



Care & feeding of your BLUF Local

A guide to BLUF Local groups, and the tools we provide to keep your members updated

Introduction

What is a BLUF Local?

A BLUF Local is the name we give to a local group of BLUF members, where there is an organiser and regular events. Consider it similar to a 'chapter' or something like that of a larger club, but without much of the admin, as membership is all handled centrally on BLUF.

From the BLUF point of view, Local group serve a number of purposes:

1. They allow members to indicate an affinity with a city or region
2. They allow other members to browse via those regions
3. They allow us to target event information more accurately
4. They allow us to publish information to smaller audiences on the BLUF website, via the BLUF Local pages
5. They allow us to collect non-member email addresses for people who want to know about particular areas
6. They help highlight the presence of BLUF in an area, and so help to increase membership

What does a BLUF Local look like?

In terms of the online presence, there is an overall page for all BLUF Local groups, which can be found at bluf.com/local. This page lists all the groups, with an introductory text and banner for each one. The text will include, where appropriate, the date of the next official BLUF event in that city, and the title of the most recent news item.

Non-members can register for updates by entering their email address on this page.

Tapping a BLUF local will open its own page.

Each individual page can be found at bluf.com/local/city or bluf.com/city (in some cases, cities are abbreviated, like SF or NYC).

On these individual pages, you will find a more expansive description, plus all the upcoming events, as well as news and blog posts related to the local. Quick links allow visitors to find shops and bars in the city too.

How do BLUF Locals get created?

Broadly speaking, there is no set criteria, but a Local group isn't just created on demand - as each one have a publicly visible page, we need to be sure that those pages and the information on them will continue to be updated, otherwise we risk giving the impression that there is no BLUF activity in a city.

If you have never held an event in a city, then we won't create a BLUF Local for the first event. If it's not a success, there's little point in asking BLUF members to opt in, and setting up all the infrastructure, only for it to lie fallow.

Typically, before we create a Local group on the site, we will want to see that events are being organised at reasonable intervals, and that you have a commitment to carrying on, and to providing information to update the site, or update it yourself, in a timely manner.

A Local group will be considered 'inactive' and hidden in lists unless a) an event is scheduled within the next 9 months, or b) an event has been scheduled within the last 4 months or c) a news item has been added to its page in the last 4 months. If none of these is true, the page will be marked as inactive, and anyone visiting it will see a message asking for volunteers to take over.

If you are interested in having a Local set up, please contact webmaster@bluf.com

Managing a BLUF Local

In this section, we will explain the main settings for your BLUF Local, including how to update the information that appears on the page.

Note that in some areas, if you have more than one person assisting you, they may not all have identical permissions to update information.

You will need to have two factor authorisation enabled on your account to update information for your BLUF Local. Advice is available at bluf.com/docs

You should also be broadly familiar with the BLUF admin system, as described in the Admin Guide, and if you are planning events, make sure you are up to date with the rules and recommendations in the BLUF Event Handbook.

Persistent failure to keep things updated, or to do it properly, may result in your Local group being delisted.

Please always try to ensure information is added to BLUF before it is published elsewhere. When someone sees an event listed in a Facebook group, but it's not anywhere on BLUF, it looks unprofessional.

Accessing your BLUF Local

It's important to understand that there are effectively two things that you may be updating in BLUF admin.

Your BLUF Local itself is the set of information that defines the Local group - what city it is, the description of it, including who is a current admin, which email facilities are set up, links to other websites and social media accounts, and the banner image that is displayed on the page.

Then, there is other information on BLUF, which is assigned to your Local group, which means that it will appear in the various lists on the page. This includes events, news items, magazine items - including event reports - and blog posts.

Typically, we will assign 'ownership' of a BLUF Local to one or more people. This means that when they sign in to BLUF admin, they will see a list of items they own at the right of the screen, for example "London (local)" as in the screenshot above.

Clicking on that allows editing of the details of the Local group. You usually won't need to do this too often, but you might want to change the banner image, or add and remove organisers from the descriptive text. When you do, just click the city name in your Ownerships list.

(You can't select Locals from the Admin settings menu, because that is for members who have permission to manage all of them).

