



Working in Bristol
to provide a
voice and support
for LGBT+ and
Questioning People

These notes have been compiled with help from The Diversity Trust



Some Key Words

LGBT+ : Lesbian, **G**ay, **B**isexual and **T**ransgender (Trans) we use the + symbol to include those who are Questioning (unsure), of other gender identities and sexual orientations (asexual, demi-sexual, etc) or who use other words to describe themselves or their identity – non-binary, queer, third sex, gender fluid, their own description, etc.

Trans : (also Transgender) people who do not identify with, or who are not the same as the gender that they are given when they are born, and identify with a different gender.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment (we use Gender Identity) : types of what are known as Protected Characteristics, which have laws to protect them (e.g. the Equality Act 2010) – Race, Religion or Belief, Age, Sex, Disability etc.

Cisgender : a cisgender person identifies as the sex given to them at birth, the opposite of trans or transgender.

Homophobia : negative attitudes and feelings towards homosexuality or towards people who identify as or are thought to be lesbian, gay or bisexual, etc.

Transphobia : negative attitudes and feelings against transgender people, based on the expression of their gender identity.

Biphobia : negative attitudes and feelings towards bisexuality or towards people who identify as or are thought to be bisexual.

Journey : we use the word journey to describe the process of discovery of gender identity or sexual orientation and this can be a short or life long journey and begin at any time.

A more detailed **glossary** can be found at : lgbtbristol.org.uk/glossary

and the **LGBT+ Manifesto for Bristol** at : lgbtbristol.org.uk/manifesto



About LGBT Bristol

- **LGBT Bristol** was formed in 1994 and became a charity in 2003. We are funded by Bristol City Council to provide Voice and Influence. We have also been successful in finding other funding to support new projects that members have asked us for, such providing the LGBT+ specialism for the Bristol Hate Crime and Discrimination Service in Bristol and specialist support groups.
- **LGBT Bristol** works to give all LGBT+ people in Bristol a voice, and to challenge discrimination: homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. This is when LGBT+ people are treated unfairly, unkindly or in a violent way due to their gender identity or their sexual orientation or sometimes both.
- As a charity, **LGBT Bristol** is managed by a Management Committee made up of up to 12 Trustees, who meet regularly to steer the work of the charity, and hold an open public Annual General Meeting once a year.
- **LGBT Bristol** is a membership-based organisation and anyone who identifies as LGBT+ can be a voting member. We also have many non-voting members who are supporters, allies and followers of our work. We are based at the Park Centre in Daventry Road, Knowle and have two part-time staff and one sub-contracted part-time walk leader.
- **LGBT Bristol** is part of the Bristol Hate Crime and Discrimination Service (BHCDS) – a collaboration led by SARI – Stand Against Racial Inequality, with Brandon Trust, Bristol Mind, Avon and Bristol Law Centre, Bristol Mediation and LGBT Bristol.
- **LGBT Bristol** is also part of the new Voice and Influence Partnership (VIP) – a collaboration led by The Care Forum, with the The Bristol Older People's Forum, Bristol Multi-Faith Forum, SARI, West of England Centre for Inclusive Living, (WECIL), BME Voice, Ujima Radio and LGBT Bristol.



Our LGBT+ Communities and Work

- LGBT+ people are currently estimated at around: 6% (5-7%) of the population, a figure that does not include Trans or other gender identities, nor other sexual orientations.
- LGBT Bristol and Stonewall, the national LGBT+ charity, estimate the percentage in the population is approximately **10%** including all those undergoing their gender identity or sexual orientation journeys, and men who have sex with men (MSM) but who do not identify as gay or bisexual, and women who have sex with women (WSW) but who do not identify as Lesbian or bisexual, plus non-binary people etc.
- We will signpost people to further help and support, when it is required and a relevant service is provided.
- Many enquiries are by telephone, and are from individuals, parents, partners, service providers, schools, teachers, NHS, etc. If people have a question about gender identity or sexual orientation they call us.
- We have a regular newsletter, a website with relevant information, a calendar and we use social media. A survey in 2013 told us that over 90% of our members have smart phones
- We hold events – both for LGBT+ people and for the wider public and organisations who wish to know more. We attend and support events and festivals to promote awareness, and publicise support for LGBT+ people in Bristol – a number of organisations have started LGBT+ support groups: St Mungos, Bristol Drugs Project, Addiction Recovery Agency.
- We apply for funding for further work and projects – there is little LGBT+ specialist support for the most at-risk LGBT+ people in Bristol.
- We do go the extra mile in supporting at-risk LGBT+ - we often find that clients have not met another LGBT+ person that they identify with, and that if we can be instrumental in changing this, that the client's prospects for friendship, a reduction in isolation and their ability to address other needs greatly increases, we recommend you do this too. We can advise with groups and opportunities if needed or check our website for info.



