



LGBT Action Plan: Annual progress report 2018 to 2019

Presented to Parliament
by the Minister for Women and Equalities
by Command of Her Majesty

July 2019

CP 115



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ISBN 978-1-5286-1458-0
CCS0619498972
07/19

Printed on paper containing 75% recycled fibre content minimum

Printed in the UK by the APS Group on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office

Contents

Ministerial foreword	1
Executive summary	2
Introduction	4
What we have done	5
Health	5
Education	6
Safety	7
Rights and the Law	9
Sector sustainability	9
Data and monitoring	10
Representation	10
Workplace	11
International	11
What we will do next	12

Ministerial foreword

Last summer I published the Government's LGBT Action Plan against the backdrop of the largest survey of its kind in the world. The National LGBT Survey highlighted how lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people were still forced to hide their identities, fearing for their safety – findings that came as a shock to many.

This year we have seen a number of high-profile physical attacks against people because of their sexuality, and protests ongoing in Birmingham simply because children are being taught about the relationships they may encounter in modern Britain.

These incidents serve as an extremely important reminder that the work of the LGBT Action Plan, and the work of the Government Equalities Office and its partners is as vital as ever.

The Action Plan is wide-ranging, bold and ambitious, containing more than 75 commitments to be implemented across a four-year period. These commitments were designed to positively impact on the entirety of an LGBT person's life.

We've made good progress with some of the key measures in the first year of delivery. Alongside the appointment of my new LGBT Advisory Panel, we have our first Health Advisor on LGBT issues, a new LGBT health fund and have extended an anti-bullying programme in schools across the country.

Crucially, we have consulted on the Gender Recognition Act and how we could improve it. We will respond to this consultation shortly, as well as reporting on the research into the number of young trans people in the UK, and on how we will end conversion therapy.

These issues are of the utmost priority, not just for me, but across government and I am determined to make the changes that will improve the lives of LGBT people in this country.

This report gives an overview of the progress we have made, setting out key milestones for future delivery as we look to ensure that all 75 commitments have been implemented over the next 3 years.

Now, more than ever, is a time to celebrate the diversity we have in this country. And, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Pride, we should double down on our mission to deliver an equal society for everyone, allowing them all to thrive.

Rt. Hon. Penny Mordaunt MP
Minister for Women and Equalities

Executive summary

1. **In July 2018, the Government published the LGBT Action Plan.** The four-year plan contained more than 75 commitments aimed at improving the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT¹) people. It was created in response to the findings of the National LGBT Survey; which we conducted in 2017 and was the largest domestic survey of LGBT people ever undertaken.
2. **The Action Plan was bold in its objectives, and broad in its scope.** We want to tackle inequalities that LGBT people face throughout their lives. The plan commits to tackling issues relating to education, healthcare, safety, at work, and more. Our objective was, and continues to be, to defend, extend and promote the rights and freedoms of LGBT people here and abroad.
3. **We said we would enable Parliament to play a full role in helping to advance LGBT equality, as part of the Action Plan.** This first annual report to the Women and Equalities Select Committee on our progress is part of fulfilling that commitment.
4. **One year on, we are making good progress.** More than one-third of the commitments made in the Action Plan have been delivered, and a similar number of commitments are currently in progress. Moreover, we have exceeded our expected delivery in several areas.
5. **We said we would put LGBT people's needs at the heart of the National Health Service.** We have now appointed the UK's first National LGBT Health Adviser, changed the law to make it easier to access surrogacy as an LGBT person, and more than doubled the number of places available on the PrEP Impact Trial. We have also launched a £1 million programme to trial new approaches to tackling LGBT health inequalities.
6. **We said we would act so that young people feel safe in education and can achieve their potential.** Our world-leading anti-homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying programme exceeded our public targets — having now worked with more than 1,800 schools — and we have extended it for another year to reach even more schools. We have also completed our reforms of Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education, making them inclusive for all children whatever their developing sexual orientation or gender identity.
7. **We said we would act so LGBT people feel safe in their homes and communities.** We updated our Hate Crime Action Plan, and we announced wide ranging measures to tackle domestic abuse with LGBT victims' needs embedded throughout.