For other things, such as Events, you just add them in the normal way via the menus. We will usually restrict your permissions to your BLUF Local, so that if you are an admin for say, BLUF Local Zurich, then in the Local setting for any item you add, Zurich will be pre-selected for you, and can't be changed.



If you need, for some reason, to access information in another Local, ask the webmaster - but note that we always respect people's choice to opt in. Just because you think people in a different city might be interested in your event does not mean you get to stick your event there. If they want info for your city, they opt in to it. Failing to respect this just results in people leaving groups or unsubscribing from emails.

Core settings for your Local group

When you click to access a Local that you own, you will see a page with a number of fields, most of which have been filled in for you. Most of these will not need to be changed, and are listed here only for completeness.

In normal use, you will probably only need to update Intro text, Extra text, Caption and the image.

City or region name. This is the name of the group, and how it will appear on the site pages, and in menu choices.

Website code. This is what users can put after the / in a URL and should normally be the city name in lower case. In some cases, it may make more sense to use a shorted name, like dc for Washington, DC, or sf for San Francisco. Usually best not changed once set.

Country. As it says

Twitter. If you have a Twitter account for this Local, enter the name here, without the @ symbol.

Non BLUF web page. If, as so many do, you have set up a Facebook group or a whole other website, enter the URL here. And reflect as you do so whether it's really worth the effort and if you've followed the guidelines regarding BLUF's intellectual property.

Mailing list: In most cases, do not change this. A mailing list will be created when your Local is set up, and will be open to both members and non-members.

Message group: In theory, we can create message groups (chat rooms) for Local groups. We haven't yet used this facility.

Intro text.

This is the important one. It will be shown under your city's name on the main Local page, and at the top of the individual page. You should include key information, for example who organisers are, so they can be contacted if anyone has questions, and if you have a regular fixed date (3rd Friday of the month, for example) include that too. But try not to be too wordy.

Optional extra text.

If you want to give a bit of history, or a mission statement, or something else, enter it here. This text won't be displayed on the main Local page, but will appear on your city's own page. If there are no events scheduled, it will appear immediately below the intro text and banner. If events are scheduled, it will appear below the events block.

Principle venue. This is theme of a bar in your city that is also in our venues database (which means we have an exact location). This is used to fetch the weather information that will be displayed on your page and on events in your city from a week before the event.

Caption for main image. If necessary, supply a caption, like 'BLUF members at London Pride' for your image.

Below these options, you will see a selection of images, and an upload area. To add a new banner image, drag and drop it onto the upload area. To use an image, click the 'Use as main image' button beneath it and click Save.

Entering detailed text

The intro text and optional extra text support all the usual BLUF features for text descriptions:

- You can use Markdown to include links, and emphasise text
- You can use @ links to link to profiles, eg @3@ to link to Nigel's
- You can use multiple languages, using the [en], [de] tags and so on.

We recommend that, if you expect visitors from abroad, that you add translated texts, or ask us to generate them for you with the automatic translation system. In the latter case, please write your original in English, which is the base language for the system, and we all automatically add French, German and Spanish.

Note that the same applies for events, news and other items you may add - we need to be much better and including translations, so more people can see things in their own language.

Examples

This is an example of how the main Local page will look in BLUF 4.5

BLUF Local

BLUF has members around the world in over fifty countries, with volunteers in dozens of cities worldwide. Although we don't have local chapters as such - membership of BLUF is handled centrally - each BLUF Local group has one or more people planning and organising events, and able to answer some of your queries about the club. In many cities, we organise both BLUF Socials and BLUF nights. A BLUF Social is usually open to all, and doesn't require that you meet the full BLUF dresscode to attend (though venues may impose some rules of their own, of course). So, attending a BLUF Social can be a great way to find out about the local BLUF members, hear about the club, and decide if you want to join.

Cities listed on this page as BLUF Locals are ones where we have active volunteers planning events. Click on one of the cities to see more details of the events there.

How do I join a BLUF Local group?

Since BLUF membership is handled centrally, when it comes to 'joining' a BLUF Local group, it's more a case of showing your affiliation with that group. That may be because it's where you live, or you want to keep in touch with information about events there, or any other reason. You can join as many groups as you like.

