
Out and included

How can housing providers help to improve the lives of LGBT+ people?

Lucy Pedrick





Affinity Sutton Group, Circle Housing, Genesis, Hanover, L&Q, Metropolitan, Notting Hill Housing, Peabody and Tower Hamlets Homes took part together in London's Pride parade 2016 under the HouseProud banner.

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About the author

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About the research

This is a research project carried out through the Charityworks leadership development programme and supported by the National Housing Federation.

Executive summary

Housing providers are champions of equality and diversity, with the values, resources and commitment to improve visibility, housing, safety and wellbeing outcomes for LGBT+ people in communities.

For 20 years, housing and LGBT+ organisations and academic researchers have been identifying the opportunities for housing providers to do just that.

This project has been designed to bring their evidence and learning together, to equip organisations with the information, advice and support that they need to be able to take their next steps on the journey to full LGBT+ inclusion.

We know that LGBT+ people perceive housing providers as inaccessible, and that their fear of being discriminated against prevents them from accessing services.

We know that until staff feel safe to be out at work in housing organisations, customers will not feel safe either.

We know that organisations must have inclusive policies and publications, and a strong, visible LGBT+ presence before perceptions of exclusion will change.

We know that LGBT+ people are more likely to be homeless than their heterosexual, cisgender peers and that they experience homelessness differently and need services which acknowledge and embrace their identities.

We know that LGBT+ people experience hate crime and harassment, and that they do not always feel safe reporting their experiences to their landlords.

We know that LGBT+ people experience domestic abuse, and need support which does not marginalise or erase their experiences or identities.

We know that LGBT+ people are more at risk of mental health challenges than their heterosexual, cisgender peers. They need services that understand their health needs in the context of, and not in spite of, their gender and sexual identity.

A series of 24 interviews were carried out with staff in housing providers and LGBT+ organisations and academic researchers interested in sexuality, gender and housing. Throughout this document, we signpost additional resources and highlight key practice tips which organisations might find useful. Key comments arising from the interviews are given in pull quotes.

We can identify six recommendations for the housing sector.

Recommendations

To each of these recommendations, five key implementation principles should be applied:

- Learn about a challenge
- Train staff to approach it appropriately
- Listen to LGBT+ voices
- Take action to respond to what they say
- Evaluate the response.



1. Introduction

Equality and diversity are deeply embedded in the cultures of many housing organisations but LGBT+ people have historically received less focus (Burns et al., 2007).

The purpose of this project is to demonstrate that housing organisations can and should improve outcomes for LGBT+ people in communities. The experiences of those who have done it themselves reveal the key milestones of LGBT+ inclusion and give rise to six recommendations for the sector.

All landlords have LGBT+ customers (five to seven per cent of people are LGBT+), and there is a strong business case for delivering accessible services. It may be within the gift of housing organisations to improve four key outcomes for LGBT+ people, depending on business models:

1. Visibility
2. Housing
3. Safety
4. Wellbeing

2. Where is the sector now?

Every report seeking to demonstrate what LGBT+ people want from housing has reached the same conclusion: there is no consensus. Some LGBT+ people favour specialist provision. Others favour mainstream services which are accessible and do not assume that they are heterosexual and cisgender.

The problem is that:

- There is currently no specialist service for LGBT+ older people, and access across every client group is especially limited in rural geographies
- LGBT+ people perceive providers of social housing as inaccessible, and unable or unwilling to meet their needs.

The solution is a range of housing options across tenures for LGBT+ people at every age and in every geography. Only then will LGBT+ people be able to make safe choices for themselves, their partners and their families about where, how and with whom they would like to live.

“Have an LGBT+ presence within your organisation, and ensure that it is a safe space for LGBT+ staff, volunteers and customers”

Jane Bancroft, Homeless Link

When LGBT+ customers perceive and experience housing providers as inclusive, customer satisfaction increases, relationships between staff and residents are strengthened, and visibility, housing, safety and wellbeing outcomes for LGBT+ residents are improved. That's better for residents, better for communities, and better for business.

The housing sector is on a journey to LGBT+ inclusion. There is 20 years' worth of research demonstrating the need and the business case for doing more.

2016 represents a turning point for the sector and its partners:

- Stonewall Housing has launched the results of a feasibility study, Building Safe Choices, exploring the options for specialist LGBT+ housing for older people
- The Centre for Research on Ageing and Gender at the University of Surrey will release the findings of a project on the research and policy futures of housing for older LGBT+ people in July 2016
- The Human City Institute (HCI) is launching new tenant research in September 2016
- Affinity Sutton, Amicus Horizon, Genesis and L&Q are working together under the banner of the HouseProud network to co-commission research into LGBT+ housing needs.

This project draws upon insight across sectors to equip housing providers with the confidence, practical examples, resources and relationships to embed LGBT+ inclusion throughout businesses.

3. How was the research carried out?

This research was carried out from early April to early June 2016. Following a broad literature review (see Appendix C), stakeholders were identified for interview because they:

- Were authors, participants or subjects of existing literature
- Were recommended by National Housing Federation staff
- Engaged on social media
- Were recommended by other participants ('snowballing')
- Heard about the project and self-nominated.

Participants were from housing providers, LGBT+ organisations, research institutions, homelessness services, local authorities and the police. The housing providers represented were diverse, and reflect a variety of sizes, geographies, structures and customer groups. They range from small specialists to large providers with 35,000+ homes, and operate in London, the East of England, Yorkshire, the North West and the North East. They include large-scale voluntary transfer organisations, group structures, small charities and arm's-length management organisations, offering general needs housing, supported housing (for a range of client groups), youth services, older people's housing, shared ownership and leasehold.

