

African Rainbow Family

- Counselling
- Financial
- Training and
- Housing Support

For Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Intersex Community and Refugees

2018

Counselling & Part of History: Celebrating Whom we Are

'Our project has been funded by The New Beginnings Programme'



**SUPPORT FOR LESBIAN, GAY,
BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND
QUEER (LGBTIQ) PEOPLE OF
AFRICAN HERITAGE**

- **Support LGBTIQ Asylum Seekers & Refugees**
- **Campaigning For Global LGBTIQ Equality**
- **Stand Against Hate Crimes**

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Love is Love, Love Is Not A Crime

African Rainbow Family

5/1/2018

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Executive Summary

African Rainbow Family is very humbled to have been able to put together a successful first ever LGBTIQ refugee conference in the UK that calls for end to 'vile' proof of sexuality policy with the generosity of The New Beginnings Fund thus:

- *Conference marks 50 years since landmark of homosexuality law reform*
- *Refugee speakers will explore ongoing plight of LGBT asylum seekers in UK*
- *Call for Home Office to drop 'proof of sexuality' policy*

We are proud to say that our Part of History conference event poster has since 21st June 2017, been added to items displayed till date in the People's History Museum Manchester for visitors to view and learn from. This would eventually be archived for future reference following the Museum's archiving procedures. Following the conference, our branch in Birmingham has been experiencing increased referrals too and now have a new branch in Leeds.

We were also approached by IMiX Migration Communications that they were producing a communications toolkit to help groups like ours to work with the media and requested that they'd love to include our press release in the toolkit as an example release. We agreed for them to use it.

The conference became bigger than what we first envisaged. We were initially suppose to inform a little more than 200 African Rainbow Family members and British public through the two main activities with 3 speakers. We were able to reach a total of 57,530 people online (Twitter - 43,200 reach with the peak between 15th May 2017 and 6th July 2017, Facebook - 13,140 total reach, Eventbrite - 1,190 page views and 130 tickets sold). We had 440 delegates in attendance at the conference, 18 external speakers, 9 members told their stories and we screened a short film produced by our members, titled 'Taboo'.

The planning committee members (all LGBTI refugees and people seeking asylum) at African Rainbow Family became creative during the preparations and incorporated stalls for organisations to exhibit their good work. Stalls were rented for very low amount of money, this was to be able to meet other unforeseen expenses.

We collaborated with BHA to have on site HIV Rapid Test for delegates and or our members who would like to take such opportunity to know their HIV status. This was equally successful.

As part of the conference activities, some of our members told their stories in a live streaming programme at a local broadcasting radio station called Radio Africana in Manchester which attracted some provocative discussions on homosexuality and its criminalisation amongst their huge African audience both within and outside the UK. We had vegetarian groceries donations from the Cooperative to supplement what we already budgeted for.

Produced two different videos (film - Taboo and documentary of the conference)

The opportunity for African Rainbow Family to provide the service of British Sign Language at the conference made it more inclusive!

A short video documentary of the conference was produced for sharing to raise further awareness and visibility of the plights of LGBT people seeking asylum.

Above all, we had many positive feedback from delegates. Some of our volunteers got paid employment and many more joined us. There are of course lessons to be learnt however, the loud call for us to make

this conference a yearly event is encouraging.

Introduction

About Us

African Rainbow Family (ARF) is an inclusive non-for-profit Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) community group based in Manchester that provides advice counselling, financial, training and housing support for the Lesbian, Gay Transgender and Intersex community and asylum seekers and refugees of African heritage and wider Black And Minority Ethnic community in the UK. We have since inception grown in number (over 150 members) with a branch in Birmingham and a potential one in Leeds before June 2018.

African Rainbow Family was recently shortlisted as a Community Organisation for LGBT by the UK's largest National Diversity Award 2017, shortlisted for the Equalities Award at the Heart of Salford 2017 awards and Small Community Organisation 2015 and 2016 by Salford CVS. We are a part organisation of the UK Alliance for Global Equality.

Many of our members have experienced violence, honour killing, forced marriage, torture, exploitation, discrimination, psychological and mental health problems and constantly live with the aftermath effects of these trauma.

We combine inclusivity with organisational structure- no hierarchy. This is crucial to us as it ensures that the beneficiaries are heard, central to the activities and structure of the group without marginalisation.

Our LGBT asylum seekers are equally signposted to other mainstream services (Solicitors, Medical Legal Services etc) that might be of help to them during their asylum processes, and those that have got refugee status are supported to find employment/education and integrate into the British society.

We know that movement against injustice is best led by those most pointedly affected by an issue hence as a group led, run by and for members, our strengths lie in better understanding of what issues we are going through, identifying what supports we need, how we would like the supports delivered and tailored around individual needs.

We are LGBT specific group of people which makes it safer for members to attend and identify with other people of same sexual orientation with them without being judged.