¹ When we say 'LGBT people' we mean anyone who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or who has another minority sexual orientation or gender identity, or who has a variation in sex characteristics (sometimes known as 'intersex').

8. **We have acted to support the LGBT voluntary and charity sector to become more sustainable.** We have established a new LGBT Sector and Community Development Scheme, providing small grants, and free training and development opportunities, to staff and volunteers at working in LGBT charitable organisations.
9. **We have also appointed the UK's first LGBT Advisory Panel.** With a diverse range of expertise and backgrounds, this 12 person panel is helping to guide our work and to hold us accountable for delivering the LGBT Action Plan.
10. **We have consulted on reforms to the Gender Recognition Act 2004.** We have also completed a Call for Evidence on the issues faced by people with variations in sex characteristics.
11. **We have delivered a significant amount in a short period of time; but we know we have more to do.** We have started or completed a large proportion of the commitments in the Action Plan in this year alone. We will deliver the remaining commitments by the end of May 2022. We are committed to ensuring everyone can feel safe and be happy to be who they are, and fulfilling our promises in the Action Plan is a big step towards this.

Introduction

12. **In July 2017, the Government Equalities Office launched the National LGBT Survey.** More than 108,000 people responded to the survey by the time it closed in October 2017 — making it the biggest survey of its kind conducted anywhere in the world. The results were published in July 2018, alongside the LGBT Action Plan.
13. **The National LGBT Survey showed that whilst many people had a positive experience of being LGBT in the UK, there was much more progress to be made.** Some of the most important findings included:
 - 13.1. respondents reported being less satisfied with their life than the general UK population (rating satisfaction 6.5 on average out of 10 compared with 7.7). Trans respondents had particularly low scores (around 5.4 out of 10)
 - 13.2. more than two thirds of respondents with a minority sexual orientation said they had avoided holding hands with a same-sex partner for fear of a negative reaction from others
 - 13.3. at least 2 in 5 respondents had experienced an incident because they were LGBT, such as verbal harassment or physical violence, in the 12 months preceding the survey. More than 9 in 10 of the most serious incidents went unreported, often because respondents thought ‘it happens all the time’
 - 13.4. two percent of respondents had undergone conversion or reparative therapy in an attempt to ‘cure’ them of being LGBT, and a further 5% had been offered it
 - 13.5. twenty four percent of respondents had accessed mental health services in the 12 months preceding the survey
14. **The LGBT Action Plan contained more than 75 commitments from across government.** The Action Plan covered a wide range of issues including tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, improving health outcomes for LGBT people, and supporting the LGBT voluntary and charity sector. We committed to deliver all of these commitments by the end of this Parliament in May 2022.
15. **It is now one year on since we published the LGBT Action Plan.** We said we would update on our progress annually, and allow Parliament to scrutinise our work. This report details the progress we have made across government in delivering on our promises.

What we have done

16. **The National LGBT Survey was stark in its findings, and the LGBT Action Plan was bold in its ambitions to address them.** The commitments we made sought to improve the lives of LGBT people in the round. They are challenging and stretching, and we are determined to deliver on them.
17. **We have chosen to focus our efforts in this first year on two areas in particular: health and education.** The National LGBT Survey highlighted some of the starkest experiences in these areas, and we wanted to take swift action. Naturally, this has meant slower progress in some other areas — we have chosen not to start some of our work on themes of representation, data and monitoring, and the workplace to enable us to prioritise the work outlined below.
18. **Overall, we have already made meaningful progress on a majority of the Action Plan.** We have completed around one-third of the commitments we made; and are in the process of delivering the next tranche of activity. A summary of our most significant progress to date is below.

