

About 'Celebrating Diversity' and the LGBT Interagency Working Group

A broadly representative Inter-agency Working Group was formed in November 2011 to devise a Plan for the Development of LGBT Services and Supports in Galway City and County. The aim was to bring key stakeholders together in order to ensure that individual projects and actions complement each other, and that major shortcomings are addressed and progressed in the coming years. In addition, this has been progressed as a best-practice model that can be shared and replicated in other parts of the country. The approach has proven effective by delivering:

- Targeted initiatives through solid evidence of current community needs
- High impact supports and services as a result of close collaboration between agencies and community representatives
- Value for money as efforts to address priority needs are co-ordinated and duplication of services and supports avoided

The membership consists of: Amach!; shOUT!; City of Galway VEC; County Galway VEC; Galway Rural Development; Galway City Partnership; Galway County Council; Galway City Council; An Garda Síochána; FRC LGBT West; West Training and Development; Galway County Community Forum; AIDS West; Western Regional Drugs Task Force; HSE – Health Promotion; HSE – Suicide Prevention; Mental Health Ireland and Jigsaw.

With the support of LGBT Diversity, the Inter-agency Working Group has now finalised 'Celebrating Diversity', a three-year Development Plan for LGBT Supports and Services in Galway City and County. Based on a thorough analysis of community needs the Development Plan identifies a number of recommendations around five key themes: Health; Community Supports; Safety and Policing; Education and Learning and Transgender Inclusion.

The deliberations of the Working Group were informed by a review of existing literature and research of community needs, including LGBT West's Needs Analysis of the LGBT population in Mayo, Roscommon and Galway (2008), and information gathered through a community consultation undertaken by Amach! during February and March 2012.

While the Working Group now has fulfilled its initial brief, it is committed to continue its work in order to ensure the effective delivery of the recommendations outlined in the Plan through annual work programmes over the coming three years. This Development Plan will be implemented from September 2012 through to September 2015.

This Working Group has been supported by LGBT Diversity. LGBT Diversity is a co-ordinated national response by twelve LGBT organisations which aims to build the capacity of the LGBT sector, and facilitate the building of relationships with mainstream organisations and the wider community. LGBT Diversity was set up as a three-year development programme running until the end of 2012.