



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

POLICY AND STRATEGY

LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales

Our plan to make Wales the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe.

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Contents

LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales: forewords

A message from the First Minister

Ministerial foreword

LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales: introduction

Introduction

LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales: background

Our vision

How did we get here?

The international context

The making of an LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales

Consultation responses

Improving, implementing, and monitoring actions

Data and research

A plan for all LGBTQ+ people

We will recognise 'intersectionality'

Stakeholder groups: nothing about us without us

LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales: themes, evidence and actions

- A. Human rights and recognition**
 - B. Safety and freedom from discrimination**
 - C. A Nation of Sanctuary for asylum seekers and refugees**
 - D. Healthcare, social care, and welfare**
 - E. Inclusive education**
 - F. Communities, private and family life**
 - G. Participation in Welsh life: culture and sport**
 - H. Inclusive workplaces**
 - I. Impact of COVID-19**
-

LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales: actions and key performance indicators

- A. Human rights and recognition**
 - B. Safety and freedom from discrimination**
 - C. A Nation of Sanctuary for asylum seekers and refugees**
 - D. Healthcare, social care, and welfare**
 - E. Inclusive education**
 - F. Communities, private and family life**
-

G. Participation in Welsh life: culture and sport

H. Inclusive workplaces

I. Impact of COVID-19

LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales: glossary of terms

Glossary of terms

LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales: references

References

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A message from the First Minister

No ground was ever gained for progressive causes without struggle. Whenever the case for change is made, defenders of vested interests and the status quo emerge. Nowhere is this clearer than in the struggle to secure the rights of LGBTQ+ people. The modern history of LGBTQ+ liberation extends over more than 50 years. The cumulative human cost involved in confronting entrenched prejudice has been enormous. The efforts of pioneers have secured really significant advances. But the need for constant vigilance remains. Discrimination and prejudice may no longer be legally or socially acceptable, but they have certainly not disappeared, nor is the effort to secure further advances over.

That is why this ambitious, cross-government LGBTQ+ Action Plan seeks to tackle the existing inequalities experienced by LGBTQ+ communities, to challenge discrimination, and to create a society where LGBTQ+ people feel safe to live and love authentically, openly, and freely as themselves.

This Plan is a statement, a powerful statement, of our determination to go on, walking down that road together here in Wales, to build on a movement of formidable courage. We are determined that, by working together and standing up for what we know to be right, we can create that equal and beautiful Wales we all want to see.

This is our first Plan to focus on responding to the specific needs, diversity, and vulnerabilities of our LGBTQ+ communities. For the first time, we have brought together our existing commitments and set out how we intend to advance LGBTQ+ equality and inclusion, to make a real difference to the life chances, prospects, rights, and outcomes for LGBTQ+ people, into the future.

We have also strengthened the ways in which we will deliver the Plan and be held accountable for it. We have secured a realistic budget and evaluation strategy to monitor success during this Senedd term. Our aim is to close the gap between publishing an Action Plan, and seeing it implemented. In fact, work to implement this plan has already begun.

We know that issues being faced by LGBTQ+ communities are often multidimensional: that is why this Action Plan has a focus on intersectionality. It aligns closely with all our work to advance human rights and reduce inequality relating to gender, disability, faith, age, and race; how this intersects with LGBTQ+ rights with no-one left behind, will be key to this Plan's success.

I hope you will enjoy reading the Plan for what it is, the accumulation of the efforts of so many people here in Wales but still only the first step in a journey which certainly does not end here.

Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS.

First Minister of Wales.

Ministerial foreword

The Welsh Government stands together with and within our LGBTQ+ communities in Wales. That's why LGBTQ+ rights are embedded in our Programme for Government, are a key component of the Co-operation Agreement with Plaid Cymru, and why we have developed this bold Action Plan. This plan strengthens protections for LGBTQ+ people, promotes equality for all, and helps co-ordinate actions across Government, communities and the country in order to achieve our ambition of making Wales the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe.

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, these values are even more central to creating a fairer, more prosperous and a more equal Wales. Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, intersex, asexual, aromantic, queer and questioning people (LGBTQ+) is at the heart of this commitment.

We want Wales to be a nation where everyone feels safe to be themselves, to be open about their sexual orientation, gender, and gender expression, at home, in work or at leisure, without feeling threatened. This Action Plan must form part of our collective commitment to create a Wales where everyone feels free,

supported, and safe to be, and live their lives as, our authentic selves.

A Wales where people like me don't need to wonder whether it is safe to hold our partner's hand in public; a Wales where slurs and snide remarks, whether online or on the streets, is no longer commonplace, and a Wales where hate is consigned to history. We've come a long way in the past few decades when it comes to LGBTQ+ rights, but LGBTQ+ people can still face discrimination and harassment, whether in the workplace, education, family settings, healthcare, social care, and more. However, we are in an age where it can feel like we are under attack, and that our rights are at risk of being rolled back: whether that is around the world or, sadly, slightly closer to home, with the apparent regressive position on LGBTQ+ rights being pursued by the current UK Conservative Government. There is a sense of history repeating itself, from the language of vilification, fear and othering targeted at the trans community to the toxic mix of misogyny and homophobia that many of us are all too familiar with.

This must change, and the work on creating that change has begun.

The LGBTQ+ Action Plan has been developed in collaboration with a wide range of communities and organisations across all parts of Wales. The goals and actions have been shaped jointly with LGBTQ+ people and we made 'Nihil de nobis, sine nobis' ('nothing about us without us') one of the values that underpins this Action Plan and our approach. We are incredibly grateful to everyone, particularly the LGBTQ+ Expert Panel, for their contribution to this work, and the willingness of LGBTQ+ people to extend their trust in believing in the possibility of positive change.

Together, in the past few years, we have already made progress in Wales. We have pushed forward with curriculum reform, embedding LGBTQ+ inclusive education. We established a gender identity service to help our trans communities be their true selves. We became the first nation in the UK to offer PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, an anti-HIV drug) free on the NHS. We have supported Pride Cymru and grassroots Pride events in communities across Wales.

We published the HIV Action Plan for Wales for consultation in 2022. The plan aims to reach the target of zero new HIV transmissions by 2030, to tackle late diagnosis in Wales and HIV-related stigma, and improve the quality of life of people living with HIV. We continue to develop our gender service in Wales, which reports shorter waiting times for first assessment than comparable NHS gender services in England and is committed to reducing waiting times further. We are also committed to improving the pathway for supporting transgender young people in Wales. The Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee, responsible for the service, will look at available evidence to further define the clinical service model for the future, and community voices will be front and centre of this work.

Our commitment to support LGBTQ+ people seeking sanctuary in Wales and demonstrate our international duty to show leadership on equality has never been more important. We have called out the UK Government, expressing our horror at their plans to send asylum seekers to Rwanda. This would be devastating for LGBTQ+ people, placing them at risk of ill treatment, discrimination, arbitrary arrest, and detention. Our place in the world and LGBTQ+ issues beyond our borders remain important to us, we have a duty to do what is right at home, including challenging and working with UK Government and abroad, using our platform to engage and influence.

Here in Wales, we are committed to leaving no stone unturned when it comes to banning conversion practices for all LGBTQ+ people. Working with Plaid Cymru as part of the Co-operation Agreement, we have started complex work, including seeking legal advice to determine all the levers we have for a ban in Wales, developing our campaign to raise awareness of support services and the horrors of conversion practices, and we have established a Working Group of experts to advise government. We are proud of our progressive approach in Wales, doing things differently and working together in partnership with Plaid Cymru towards creating a more inclusive and supportive society, politics and nation.

We know we need to ensure the voices and lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people need to be not just heard but acted upon. The way in which we developed this Plan made sure that these personal stories and experiences

were written into this work. People generously gave their time, and many shared their experiences of discrimination and hostility as citizens in Wales. They also shared their achievements as advocates, workers, and leaders; as researchers, experts, and professionals; and as communities. This Plan is a culmination of an effort to sustain open and dynamic dialogues within and between the Welsh Government, local government, academics, activists, community groups, and individuals from the breadth of the LGBTQ+ communities in Wales.

During a visit to meet with the Digion group from Ysgol Plasmawr in Cardiff, I asked the students what message they would want us to share in a statement to mark Pride Month 2022. The message was clear:

“ I don't just want to be tolerated, I want to be celebrated”. ”

The greatest tribute we can pay to the pioneers that paved the way for people like me, is to continue to work together in common cause, to speak up, stand up and play our own part in achieving a fairer future where we feel safe, supported, and celebrated. Together in Pride and towards progress, we can create the Wales we want to be and become the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe.

Hannah Blythyn MS.

Deputy Minister for Social Partnership.

Introduction

LGBTQ+ rights are human rights.

The Welsh Government wants to make Wales the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe. It is an ambitious goal, but we believe we can support all LGBTQ+ people in Wales to live their fullest life: to be healthy, to be happy, and to feel safe.

As a government, we stand with our LGBTQ+ communities. That is why LGBTQ+ rights are embedded in our Programme for Government commitments ([Welsh Government 2021a](#)), are a key component of the Co-operation Agreement ([Welsh Government 2021b](#)) with Plaid Cymru, and why we have developed this ambitious Action Plan. Our aim, through this plan, is to show our clear commitment to respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the human rights of all LGBTQ+ people in Wales ([OHCHR 2022a](#)).

This plan will act as the framework for LGBTQ+ policy development across government and with our partners. It sets out the concrete steps we will take to strengthen equality for LGBTQ+ people, to challenge discrimination, and to create a society where LGBTQ+ people are safe to live and love authentically, openly and freely as themselves.

This LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales has been established to help coordinate action by the Welsh Government and other agencies. The plan sets out an overarching vision to improve the lives of, and outcomes for, LGBTQ+ people. It includes a wide range of policy-specific actions relating to human rights, education, improving safety, housing, health and social care, sport, culture, and promoting community cohesion. In particular, through this Action Plan, the Welsh Government commits to defend and promote the rights and dignity of trans and non-binary people, and to make those communities feel welcome and included in Welsh society.

For the first time, we have brought together our existing commitments and set out how we intend to advance LGBTQ+ equality and inclusion, to make a real difference to the lives, prospects, and outcomes for LGBTQ+ people, today and in the future.

Our vision

We developed a vision, or a higher-level framework, that can guide us towards what we want to achieve with this Action Plan. This will help us all pull in the

same direction, and towards the same destination. We believe in the importance of creating sustainable, long-term change, starting today. We have gained commitment from a wide range of partners in the creation of this Action Plan who share our vision:

For all LGBTQ+ people, we will:

- strengthen equality and human rights ([Welsh Government 2022a](#))
- make Wales a safer place
- make Wales a Nation of Sanctuary for LGBTQ+ migrants
- improve healthcare outcomes
- ensure education in Wales is inclusive
- improve inclusion and participation in all areas of life
- listen to, and work with, our LGBTQ+ communities
- defend and promote the rights of trans and non-binary people

This Plan sets a benchmark for how we will achieve these challenging and ambitious goals and build a society where LGBTQ+ people are included and celebrated.