If you're a BLUF member, just go to the BLUF Local page for a city and click the Join button. If you're not a BLUF member, enter your email address in the box below, and we'll send you a link so that you can opt in to email news for the cities of your choice.

Active BLUF Locals

BLUF Locals are currently active in the following cities:

[Amsterdam](#) • [Antwerp](#) • [Berlin](#) • [Boston](#) • [Chicago](#) • [DC](#) • [London](#) • [Manchester](#) • [Minneapolis](#) • [Montreal](#) • [Munich](#) • [New York](#) • [Paris](#) • [San Francisco](#) • [SoCal](#)

Remember, we also have events in other cities from time to time - check the [BLUF Calendar](#) for a comprehensive list.

Amsterdam

Amsterdam has for many years been one of the principal cities for BLUF events in Europe, and it's where many of BLUF's major milestones have been celebrated, including our 6th and 15th birthdays, the launch of the current BLUF site, and more.



Parties are held regularly, including during Fetish Pride, Gay Pride and Leather Pride.

Current organiser this year: Joffry, aka wescobootcop (2252).

Please do visit our BLUF Amsterdam events in the Web Bar, our main venue, and at some other venues in The Netherlands .

BLUF members who like to help the organizing crew or willing to take part in the Amsterdam local board are kindly requested to message Joffry, aka wescobootcop (2252).

See our new updated Events Agenda 2022 ! In October 2022 we will start with a new event; BLUF Leather Evening in the Dirty Dicks bar, more info soon to be read.

Who's in charge?

In each BLUF Local city, there is a person, or group of people who are in charge of planning events. Some have planning committees, some just have a single person - we don't have strict rules on the structure. You can find out more on each city page, and if you want to get involved, just talk to the people listed for that city.

As far as possible, BLUF leaves Local teams to manage their own events, because we believe these things are best handled by those who live somewhere. However, we do set out guidelines for organisers, including in our BLUF Event Handbook, which you can find in our [document library](#).

We will also be publishing a [Code of Conduct](#), which we will

This view is for a logged in user; if visited by someone who's not logged in, there will be a box for user's to enter their email address. When they do so, they will be asked to complete a captcha, and then sent a confirmation link that will allow them select which Local groups they want to hear from.

BLUF Local: Amsterdam

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www.facebook.com/BLUFAmsterdamNetherlands/

[AmsterdamBluf](#)



Check back soon for event details

BLUF LOCAL

You are a member of this BLUF Local. Click Leave to remove it from your profile and stop receiving email updates

LEAVE

MEMBERS

If a user were to tap the Amsterdam group listed at the top of this page, then they'd see something similar to this example. Again, this is the view of a logged in member. For a non-member, there would be a sign-up box top right.

Events

BLUF Sunday Social Afternoon 5 PM, @The Web

Sunday 28 Aug, 17:00

Please be welcome at our BLUF Sunday Social at the Web bar this Sunday.

Starting at 5 PM and hope to meet you there.

A great opportunity to see each other again ad to have a beer tand a good time together.

Graag zien we je graag weer op de BLUF Sunday Social vanaf 1700 uur in The Web bar.

Een mooie gelegenheid om elkaar weer te zien en samen een biertje etc .te drinken

The Web, Sint Jacobsstraat 6, Amsterdam, Netherlands

BLUF Sunday Social Afternoon 5 PM, @The Web

Sunday 25 Sep, 17:00

Please be welcome at our BLUF Sunday Social at the Web bar this Sunday.

Starting at 5 PM and hope to meet you there.

A great opportunity to see each other again ad to have a beer tand a good time together.

Graag zien we je graag weer op de BLUF Sunday Social vanaf 1700 uur in The Web bar.

Een mooie gelegenheid om elkaar weer te zien en samen een biertje etc .te drinken

The Web, Sint Jacobsstraat 6, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Leatherpride Amsterdam BLUF Sunday Social Afternoon 5 PM, @The Web

Sunday 30 Oct, 17:00

Please be welcome at our BLUF Sunday Social at the Web bar this Sunday during the Leatherpride Amsterdam Weekend

Starting at 5 PM and hope to meet you there.