In total, 24 interviews were carried out over the telephone, each lasting 30 minutes. In four cases, participants were met in person, and conversations lasted between an hour and 90 minutes. A semi-structured interview rubric was adopted.

As a trade body, the National Housing Federation is not best-placed to carry out tenant research. This project draws instead upon existing research and institutional experience. It will also be followed by tenant projects from the Human City Institute (HCI) and Affinity Sutton, Amicus Horizon, Genesis and L&Q working under the banner of the HouseProud network later in 2016. The researchers involved with all of these projects have been working to ensure that knowledge is shared.

This project does not incorporate the perceptions of organisations which have not engaged with LGBT+ inclusion. The examples featured here demonstrate that regardless of geography, size, level of resource, specialism or client group, every housing provider can take simple steps to improve outcomes for LGBT+ people.

Throughout this document, we signpost additional resources and highlight provide key practice tips which organisations might find useful. Key comments arising from interviews are in pull quotes.



L&Q, Stonewall Housing and Wealdens worked together to makeover a garden of an LGBT hostel in east London.

4. What can we learn?

The housing needs of LGBT+ people are much the same as of anybody else. However, what is good practice for one LGBT+ person might feel inaccessible and inappropriate for another. Housing providers are ideally resourced to meet the housing and hate-crime needs of LGBT+ people. Those organisations that provide homelessness, domestic abuse or mental health support are especially well-placed to support LGBT+ people to manage the particular vulnerabilities they may face.

However, despite the best efforts of our colleagues in the housing sector, the majority of LGBT+ people still perceive housing providers as either unable or unwilling to engage with them. They prefer, therefore, to approach LGBT+ organisations that do not have the resources and may not have the skills or knowledge to manage housing and housing-related challenges effectively.

“Housing is consistently in the top five issues covered by enquiries”

Andrew Gilliver, LGBT Foundation

Sexuality and trans status monitoring

Monitoring is a powerful tool for inclusivity. Used well, it can be cross-referenced against other data to reveal, for example, the proportion of LGBT+ people in different parts of the business (such as different staff teams or customers across different tenures) or the comparative satisfaction rates for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans.

Every housing provider that took part in this research project monitors sexuality of staff, and most included customers too. Fewer providers monitor trans status, for reasons including:

- Social awareness of trans issues is relatively new
There is a fear of using inappropriate or outdated language to ask monitoring questions
- There is sometimes a perception that there are no trans people in the business, because if there were they would be easily identifiable.

However, monitoring trans status matters. It demonstrates to trans staff and customers that the organisation recognises trans identities. It opens up opportunities for conversations with others who might express transphobic views, whether through ignorance or malice. Most importantly, it can inform providers about the presence of trans people and has the potential to enable them to improve lives.

There is some excellent practice in the corporate world around the challenges that can arise when a person comes out as trans at work and chooses to transition. Stonewall has recently launched a suite of workplace resources to support employers to develop robust, appropriate and inclusive trans policies. As society becomes more aware of trans lives, it is likely that the body of best practice will grow, offering yet further examples to providers of how to broach these questions most effectively.

Most providers have relatively low LGBT+ declaration rates (around one per cent of tenants), but have recognised that the data indicates that LGBT+ people in communities do not all feel safe disclosing

Resources

1. Lesbian and Gay Foundation & NHS North West (2011) Everything you always wanted to know about sexual orientation monitoring but were afraid to ask
2. Scottish Transgender Alliance & Equality Network (2009) Transgender equality monitoring: guidance for organisations on monitoring transgender staff or service users
3. Stonewall (unknown a) Monitoring form
4. Stonewall (unknown b) What's it got to do with you: 10 reasons why you should fill in those funny box things at the end of forms
5. Stonewall (2012c) Using monitoring data: making the most of sexual orientation data collection
6. Chartered Institute of Housing (2011) Delivering housing services to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender customers

their sexual or gender identity. As a result, equality, diversity and inclusion staff have used these low figures as a call to action for the business to become more LGBT+ inclusive.

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Visibility

LGBT+ experts consistently reported that the first step to LGBT+ inclusion must be visibility. Pleasingly, every housing provider recognised that and has taken some steps to addressing it.

There are pervasive assumptions that everybody is heterosexual, and that their gender identity is the same as that which they were assigned at birth. LGBT+ lives are socially 'invisible', and LGBT+ people may feel excluded from conversations, activities or communities. When LGBT+ people encounter challenges, they are less likely and less able to access appropriate support.

There are three key strategies that housing providers have used to promote LGBT+ visibility:

- Ensuring that policies, publications and people are inclusive
- Listening to LGBT+ people in the business
- Championing a visible LGBT+ presence externally.

Ensuring that policies, publications and people are inclusive

Housing providers endeavour to:

- Use gender neutral language such as 'partner' or 'spouse' and they/them/their pronouns
- Use same-sex photographs
- Ensure that staffing policies (including for parental leave or adoption) include same-sex couples or people whose gender identity does not align with the one they were assigned at birth
- Train staff to understand the language of the LGBT+ community (see Appendix B), not assume anyone's sexuality or gender identity, and ensure that they ask and use people's preferred pronouns.

“Even just seeing the acronym LGBT somewhere in a building can make a huge difference for people”

Carin Tunåker, Porchlight

“A heterosexual person might just see two friends in a kitchen, but it matters that an LGBT+ person could see a same-sex couple”

Pam Walton, Gentoo Group

Listening to LGBT+ people in the business

Every provider that took part in this research has an LGBT+ staff and/or tenant network. Staff networks are a powerful tool for shifting perspectives. If LGBT+ customers can see that LGBT+ staff feel safe and respected at work, they are more likely to trust that a provider will respect their identity too.