Health

19. **Whilst many respondents to the National LGBT Survey had a positive experience accessing healthcare, the survey showed we had more to do.** Large numbers of respondents had difficulties accessing healthcare and, in particular, gender identity services. Many respondents also experienced inappropriate questioning and curiosity from healthcare staff. Some respondents felt their specific needs were ignored or not taken into account when accessing their healthcare.
20. **We said we would ensure that LGBT peoples' needs are at the heart of the National Health Service.** We have made excellent progress on the commitments we made to achieve this; some of the most significant progress includes:
 - 20.1. **In March 2019, we announced the appointment of the first National Adviser for LGBT Health².** Dr Michael Brady, Medical Director of the Terrence Higgins Trust and a sexual health and HIV consultant at King's College Hospital, will advise the government on how to tackle inequality in the healthcare system. Dr Brady will help us to improve healthcare professionals' awareness of LGBT issues, working with statutory and professional organisations to address the inequalities LGBT people face in physical and mental health services. The Department of Health and Social Care and Government

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-appoints-first-national-adviser-for-lgbt-health>

Equalities Office are committed to the continuation of this role as we approach the next Spending Review.

- 20.2. **In February 2019, the Government Equalities Office announced funding for five organisations working to improve LGBT health and social care**³. Advonet, LGBT Foundation, London Friend, Mind in the City, Hackney and Waltham Forest, and the Royal College of General Practitioners were awarded a share of £1 million of grant funding to undertake innovative pilot projects.
- 20.3. **The Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England delivered on its commitments relating to sexual and reproductive health.** In January 2019, the Department of Health completed its work revising surrogacy legislation, making it easier for LGBT people to adopt. By September 2018, NHS England delivered on its commitment to consider expanding the PrEP Impact trial by funding the drugs and research costs for an additional 3,000 places. In January 2019, the Department of Health and Social Care announced that the trial would be expanded by a further 13,000 places, making the PrEP Impact Trial available to up to 26,000 individuals⁴. The expansion will involve the use of an innovative online service that trial participants will have the option of using for their regular sexual health checks.
- 20.4. **In April 2019 NHS England began a process of national procurement to identify which organisations are best able to deliver adult gender dysphoria services in the future.** Services will have to meet the new service specifications that were agreed through extensive stakeholder engagement and public consultation. The process of procurement is planned to conclude by the autumn of 2019.

Education

21. **A substantial number of respondents to the National LGBT Survey said they had experienced a negative incident during their time in education.** Many had been 'outed' without their consent, or been victims of verbal harassment in education. In addition, very few respondents felt that their education had prepared them for life as an LGBT person.
22. **We said we would act so that young people feel safe in education and can achieve their potential.** We are meeting our commitments in the LGBT Action Plan to achieve this. The most significant progress in this area includes:

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/lgbt-history-month-new-government-support-for-lgbt-groups>

⁴ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2019/02/prep-impact-trial-to-be-expanded/>

- 22.1. **In April 2019, the Department for Education passed regulations to implement mandatory Relationships Education in primary schools and Relationships and Sex Education in secondary schools.** The Department has updated the statutory guidance to support teaching is age-appropriate and relevant to all pupils whatever their developing sexual orientation and gender identity.
- 22.2. **In November 2018, the Government Equalities Office announced a further £1 million of support for anti-homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying interventions in schools⁵.** Barnardo's, Diversity Role Models, Equaliteach, National Children's Bureau, Stonewall and The Diana Award were awarded a share of the funding to extend the existing programme that has now supported more than 1,800 schools in England. The extended programme will run until March 2020, and the Government Equalities Office and Department for Education are considering jointly how to ensure this work is taken forward.
- 22.3. **The Department for Education are supporting teachers to be themselves at work and improve the diversity of the teaching profession.** Regional hubs funded through the Department for Education Equality and Diversity fund, support schools to develop local solutions to support the progression of teachers covered by at least one of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. A number of the Hubs are funding projects specifically targeted at supporting the progression of LGBT teachers and the grassroots organisation LGBT Ed is also engaged in this work. This £2 million fund has been made available across all the Regional Schools Commissioner regions between 2018-2020⁶.

