

## **Scotland Report August 2012**

The committee met on the eve of Pride Scotia – 29th June where we finalised our motions to our conference. We also agreed delegations to national LGBT conference, the STUC LGBT conference which is being held in Glasgow in September as well as ILGA Europe and World conferences which will take place later this year.

We reviewed the constitution of the new STUC conference and will feed back our comments. The committee nominated Willie Docherty for a general seat on the LGBT Council.

Following a recruitment event, we have now successfully filled our reserved bi seat.

We attended Pride Scotia in Edinburgh. Unfortunately, due to illness of regional officers, we did not submit any GPF bids this year so we had no money for merchandise or for a stall, however we were there and we had a very visible presence.

Two weeks later we attended Glasgow Pride. We were out in force on the march and we were very proud to be joined by many of our straight colleagues from several branches. We did manage to get a stall at Glasgow Pride (it's not what you know, it's who you know) and we spoke to lots of members of the public about our campaigning work.

You will no doubt have heard by now that the Scottish government have now announced that it will be bringing forward legislation to allow gay couples to marry in civil ceremonies and religious ceremonies where faiths choose to permit it and remove the need for trans people to divorce and form civil partnerships if they transition while married. The majority of MSPs have pledged to support such a change in the law. The law will make Scotland the first part of the UK to allow gay couples to marry. This is welcome news to the committee who have campaigned for this for a long time.

Trade unionists successfully stopped the far-right BNP and Scottish Defence League from holding a so-called "national rally" in Glasgow on 28th July. Leader of the BNP Nick Griffin had been due to address the rally. But neither the BNP nor SDL turned up and the rally was limited to just three heavily outnumbered members of a separate far-right splinter group.

STUC Congress 2012 called on the General Council to organise a consultation amongst union members and the wider Scottish community to allow a full discussion of the issues relating to a future referendum on Scotland's constitutional future. There will be 5 major all-day discussion events across Scotland in September, as well as an invitation to submit views directly to STUC. As the name suggests, 'A Just Scotland' will promote a discussion on Scotland's future based on our shared values of delivering a more socially just and equal Scotland. Committee members will be attending these events. UNISON Scotland have also arranged events to coincide with the STUC events so that UNISON members can attend briefings before attending these sessions.

We continue to support SWAN and the next event will be at the Law Society of Scotland on 19<sup>th</sup> September.

**Elaine Duffy and David Calderwood  
Scotland Regional Reps**