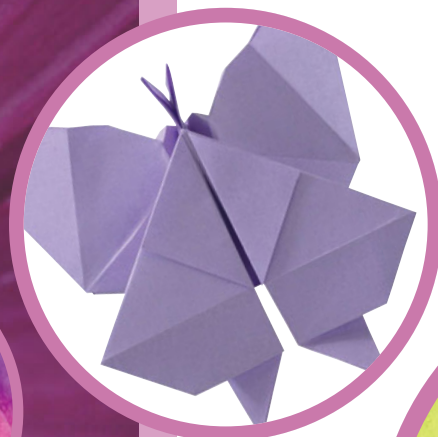


Delivering housing services to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender customers



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Foreword by Bill Payne, Chief Executive of Metropolitan Housing Partnership



As a former president of the Chartered Institute of Housing, I'm delighted and proud that Metropolitan Housing Partnership (MHP) has been able to join with Gentoo Housing Group and Knowsley Housing

Trust (KHT) to sponsor the development and publication of this practice brief.

Many housing associations owe their origins to a struggle against prejudice and exclusion. MHP is no exception: it was established in the 1950s to help African-Caribbean immigrants arriving in London when the mantra 'No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs' was casually accepted as a norm. To that you might as well have added 'No Queers'.

Thankfully, things have moved on tremendously in the last twenty years or so, and it is now no more permissible to discriminate against people on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity than on their gender or ethnicity.

Nevertheless, because people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) are often an invisible minority, their needs, and the challenges they face, still too often go unrecognised. As a group, they are probably under-housed in the public sector, and housing providers need to do more to make their services fully inclusive of LGBT people, and accessible to them.

Many of the UK's estimated 3.6 million LGBT people live in the homes we as a sector provide, and work in our offices. They are entitled to recognition and respect, with equivalent rights

to their straight neighbours or colleagues. I know that the work MHP has done with its LGBT staff to create a more inclusive workplace has enabled them to feel more settled and productive and, moreover, that it's had a powerful and positive impact on our whole approach to diversity. I'd like to think we can do the same with our customers.

Housing providers need to work with their LGBT customers to understand their needs, but to do that they must first earn their trust. I'm sure this practice brief will be an invaluable aid to managers and staff in addressing that task, and provide them with clear guidance and examples to help them get started.

Be warned! There will be those who say 'what are you doing that for?' or 'why should they be treated differently to anyone else?' Such views miss the basic point – of recognising people as individuals, with individual needs, and a right to be respected. But I can also promise, from personal experience, that the journey will be well worthwhile.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Bill Payne'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

1. Sexual orientation, gender identity and housing?

Growing diversity of the UK

The UK is an increasingly diverse place to live and our understanding of diversity is developing. Surveys consistently show that the UK is becoming a more tolerant place to live and less tolerant of discrimination.

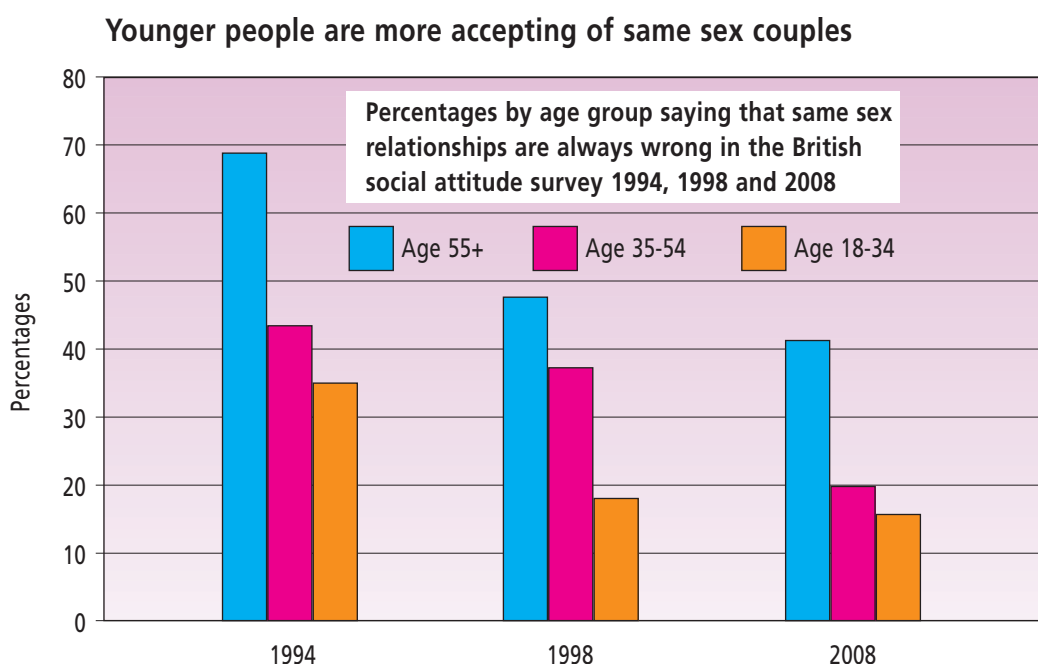
Our homes and the communities in which they are located play an important role in creating a fairer and more tolerant society. They directly influence our quality of access to critical opportunities such as employment and education and our ability to participate in the social and economic life of the community.

This **practice brief** will look at how housing organisations can deliver inclusive services to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) customers. It will show:

- how a greater understanding of diversity can lead to better customer service all round

- why sexual orientation and gender identity are still important issues for housing
- how to identify and respond to the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) customers
- how to engage with LGBT customers around service design and delivery
- how housing providers across the UK have embraced diversity and are working to further equality for LGBT customers.

In recent years, new laws have come into being which prohibit discrimination and require public bodies to promote equality for LGBT people. But alongside this, public attitudes have become much positive about diversity in terms of sexual orientation and gender identity. For example, British Social Attitudes Surveys show how people have become much more positive about same sex relationships.



Reference: EHRC (2010) *Equality, human rights and good relations in 2010: the first triennial review*, London, EHRC

Key figures

- Stonewall estimates that 5-7 per cent of the population are lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) based on the estimates of Treasury Actuaries. This represents about 3.6 million people¹
- Census, data indicates there are 145,150 to 203,216 LGB people across Wales²
- in 2008, the Scottish Government estimated that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people make up about 5 per cent of the population, around 250,000 across all parts of society
- there are estimated to be about 5,000 transsexual people in the UK
- the campaigning organisation Press for Change estimates that worldwide 1 in 11,500 adults are transsexual³

Equality, diversity and customer service

This **practice brief** sets the delivery of services to LGBT people firmly within a customer service context. Housing providers need to understand the needs of existing and potential customers and this involves knowing who they are, what they want and how services can best be delivered. Understanding the diversity of customers is essential to achieving these outcomes.

There is a need to better information about the housing needs of LGBT people

There is widespread recognition of the need to develop more extensive and better quality research about the housing needs of LGBT people.⁴ With reference to sexual orientation,

Stonewall acknowledge that relatively little is known about the challenges LGBT people face in relation to housing. Historical discrimination means many LGBT people have been reluctant to articulate their needs or have been marginalised in consultation processes.⁵

There is a need to be aware of the different ways in which individuals are diverse

Although this **practice brief** focuses on delivering services to LGBT customers, there is growing recognition that individual customers reflect a range of diverse characteristics.

LGBT people are not the same. They are diverse in different ways and have complex identities. We will explore more about this in section 5.

1 The Integrated Household Survey, based on the responses of 450,000 people, which carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in 2010 estimated that 1.5 per cent of the UK population is LGB. These figures have been disputed by LGB rights organisations as an under-representation of the true figure

2 Cited CIH (2009) *Key Information Issue 10 Equality and diversity: understanding policy – promoting good practice*, Cardiff, CIH Cymru

3 Press for Change (undated) *Facts and fancies about transgender people*

4 Thornhill J (2009) *CIH Response to the Homes and Communities Agency Single Equality Scheme*, Coventry, CIH

5 HCA (2009) *Diverse Intentions: Our Single Equality Scheme*: (P53)

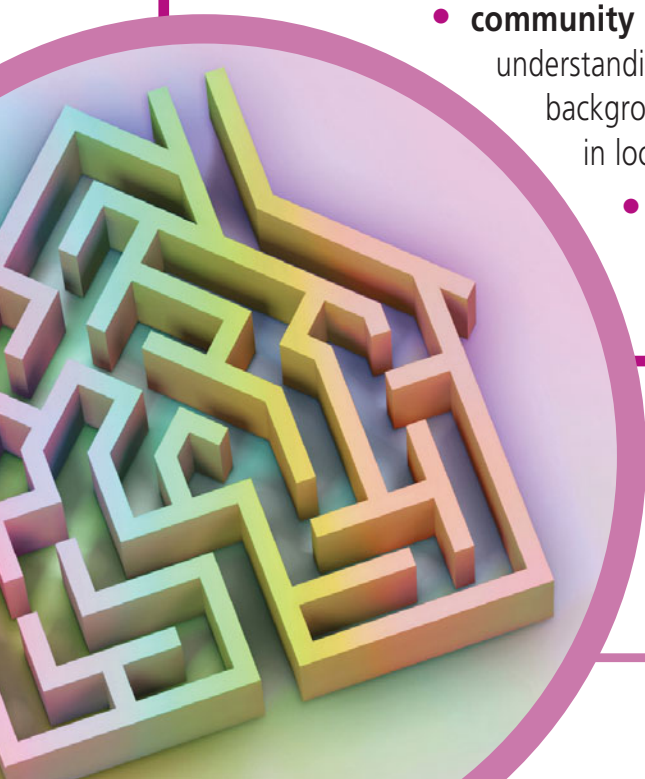
A customer-focused approach to diversity recognises that the needs and experiences of individuals will be different. A starting point for delivering better services to customers is to gain a better understanding of who they are and how they articulate their needs.

*'Customer focus does not mean the relentless promotion of a standardised 'one size fits all' services approach but rather requires a process of differentiation with services aimed at particular market segments.'*⁶

Understanding diversity in customer service

For housing providers, responding positively to diversity in the delivery of services is important for the following reasons:

- **knowing your business:** housing organisations need to have a clear sense of what their business is, how it is positioned in the social housing sector and in the communities in which they are based; and what are the opportunities and threats to growth
- **customer insight:** being aware of and proactive about the diversity of customers will ensure that housing providers are able to provide the right services and meet the right needs
- **customer satisfaction:** responding positively to the diversity of customers will lead to greater satisfaction
- **employment:** embracing diversity helps housing organisations recruit the best talent available
- **diverse communities:** contact with diverse communities, whether service users or work colleagues, can be an enriching experience for employees through interaction with people from different backgrounds and with different life experiences
- **community cohesion:** a positive approach to diversity will promote understanding and good relations between people who have different backgrounds and experiences, and this enhances the quality of life in local areas
- **tackling anti-social behaviour:** housing providers have a responsibility to challenge criminal and anti-social behaviour which affects LGBT people.



⁶ Richardson J (ed) (2010) *Housing and the customer: understanding needs and delivering services*, Coventry, CIH

Sex, sexual orientation and gender identity

There are a number of words and phrases which will appear in this **practice brief** which need some explaining:

Biological sex refers to outward sexual appearance. For example, having the reproductive organs of a male or a female. The human brain also has male and female characteristics. Biological sex is not as fixed as many people assume.

Gender identity is different. It refers to the inner sense of knowing that a person is a man or a woman. **Gender role** refers to those cultural, and behavioural characteristics typically associated with being a man or a woman in society.

Sexuality refers to how men and women express themselves as sexual beings. **Sexual orientation** is a combination of emotional, romantic, sexual or affectionate attraction to another person. It is not the same as sex or gender.

The words gay, gay man or **homosexual** are used to refer to a man who has a sexual orientation towards another man. The words **lesbian**, gay woman or homosexual are used to refer to a woman who has a sexual orientation towards another woman. Great sensitivity should be exercised when using the word homosexual. While this word may be acceptable to some people, because the term is rooted in a 19th century assertion of same sex attraction being a mental illness or medical problem, other people may find it unacceptable. You should talk with lesbian and gay individuals in the community about preferable terms.

Bisexual men and women have a sexual orientation involving physical or romantic attraction towards both men and women.

Although a lot of progress has been made in developing a greater understanding of lesbian and gay people, there is still a widespread lack of understanding of bisexuality in society and their experiences of housing and employment.

Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or expression differs from their birth sex. Transgender is not a sexual orientation. However, transgender people may identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual. The term transgender may sometimes include the term **transsexual** which refers to a person who wants to or who has already changed their physical sex from the one which they were born with.

The process of identifying and living in a new gender, with or without hormone therapy or **gender reassignment**, is called **transition**. Gender reassignment refers to the process of transitioning from the gender assigned at birth to the gender the person identifies with. Some transsexuals may decide to change their bodies through hormone therapy or gender reassignment, but not all will.

The term **trans** is a generic term generally used by those who identify themselves as transgender or transsexual. Many transgender people can identify as female-to-male (FtM) or male-to-female (MtF). Some medical professionals use the term gender dysphoria to describe a condition where a person feels that they are 'living in the body of the wrong sex'. However, great caution should be exercised using this phrase. It is rejected by some transgender people because of its perceived links to mental illness.

In this **practice brief** we will use the acronym LGB to refer to lesbian, gay and bisexual. We will use the acronym LGBT to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Why is sexual orientation important for housing?