A great opportunity to see each other again ad to have a beer tand a good time together.



Leather & Fetish Pride Amsterdam

Thursday 27 October — 31 Monday Oct 22

Amsterdam's fetish weekend is back, with a range of events after the weekend, including Mr Leather Netherlands. More details on the website

Various venues, Amsterdam, Netherlands

BLUF Sunday Social Afternoon 5 PM, @The Web

Sunday 27 Nov, 17:00

Please be welcome at our BLUF Sunday Social at the Web bar this Sunday.

Starting at 5 PM and hope to meet you there.

A great opportunity to see each other again ad to have a beer tand a good time together.

In this city

Click to search BLUF for bars, clubs, photographers or shops in this city

[Bars](#)

[Clubs](#)

[Photographers](#)

[Shops](#)

Weather today

Clouds, 4m/sec, 64% cloud,

◦ Day: 24.8°C

◦ Evening: 24.9°C

◦ Night: 19.1°C

◦ Humidity: 61%

Other cities

See what BLUF Local is doing in these other cities:

[Antwerp](#)

[Berlin](#)

[Boston](#)

[Chicago](#)

[DC](#)

[London](#)

[Manchester](#)

[Minneapolis](#)

[Montreal](#)

[Munich](#)

[New York](#)

[Paris](#)

[San Francisco](#)

[SoCal](#)

Scrolling down the page, Events will normally be shown next, like this:

There are two columns of events in the block, and it reads left to right, then down, and so on. If the first event has a poster, it will be put in the place where the second event would normally go.

So, to give events prominence here and elsewhere, please make sure they have images.

At the right, the weather includes evening and nighttime temperatures, and links to other active cities.

If you added additional information, it will appear below the Events section, unless there are no events, in which case it will replace it. Here's the example for Munich:

BLUF Local: Munich

Welcome to BLUF Munich!

Wherever you come from, what ever your ethnicity, your age and orientation may be, feel welcome here in Munich, Germany, in one of the most tolerant cities in the world for showing yourself in gear.

Our idea of BLUF is to spread the joy of wearing leather, to encourage the gay community to increase presence and to connect to like-minded men around the world in a respectful way.

Please find further options for keeping in contact on the following sites:

[Facebook Page](#)

[Facebook Group](#)

We are looking forward to seeing you in Munich!
www.facebook.com/BLUFMUNICH

BLUF LOCAL

You are not a member of this BLUF Local. Click Join to add it to your profile and receive email updates

JOIN

MEMBERS

More about BLUF in Munich

Deeply rooted in the traditions of one of Germany's most renowned fetish clubs, the [MLC Munich](#), BLUF has had the honor to be guest of the MLC in its club location Underground, where BLUF nights and BLUF Socials have been held regularly. The Bavarian Mr Leather 2016 BMrL 2016. Munich is homebase (formerly #3348) is a close friend and member of the board of the MLC Munich. We are honored to continue the legacy of BLUF Munich started by Bavarian Mr. Leather 2015 Mister Morris (810) and

In this city

Click to search BLUF for bars, clubs, photographers or shops in this city

Image information

For the image that appears with your city information, you should create (or ask us to create) a banner image, ideally of a size around 700 pixels wide and 250 high. Please try to avoid using portrait images, as all the information below will be pushed down the page.

Also, while it can be great to have some text in the image, note that it should also appear in the actual text, where it can be read more easily by users or assistive technology.

Try not to use the banner image to promote a single event; you can use a news story for that. If you really must, make sure you update it after the event it over. If you're still promoting something that happened months ago, people will assume you're not doing anything new.

We reserve the right to change your banner image, if we think it's making your page less readable.

What information can I add?

A common misconception is that the only thing you can add to your BLUF Local page is stuff directly related to BLUF in that city. That's not strictly true.

One of the original intentions for the BLUF Local pages was that they could include information that is not directly BLUF-related, but nevertheless relevant to members in that city or region. If you have the time and effort, your BLUF Local page can be a noticeboard for the leather community in your area.

