

*Changing Attitude Sussex &
Brighton and Hove Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement
PO Box 328
Brighton BN2 9TB*

24th February 2012

Dear PCC Secretary,

Helping lesbian and gay people to worship in the Diocese of Chichester

The Christian churches have often had an uneasy relationship with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) people, who may consequently feel wary about attending their local church. The Diocese of Chichester has a large LGBT community and it may be helpful to potential new church members and also to gay visitors to the area to have a listing of those churches at which they might anticipate being welcomed, being able to be open, and being able to participate fully in church life. More generally it would be worthwhile for the approaches taken by churches in the Diocese of Chichester to the LGBT people in their midst to be known.

We would like to ask churches to inform us about their attitude to LGBT people. To this end we would be very grateful if you would complete the enclosed short survey questionnaire. Please tick the approach which best describes your church. You may wish to discuss this with your parochial church council and congregation. We would also welcome any written comments you might want to make. Please then return the questionnaire in the stamped addressed envelope which has been sent to the Priest who is listed on the Diocesan website as having care of your Church.

We have discussed this survey with the Bishop of Chichester, the Right Reverend Dr John Hind, and he has issued an official press statement saying, '***I consider this survey to be a helpful and appropriate contribution to the process of listening to the experience of gay people commended to all in the Anglican Communion by the 1998 Lambeth Conference.***' The Bishop's statement also says that the results of the survey will form a useful basis for further discussion of this issue.

Once the list of churches is completed it will be published on the internet and in paper form for distribution through appropriate channels.

Please feel free to contact us if you would like further information about this survey or would like to discuss any of the issues that it raises. We will be more than happy to help. Contact details can be found on the websites www.changingattitudesussex.com and www.lqcm.com.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Keith Sharpe
Chair, Changing Attitude Sussex



Nigel Nash
Chair, Brighton and Hove Lesbian
and Gay Christian Movement

Changing Attitude Sussex Brighton and Hove Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement

Churches Survey

Name of Church: _____

Please place a tick in the circle alongside *one* of the four descriptions
which *best relates to your church*

Whilst openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) people are welcomed they would not be permitted to be involved in many positions in the church, and especially not in lay leadership roles. Leaders and congregation believe that the Bible teaches that homosexual acts are sinful and that it is wrong to be in a gay or lesbian relationship; similar views are held about people who are bisexual or transgendered.

There is a variety of views on LGBT issues among the congregation, but the church is not comfortable having openly LGBT people involved in some aspects of the church's life. Leaders hold to traditional biblical teaching on sexual orientation but are willing to hold dialogue and to explore different interpretations.

Openly LGBT people, including those in relationships, can be involved in every aspect of the church's life, including lay leadership roles. The equality and worth of openly LGBT people is implicit but is not often explicitly discussed and there may be few or no visible signs of the involvement of LGBT people and organisations in the church.

Gay and lesbian people can be fully and openly involved in every aspect of the church's life, including lay leadership roles. A conscious effort is made specifically to include LGBT people and to affirm the equality and worth of their lives and relationships, with explicit references in, for example, intercessions or sermons. LGBT Christian or secular posters can be displayed on church noticeboards. The church has already or would in principle be willing to make a public declaration of its open and welcoming character to LGBT people.

Please add any comments you wish to make (continue overleaf if necessary):