What has sexual orientation got to do with housing? There are a number of reasons why a person's sexual orientation impacts on their housing experiences:

- **perceptions of unfavourable treatment in housing services:** in 2007 Stonewall commissioned a poll which revealed 20 per cent of LGB people expected to be treated less favourably than a straight person when applying for social housing
- **hate crime and harassment in homes and communities:** Stonewall found 20 per cent of LGB people had been the victim of one or more 'hate crimes' in the past three years⁷
- **family rejection:** a 2005 Stonewall Housing and Shelter publication⁸ showed that some young people who present themselves as homeless have been thrown out of their family home because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual

- **discrimination in the owner occupied sector:** Brighton and Hove Council found that 10 per cent of the men they surveyed reported problems in getting a mortgage or life insurance because of being gay or bisexual⁹
- **risk of exploitation:** the Albert Kennedy Trust found two thirds of the young men they surveyed had been offered sex or been forced to offer sex to get a bed for the night¹⁰
- **landlords have historically seen sexual orientation and gender identity as a low priority:** a 2005 survey of Scotland's local authorities revealed that, when asked to rank the priority given to the different equality themes, sexual orientation was ranked as lowest.¹¹

Specific challenges affecting bisexual people

In addition to the challenges identified above, bisexual people often articulate the following experiences:

- **lack of understanding and biphobia:** a lack of understanding about bisexuality by employers, service providers, the wider community, and some lesbian and gay people can lead to negative stereotypes where bisexual people are labelled as being uncertain, indecisive and even unstable

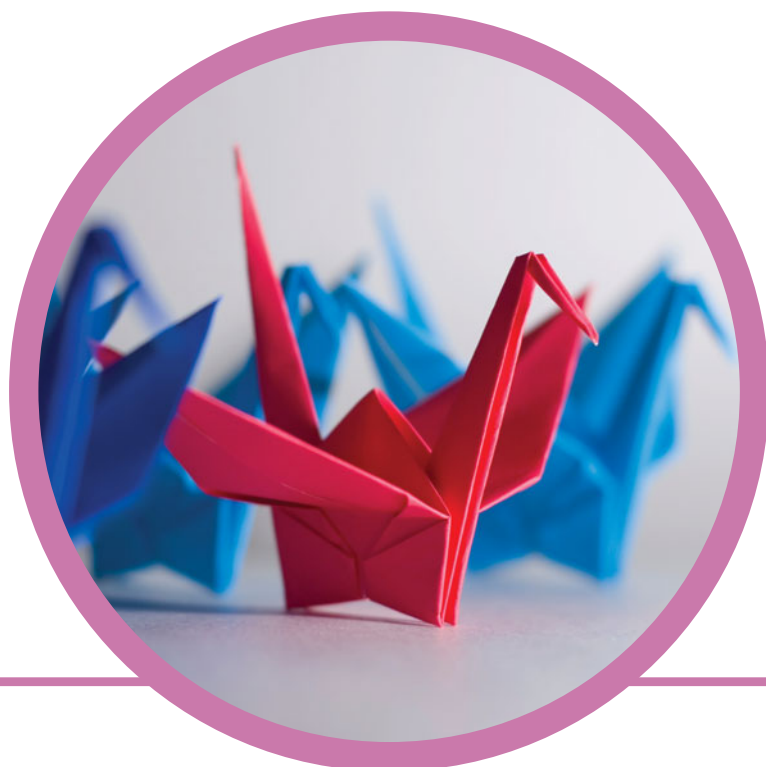
7 Hunt R and Dick S (2007) *'Serves You Right' Lesbian and Gay People's Expectations of Discrimination*, London, Stonewall

8 Stonewall Housing/Shelter (2005) *Meeting the Needs of Homeless Lesbian and Gay Youth*, London, Shelter

9 Brighton and Hove Council (2001) *Count me in: Brighton and Hove lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community strategy 2001-2006*, Brighton and Hove

10 <http://www.akt.org.uk/about-us.html>

11 Stonewall Scotland (2007) *Safe and secure: LGBT experiences of social housing in Scotland*, Stonewall Scotland



- perceptions of invisibility in the community: while there is developing visibility for lesbians and gay men, many bisexual people feel invisible in the community to service providers and with their employers
- lack of peer support networks: bisexual people often identify a lack of peer support networks which can lead to feelings of isolation and/or exclusion.¹²

Finding out more

Bi.org is a web portal which lists a range of support networks and information for the bisexual community. You can visit bi.org at <http://bi.org>

Bisexuality – coming out and staying out is a booklet published by Bi Community News and produced by the UK Bi Activist Network. You can download a copy from www.bicommunitynews.co.uk/resources.html

Bi People is a report produced as part of Brighton and Hove's 2008 *Count Me In Too* survey. It addresses the lives and experiences and identities of bisexual people in Brighton and Hove and their vulnerability to marginalisation and exclusion. The report also makes recommendations for future strategy and service development. You can download a copy from www.countmeintoo.co.uk/bi_people.php?search_term=Bi



Practice checklist: Sexual orientation and housing

- ✓ the services your organisation delivers should reflect the diversity of customers and be responsive to their different needs
- ✓ 5 to 7 per cent of your customers will be LGB. This is likely to be higher in urban areas where customers are seeking access to homelessness services or housing support. Reports such as *Out On My Own*, *Tipping The Iceberg* show large representations of LGBT people in urban areas due to community migration, domestic abuse, family rejection or sexual exploitation (see section 9 for more information)
- ✓ research shows LGB people perceive they will receive a worse experience in terms of their service provision from social housing providers. This may not reflect reality, but how existing and future service users 'perceive' your organisation is important in terms of customer satisfaction
- ✓ LGB people do experience real and evidenced risks of being the victims of 'hate incidents' and domestic abuse in their homes and in the communities in which you work
- ✓ failure to recognise the needs of LGB customers can lead to wider personal and social risk factors such as ill-health, mental ill-health and exploitation
- ✓ be aware of and responsive to *difference* in diversity: the housing experiences of individual LGB customers will all be different: so avoid taking a 'tick-box' approach to equality and diversity.

¹² Chamberlain B (2009) *Bisexual people in the workplace: practical advice for employers*, London, Stonewall

Why is gender identity important for housing?

Gender identity is distinct from sexual orientation. While there are commonalities in the experiences shared by LGB people and trans people such as discrimination, exclusion and misunderstanding; great sensitivity should be taken to be aware of and responsive to the differences between gender identity and sexual orientation and how this affects individuals housing experiences.

Delivering housing services that are responsive to trans customers is a developing area. Compared to sexual orientation, many housing organisations are starting from a very low base line. For this reason, we have included a practice checklist to help you deliver trans inclusive services in section 7 of this **practice brief**. CIH is aware that there is a need to develop more appropriate and sensitive services to transgender customers in the housing sector. It is intended that the new CIH practice hub (www.practicehub.cih.co.uk) will provide a developing forum in which practice can be shared and developed in this area.

There are a number of reasons why a person's gender identity impacts on their housing experiences:

- some trans people will express a desire to change their name and personal details and be referred to in the gender with which they identify: this presents challenges for how housing staff hold and maintain information and how they speak with trans customers
- trans people experience a lot of social stigma and discrimination. They may be vulnerable to harassment and 'hate crime' in their communities
- 25 per cent of trans respondents surveyed in Scotland in 2007 stated that they have previously had to move out of their home due to the transphobia from families, flat-mates or neighbours. 4 per cent of the respondents were homeless at the point of survey¹³
- trans people may experience poverty due to discrimination in employment or lack of economic support from family or friends
- risk of sexual abuse and exploitation, HIV or other sexually transmitted infections from survival sex work.¹⁴

*Please refer to the trans inclusive service checklist in section 7 of this **practice brief**.*

¹³ Scottish Transgender Alliance (2008) *Transgender experiences in Scotland*, Edinburgh, Scottish Transgender Alliance

¹⁴ Mottet L and Ohle J (2003) *Transitioning our shelters: A guide to making homeless shelters safe for transgender people*, New York, National Coalition for the Homeless and the national Gay and Lesbian taskforce Policy Institute

2. The changing context for service delivery

The social housing sector is undergoing major changes including:

- legislative changes which have re-cast the landscape in which housing services are delivered
- the social and political vision of the coalition government with its emphasis on localism, mobility, empowerment, efficiency and transparency
- changes to the regulatory and inspection framework in the social housing sector
- reductions in public expenditure which will present new social and economic challenges for housing providers and their customers.

This section will provide an overview of the changing context for service delivery and how this specifically affects LGBT customers.

Human Rights

Equality and diversity sits with a wider context of individual human rights in society. The Human Rights Act 1998 extends the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the European Convention on Human Rights which relate to housing and communities, including the following:

- the right to freedom
- the right to respect for private and family life
- freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and freedom to express your beliefs
- freedom of expression
- the right not to be discriminated against in respect of these rights and freedoms
- the right to peaceful enjoyment of your property.

Legislation relating to sexual orientation and gender identity

There have been many recent changes in the legislation affecting LGBT people in the UK. This has included:

- **Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999:** was a measure to prevent discrimination against transsexual people on the grounds of sex in employment and vocational training
- **Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003:** made it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. The regulations applied to vocational training and all facets of the employment relationship
- **Civil Partnership Act 2004:** gave same-sex couples the right to register a civil partnership, which meant that the partnership was legally recognised. Civil partners were granted similar rights as a married couple in such areas as tax, inheritance and benefits
- **Gender Recognition Act 2004:** gave transsexual people the right to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate. This meant for all legal purposes, the holder was to be recognised in their acquired gender. Transsexual people were able to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate from the Gender Recognition Panel which was set up under the Gender Recognition Act 2004 to ensure that transsexual people can enjoy the rights and responsibilities appropriate to their acquired gender. The Gender Recognition Act aimed to safeguard the privacy of transsexual people by prohibiting any disclosure of

information which is obtained in respect of an application for a Gender Recognition Certificate

- **Equality Act 2006:** placed a statutory duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

Note: the Equality Act 2010 has replaced all existing equality legislation.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 received Royal Assent on 8 April 2010. Its main aim is to combine and consolidate different strands of anti-discrimination legislation that have developed over the past 40 years. The main provisions of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010 which establishes the basic framework of protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in services and public functions, premises, work, education, associations, and transport.

The 2010 Act brings together the different strands of discrimination that currently exist into protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- maternity
- race and ethnicity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation.

A note on gender reassignment in the Equality Act 2010



The Equality Act 2010 provides protection for a person who has proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex. A woman making the transition to being a man and a man making the transition to being a woman both share the characteristic of gender reassignment. This is so whether they have only just started the process of changing sex, or have completed that process. The Equality Act 2010 has changed the previous definition by no longer requiring a person to be under medical supervision in order to be protected.



Public sector duties

Additional duties will be placed on the public sector. These come into effect from April 2011. A new public sector equality duty will require organisations¹⁵ to which they apply, to give 'due regard' to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relationships.

This applies to all of the protected characteristics, with the exception of marriage and civil partnership. It will extend existing duties relating to race, gender and disability, so that public bodies, and private bodies delivering a public function, will now also have to consider, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment when designing and delivering public services. There will be a further public sector duty for some organisations to report on equality issues in the workplace.

Finding out more

The Equality and Human Rights Commission have created a series of guidance documents to help explain the Equality Act 2010 and provide practical examples on how the law has changed. They currently have guidance for employers, workers, service providers and service users.

www.equalityhumanrights.com/legislative-framework/equality-bill/equality-act-2010-guidance/

Types of discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits the following types of discriminatory behaviour:

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- harassment
- victimisation.

Definitions of these terms can be found in the glossary in section 8.

Discrimination by perception or association

The Equality Act 2010 also includes a new category of discrimination by perception or association. This means that direct discrimination can also take place because of a protected characteristic that a person does not personally have. For example, a person can be discriminated against because of their association with a person who has a protected characteristic (e.g. their sexual orientation or if they are undergoing gender reassignment), or because they are wrongly perceived to have a protected characteristic, or are treated as if they have one.

Finding out more

To find out more about discrimination by perception or association you can download the guide *Equality Act 2010: what do I need to know? Quick start guide to discrimination by association*: www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/401727_EqualityAct2010_Discrimination_acc.pdf

¹⁵ The Equality Act 2010 explains that a public function is a function of a public nature for the purposes of the Human Rights Act 1998. In the case of *Weaver v London and Quadrant Housing Trust* it was found that the management and allocation of housing stock by a housing association could be a function of "a public nature" for the purposes of the Human Rights Act 1998. It is likely that this public sector equality duty will apply to both ALMOs and housing associations in respect of decisions taken regarding the management and allocation of housing stock

Sexual orientation and gender reassignment in the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 identifies sexual orientation and gender reassignment as separate protected characteristics.

With regards to both protected characteristics, the Equality Act 2010 provides protection in the following ways:

- **employment:** the Equality Act 2010 covers discrimination against applicants for employment, employees and former employees. For example, with reference to a person undergoing gender reassignment, it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person because they have proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex in recruitment or employment. It is also unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person because of their sexual orientation
- **provision of services:** the Equality Act 2010 covers discrimination in the provision of services to members of the public. The Act applies to all provision of services regardless of whether those are free or paid for and regardless of the legal structure of the organisation. With regard to provision of services it is unlawful to discriminate against a person because of their sexual orientation or to a person undergoing gender reassignment by either not providing them with the service, the terms on which a service is provided, by terminating the provision of a service, by subjecting the person to any other detriment, by harassing the person requiring the service, or by victimising a person requiring a service or to whom they provide the service
- **premises:** a person who has the right to dispose of or manage premises must not

discriminate against, harass or victimise another person because of their sexual orientation or because they are undergoing gender reassignment. A person who has the right to dispose of or manage premises must not discriminate against, harass or victimise another person because they have proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex.