Things that are acceptable to post (not an exhaustive list)

- News items about planning or other city decisions that might impact the LGBT community
- News about topical issues relating to the community where you are, eg Monkeypox vaccinations
- Announcements of events, exhibitions and other things of interest to the community
- Information about other clubs and groups
- Event listings for community events that may appeal to BLUF members, even if they're not strictly leather

Examples of things that are **not** suitable to post

- Event listings for purely commercial fetish events
- Promotional material thinly disguised as news
- Overtly political stuff other than in support of LGBT rights

Obviously, you will need relevant permissions for the type of material you are posting - event, news, magazine or blog. If you don't have the appropriate permission but think you may want it, let me know.

It's not compulsory to post this extra material, but I do think it can be useful in building up an audience for your page, and hopefully also helping the attendance events listed on it.

The BLUF Email system

A key part of promoting events is the BLUF email system, which is designed to allow you to target event mail shots to both club members and non-members, and to make sure as many people as possible receive information about events.

Note that you should generally only be promoting official BLUF events using the email system, but it's acceptable to mention other events happening around the same time, eg as part of a fetish weekend or Pride event.

You should not be sending mail shots to promote purely commercial things, and you should avoid sending so many messages people feel bombarded by them - no more than every couple of weeks is probably sufficient.

Address privacy

Privacy is important to us, and it is not possible to get member or non-member email addresses. You should not attempt to collect them, and should use the BLUF Email system to contact people, so we can properly track recipients and unsubscribe requests.

To understand the email system, and who will get a message you send, you need to know how we handle subscriptions.

On BLUF, members opt in to receive information. By adding a BLUF Local group to their profile, they opt in to emails from that group as well.

Other groups people can include are 'Event information in my country' and national or regional groups, like Western US, Scandinavia, UK & Ireland.

If information is being sent about an event in, for example, London, UK, then we would contact:

1. Anyone who is in the UK, and has asked for event information in their country
2. Anyone anywhere in the world, who has asked for UK & Ireland event information
3. Anyone anywhere in the world, who has asked for BLUF Local: London information

Since in part 3, BLUF Local members, people may be external subscribers (ie not BLUF members), you can choose whether to include those non-members or not. This may be useful if, for example, an event is being held at a member's home, and you want to restrict it to people who are known BLUF members.

Sending and replying

From BLUF 4.5, when you send an email about an event, it will always appear to be from news@bluf.com. However, the headers are constructed to direct replies to a custom address for each mail shot. Your personal email address is kept private from recipients.

If a recipient replies to the email within 90 days of it being sent, their reply will be forwarded to you. If you then reply to them, they will receive your response directly, which will include your sending email address.

The instructions over the page show the basics of how to send an event mail shot. If you need to send other types of mail shot, it's usually best to check beforehand - we must at all times avoid gaining a reputation as spammers.

The mailshot composer

This screen shows the BLUF v4.5 mail shot composing tool, which you will find in Admin by selecting Event Mailshot from the Messaging menu.

BLUF mailshot

Via this page, you can send a BLUF mailshot. You may use markdown to create your message. Select the mailing list you want to use from the list at the right hand side of the page, then click Preview to see what the message looks like and how many people will receive it.

Remember: sending too many mailshots, or duplicate messages, is likely to make members unsubscribe. We recommend no more than three messages on a particular topic

Message subject and text

The subject will be used on emails, but ignored for BLUF inbox messages

Type the subject of your message here

Enter your message here. You may use Markdown formatting

Email options

Select a list

Choose an option

Where is the event?

United Kingdom

Include event link?

No event link

The event name will be added to the message as a headline, with the event date immediately below

Email only attending members?

Include a BLUF Local

Choose an option

Include non-members?

PREVIEW

SAVE DRAFT

Recipients: 0 (if sending now)

Defer sending until (blank = Send Now)

0800 UTC

Reply handling

Replies will be directed to this address

nigel@roughsex.org

This address will not be included in the mail shot, but replies will automatically be routed to it for 90 days

Message subject

You should always include a subject on event emails. You do not necessarily have to include the event name or date, as those will automatically be included in the message body by the new email templates, if you select an event from the list.