“ Forty years ago, gay and bisexual people were subject to hateful slurs and prejudiced attacks. Trans people today are being subjected to a similar barrage of hate-fuelled debates. We believe that extending rights for one group does not mean eroding rights from another. We do not believe improving rights for trans women will damage rights for cisgender women and girls. Our trans communities are hurting, they're afraid, and they're experiencing harm. As a society, we can and must do better than this”. ”

Hannah Blythyn MS, Deputy Minister for Social Partnership ([Senedd Cymru 2022a](#)).

How did we get here?

We have come a long way in the past few decades when it comes to strengthening equality and human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, non-binary, intersex or VSC (or Variations of Sex Characteristics), asexual, and aromantic people in Wales and across the UK, in short, all LGBTQ+ communities. However, we cannot be complacent, with LGBTQ+ rights often under attack, and hard-fought-for rights at risk of being rolled back around the world, including here in the UK.

Changes to the law have meant schools, organisations and public services are now doing much more to advance these rights and tackle LGBTQ+ discrimination. Equal marriage and adoption rights are now a reality and we have now consigned Section 28 to history; a law passed in 1988 that stopped local authorities and schools "promoting the teaching of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship" (**Local Government Act 1988**). We have seen a huge shift in positive public attitudes towards LGBTQ+ communities and for LGBTQ+ inclusion, as well as gaining a better picture of LGBTQ+ groups in Wales. The inclusion of voluntary questions on sexual orientation and gender identity, asked for the first time in the 2021 Census, can serve as an example of this (**Office for National Statistics 2023; Welsh Government 2023**), where 92.4% of the population aged 16 years and over responded to the voluntary sexual orientation question in Wales, and c.77,000 usual residents in Wales selected an LGB+ sexual orientation in 2021.

However, many continue to face significant barriers to participating fully and equally in Welsh society. In a survey commissioned to support development of this Plan in summer 2020 (**Welsh Government 2021c**), it was found that, among those who took part in the survey, 78% of respondents have avoided being open about their sexual orientation or gender for fear of a negative reaction from others. Furthermore, 46% of LGBTQ+ people in Wales had experienced verbal harassment in the year prior to the survey. Such findings show the distressing experiences LGBTQ+ people continue to go through in Wales today and demonstrate how far we still have to go to achieve equality,

and for people to feel happy and safe by just simply being who they are.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, we knew LGBTQ+ communities were more likely to experience a range of inequalities or worse outcomes compared with heterosexual and cisgender populations ([WCEC 2022](#); [Welsh Government 2021c](#); [Welsh Government 2021d: page 3](#)). In particular, those communities reported experiencing:

- lower life satisfaction levels
- poorer access to healthcare services
- bullying, discrimination and hate crime in school, the workplace or in their communities
- higher-level of substance misuse, including alcohol and smoke
- poorer mental health including loneliness, depression, and suicide

These disadvantages are further exacerbated when the specific needs and vulnerabilities of being LGBTQ+ intersects with other protected characteristics including age, race, religion, and disability ([Switchboard 2018](#)).

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the structural inequalities faced by the most marginalised and disadvantaged LGBTQ+ communities in Wales and in some cases has made those inequalities worse ([WCEC 2022](#)). For LGBTQ+ people, research highlights ongoing concerns in education, personal and community safety, health and social care, and the workplace ([Welsh Government 2021c](#)). The Welsh Government commissioned research, a review of existing evidence, and published a report in April 2022 on the impact of COVID-19 on LGBTQ+ communities, and a similar picture emerged ([WCEC 2022](#)). These reports also highlighted the need for improved strategic coordination on LGBTQ+ issues, including collection of robust data, and using data to improve policies. Moreover, additional observations by Welsh Government, for instance in the Locked Out report ([Welsh Government 2021e](#)) and in our response to the COVID-19 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Socio-economic Sub-Group Report ([Welsh Government 2020a](#)), revealed further inequalities experienced during the pandemic by ethnic minority communities and disabled people in Wales.

Emerging evidence also suggests LGBTQ+ people may have faced barriers in being unable to access healthcare services or medication as a result of the pandemic, while in certain cases being at increased risk of violence, abuse, homelessness, lower rates of employment, social isolation and loneliness ([EHRC 2020](#); [LGBT Foundation 2020](#); [EHRC, 2018a: pp139–140](#)). Research shows that LGBTQ+ people are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse ([EHRC 2018a: pp139-140](#)). Furthermore, LGBT Foundation’s Domestic Abuse Support Programme has seen demand for support rise since lockdown measures were introduced: a 38% rise in the number of people referred for domestic abuse support, and a 38% increase in calls to the helpline referring to domestic abuse ([LGBT Foundation 2020](#)). LGBT young people are more likely to find themselves homeless than their non LGBT peers, comprising up to 24% of the youth homeless population ([Albert Kennedy Trust 2015](#)) and employment rates are considerably lower for trans and non-binary people, and lower again for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic people who are transgender ([GEO 2018a](#)). Parts of the LGBTQ+ population are also more likely to be lonely or socially isolated, especially older people ([LGBT Foundation 2020](#)).

The actions within this plan aim to address several of these issues and barriers, through providing tangible and measurable actions to be taken to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ people in Wales. Progress can and never should be taken for granted and more work needs to be done for Wales to lead by example and safeguard the hard-won freedoms of LGBTQ+ people.

The international context

We have witnessed a rise in anti-LGBTQ+ attitudes and hostility in many parts of the world. Looking at our neighbours in Europe, including within the UK, we have seen a rise in anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric. However, this is at odds with strong levels of support among the public to tackle exclusion of LGBTQ+ people. As the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association stated in their 2022 report, there are 2 sides to the story that clearly emerge ([ILGA-Europe 2022a](#)):

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“ On 1 hand, there was a severe rise in 2021 of anti-LGBTI rhetoric from politicians and other leaders, which has fuelled a wave of violence, with anti-LGBTI hate crime reported in every country this year; while on the other the response to this has been an allied determination in many countries, and at the European level, to tackle hatred and exclusion of LGBTI people”. ”

We should not fail to acknowledge that the UK, once ranked the most LGBT-friendly nation in Europe, finished in 14th place in the most recent European rankings ([ILGA-Europe 2022b](#)). We must recognise that disadvantage, inequality, and discrimination remain a reality for many LGBTQ+ people living in Wales. More broadly, the human rights of LGBTQ+ people are under continuing or renewed threat in many countries.

From an international perspective, this Action Plan is underpinned by the Human Rights-based approach set out by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([UNSDG 2022](#)) and the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (IESOGI) ([OHCHR 2022b](#)), and supports the realisation of rights guaranteed to LGBTQ+ people included those in the:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- United Nations Principles for Older Persons (UNPOP)

In this respect, we also welcome the UN Human Rights Council decision to renew the mandate of the UN IESOGI in July 2022 ([OHCHR 2022c](#)). In 2016, when the Council created the first ever IESOGI mandate in the human rights system, it sent the clear message to the world that all LGBTQ+ people, with no exception, should be able to live a life free of violence and discrimination. The renewal of the mandate was not a given, and we are pleased that this important

work will continue, showing clear support for tackling violence and discrimination against people of diverse sexual orientations and gender globally.

This approach ensures the Plan will also contribute strongly to the Welsh Government's fulfilment of its Public Sector Equality Duty functions, under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It will link to related work on gender equality, disability, race, and other protected characteristics under this Act. We recognise the need to ensure our equality Action Plans work together.

While this is the first policy framework to focus on the specific needs and vulnerabilities of LGBTQ+ people, it forms part of a wider approach to mainstream equality and strengthen human rights protections for everyone. As such, it should be read alongside our Strategic Equality Plan, Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, Framework for Action on Disability, and Gender Equality Plan ([Welsh Government 2020b](#); [Welsh Government 2022b](#); [Welsh Government 2019a](#); and [Welsh Government 2020e](#)).

The making of an LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales

The Welsh Government has worked with a wide range of LGBTQ+ communities and the organisations that support these communities to help develop this Action Plan. In the summer of 2020, we commissioned a survey to capture LGBTQ+ people's lived experiences in Wales, alongside holding a series of focus groups. Some of the important subjects raised in the survey, to which over 600 responses were received, included (1) tackling LGBTQ+ discrimination, (2) improving safety, and (3) addressing health inequalities, particularly trans health.

Focus groups looked at the needs of LGBTQ+ young people; older people; disabled people; and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, and we also worked with other organisations including the Wales TUC, Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales, Pride Cymru, and LGBT Helpline Cymru.

In November 2020, we brought together an LGBTQ+ External Reference Group

to provide advice and guidance and in January 2021, the Independent LGBTQ+ Expert Panel was established to provide detailed advice on LGBTQ+ equality in Wales. We are indebted to the wide range of stakeholders from across communities who have worked with us to get to this stage, particularly the Independent LGBTQ+ Expert Panel. This Expert Panel was comprised of people with a depth of community-based, professional, and academic experience, as well as personal lived experience. The work of the Panel was enhanced by separate working groups which considered many issues in more detail. The Expert Panel produced a report ([Welsh Government 2021c](#)) including recommendations on incorporation of human rights into domestic law, strategic coordination and integration of plans, and training, awareness-raising and capacity building.

The report included recommendations for a broad range of policy areas, including:

- recognition of trans and non-binary people
- safety
- home and communities
- health and social care
- education and lifelong learning
- workplace
- supporting the COVID-19 response

These recommendations formed the basis of the draft LGBTQ+ Action Plan on which the Welsh Government consulted from July to October 2021 ([Welsh Government 2021c](#)).

Consultation responses

More than 1,300 responses were received from individuals and organisations, offering views on the proposed Plan. A full analysis of the responses was undertaken by an external research company which has been used to help

finalise the action plan. We are grateful to all individuals and organisations that took the time to respond to the consultation. A summary of consultation responses has been published along this Action Plan.

There were 2 significant campaigns identified within the responses. One centred on banning conversion practices, sometimes known as “conversion therapy”, and advocated a more explicit definition within the Action Plan. These responses felt that a clearer definition would be valuable in ensuring a balanced application of the law. Another campaign centred on concerns and the belief that issues relating to sex, sexual orientation, and gender should be addressed under a separate action plan.

In this respect, it is important to set out that the Welsh Government’s position on trans people is clear ([Welsh Government 2020c](#); [Senedd Cymru 2022b](#)):

“ Trans women are women, trans men are men, and non-binary identities are valid”. ”

Through Impact Assessments, engagement with the LGBTQ+ Expert Panel, and the consultation responses, we continue to evaluate potential effects of our LGBTQ+ Action Plan. We have developed an Integrated Impact Assessment, we evaluated the potential effects of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan on women’s rights and, in considering provision set out in Schedule 3 of the Equality Act 2010, we are of the view that support for LGBTQ+ people and publishing this Plan will not result in the erosion of the rights of women, including cisgender and transgender women.