Networks:

- Provide a safe space to socialise, network and find peer-to-peer support
- Act as a sounding board to scrutinise policies and publications
- Build confidence of LGBT+ staff and/or service users
- Act as a platform to enable people to voice concerns with policies or practices
- Support the organisation to identify opportunities for new inclusion strategies.

Staff networks increase LGBT+ visibility in organisations. Several providers have networks which are chaired by very senior staff. The credibility that senior buy-in fosters has driven faster and more effective cultural change, as well as demonstrating a clear organisational intention to take LGBT+ issues seriously.

“Start with staff, before you go out externally. Because if you don’t, you run the risk of it going really hideously wrong.”

Lynne Nicholls, Circle Housing

It is vital that networks are appropriate for the people who use them. One organisation initially had a joint staff and tenant network, but has recently decided to adapt the group to be tenant-only. That is because staff members have reported that they no longer feel it is necessary for them. Similarly, some organisations have separate LGBT+ and ally networks, and others have single networks that are open to anybody. Another provider had chosen to have two co-chairs,

one woman and one man, to prevent dominance of any one sub-group. Decisions such as these should be led by LGBT+ network users themselves.

Research participants of a range of sizes ran internal-only networks, but it is clear that this works most effectively in urban geographies and for organisations with relatively high staff numbers. However, with a little creativity, the challenges of smaller and rural organisations can be overcome.

A rural provider in Norfolk has worked with other housing and non-housing organisations in the county to establish a regional LGBT+ professionals network. It has drawn on the financial capacity of a large corporate insurance firm and the LGBT+ inclusion expertise of the local police force. The housing provider brings its own assets and skills to the network.

HouseProud is a similar cross-organisational, national network for LGBT+ staff in the housing sector, which some smaller providers have found useful to direct their LGBT+ staff towards. Even actions as simple as including information about HouseProud in induction materials for new staff sends a clear message that a housing provider is committed to LGBT+ visibility.

Some providers use networks as a platform from which to listen to LGBT+ staff and customers. For example, one large housing association had decided to introduce an option for customers to choose to speak to an LGBT+ staff member, after a member of their staff network suggested that it would be helpful. While there was not a significant take-up of the scheme, it did make a significant difference for those customers who did opt in. To improve outcomes for LGBT+ customers most effectively, it is crucial that networks are empowered and encouraged to change policy.

There are also other solutions for creating safe spaces for LGBT+ customers to report their challenges. In Leeds, a group of social housing providers has recently overcome negative perceptions by working together with the city council to organise an LGBT+ listening event. It worked with Yorkshire MESMAC (a local specialist LGBT+ organisation) to host the

event at a hotel in the heart of Leeds's LGBT+ scene. By listening to LGBT+ people in a space where they already feel safe, the onus on customers to approach their housing provider themselves is removed and barriers to open communication are broken down.

Championing a visible LGBT+ presence externally

In order to develop an external presence, housing providers can promote LGBT+ visibility by celebrating or commemorating the key events in the LGBT+ calendar.

In the last few years providers have:

- Posted blogs and shared articles in newsletters
- Hosted events
- Attended local and national events
- Displayed the rainbow flag and/or colours on websites, buildings and in business spaces.

All of these activities raise the profile of the LGBT+ community, and demonstrate to LGBT+ people that associations are serious about including them and their lives within their businesses.

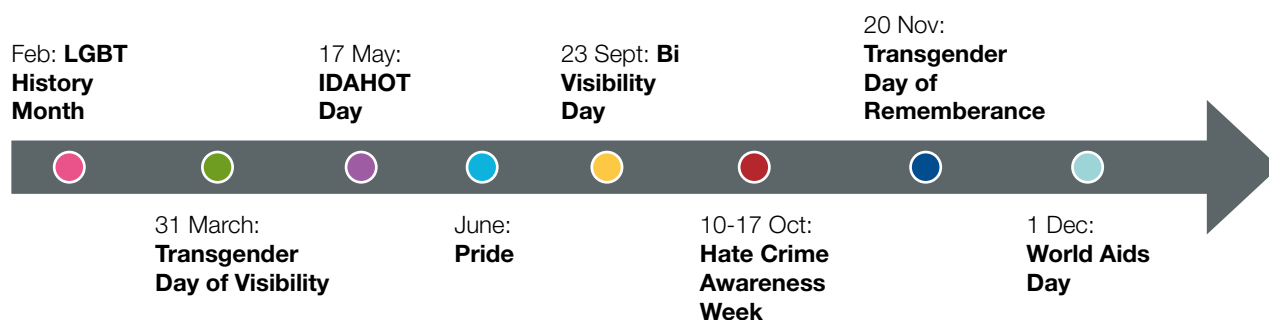


Fig 1. a timeline of the key events in the LGBT+ calendar

Practice tips

- Become a Stonewall employer and participate in the annual Workplace Equality Index
- Train staff, so that they understand what you're doing and why
- Involve staff of all levels, including at the most senior level
- Profile staff who are out as LGBT+ in internal communications to demystify LGBT+ identities
- Seek advice and resources from LGBT+ organisations, other housing providers and other stakeholders in your region
- Value LGBT+ networks as social spaces but ensure that they are empowered to influence policy too
- Use existing LGBT+ safe spaces, so that you go to LGBT+ people rather than expecting them to come to you
- Communicate what you are doing, internally and externally.