Safety

23. **The National LGBT Survey showed that, despite the progress made on LGBT equality in the UK, most respondents avoided being open about their LGBT identity in public because they feared a negative reaction from others.** Many respondents said they had experienced an incident committed by someone they did not live with, and the majority did not report it to anyone.
24. **We said we would act so that LGBT people feel safe in their own homes, online and in their communities.** We have delivered a range of commitments in this area since we announced the LGBT Action Plan to enable this, including:

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/26-million-to-improve-lives-of-lgbt-people>

⁶ More information, including contact details for regional hub schools can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-and-diversity-funding-for-school-led-projects>

- 24.1. **In October 2018, the Home Office refreshed the 2016 Hate Crime Action Plan⁷.** The Hate Crime Action Plan has committed to a wide-ranging Law Commission review into hate crime, exploring the coverage and effectiveness of existing legislation. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services also published in 2018 their inspection findings on the effectiveness of English and Welsh police forces in identifying, recording and responding to reports of hate crime.
- 24.2. **We have delivered a range of commitments on tackling domestic abuse and supporting victims.** The Home Office and Government Equalities Office have worked together to develop LGBT-specific actions as part of the Government's work on domestic abuse. In January 2019, the Home Office awarded £120,000 per annum to LGBT domestic abuse charity Galop to deliver the National LGBT domestic abuse helpline until March 2022. In January 2019, the Home Office also awarded Galop almost £500,000 to deliver the 'LGBT victims of domestic abuse capacity building' project until March 2021. The project seeks to build capacity to deliver support for LGBT victims of domestic abuse by improving inter-agency support services; raising awareness in LGBT communities; and improving monitoring and reporting of domestic abuse.
- 24.3. **In November 2018, the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government has announced £22 million for domestic abuse services across England⁸.** 63 projects across England are currently being funded, providing tailored support to more than 25,000 survivors and their families – including over 2,200 additional beds in refuges and other safe accommodation. Manchester City Council and Sheffield City Council, as recipients of this fund, are delivering accommodation-based service projects for LGBT victims of domestic abuse.
- 24.4. **In April 2019, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Home Office jointly published the Online Harms White Paper⁹.** The Online Harms White Paper sets out the government's plans for a world-leading package of online safety measures that also supports innovation and a thriving digital economy. This package comprises legislative and non-legislative measures and will make companies more responsible for their users' safety online, especially children and other vulnerable groups. The consultation closed on 1 July 2019. As part of this process, the Department has engaged with LGBT civil society stakeholders to understand the impact of online harms on LGBT users.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hate-crime-plan-refreshed-to-protect-victims-and-promote-shared-values>

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/22-million-for-projects-to-support-domestic-abuse-survivors>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/online-harms-white-paper>

Rights and the Law

25. **The UK has a proud record of defending and extending LGBT rights, both at home and abroad.** We made a range of commitments that build on that record in the LGBT Action Plan. In the last year, we have made significant progress towards meeting these commitments, including:

25.1. **The Government Equalities Office has consulted on reforms to the Gender Recognition Act 2004.** More than 100,000 people responded to the consultation, and the Government will publish its response to the findings later this year.

25.2. **The Government Equalities Office has also undertaken a Call for Evidence into issues faced by those with variations in sex characteristics.** The Government is now analysing the results and will publish the findings once the analysis is complete. The Government Equalities Office has also tendered for a Call for Evidence into non-binary people's experiences which will be running later this year.

Sector sustainability

26. **The National LGBT Survey highlighted that respondents found LGBT-specific charities particularly helpful when seeking support.** LGBT organisations and charities were viewed as the most helpful when handling the most serious incidents experienced by respondents in a number of areas.

27. **Recognising their important role in improving LGBT lives, we said we want to ensure that LGBT organisations and charities are supported to continue to deliver services that LGBT people rely on.** We said we would make the most of their expertise, and that of the wider academic community, in the design and delivery of government's work, and ensure the LGBT charities sector is put on a sustainable footing. To do this, we have delivered on our commitments and gone further:

27.1. **In March 2019, we announced the appointment of our first LGBT Advisory Panel¹⁰.** The panel is advising the Government on how best to implement the commitments in the LGBT Action Plan. Three organisations were invited by the Minister for Women and Equalities to join the Panel permanently: Stonewall, LGBT Foundation, and Consortium. The remaining nine members of the panel were appointed through an open and fair competition process that we launched in November 2018¹¹.