Improving, implementing, and monitoring actions

In response to our consultation on the draft Action Plan, the need for clarity on some actions and their implementation was raised. Some of the actions were described as too broad and more detailed proposals were required, including

who was responsible for each action (e.g., “action owners”), when each action would be undertaken, and what the outcome would be for LGBTQ+ people in Wales. It was also mentioned that, throughout the draft Action Plan, actions concerning research and collection of data were suggested multiple times, without clear purpose or aims. Finally, a recurrent point was around unclear terminology and the need to provide a glossary of terms.

To clarify those aspects, we have separated out the vision we have for the LGBTQ+ Action Plan and the wider outcomes we want to achieve with the updated actions. The table of actions “LGBTQ+ Action Plan: Actions and Key Performance Indicators” has been updated to set out some measurable activities, including outputs; who is responsible for each action; how each action will be carried out; and how we will measure success. Actions concerning research and data collection have been clarified in the context of achieving a specific aim, whether on improving services or devising strategies and plans in a specific area. We aim to provide an annual progress update to show what has been achieved and what more needs to be done and, ultimately, we hope to measure the impact of this Action Plan on LGBTQ+ communities in future. A glossary of terms, which has been shared with representatives of LGBTQ+ communities for accuracy and inclusion, has been added to this plan.

Measuring the impact of this Action Plan on LGBTQ+ communities will be crucial in evaluating its success and efficacy. Work will be done initially by the Welsh Government to outline how this Action Plan can be evaluated. This includes developing a theory of change to account for how activities will lead to desired outcomes and impacts, and upon which assumptions this success is based. We will also identify what information can be used to indicate the impact of the Action Plan, and whether this data is already collected by Welsh Government and other public bodies or if further data need to be collected. Designing and implementing the evaluation of the Action Plan will be undertaken in close collaboration with Welsh Government’s Equality, Poverty and Children’s Evidence and Support Division.

The impact of this Action Plan, and other Welsh Government Action Plans, will depend on our approach to implementation. An intersectional approach will be

crucial. Through our work with internal and external stakeholders, we will consider and draw-in expertise from across a range of protected characteristics, to ensure that combined impacts are considered, as the Plan is put into action. Our internal stakeholder group, mostly composed of Deputy Directors and Heads of Policy, will be a central point for the governance of LGBTQ+ related work in the Welsh Government, and ensure that work is joined up in shaping and delivering the plan. Governance frameworks for all other equality plans will also be adjusted for the same purpose, and reporting mechanisms, including risk reporting, identified, and put in place.

The Welsh Government's activities affect more than 3 million people every day. Impact Assessment (IA) is a structured way to consider the factors that mean our policies affect different people's lives in different ways. Impact assessment guides us to better policy making and implementation and it supports our efforts to work collaboratively across portfolios to deliver the Ministers' vision to make a real difference for people in Wales. It is the process of identifying the possible consequences of a current or proposed action, and it plays an important part in options appraisal and decision making. This is the reason why our Impact Assessments are published alongside this LGBTQ+ Action Plan, including the assessment of impact through our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) approach.

Data and research

The collection and analysis of data, including personal narratives from those who are experts by experience, is key to understanding the extent of the inequalities facing LGBTQ+ people in Wales. We are aware we must do more to improve the collection and reporting of equality data in Wales. Hence, we have established the Welsh Government Equality Evidence Unit which will provide cross-cutting analytical support to improve the collation, availability, and use of equalities evidence which in turn can help drive forward on-the-ground change to tackle inequalities in Wales. For instance, for those Actions in this Plan where Welsh Government leads on data collection and use, best practice concerning

compliance with GDPR will be used.

It is important for Welsh Government to collect actionable evidence about its ability to deliver government priorities, and whether or not they are effectively implemented. The lawful basis for processing information as part of any data collection exercise is our public task; that is, exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government. There may be occasions when we collect special category data and the lawful basis for processing this information is that it is for statistical or research purposes. All personal data provided to Welsh Government is held on secure servers, with contact details and any personal data we collect stored in restricted folders. Research projects might have different requirements when it comes to how long personal data is retained, hence participants of each research project will be informed separately of the relevant data destruction timeframe.

All data collected by Welsh Government will be reported in an anonymised format. Welsh Government reports will not contain contact details and any identifiable information in open-ended answers will be removed. This will always be the case unless otherwise agreed with the individual(s) concerned. Under UK GDPR, providers of personal information to Welsh Government have the following rights:

- to access a copy of their own data
- for us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to object to or restrict processing (in certain circumstances)
- for their data to be 'erased' (in certain circumstances)
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Phone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113. Website: ico.gov.uk. The Welsh Government's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at: Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ, Email: DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales.

A plan for all LGBTQ+ people

The consultation responses pointed to the lack of acknowledgement of certain LGBTQ+ groups or communities, such as bisexual, intersex, and asexual and aromantic people (Ace/Aro) in the Action Plan, as well as the lack of focus on the experiences of non-binary people. Some of the actions now clearly state that they concern all groups under the broader LGBTQ+ umbrella, which includes those communities; while others specifically address the needs of underserved groups, such as bisexual, non-binary and intersex people.

Stakeholder groups have recommended that we should use the acronym LGBTQ+ in relation to this work. Both the Expert Panel and the Welsh Government recognise there are different views and usages across our communities, and that practice is likely to change again in future. For further details, please see our Glossary of Terms.

This Action Plan will be published in the most accessible form possible, to make sure that it reaches all LGBTQ+ people, including young people and disabled people. When the plan makes reference to LGBTQ+ people, this includes people of all ages.

The Welsh language is one of the treasures of Wales. It is part of what defines us as people and as a nation. Our ambition as Welsh Government is to see the number of people able to enjoy speaking and using Welsh reach a million by 2050. At the beginning of the 6th Senedd, the Welsh Government published a 5 year work programme for delivering “Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers” during 2021 to 2026 ([Welsh Government 2022c](#)). Whilst not a protected characteristic, Welsh speaking LGBTQ+ people also have specific Welsh language needs and intersectional identities. Therefore this LGBTQ+ Action Plan should be read in combination with the Welsh Language strategy and plans, considering the role of Welsh language across the activities outlined below. The Welsh language, and the responsibility for acting to protect it, belongs to us all. Everyone has their role, regardless of where they live or how much Welsh language they can speak. We hope to see more organisations and

public leaders taking responsibility for the language.

We will recognise 'intersectionality'

Recognising the intersecting needs across several characteristics of an individual or group such as sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, disability, and religion, is often defined as “intersectionality” (see below, “Glossary of Terms”). In the responses, there was a clear desire to see more recognition of LGBTQ+ people as individuals, who may have many other aspects and layers of their identity and lives. Some of these other characteristics can also be linked to additional barriers or inequality. As a government, we believe we should not be addressing LGBTQ+ inequalities in isolation, which is the motivation behind the Action Plans to address minorities, underserved, or disadvantaged groups.

The LGBTQ+ Action Plan is intended to be used alongside other plans and initiatives, such as the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, Framework for Action on Disability, and Gender Equality Plan, to make sure that all discrimination is addressed and reduced for everyone, whatever their personal circumstances. For instance, the Welsh Government has a clear plan to develop and implement learning disability policy from 2022 to 2026, and guidance to support the delivery of autism services. Additionally, our Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence National Strategy 2022 to 2026 aims to take action to tackle violence, gender inequality and misogyny head on gender-based violence, misogyny, and sexism remain issues faced by many LGBTQ+ people. Therefore, when working we must consider other aspects of discrimination and how they intersect with disability, gender, age, race, and LGBTQ+. The above-mentioned strategies and plans should also be used in conjunction with this LGBTQ+ Action Plan.

“ Attaining cultural humility with the full appreciation of the intersectionality of humanity is an ultimate educational goal”. ”

Stakeholder groups: nothing about us without us

In rewriting this plan we aimed to say what we will do, in clearer terms, especially concerning the work with communities and groups across Wales. The active role of stakeholders and community representatives has been a key component during the development of this plan. This vital engagement will continue as we move to implement the actions. We will continue to listen to and understand the needs of groups, organisations and communities under the broad LGBTQ+ umbrella.

The LGBTQ+ Expert Panel, which provided invaluable help in the formation of this plan, will be refreshed and formalised into an ongoing advisory group that will continue to provide advice and insight to help the implementation of the plan, focusing on the needs of LGBTQ+ communities in Wales.

We will also continue to improve and increase our engagement with grassroots organisations that support LGBTQ+ people in Wales, as well as groups across Wales who have a direct interest in this area of policy. Particular attention will be given to the matter of banning conversion practices and to the establishment of a working group of people with professional and lived experiences in this area.

A. Human rights and recognition

Vision: we will strengthen equality and human rights

We will continue our support for LGBTQ+ people by defending and promoting their right to take a full and equal role in Welsh society. Research undertaken in preparing this Action Plan highlighted concerns from non-binary and intersex people over a lack of recognition both societally and in how they are reflected in

the way services operate ([Welsh Government 2021](#)). In addition, Trans people in Wales told us they would like to see the Welsh Government go above and beyond the actions of the UK Government in protecting and furthering trans people's rights. Research into British attitudes towards trans people by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) suggests that negative public attitudes towards trans people may be increasing overtime in certain areas of life, including accessing refuges for survivors of domestic violence ([Morgan et al. 2020](#)).

Conversion practices

There is particular concern around the continuing practice of 'conversion practices', sometimes known as 'conversion therapy'. 'Conversion practice' is used as an umbrella term to describe harmful interventions of a wide-ranging nature, all of which are premised on the misconception that a person's sexual orientation and gender, including gender identity, can be changed or suppressed. Such practices are therefore consistently aimed at effecting a change from non-heterosexual to heterosexual and/or from trans or gender diverse to cisgender. Depending on the context, the term is used for a multitude of practices and methods, some of which are clandestine and therefore poorly documented ([Human Rights Council 2020](#)).

As we seek to move to ban conversion practices for all LGBTQ+ people in Wales, it is important to understand the impact and prevalence that conversion practices have on LGBTQ+ communities ([Welsh Government 2022d](#)). The 2018 National LGBT survey found that 4.8% of cisgender LGBTQ+ people in Wales were offered but did not undergo conversion practices ([GEO 2018a](#)), while 2.1% had undergone it. This was higher for trans populations, with 9.0% of respondents in Wales being offered but not undergoing conversion practices and an additional 5.6% having undergone it. The report found that for respondents in the UK who had undergone conversion practices, in more than half of cases, these had been conducted by faith organisations.