Findings and Observations

- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity are journeys that vary in length for different people - people can gain the confidence or need to come out at any time.
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity are the least likely areas to be addressed in organisations, businesses and educational establishments, and more often than not the work is driven by LGBT+ people, our allies or networks within the organisation.
- Often people still believe, that if they are talking about LGBT+ people, they are talking particularly about sex and sexual activity which can hold back work in this area.
- Anyone – LGBT+ or heterosexual can suffer homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse.
- Young people are still made homeless on account of their gender identity or sexual orientation, and make a higher percentage of young homeless people - they are also more likely, due to homelessness, to go on to have harmful addictions, be involved in sex work, or to be abused - Shelter estimate that at 20% of homeless youth are LGBT+.
- People are still attacked and killed – even in this country, because of their gender identity and sexual orientation.
- LGBT+ people are more likely to suffer from alcohol or substance misuse, or have mental health problems, due to the treatment, rejection and discrimination they experienced throughout their lives.
- Gender Identity - pronouns and names are very important, if in doubt use **they** to describe someone.
- You can also ask someone how they identify if this isn't obvious to you. Most Trans+ people will take the opportunity to talk about their identity and to help you understand.
- Not all people that come under the Trans+ umbrella identify as Trans – gender fluid, non-binary and self identifying terms are often used so we use the term **Trans+** to be inclusive.



Hate Crime

- A hate crime is a crime committed against a person who has been targeted due to their sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or beliefs, race or ethnicity, disability (including learning disabilities and mental health), age or gender.
- A hate crime can include; physical attacks, verbal assaults, threats, harassment, intimidation, vandalism, graffiti and even murder.
- Reporting any hate crime and discrimination, can stop it escalating, stop it happening to other people and help to identify the perpetrators.
- Avon and Somerset Police Figures

	2015	2016
◦ Transphobic :	35	45
◦ Homophobic :	277	350
- LGBT+ hate crime is significantly under-reported – Stonewall estimated in 2017 that 81% of LGBT+ people do not report hate crimes to anyone.
- We raise awareness about the work we do to support clients and the growing confidence that clients can have in legal and policing systems.
- Many LGBT+ people do not think they will be taken seriously or fear a negative response if they report homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. At worst they expect to receive more discrimination when they report the offence. This remains a problem within the police force, as we know from LGBT+ police (Gay Police Association), as it is in many large organisations, despite changes in the law and more open and welcoming and tolerant attitudes in society.
- Avon and Somerset Police have 12 LGBT+ Liaison Officers.
- 90% of our LGBT+ hate crime clients have complex personal needs. This can be due to homophobia, biphobia and/or transphobia, discrimination, and also from peer and family rejection.
- Because of this LGBT+ communities have greater mental health needs than the general population and often self-medicate through the use of alcohol and drugs.