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-appoints-first-national-adviser-for-lgbt-health>

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/lgbt-advisory-panel-recruitment>

- 27.2. **In November 2018, the Government Equalities Office announced £600,000 of funding for LGBT sector development**¹². £200,000 of this funding is being used for training and development of LGBT sector organisations to help them grow, mature and become more sustainable over time. £300,000 of the remaining £400,000 has been distributed through a new ‘LGBT+ Futures Fund’ so far to more than 50 organisations. It is supporting locally based interventions that increase the visibility of diverse LGBT people, and helping LGBT organisations implement initiatives to help them continue to deliver in the long term.

Data and monitoring

28. **We strongly believe that good public services are designed with robust data and evidence.** The National LGBT Survey was a significant contribution to the evidence base relating to LGBT inequalities, and we made further commitments in this area in the LGBT Action Plan. Our progress in this area includes:
- 28.1. **The Cabinet Office has introduced legislation to incorporate sexual orientation and gender identity questions in the 2021 Census.** The ‘Census (Return Particulars and Removal of Penalties) Bill’ was introduced to Parliament on 1 May 2019.
- 28.2. **The Government Equalities Office has published more than 500,000 new data tables from the National LGBT Survey.** We have made these tables easy to access through a new online data viewer¹³, allowing anyone to find information about the experiences of LGBT people in the UK. This data was not available in the research report we published in July 2018.

Representation

29. **Despite the increasing acceptance of LGBT people in wider society, the National LGBT Survey found that survey respondents routinely engaged in avoidance behaviour.** More than two-thirds of respondents with a minority sexual orientation said they had avoided holding hands with a same-sex partner in public, and 67% of trans respondents said they had avoided being open about their gender identity.
30. **We want LGBT people to feel comfortable being authentically themselves in public, and to not feel like they have to hide who they are.** Our most significant progress in this area relates to Pride. The Government Equalities Office supported Pride events in 7 towns and cities in 2018, and — through the LGBT+ Futures Fund — has distributed around £30,000 to 10

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/26-million-to-improve-lives-of-lgbt-people>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-data-viewer>

Pride events across the UK in 2019. The Civil Service more broadly is delivering on its commitment to have an active presence at Pride, with a wide range of departments being represented at Pride events across the UK.

31. **We have also started our work to better consider gender norms and their impact.** The Government Equalities Office has commissioned work that will improve the evidence base on how to shift and challenge gender stereotypes that limit individuals' potential.

Workplace

32. **A majority of respondents to the National LGBT Survey had a positive or neutral reaction when they were open about being LGBT at work.** Some said they had experienced a negative reaction due to being LGBT. Too many respondents felt unable to be themselves at work and that the majority of incidents in the workplace were left unreported.
33. **We said we wanted every workplace to be an inclusive workplace.** As a first step, this autumn the Government Equalities Office will convene a series of events to gather views, and share expertise and experience of both employers and employees across a range of sectors¹⁴.

International

34. **While the UK is a global leader on LGBT rights, we know there is more to do around the world to support LGBT people.** That is why we made a range of commitments on continuing to defend the rights of LGBT people overseas in the LGBT Action Plan.
35. **In June 2019, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office announced that the UK has taken over as chair of the Equal Rights Coalition (ERC), jointly with Argentina, until 2021¹⁵.** Priorities for the UK in their period as co-chair include a refreshed strategy to guide, shape and re-energise the work of the ERC; and the coordination of the ERC's work plan with the Global Equality Caucus. The ERC co-chairs will host an international conference in London in 2020 that seeks to address the key issues facing global LGBT equality. The Government Equalities Office, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development have established a working group and are facilitating discussions between civil society stakeholders to support planning and delivery. The UK also has the honour of hosting the 2020 European LGBTI Focal Points Network's IDAHOT+ Forum and we are considering how best to facilitate hosting two LGBT rights' related events in one year.