There are opportunity for empowerment, growth in self esteem and confidence, peer support, integration and being valued. We are user-centred, flexible in providing varied services, react quickly to the changing needs of our community, needs-based, holistic, trusted, connected to our community to reach people that the statutory sector finds more difficult to access. We are experts by experience, committed, engage in value for money whilst improving our community's life.

This project was funded by the New Beginnings Fund to provide needs based LGBT specific counselling for members, meet volunteers out of pocket expenses and organise Part of History: Celebrating Whom We Are Conference in commemoration of the 50th year anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of Homosexuality in the UK.

Meeting expenses for our volunteers who are refugees means they can learn new skills in career planning, leadership, presentations/public speaking, generally increase their confidence, life skills and continue to volunteer their time at the organisation to support other people seeking asylum coming through the system.

We know that LGBTI people seeking asylum are at risk of low self esteem and lack of confidence. Increased social stigma, discrimination of living as a sexual minority - a source of stress, anxiety, higher levels of depression, substance use, suicidal ideation, self-harm, social rejection, bullying, mood swings and other mental health concerns LGBT people experience due to discrimination and oppression re housing, employment, education, basic human rights, coming out to one's family, sorting out an "authentic" sense of self in the face of social expectations and pressures. This is compounded by intersectionality of seeking asylum, being refugees and BAME whom have lived in the closet for long, forced to shield their sexuality whilst in their countries of origin in order to conform with societal norms where homosexuality is criminalised and sometimes met with death sentence.

Despite rapidly growing cultural acceptance of diverse sexual, romantic orientations and gender identifications; oppression, discrimination and marginalisation of LGBT people persists.

We know that celebrating whom we are as part the wider LGBT+ community is important. This ensures cohesion, integration, shared cultural values with wider community, change the xenophobic mainstream media narrative portrayal of people seeking asylum and refugees.

Garnering community support and solidarity for LGBTI and non-LGBT refugees and people seeking asylum is important. This invariably brings about our local community responding when people are detained, threatened with deportation. Importantly, empowerment for LGBT+ refugees and people seeking asylum to make positive contributions, embrace British values; including acceptance, tolerance, celebrate diversity and promote integration with the wider community.

The Conference

Part of History : Celebrating Whom We Are conference was delivered over two different days. Informed nearly 500 African Rainbow Family members and British public through two main activities which comprised of:

Day 1- Celebrating Whom We Are Seminar - Visit to the People's History Museum

Live Broadcast at Radio Africana, Manchester.

Day 2 - Celebrating Whom We Are Conference - LGBTI Refugees Tell Their Stories In Manchester!

18 invited speakers and 9 members of African Rainbow Family gave perspectives on:

1)What the environment was pre 1967 to be an LGBT person in the UK, journey so far

2)Expectations of the community for the future and

3)LGBT political asylum regarding the environment of LGBT asylum process. Our members told their stories of persecutions back in their home countries in order for our community in the UK to appreciate the gains made here, reflect on environment for LGBTs in our members' individual countries. We celebrated our diversity through traditional foods from Asia, Africa and English as a way of bringing our community in Manchester together, encourage community cohesion, network, share good ideas and practices useful in supporting our members. Also celebrate amongst ourselves whom we are as LGBT people from different cultural and religious backgrounds.



African Rainbow Family's Conference Poster Displayed By The People's Museum Manchester As Part of Their Historic Collections.

Part of History

Day 1- Celebrating Whom We Are Seminar - Visit to the People's History Museum Manchester

About seventy five LGBTI people seeking asylum including members of African Rainbow Family and three other support groups from Manchester, Liverpool and York attended a half day tour and seminar about LGBTIQ history at the People's History Museum that involved visiting exhibit and archives.

Session: Guided Tour of Never Going Underground and Introduction to LGBT+ Archives

Learning Objective: Learn more about the history of what the environment was being an LGBTI person in the UK prior to the decriminalization of homosexuality in 1967 and the people that fought for the freedom that we now enjoy.

Most of the participants had never been to the People's History Museum before nor heard of the history of LGBTIQ people in the UK. The majority of participants said they gained new knowledge and skills as well as felt better informed and confident. All said they would recommend a visit to their friends or others. In discussion with Museum staff many felt there should be information on LGBTIQ refugees and African Rainbow Family offered to support this further.

'It is a lot to gain by coming to the guided tour in the museum. You can acknowledge yourself in what has happened in the past, the different effects in the past and who has helped to improve our way of linking and understanding out present and principles'. Said by an attendee member of African Rainbow Family.

Evaluation (20 filled out and out of this):

15 people said it was their first time attending such event.

5 people said they had attended a similar event in the past 5 months.

Satisfaction 20 Very Satisfied or Satisfied; 17 Would recommend to others.

At group face to face discussion to evaluate the event:

70 people said it was their first time attending such event.

5 people said they had attended a similar event in the past 5 months.

All 75 participants were satisfied and 72 would definitely recommend it to others.