Housing

LGBT+ people are more likely to experience homelessness than cisgender and heterosexual people. Among the homeless, especially homeless youth (aged 16-25), 30% are LGBT+ (Albert Kennedy Trust, 2015). In some places, this figure can be as high as 40%.

Reasons why LGBT+ young people are particularly vulnerable to homelessness include:

- Family estrangement or estrangement from social care
- Social isolation
- Fear of negative repercussions from coming out
- Challenges obtaining employment
- Mental health vulnerabilities.

Housing providers are equipped with housing assets that can be key to solving these challenges. Organisations such as the Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT) have worked in partnership with providers to deliver services in accommodation owned and managed by housing associations. One such example is the Purple Door Project which operates as a safe-house for LGBT+ young people in London and is run in partnership between AKT and a large housing provider.

A number of organisations provide general homelessness services and have worked with organisations such as Stonewall Housing to deliver LGBT+ homelessness training for their staff. This is important not just to understand the vulnerabilities which can lead to homelessness for LGBT+ young people, but also to understand the particular challenges that LGBT+ people can experience while homeless. It also helps to ensure that they experience minimal homophobia, biphobia and/or transphobia when they access homelessness services.

Older LGBT+ people also often experience particularly acute housing needs, and may be less likely to disclose their sexuality or trans status due to historic experience of structural and legal discrimination.

Other key issues for older people include:

- Lacking the social support networks upon which they would otherwise rely
- Dementia, which might prevent them from remembering that they are out or have transitioned
- Personal care (this is critical, particularly for trans people, whose bodies are often subject to transphobic scrutiny).

Tonic Housing is an innovative new community interest company, seeking to deliver an Extra Care scheme for older LGBT+ people. It has been working with housing providers across the country to develop a proposed model, which it hopes will lead to the first specialist LGBT+ older people's scheme within the next few years. There is certainly a need, and perhaps also an appetite in the sector, for better, more accessible accommodation for older LGBT+ people. This is a clear message from participants in LGBT+ organisations, the research sector, and both housing associations and local authority housing providers (albeit predominantly those operating in large urban centres).

Safety

LGBT+ people are at risk of violence in public (hate crime and harassment) and in private (domestic abuse) because of their identity. Housing providers are well placed to identify risks and take action to maximise the safety of LGBT+ customers.

Hate crime

In 2014/15, police recorded 5,597 sexual orientation and 605 transgender hate crimes (Home Office, 2015). Between 2011 and 2015, there was an increase in reported hate crime against both groups (ibid). In 2013, one in six LGB people had experienced a homophobic hate crime or incident in the previous three years. Far less is known about the trans experience, but it is likely that levels of violence, sexual assault and fear are as high, if not higher.

Reported evidence indicates that LGBT+ people have had mixed experiences reporting hate crime to their housing providers. It is, therefore, extremely important that organisations have robust hate crime and harassment policies. Although most people report hate crimes to LGBT+ organisations rather than to housing providers or to the police, housing

Resources

1. Stonewall (2013) Homophobic hate crime: the gay British crime survey 2013
2. Kelley, P. (2009) Filling in the blanks: LGBT hate crime in London, Galop
3. Home Office (2015)
4. Hate crime, England and Wales, 2014/15

in their rural area. Although racial crimes have been reported, the team is yet to receive a report of LGBT+ hate crime. This may be because levels of LGBT+ hate crime are low in the area. Alternatively, this may result from the historic perception of housing providers as inaccessible to LGBT+ people being compounded by the perceived homophobia, biphobia and transphobia of the police force. Challenging these perceptions is difficult and requires significant proactive and visible engagement. One possibility would be to hold a reporting hub in an existing LGBT+ hub in the region. Nonetheless, it is positive to see that providers are acknowledging the importance of taking hate crime seriously.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse may occur between same-sex partners, in relationships where one or more parties is trans, and in other family relationships where somebody is LGBT+. A person's LGBT+ status may be perceived by the perpetrator as a trigger for abusive behaviour or it may be incidental to the abuse.

Many housing providers have policies for identifying and reporting abuse, and some also operate domestic abuse schemes and/or refuges. It is paramount that these services are inclusive and appropriate for LGBT+ people. This is even more essential now that Broken Rainbow, the leading national LGBT+ domestic abuse charity, has been forced to close due to a lack of funding. Galop has taken over the telephone helpline service, but not other aspects of the service offered by Broken Rainbow. Where housing providers could previously signpost LGBT+ customers experiencing abuse to Broken Rainbow for specialist support, customers may now be dependent on mainstream local services and may, in some cases, have access to no support whatsoever.

LGBT+ people are no more or less at risk of experiencing domestic abuse than anybody else, but they are less likely to access support. Many of the services that exist are inaccessible. The 'public story' of domestic abuse is also a barrier. There is a perception that domestic abuse only happens in white, heterosexual, intimate relationships, between a cisgender male perpetrator and a cisgender female

victim. Instances of abuse that do not match this pattern – including those involving particularly young or older people – risk being marginalised, minimised or unnoticed.

One housing provider has made same-sex domestic abuse a priority for its organisation. Last year it trained all staff to recognise signs of LGBT+ domestic abuse experienced by colleagues or customers. The organisation has a network of 20 domestic abuse champions, two of whom define as LGBT+. They have services for victims of abuse and for perpetrators, and work with academics, the police and other housing providers across the region – through the North East Domestic Abuse Project – to champion best practice in LGBT+ inclusive services.

“NEDAP is about the North East as a region coming together and getting LGBT+ domestic abuse on the agenda.”