Practice checklist: The Equality Act 2010

- ✓ review and update your Equal Opportunities policy to reflect the changes introduced by the Equality Act 2010
- ✓ review and update your recruitment and promotion policy and related documents to reflect changes introduced by the Equality Act 2010
- ✓ consider whether your provision of services could discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender reassignment and update your policies accordingly
- ✓ provide your staff with training on equality and diversity, particularly where this relates to the new protected characteristics including sexual orientation and gender reassignment
- ✓ review procedures on harassment, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour to ensure they protect LGBT people (see more on this in section 6)
- ✓ consider whether you have appropriate policies in place for reporting third party harassment, especially from clients or customers and consider whether it would be appropriate to take steps to alert clients and customers that staff should not be subject to discriminatory treatment.

The changing regulatory and inspection framework for housing

In October 2010 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published its *Review of Social Housing Regulation* and announced major changes to the regulatory and inspection framework. The main findings from the review are:

- the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) will be abolished and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) will take on what remains of the TSA's regulatory powers
- an independent statutory regulation committee within HCA will be responsible for ensuring that the HCA provides effective economic regulation and 'back stop consumer regulation' of social housing
- the HCA will be reactive in its approach to consumer regulation and will only act when it becomes aware of possible serious failures. There will also be a greater emphasis on co-regulation at a local level, with a clearer role for tenants in scrutinising performance, a clearer role for local representatives in resolving problems, and the regulator's role significantly reduced in accordance with its new 'back stop' role

- greater focus on tenant scrutiny means housing organisations will need to develop their capacity in terms of understanding who their tenants are in their diversity and providing opportunities for enhanced scrutiny: this will include LGBT customers.

Finding out more



You can find out more about changes to the regulatory and inspection framework by visiting the policy pages on the CIH website www.cih.org

You can download a full copy of the DCLG Review of social housing regulation from: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/socialhousingregulation

The changing social and economic context

LGBT groups have expressed particular concerns about the potential adverse effects of public expenditure cuts on groups providing support to LGBT people and their customers:

- London based LGBT charities Galop, PACE, Stonewall Housing, LGBT Consortium, Albert Kennedy Trust, London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard, Broken Rainbow and Kairos in Soho obtain funding from London councils, the umbrella organisation of local authorities who all pay in to a central £25.4 million pot to help fund capital-wide services
- Stonewall Housing has identified that over 50 per cent of their clients identify their housing need in direct relation to their sexual orientation or gender identity. In addition,



Stonewall Housing has expressed concern that the proposed changes to housing benefit would increase the insecurity of accommodation for LGBT people in housing need. Proposed changes could deter some LGBT people from fleeing domestic abuse or harassment or they may accept less affordable, more crowded and more insecure accommodation as an alternative

- the UK Health Protection Agency estimates revealed nearly 40 per cent of new HIV cases

were in gay men.¹⁶ There is a clear relationship between poverty and HIV. A new report on rising poverty and HIV by the National AIDS Trust (NAT) and the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) has shown that at least one in six people diagnosed with HIV in the UK experienced severe poverty between 2006 and 2009.¹⁷ In tougher economic times, poverty is a real risk indicator for tenants failing to sustain their tenancies.



Practice checklist: The changing social and economic context

- ✓ build trust among your LGBT service users (see more on this in section 4)
- ✓ develop links with LGBT groups locally so they can help you build trust with your LGBT service users
- ✓ use tenancy audits to build up a clearer picture of your tenants and identify if LGBT tenants are at particular risk. Offer proactive support if this is required
- ✓ LGBT people often form households in different ways. For example, they may not necessarily choose to form a civil partnership or have relationships with just one other person. If your customers live in households with other adults, how many will have non-dependent deductions from their benefit?
- ✓ identify the potential level and likelihood of increased arrears and analyse this according to different diversity strands including LGBT
- ✓ plan to ensure your procedures and resources for rent collection are able to cope with more people with small shortfalls on their rent
- ✓ review your transfer procedure and choice based lettings system give sufficient priority to households wanting to downsize
- ✓ explain changes to housing benefit and welfare benefits to your tenants using appropriate communication methods. Develop and extend support and advice services to help people get back to work and make links to specialist debt advice as well as to credit unions and community banking.

¹⁶ To download the Health Protection Agency *HIV in the United Kingdom: 2009 Report* visit: www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1259151891866

¹⁷ NAT and THT (2010) *Poverty and HIV 2006-2009*, London, NAT and THT

3. Developing an inclusive organisational culture

The starting point for a housing service that is genuinely inclusive of LGBT customers is the creation of an organisational culture that is open to the needs of LGBT staff, customers and communities.

This means developing an organisation that:

- is representative of LGBT people in terms of its staff profile (internal customers)
- is open about addressing LGBT issues
- is visible to staff and customers as an LGBT champion
- provides opportunities for engagement with LGBT tenants, residents and service users (external customers)
- meets the needs of LGBT customers in service design and delivery.

In this section, we will look at:

- **getting your organisational culture right:** developing an LGBT inclusive culture and making sure your staff and board members (internal customers) are positive about delivering LGBT inclusive services
- **meeting the needs of LGBT customers in the communities where you work:** creating a welcoming environment for LGBT customers, sending out the right messages to current and future customers, and delivering the services LGBT customers want.

Do internal and external LGBT customers trust your organisation?

Consider these questions about your organisation. If you can reply 'yes' to most of them, that should be a good indication that LGBT staff and customers can trust your organisation.

- **does your organisation provide a high quality service generally?** If your organisation provides good quality and consistently reliable services in general, it is more likely to be trusted by all customers including LGBT customers
- **does your organisation employ LGBT employees at all levels?** If so, LGBT customers and prospective employees will feel more welcome and confident working with you
- **does your organisation appoint LGBT board members?** If so, LGBT customers and prospective employees will have greater confidence in engaging with you
- **does your organisation involve the LGBT communities in its work?** LGBT people are likely to feel they already have a relationship with your organisation, know key staff, and feel confident about contacting you
- **does your organisation have a track record of meeting diverse needs?**
- **does your organisation publically demonstrate its commitment to LGBT equality?** It is important to be seen to have a public commitment to LGBT equality. For example the Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT) provides housing-specific training in the form of the Quality Mark which helps providers achieve consistent practice in their work with LGBT customers
- **does your organisation train and support staff to implement procedures for LGBT equality?**
- **does your organisation have a clear and public zero tolerance policy towards homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and hate incidents?**¹⁸

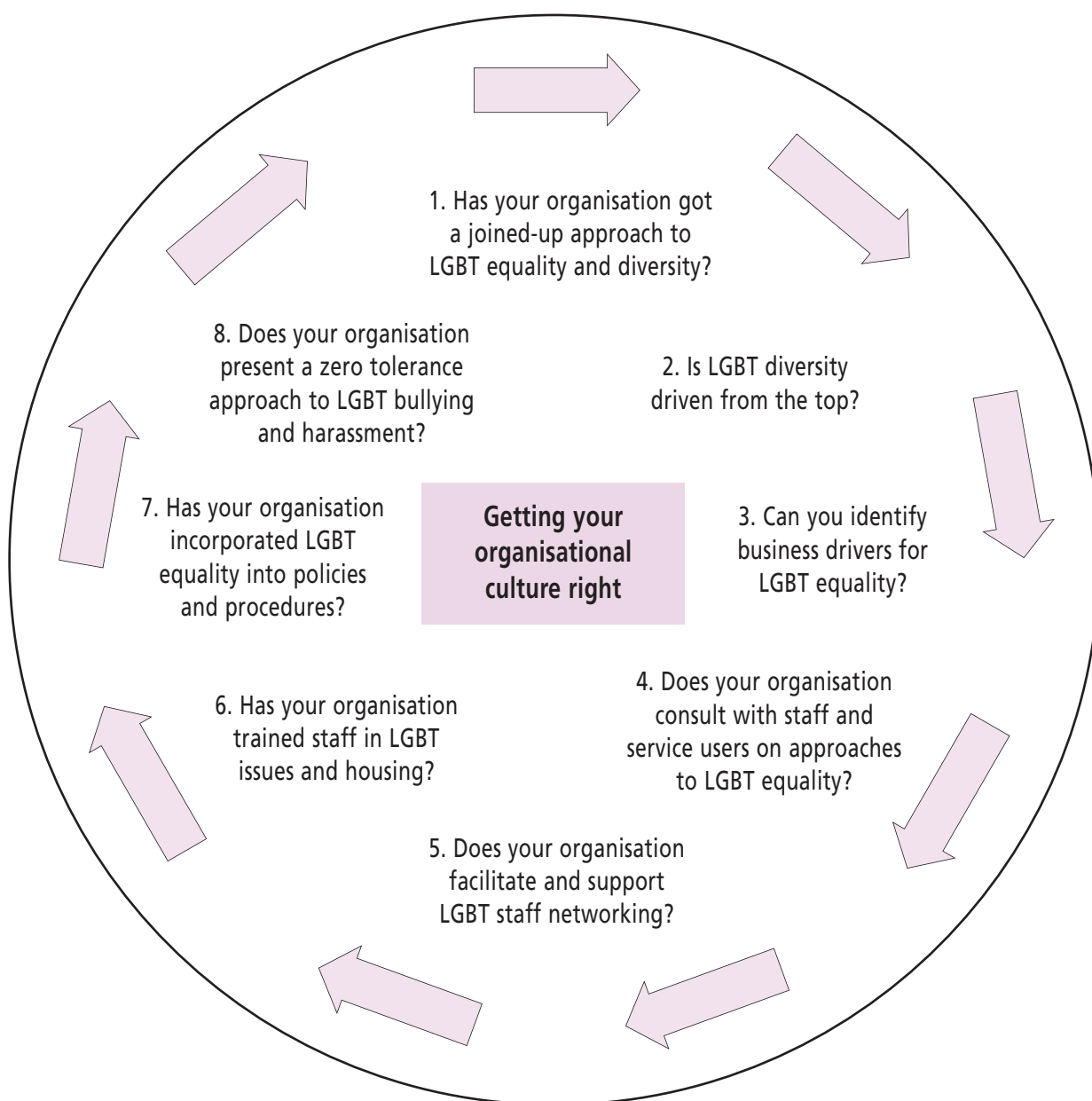
¹⁸ Adapted from: Welsh Social Landlords ASB Forum (2009) *Tackling Hate Incidents: a toolkit for social landlords in Wales*

Developing an organisational culture which is positive about LGBT equality and diversity requires a number of elements:

Taking a joined-up approach

Creating an organisation that is positive about LGBT equality and diversity should not be a

random process. It requires action at a number of different stages and buy-in from the top of the organisation to the bottom. The following diagram shows the different steps a housing organisation can take to develop an organisational culture that is positive about LGBT equality and diversity.





Finding out more

There are a number of free guides available to help you develop your organisational culture:

EHRC: An employer's guide to creating an inclusive workplace:

www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/publications/an_employer_s_guide_to_creating_an_inclusive_workplace.pdf

Stonewall Employment guides:

- Stonewall (2006) *Monitoring: how to monitor sexual orientation in the workplace*, London, Stonewall
- Stonewall (2007) *Bullying: preventing the bullying and harassment of gay employees*, London, Stonewall
- Stonewall (2005) *Network groups: setting up networks for lesbian, gay and bisexual employees*, London, Stonewall
- Stonewall (2009) *Religion and sexual orientation: how to manage relations in the workplace*, London, Stonewall
- Stonewall (2009) *Gay people, your business: what small employers need to know*, London, Stonewall
- Stonewall (2010) *Marketing: how to market to gay consumers*, London, Stonewall

www.stonewall.org.uk/what_we_do/2583.asp

There are a number of important components in developing an LGBT friendly organisational culture which are worth highlighting:

Getting buy in from the top

Leadership is very important in terms of sending out the message to staff, customers and the community that your housing organisation is positive about LGBT diversity. The following practice examples illustrate this.



Practice example

Nacro gets senior management buy-in for monitoring

Nacro is a third sector organisation providing

services across England and Wales including offender resettlement, youth projects, education and employment. Nacro's Head of Equality Strategy obtained support from senior management for sexual orientation monitoring by presenting the business case to the board. She explained why sexual orientation mattered at work and why it was important to understand the needs of different groups of staff members to ensure representation and to act on key concerns. She described how in the long term sexual orientation monitoring would lead to better employee relations and improved service provision.

Contact: Anis Ghanti Head of Equality and Inclusion anis.ghanti@nacro.org.uk



Practice example

Metropolitan Housing Partnership moves into top 30 of UK's most gay-friendly employers

Metropolitan Housing Partnership (MHP) has been ranked 21st in Stonewall's 2011 Workplace Equality Index of the UK's most gay-friendly employers. Stonewall's assessors were impressed by MHP's high-profile stance in promoting understanding of the issues faced by LGBT people accessing affordable housing, and the experiences of LGBT asylum seekers in the UK. The WEI assessment examines employers' policies and procedures, leadership on diversity issues, support for lesbian, gay, and bisexual staff, and support for the wider gay community. Bill Payne, MHP's Chief Executive has taken a leading and public role in championing LGBT equality within the organisation and in the wider housing sector.

Contact: Mark Harrison: Diversity Strategy Manager mark.harrison@mht.co.uk

Making the business case for LGBT equality

One of the reasons why organisations are often reluctant to be more pro-active in terms of LGBT equality is because they are unable to articulate clear business reasons why this is important. Service providers often assume that there are no LGBT people using their services or the number is so statistically small that it doesn't matter; or that the needs of LGBT people are no different to the needs of heterosexual people.

It is very important that housing organisations can explain clear business drivers for LGBT equality, both for board members, for staff and for customers. This will help to get buy-in across the organisation.