Impact (20 filled out and out of this):

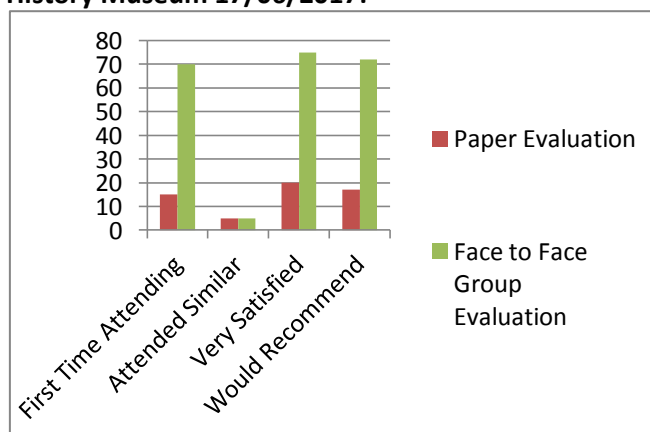
20 people said they had gained new skills or knowledge and 5 had changed attitudes; 19 felt more confident and 20 have had increased self esteem.

At group face to face discussion to measure impact of the event:

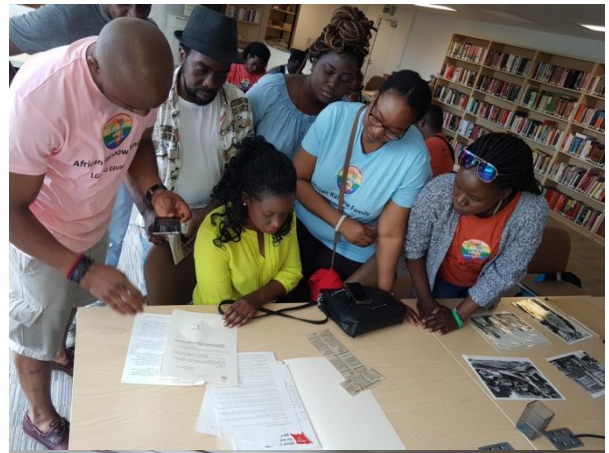
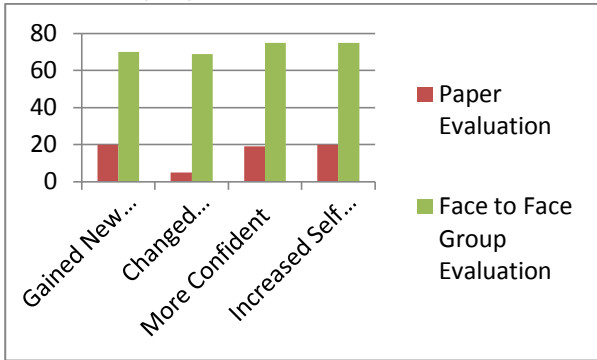
70 people said they had gained new skills or knowledge and 69 had changed attitudes; all 75 felt more confident 75 and have had increased self esteem.

The Seminar was equal numbers of men and women who identify as gay, lesbian and intersex. The majority were African Christians (60) with 10 of Asian origin and Muslims.

Day 1 Satisfaction Evaluation: At People's History Museum 17/06/2017:



Day 1 Impact Evaluation: At People's History Museum 17/06/2017:



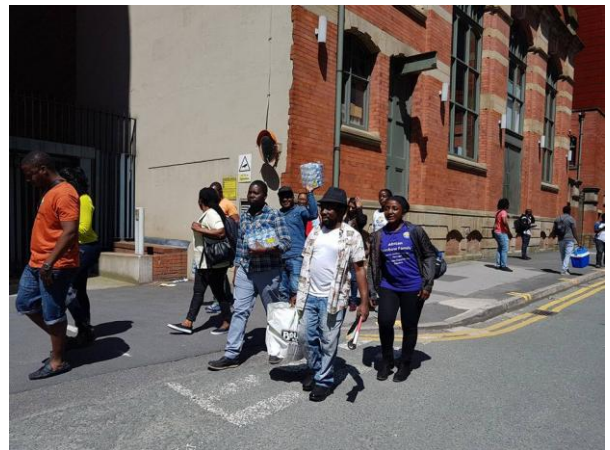
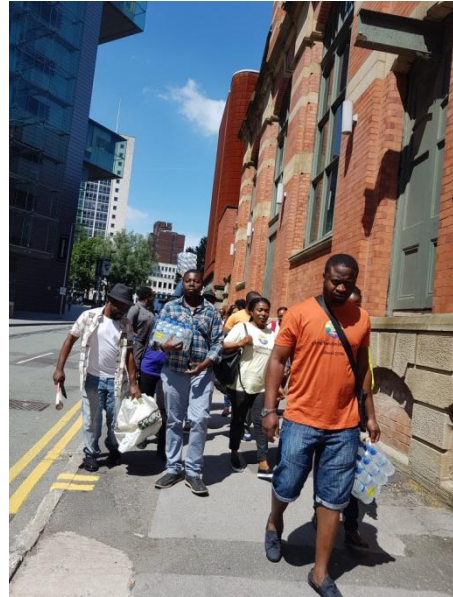
Day 1 Pictures at People's History Museum 17/06/2017 below:





Following the learning session, we had a picnic where we shared food and drinks together as a family. Below are some of the picnic pictures:

Day 1 Pictures of picnic after learning at the People's History Museum 17/06/2017





Live Broadcast at Radio Africana, Manchester.