Kelly Henderson, Gentoo Group

Housing providers want to take domestic abuse seriously, but the prospect of approaching same-sex domestic abuse specifically can be daunting. The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) is run jointly by Peabody, Gentoo Group and Standing Together

Against Domestic Violence. It offers an accreditation process for housing providers that supports them to improve their practice in tackling domestic abuse. Providers must demonstrate that their services are inclusive and accessible. There have been over 150 expressions of interest so far. By getting involved, staff confidence and skills are improved, processes are standardised to improve service, local partnerships are maximised and costs are reduced for both organisations and the public purse.

DAHA and national LGBT+ organisations are able to provide housing organisations with the training they need to be able to manage LGBT+ domestic abuse effectively in their communities. Doing so improves the safety of LGBT+ people and their partners, and forms part of a wider picture of organisational inclusion, challenging negative perceptions and building safer, happier communities.

Wellbeing

LGBT+ people are disproportionately vulnerable to mental health challenges. Levels of depression and anxiety are high amongst LGBT+ people, and trans people are particularly susceptible to self-harm and even suicide. Most research suggests that discrimination, bullying, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are the key causes for mental health problems for LGBT+ people.

LGBT+ people are also less likely to have access to services which are inclusive and respectful of their identities. This poses a particular challenge because services are under financial pressure – PACE, London’s leading LGBT+ mental health charity was

Practice tips

- Have and display a clear No Tolerance to harassment policy and apply it consistently in practice
- Train staff to deal appropriately with hate crime and harassment
- Be sensitive and realistic when speaking to victims and signpost them to other support where it is available
- Develop relationships with local LGBT+ organisations so that when tenants report harassment, the LGBT+ organisation is able to refer them back to their housing provider confidently
- Train staff to recognise signs of abuse in LGBT+ relationships and to address them appropriately
- Ensure that written and verbal language is appropriate and inclusive
- Ensure confidentiality, being sensitive to the fear of being outed
- Empower customers to make their own choices about which services they wish to access.

forced to close in January 2016. There are still some local mental health services for LGBT+ people, such as MindOut in Brighton and Hove. However, it is crucial that mainstream mental health services, including those operated by housing providers, are accessible to and safe for LGBT+ people.

None of the providers that took part in this research currently operate mental health services for their customers in general, or specific mental health services for LGBT+ customers. In the context of a challenging economic environment for all specialist services in the wider third sector, there are opportunities here for housing providers. They could be innovators and sector leaders in responding to the demonstrable needs of their communities.

Resources

1. Stonewall (2012b) Mental health Stonewall health briefing
2. Lesbian and Gay Foundation (unknown) Mental health and wellbeing: a guide for lesbian, gay and bisexual people

Practice tips

- Train staff to recognise mental health challenges, and to understand stigma against mental health and LGBT+ identities
- Ensure that staff ask, and use, customers' preferred pronouns
- Identify the LGBT+ services in your local area and display information about them.

5. How can housing providers respond?

In the previous chapter we saw that housing providers are equipped to influence outcomes for LGBT+ people in our communities. How should providers engage with this process? What behaviours should they foster, and when should they progress to the next stages?

The recommendations are designed to support organisations no matter which stage of inclusion they are currently at. For providers new to the subject, Recommendation One is a helpful place to start, which will enable them to identify where the LGBT+ people are within their organisation.

This research demonstrates that most organisations that have engaged in inclusion are good at monitoring, celebrating key events (especially Pride and IDAHOBIT Day), and developing staff networks to maximise LGBT+ visibility. For these organisations, Recommendations Four to Six demonstrate what has been achieved by providers who are further on in their journeys. These latter recommendations will enable organisations to take the next step from LGBT+ visibility to improving housing, safety and wellbeing outcomes tangibly for the LGBT+ people in their communities.

Depending on budget and resources, providers will find some recommendations more achievable than others. Providers with different geographies, governance structures and tenure mixes have each embraced different approaches which align with these recommendations. Therefore, the recommendations reflect a reasonably feasible model for the sector as a whole.

Effective LGBT+ inclusion is embedded within the culture of organisations. It is not dependent on particular members of staff being in post, or on significant orchestration – it organically becomes a part of the way that an organisation behaves.

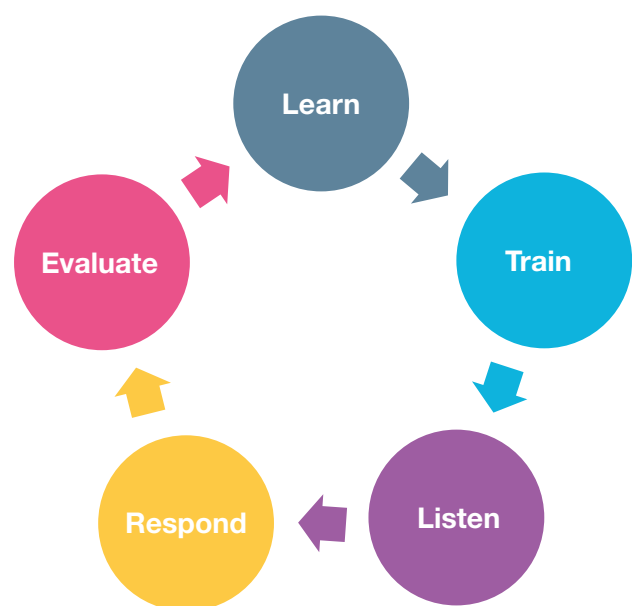
Each recommendation needs to be implemented one at a time, through the following cyclical process:

- Learning about a challenge
- Training staff to approach it appropriately

- Listening to LGBT+ voices
- Taking action to respond to what they say
- Evaluating the response.