Business arguments for greater LGBT equality

The following points can assist a housing organisation make the case for greater LGBT equality:

- there are 3.6 million LGB consumers spending an estimated £70 billion in the UK economy, and there is additional spending from the trans community
- research for Stonewall shows that 74 per cent of LGB consumers and 42 per cent of straight consumers are less likely to buy products from companies that hold negative views of LGB people¹⁹
- research for RainbowReferrals.com in the US has shown that more than 90 per cent of LGB would be inclined to make use of a product advertised in the lesbian and gay media, especially if the brand was associated with an organisation actively promoting equality²⁰
- it is the law: the Equality Act 2010 provides protection for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and heterosexuals and people undergoing gender reassignment in respect of employment, the provision of services and the management and disposal of premises.

¹⁹ Fray L (ed) (2006) *Monitoring: how to monitor sexual orientation in the workplace*, London, Stonewall

²⁰ Stonewall (undated) *Sexual orientation employer handbook* (Third edition), London, Stonewall

Providing opportunities for LGBT staff to network

Supporting the development of a LGBT staff network is a way in which organisations can demonstrate both internally and to suppliers and customers, their commitment to LGBT equality. Staff networks provide opportunities to:

- raise awareness of LGBT issues and thereby promoting equality and diversity
- represent the views of LGBT staff
- provide a gateway of support and assistance to LGBT staff in the workplace
- act as a sounding board for the development of more equal working practices and services.

If your organisation is too small to sustain an LGBT staff network, think about establishing an equality and diversity network which looks at a range of different diversity issues including LGBT; or join up with a neighbouring organisation's staff network.



Practice example

Setting up a staff network group at Gentoo

Staff Network Groups enable Gentoo to connect directly with staff who have a personal interest in, or experience of, disability, faith or sexual orientation. They help Gentoo recognise the effect of its policies and practices on different sections of the community, and identify the changes it needs to make to improve staff and customer experiences. The groups can each determine their own terms of reference, so activities differ. The LGB group is the most active. The group helps ensure Gentoo's policies and initiatives are fully inclusive of the LGB community. Examples of its activities include:

- providing independent guidance or support to any member of staff in relation to any LGB related topic, including the range of options available for addressing any specific issue of concern
- influencing the development and content of relevant corporate policies, strategies etc
- expanding the information available on the company intranet in relation to LGB issues
- supporting appropriate local and/or regional structures and events which promote a more visible and cohesive lesbian, gay and bisexual community
- participating in formal equality and diversity meeting structures within Gentoo, and contributing to internal newsletters and magazines to increase awareness and understanding
- arranging social activities for members.

Contact: Pam Walton
Pam.walton@gentoogroup.com

LGBT training and awareness raising opportunities

Training and awareness raising opportunities are important for developing understanding about LGBT issues in the workplace. Training and awareness raising activities should seek to be:

- **inclusive and comprehensive:** all staff should be included across all levels of the organisation to stress how important your organisation treats LGBT equality
- **person centred and sensitive:** while it is important for staff to understand the law in relation to LGBT equality, a more positive approach places individual human stories and experiences at the heart of training and awareness raising activities.



Practice example

Gentoo holds an equality and diversity month

Gentoo held an equality and diversity month in which it launched its new equality and diversity strategy, and new supplementary guidance for managers and staff about LGB bullying and harassment. During the month Gentoo's series of 'Diversity Matters' staff handbooks covering different equality areas were promoted. The handbooks made topics like sexual orientation and gender identity much easier to discuss and understand, and created opportunity for people to ask questions. Different awareness raising events took place, including an equality quiz, the answers for which could be found on

the staff intranet or in the handbooks. The month long exhibition also included a timeline of LGB history, and staff also took part in a competition to create a new 'diversity matters' logo for Gentoo, with the winning logo now used in corporate documents. Staff created a snakes and ladders equality board game which was used to deliver some innovative equality and diversity training to 600 staff during the month. Played either as a giant floor sized version, or projected onto a screen and played in teams with a giant dice, the game was a fun and different way of increasing awareness of some key equality and diversity messages and achieved greater staff engagement. In addition, in talking with staff and service users about sexual orientation, Gentoo have tried to promote the personal angle. Rather than only ever talking about legislation or discrimination, Gentoo have done a Q&A interview style article in their staff magazine with LGB members of staff talking about their personal experiences.

Contact: Pam Walton

Pam.walton@gentoogroup.com





Practice checklist: Getting your organisational culture right

- ✓ be clear about your business reasons for working towards LGBT equality and communicate why this is important at a board, management, staff and tenant level
- ✓ get high profile buy-in from the top of your organisation for LGBT equality
- ✓ incorporate LGBT equality into your policies and procedures
- ✓ provide training and information for staff and tenants about LGBT equality: challenge myths and stereotypes and make clear the legal, business, and organisational drivers for LGBT equality
- ✓ consider establishing a staff networking group to support LGBT employees in the workplace
- ✓ consider joining the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme to develop and share practice
- ✓ consider commissioning Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT) Quality Mark training, specifically designed to help housing providers understand and meet LGBT housing need
- ✓ make a clear organisational commitment to staff, customers and suppliers that your organisation has zero tolerance for homophobia, biphobia and transphobia
- ✓ consider introducing a supplier or procurement policy so suppliers and partner organisations fully comply with your policies and practices on LGBT equality.

4. Meeting the needs of LGBT customers

Once a housing organisation has made progress in terms of developing an organisation culture which is positive about LGBT equality, it will be in a much more competent and credible position to deliver sensitive, appropriate and responsive services to LGBT customers externally.

There are a number of parts to this:

- find out who your LGBT customers are through customer insight, monitoring and profiling
- strictly maintain confidentiality with information about LGBT customers
- create a visible and welcoming environment
- engage with LGBT individuals and groups in designing and delivering services and where there is an identifiable business need, positively market products and services to LGBT customers
- evaluate the LGBT equality impacts of service delivery.

Finding out who your LGBT customers are through customer insight, monitoring and profiling

A starting point for delivering better services to LGBT customers is to gain a better understanding of who your customers are and how they articulate their needs. For example, research undertaken by CIH for the Customer Insight Toolkit showed that only 14 per cent of registered providers knew the sexual orientation of more than 75 per cent of their tenants.

Some organisations have become focused on collecting equality and diversity and vulnerability data because they think they have to rather than because they can use it. In this section we will explore how LGBT data can be sensitively collected and how it can be positively used to improve services.

Asking monitoring questions about sexual orientation and gender identity

Great care should be taken when monitoring for sexual orientation and gender identity. Monitoring will help housing organisations to understand the needs of their LGBT service users but this will involve building up trust and confidence with your LGBT staff and service users.

Monitoring for sexual orientation and gender identity involves the collection of information about tenants which may be viewed as very personal. Questions relating to sexual orientation or transgender can make some tenants, and staff feel uncomfortable, or fail to see the relevance in questions which seem so personal.

To manage this process effectively the following steps should be taken:

- 1. be clear about your aims:** why do you want to know information about your LGBT customers? What are your service improvement objectives? While the eradication of discrimination against LGBT people and community safety should be key objectives for housing organisations; it is important to focus on achieving positive outcomes for LGBT customers too
- 2. prepare the ground work:** do staff and tenants understand why you are collecting information about sexual orientation and gender identity? Preparatory information and or training should be given to explain why this information is important for LGBT service users and for delivering better services. You may need assistance from community advocates to help you build trust with LGBT customers

3. ask the right questions: questions you ask about sexual orientation and gender identity should be proportionate, relevant, and phrased in a sensitive way. Asking questions which customers perceive to be personal or intrusive with little clear rationale can seriously damage response rates. You may need assistance from community advocates to help you phrase the right questions and to build trust in LGBT communities. The following key messages should be emphasised:

- *be transparent:* customers and staff need to fully understand how the information you ask from them will be used and how this information has been used to improve services
- *obtain consent:* customers must consent for the data to be used for the purposes for which it is collected

4. profile LGBT customers: once you know who and where your LGBT customers are, you will be able to monitor their experience of service delivery. This could include key aspects of service delivery such as lettings, repairs and customer care, etc

5. monitor and review: monitoring is an ongoing process and must be reviewed to ensure actions are current and responsive.



Practice example

South Gloucestershire Council: phrases used to ask for sensitive information

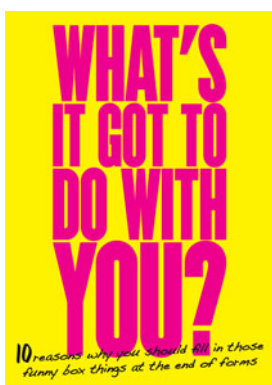
- by answering the following questions you will help us ensure we give a good and fair service to everyone. Your answers will be treated as confidential
- we will use your comments to help improve our understanding of needs, improve our services and raise our standards. All your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used to monitor and help improve services
- data will be used for statistical purposes and may be shared with departments across the council to help improve our services
- no third party will use your details for any other market research purpose such as direct mailings
- monitoring data enables us to identify how we could potentially improve our services to you in the future
- I would like to ask you some further questions to help us to monitor and improve our services, however you do not need to answer them if you prefer not to
- the council believes it is important to understand the different types of communities who use our services and it is only by asking you these questions that we can be confident we are meeting your needs.

Source: South Gloucestershire Council (2009)





Practice example



Preparing staff and customers for monitoring

Stonewall have produced a plain language guide to collecting sensitive information called *What's it got to do with you?*

The guide explains why a range of data such as age, gender, sexual orientation and belief may now be requested by employers and service providers, and what the benefit is. This guide makes the case for monitoring across all equality strands.

www.stonewall.org.uk



Practice example

Knowsley Housing Trust (KHT) training staff to ask about sexual orientation

KHT is a not for profit, independent housing association, based in Knowsley managing over 13,000 high quality homes at affordable rents. At KHT all staff have been trained around customer profiling with an extended section on asking people about their sexual orientation and why it's important for housing.

Training for staff: Sexual Orientation – asking the question

- the best way to ask a customer their sexuality is to bring it up as part of a list of equal opportunities monitoring questions, so that the customer knows they have not been singled out

- staff should give a brief explanation of the reasons for asking the question and make it clear that all customers are asked the same question
- the organisation uses the information to make sure that it behaves in a fair way to all clients
- if patterns appear, the organisation will use the information to plan its services
- the information will be completely confidential
- staff should ask the question in a direct and jargon-free manner, for example: *'How would you define your sexuality? Lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, or unsure?'*
- staff should appear comfortable and confident about asking the question. If the staff member is uncomfortable, this will discourage disclosure
- staff should not make a joke of asking about sexual orientation.

Contact: Helen Lacey

Helen.Lacey@k-h-t.org

Trans equality monitoring

Like sexual orientation, trans equality monitoring must also be undertaken sensitively. There are differing views among trans individuals and in trans communities about gender identity monitoring. Also, because trans numbers are small and because capacity in the housing sector regarding trans engagement is comparatively low; housing organisations should exercise great caution regarding trans monitoring. It is best to seek advice from trans groups or advocates before proceeding. Questions on gender identity must always be optional and use language that trans people find acceptable. The trans organisation *Press for Change* recommends the following approach when issuing questionnaires which seek to determine the gender identity of customers:

Do not treat trans as a third sex: for example, do not ask a person if they are male, female or transgender.

Do not treat trans as a sexual orientation: gender identity is not the same as sexual orientation. So, for example, do not ask a person if they are gay, straight, bisexual or transgender.

Treat trans as trans: Questions on gender identity should always be in their own section. Press for Change recommends the use of descriptive questions that do not rely on a particular terminological adherence:

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you live and work full time in the gender role opposite to that assigned at birth?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Reference: www.pfc.org.uk/node/140

Confidentiality

LGBT people are often worried about disclosing information about their sexual orientation or gender identity in case this information is misused to discriminate against them or to identify them in the community, thus putting their safety at risk. Housing organisations should ensure that all data on LGBT customers is treated in the strictest confidence, is used appropriately and for the purposes for which it was collected.

Data Protection



The **Data Protection Act 1998** is the principal legislation governing this area and applies to all personal data held by housing providers which relates to information that can be retrieved about a living individual. There are eight data protection principles underpinning the Data Protection Act which state that personal data must be:

- processed fairly and lawfully
- obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes and used only for that purpose
- adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose(s) it is being processed for
- accurate and, where necessary, kept up-to-date
- kept for no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the Act
- guarded against unauthorised or unlawful processing as well as accidental loss, destruction or damage
- not transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data
- in general, information supplied by an individual should only be used for the purpose for which it was given.

Engagement

Engaging existing and future LGBT customers in service design and delivery is key to ensuring customer satisfaction and the appropriate use of resources. The following examples show how housing organisations have attempted to achieve this.



Practice example

Engaging LGBT people in service design and delivery

Brighton and Hove Council provide an example of achieving a cross-city, cross-directorate, cross-sector, and service-user inclusive approach to delivering LGBT equality. Brighton and Hove developed their strategy in response to the *Count Me In* survey which was conducted in 2000 and aimed to comprehensively identify the personal, social and community needs of LGBT people in Brighton and Hove as articulated by them.

This was followed by *Count Me In Too* where LGBT people shared their views and experiences, and worked with service providers and others to gather and present evidence that would promote positive changes for LGBT people living in the local authority area.

Engagement activities included:

- 819 questionnaires completed by respondents
- testimonies from 69 people who took part in focus groups
- a Speakers' Corner event where LGBT people shared their stories
- a project exhibition which showed the role that Brighton and Hove's LGBT community played in its development
- a series of Community Summary sheets which outlined key findings and issues identified
- feedback on the project and ideas for future activities.

You can find out more about *Count Me In* and *Count Me In Too* by visiting:
www.countmeintoo.co.uk





Practice example

Guinness South engages with LGBT tenants and residents

In the spring of 2009 Guinness Trust (now known as Guinness South) sponsored LGBT History Month in the boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets. This brought together a variety of groups within the two boroughs, including the LGBT housing provider Stonewall Housing, the Metropolitan Police, the Primary Care Trust, and other lesbian and gay organisations.