Our members were on a live radio broadcast at the Radio Africana on 19th June 2017 leading up to day 2 of the conference.

They told their stories, raised awareness about the homophobia that is endemic in the African communities and used the radio show to campaign for acceptance of LGBTI people and equality.

Engagements at the live broadcast has 183 views, there were very mixed views amongst the audience. Various upsetting comments were made at the beginning but with time, they appeared to be liberal in their understanding of what it is to be an LGBTI person and at the same time, an African.



Pictures of Live broadcast at Radio Africana, Manchester, 19/06/2017:



Day 2 - Celebrating Whom We Are Conference - LGBTI Refugees Tell Their Stories In Manchester! - Conference

Celebrating Whom We Are conference was delivered over two different days. Informed nearly 500 African Rainbow Family members and British public

LGBTIQ Asylum Seekers And Refugees Tell Their Stories In Manchester! Celebrating Whom We Are Conference - Methodist Central Halls -June 21, 2017

Manchester hosted 150+ participants at the first ever LGBTIQ asylum seeker and refugee conference marking 50 years since the landmark Sexual Offences Act 1967 made the first steps towards decriminalising homosexuality in the UK.

The conference featured LGBTIQ refugee speakers 'experts by experience' sharing their stories (5 ARF members shared their own experiences), together with experts and activists exploring changes in attitudes in the UK in the last 50 years and highlighting the plight still faced by LGBTIQ asylum seekers and refugees today. The conference was fully interactive with discussion throughout all of the sessions and day with the majority by LGBTIQ refugees.

The conference included a lunch of traditional food, a dramatic video of ARF members highlighting the challenges of living as LGBTIQ in traditional African Families, and the Women Asylum Seekers Together (WAST) Choir.

The conference highlighted the challenges LGBTIQ refugees face coming to the UK including: Home Office 'proof of sexuality' policy; deportation of LGBTIQ asylum seekers on the grounds that they could 'be discreet' about their sexuality in their home country. It also brought together some of the UK's leading experts.

Two main plenary included LGBTQI refugees (African Rainbow Family members) sharing their experiences and expert/activist speakers speaking on the following:

- Peter Tatchell, leading human rights and LGBTIQ campaigner ***"What the environment was pre 1967 to be an LGBT+ person in the UK, the journey so far and expectations of the community for the future and how it affects people seeking asylum in the UK today"***.
- Barrister S. Chelvan, LGBTIQ asylum law specialist ***"The climate of LGBTI political asylum process in the UK - The UK Asylum System Experiences of LGBTI People Seeking Sanctuary In The UK & How***

To Support Them"

- Paul Dillane, Chief Executive of Kaleidoscope Trust ***'What the situation is for LGBTI people living in Commonwealth countries where being an LGBTI person is a crime & what could be done in decriminalising such laws'***
- Sue Sanders, Emeritus Professor at the Harvey Milk Institute Chair SCHOOLS OUT UK, ***'What the environment was pre 1967 to be an LGBT person in the UK, journey so far and expectations of the community for the future - Feminism and Lesbians Perspective'***.
- Aderonke Apata LGBTIQ campaigner and founder, African Rainbow Family ***"Domestic Abuse As It Affects LGBTI Asylum Seekers - Intersectional Experience"***

Two concurrent Panel Workshops included **UK, African & Caribbean Perspectives:**

Panel 1:

Rob Berkeley, Black Out UK - *"What were and are the expectations for LGBTIQ People of Colour in the UK."*

Philip Jones, Metropolitan Congregation - *"Christianity & homosexuality past, present, and expectations for the future."*

Vivien Walsh & Pam Flynn - *"What's the environment and support services for LGBTIQ persons, including people seeking asylum, journey so far and expectations of the community for the future in Manchester- Feminism and Lesbians' Perspective."*

Chair: Elijah Saunders, African Rainbow Family

Panel 2:

Jason Jones, - *"How LGBTIQ People of Colour fit into the wider LGBTIQ community in the past until today in the UK."*

Linda Bellos, Leading UK equality law specialist - *"What was the legal environment for LGBTIQ People of Colour from past until today in the UK."*

Smyth Harper, LGBT Foundation - *"What progress has been if any, in types of support services available to LGBT people, including people seeking asylum and why were/are they needed in Manchester."*

Margaret Nankabinwa, African Rainbow Family - *" How do LGBTI Asylum Seekers and Refugees fit into wider LGBTIQ community in the UK?"*

Chair: Sandhya Sharma, Safety4Sisters

The conference concluded with a practical advice and discussion session.