Once an approach has been evaluated, the most effective organisations use their learning from this process to inform next steps – continuing the cycle. Implementation should be led from the top of organisations (Chief Executives and Directors), and facilitated by equality, diversity and inclusion staff or human resources teams.

There are potentially considerable resource implications for organisations. However, the options provided under each key principle have varying cost and resource implications and are designed to reflect a spectrum across different organisational capacities. The most likely barrier to effective implementation is that staff and/or customers are either unaware of or lack understanding of changes that are made. Organisations should communicate what they are doing, how and why they are doing it, to staff and to customers. This ensures that everyone is included, and it is a useful tool for building trust amongst LGBT+ people.



1. Monitor sexual orientation and trans status

- Train staff in what to ask, how to ask it and why it matters
- Maintain confidentiality and use the information to improve services Carry out the monitoring process sensitively and transparently.

2. Communicate inclusion

- Explain what you are doing and why to staff and customers
- Ensure that policies and publications use inclusive language and imagery
- Train staff to use preferred pronouns and gender-neutral language
- Develop an internal and external LGBT+ presence
- Maintain and apply consistent No Tolerance harassment policies.

3. Listen to LGBT+ people and organisations

- Listen to your LGBT staff, for example through a staff network
- Analyse trends in feedback from LGBT staff and customers
- Develop relationships with LGBT+ organisations locally, and other housing providers who are engaging in LGBT+ work
- Use this learning to inform training and policy.

4. Signpost to local services

- Understand and signpost to services in your area
- Respond proactively when a solution is within your gift
- Consider ways that you are equipped to respond to gaps in local provision, whether individually or in partnership.

5. Integrate LGBT+ experiences in services

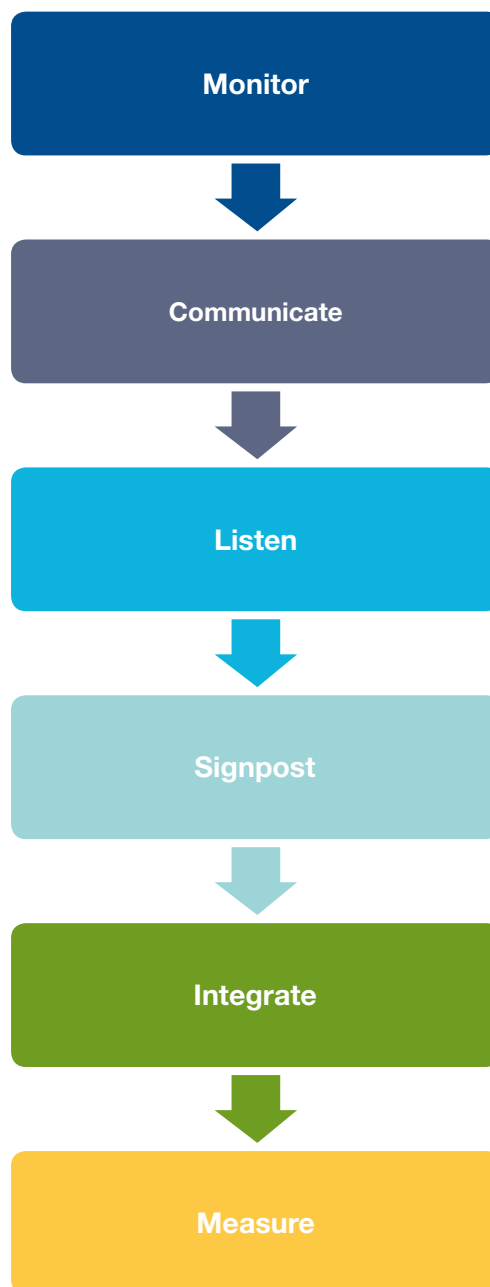
- Ensure that housing, homelessness, domestic abuse and mental health services are accessible to and appropriate for LGBT+ people
- Seek input from specialist LGBT+ organisations, as advisers, trainers or partners, and from LGBT+ staff and customers where appropriate
- Train staff to recognise the particular vulnerabilities that LGBT+ people may experience

6. Measure impact

- Identify appropriate metrics, and measure your impact to demonstrate the effectiveness