In 2009, Guinness South commissioned Stonewall Housing to design and deliver awareness training to staff on the housing needs of LGBT people, and to carry out a wider programme of work to assess Guinness South's approach to LGBT equality and inclusion. The training was built around LGBT staff and tenant focus groups which were facilitated independently by Stonewall Housing. Stonewall Housing was then also able to assist with Equality Impact Assessments of key policies and strategies. The awareness programme identified Guinness South's good practice and highlighted how it could continue to strive to be an inclusive and welcoming organisation for everyone whatever their identity.

Contact: Steve Mullings: Learning and Development Manager, Tel 014940607268
steve.mullings@guinness.org.uk

Creating a welcoming organisation for LGBT customers

How a housing organisation presents itself to LGBT customers is extremely important. This includes not just public spaces such as housing and neighbourhood offices or community facilities, but also the type of information provided to customers (e.g. brochures and information leaflets) and how it is provided (e.g. the website). The key elements housing providers need to consider are:

- make use of LGBT inclusive language in information, policies, procedures and advertising
- having clear policies which communicate a zero-tolerance approach to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia
- making sure staff and tenants and residents are trained and informed to be sensitive to the needs of LGBT people and inclusive in their approach
- involve LGBT service users and the wider community in service design and delivery
- be visible as an LGBT inclusive organisation to staff, the community and to LGBT individuals and groups.



Practice example

Bradford Equality Partnership: 25 ways to be an LGB friendly organisation²¹

Language

1. avoid making assumptions about a person's sexual orientation: use gender-neutral language such as partner(s)
2. listen to how people describe their own identity, partners and relationships and reflect their choice of language
3. some LGB people may have reclaimed derogatory used words such as 'dyke'; 'fag'; or 'queer' to describe themselves but it isn't appropriate for your organisation to use these words to describe LGB people. As a general rule people should avoid using the label 'homosexual' since it is still viewed negatively. Most people are happy with lesbian, gay or bisexual, but if in doubt – ask!

Policies

4. display a visible non-discrimination statement, for example: 'our organisation provides equality of services and care to everyone, regardless of people's sexual orientation, gender identity, race, age or disability'
5. make sure that your organisation's equality and diversity policy and statement are on display and publicised
6. ensure confidentiality to all staff and service users, unless they personally choose to be 'out' themselves
7. monitor the sexuality of all staff and service users, in line with confidentiality, in order to

identify gaps in service provision and staffing balance. Any form used needs to state clearly what the information will be used for. Without this monitoring LGB people's exclusion will continue to be ignored

8. explore ways of creatively integrating LGB issues into your work rather than separating them out or having them as an add on
9. good access principles still apply – ensure that you provide appropriate access in terms of all equality issues such as interpreters etc

Staff

10. provide training for all staff – paid and unpaid – in LGB equality issues. This will highlight any long-standing prejudices because of ignorance or lack of familiarity with LGB issues, and also help to provide skills and information to enable them to challenge discrimination against LGB people. It also provides a clear message that discrimination against LGB people is not acceptable
11. encourage your staff and volunteers to address negative comments and 'jokes' about LGB people and/or LGB issues, and ensure people know this is their responsibility. This applies particularly to managers who have responsibilities for ensuring equality in the workplace and for services provided under statutory employment regulations

²¹ Bradford Equity Partnership (2007) *25 ways to be LGB friendly*, Bradford, Bradford Equity Partnership

12. provide role models: for example LGB staff who are 'out'. Staff should be encouraged to attend staff support groups/networks in paid time. If there are no 'out' staff use posters depicting historical or contemporary well known LGB people
13. if your organisation has front line staff it's important that as the first point of contact they are 'gay friendly'
14. many organisations require people to sign in on arrival for health and safety reasons. If by signing the check in/register there will be an open record that people have attended an LGB event please ensure it is possible to use a first name only if preferred
15. advertise your vacancies and services in the LGB press, through the Equity Partnership and through local LGB groups
16. keep information about local LGB groups and organisations and other relevant resources. This will assist your staff with awareness, referrals and networking
20. arrange meetings out of working hours if you want to include more LGB people. Most LGB groups and organisations do not have paid staff to come to meetings, and many LGB people cannot miss work to attend events
21. when working with LGB people it is important to remember that they are least likely to be 'out' in the place they live because of the possibility of harassment and compromising personal safety. This may particularly be an issue in neighbourhood work
22. if you are planning to work with LGB people remember that much of LGB life is organised through separate women's and men's events and many LGB groups are gender specific

Involvement

17. remember that not all LGB people are 'out' and that LGB people have to decide whether to be 'out' each time they are in a heterosexual environment – this could be several times a day
18. if you are using community groups to assist you in consultation or involvement work, support them by either providing administrative support or paying for their work
19. use a city centre venue for meetings involving LGB people to reduce personal safety risks

Information and visibility

23. having LGB information on display creates a welcoming atmosphere. This could include LGB posters showing racially and ethnically diverse, disabled and parent same sex couples
24. if using posters etc make sure that any contact information can be read from a distance so that LGB people can read them and take details down without obviously doing so
25. support LGB communities by advertising your organisation in LGB publications, sponsoring LGB events or working in partnership with LGB organisations



Practice example

Liverpool social landlords take part in Liverpool Pride 2010



Knowsley Housing Trust (KHT), Liverpool Mutual Housing, South Liverpool Housing Group and Riverside worked together to prepare a float for Liverpool Pride in 2010. Helen Lacey, KHT's Equality and Diversity Officer, said: *'We are very proud to have had a place in the first Liverpool Pride. It was a fantastic event that brought people from all walks of life together to celebrate their differences and similarities. We strongly believe in equality and diversity and this was a great way of getting across that message.'*

Contact: Helen Lacey
Helen.Lacey@k-h-t.org



Practice example

Metropolitan Housing Partnership engaging with the LGB community

Metropolitan Housing Partnership (MHP) has supported the LGB community for many years, as part of a wider organisational commitment to reach the diverse audiences in the areas where MHP works. Metropolitan Home Ownership (MHO) has long advertised its affordable home-ownership through the pink media, and in 2008, began looking at how it could engage with LGB customers through more targeted marketing.



MHO has set up an LGB customer focus group to review all advertising campaigns, both in the mainstream and gay press. Feedback from the focus group

identified that informative adverts work but needed to be targeted at LGB customers. Here is an example of publicity aimed at LGB customers which MHP has placed in the gay and mainstream press.

Contact: Jim Munson, Head of Marketing, MHO
jim.munson@mht.co.uk



Practice example

Stonewall Housing working with the LGBT community and social landlords

Stonewall Housing provides housing support, advice and advocacy to over 1000 LGBT people each year and supported accommodation for LGBT people aged between 16 and 25. The volume of calls and the life experiences that they have gathered since 1983 from communities, often ignored by other housing providers, have been incorporated into major pieces of research on youth homelessness and LGBT housing needs. Their advice service statistics have been used in major research projects including:

- The National Aids Trust report called *Housing and HIV* which highlighted that people with HIV face discrimination and harassment in housing. They have also produced a companion advice guide for housing workers
- Galop report called *Filling in the Blanks* which highlighted that many LGBT people would rather report hate crime to LGBT organisations rather than to the police and that the majority of hate crime incidents occur in and around the home
- Metropolitan Support Trust report called *Over not Out* which highlighted the lack of housing options and harassment faced by LGBT asylum seekers
- Stonewall Housing has also assisted the International Longevity Centre UK with their policy guides on older LGBT people (which include housing, care and support).

The information and experiences gathered also frame the opinions they voice on the equality board of the Homes and Communities Agency and the Office for the Mayor of London. Stonewall Housing provides training, consultancy and advice to other housing providers around LGBT housing issues.

Stonewall Housing is also involved in the following major projects:

- **LGBT Domestic Abuse:** 5 LGBT charities, including Stonewall Housing, have developed an LGBT Domestic Abuse Partnership that aims to provide LGBT people who experience domestic abuse a single access point to a number of agencies to support them to access housing advice, support groups and assistance in dealing with the criminal justice system. Stonewall Housing has also received funding from the Trust for London to develop the network of individuals and organisations which are aiming to improve services for LGBT people experiencing domestic abuse
- **Jigsaw Project:** working in partnership with the Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT), Galop, and PACE, Stonewall Housing have developed a portal to join up the different services young LGBT customers need when starting out living independently. A young LGBT person is put in contact with a link worker who helps them to access what can be a confusing range of services
- **National LGBT Partnership:** Stonewall Housing and 11 other LGBT charities have formed a national partnership with funding from the Department of Health to reduce the health inequalities experienced by LGBT people and improve engagement with LGBT communities
- **Older LGBT Housing Group:** Stonewall Housing chairs a group of individuals and organisations who meet regularly with the aim to improve current services and advise on the design of new services for older LGBT people.

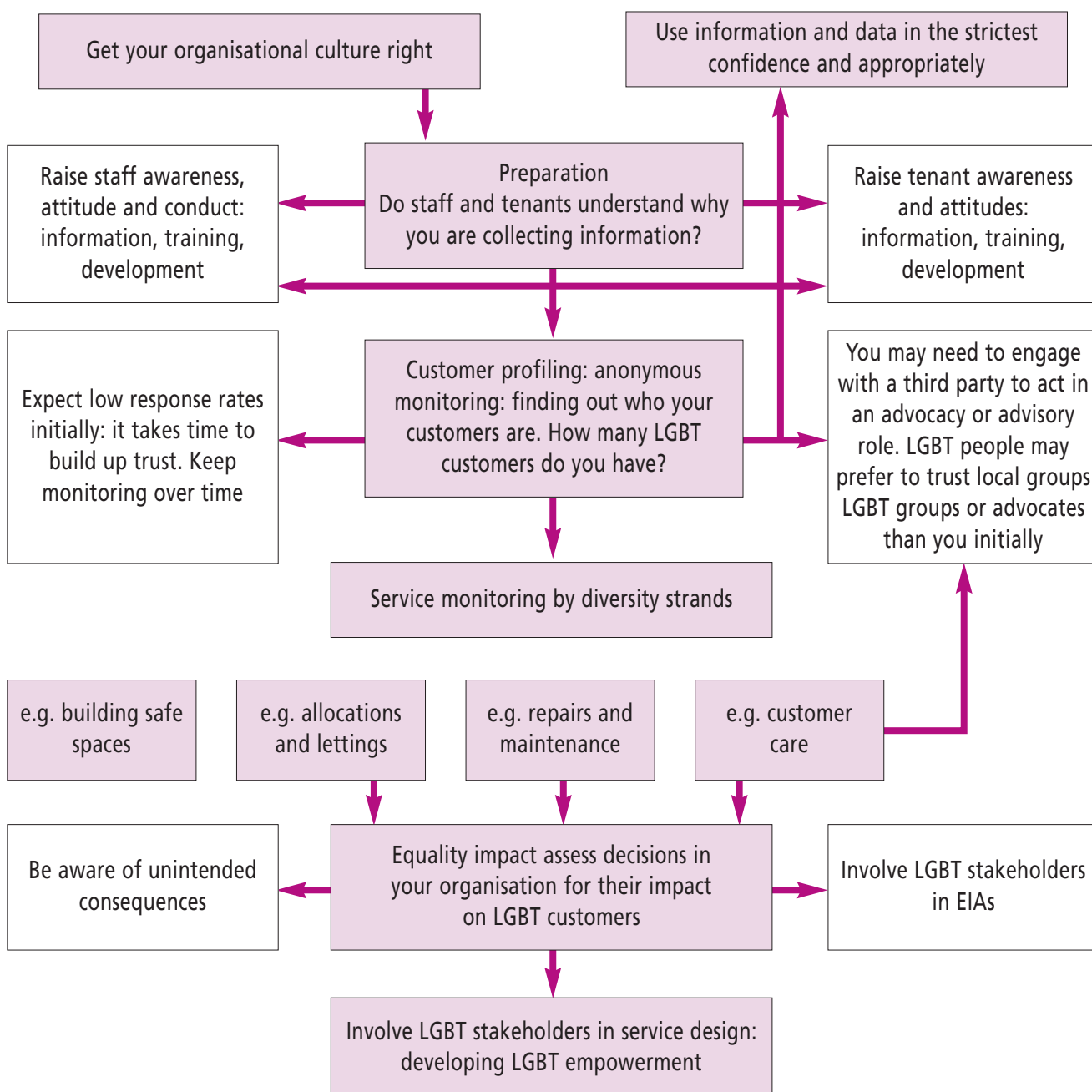
For more information about Stonewall Housing call 020 7359 6242

Measuring equality impacts in service delivery

Decision making and activities in a housing organisation will affect different groups of people in different ways. Sometimes this might lead to unintended consequences for specific

groups, for example LGBT people. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool which organisations use to think about their decision making and action planning processes in a more structured way.

Practice route-map: designing and delivering LGBT inclusive services





Practice checklist:

Meeting the needs of LGBT customers in the communities in which you work

- ✓ make sure your organisation presents itself to LGBT customers as welcoming: ensure all language and images used by your organisation for information, publicity, policy and procedures; and on-line are LGBT inclusive
- ✓ engage with the LGBT community: make use of the LGBT media for advertising and recruitment and ensure a presence at LGBT community events such as 'Pride'
- ✓ communicate a clear and visible zero-tolerance approach to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia to staff, suppliers, partners and tenants and residents
- ✓ build links with local LGBT community groups and advocates to develop your capacity and build confidence among LGBT service users
- ✓ ensure your organisation has strict data use and sharing procedures and that access to information about sexual orientation and gender identity is treated with particular sensitivity and only for the purposes for which it is collected
- ✓ undertake equality impact assessments to make sure decision making and actions undertaken in your organisation do not adversely affect LGBT customers.