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/minister-for-women-and-equalities-penny-mordaunt-stonewall-workplace-conference-london-2019>

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-argentina-take-on-co-chair-of-equal-rights-coalition>

What we will do next

36. **We have made significant progress in delivering the LGBT Action Plan's commitments this year.** We intend to deliver the remainder of the commitments over the next three years. In terms of our next steps, we will be prioritising the following areas:
- 36.1. **We will continue our work on LGBT health care.** The Government Equalities Office will continue to deliver our LGBT health and social care programme, working with our partner organisations; and consider how this is taken forward in the Spending Review. We will look closely at innovative ways to improve the mental health care for LGBT people and the Government Equalities Office will work jointly with the Department for Health and Social Care to develop a plan to reduce suicides among the LGBT population. The NHS will continue with its transformation of adult gender identity services. As part of the process of procurement NHS England will designate one or two Gender Dysphoria Clinics to act as National Trans Health Units, with responsibility for managing a national network of gender dysphoria clinics. NHS England has also begun the process of identifying a number of locations across England that will offer an extended delivery model by trained healthcare professionals in local health settings, including sexual health services and primary care. NHS England will also fund the Royal College of Physicians to develop the United Kingdom's first accredited training course in gender medicine, which will begin accepting recruits in 2019 to 2020. This summer the Government Equalities Office is commissioning research which will explore the nature of adolescents transitioning gender, how this has changed over time, and the reasons for the increase in adolescents, particularly natal girls, wanting to transition.
- 36.2. **We will also continue to deliver our work in creating LGBT-inclusive schools.** The Department for Education is preparing for the roll out of the new Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education subjects starting in September 2020. The Government Equalities Office will continue its anti-bullying programme through to March 2020, and consider jointly with the Department for Education to agree the future of the programme. The Department for Education will publish an update to the Equality Act Guidance for Schools, which includes the protected characteristics of sexual orientation and gender reassignment. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is currently developing guidance for schools on supporting trans pupils, which will be released in due course.
- 36.3. **We will bring forward our proposals to end the practice of so-called 'conversion therapy'.** This is a complex issue, cutting across a number of government departments. The Government Equalities Office has commissioned additional research into this issue, building

on the National LGBT Survey, and started engaging with external stakeholders in anticipation of bringing forward a formal consultation.

- 36.4. **We will complete our research into the experiences of LGBT people who face homelessness.** The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will outline further actions in this area in future updates to the Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 36.5. **We will make further progress on our workplace commitments.** The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service will publish its revised guidance on sexual harassment, and the Government Equalities Office will convene its events focusing on the experiences of LGBT people in the workplace.
- 36.6. **We will publish our response to the findings of the Gender Recognition Act consultation.** The Government Equalities Office is analysing the results and intends to respond to the consultation this year. We will also publish the findings of the variations in sex characteristics and non-binary Calls for Evidence this year.
- 36.7. **We are in the process of planning for our LGBT rights event commitments and details will be shared in due course.** Our LGBT Action Plan contains a commitment to deliver an international conference focusing on the issues LGBT people face around the world during this parliament. We intend to hold the conference in 2020.
- 36.8. **We will continue work to enable government services to appropriately monitor sexual orientation and gender identity.** We are working closely with the Office for National Statistics and the Government Statistical Service to develop monitoring standards for sexual orientation and gender identity across central government.
- 36.9. **The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Home Office will jointly publish a response to the Online Harms White Paper consultation by the end of the year,** and bring forward legislation when parliamentary time allows.
- 36.10. **We will develop and publish guidance for commissioners and providers on how to provide support services for LGBT victims of violence against women and girls, and compliance with the Equality Act 2010.** We will work collaboratively with commissioners, providers and the sector, to develop this guidance by the end of 2020.

ISBN 978-1-5286-1458-0
CCS0619498972