



## THE REGIONAL ORGANISER ROLE

# JUDITH'S PERSPECTIVE

IT IS NOW ABOUT A YEAR SINCE I BECAME THE REGIONAL ORGANISER (RO) FOR SCOTLAND, AND DID I REALISE WHAT I WAS LETTING MYSELF IN FOR WHEN I OFFERED TO TAKE ON THE ROLE? IN A WORD...NO.

**T**he past year has been a rapid learning curve for me, but it has been a great time. My early days were spent in establishing links with our members by email, where possible, and also finding out from Jackie Neal who had previously been doing the job who were good contacts. I also set about learning what was available in the area in the way of resources, and whilst doing this I established contact with the Scottish Borders LGBT board amongst others.

My first outing as RO was to our Dunblane group where I was made very welcome by the members. However, my next outing was to an LGBT board meeting in Hawick where I had been asked to give a presentation to the board about the Beaumont Society. I must have done a reasonably good job as I was asked to stay at the board meeting and at the end was invited to join the board. I have attended a 'hate crime event' representing our Society which was very informative and also provided useful links to both the police and procurator fiscal service.

An RO gets emails and phone calls from a variety of people both trans like us and partners/work colleagues and friends all seeking different types of advice. Recently I have been talking to a parent who wishes to set up a parent support group for those who

have trans children, and I have offered to go and talk to them about Beaumont and how it can be supportive. I am also in touch with an equalities officer for a large employer in the borders who has a member of staff who has just started the journey and needs support both at work and at home. I have also due to

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personal circumstances discovered that the NHS in my part of Scotland is not very clued up on gender matters, and I have raised this issue with the CEO of the NHS board so hopefully training will be put in place. This prompted me to investigate further, and I am finding that the churches are in a similar position, so we still have much work to be done.

The RO's role is to support the Area Organisers (AO) who work more locally. Sadly, in Scotland we have many areas without

an AO in place, and I am currently looking for volunteers to help me out, so if you would like to help me set up a small group meeting where you are please do get in touch. I am sure many other ROs elsewhere in the country would welcome similar offers, so come on girls, do not be shy – after all it is another opportunity to put on the glad rags and lippy and have a night out.

It is good to have the backing of fellow ROs who have been active longer, as they can often help in locating sources of information as well as giving me guidance when I am unsure if it is Society policy to assist.

If the Beaumont Society is to continue the work started 50 years ago, we need to have strong grass roots support for members and others. This can be achieved by members becoming more involved, as this spreads the word to others. We are in need of ROs in various areas, so if you would like to know more why not contact Kay or one of the current ROs who will gladly help by answering any questions you have. There is nothing you cannot tackle, so do not be worried about the complexities. One of the advantages for me is it gets me more time to be out and about as Judith and also helps build my confidence. ■