5. Working with different types of diversity

This **practice brief** has emphasised the need to be mindful that individuals are diverse in different ways. For example, individuals can be both gay and a member of a minority ethnic community, bisexual, female and over 55; or transgender and hold religious or other beliefs. Some LGBT people also have children and caring responsibilities. A recent report for the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) found:

*'Britain is not only more diverse than ever before, but that diversity itself is growing more diverse. Today, inequalities are more complex and fluid than they used to be, reflecting shifting interests and allegiances. For those of us interested in equality, this new situation presents some difficult challenges...The tick box approach to identity seems to be missing out on growing numbers of people who fall outside or across standard classifications.'*²²

In this section we highlight some examples of how housing organisations have responded to different types of diversity. It is not possible to provide a comprehensive presentation of the range of different issues relating to multiple identities and housing in this short publication, but the following examples should provide some guidelines for housing organisations to consider.

Working with older LGBT customers

As with other developed countries, in the UK people are living longer. The number of households being formed is also growing and

the way in which these households are formed is changing too.

Why are LGBT issues important for older people?

There are a number of reasons why sexual orientation and gender identity presents particular challenges for people as they grow older:

- the number of LGBT older people is growing
- with reference to sexual orientation, 36 per cent of LGB people (aged 60-91) had been subjected to verbal abuse²³
- some older LGBT people may have reservations about being open about their sexual orientation and gender identities
- some older people may have been happy about being 'out' about being LGBT while they lived independently or with supportive peers, but may fear being 'out' in sheltered or supported accommodation or in situations where they receive care and support from other adults. This has led many older LGBT people to 'go back into the closet' in later life
- the 2008 DCLG report Lifetime Homes stated that specialised housing is not always sensitive to the needs of LGBT people
- the 2006 Commission for Social Care Inspection report found that only 9 per cent of social care providers in their sample had carried out specific work to promote equality to LGB people and only 2 per cent for trans people.

²² Fanshawe S and Sriskandarajah S (2010) *You can't put me in a box: super-diversity and the end of identity politics in Britain*, London, IPPR

²³ Klocker, S (2006) *The Whole of Me: Meeting the needs of older lesbians, gay men and bisexuals living in care homes and extra care housing*, Age Concern, London

In addition, older LGBT people may have a greater need for health and social care services because, compared with their heterosexual contemporaries, they are:

- two-and-a-half times as likely to live alone
- twice as likely to be single
- four-and-a-half times as likely to have no children to call upon in times of need ²⁴
- a recent study found that similar to heterosexual older people, older LGBT people expressed the desire to live in their own homes for as long as possible.²⁵



Practice example

Anchor: LGBT older LGBT tenant group

Anchor is the largest not-for-profit provider of housing, support and care in England. They specialise in providing a range of services valued by older people, including residential and nursing care. An older lesbian resident explained to a tenant's forum her anxieties about coming out to her neighbours in her scheme. Working with the tenant, Anchor's Tenant Participation Manager placed adverts in the tenants' newsletter inviting gay and lesbian residents to get in touch to identify ways in which Anchor could help out. Initially not many LGBT tenants came forward, but with some persistence an LGBT tenant group was established in October 2007. The group is open to both LGBT tenants and staff. The group meets quarterly and meetings are held in different parts of the country where Anchor has different schemes.

Achievements

- the group worked with Anchor, AgeUK and others, including Help the Aged to organise a conference in March 2009 to look at the needs of the older lesbian, gay and bisexual communities
- the group has been consulted on how Anchor should meet the needs of the LGBT people moving into care homes and also how their needs in sheltered housing should be addressed
- the group were instrumental in the development of diversity training called *Celebrating Difference* which was written and delivered to all 120 tenant members of the national tenant forums. Feedback from this is helping shape staff training.

Contact: Brenda Metcalfe:
Brenda.metcalfe@anchor.org.uk

²⁴ ibid

²⁵ Croucher, K (2008) *Housing Choices and Aspirations of Older People: Research from the New Horizons Program*, London, CLG





Practice example

Age Concern and Camden LBC working in partnership for older LGBT customers

Working in partnership, AgeUK and Camden London Borough Council have focused on working with older LGBT customers. The triggers for this partnership were:

- a local group for gay men (Camden Older Gay Men's Group) expressed concerns that the needs of older members were not being met
- older LGBT people were at risk of becoming socially isolated after the bereavement of a relative or partner.

A three year project called Opening Doors was established which works across 5 London boroughs (Camden, Islington, Hackney, Kensington & Chelsea & Westminster). The project has been funded by the Big Lottery.

Opening Doors provides a range of local services for the older LGBT community including:

- social activities
- telephone advice
- signposting
- befriending schemes.

To find out more about Opening Doors visit:
<http://ageconcernhackney.org.uk/index.cfm?id=4670>

Working with young LGBT customers

There are a number of reasons why sexual orientation and gender identity presents particular challenges for young people:

- socially isolated young people, looked after young people, young people leaving care, young offenders, young people from some BME communities, drug users, LGBT young people and young people with mental health problems are particularly vulnerable to housing and homelessness problems²⁶
- in 2008, the Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT) received 400 requests for support from young LGBT people
- 55 per cent of the young people who contacted AKT in London were in need of emergency accommodation
- 85 per cent of young people approaching AKT had faced some level of rejection by their parents just for 'coming out'.²⁷



Practice example

Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT): helping young LGBT people

AKT provides a range of innovative services to help support young LGBT people across Greater London and Manchester.

Supported lodgings

AKT provides a limited number of supported lodging placements for young LGBT people (16-21) with LGBT carers. Carers can provide a safe home for a short term placement or for a period extending to 18 months.

²⁶ Kenrick J (2006) *Locked out: The prevalence and impact of housing & homelessness problems amongst young people, and the impact of good advice*, London: YJB

²⁷ www.akt.org.uk

Albert Kennedy Trust Quality Mark

AKT has developed the Quality Mark 'Making a Difference' which is intended to offer a model of practice for LGBT equal and accessible housing and homelessness services for young people across the United Kingdom. Service user participation and inclusion is at the heart of the project; with AKT's young service users being involved in the planning and delivery of the Quality Mark. In becoming trainers and assessors, young people develop skills and obtain a qualification accredited by AQA. AKT's Quality Mark housing clients include: Knowsley Housing Trust, Trafford Housing Trust, Homes for Havering, and YMCA (South London).

Rainbow Starter Pack

To meet young LGBT customers' needs when starting out living independently, AKT offers support through the Rainbow Starter Pack which includes a loan which could be used to secure a deposit, purchase some essential items of furniture or do a first weekly shop for groceries.

To find out more about the range of services AKT offers young people, please visit:

www.akt.org.uk



Practice example

Swansea Youth Single Homeless Project

Swansea Youth Single Homeless Project monitors its clients by sexual orientation. A positive outcome is that clients can choose to have a lesbian, gay or bisexual support worker. Due to the openness of the organisation, clients asked for the establishment of a LGB service user group to assist in providing feedback on the organisation's policy and practice consultation exercises. Homophobia and biphobia among clients is actively and creatively challenged in a number of ways:

- at the interview stage, levels of discrimination are evaluated and talked through. If potential clients demonstrate homophobic or biphobic views and are unprepared to address these, they are not taken into the project
- the tenancy agreement makes clear that homophobia and biphobia towards clients and staff members will not be tolerated, whether it is from a client or a guest of a client LGB clients are empowered by the guarantee that they will be protected from, as well as supported in addressing any homophobic or biphobic behaviour they face
- posters advertising LGB services (e.g. help-lines, health services, peer support groups, social events) are displayed in communal areas
- where homophobic or biphobic attitudes are displayed, staff take swift action against the perpetrator, who will risk eviction or being banned from the building if not a tenant.²⁸

Contact: Sharon Hopkins, Operational Manager for Accommodation, Swansea Young Single Homeless Project. s.hopkins@syshp.org.uk

28 Cited CIH (2009) *Key Information Issue 10 Equality and diversity: understanding policy – promoting good practice*, Cardiff, CIH Cymru



Sexual orientation, gender identity and religion or belief

Equality legislation emphasises the need to treat people with different protected characteristics in a non discriminatory way. Housing organisations have a particular role to play in promoting good relations in the communities where they provide homes and services.

Housing providers often express anxiety at how to resolve potential or actual conflicts between staff and or between staff and customers over issues relating to sexual orientation or gender identity and religion or belief. There are a number of reasons for this:

- with reference to sexual orientation, 59 per cent of respondents to a 2007 Stonewall survey thought that religious attitudes were a major cause of prejudice against LGBT people²⁹
- recent high-profile tribunal cases involving religion and belief and sexual orientation (e.g. *McFarlane v Relate Avon Ltd*) have raised concern among housing providers about how to manage potential conflicts between these two protected characteristics.

It should be emphasised that most people who hold religious beliefs do not hold negative views about LGBT people. Similarly, most LGBT people do not hold negative views about people who have religious beliefs.

The following example shows how one housing organisation has tried to create a greater understanding of the relationship between sexual orientation (in particular) and religion or belief in the workplace and in service delivery.



Practice example

Gentoo encourages dialogue about religious beliefs and sexual orientation

Gentoo funded a member of their LGBT network group to attend a Stonewall seminar on religion and sexual orientation. This person's experience was used to facilitate discussion within the network group, which was then used as a catalyst to open the debate up to all staff at the housing organisation.

An article was placed in the summer 2010 edition of the Gentoo staff magazine raising some key questions about the relationship between religion and sexual orientation with the aim of creating space for respectful debate. The article was also careful to set this in the context of Gentoo's commitment to diversity for all staff, which can be summarised as:

'all staff are entitled to their own personal beliefs. However, all staff are also entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. Therefore personal views must not adversely affect attitudes or behaviours at work'

Gentoo's inter-faith staff network group submitted a response to the article outlining their position, and Gentoo published this in the following edition of the magazine.

Contact: Pam Walton
Pam.walton@gentoogroup.com

²⁹ Stonewall (2007) *Living together: British attitudes towards lesbian and gay people*, London, Stonewall



Practice example

Albert Kennedy Trust works with the Forced Marriages Unit at the Home Office

AKT has been working with the Forced Marriages Unit at the Home Office to support young LGBT people from different faith backgrounds who may be at risk from forced marriages. In 2010 the FMU has dealt with 29 confirmed cases of forced marriage involving LGBT people. Last year, the unit offered support and advice to nearly 1,700 cases in total. AKT has been working to raise awareness among housing providers about the risks posed to young LGBT teenagers from forced marriages.

To find out more visit: www.akt.org.uk

Finding out more

Stonewall have produced a guide on religion and sexual orientation and how to manage relations in the workplace. This can be downloaded from www.stonewall.org.uk/at_work/research_and_guides/4907.asp



Sexual orientation, gender identity and disability

Nearly one in five people of working age (6.9 million or 19 per cent) in Great Britain are disabled. Not all disability is obvious and not all disability is physical. Only 4 per cent of disabled

people use a wheelchair. Some disabilities develop over a lifetime and not all disabilities affect people all of the time.

People who have a disability are no more or less likely to be LGBT than any one else in society. However, there are particular challenges faced by disabled LGBT people which relates to housing and the communities in which they live:

- 43 per cent of people living in social housing have a long term disability
- a study for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation study in 1995 on the experiences of disabled women found that disabled lesbians felt they were 'invisible' both to disability organisations and to many service providers³⁰
- research for the EHRC shows that disabled people are at greater risk of experiencing violence or hostility than the wider population. This includes violence or hostility which might be perceived as a 'hate crime'. Where disabled people are also LGBT, there is greater risk of experiencing violence or hostility³¹
- research for the University of Bristol which looked at the experiences of LGB people with learning difficulties found many staff were uncomfortable about dealing with issues of sexual orientation and did not know how to challenge discriminatory attitudes from other customers³²
- a recent study conducted in Leeds by the LGBT disability group *Rainbow Ripples* identified instances of 'disabilism' with the LGBT community and homophobia, biphobia and transphobia within disability organisations.

30 JRF (1995) *The experiences of disabled women* – Findings; Joseph Rowntree Trust, Social Policy Research 81, York, JRF

31 EHRC (2009) *Promoting the safety of disabled people*, London, EHRC

32 Abbot D (et al) (2005) *Secret loves, hidden lives: a summary of what people with learning difficulties said about being lesbian, gay or bisexual*, Bristol, University of Bristol



Practice example

National AIDS Trust: guidance for housing workers

The National AIDS Trust (NAT) has developed two publications which will help housing organisations gain a better understanding of how HIV affects people's housing choices and experiences; and how best housing workers can provide an appropriate, supportive and empowering housing service for people living with HIV. You can download these guides from: www.nat.org.uk/Information-and-Resources/Housing.aspx

Finding out more

REGARD is a national, volunteer run organisation for disabled LGBT people. You can visit their website at: www.regard.org.uk



Sexual orientation, gender identity and race

Historically, housing has been an important focus for discrimination on the grounds of race in the UK. LGBT customers can experience racism and homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in the communities in which they live. Great sensitivity needs to be exercised around meeting the needs of black and minority ethnic LGBT customers because:

- some black and minority ethnic LGBT people feel that they are not as fully supported as white LGBT people in terms of LGBT focused support services

- some black and minority ethnic LGBT individuals may feel isolated in or discriminated against within their own communities for cultural or religious reasons. They may not be able to rely on traditional family or community support mechanisms
- however, it is often wrongly assumed that black and minority ethnic communities are more homophobic, biphobic or transphobic than white communities
- some black and minority ethnic LGBT individuals experience racism from the LGBT community
- research from the Metropolitan Support Trust found that LGBT asylum seekers are encountering high levels of homelessness, discrimination and exploitation due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.