In 2020, Galop, a UK's LGBTQ+ anti-abuse charity, surveyed UK LGBTQ+

survivors of sexual assault and found that 23.5% of respondents reported that the perpetrator ‘intended to convert’ or punish their LGBTQ+ identity (**Galop 2022: p.3**). This percentage was higher for asexual people (34.4%), non-binary people (31.9%), trans men (34.7%) and trans women (29.6%).

Conversion practices are not used in the NHS. NHS Wales signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Banning Conversion Practices (**BACP 2022**), which is an agreement by organisations working in the provision of mental or psychological health delivery or commissioning, to seek to ensure they do not commission or provide conversion therapy.

We want every LGBTQ+ person to be treated with equal value, to be safe and to live authentically and openly as themselves, which is why the Programme for Government, and the Co-operation Agreement with Plaid Cymru, highlight that we will ban all aspects of LGBTQ+ conversion practices that are within our current powers and seek the devolution of any necessary additional powers to enable us to achieve this. In addition, we will seek the devolution of powers in relation to Gender Recognition and support our Trans community.

The consultation responses overwhelmingly stated that conversion practices that try and force people to change their sexual orientation or gender should be stopped. A clear definition of conversion practices was needed to make sure that legitimate discussions and support about an individual’s feelings about their sexual orientation or gender would not be included in any ban. A dedicated Working Group on Banning Conversion Practices has been established by Welsh Government and will provide advice and guidance to Welsh Government on this work which will be led by Social Justice, Social Partnership, and the Equality and Human Rights Division.

Our actions

1. Strengthen understanding of the human rights of LGBTQ+ people.
2. Improve LGBTQ+ people’s understanding of how to assert their human rights.

3. Ban all aspects of LGBTQ+ Conversion Practices.
4. Strengthen LGBTQ+ representation on equality forums.
5. Involve LGBTQ+ communities in designing public services.
6. Provide recognition of non-binary and intersex people.
7. Seek the devolution of powers in relation to Gender Recognition.
8. International engagement showcases our LGBTQ+ values and support in Wales and globally.

B. Safety and freedom from discrimination

Vision: we will make Wales a safer place for all LGBTQ+ people

Feeling safer in Wales will allow LGBTQ+ people to thrive and live free from fear, in their personal life and in society. Many LGBTQ+ people in Wales continue to feel unsafe and at a high risk of abuse or discrimination ([Stonewall Cymru 2017a](#)), and therefore it is vital that action is taken to address this and seek to improve the safety LGBTQ+ people in Wales.

The National Hate Crime Statistics for England and Wales 2021 to 2022 were published by the Home Office in October 2022. The statistics show a 35% increase in recorded hate crimes across Wales compared to 2020 to 2021 ([Welsh Government 2022e](#); [Home Office 2022a](#)). There were 6,295 recorded hate crimes across the 4 Welsh Police Force Areas of which:

- 1,329 (21%) were sexual orientation hate crimes
- 247 (4%) were transgender hate crimes

For the year April 2021 to March 2022, police recorded sexual orientation hate crimes in Wales increased by 50% on the previous year (from 884 to 1,329) and hate crimes against transgender people (i.e., transgender hate crimes) rose by 43% (from 173 to 247 incidents) ([Home Office 2021a](#); [Home Office 2022a](#); [Home Office 2021b: Appendix Table](#); [Home Office 2022b: Appendix Table](#)).

Hate crimes may have multiple motivating factors, and the above statistics represent those crimes for which sexual orientation or gender identity were included in the recorded motivating factors.

According to the “Is Wales Fairer?” report ([EHRC 2018b: p.94](#); also see [Stonewall Cymru 2017a](#)), evidence from the voluntary sector suggests that these increases in recorded crime may also reflect an increase in incidents: in 2017, 20% of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people in Wales had been a victim of hate crime or incident in the previous 12 months, compared with 11% in 2013; half (52%) of trans people reported that they had been a victim of a hate crime or incident in 2017. This is a concern, but we also know that this is the tip of the iceberg, and many more hate crimes go unreported. The report also mentioned that the majority of LGB and trans people who had experienced a hate crime or incident (82%) did not report it to the police. The same report also mentioned that lesbian, gay and bisexual people were more than twice as likely than the wider population to be survivors or victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence in 2016 to 2017. Most recognised studies indicate up to 40% of the LGBTQ+ population will experience domestic abuse in some form during their lives, this rises to approx. 80% for the trans community ([Welsh Government 2022f](#)).

Evidence shows that ethnic minority LGBTQ+ people are at a greater risk of discrimination. The Home and Communities report ([Stonewall 2018a](#)) indicated that in Britain, 11% of LGBTQ+ respondents experienced domestic abuse from their partner. This increased to 17% for ethnic minority LGBTQ+ respondents. Additionally, 51% of ethnic minority respondents reported experiencing discrimination because of their ethnicity from within their local LGBTQ+ communities within the year prior, for Black people this increases again to 61%.

Although the majority of LGBTQ+ people in Wales do live fulfilling and positive lives, we also know that too many live in fear of discrimination and prejudice, and people in Wales continue to face discrimination at home and in their respective communities. Nearly half (46%) of respondents to Stonewall Cymru’s 2020 survey which informed the Expert Panel report ([Welsh Government 2021c](#); [Welsh Government 2021d](#)), stated they had been subjected to verbal

harassment in the year prior, while 26% had suffered online abuse or harassment and 13% experienced the threat of physical or sexual harassment and violence in the same period. These findings show how much more must be done to make homes and communities in Wales safe for all.

Evidence also suggests that LGBTQ+ people are particularly at risk of homelessness ([Llammau 2019](#)), with UK-wide data suggesting that LGBTQ+ young people are grossly over-represented within youth homelessness populations ([Albert Kennedy Trust 2015](#)). In the UK, research from the Albert Kennedy Trust found that LGBT young people were more likely to find themselves homeless, than heterosexual and cisgender youth, reporting LGBT young people make up 24% of the homeless population. However, there is still significant gap in dataset for Wales on youth homelessness and their characteristics, and responses to the consultation also suggested that there is still a perception of risks concerning discrimination in the private rental sector.

We know that many services that provide care for people surviving violence or abuse already have provision in their service design to be inclusive of LGBTQ+ people, including the needs of lesbian and trans women. It is important that these services continue, and that the needs of LGBTQ+ people reporting and receiving care after surviving violence and/or abuse are acknowledged and taken into account. We also look forward to working with criminal justice partners, in the hope that we will be able to effectively tackle inequality and to create an LGBTQ+ inclusive criminal justice system.

The Minister for Social Justice Jane Hutt MS wrote to the UK Government to ask to accept the recommendation that the aggravated offences which currently exist for race and religion should be extended to all other existing characteristics within the hate crime legislative regime, including sexual orientation and transgender identity. This would send out a clear message that hate crime motivated by sexual orientation, transgender identity is unacceptable and there are consequences for those perpetrating these hateful actions. We will keep advocating for LGBTQ+ hate crime to be made an aggravated offence, and will also seek to take forward our Programme for Government commitment to pursue the case for devolution of policing and justice.

Our actions

9. Remove barriers to LGBTQ+ people reporting hate crime.
10. Continue to invest in hate crime prevention programmes across Wales.
11. Counter online anti-LGBTQ+ attitudes and hate crimes.
12. Improve the relationship of LGBTQ+ communities with Policing in Wales.
13. Target violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) among LGBTQ+ communities.
14. Homelessness services are inclusive of the specific needs of LGBTQ+ people.

C. A Nation of Sanctuary for asylum seekers and refugees

Vision: we will make Wales a Nation of Sanctuary for LGBTQ+ migrants

We are aiming for Wales to become the world's first 'Nation of Sanctuary', celebrating Welsh hospitality and our history of migration and safety. The ambition is wherever in Wales people seeking sanctuary go, they are met with welcome, understanding and celebration of their unique contribution to the rich tapestry of life in Wales.

We believe the UK Government agreement with the Government of Rwanda to process asylum claims is devastating for LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers, placing LGBTQ+ people at great risk of ill treatment, discrimination, arbitrary arrest, and detention. In the UK Government Equality Impact Assessment for the policy, the real risks that this agreement would pose for LGBTQ+ people was highlighted ([Home Office 2022c](#)). Our Nation of Sanctuary vision and plan is about making Wales not just welcoming to migrants, but also harnessing the opportunities which migration brings to help our economy and

communities to thrive. The plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda is the opposite of that vision.

Many asylum seekers flee their own country because of being persecuted for who they are and for who they love, escaping violence and abuse due to their sexual orientation or gender identity ([Mole 2021](#); [Dyck 2019](#)). Therefore, 1 of our actions concentrates on the importance of working with UK Government to improve sensitive identification of LGBTQ+ people, their safeguarding, and signposting measures including through improvements of tools such as the Asylum Support Application Form (ASF1 form).

We are committed to work in collaboration with local authorities and key partners to ensure that housing provisions for LGBTQ+ asylum seekers ([Glitter Cymru and DPIA 2022](#)) and refugees meet their needs.

Our actions

15. Identify, safeguard and signpost LGBTQ+ people in claiming asylum.
16. Encourage the development of LGBTQ+ only asylum properties in Wales.
17. Ensure Wales a Nation of Sanctuary remains inclusive of LGBTQ+ people.

D. Healthcare, social care, and welfare

Vision: we will improve healthcare outcomes for all LGBTQ+ people

Within healthcare settings LGBTQ+ people feel that they may face unequal treatment and discrimination. Examples of these inequalities are highlighted in the LGBT Health report ([Stonewall 2018b](#)). For example, the report states almost one in four LGBTQ+ people (23%) have at one time witnessed discriminatory or negative remarks against LGBTQ+ people by healthcare staff. Moreover, 14% of respondents avoided healthcare treatment due to concerns

that they would experience discrimination because of their LGBTQ+ identity.

Research has also indicated that some LGBTQ+ people do not disclose their gender or sexual orientation to healthcare services. The National LGBT survey reported that in the 12 months that preceded the survey, of their Welsh sample, 50% of LGBQ+ cisgender people stated they had never shared their sexual orientation with healthcare staff ([GEO 2018b](#)). Moreover, 19.6% of Welsh trans respondents reported in the National LGBT Survey that their specific needs were disregarded when using or attempting to use healthcare services.

Research undertaken in England ([NatCen Social Research et al. 2021](#)) indicated that LGB people were more likely to be current smokers compared to heterosexual adults (27% and 18% respectively). Similar patterns were recorded for the prevalence of drinking alcohol 'to an increased risk or higher risk' (32% for LGB adults compared to 24% of heterosexuals).

Previous reports show that LGBTQ+ disabled people continue to face discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity from those providing personal care ([SSCR 2017](#)). Research on the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in social care settings has shown it is often noted that the needs of older people are not always met ([PolicyBristol 2017](#); [Hafford-Letchfield et al 2018](#)).

Westwood's ([2018](#)) commentary on the abuse facing older LGBT people concluded that they are vulnerable to abuse at an organisational level as well as an interpersonal level. Westwood highlights that despite facing abuse based on their gender or sexual orientation, older LGBT people are less likely to report this due to the social marginalisation they may experience living as an older LGBT person.