The message body area can use Markdown so that you can include headings. It does not support multilingual text, so if you want to include two or more languages, our preferred format is to start with a note indicating that other languages are below, and then put English first.

Eg.

Français ci-dessous.

We're looking forward to seeing you ...

Reply handling

This box will be filled automatically with the email address on your BLUF account. If you have a BLUF local address (eg paris@bluf.com) you might want to enter that here instead. If you leave it blank, replies to your message will go to webmaster@bluf.com. It's best to make sure they go to someone who can answer questions, though.

Select a list

This is the principal email list to which your message will be sent. Unless you are planning a small event with limited capacity, you almost certainly want to select a larger list here than a BLUF Local one. For example, one of the US lists, or a list like UK & Ireland. The message will go only to those who have opted in.

Where is the event

Select the country in which the event is happening. This ensures that people who have asked to hear only about events in their own country will receive it.

Include event link

In just about every instance, you should select your event from this list. If there is a poster for the event, it will be included in the email. The event name will be added as a headline, with a secondary headline based on the date of the event (or the first date, if it's a multi-day event).

Email only attending members

Normally this option can be ignored. It is useful for ticketed events, or where there is a late change; only members who have indicated in their BLUF travel plans that they were going to an event will be included in the mail shot, regardless of what other options you select. So, you can use this to send a location only to people who actually plan to attend, or to announce a cancellation, for example.

Include a BLUF Local

Here is where you select your BLUF Local group, so that anyone who is interested in your city will receive the message. This may seem complex, but it allows for example for someone to opt in only to San Francisco, without receiving emails for every other event in the US, or the Western US.

Include non-members

Finally, tick this if you wish non-members to know about your event. Extra people will be reached, but remember that we don't necessarily know who they are. For events in private homes, or with limited space, we recommend you don't include non-members.

For a typical event then, select a country or region-level list, then the country of the event, the event itself, and then your BLUF Local city, for maximum coverage.

When you have selected your options, and written the message, click Preview. You will see a total of the number of people your message will reach, and a preview will appear further down the page.

Check the preview carefully before sending. The BLUF logo and appropriate disclaimers will be added to your message before it is sent.

Membership changes in BLUF v4.5

BLUF v4.5 has introduced some minor changes in how we handle membership of BLUF Local group for new members.

As previously, if a new member was subscribed to any BLUF Local groups as an external subscriber, they will automatically be added to those groups when accepted as a BLUF member, with no notifications.

However, the new member application form in BLUF v4.5 also allows an applicant to pre-select a BLUF Local group as part of the process.

If this is done, and they are successful, when their account is created they will automatically be added to that Local group.

In addition, the owners of that group will receive a notification, alerting them of the new member. It would be appreciated if you took the time to send them a Welcome notice. Normally, I consider it best practise to do this when you see a member has signed on, so you know they'll receive it right away and, more importantly, if they do come back to you with a question, you can respond swiftly too.

Management issues

Following some recent issues, it's important to clarify that, since we don't have a formal disciplinary structure at the moment, or a formal code of conduct - one is in the works - if there are issues in a BLUF Local, the best place to resolve them is usually there.

If we trust you enough to manage a BLUF Local, you should also be able to mediate if disputes arise between people, though you are always welcome to ask for advice. The Directors can step in if things are impossible to resolve, but in most cases we'd be doing so from a great distance, and possibly not with the same native language as those people involved, or any first-hand knowledge of what's going on.

So, it's always best if things can be resolved at a local level wherever possible.

In extreme cases, as always, if someone is being disruptive, or bringing the club into disrepute, the Directors can take action including terminating their membership, but that should be considered a last resort.

Local relations

One final topic: our guiding principle when it comes to pre-existing groups in a city or region should always be that it is best to work with them, rather than in competition or against them. We should seek to include and lift up, rather than exclude. So, for example, in London we organise events with London Leathermen, and we do similar in Manchester.

Events don't have to be exclusively BLUF - though obviously we should have some strict BLUF dresscode events. We have a name with considerable recognition; if by using that we can help keep leather venues, and other clubs, alive and prospering, then that is what we should do.

Membership of BLUF offers access to people and events around the world; it should be seen as a complement to, not a replacement for, membership of local leather organisations.