Practice example

Over Not Out: the housing and homelessness problems faced by LGBT asylum seekers

The Research and Consultancy Unit (RCU) at Refugee Support, the refugee services arm of Metropolitan Support Trust (MST) commissioned research into the housing and homelessness issues specific to LGBT asylum seekers. The report highlights three key findings which are:

- support services for LGBT asylum seekers are poor
- homophobic and transphobic attitudes are causing homelessness and ill-health
- hate crimes against LGBT asylum seekers are not being reported.

You can download a copy of this report from: www.refugeesupport.org.uk/130509.html



Practice checklist: Working with different types of diversity

Working with older LGBT customers

- ✓ raise awareness among staff around the particular challenges affecting older LGBT customers
- ✓ ensure that staff, residents (and their visitors) and service partners understand that your organisation takes a zero-tolerance approach to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in the workplace and service provision
- ✓ work with organisations like AgeUK to develop your organisations approach to service provision for older LGBT customers
- ✓ in line with the Personalisation Agenda, take a person centred approach to the care of older LGBT people in supported and sheltered housing. For example, consider direct payments to older LGBT customers so they can access the care that most suits them
- ✓ involve older LGBT people in service planning
- ✓ ensure rights enjoyed by married couples in supported and sheltered accommodation extend to same-sex couples in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Working with young LGBT customers

- ✓ make links with organisations that provide support to young LGBT people and raise the issue of LGBT aware and inclusive service delivery: the local youth service is the most obvious partner as they tend to target their resources to the most disadvantaged areas where there is the greatest need
- ✓ work with organisations such as the Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT) to develop organisational capacity for providing services to young LGBT people. Consider participating in the AKT Quality Mark 'Making a Difference' scheme
- ✓ involve young LGBT people in decision making, audit and review of services
- ✓ local authorities should consider giving priority to young LGBT in view of the risks unstable housing presents to them.



Working with issues relating to sexual orientation, gender identity and religion or belief

- ✓ make sure your organisation delivers services in compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (see section 2)
- ✓ facilitate dialogue between staff and service users around sexual orientation, gender identity and religion or belief
- ✓ make use of expert guidance such as the Stonewall Guide *Religion and sexual orientation and how to manage relations in the workplace*.

Working with disabled LGBT customers

- ✓ do not make the mistake of assuming that disabled customers do not have a sexuality or a sexual orientation
- ✓ be aware that disabled LGBT customers may face additional risks of hate incidents in the community because of their sexual orientation or gender identity and their disability
- ✓ liaise with organisations that provide support to LGBT people with disabilities such as REGARD (contact details are listed in section 10)
- ✓ challenge and take action against discriminatory attitudes against LGBT people with disabilities by staff or other service users
- ✓ in line with the Personalisation Agenda, take a person centred approach to the support of LGBT people with disabilities.

Working with black and minority ethnic LGBT customers and LGBT asylum seekers

- ✓ liaise with specialist providers or community advocates who have experience working with black and minority ethnic LGBT people
- ✓ make sure your organisation delivers services in compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (see section 2)
- ✓ facilitate dialogue between staff and service users around issues relating to sexual orientation, gender identity and race.



6. Tackling harassment and hate incidents

For many landlords, responding to harassment or hate incidents perpetrated against LGBT people in their homes and communities is a motivating factor for greater LGBT equality. Research for Stonewall Scotland suggests that 88 per cent of LGBT people who experienced verbal abuse did not report it, and 61 per cent of those physically attacked did not inform police.³³

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) distinguishes between a **hate incident** and a **hate crime**.

- A **hate incident** is: *'any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate'*
- A **hate crime** is defined specifically as: *'any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate'*

The ACPO defines a **homophobic hate incident** as: *'Any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person'*

All hate crimes are hate incidents. However some hate incidents may not constitute a criminal offence.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people experience hate crime, with gay men and trans women experiencing the highest levels of violent crime. Hate incidents may be homophobic, biphobic or transphobic, but what all incidents

have in common is that they are perceived as being motivated by prejudice or hate towards LGBT people.

It is important to remember that people can also become victims of hate incidents because they are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, even if they themselves do not identify in that way.

LGBT domestic abuse

Domestic abuse also occurs in LGBT households and communities. It can be perpetrated by partners or ex-partners. Domestic abuse includes physical or sexual abuse, emotional abuse such as threats or isolating individuals from their family and friends). In LGBT communities, domestic abuse often has particular characteristics including:

- lack of recognition or understanding that domestic abuse happens in LGBT households and communities
- sexual orientation or gender identity becomes associated with the abuse so a victim feels as though they are being abused because they are LGBT
- some victims may feel isolated from broader support networks or may feel as though they will be 'outed' to other people who may be hostile towards them.

³³ Cited: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/8580960.stm>



Finding out more

For more information on LGBT domestic abuse you can visit:

The LGBT Domestic Abuse Project funded by the Scottish Government
www.lgbtdomesticabuse.org.uk

Broken Rainbow: LGBT domestic violence organisation
www.broken-rainbow.org.uk

Threshold Gay Men's Shared Housing: offers support and housing for gay men escaping domestic or homophobic violence
www.thp.org.uk/

Working in partnership to tackle LGBT hate incidents

Landlords can work with key community partners to tackle LGBT hate incidents including:

- **the police:** have responsibility for investigating and preventing crime. The police will often be the organisation that receives reports of hate incidents. They have expertise in interviewing victims, witnesses and alleged perpetrators and in gathering evidence
- **inter-agency partnerships for hate incidents:** these exist in some areas. Roles vary from casework co-ordination to monitoring, campaigning and spearheading preventative work
- **local community safety projects:** these may be active in target-hardening and may also have a role in reporting and victim support
- **community safety partnerships:** can help in providing advice and perhaps seek to 'unblock' difficulties in multi-agency working. They may provide the stimulus to local initiatives to combat hate crime and to the establishment of specific hate incidents forums
- **victim support organisations:** can befriend and advise the victims of crime. The service is tailored to suit the needs of an individual. Specialist help can be made available to help those attending court
- **organisations representing LGBT communities:** may receive reports, support victims and prompt organisations to take action where appropriate
- **residents' associations:** can keep an eye open for local problems, encourage reporting and, however informally, play a role in victim support.³⁴

³⁴ Adapted from Wales Social Landlords Anti-social behaviour Forum (2009) *Tackling hate incidents: a toolkit for social landlords in Wales*, HouseMark and Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Group



Practice example

Tackling hate crime in Cardiff

Cardiff Council has developed comprehensive policies and procedures for dealing with racial and homophobic harassment in its housing estates. Key principles set out in the document include a commitment to investigating all cases, however isolated; adopting a victim-centred approach through an acceptance that an initial report is racial or homophobic harassment if the victim so defines it (and until further investigations prove otherwise) and a commitment that those suffering harassment will be encouraged to play their full part in taking action to deal with it. Four key elements are emphasised:

- dealing with each case in the timescale specified
- ensuring case notes are up to date and comprehensive
- ensuring everyone is kept informed at each key stage
- ensuring that appropriate action is taken at the right time.

The document includes a checklist for immediate action and good practice 'do's and don'ts' for interviewing the alleged perpetrator. The procedure has recently been updated and is now called the 'Racial, Homophobic and Disabilist Procedure'.³⁵

Contact: Heather Price
heprice@cardiff.gov.uk



Practice example

Practice example: Brighton and Hove Crime and Disorder reduction partnership: *safe in the city*

Safe in the City is the campaign of Brighton and Hove's Community Safety Partnership. The Partnership works to provide support to all those who experience incidents motivated by prejudice as well as bringing perpetrators to justice. The Partnership aims to:

- reduce crime and disorder and tackle anti-social behaviour
- reduce fear of crime
- improve community safety
- improve the lives of residents, visitors and people who work in the city.

Partner agencies include the police and criminal justice agencies, council services, children and young people's services, fire and health, the community and voluntary sector and private sector agencies. The Partnership has set up an LGBT Community Safety Action Plan which details the actions the Partnership is implementing to address LGBT hate crime across Brighton and Hove.

For more information on Safe in the City, visit: www.safeinthecity.info

³⁵ Cited CIH (2009) *Key Information Issue 10 Equality and diversity: understanding policy – promoting good practice*, Cardiff, CIH Cymru



Practice example

Knowsley Housing Trust and Riverside Group tackle homophobia in schools

Knowsley Housing Trust and Riverside Group have been working with Liverpool's arts and social justice organisation, Homotopia, to promote FIT: a play aimed at tackling homophobia in young people. This is being done with the support of Marie Causer whose son, Michael, was killed aged 18. KHT Chief Executive Bob Taylor has said *'There is no place for homophobia in our society and we are committed to doing all we can to stamp it out.'*

Contact: Helen Lacey
Helen.Lacey@k-h-t.org



Practice example



Stonewall: *Blow the whistle on gay hate crime*

Stonewall have produced a new plain English guide called *Blow the Whistle on gay hate crime* gives clear, concise information for people

who are victims of homophobic hate crime.

The guide explains what homophobic hate crime is, why hate crime should be reported and what to say when reporting it. You can download a copy from www.stonewall.org.uk/



Practice example

Tackling homophobic hate crime (Wales)

Stonewall Cymru has produced a free leaflet called *Have you experienced homophobic hate crime* which helps victims of homophobic hate crime report incidents and access the support they need. This is a really useful resource for anyone who feels as though they have been the victim of a homophobic incident.

You can download this leaflet from:
www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/cymru/english/what_we_do/publications/default.asp



Finding out more

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has produced a policy for tackling homophobic and transphobic hate crime.

You can download this guide from:
www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/htc_policy.pdf



Practice checklist: Tackling harassment and hate incidents

- ✓ make sure that staff fully understand how harassment and hate incidents affect LGBT customers are able to deal with these issues sensitively and decisively
- ✓ have clear organisational procedures that are responsive to reports of LGBT harassment and hate incidents. These policies should include options for transfer where LGBT people are clearly at risk in their communities
- ✓ make clear to tenants and residents (and their visitors) that your organisation has a zero-tolerance approach to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and will take action with appropriate partners such as the police to tackle harassment and hate incidents
- ✓ consider using tenancy agreements to make clear that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic attitudes towards other tenants, residents, members of the community and staff will not be tolerated
- ✓ liaise with community partners to tackle harassment and hate incidents against LGBT customers including the police, local authority ASB teams, local community safety partnerships, LGBT community groups, community safety partnerships and victim support organisations
- ✓ work with schools and community groups to tackle harassment and hate incidents against LGBT people in the community
- ✓ local authorities should offer greater flexibility in terms of their lettings if LGBT people want to move to areas where there are good services aimed at them.



7. Practice checklist for trans inclusive services

This section will reiterate some specific points which housing providers should be aware of when working with transgender customers.

In general, housing services should adopt a person-centred approach which makes trans people feel accepted, welcomed and supports self-esteem and reduces isolation in the communities in which they live.

Specific points include:

- ✓ make sure gender identity and gender reassignment are included in your organisation's equal opportunities policies and are fully in compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (see section 2)
- ✓ communicate a zero tolerance approach to transphobia to all staff and service users
- ✓ always address a transgender customer in the gender to which they identify and not according to their birth sex
- ✓ provide transgender customers with access to appropriate single-sex facilities which are in line with their gender identity and not their birth sex (e.g. toilet facilities or single sex accommodation)
- ✓ some transgender people may have specific personal care needs and these should be handled sensitively (e.g. personal care support appropriate to their gender identity)
- ✓ train staff on housing issues relating to gender identity
- ✓ monitor your staff and service users on gender identity: but take particular care and seek advice from specialist organisations such as Press for Change or the Gender Trust
- ✓ be aware that many trans people experience social stigma and discrimination and may be vulnerable to harassment and 'hate crime' in their communities
- ✓ again, be responsive to *difference* in diversity: the housing experiences of individual trans customers will all be different: so avoid taking a 'tick-box' approach to equality and diversity
- ✓ maintain strict confidentiality around someone's transgender status
- ✓ it should be emphasised again that there is a clear distinction between sexual orientation issues (LGB) and transgender issues (T): while LGBT customers experience commonalities in their experiences of service delivery, there are different issues which affect them which should be recognised.





Practice example

The Clare Project

Brighton and Hove Council worked with a local group called the Clare Project to develop its approach to trans equality. The Clare Project is a self supporting group based in Brighton and Hove open to anyone wishing to explore issues around gender identity: www.clareproject.org.uk



Practice example

Boston Belles

Boston Borough Council actively encourages representation from a local transgender support group called the Boston Belles. Group representatives are represented on many local and county council led initiatives including Local Strategic Partnership Groups, countywide LGBT forums and also the Independent Police Advisory Group for the Eastern Division which includes Boston: <http://boston-belles.co.uk>



Practice example

Scottish Transgender Alliance

The Scottish Transgender Alliance aims to improve the lives and experiences of trans people living in Scotland through education, training, policy development and support. The Scottish Transgender Alliance has secured funding for their Transition Support Service.

The funding will employ a support service development worker who will work with trans people in Scotland on a range of life skills including the social and emotional challenges of dealing with gender reassignment. Workshops will hopefully help with the social integration of vulnerable trans groups into communities through a peer mentoring service.