Panel 3: How to support LGBTI People Seeking Asylum

Margaret Nankabinwa, LGBT Refugee and Secretary, African Rainbow Family

Kris Harris, Medical Justice

Leila Zadeh, UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group (UKLGIG)

Denise McDowell, Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (GMIAU)

Lisa Matthews, Right to Remain

Chair: Aderonke Apata African Rainbow Family

Some Comments and Pictures:

'I liked best when people were telling their story about what happened to them and when they came out as well as the video drama... the speeches and discussion were very educational'



'Panel discussions were very informative, well organised, well chosen, and worked well together'



'Welcoming event, great food and interesting debates and good speakers'



'Very well prepared...cool to see service users – all very friendly, welcoming. Good range of speakers'



'The networking and the speeches were very knowledgeable. Good sharing of stories by African Rainbow Family members'

'Good to share experiences and understand how far some had come from'



'Keep up the good work! It was great and I look forward to the next conference'



Jason Bergen, a delegate says:

Sue Sanders, Professor Emeritus, Harvey Milk Institute and Chair Schools OUT UK; one of our keynote speakers says:

'We had an inspiring moving and invigorating day that due to the moving testimonies from people who are seeking asylum renewed our determination to challenge the home office and their outrageous ways. The mix of speakers and the choir was particularly welcome and the food was memorable'

"Never before has there existed a space for BAME LGBTIQ asylum seekers to have a voice, and be heard. The Manchester conference provided the safe space for expert voices, asylum-seekers and refugees to share knowledge and ideas to ensure the most vulnerable can no longer be silenced. Thank you African Rainbow Family."





The two linked events brought our community of LGBTIQ refugees and our allies and supporters in Manchester together, encouraging understanding of our challenges and realities promoting community cohesion, networking, sharing good ideas and practices useful in supporting our members.



We were also able to celebrate whom we are as LGBTIQ people from different cultural and religious backgrounds. We shared good meals with the community, networking, built support and solidarity.



'Great day and great conference bringing together refugee 'experts by experience', practitioners and national experts on asylum and LGBTIQ issues. Good to see discussion and people from across the UK together in solidarity to share and make a change. Well done to the organisers'. Jason continues.





Some people still in the 'closet' expressed to us that through the conference, they have found strength in celebrating whom they are. We believe, those still questioning their identity, are on the journey to coming to terms with it. Non-LGBTs clearly appreciated the kind of challenges faced by LGBT people seeking asylum and refugees. People seeking asylum due to their sexual orientation and gender identity were embraced as equal human beings. Respect for diversity that there are in our society as a whole was embraced.



Absolutely fantastic day at UK's first-ever LGBT asylum seekers and refugees-led conference hosted by African Rainbow Family in Manchester!

It was a real honour to give a keynote speech at this landmark event on the state of LGBT rights around the world and spend the day with activists from across the UK including Peter Tatchell, Linda Bellos, Sue Sanders, UKLGIG, LGBT Foundation and Right to Remain. Well done, **Aderonke Apata**. What an achievement!

Read more:

<http://mailchi.mp/f11128c47473/press-release-first-ever-lgbtq-refugee-conference-calls-for-end-to-vile-proof-of-sexuality-policy>







"I'm amazed, never seen a conference ran this smoothly with the numbers of speakers here in a day. Moreover, it is organised and led by one of the most marginalised and vulnerable people in our society".





Feedback From a Partner Agency At The Conference:

BHA for equality
in health
and social care

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Working in collaboration with African Rainbow Family (ARF) at their Conference on the 21/06/2017

BHA is a health and social care equality charity that exists to challenge health inequalities and support individuals, families and communities to improve their health and wellbeing. Our areas of expertise include sexual health, community health education and engaging and involving individuals and communities in health and social care decision making.

BHA sexual health services attended the conference "Part of History – Celebrating Whom We Are: LGBT Asylum Seekers & Refugees Tell Their Stories in Manchester!" in order to offer information and advice around sexual health and raise awareness of HIV. This was delivered through 1-2-1 interventions and the offer of free and confidential HIV rapid test at the venue. We collaborated with ARF in order to provide culturally appropriate sexual health information to the members of this organisation.

Discussions with the lesbian group identified a gap in their understanding of how HIV is transmitted. In total we interacted with 28 people, 3 of which accessed our rapid HIV testing service on the day.

We have been privileged to work with ARF and we are more than happy to carry on this work in collaboration.

Regards,

Fabiola Bayavuge

Community Engagement & Development Worker

BHA is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England

Company No. 3818058

Chief Executive: Dr. Priscilla Nkwenti FRSA FRSM

Registered Charity No. 1079727

Chair of Trustees: Mr. Michael Naraynsingh

Counselling

Although a person's sexual orientation or gender identity may not be a source of distress however, our members who identify as LGBTI or any other type of non-conforming sexual or gender identity have expressed that they experience anxiety, relationship problems, low self esteem and often times LGBTI people feel more comfortable with an LGBT therapist, such therapists are not available in every mainstream community. This can be critical to successful therapy outcomes.

