

CHANGING ATTITUDE TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT June 2003 – May 2004

Introduction

Changing Attitude Trust is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The trustees are the directors of the company and are also the shareholders. They appoint new trustees/directors, aiming to reflect a wide diversity of experience from among Anglicans sympathetic to *Changing Attitude's* objectives. *Changing Attitude* has continued to evolve in the last 12 months, pursuing its objectives of advancing the Christian religion particularly but without restriction through the development of a mature theology of sexuality within the Church of England and the Anglican Communion.

This Annual Report covers a momentous and turbulent period for the worldwide Anglican Communion, a period of rapid social change and the beginning of significant legislative progress for lesbian and gay people in British society. Thanks to our funding achievements and the appointment of new members of staff, *Changing Attitude* was well-placed to respond effectively to these dynamic events.

Funding

We continue to be funded by major three year grants from the Community Fund – £186,793, the Northern Rock Foundation – £50,000 (to hold conferences in the Northern Dioceses and form 6 diocesan information and advice groups) and Comic Relief – £40,000 to employ a half-time Office Manager for three years.

Staff

Colin Coward continues to work full-time as Director, Sally Rogers as half-time Development Worker and Brenda Harrison as half-time Office Manager.

Supporters

Changing Attitude continues to attract healthy numbers of new supporters. On 31 May 2004 the database totalled 507 (373 in 2003). Of 460 active supporters (325 in 2003), there are 315 paid subscriptions (235 in 2003), 44 partners (20 in 2003) and 101 free or unpaid subscriptions (70 in 2003). Forty nine newsletters are sent free to patrons and other groups (45 in 2003).

Diocesan Support, Information and Advice Groups

Nine new groups were formed in the course of the year, bringing the total to 19, covering 21 dioceses.

Birmingham – Held a conference on Saturday 21 June at which Jim Cotter was the main speaker. Over 80 people attended, young, not so young, male, female, husbands and wives, lay, clergy, authors, bishops, gay and lesbians, singly-or with partners-, parents of lesbian and gay children, different nationalities and different economic backgrounds.

Bristol – Held a Quiet Day on Saturday, 27 September hosted and led by Michael Doe, Bishop of Swindon, entitled 'I have called you friends'.

Canterbury – The two-monthly meetings continue, meeting in different parts of the diocese. New members continue to join. A meeting with Bishop Stephen Venner, Bishop of Dover, took place on 11 December.

Chelmsford – John-Francis Friendship took over as Coordinator of CA in Chelmsford from Claire Wilson, who started things off and worked hard to establish the group. The group has organised an active, regular programme, made a submission regarding the appointment of the new bishop, and actively welcomed him to the diocese.

Chester – The Chester diocesan group launched with a conference entitled "Issues of Sexuality ... an exploration with Jim Cotter" held at St Cross Church Room, Mobberley Road, Knutsford on Saturday, 15 November. The group meetings continued to explore the report 'Some Issues in Human Sexuality'.

Guildford – The inaugural meeting of the Guildford group of *Changing Attitude* took place on Monday 20 October 2003. The group held an inaugural conference at Guildford cathedral on 24 January 2004. Forty-nine people attended and heard stories from a lesbian priest, two evangelical gay men and the evangelical mother of a gay son.

Leicester – The first meeting of *Changing Attitude* Leicester met at Leicester Cathedral Centre on 18 October 2003. About twenty people attended, with a further twenty sending apologies. A broad cross-section of people attended – gay, lesbian and bi Christians, as well as straight supporters, a couple of Roman Catholics from Quest and a member of the URC. The group organised an ecumenical celebration as an integral part of Leicester Pride on Friday 18th June 2003 in Leicester Cathedral

Lichfield – Following a Vigil held on 18 October 2003, an inaugural meeting for *Changing Attitude* was held on 23 October 2003 in Cannock. The meeting attracted nearly 30 people, and a variety of shades of opinion. The group organised a study day on Saturday, 27 March 2003 at S. Bertelin, Stafford entitled 'The Way to Wholeness – embracing sexuality in faith'.

Liverpool – Irene and Mike Homfray organised a very successful launch meeting for a Diocesan group on Monday 11 November at Liverpool Parish Church. Thirty people attended and 10 more sent apologies. A second meeting was organised in late-January, and the group has established itself with a programme of events and activities. The group organised a conference 'Creating an Inclusive Church' with speakers including the Rt. Rev. David Jenkins, former Bishop of Durham on Saturday 20 March 2004 at Our Lady and S. Nicholas', Pier Head, Liverpool.

London – The group continues to meet bi-monthly at St Anne's Soho.

