastle. 3:30pm - 2am (± £2 entry
after 9pm) facebook ‘poeke newcastle’

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out! takes...

scene out?
horoscopes
by jasmine starr

aries
21 march-april 19

Busy times at the moment for you, so you might be falling behind with some things. But there is a respite ahead. Ensure that you prioritise what is most important, and it will eventually fall into place. If you have travel plans they look set to be disrupted, so plan an alternative. If you were planning to catch up with family or friends abroad you might have to settle for a phone call or web chat instead.

taurus
20 april-may 20

Not one for extravagance, you’ll be overcome by a wave of extreme confidence, and want to explore new horizons. You might find yourself planning a trip abroad, or a weekend away with someone close. With money matters, your new found adventurous streak might lead you to take some risky decisions. The old you will soon return though, so don’t be too hasty about signing your life away!

leo
23 july-august 22

You’re getting a lot of satisfaction from a big project that is eating up a lot of your time. If it’s been too busy lately then it is about to get a little better. Some good news soon will ease your worries. Stay focused and resolve, and the rewards will be huge. Friends and colleagues will be impressed at your work ethic, and will be keen to spend time with you – if you actually want to take a break of course!

virgo
23 august-september 22

You’re in a giving mood, so why not give some of your time up to a worthy cause? It could also reap benefits in your social life. You will make some new friends and it could be really good for your sense of wellbeing. At work, you’ll find doors starting to open for you, and bosses more responsive to your ideas. A promotion or pay rise may not be too far away if you play your cards right.

libra
23 september-october 22

Something out of the blue is set to inspire you. Your extra-curricular activities are going to take up a lot of your time, but you are ready for the challenge. Your partner might think that you won’t have enough energy left for them, but you’ll be fine in that department as well! In fact, in the mood you’re in, you will probably find yourself making all the romantic plans!

sagittarius
22 november-december 21

You get twitchy when you see others getting twitchy. You want more than life has to offer at the moment and so does a close friend or maybe even your partner. Big changes are around the corner. Emotionally you could do with a change of scene, so you might be off on your travels very soon. And if you do head off somewhere, make sure that you leave all your worries behind!

capricorn
22 december-january 19

You may find that financial issues rear their ugly head once again. Usually keen to keep an eye on your spending, you might have been a little remiss in this department recently, and it won’t help when a close friend or your partner brings up this touchy subject. Sparks may fly and you might wind up with a bruised ego to go with your battered wallet. Be warned!

scorpio
23 october-november 21

Looking for romance now is also a very infectious – others will share your joy at the moment, and these exciting plans are just what you need to kick-start yourself into action again. It’s time to throw caution to the wind, grasp the mantle and get yourself firmly back on track.

cancer
21 june-july 22

Getting in touch with some close friends will help you appreciate that life is very good indeed. Material goods are of no importance to you when you have people around you to share good times with. The impact of such good relationships is infectious – others will share your joy at the quality of friendship. Everyone around you will be feeling the love, and if you’re looking for romance now is also a very good time.

gemini
21 may-june 20

If you’ve been a little compulsive with your wallet lately? After an eye-watering bank statement you’ll be keen to prove to all that you can work the other way too. Paying off any debts to close friends and your partner will probably be top of your list. Try being a bit more candid about your finances, especially if you share bills or expenses. Your partner will be forever grateful!

taurus
20 april-may 20

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pisces
19 february-march 20

Are you harbouring a secret? Has someone close confided in you? If so, you might find some are curious to find out what the mystery is. But stay true to your word and keep your cards close to your chest or risk the wrath of your confidant! You also might come in for some special treatment or be made an unusual offer. Proceed with caution though, and think carefully about the person’s motives.
1-2-1 counselling

LGBT Quality Training & Audits

Diversity Training & Audits

theequalityacademy.com

LGBT & Child Counselling

Call Joanne: 01429 236 790 or email fairness25@live.co.uk

220 York Rd, Hartlepool TS26 0ER

HARTGABLES

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employment, engagement, community

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info@re-mind.org.uk

visit us online

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mail@lgbtfed.com

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info@opusdiningclub.co.uk

www.opusdiningclub.co.uk

football

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young people’s advice

pride @ src

Get confidential advice and information on LGBT issues

email pride@stockton.ac.uk

or contact Liz Maddison

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The magazine & online community for women’s football

football

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The magazine & online community for women’s football

football
Based on a true story
"Lesbian & Bisexual Women Need Cervical Screening Too"

Are you ready for your Screen Test?

If you are a lesbian or bisexual woman between 25 and 65, you need to go for regular cervical screen tests!

Don't get left in the dark...

For more on this campaign visit www.lgf.org.uk/screening

University of Salford
Manchester

LGF
The Lesbian & Gay Foundation
Ending Homophobia, Empowering People
www.lgf.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1070584

NHS
Cervical Screening Programme