Each of these findings display that work must be done to ensure that LGBTQ+ people in Wales are safe and confident in accessing the health and social care system. There are also several areas where LGBTQ+ people are disproportionately affected, such as depression and substance use ([Stonewall 2018b](#); [Pitman et al 2021](#)).

Data from the National Survey for Wales ([Welsh Government 2021f](#)) between 2019 to 2020 indicated that LGBTQ+ people were twice as likely to report feeling lonely (30%) compared to their heterosexual counterparts (15%). According to the report “Is Wales Fairer?” ([EHRC 2018b: p.102](#)), loneliness, isolation and a reduced sense of belonging are some of the most significant issues facing particular groups, including lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people, and people from some ethnic minorities.

We must take action to better understand and mitigate for these disproportionalities, especially for transgender and non-binary people. Being transgender should be celebrated as a valued and important part of families, communities, and societies ([AusPATH 2021](#); [World Health Organisation 2018](#)). Delaying or preventing a person from having their identity respected can have a negative impact on their lives ([Ashley 2019](#)). Research has shown the harms of delayed transition, with UK based research demonstrating the challenges, frustration, and trauma of trans people, including young people, who have experienced rejection and delay. There is evidence that indicates the positive impact of pre-pubertal social transition ([Durwood et al. 2021](#); [Horton 2022](#)). Research on socially transitioned trans children has shown positive mental health and well-being outcomes ([Durwood et al., 2017](#); [Olson et al. 2016](#)). These findings also reinforce retrospective research on the negative mental health toll of childhood rejection, drawn from research with trans adults and trans youth ([Katz-Wise et al. 2018](#) [Klein and Golub 2016](#); [Pollitt et al. 2021](#); [Russell et al. 2018](#); [Simons et al. 2013](#); [Travers et al. 2012](#); [Wallace and Russell 2013](#)).

Although Wales has in place its own gender service, this only caters to adults. In simple words: there are no gender services for transgender children and young people in Wales. Therefore, they are often signposted to services in England. A Gender identity services Inspection report ([Care Quality Commission 2019](#)) has found that Gender Services for young people are still inadequate in England, saying that, “The service was difficult to access. There were over 4600 young people on the waiting list. Young people waited over 2 years for their first appointment”. The cited research is among the many reasons that encourage us to do more and to continue to develop our gender services for adults in Wales,

and to consider options for the development of a gender service for young people in Wales. This will include an evidence-driven approach and engagement with young people, service users, and stakeholders.

In line with Action 18, Activity 18.4 of this Plan, our ambition is that the overall health outcomes and experiences of trans and non-binary people will be considered at all stages of gender reassignment. This includes, for instance, cancer screening and sexual health provisions.

Our actions

18. Understand and improve the experience of LGBTQ+ people in the health and social care sectors.
19. Ensure maternity and fertility services are accessible and straightforward to use for LGBTQ+ people.
20. Ensure the development of the new mental health strategy takes account of LGBTQ+ people.
21. Publish and act on a new HIV Action Plan.
22. Overcome barriers to LGBTQ+ people accessing sexual health services.
23. Review the Gender Identity Development pathway for young people in Wales.
24. Continue to develop the Wales Gender Service.
25. Improve the data recording and change processes for maintaining trans, non-binary and intersex people's medical records.

E. Inclusive education

Vision: we will provide LGBTQ+ inclusive education across Wales

In 2017, Welsh Government's Expert Sex and Relationships Education panel drew on a wide range of national and international research ([Renold and](#)

McGeeney 2017a; 2017b), one of the key findings of the panel was that there was a gap between children and young people's lived experiences of relationships and sexuality and the content of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) provision.

Research undertaken in the School Report Cymru (**Stonewall Cymru 2017b**) states that 58% of Welsh LGBT students have not been taught LGBT matters, 84% had never been educated on bisexuality and 87% had never been educated on transgender people and other genders. There have however been recent changes. With the roll out of the Curriculum for Wales in September 2022 developmentally appropriate Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) became mandatory for all learners. The RSE Code aims to ensure that 'all learners can see themselves, their families, their communities and each other reflected across the curriculum and can learn to value difference and diversity as a source of strength' (**Welsh Government Hwb 2022**).

Schools and settings have an important role to play in creating safe and empowering environments in supporting learners' rights to enjoy fulfilling, healthy and safe relationships throughout their lives. We are enabling more inclusive education, by committing to provide national guidance for schools by Summer 2023 to help schools fully support transgender pupils.

Findings from a UK-wide survey by Just Like Us (**Milsom 2021**) reported that only 58% of LGBT+ students described feeling safe on a daily basis at school in the 12 months prior, compared to a higher figure of 73% for non-LGBT+ students. In addition, 43% of LGBT+ students reported being bullied, compared to 21% of non-LGBT students.

The School Report Cymru (**Stonewall 2017a**) stated that of Welsh students aged 11 to 19 years, 54% of LGBT students including 73% of trans students experienced bullying at school about their sexual orientation or gender. Moreover, the report indicated that 60% of respondents 'frequently' or 'often' heard homophobic language in school, while 49% reported having heard biphobic language and 51% reported hearing transphobic language.

According to “Is Wales Fairer?” report ([EHRC 2018: p.25](#)), those with special needs or a disability, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils, and those from an ethnic minority or religious background are at particular risk of being bullied; cyberbullying is also on the rise ([Estyn 2014](#)).

Schools are places where learners should feel safe and ready to learn. Any form of bullying or sexual harassment is completely unacceptable.

We want to see an end to all forms of bullying. Our commitment to tackle this issue aims to ensure that LGBTQ+ young people understand how to get support and gain the confidence to challenge bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

Our actions

26. Provide national trans guidance for schools and local authorities.
27. Support LGBTQ+ young people and tackle homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying.
28. Design and implement a whole school approach that is fully LGBTQ+ inclusive.
29. Ensure that all colleges and universities in Wales are LGBTQ+ inclusive environments for learners, students, and staff.

F. Communities, private and family life

Vision: we will improve inclusion and participation for LGBTQ+ people in all areas of life

Wales is made up of diverse communities, languages, identities and cultures. All people, whatever their identity or wherever they live, should be able to feel a sense of belonging both to their community and to Wales. From rural and urban communities to communities of faith, culture and the arts.

According to the National Survey for Wales (2021f), in 2018 to 2019, 72.4% of adults in Wales agreed they felt they belonged to their local area. However, people identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual (63.2%) were less likely to agree than those identifying as heterosexual/straight (72.6%). For instance, gay, lesbian and bisexual and transgender people in Wales were found still experiencing poor treatment while going about their lives. Supporting young people and families will be a key part of improving inclusion and participation for LGBTQ+ people. Addressing regional inequalities, particularly in rural Wales, and in areas where Welsh is the primary language will help all LGBTQ+ people feel a sense of belonging. We recognise the impact events such as the National Eisteddfod for Wales and their Mas ar y Maes partnership, and others, have had. Our ambition is to ensure the needs of Welsh language speakers are met in the representation of LGBTQ+ culture.

More research is needed to understand rural and regional issues in Wales faced by LGBTQ+ people.

We have already begun providing funding to local Pride events and will be continuing to support local Prides. We recognise the particular importance that these events can have in creating a feeling of inclusion and community.

A recent “Call for Evidence” was launched to share views on the treatment of veterans affected by the pre-2000 ban on homosexuality in the armed forces (**LGBT Veterans Independent Review 2022**). The review will consider the experiences of LGBTQ+ veterans and their families prior to the ban and the impact this had on their lives. The ‘Call for Evidence’ closed on 1 December 2022 and the full results will not be known for some time. However, some of the actions and activities in this Plan seek to address some of these issues and concerns. Officials will review the results of the Call for Evidence when available and consider whether any further action is needed as a result. By way of background, prior to 2000, homosexual acts were considered an offence if found guilty under the Army Act 1955, the Air Force Act 1955, and the Naval Discipline Act 1957. Section 1(1) of the Sexual Offences Act 1967 (amendment of law relating to homosexual acts in private) decriminalised homosexual acts between adults in private and was repealed by the Sexual Offences Act 2003 sections

139, 140, Schedule 6, paragraph 15(a), Schedule 1, wef 1 May 2004.

Our actions

30. Support the family lives of LGBTQ+ people.
31. Support the LGBTQ+ youth work sector.
32. Support open dialogue between faith groups and LGBTQ+ people.
33. Ensure that LGBTQ+ Welsh speakers have access to Welsh medium support services.
34. Provide support for LGBTQ+ people to participate in democracy, including standing for elected positions.
35. Support Pride organisations across Wales.
36. Use LGBTQ+ awareness events to amplify LGBTQ+ voices.
37. Support LGBTQ+ veterans of the Armed Services.

G. Participation in Welsh life: culture and sport

Vision: we will improve inclusion and participation for LGBTQ+ people in all areas of life

Welsh LGBTQ+ history, culture, and heritage in Wales has contributed to our legacy and experiences as a nation and these stories need to be told. Over the past decade, the showcasing of sexual orientations and gender, including gender identity and expression, in history, literature and heritage has greatly increased, as proven by the effort of National Museum Wales and Queer Britain to showcase and archive LGBTQ+ stories and experiences. However, there is still an overall lack of familiarity, knowledge and engagement with the subject ([Welsh Government 2021g](#)).

We are also aware that Wales has some of the best creative talent in the world. Through Creative Wales, we want to champion an environment where talent from all communities, including LGBTQ+ communities, can be nurtured through

skills development and creative industries can continue to grow. Therefore, we recommend reading this Action Plan along the Priorities for the Creative Industries Sector in Wales ([Welsh Government 2020d](#)) and the new 3 year Creative Skills Action Plan (2022 to 2025) which is aligned to the Programme for Government commitment to establish a Creative Skills Body ([Welsh Government 2022g](#)).

Sport is also an important element of life in Wales. In recent times, various international and domestic sporting bodies have announced policies which are not fully inclusive of trans people, particularly transgender women. A blanket exclusion of transgender and non-binary people risks sending a wrong message to trans young people that they cannot have the same opportunities as their friends and other children, and to all young people that they must present a certain way to be respected for who they are, which has broader implications.

Sport is wide-ranging, and a uniform approach to a very complex issue is challenging. There is clearly widespread support for ensuring that sport is welcoming to all, including transgender people. Our position concerning inclusion in sport is clear: LGBTQ+ rights, including trans rights, are human rights and as the First Minister Mark Drakeford said, our starting point is that transgender women are women ([Senedd Cymru 2022b](#)). Sport should be for everyone, a place where everyone can take part and where everyone is treated with kindness, dignity, and respect. We must work hard to look for opportunities for dialogue, to find ways of promoting understanding rather than conflict, and to demonstrate respect rather than to look for exclusion.