of interventions to both internal and external audiences

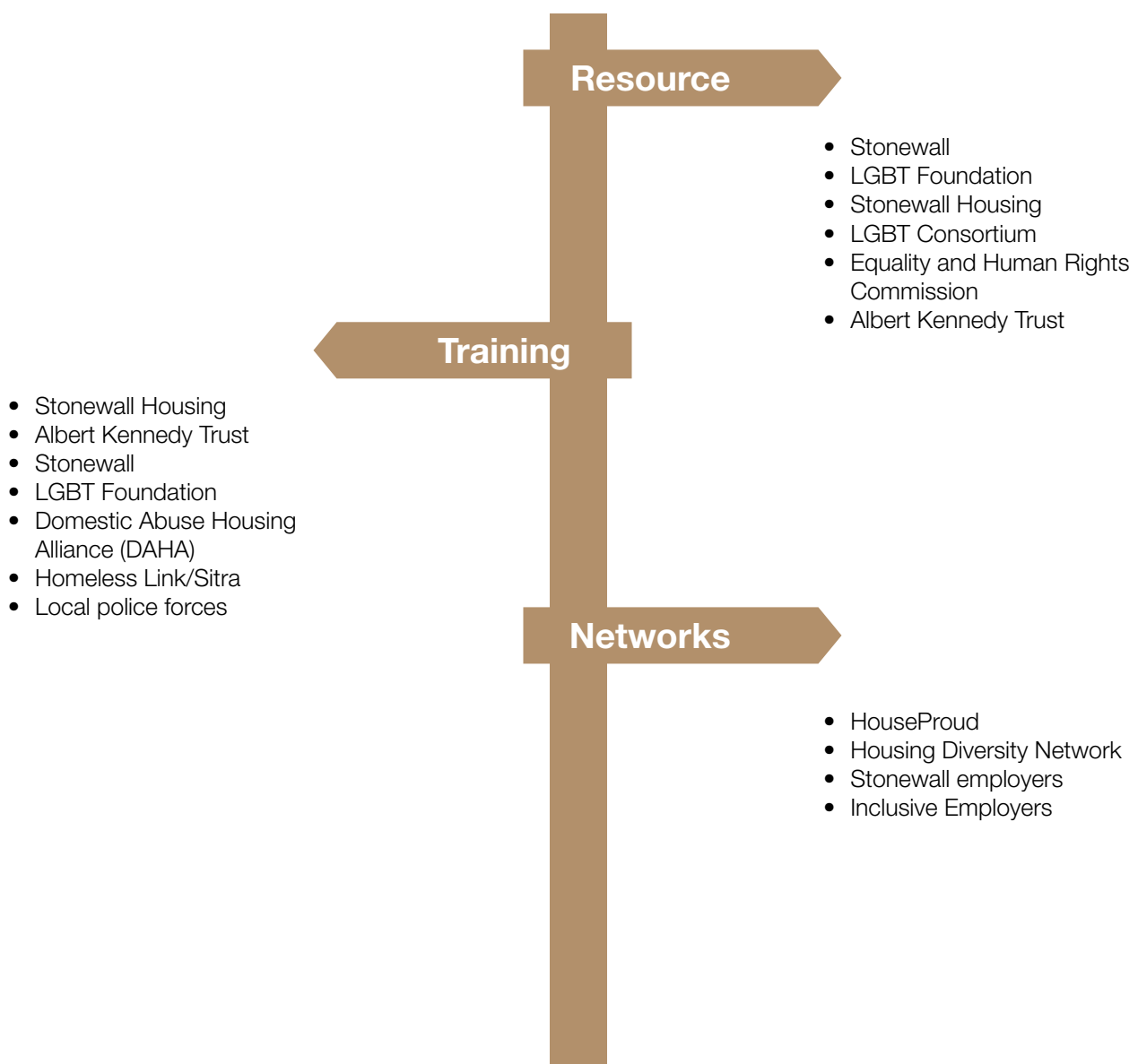
- Think about doing this in partnership, such as working with local LGBT+ organisations to measure the volume of inquiries from your customers
- Communicate this impact across the sector to share best practice



Appendix A: Signposting

There are a number of LGBT+ expert organisations up and down the country, poised to support housing providers to ensure that the services they deliver are accessible and appropriate for LGBT+ people. Many of them operate in smaller local and regional patches, doing grass-roots work which is embedded in the communities in which they operate. Providers interested in improving their LGBT+ service offer should seek out local partners and develop relationships with them to share learning, knowledge and expertise.

For other resources, training and networks at a national level, the following may be useful.



Appendix B: Glossary of specialist terms

The housing sector uses specialist terminology and acronyms, and it is assumed that the audience of this paper has knowledge of this language. The National Housing Federation produces a Housing Jargon Handbook, which may be useful.

There is also a significant quantity of specialist language around LGBT+ identities, interventions and research. This glossary is designed to define the LGBT+ terms that are used in the report, and other key terms which feature prominently in the wider LGBT+ sector.

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Term	Definition
Agender	A person who does not have a gender, or identify with a gender.
Ally (allies)	A person, typically straight and/or cisgender, who supports and respects members of the LGBT+ community.
Aromantic	A person who experiences a lack of interest in forming romantic relationships.
Asexual	A person who has a lack of, or low level, of sexual attraction to others. Asexuality exists on a broad spectrum.
Bigender	A person who fluctuates between traditionally 'woman' and 'man' gender expression, identifying with both genders.
Biological sex	A medical term referring to outward sexual appearance, for example having the reproductive organs (internal and external), hormones and/or chromosomes used to classify an individual as female, male or intersex.
Biphobia	A range of negative attitudes felt and/or expressed towards bisexual people by anyone, including within the LGBT+ community.
Bisexual (bi)	A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to more than one gender. Typically this is understood as referring to attraction to both men and women, but many bi people are attracted to people outside the gender binary. Closely related to pansexuality.
Butch	A person who identifies themselves as masculine.
Cisgender	A person whose gender identity and biological sex assigned at birth align (ie a person who is not trans).
Cisnormativity	The often institutional assumption that everyone is cisgender. Cisnormativity contributes to the invisibility and oppression of trans identities and causes harm to trans people.