This has led us to partner with 2 dedicated-LGBT specific Counsellors at reduced rate to provide counselling and advice sessions to 15 of our members who need holistic therapies that have been identified through assessments and self referrals.

There are marked visible positive improvements in the self esteem, confidence, mental health and well being of the 15 people that benefited from the counselling however, some of them expressed that they would benefit from more counselling sessions. Below is a quotes from some of the beneficiaries (names are initialised due to Data Protection and Confidentiality):

- JB: *"The counselling I received at African Rainbow Family has helped me untangle my thoughts - I can speak out more confidently now"*
- GF: *"The counselling service that I accessed at African Rainbow Family was free, confidential and person centred"*
- ID: *The counselling afforded me a safe space to talk about things that were worrying me about my identity. I feel more empowered to deal with the suicidal ideation I was always having that caused me so much anxiety and distress"*
- DU: *"The counselling sessions were run by LGBT Counsellors - this makes it even more relaxing and safe for me as I realised that they understood and handled my troubled circumstances with sensitivity and respect"*
- MY: *"I feel better in my mental health which I haven't felt for a long time after the counselling sessions that I had at the African Rainbow Family organisation"*
- "I was offered a first appointment to see which service best meets my needs and then offered 10 sessions as needed in a suitable, safe and confidential setting. With my counsellor I agreed what I wanted to achieve from the sessions." ED,*
- member ARF.*
- "My name is Jade, I used to be very anxious and feeling suicidal due to everything going on around me; especially developing from the bullying and harassment I get constantly due to my gender identity as a Trans Woman of Colour. I was drinking a lot of alcohol and would drink myself to nuts as a way of dealing with all of the negative thoughts and worth I was having about myself. Then I joined African Rainbow Family in October 2015.*
- I was assessed for counselling, advice and support. Although the counselling sessions didn't start until sometime in May 2017 but I was getting peer supports and socialising with other people like me which lessened my anxiety a little bit. Once I was lucky to get onto the counselling, I was very glad because there's a long waiting list for counselling as it is LGBT specific and delivered by Counsellors who are also LGBT people meaning that I would not be judged. I was informed that the long waiting list was due to lack of money to deliver it.*
- I had 10 continuous counselling sessions which helped me to explore so many things. Now I am very confident about myself, moderate alcohol consumption, no suicidal thoughts and feel I can seek help if at any point I am feeling low or suicidal again. Thank you African Rainbow Family for the good work you do for us all." Jade, member ARF.*

Volunteering

African Rainbow Family was able to meet out of pocket expenses for 11 volunteers who work so hard to make our project a success. They were able to help in ensuring the continued delivery of our drop-ins, counselling sessions, visiting members in detention centres when detained, supporting members to reporting centres when needed, signposting members to Solicitors and other mainstream services, advocating on behalf of members and many more.

We are delighted that our volunteers also gained more experience that are valuable for prospective job opportunities; 8 of them got paid employments through their experience from volunteering with us. They were all able to give back into the community through their volunteering passion and 9 new people join our volunteering pool. We have an antideportation response of 10 volunteers. We have 10 new volunteers in our branches in Birmingham and Leeds respectively.

Over 120 members were supported by our volunteers during the period that we were funded by the New Beginnings Fund, we are proud to say 12 of our members were granted refugee status! The fund has assisted in part with their cases as they were able to present pictures of the different events they attended at their interviews and appeals in court to prove their membership of and integration into the LGBT community in the UK. Our membership increases with an average of 3 new members weekly since end of June 2017.

Some of the events that we organised and attended with the support of our volunteers during the span of the New Beginnings Fund are:

African Rainbow Family members at Manchester Pride, August 2017.



African Rainbow Family members attended the Queer And Now Festival at Tate Britain London June 2017



African Rainbow Family members at London Pride July 2017



African Rainbow Family members at July 2017 Group Meeting



Banner making for Manchester Pride August 2017



Training Session of African Rainbow Family members at July 2017 Monthly Meeting



African Rainbow Family members at October 2017 Monthly Meeting



Conclusion

In conclusion, the New Beginnings Fund has helped to raise the profile of African Rainbow Family, helped in improving some members' mental health and enabled us to meet the out of pocket expenses of our valued volunteers in running and delivering significant services to our members as we have no paid staff.

Setbacks such as non-continuity in funding volunteering out of pocket expenses and counselling sessions for members that we would have otherwise experienced when the New Beginnings funding ended were overcome by securing further funding from other generous funders.