Our actions

38. Improve the representation, inclusion, and participation of LGBTQ+ people in sports.
39. Improve the access and participation of transgender people in sport.
40. Celebrate and improve the representation of LGBTQ+ communities in the heritage and culture of Wales.
41. Increase the involvement of LGBTQ+ people and organisations in the design

of cultural events and activities.

H. Inclusive workplaces

Vision: we will improve inclusion and participation for LGBTQ+ people in all areas of life

Although organisations are increasingly taking pride in their commitment to LGBTQ+ staff, customers and service users, discrimination in the workplace remains widespread. The National LGBT survey reported that 22.4% of Welsh respondents experienced adverse reactions at work because of their gender or sexual orientation or being perceived as LGBT ([GEO 2017](#)). 11.1% also reported receiving ‘inappropriate’ comments or conduct, and 9.3% reported verbal harassment. 2019 to 2020 data from the National Survey for Wales ([Welsh Government 2021f](#)) reported that 19% of lesbian, gay and bisexual people had experienced bullying at work in the year prior to undertaking the survey. This compares to 11% of heterosexual people. Moreover, 20% of lesbian, gay and bisexual people reported having experienced discrimination within their workplace in the last 12 months, compared to 10% of heterosexual people.

The Work report ([Stonewall 2018c](#)) showed that more than a third of LGBT staff (35%) hid the fact they were LGBT at work for fear of discrimination; one in ten Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic LGBT employees (10%) had been physically attacked by customers or colleagues in the year prior; and nearly 2 in 5 bi people (38%) weren’t out to anyone at work.

The prominence of glass ceilings in the workplace for gay and lesbian managers remains a phenomenon observed within the UK ([Frank 2006](#); [Aksoy et al. 2019](#)). Recent and historical research suggests that “sexual minorities” are less likely to be in a higher managerial position compared to their heterosexual counterparts and suggests that it is due to differential returns received by gay and lesbian managers compared to heterosexual counterparts for their

education and additional skills.

A survey and focus groups undertaken in the development of this action plan ([Welsh Government 2021c](#)), found that whilst 45% of people reported that those in the workplace reacted only positively when aware they were LGBTQ+, 24% reported un-permissible exposure of their LGBTQ+ identity in the workplace (or 'outing') and 10% recounted experiencing verbal harassment. This needs to change; happiness in the workplace is important. It improves the health of workers, leads to better working relationships, and can boost creativity and productivity. Workplaces in Wales have improved, yet we need to go further to eradicate discrimination and empower all those in employment to be themselves as well as championing the positive impact diversity can have in all types of organisations.

Our actions

42. Remove unnecessary personal identifications from recruitment practices.
43. Provide equalities training that includes the needs of LGBTQ+ people to all public sector organisations.
44. Encourage private sector employers to be LGBTQ+ inclusive.

I. Impact of COVID-19

Anecdotal evidence suggests a disproportionate impact from COVID-19 among LGBTQ+ communities in Wales. More widely in the UK, online surveys have indicated inequalities experienced by LGBTQ+ people throughout COVID-19. For example, LGBT Hero's LGBTQ+ Lockdown Wellbeing ([2020](#)) report highlights that LGBTQ+ people reported high rates of experience of violence and abuse during lockdown. This was reported particularly by younger people, but also by trans and gender diverse people who reported twice as much violence and abuse during lockdown than cisgender people. The report indicates that of their LGBTQ+ sample, 15% reported experiencing violence or abuse throughout

lockdown. This figure was more than twice as high for Black and South Asian LGBTQ+ people compared to their white counterparts. Additionally, the report indicated that 79% of their UK sample reported that their mental health was negatively impacted by COVID-19 lockdown.

An LGBT Foundation report (2020) highlights that 30% of UK LGBT respondents were living alone during the pandemic, older LGBT people are more likely to have been living alone throughout the pandemic with 40% of 50+ years old reporting this. Moreover, the report indicated that 8% of respondents did not feel safe in their living arrangements when surveyed during lockdown. This is not equally experienced across LGBTQ+ communities as for ethnic minority LGBT people the proportion was 9%, 15% for LGBT disabled people, 17% for trans people and 17% for non-binary people.

It is vital to collect and understand data first, to fully appreciate these impacts in order to identify and prioritise actions to reduce the current and future impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and potential future pandemics on LGBTQ+ communities living in Wales.

Our actions

45. In planning and implementing a recovery response to COVID-19, to consider the experiences of LGBTQ+ people, particularly on mental health.
46. Undertake a thorough investigation into how LGBTQ+ people, particularly LGBTQ+ young people and LGBTQ+ disabled people, in Wales have been impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic.

A. Human rights and recognition

Action 1: strengthen understanding of the human rights of LGBTQ+ people

How we will achieve it?

- Publish a toolkit of LGBTQ+ Human Rights resources, led by LGBTQ+ civil societies.

What the impact will be?

- Increased knowledge amongst the general population of the human rights of all LGBTQ+ people.

When we will do it?

- Medium term.

Who will help achieve this?

- LGBTQ+ civil societies.
- Welsh Government (WG) Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 2: improve LGBTQ+ people's understanding of how to assert their human rights

How we will achieve it?

- Share resources that cover protection, infringement, and redress of human rights for LGBTQ+ people.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ people have access to resources and services to tackle infringements of their human rights.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- LGBTQ+ civil societies.
- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 3: ban all aspects of LGBTQ+ Conversion Practices

How we will achieve it?

- Establish a Working group to examine the prevalence and effect of

conversion practices in Wales, and to advise on campaigns.

- Launch a campaign highlighting the harm conversion practices cause, as well as amplifying support services for survivors.
- Complete a research project into the experience of survivors of conversion practices in Wales.
- Obtain legal advice on policy and legal mechanisms to ban conversion practices in Wales.
- Use all available powers to ban all aspects of LGBTQ+ conversion practices in Wales and seek the devolution of any necessary additional powers ([Welsh Government 2021a](#)).
- Seek to implement legislation to ban conversion practices in Wales.

What the impact will be?

- Improve access to support services for survivors.
- Reduced number of LGBTQ+ people who experienced conversion practices in Wales.
- General public made more aware of prevalence and dangers of conversion practices.

When we will do it?

- Medium and long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.
- WG Working Group on Banning Conversion Practices.
- WG Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit/Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) (see section “Data and Research”).

Action 4: strengthen LGBTQ+ representation on equality forums

How we will achieve it?

- Improve LGBTQ+ representation on Welsh Government Equality Forums.
- Monitor the intersectional inclusion of WG Equality Forums.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ voices are heard, and intersectional considerations are met.

When we will do it?

- Medium term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 5: involve LGBTQ+ Communities in designing public services

How we will achieve it?

- Public bodies in Wales include LGBTQ+ people in service design by default, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and Strategic Equality Duty (SED).

- WG Strategic Equality Plan, PSED and SED address the involvement of LGBTQ+ communities in strategic planning.
- Review Welsh Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) regulations and reporting.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ communities feel included in public life in Wales.
- The review of Welsh PSED regulations takes account of, and includes LGBTQ+ people and needs.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.
- Local authorities.
- WLGA.
- Public bodies.

Action 6: provide recognition of non-binary and intersex people

How we will achieve it?

- Throughout devolved policy areas, review language of policies and guidance to be sensitive to gendered language and gender markers.
- In non-devolved policy areas, initiate conversations with UK Government aiming to implement a recognition of non-binary people on passports and

driving licenses (e.g., X gender marker).

What the impact will be?

- Non-binary and intersex people's needs are identified and met within public services.
- Welsh Government and its publications use inclusive language.
- Non-binary and intersex people are publicly recognised and validated.

When we will do it?

- Medium term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 7: seek the devolution of powers in relation to Gender Recognition

How we will achieve it?

- Start negotiation with UK Government, and trigger a request to devolve powers related to Gender Recognition.
- Identify ways to support Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) applicants in Wales.

What the impact will be?

- Welsh Government support for our trans communities is visible.

- Devolution of relevant powers granted.
- Trans people are helped to obtain a GRC.

When we will do it?

- Short term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 8: international engagement showcases our LGBTQ+ values and support in Wales and globally

How we will achieve it?

- Consider how to adopt an inclusive approach to procurement which reduces and removes real and perceived barriers to diverse suppliers bidding for Welsh Government contracts.
- Explore how to set meaningful short-, medium- and long-term targets to increase the diversity of Welsh Government's supply chains. As a first step, we will analyse Welsh Government's supply chains to determine the current level of supplier diversity.
- Project our values of Wales as an LGBTQ+ friendly nation, through diplomatic engagement and our overseas network, including with countries that do not necessarily share these views, regularly reviewing our approach.
- Work with the ILGA-Europe Rainbow Map for LGBTQ+ inclusion ranking in Europe to highlight Wales's position within the broader UK analysis: to ensure that Wales is represented in the Annual Review in more detail.
- Raise the importance of LGBTQ+ rights where we engage internationally and work with other nations or intergovernmental organisations to improve

the lives of LGBTQ+ people across the world.

What the impact will be?

- Wales is perceived as an LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe and Globally.
- Wales' international relations and procurement practices reflect its aim to be an LGBTQ+ friendly nation.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing, review annually.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG International Relations Team.
- WG Commercial Procurement Directorate.

B. Safety and freedom from discrimination

Action 9: remove barriers to LGBTQ+ people reporting hate crime

How we will achieve it?

- Work with Policing in Wales to examine and improve procedures within the police and guidance for officers concerning hate crime.
- Continue conversations concerning the classification of hate crime against LGBTQ+ people.
- Gather evidence from LGBTQ+ communities of positive and negative

experiences with reporting hate crime and understanding any barriers to reporting. Using this evidence, support the work of the Community Tension Board to feedback to policing in Wales.

- Review statistics on the diversity of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) in Wales reported annually to the PCSO Steering Group, to understand and improve the make-up of the PCSO workforce, as representative of LGBTQ+ communities.

What the impact will be?

- Improve levels of reporting and recording of LGBTQ+ hate crime.
- LGBTQ+ people are confident to report hate crime.
- A more representative and diverse Police and Community Support Officer workforce, and generally a police forces in Wales, and increasing trust in the service for LGBTQ+ people.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables, along with other criminal and social justice partners.
- WG Community Safety Team, working closely with Policing in Wales.
- WG Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit/Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) (see section “Data and Research”).

Action 10: continue to invest in hate crime prevention programmes across Wales

How we will achieve it?

- Launch a revised version of the **Hate Hurts Wales** campaign, with a focus on working with LGBTQ+ people and organisations, in particular around hate and harassment against transgender and non-binary people.

What the impact will be?

- Raised awareness of what hate crime is, how to report it, and the support and advocacy available to LGBTQ+ people via the Wales Hate Support Centre.
- Increased understanding of the different ways to report hate crime, other than directly to the police.
- Potential perpetrators of hate shown the consequences of hate crime, on both their own lives and the lives of the victims.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Team.

