

A look back at the LGBTQ+ history in Harrow

June 17, 2022 13:01

By Luke Severn



Credit:

North West London Lesbian and Gay Group

Harrow has seen significant changes throughout history. The borough has traces back to the 8th century and has seen the influence of the opening of Harrow School. Combine this with the vast picturesque green landscape then it is easy to see why there has been significant interest in its history.

With June being Pride Month, we thought it would be great to look back at the LGBTQ+ history of the borough. [Harrow](#) is the home to the North West London Lesbian and Gay group which was founded in October 1971. With LGBTQ+ equality not being quite the same as today, this group was a lifeline for many from across Harrow.

The group was originally called the Harrow Gay Unity and fought for LGBTQ+ equality across London. Figures such as Ken Livingstone gave speeches at for the group and they had the support of various politicians at the time. The club was originally based upstairs at the 'Goodwill To All' pub. Now called the North West London Lesbian and Gay group, the group recently celebrated their 51st anniversary.

Originally, the social group stemmed from Gay Liberation Front, which in the 1970's was a fairly radical group. The groups history and their story shows that the entire purpose was just to meet like-minded people who had similar struggles.

The group was a saviour for many local gay men, it gave them a safe space to be themselves without judgment. One of the longest members of the group, Malcom, discussed the history of the group and what it meant to him. He spoke about how when he first joined, there were over 100 members and that it was a safe and comfortable space for LGBTQ+ people.

The group turned out to be the perfect lifeline for those who were often living double lives. He mentioned about police targeting certain men and how newspapers would publish names of men

who were found out to be homosexual. We also discussed the differences in generations.

Malcolm stated that there was not as much need for the group anymore and younger people are much more comfortable with their sexuality. He does hope to keep the group alive, especially for those from ethnic minorities and those who may not be able to come out.

Now the group still regularly meets, still supporting each other and looking back at how far they have come together. Whilst celebrating this pride month, it is great to see the rich history that has occurred right on our doorstep.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the North West London Lesbian and Gay Group, visit their website – <https://nwlgay.com>