Aderonke Apata

African Rainbow Family

APPENDIXES

Screenshot of Total audience event reach of LGBT Asylum Seekers & Refugees Tell Their Stories In Manchester of 21/06/2017 on Facebook

This screenshot shows the Facebook Insights dashboard for the event. The event title is "LGBT Asylum Seekers & Refugees Tell Their Stories In Manchester!". The date is June 21st, 2017, at 9:00 AM in Manchester. The dashboard displays the following metrics:

- Total event reach:** 13,140
- Total responses:** 221
- Total ticket clicks:** 13

The "Audience" tab is selected, but it displays a message: "No audience info in this date range." The interface also shows navigation options for Awareness, Engagement, Tickets, and Demographics.

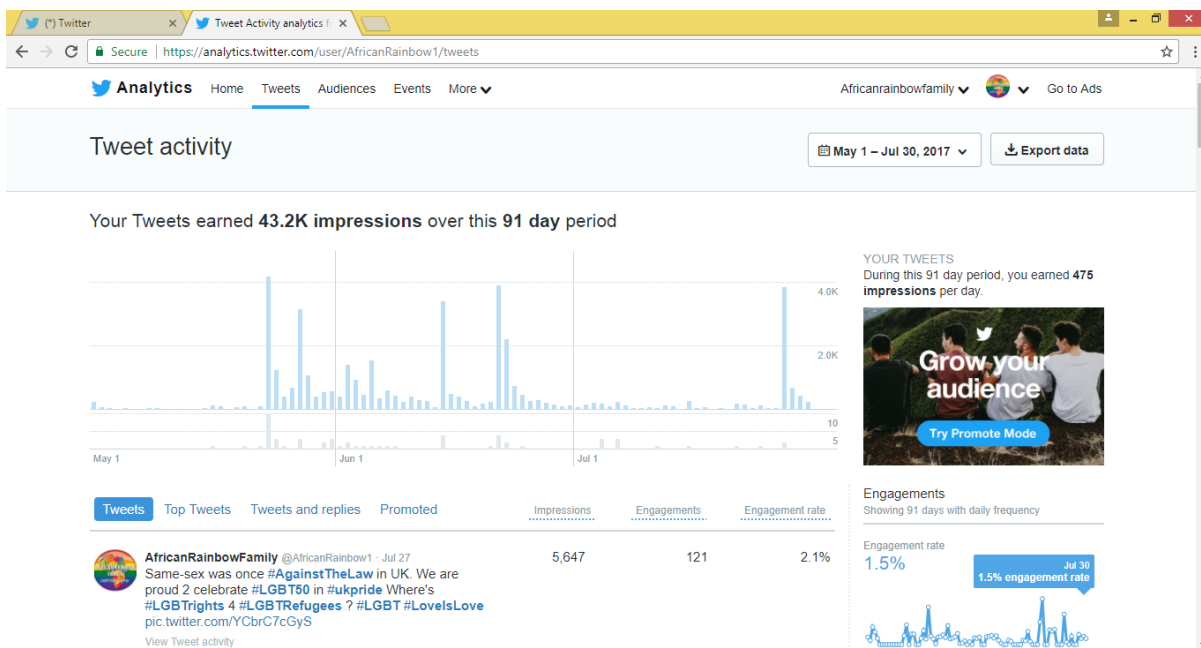
This screenshot shows the public Facebook event page for the same event. The event is hosted by AfricanRainbowFamily. The event details include:

- Date:** 21 JUN
- Time:** 9am - 5pm
- Location:** Methodist Hall, Oldham Street Manchester, M1 1JQ
- Category:** Public - Hosted by AfricanRainbowFamily

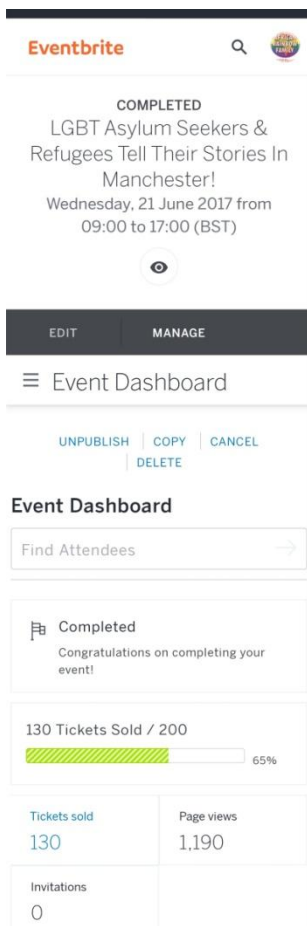
The event description features a colorful poster with the text: "LGBTI Asylum Seekers & Refugees Tell Their Stories In Manchester! - Part of History Seminar. Celebrate With Us, Whom We Are - Being Part of History of The 50th Anniversary of The Sexual Offences Act 1967 - Partial Decriminalization of Homosexuality in the UK. Experts By Experience LOVE IS LOVE. Celebrating Whom We Are! Come & Enjoy Our Cultures. Hot Meals Served!!!".