Action 11: counter online anti-LGBTQ+ attitudes and hate crimes

How we will achieve it?

- “Rights, respect, equality; statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools” includes digital threats and prejudices expressed online, including online bullying and aggression.
- ‘Hate Hurts Wales’ features examples of online hate and show clear methods for survivors and targeted individuals to report online hate.
- Update the “HWB” resources, the digital teaching and learning platform for schools in Wales, and “keeping safe online” sections to tackle online safety and resources.
- Support schools with the implementation of mandatory Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in which online safety is a key feature.
- Provide insight into LGBTQ+ specific needs for Welsh Government influence on the current Online Safety Bill.

What the impact will be?

- Increase the understanding of anti-LGBTQ+ attitudes online.
- Public bodies better understand what works in disrupting spreading hateful content online.
- Raise awareness of online hate, how to report it, and the support and advocacy available to LGBTQ+ people via the Wales Hate Support Centre.
- Learners will be supported to develop an understanding of the social, emotional, physical and legal nature and impact of harmful behaviours, including LGBTQ+ based bullying in a range of contexts including online.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equity in Education Division.
- WG HWB Team.
- WG Curriculum Division.

Action 12: improve the relationship of LGBTQ+ communities with Policing in Wales

How we will achieve it?

- Work with Policing in Wales to encourage the provision of a forum for police and other enforcement authorities to meet with LGBTQ+ communities and representatives.
- Facilitate discussions with LGBTQ+ disabled people and Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic people to understand their experiences with police call handlers and other front-line staff.
- We will take forward our Programme for Government commitment, supported and reflected in the Co-operation Agreement, to pursue the case for devolution of policing and justice, as a means of achieving a system that is right for Wales which is fully inclusive for LGBTQ+ people and tackles inequalities.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ communities feel confident to engage with law enforcement

services, and feel respected and understood when they do.

- Specific intersectional needs of LGBTQ+ people, particularly those from disabled communities and Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities, are met.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- Police and Crime Commissioners.
- Hate and Community Tensions Board Cymru.
- Chief Constables.
- LGBTQ+ Civil Societies.
- WG Equality and Human Rights Team.
- WG Community Safety Team.
- Criminal Justice in Wales which includes Policing in Wales.

Action 13: target violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) among LGBTQ+ communities

How we will achieve it?

- Provide sustainable long-term funding for specialist domestic abuse and sexual violence services.
- Welsh Government Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence programme of work is delivered in a way that is inclusive of all LGBTQ+ people.
- Undertake further research to better understand the experiences of LGBTQ+ ethnic minority and LGBTQ+ disabled domestic abuse survivors and the

barriers they face to reporting abuse, accessing support, and engaging in the criminal justice system.

- Improve data collection from VAWDASV service providers, including police data, to capture the experiences of LGBTQ+ reporting, referrals, and incidences.
- All literature, messaging and awareness raising initiatives are made LGBTQ+ inclusive.

What the impact will be?

- Improved experience for LGBTQ+ people reporting VAWDASV.
- Improved understanding of the barriers to reporting.
- The needs of cisgender and transgender men, including gay and bisexual men is considered.
- LGBTQ+ survivors see themselves reflected in Welsh Government literature and guidance.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG VAWDASV Team.
- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.
- WG Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit / Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) (see section “Data and Research”).

Action 14: homelessness services are inclusive of the specific needs of LGBTQ+ people

How we will achieve it?

- Ensure that LGBTQ+ people are engaged and able to influence new policy and legislative developments related to homelessness prevention.
- Work with local authorities and care home providers to ensure staff are fully trained in relation to LGBTQ+ people's rights and barriers, especially those working with LGBTQ+ people facing homelessness.
- As part of a wide-ranging homelessness projects evaluation, we will evaluate specific LGBTQ+ projects, such as the Ty Pride project, and gather best practice and principles to share with local authorities regarding LGBTQ+ homelessness.
- Maintain a watching brief of innovation across equalities and homelessness and projects and share with stakeholders, as appropriate.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ people facing homelessness feel that support is easy to understand, and resources are accessible.
- Homelessness services sensitively engage with LGBTQ+ people.

When we will do it?

- Medium term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Homelessness Prevention team.

- WG Housing Policy Team.
- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.
- Local authorities.
- WLGA.

C. A Nation of Sanctuary for asylum seekers and refugees

Action 15: identify, safeguard and signpost LGBTQ+ people in claiming asylum

How we will achieve it?

- Initiate negotiations with UK Government to amend the Asylum Support Application Form (ASF1) form to capture information concerning sexual orientation and gender reassignment to provide tailored signposting and safeguarding measures.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees feel that Welsh Government commitments to making Wales a Nation of Sanctuary are inclusive of LGBTQ+ people.
- ASF1 form and Asylum Case Worker Guidance is amended and updated.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- UK Government.
- UK Minister for Immigration.
- UK Government Home Office.
- WG Inclusion and Cohesion team.

Action 16: encourage the development of LGBTQ+ only asylum properties in Wales

How we will achieve it?

- Work with all appropriate agencies to facilitate meeting the information, advice and advocacy needs of LGBTQ+ asylum seekers in relation to accessing appropriate homes.
- Gather evidence of positive and negative experiences of LGBTQ+ asylum seekers in relation to housing to demonstrate the requirement for focused consideration on their needs.

What the impact will be?

- Services, including advice services become fully accessible to the full diversity of asylum seekers.
- LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees feel that Welsh Government commitments to making Wales a Nation of Sanctuary are inclusive of LGBTQ+ people.
- Services, including advice services demonstrate how they have become more accessible, with necessary safeguarding and welfare considerations implemented.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- UK Government Home Office.
- Clearsprings Ready Homes.
- Ethnic-minority-led organisations
- WLGA.
- WG Inclusion and Cohesion team.
- WG Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit/Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) (see section “Data and Research”).

Action 17: ensure Wales a Nation of Sanctuary remains inclusive of LGBTQ+ people

How we will achieve it?

- Work with specialised LGBTQ+ asylum and refugee support services to engage and understand the needs of LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees.
- Gather evidence of positive and negative experiences of LGBTQ+ asylum seekers in relation to the asylum process and integration to Wales to understand and consider their needs.
- Using the above evidence and experiences, create tailored training for relevant service providers, public bodies and organisations in Wales concerning rights and issues of LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers in Wales.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees feel that Welsh Government commitments to making Wales a Nation of Sanctuary are inclusive of LGBTQ+ people.
- Views of LGBTQ+ asylum seekers in Wales shared with the Home Office.
- Local authority, public bodies and third sector staff are fully up to date with the rights and entitlements of LGBTQ+ migrant groups.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Inclusion and Cohesion Policy team.
- WLGA.
- Local authorities.

D. Healthcare, social care, and welfare

Action 18: understand and improve the experience of LGBTQ+ people in the health and social care sectors

How we will achieve it?

18.1: training and workplace

- Undertake a review of existing training for NHS Wales staff on inclusive healthcare practices, identifying and addressing any gaps.
- Work with partners including the NHS Wales Partnership Forum to understand the experience of LGBTQ+ staff in the NHS workplace. Take any appropriate action (including development of training) as a result.
- Work with Social Care Wales to design, roll-out and evaluate the impact of specific training for staff in social care setting.

18.2: inspection

- Health Inspectorate Wales (HIW) to consider LGBTQ+ service users and patients in their review of inspection methodology in line with the 6 domains of Quality (specifically 'equitable').
- As part of inspection, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to consider the extent to which people receiving care and support, including LGBTQ+ individuals, are treated with respect and sensitivity, having regard to any relevant protected characteristics.

18.3: complaints

- Encourage health bodies to record equality data, where possible, to

ascertain whether LGBTQ+ people are raising complaints about their care. They should review the data and report to their equality and diversity and Equality and Safety committees.

- In the context of social care, improve the reporting of concerns and complaints by service users and recording follow-up action, engaging with the new independent Citizen Voice Body (CVB), advocacy providers, and local authorities.
- Consider the needs of LGBTQ+ people of all ages in the process of reviewing codes of practice and statutory guidance under the **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014** and **Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Wales Act 2016**.

18.4: outcomes and experiences

- Through a review of existing research and evidence, identify the barriers facing LGBTQ+ people accessing health and social care, including any experiences of anti-LGBTQ+ attitudes, and the impact these barriers have on people's behaviours in maintaining their health and wellbeing. This includes, for instance, cancer screening and sexual health provisions. Share the results of the research reviews with the NHS Health Inequalities Group and ADSS Cymru to look into implementation.
- In the context of healthcare and social care, review evidence concerning the impact of certain behaviours (e.g., substance misuse behaviour, tobacco use, sexual health, and mental health) that may disproportionately affect LGBTQ+ individuals. Use the review to identify best pathways to commission services.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ people feel safe, respected, and understood when using health and social care services.
- LGBTQ+ people feel safe, respected, and understood in care homes.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing and long Term.

Who will help achieve this?

- NHS Wales organisations.
- Health Inspectorate Wales.
- Care Inspectorate Wales.
- ADSS Cymru.
- Citizen Voice Body (CVB).
- Equality Staff networks.
- MoU on Banning Conversion Therapy.
- WG Health and Social Services Group.
- WG Quality & Nursing Directorate.
- WG Population Health Team.
- WG Social Services and Integration Team.
- WG Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit/Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) (see section “Data and Research”).

Action 19: ensure maternity and fertility services are accessible and straightforward to use for LGBTQ+ people

How we will achieve it?

- Review and improve fertility referral pathways and services for LGBTQ+ people.
- Identify, review, and improve access for IVF, including financial costs for LGBTQ+ people.
- WHSSC fertility guidance, open for public consultation in November/December 2022 to make reference to female assigned at birth and male

assigned at birth and patients on an NHS funded pathway for gender reassignment, and include information on how they access fertility preservation.

What the impact will be?

- Single sex families can access fertility treatment equally.
- Trans people have timely access to gamete storage that does not unduly delay a medical transition.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- Welsh Government Health and Social Services Group.
- WG Quality and Nursing Team.

Action 20: ensure the development of the new mental health strategy takes account of LGBTQ+ people

How we will achieve it?

- Identify and consider the needs of LGBTQ+ people, refugees and people seeking asylum as part of engagement work to develop the Strategy.
- Develop actions to reduce inequalities in access and outcomes from mental health services.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ people are confident that mental health services meet their needs.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- Welsh Government Health and Social Services Group.
- WG Quality and Nursing Team.

Action 21: publish and act on a new HIV Action Plan

How we will achieve it?

- Publish a draft HIV Action Plan for Wales and open consultation.
- Review responses and publish a revised HIV Action Plan for Wales which includes a focus on prevention, late diagnosis, education, equitable service provision, and removal of stigma.
- Establish an oversight group to monitor delivery of the actions within our HIV Plan.

What the impact will be?