Manchester – a launch meeting for Manchester Diocese was held on Saturday 10 May 2003 at Holy Innocents, Fallowfield, addressed by Canon Trevor Dennis of Chester on 'How the Bible communicates God's love for homosexual people'. Over 37 people attended and a group was successfully established. A wide spectrum of people in terms of age, sexual identity, lay/ordained, gender and geography, attended.

Newcastle/Durham – A meeting was held on 22 May 2004 with a view to forming a diocesan group

Oxford -The group has developed strongly in the course of the year, with an adventurous programme of events and a growing membership.

Ripon and Leeds – Half a dozen supporters met in Leeds on 30 October 2003 to launch the Ripon & Leeds *Changing Attitude* group.

St Albans -the day on sexuality, under the auspices of the Diocesan Spirituality Group, on Saturday 16 November, was cancelled. Members continued to meet, but house moves and other changes resulted in diminishing numbers.

Southwark -Following the decision of the Southwark Diocese Lesbian and Gay Support Network to disband and become a *Changing Attitude* group, four members volunteered to be part of a steering group to plan and organise the first meeting of the new group CADS (*Changing Attitude: Diocese of Southwark*). A launch meeting for CADS was held on Saturday, 11 October, 2003, at St Peter's, Walworth, Liverpool Grove, SE17.

Wakefield/Bradford – The launch meeting of *Changing Attitude* Wakefield and Bradford took place at the Mirfield Centre on Monday 26 January 2004. Around 20 people from both dioceses attended.

Worcester – A launch meeting was held on Saturday, 6 December 2003 at Beoley. About 50 people attended a very successful first meeting.

York – A launch meeting was held on 26 November 2003 at Holy Rood House, Thirsk

Group Convenors Day

We organised a third Diocesan Group Convenors and Contact Persons Conference at the Friend's Meeting House in Birmingham on Saturday 15th May 2004 attended by over 30 people.

Welcoming and Open Congregations

We now have 13 churches registered as welcoming and open congregations (8 in 2003). This means that their details are advertised on the *Changing Attitude* website as churches that are welcoming to lesbian and gay people.

Newsletter

Four editions of the *Changing Attitude* Newsletter were produced during the year. The newsletter contains details of *Changing Attitude* groups and events as well as extensive reports of news and events. The newsletter is widely appreciated by supporters and continues to be sent to all bishops, Diocesan Directors of Ordinands, Social Responsibility Officers and Course and College Principals.

Trustees at May 2004

Jenny Clark, Irene Cowell, Daniel Hughes, Susannah Izzard, Sanjay Kumar, David Page, Stephen Peters, Bob Williams, Rowan Williams.

Patrons at May 2004

The Rt Revd Paul Barber; The Rt Revd Michael Bourke, Bishop of Wolverhampton; The Rt Revd Michael Doe; The Rt Revd Richard Holloway; The Revd Bill Kirkpatrick; Sister Una Kroll; The Rt Revd Richard Lewis, Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich; The Rt Revd Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Hulme; Jean Mayland; The Rt Rev Hugh Montefiore; The Rt Revd John Oliver; Christina Rees, The Rt Revd John Saxbee, Bishop of Lincoln; The Rt Revd Dr Peter Selby, Bishop of Worcester; The Rt Revd Robin Smith; The Rt Revd Alan Smithson; The Revd Dr Anne Townsend; The Rt Revd Roy Williamson

Changing Attitude Trust

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Changing Attitude Trust is a Registered charity No. 1076808
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Publications

Changing Attitude published two new booklets in 2004. *Sexual Ethics* is a Report of the Lesbian and Gay Clergy Consultation Working Group, edited by Andrew Henderson. *All God's Children ... Lesbian and gay people in the Anglican Church* is a brief guide to understanding the role and history of lesbian and gay people in the Anglican church and is available free for church bookstalls and group events.

Web Site and Online Forum

The web site has been maintained by Colin Coward since its redesign – he hesitates to call himself the web-master. Maintenance of the site has been more frequent this year, with two periods when, due to a heavy workload, updates did not happen. News and group information can now be updated on an almost daily basis.

The online lesbigayanglican forum hosted by YahooGroups now has 165 members (162 in 2002) and generates a healthy level of activity, mainly news-based. Members join and leave, but the total remains stable in the 160–170 bracket.

Finance

We offer a very big "thank you" to our individual supporters and to grant-giving bodies for helping to maintain and expand the Trust's activities. We spent £106,900 in the year ended May 2004 (compared to £64,000 in the previous year). This included £58,800 for salary and national insurance costs for three staff. The Trustees are unpaid.

