



(formerly Stonewall Immigration Group)  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **"UKLGIG Takes The Lead To Train Immigration and Asylum Lawyers"**

On 9th May 2006, at the city based offices of Baker McKenzie Solicitors, 18 legal advisers from the voluntary sector, law centres and private firms attended a training event, jointly organised by the Immigration Law Practitioners Association and the United Kingdom Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group, formerly known as Stonewall Immigration group.

The session was chaired by Wesley Gryk, co-founder of Stonewall Immigration Group in 1993, and was jointly presented by Matthew Davies of Wilson and Co solicitors, Tim Barnden of Wesley Gryk Solicitors, and S. Chelvan of Mitre House Chambers.

Participants were reminded that it is difficult for any asylum application to satisfy the tests set by both the Home Office and the courts, and that asylum applications on the basis of sexuality must clear the additional hurdle of homophobia.

Tim Barnden said " The event more than lived up to our expectations. Participants were able to hear an up to the minute analysis of the way the courts treat asylum claims based on sexual orientation, and contributed to a lively and informed discussion on how to best present applications effectively"

Sarah Booker, of UKLGIG's Asylum Seekers Support Project, said "Skilled up legal advisers means more support for lesbian and gay asylum seekers and an increased likelihood of successful outcomes in their cases."

The event raised over £1000 for UKLGIG's Lesbian and Gay Asylum Seekers Support Project.

### **Editors' Notes**

#### **Resources for Journalists and the Media**

Further information about this meeting and the Lesbian and Gay Asylum Seekers Support Project can be found at [www.uklgig.org.uk](http://www.uklgig.org.uk)

#### **UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group**

UKLGIG has been in existence since 1993 and was formerly known as the Stonewall Immigration Group. The group was founded in order to assist same-sex, bi-national couples win the right for foreign partners to remain in the United Kingdom on the basis of their same sex relationship. The work of the Group resulted in the introduction of the unmarried partners concession in 1997 which entered the Immigration Rules in October 2000. Many of Group's recommendations have been included in the Civil Partnership Act which was implemented in December 2005.

With the successful implementation of the Civil Partnership Act, we have shifted our focus towards the problems faced by lesbian and gay asylum seekers. We are contacted with increasing frequency by those who are seeking the protection of the United Kingdom, because they are persecuted due to their sexual orientation, in their home country. There is little support for such individuals in the United Kingdom and this is why we have set up the Lesbian and Gay Asylum Seekers Support Project.

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