The page shows the event location as Methodist Hall, M1 1JQ Manchester, United Kingdom. Below the event details, there is a section for "Write Post" and "Add Photo/Video". At the bottom, it shows that 60 people went and 161 were interested, with a list of attendees including Happyness, Shaheda, and 34 other friends.

Screenshot of Total audience event reach of LGBT Asylum Seekers & Refugees Tell Their Stories In Manchester of 21/06/2017 on Twitter



Screenshot of Total audience event reach and attendees of LGBT Asylum Seekers & Refugees Tell Their Stories In Manchester of 21/06/2017 on Eventbrite and Facebook



Conference Press Release:

<https://africanrainbowfamily.org/2017/06/21/first-ever-lgbtqi-refugee-conference-calls-for-end-to-vile-proof-of-sexuality-policy/>

First ever LGBTIQ refugee conference calls for end to 'vile' proof of sexuality policy



LGBTIQ Equality

LGBTI Asylum Seekers & Refugees Tell Their Stories In Manchester! - Part of History Seminar

You're Invited!
Celebrate With Us, Whom We Are -Being Part of History of The 50th Anniversary of The Sexual Offences Act 1967 – Partial Decriminalisation of Homosexuality in the UK.

Come & Hear From Experts By Experience
LOVE IS LOVE

**Celebrating Whom We Are!
Come & Enjoy Our Cultures**

Hot Meals Served!!!

www.africanrainbowfamily.org  AfricanRainbowFamily  @AfricanRainbow1

Date: 21/06/2017, Time: 9am – 5pm @ Methodist Hall, Oldham Street Manchester. M1 1JQ

'Our project has been funded by The New Beginnings Programme'

Press Release For Immediate Release 21st June 2017

First ever LGBTIQ refugee conference calls for end to 'vile' proof of sexuality policy

- Conference marks 50 years since landmark of homosexuality law reform
- Refugee speakers will explore ongoing plight of LGBT asylum seekers in UK
- Call for Home Office to drop 'proof of sexuality' policy

Manchester will host the first ever LGBTIQ asylum seeker and refugee conference today [21st June], marking 50 years since the landmark Sexual Offences Act 1967 made the first steps towards decriminalising homosexuality in the UK.

The conference will feature LGBTIQ refugee speakers telling their stories, exploring changes in attitudes in the UK in the last 50 years and highlighting the plight still faced by LGBTIQ asylum seekers today.

In many countries, particularly in Africa, homosexuality remains illegal and violent attacks on LGBTIQ people are common. Many are forced to flee, some to

the UK, after being publicly ‘outed’.

Gay asylum seekers coming to the UK face significant barriers. The Home Office refuses to accept that any asylum seekers are homosexual unless they provide ‘proof of sexuality’. Until recently, the Home Office had deported LGBTIQ asylum seekers on the grounds that they could ‘be discreet’ about their sexuality in their home country to avoid harm – that was ruled unlawful in 2010.

The conference is being organised by [African Rainbow Family](#) (ARF), a group that supports LGBTIQ people of African heritage and wider BAME in the UK. ARF works with the growing African LGBTIQ asylum seeker and refugee communities who face harassment, hate crimes and discrimination. It will see a call on the Home Office to abandon its ‘proof of sexuality’ policy, which ARF says is demeaning and cruel.

Speakers will include:

- Peter Tatchell, leading human rights and LGBTIQ campaigner
- Barrister S. Chelvan, LGBTIQ asylum law specialist
- Paul Dillane, Chief Executive of Kaleidoscope Trust
- Sue Sanders, Emeritus Professor at the Harvey Milk Institute
- Aderonke Apata LGBTIQ campaigner and founder, African Rainbow Family

Aderonke Apata, Founder of the ARF and a long-term campaigner on LGBTIQ asylum, who is also speaking at the conference, said:

“Despite the gains in acceptance of LGBTIQ people in the UK, LGBT asylum seekers’ and refugees’ situation remains precarious. The Home Office needs to catch up with the rest of the UK, drop its vile ‘proof of sexuality’ policy and move on from 1967.

“All LGBTIQ people seeking asylum in the UK want – like anyone else – is to be treated with fairness and humanity. Having been forced to flee by hate and intolerance at home, being branded a liar by the Home Office is demeaning and cruel for LGBTIQ people seeking asylum.

“I hope the Home Office will listen to the message coming out of our conference and treat everyone with the decency and respect they deserve.”

/ENDS

Notes to editors:

More information and tickets to the conference: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lgbt-asylum-seekers-refugees-tell-their-stories-in-manchester-tickets-34762202684?aff=eac2>

More information about the African Rainbow Family: <https://africanrainbowfamily.org/>

Homosexuality remains a criminal offence in 75 countries and in 14 is punishable by lengthy imprisonment and death – including in Nigeria, Uganda, Cameroon, Central African Republic and Pakistan.

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African Rainbow Family

African Rainbow Family is a group that supports LGBTIQ people of African heritage in the UK especially, in the wake of the growing toxic anti-gay persecutions they face for their sexuality.

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