For more information visit:
www.scottishtrans.org



Finding out more

Two pieces of trans specific research which may help you develop your capacity to provide trans focused housing services include:

Browne K and Lim J (2008) *Trans people: Additional findings report: Count Me In Too: LGBT lives in Brighton and Hove*, Brighton, University of Brighton and Spectrum
www.spectrum-lgbt.org/cmiToo/06/Download.htm

and the American study:

Mottet L and Ohle J (2003) *Transitioning our shelters*, New York, National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce and national Coalition for the Homeless
www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/TransitioningOurShelters.pdf

8. Glossary

Biphobia

The irrational fear, hatred, and discriminatory treatment of people who are bisexual.

Bisexual

A word which describes a person who is physically, romantically and emotionally attracted to men and women.

'Coming out'

This phrase refers to a lesbian, gay, bisexual person disclosing their sexual orientation; or a transgender person disclosing their gender identity.

Discrimination

Making a positive or negative judgement about someone based on bias, assumptions or prejudice. Discrimination can either be direct or indirect.

- **under the Equality Act 2010 direct discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender re-assignment** occurs where, because of sexual orientation or gender reassignment, a person (A) treats another (B) less favourably than A treats or would treat others
- **under the equality Act 2010 indirect discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation gender re-assignment** occurs where:
 - A applies to B a provision, criterion or practice that
 - A applies (or would apply) to persons not of the same sexual orientation or undergoing gender re-assignment as B
 - the provision, criterion or practice puts or would put persons of B's sexual

orientation or undergoing gender re-assignment at a particular disadvantage when compared to other persons; and

- A cannot justify the provision, criterion or practice by showing it to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Diversity

An appreciation that each individual is unique giving recognition to individual differences. For example, age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief. An appreciation of diversity moves beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating diversity as beneficial for communities, wider society and the economy.

Equal opportunity

Not excluding individuals from the activities of the society in which they live: for example, employment, education and health care. This also includes positive action and capacity building. Simply removing barriers does not always provide equal opportunities.

Gender

The different social or cultural roles attached to being a man or a woman.

Gender identity

This refers to a person's inner sense of knowing that they are a man or a woman.

Gender reassignment

This refers to the process of transitioning from the gender assigned at birth to the gender the person identifies with.

Glass ceiling

A phrase used to describe the barriers which people feel are in place which prevent women and other minority groups from being promoted. The phrase 'double-glazed glass ceiling' is sometimes used to refer to barriers which exist for lesbians.

Harassment

Attention or behaviour by an individual or a group which is unwanted by the person or group against whom it is directed. For example, touching a colleague, sexist or explicit jokes or making personal comments about someone's appearance or personal life. Under the equality Act 2010 there are provisions that employers can be liable for harassment of an employee by a third party because of the employee's protected characteristic of gender reassignment. This provision is far reaching because it also applies to perceived characteristics.

Heterosexism

This is discrimination directed against non-heterosexual behaviour. This can be because of cultural or social prejudice against LGB people. It is based on an assumption that heterosexuality is superior to any other form of sexual orientation.

Homophobia

An irrational fear of, or prejudice and discrimination against gay men, bisexuals and lesbians.

Homosexual

A word used to describe a person who has an emotional, romantic, sexual or affectionate attraction to a person of the same sex. Great care should be exercised in using this word. It is acceptable to many LGB people, but some LGB dislike it because the term is rooted in a 19th century understanding of same sex attraction being a mental illness or a medical problem.

Intersex

A term which describes people who are born with reproductive organs, genitalia and or sex chromosomes that are not exclusively male or female. Intersex people are often assigned a male or female gender when they are babies. However, sometimes intersex people can develop gender identity issues because they have been assigned the wrong gender.

Lesbian

A word used to describe emotional, sexual and romantic attraction between women.

LGBT

An acronym used to describe people who define themselves as either lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender.

Positive Action

Lawful measures used by an organisation to address under representation of particular groups. For example, schemes to encourage more women to work in building and construction.

Prejudice

Where a view about someone is based on a lack of knowledge, a pre-conceived idea or on social pressure.

Queer

Originally this was a derogatory term used to verbally abuse LGBT people. Now, however, the word queer is sometimes used by some LGBT people and groups to identify themselves.

Sexism

Attitudes or actions which discriminate against women and men purely on the grounds of their sex or gender.

Sexual orientation

A combination of emotional, romantic, sexual or affectionate attraction to another person.

Sexuality

A word which refers to how men and women express themselves as sexual beings.

Trans

A short-hand term used by transgender people to describe being transgender.

Transgender

An umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or expression differs from their birth sex.

Transition

The process of identifying and living in a new gender.

Transphobia

The irrational fear, hatred, and discriminatory treatment of people who are transgender.

Transsexual

A word which refers to a person who wants to or who has already changed their physical sex from the one which they were born with. Not all transgender people are transsexual.

Victimisation

Situations where people are targeted with abuse, or experience less than equal treatment in their employment conditions.

9. Further information and resources

Acas guide to the Sexual Orientation Regulations

www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/a/8/guide_sexualO_1.pdf

Bi Community News (2010) *Both directions: finding the bi scene in the UK*, London, BCN

Browne K and Lim J (2008) *Trans people: Additional findings report: Count me in too: LGBT lives in Brighton and Hove*, Brighton, University of Brighton and Spectrum

www.spectrum-lgbt.org/cmiToo/06/Download.htm

Browne K with Petra Davis (2008) *Housing: Additional findings report: Count me in too: LGBT lives in Brighton and Hove*, Brighton, University of Brighton and Spectrum

www.spectrum-lgbt.org/cmiToo/06/Download.htm

Care Quality Commission (2008) *Guidance for inspectors: On how we promote the rights of people whatever their sexual orientation*, Care Quality commission

www.cqc.org.uk

Crown Prosecution Service (2007) *Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Homophobic and Transphobic Hate Crime*, London, CPS

Equality and Human Rights Commission: Explanatory notes to the Equality Act 2010

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpgaen_20100015_en.pdf

Equality and Human Rights Commission: Draft employment Statutory Code of Practice

www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/Equality%20Bill/revised_employment_code1.pdf

Fanshawe S and Sriskandarajah D (2010) *You can't put me in a box: super-diversity and the end of identity politics in Britain*, London, IPPR

www.ippr.org/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=725

Home Office (Police Standards Unit) (2005) *Hate crime, delivering a quality service*, London, Home Office

www.acpo.police.uk/

Hunt R and Dick S (2007) *Serves you right: lesbian and gay people's expectations of discrimination*, London, Stonewall

www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/servesyouright.pdf

Local Government Association and IDeA: (2008) *Measuring equality at a local level*, LGA and IDeA

www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelD=8579514

Mottet L and Ohle J (2003) *Transitioning our shelters*, New York, National gay and Lesbian Taskforce and national Coalition for the Homeless

www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/TransitioningOurShelters.pdf

MST (2009) *Over not out: the housing and homeless issues specific to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender asylum seekers*, London, MST

www.refugeesupport.org.uk

Musingarimi P (2008) *Housing issues affecting older gay, lesbian and bisexual people in the UK: A Policy Brief*, ILC-UK

www.ilcuk.org.uk/files/pdf_pdf_69.pdf

National AIDS Trust (2009) *HIV and housing*, NAT, London

www.nat.org.uk/Information-and-Resources/Housing.aspx

Older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender network, *A report of the older LGBT network into the specific needs of older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people*, Cardiff, AgeUK

www.ageuk.org.uk

Press for Change: A Question of Strategy by Christine Burns: audio recording concerning supporting transsexual employees in transition

<http://services.pfc.org.uk/>

Solace Foundation (2008) *How equality shapes place*, London, Solace Foundation

www.solace.org.uk

Scottish Transgender Alliance (2008) *Transgender experiences in Scotland*, Edinburgh, Scottish Transgender Alliance

www.scottishtrans.org

Stonewall (2010) *Religion and sexual orientation: how to manage relations in the workplace*, London, Stonewall

www.stonewall.org.uk

Stonewall (2010) *Marketing: how to market to gay consumers*, London, Stonewall

www.stonewall.org.uk

Stonewall (2010) *Blow the whistle on gay hate crime*, London, Stonewall

www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/stonewall_gay_hate.pdf

Stonewall, Stonewall Housing and the Albert Kennedy Trust (2010) *The housing guide for lesbian, gay, bisexual people*, London, Stonewall, Stonewall Housing and AKT

www.stonewall.org.uk/at_home/housing_and_homelessness/3837.asp

Tai Pawb (2009) *Good practice briefing 24: Lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) equality and housing*, Cardiff, Tai Pawb

www.taipawb.org

UNISON and Scottish Transgender Alliance (2010) *Transgender workers rights*, UNISON and Scottish Transgender Alliance

www.scottishtrans.org

Women and Equality Unit: A guide for employers

www.equalities.gov.uk/PDF/Gender%20reassignment%20-%20a%20guide%20for%20employers%202005.pdf

10. Useful websites and contacts

Organisation	What do they do	Contact
Albert Kennedy Trust	Charity supporting LGBT homeless young people	www.akt.org.uk
Bi.org	A web portal for the bisexual community	www.bi.org
Bi Community News (BCN)	The bisexual magazine giving voice to the bi community	www.bicommunitynews.co.uk
Broken Rainbow	A telephone helpline for LGBT people who are the victims of domestic abuse	www.broken-rainbow.org.uk/index.html
Diva	Mainstream lesbian magazine	www.divamag.co.uk
Equality and Human Rights Commission	Commission working to eliminate discrimination and reduce inequality	www.equalityhumanrights.com
Equality Britain	Promoting opportunities for everyone regardless of race, age, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender or transgender status	www.equalitybritain.co.uk
Equality Network	Works for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) equality and human rights in Scotland	www.equality-network.org
Galop	Works to prevent and challenge homophobic and transphobic hate crime in Greater London	www.galop.org.uk
Gay and Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland (GLYNI)	Provides advice and services for the LGBT community in Northern Ireland	http://glyni.org.uk
Gay Times	Online gay magazine	www.gaytimes.co.uk
Gender Advisory Bureau	Charity providing training courses on transgender awareness	www.genderadvisorybureau.com

Government Equalities Office	Government department responsible for equalities legislation in the UK	www.equalities.gov.uk
Housing Associations Charitable Trust	Pioneering practical housing solutions for social inclusion	http://hact.org.uk/
Housing Diversity Network (HDN)	HDN provides specialist consultancy and training on equality and diversity issues for the social housing sector	www.housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk
Kiss	A social group made up of women who identify either as lesbian, bisexual or queer and are of South Asian or Middle Eastern or North African descent	www.planetkiss.org.uk
Lesbian Information Service	News and information for lesbians	www.lesbianinformationservice.org
LGBT Domestic Abuse Project	LGBT domestic abuse project funded by the Scottish Government	www.lgbtdomesticabuse.org.uk
LGBT Excellence Centre Wales	A charity that promotes equality, diversity and human rights and works on developing collaborative models for delivering LGBT equality	www.ecwales.org.uk
Lesbian and Gay Foundation (LGF)	A North West based charity supporting the LGB community	www.lgf.org.uk
The Lesbian and Gay Alzheimer's Society Carer's Network	This network provides support for lesbian and gay carers. Its website gives advice on choosing residential accommodation and examples of good practice in social care	www.alzheimers.org.uk
LGBT Youth Scotland	A national youth organisation working towards the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people in Scotland	www.lgbtyouth.org.uk

National Aids Trust (NAT)	NAT is a leading HIV and AIDS charity in the UK. NAT develops resources to help individuals and organisations meet the needs of people living with HIV	www.nat.org.uk/
Naz Project	Provides sexual health and HIV prevention and support services to targeted Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in London	www.naz.org.uk
Opening Doors	Age UK's programme that seeks to address the needs of older LGBT people	www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/openingdoors.asp
PACE	PACE is a London based charity promoting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community	www.pacehealth.org.uk
Pink Paper	Politically focused weekly gay paper covering news, politics and events happening across the UK	www.pinkpaper.com
Press for Change	Press for Change is a lobbying and educational organisation, which campaigns to achieve equality and human rights for all trans people in the United Kingdom	http://services.pfc.org.uk/
Rainbow Mark	An equality mark sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government and supported by the Welsh Local Government Association and Tai Pawb	www.ecwales.org.uk/modules/rainbowmark
REGARD	A national, volunteer run organisation for disabled LGBT people	www.regard.co.uk
Safra Project	For Muslim LBT women	http://safraproject.org
Scottish Government	Website of the devolved government in Scotland	www.scotland.gov.uk

Scottish Human Rights Commission	Human rights commission for Scotland	www.scottishhumanrights.com
Scottish Refugee Council	An independent charity dedicated to providing advice, information and assistance to asylum seekers and refugees living in Scotland	www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk
Scottish Transgender Alliance	Alliance works to improve transgender inclusion, equality and rights	www.scottishtrans.org
Stonewall	UK wide charity working for LGB equality	www.stonewall.org.uk
Stonewall Cymru	The LGB Forum Cymru was established in 2002 through the joint support and funding of the National Assembly of Wales and Stonewall (UK)	www.stonewallcymru.org.uk
Stonewall Scotland	Organisation campaigning for and promoting equality and justice for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people	www.stonewallscotland.org.uk
Stonewall Housing	Charitable housing association providing housing advice, advocacy and support to LGBT people	www.stonewallhousing.org
Tai Pawb	Organisation set up to promote equality and social justice in housing in Wales	www.taipawb.org/
Welsh Assembly Government	The Welsh Assembly Government is the devolved government for Wales	www.wales.gov.uk

The Chartered Institute of Housing



The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) is the professional body for people involved in housing and communities.

We are a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation. We have a diverse and growing membership of over 22,000 people – both in the public and private sectors – living and working in over 20 countries on five continents across the world.

We exist to maximise the contribution that housing professionals make to the wellbeing of communities. Our vision is to be the first point of contact for – and the credible voice of – anyone involved or interested in housing.



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