From our total expenses of £106,900 we spent £59,500 (55 per cent) on activities to further our main objectives, including provision of advice, information, publicity, conferences and meetings of supporters. In addition we spent £16,300 on generating funds, £15,500 on support costs and £15,600 on management and administration – each representing 15 per cent of our costs. The latter includes a refund of a research grant which we were unable to spend during the grant period.

The Trust's income for the year was £115,900 (compared to £88,100 in the previous year), including £91,600 grants (£62,600 from the Community Fund (the Big Lottery Fund), £16,000 from the Northern Rock Foundation, and £13,000 from Comic Relief). Our income also included £21,800 donations and subscriptions from individual supporters and £2,500 'gift aid' tax recovery.

Funds held at 31 May 2004 were £39,300 (compared to £30,300 the previous year). Our General Fund was in deficit (£4,000) and our restricted funds were in surplus by £43,300. We are very pleased that support has come from the various grant-giving bodies to secure the project's future, and its expansion, over a three-year period from 2003. The grants are, however, restricted for specific purposes. There is therefore a continuing need for our individual supporters to help finance those routine running costs charged to our General Fund that are ineligible for funding from these specific grants. The Trustees continued to review the financial risks facing the Trust and are mindful of the need to generate income to ensure that the General Fund comes out of deficit as soon as possible.

General Synod

Changing Attitude rented a house for the duration of the July 2003 meeting of General Synod, used by the staff and other supporters, one from the USA. We welcomed Synod members on Saturday morning with the Changing Attitude banner and leaflets. Members of the General Synod Human Sexuality Group, the Clergy Consultation and LGCM joined us, over 50 people in all. Our witness coincided with Peter Tatchell's invasion of Synod and the suspension of proceedings. *Changing Attitude* staff were much in demand by the media for interviews.

The staff also attended the February 2004 session of Synod with the new JSG banners. In the take-note debate on 'Some Issues in Human Sexuality' 70% of those who spoke advocated a positive attitude, revealing a significant change of heart in Synod. The House of Bishop's Working Party had published their report, entitled 'Some Issues in Human Sexuality' on 4 November 2003.

Canon Jeffrey John

Dr Jeffrey John's appointment as bishop of Reading in the Diocese of Oxford was announced on 21 May 2003. By the 29 May, clergy in the Oxford diocese were calling for an emergency meeting with Richard Harries, and as a result of the growing turmoil that followed around the Communion, Canon Jeffrey John was forced to withdraw his acceptance on 6 July. This was the first of the major events in 2003 which engaged our time and attention and created a huge workload as well as opportunities to make positive contributions.

New Westminster Blessings

The second controversial story broke on 29 May when Bishop Michael Ingham of New Westminster authorised a Rite for the Celebration of Gay and Lesbian Covenants for use by clergy in six parishes within the Diocese.

Bishop Gene Robinson

The third major strand of events began when the Revd Canon Gene Robinson was elected bishop coadjutor of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire on 7 June 2003, the first openly gay, partnered man in the Episcopal Church to be elected as a bishop. Because of the timing of the election, it had to be confirmed by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church meeting from 28 July to 8 August in Minneapolis. It was decided that Colin should attend the General Convention to witness the confirmation of the election by the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies and contribute to Integrity's presence at GC. Integrity had a team of about 80 people based in a down-town hotel, each delegated to undertake different tasks. On the final Thursday evening, following confirmation of the election, Claiming the Blessing and Integrity held a celebratory Eucharist in the downtown Church of Gethsemane. The celebrant was the Rt Revd James Jelinek, Bishop of Minnesota. Michael Hopkins, President of Integrity, preached. Colin Coward participated with Sandye Wilson, the Vicar, and Gene Robinson. The election unleashed an unprecedented backlash in the worldwide Church. On Sunday 2 November 2003 more than 4,000 people gathered at the Whittemore Centre at the University of New Hampshire to witness the consecration of the Rev. Canon Gene Robinson

Primates' Meeting

As a result of Gene Robinson's election, the thirty-seven Primates of the Anglican Communion were summoned to Lambeth Palace on 15 and 16 October 2003.

Changing Attitude prepared carefully and very successfully for the Primates' meeting. We wrote a global **letter to Primates** to be used by CA supporters and others as a basis for their own letter, widely circulated and used by many people, some of whom wrote to every single Primate.

This was followed by a **Global Open Letter**, which 24 bishops, politicians and patrons signed. The letter was sent to the main newspapers in every country from which the Primates came, for publication on Friday 10 November. The Independent published it as their lead letter.

In London, we held a **service at St James' Piccadilly** on Tuesday, the eve of the Primates' meeting attended by over 250 people. The Revd Claire Herbert, Rector of St Anne's, Soho, presided at the service. The preacher was the Revd Colin Coward, and the sermon included testimonies from Brenda Harrison and the Revd Rowland Jide Macaulay. The Revd Sally Rogers led the intercessions.