Hate Crime

- Within the combined service we are able to share expertise and work together where there are clients who belong to more than one protected group (intersectionality).
- We offer the following support to our clients :
 - Supporting, listening and advising
 - Empowering people and ensuring their voices are heard
 - Signposting, and contacting agencies and organisations on behalf of our clients and service users
 - Checking all procedures are done correctly including with the police and housing services
 - Monitoring investigations
 - Further support for complex clients such as supporting housing relocation, crisis support, support to find and approach medical services, etc – we help where needed on a case by case basis
- How to report a hate crime :
 - In an emergency please call the police and report the crime. Either 999, in an emergency, or 101 in a non-emergency situation.
 - Call Bristol Hate Crime and Discrimination Services 24 hour advice line – 0800 171 2272
 - Complete a referral online – www.sariweb.org.uk
 - Email – johanna@lgbtbristol.org.uk
 - Refer victims to us or ask someone else to refer you
 - We have plenty of cards and leaflets – please ask



Creating a welcoming environment to engage LGBT+ people

- Ensure you have something in your reception or public facing rooms, and on your website that shows you are inclusive of LGBT+ people:
 - Display information about support for LGBT+, such as your LGBT+ staff network or LGBT+ client support group, and other local LGBT+ support/social/sports groups;
 - Display the Rainbow Flag which is universally recognised by LGBT+ people, or the Trans or Non-Binary Flags.
- Ensure equality statements and policies or equality mission statements, include reference to including all protected characteristics by listing them so that LGBT+ is included – this can also be printed and displayed.
- Ensure that you reference those who are questioning (we use the + symbol to include all those not directly included under the LGBT banner – such as queer, questioning, non-binary and other self-descriptive identities).
- Make use of our sexual orientation and gender identity monitoring advice sheet.
- Ensure all policies, recruitment and employment practices are inclusive and up-to-date.
- Ensure staff training includes LGBT+ in the equalities section – and remember that this may need more input than other equalities information – allow time for good open discussion and timetable continued awareness training.
- Ensure your publicity reflects your commitment to LGBT+ equality and inclusion, and use appropriate positive images.
- Check you use appropriate language:
 - partner is the inclusive term to use where you do not know the gender of someone's partner;
 - If unsure, use **they** as the pronoun for a trans or non-binary person or ask them how they like to be known/which pronoun to use.



Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Equalities Monitoring

8 reasons why monitoring for gender identity and sexual orientation is a positive step for all organisations.

The following are recommended as best practice monitoring questions :

Sexual Orientation

Do you identify as: Lesbian/Gay Woman Gay Man Bisexual
 Heterosexual Asexual Prefer not to answer

Other _____

Gender Identity

Do you identify as the sex assigned at birth? Yes No

Gender

Do you identify as: Male Female Prefer not to answer
 Other _____

Including these questions to your Equalities Monitoring Forms shows that your organisation :

- 1 acknowledges and welcomes LGBT+ people in employment or services;
- 2 is including and **not** discriminating against LGBT+ people on the monitoring form;
- 3 offers/may offer services for LGBT+ people;
- 4 has/may have policies and provision for LGBT+ staff;
- 5 is giving equal promotion to gender identity and sexual orientation as protected characteristics on the monitoring form;
- 6 allows you to monitor and report how your services are reaching LGBT+ people;
- 7 is acknowledging and fulfilling its duty within the Equality Act

8 2010;
shows that you care.



Contact and Further Information

LGBT Bristol

Sarah-Louise Minter : Development Manager

sarah@lgbtbristol.org.uk

07804 945 849

lgbtbristol.org.uk

Our website contains information on local support, social and sports groups, plus local news and events.

Diversity Trust – Specialised LGBT+ Training and Research

Berkeley Wilde : Director

berkeley.wilde@diversitytrust.org.uk

0844 800 4425 mobile 07747 752 454

www.diversitytrust.org.uk

Useful Websites

Freedom : **<http://www.otrbristol.org.uk/what-we-do/freedom/>**

Support and Social Groups for LGBT+ young people in Bristol

Mermaids : **<https://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/>**

Information and family and individual support for gender diverse and transgender children and young people.

Crossroads : **<http://www.bristol-crossroads.org.uk/>**

Support for transgender people (Transvestites, Crossdressers, Transexuals, male-to-female and female-to-male) and partners

Western Boys : **<https://westernboys.org/>**

Information and support for female-to-male transgender people

Stonewall : **<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>**

LGBT rights charity and information bank

LGBT Foundation : **<https://lgbt.foundation/>**

Advice, support and information for LGBT+ communities

GIRES : **<https://www.gires.org.uk/>**