Cis-sexism	Behaviour that grants preferential treatment to cisgender people or entrenches the invisibility of trans people.
Coming out	The process by which one comes to accept/identify one's own sexuality or gender identity, and the process by which one shares this identity with others.
Cross-dresser	Someone who wears clothes of another gender/sex.
Demisexual	A person who only experiences sexual attraction once they have already formed a strong emotional connection with them.
Drag King	A person who performs masculinity theatrically.
Drag Queen	A person who performs femininity theatrically.
Femme	A person who identifies themselves as feminine.
Fluid	Gender-fluid or sexually fluid refer to identities that may shift over time.
FtM; Mtf	Abbreviation for female-to-male trans person; abbreviation for male-to-female trans person.
Gay	A person who is primarily attracted to members of the same-sex and/or gender. More commonly used when referring to men, but can be applied to women as well.
Gender binary	The idea that there are strictly two genders.
Gender expression	The visible behaviours and appearance that a person uses to express their gender.
Gender identity	A person's internal, personal sense of being a man, a woman or a person outside of that gender binary.
Gender non-conforming	Someone whose gender expression does not align with gender-based expectations.
Gender normative	Someone whose gender expression aligns with gender-based expectations.
Genderqueer	A gender identity label used by people who do not identify as either man or woman, or as an umbrella term to encompass many different gender non-conforming identities.
Gender reassignment	The process of transitioning from the gender assigned at birth to the gender a person identifies with. This often involves physical changes to the body through surgery and/or hormone treatment.
Gender role(s)	The way that a person understands themselves in relation to the gender identity and/or expression of the people to whom they experience sexual attraction.

Heteronormativity	The often institutional assumption that everyone is heterosexual. Heteronormativity contributes to the invisibility and oppression of LGB+ identities, and causes harm to LGB+ people.
Heterosexism	Behaviour that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, or entrenches the invisibility of LGB+ people.
Homophobia	A range of negative attitudes felt and/or expressed towards members of the LGBT+ community. The term encapsulates negative treatment of bisexual and trans people, but the terms biphobia and transphobia are used to emphasise the particular structural negativity towards bisexual and trans people.
Homosexual	A term used to describe a person primarily attracted to members of the same sex/gender. Extreme caution should be exercised when using this term, as it is widely considered to be stigmatising. Generally, lesbian, gay or queer are more appropriate terms. If in doubt, it is always best to ask the person directly which term they prefer.
Intersex	An intersex person is someone whose biological sex traits (internal and/or external reproductive organs, hormones and/or chromosomes) do not all align as either male or female. For example, a person with both male and female reproductive organs, but male hormones and chromosomes, is intersex. Intersex people may identify as women, men or non-binary people. Some intersex people identify as trans. An intersex person may have any sexual orientation. Biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation bear no direct relationship with one another.
Lesbian	A term used to describe women who are attracted to other women.
LGBT+	Encompassing all gender and sexual identities other than heterosexual cisgender identity. 'LGBT' stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans. 'Trans' is inclusive of all trans identities, and is not limited to transgender men and women. '+' is inclusive, in particular, of queer, questioning, intersex and asexual identities. Where this report uses the term LGB+, it refers to people with sexual identities other than heterosexuality.
MSM / WSW	Men who have sex with men; women who have sex with women. These terms make clear the distinction between sexual behaviour and sexual identity, and also ensure that LGB services do not inadvertently exclude bisexual people.
Non-binary	A gender identity outside the gender binary. Non-binary people often prefer to be referred to with gender neutral pronouns, such as they/them, ze/hir. It is always best to ask somebody what their preferred pronouns are and then make a best effort to use them appropriately.
Outing	Involuntary disclosure of another person's sexuality or trans or intersex status. It is crucial that when providing services for LGBT+ people, confidentiality is ensured at all times.

Pansexual	A person who experiences attraction across a spectrum of gender identities and expressions.
Passing	A term used for a trans person who may be perceived as their self-identified sex/gender; a term for an LGB+ person who is or may be perceived as heterosexual.
Polyamory	The practice of, desire to, or orientation towards having ethical, consensual non-monogamous relationships.
Preferred pronouns	The pronouns by which a person would like to be referred. These may be binary pronouns of he/his or she/her, or gender-neutral pronouns such as they/them or ze/hir. It is always best to ask a person what their preferred pronouns are.
Queer	Historically a term which was used as an LGBT-phobic slur, though many people in the LGBT+ community have reclaimed the label 'queer' as their own. It is now often used as an umbrella for the whole LGBT+ community, or a label for an individual who feels that they exist outside of cisnormative, heteronormative society. Caution should be exercised using this term, due to its history. It is always advisable to use the language that a person adopts for themselves.
Questioning	A person who is unsure about or exploring their sexuality or gender identity.
Self-define / self-identify Sexual identity /sexuality /	Individuals determine for themselves their gender and sexual identity.
sexual orientation	The way that a person expresses sexual feelings for another person, often labelled based on the gender of the person and the people they are attracted to.
Third Gender	A term for a person who does not identify as either a man or a woman, but instead with a third gender.
Trans / transgender	A term used to describe a person whose gender identity differs from the sex the doctor marked on their birth certificate. Some trans people prefer the term 'transgender', while others prefer 'trans'. It is best to ask and be responsive to people's preferences. The umbrella term 'trans' is inclusive of many identities, including trans men and women, genderqueer, two-spirit and agender people. Some people use 'trans*' to indicate explicitly that they refer to the widest possible range of trans identities.
Trans man; trans woman	A person who defines as both trans and a man, or as both trans and a woman.
Transition	The process of identifying and living in a gender that is different to that assigned at birth. Transition may or may not involve physical gender reassignment.

Transphobia	A range of negative attitudes felt and/or expressed towards trans people, including by other LGBT+ people.
Two-spirit	Traditionally a Native American term, this is a label adopted by some people who possess qualities or fulfil roles of more than one gender.
Ze / Hir	Alternative, gender-neutral pronouns preferred by some trans people. Some trans people prefer they/them, but it is always best to ask.

Appendix C: Resource bank

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Appendix D:

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I had to
be
you & work

with #nofilter
me or job with us