Our objective was to ensure that the lesbian and gay agenda was reported in as positive a way as possible. We achieved an amazing level of media coverage, both nationally and locally, with many different people undertaking interviews and live appearances on TV and radio. We were quoted on the front page of the Times and interviews and video clips were used on the main news bulletins on BBC 1 and 2, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5, Sky News, BBC World and BBC News 24 and many local radio stations. We also gave interviews to stations and papers from other countries, including the USA, Canada, Finland, Australia, Germany, Greece and the Bahamas.

Lambeth Commission

On 28 October 2003 the Archbishop of Canterbury announced the makeup and the terms of reference for a Commission to look at the legal and theological implications flowing from the decisions of the Episcopal Church (USA) to appoint Gene Robinson, and of the Diocese of New Westminster to authorise services for use in connection with same sex unions. *Changing Attitude* agreed to prepare a submission on behalf of the Joint Strategy Group. This is a group of representatives from *Changing Attitude*, Lesbian and Gay Clergy Consultation, General Synod Human Sexuality Group and Anglican Matters.

Inclusive Church

Inclusive Church was launched at a Eucharist and forum at St Mary's Putney on Monday 11 August to promote a petition, responding to the furore caused by Jeffrey John's appointment and Gene Robinson's election. *Changing Attitude* was one of the founding groups, is represented on the executive committee and is a member of the Coordination group, encouraging coordination between the various bodies and organisations that have signed up to or may be sympathetic to Inclusive Church's Declaration of Belief.

Half-Way-to-Lambeth Conference and Inclusive Communion

A large number of *Changing Attitude* supporters attended the Half way to Lambeth Conference held in the aftermath of the Primates' Meeting and just prior to Gene Robinson's consecration. The conference was attended by representatives from Anglican churches in Brazil, Canada, South Africa, Uganda, the UK and the USA. We met twice outside the conference programme to put in place a plan which will enable us to work constructively together for the Lambeth Conference in 2008. **Inclusive Communion – Anglicans Uniting for Justice** was born at the second meeting. We agreed a number of tasks, one of which is to search for GLBT groups and contacts in every province of the communion to ensure that local voices are heard and people can become directly involved. We intended that two people from each Communion region – Africa, Asia, Australia/NZ, North America and South America, should meet physically in each of the next two years, and that a global conference should be organised prior to Lambeth 2008. Progress has been difficult. Energy and enthusiasm have been dissipated as a result of the negative reactions to events and to the voices of LGBT people in the church.

Civil Partnership Bill and European Employment Directive

On 1 July 2003, the government published the **Civil Partnership Bill** which will give gay couples the same rights as married heterosexual couples. As the legislation has progressed, bishops have both supported and opposed the legislation in the House of Lords, some supporting conservative evangelical wrecking motions. Following representations from the Archbishop's Council and other church groups, the government agreed to include a clause in the British version of the **European employment directive** granting religious organisations the legal right to exclude gay and lesbian people from employment for the first time. *Changing Attitude* has responded to supporters in making our views heard on both these issues.

Joint Strategy Group

The group has continued to meet every three months, trying to maintain communication between groups and developing a strategy of working together where possible. Colin Coward and Sally Rogers have represented *Changing Attitude*.

Changing Attitude Scotland

Changing Attitude Scotland was formed in 2003, as an independent group with the same ethos and aims as English Changing Attitude. It is primarily an internet based network of members of the Scottish Episcopal Church, lesbian, gay, heterosexual and bisexual, lay and ordained.

Changing Attitude New Zealand

Towards the end of 2003 a Changing Attitude branch was launched in Auckland, New Zealand. The group was invited to be part of the steering group organising an ongoing conversation/dialogue on issues of homosexuality which was set up in the diocese.

Trustees

Daniel Hughes resigned as a Trustee during the year.

Patrons

Christina Rees and Revd Jean Mayland agreed to become patrons. We sadly have to record the early death of the Rt Revd Jim Thompson, retired only two years earlier as Bishop of Bath and Wells. He died after a very short illness on 19th September 2003. Jim was one of the first patrons of *Changing Attitude*.

And thank you ...

Once again, we would like to offer our thanks to our supporters, patrons, funding bodies and bishops, for the many different ways in which they have offered help and encouragement during the year. Some have given very significant practical and financial help and we are grateful. To know that supporters are there, working, praying and often caring passionately, has helped sustain energy and commitment to the pursuit of a holy, just and inclusive Church.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees and Directors of Changing Attitude

19 February 2005