- People living with HIV feel satisfied with their quality of life and quality of care.
- Reduce cases of late diagnosis.
- Wales meets the target of zero new HIV transmissions by 2030.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- Welsh Government Health and Social Services Group.
- Public Health Wales (PHW).
- Health boards.
- WG Health Protection.

Action 22: overcome barriers to LGBTQ+ people accessing sexual health services

How we will achieve it?

- Raise awareness, through targeted campaigns, with LGBTQ+ people of available remote services, including postal testing (see HIV Action Plan for Wales).
- Increase telemedicine and remote services to cater for people across all areas of Wales that are currently underserved, taking account of people who are digitally excluded.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ people in all regions of Wales feel they can have easy, private, and confidential access to sexual health service.

When we will do it?

- Medium term.

Who will help achieve this?

- Welsh Government Health and Social Services Group.
- WG Health Protection.
- PHW.
- Health boards.

Action 23: review the Gender Identity Development pathway for young people in Wales

How we will achieve it?

- Ensure young people and stakeholders in Wales are engaged in the consultation on an interim service specification.
- Consider options for the development of a service in Wales. This will include engagement with young people, service users and stakeholders.

What the impact will be?

- Trans Children and Young people in Wales can access services closer to where they live.
- Health services for trans children and young people are focused on clinical need and based on clinical evidence.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- Welsh Government Health and Social Services Group.
- Welsh Gender Service.
- Welsh Health Special Services Commissioners.

Action 24: continue to develop the Wales Gender Service

How we will achieve it?

- Further reduce waiting times for the Welsh Gender Service and Local gender teams.
- Enable GPs to initiate hormone therapy as part of the adult pathway.
- Understand the needs of non-binary people accessing the Welsh Gender Service.

What the impact will be?

- Service users across Wales can access gender identity services in a timelier way and closer to home.
- Non-binary people are confident that the Welsh Gender Service meets their healthcare needs.
- In line with Action 18, Activity 18.4 of this Plan, the overall health outcomes and experiences of trans and non-binary people will be considered.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- Welsh Government Health and Social Services Group.
- Welsh Gender Service.

Action 25: improve the data recording and change processes for maintaining trans, non-binary and intersex people's medical records

How we will achieve it?

- Engage with expert panels and stakeholder groups to understand the needs of trans, non-binary and intersex people in relation to demographic and clinical data recording.
- Apply these findings to improve the patient information of NHS sex-specific services (e.g., cervical, breast and prostate cancer screening).
- A broader review of the use of sex and gender markers to ensure that a change of details is carried through to other NHS demographic systems.
- Examine options for amending or developing digital services to achieve the above policy aims linked to greater inclusion of trans, non-binary, and intersex citizens.

What the impact will be?

- Improved access to healthcare services and reduced risk of exclusion.
- Communication from NHS reflect the needs of trans and non-binary people.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- Welsh Government Health and Social Services Group.

E. Inclusive education

Action 26: provide national trans guidance for schools and local authorities

How we will achieve it?

- Publish the Transgender Guidance for schools in full.

What the impact will be?

- Schools and local authorities can implement national guidance with confidence.
- Challenges to the guidance can be dealt with nationally rather than by individual schools and local authorities.

When we will do it?

- Summer 2023.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equity in Education Division.

Action 27: support LGBTQ+ young people and tackle homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying

How we will achieve it?

- Provide professional learning and support for practitioners in recognising, recording and challenging prejudice-based bullying and harassment, both during initial training and as a part of continuous professional development. This should consider how professionals support LGBTQ+ young people by preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying by embedding the rights-based approach.
- Engage with local authorities to improve access to, and use of, data gathered by schools concerning bullying, harassment, and discrimination towards LGBTQ+ people, in line with their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Accredited Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes are taught in a way that ensures LGBTQ+ pupils/students are not subject to discrimination and actively tackles key inequalities, understanding and preventing bullying and negative peer pressure, and having knowledge of safeguarding issues and procedures.
- Improve and publish the updated "Rights, respect, equality, statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools".

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ young people report lower levels of bullying and discrimination.
- LGBTQ+ young people understand how to get support when facing

discrimination or bullying.

- LGBTQ+ young people are confident to challenge bullying and discrimination.

When we will do it?

- Review of peer-on-peer sexual harassment in further education to be published 2023.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Curriculum Division.
- WG Pedagogy, Leadership and Professional Learning Division.
- WG Professional Learning Team (see section “Data and Research”).

Action 28: design and implement a whole school approach that is fully LGBTQ+ inclusive

How we will achieve it?

- Support schools with mandatory requirements of the statutory RSE Code and guidance which is LGBTQ+ inclusive.
- Ensure education supporting resources contain materials that are LGBTQ+ inclusive, including in Welsh Language.
- Provide professional learning opportunities for all staff in schools and educational settings to understand the core elements of providing LGBTQ+ inclusive education.
- Support schools in Wales, along with Local Authorities, to comply with their Public Sector Equality Duty obligations, in particular the requirement to publish Strategic Equality Plans (SEP) and equality objectives.

What the impact will be?

- Schools and educational settings have the tools that they need to successfully implement the RSE Code and Guidance in all educational settings, in both Welsh and English.
- Schools and educational settings have access to a range of LGBTQ+ inclusive literature and resources in all educational settings, in both Welsh and English.
- LGBTQ+ Welsh speaking young people see themselves reflected in their school environment, education, and Welsh literature.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equity in Education Division.
- WG Curriculum Division.
- WG Pedagogy, Leadership and Professional Learning Division.

Action 29: ensure that all colleges and universities in Wales are LGBTQ+ inclusive environments for learners, students and staff

How we will achieve it?

- Work with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) to encourage universities to take account of issues of intersectionality, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment, when considering

how they support their diverse staff and student populations.

- Work with universities and colleges in Wales to ensure their Strategic Equality Plans (SEP) set out how they will meet their duties under the Equality Act 2010 including as this relates to gender reassignment and sexual orientation.
- Commission a thematic review of peer-on-peer sexual harassment in further education this year, which will include identification of issues around homophobic discrimination or bullying.

What the impact will be?

- LGBT+ students will be able to pursue their studies and career in an environment free from harassment, discrimination or victimisation.
- To allow all students to be able to fulfil their full potential, to be fully supported and engage fully in their studies for the duration of their course.
- Robust complaints policies and processes are in place for students and staff. A system where students can be confident that they can raise any concerns and report any incidents without fear and will know that it will be dealt with appropriately.
- An increased awareness of consistent, whole institutional approaches to tackling LGBTQ+ violence, harassment and bullying.
- Improved evidence base on the experiences of LGBTQ+ learners and recommendations on actions to tackle issues around homophobic discrimination in FE.

When we will do it?

- Medium term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Higher Education Policy and Delivery Division.

- WG Further Education and Apprenticeships Division.
- HEFCW.
- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

F. Communities, private and family life

Action 30: support the family lives of LGBTQ+ people

How we will achieve it?

- Work across Welsh Government and with external providers to ensure that the resources of existing services, such as Welsh Government’s “Parenting. Give it time” campaign, meet the needs of parents and families of LGBTQ+ young people.
- Support the production of resources for all ages on LGBTQ+ families, in English and Welsh. These should include representation of diverse family relationships with LGBTQ+ people, such as LGBTQ+ parents, carers, siblings, children etc.

What the impact will be?

- All family members feel confident on how to support their LGBTQ+ family members, including children and young people.

When we will do it?

- Medium term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Tackling Poverty and Supporting Families Division.
- WG Parenting Branch.
- WG Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit/Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) (see section “Data and Research”).

Action 31: support the LGBTQ+ youth work sector

How we will achieve it?

- Explore options for a longer-term sustainable funding model for organisations, including in the voluntary sector, who provide support for a wide range of young people with differing backgrounds and needs, including support for LGBTQ+ young people.
- Engage with youth work sector to improve access to Youth Work provision and safe spaces for young people with differing backgrounds and needs, including LGBTQ+ young people, and increased diversity within the youth work workforce.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ young people are able to access youth work services that are relevant to them, and they have safe spaces to go to.

When we will do it?

- July 2023 to June 2024 and longer term.
- From October 2022 and longer term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Youth Engagement team.
- WG Support for Learning Team.
- Youth Work Strategy Implementation Board.

Action 32: support open dialogue between faith groups and LGBTQ+ people

How we will achieve it?

- Work, to establish inter-faith conversations to enable positive interaction between faith groups LGBTQ+ communities.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ people of faith feel accepted in their faith communities.

When we will do it?

- Long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 33: ensure that LGBTQ+ Welsh speakers have access to Welsh medium support services

How we will achieve it?

- Services provided by public services and funded partners are available in both Welsh and English, in line with the Welsh Language Standards and Welsh Government policy for grant recipients and funded services.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ Welsh speakers will be able to access services in the language of their choice.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- Welsh Language Division.
- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 34: provide support for LGBTQ+ people to participate in democracy, including standing for elected positions

How we will achieve it?

- Promote access to diverse role models for participation in democracy including standing for office.
- Continue the support towards mentoring schemes such as the “Equal Power Equal Voices” Public Life Mentoring Programme.
- Consult with LGBTQ+ stakeholder groups on proposals for an Electoral Administration and Reform White Paper, including measures to reduce abuse of electoral candidates and proposals to expand the Access to Elected Office Fund.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ people are better represented in public life.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Local Government Group.
- WG Election Division.
- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 35: support Pride organisations across Wales

How we will achieve it?

- Continue our support for Pride Cymru.
- Through the “All-Wales LGBTQ+ Grassroots Fund for Pride events” support local pride organisations and pride events.

What the impact will be?

- Local pride events become better funded and able to serve their LGBTQ+ populations better.
- Improve the connectivity and experiences of LGBTQ+ communities in the rural and regional dimensions.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 36: use LGBTQ+ awareness events to amplify LGBTQ+ voices

How we will achieve it?

- Important dates for LGBTQ+ people, including LGBTQ+ History Month, acknowledged in WG Communications.
- Appropriate flags raised in public sector buildings, particularly from underrepresented communities (e.g., bisexual; asexual; aromantic).
- Elected officials support events to mark important dates.

What the impact will be?

- Individual communities within the wider LGBTQ+ community feel seen and heard.
- Voices of under-represented sections of LGBTQ+ communities are heard.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Social Justice Communications Team.

Action 37: support LGBTQ+ Veterans of the Armed Services

How we will achieve it?

- Provide resources to deliver a support group for LGBTQ+ veterans in Cardiff and Vale, and Cwm Taf area.
- Provide support to “Fighting with Pride”, a charity for improving and supporting the health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ Veterans.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ Veterans in Wales feel supported as an integral part of the wider Veterans community.
- LGBTQ+ Veterans are aware of the opportunity to take part in LGBT+ Independent Review.

When we will do it?

- By end October 2022.
- By March 2023.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Local Government Group.
- WG Armed Forces Branch.

G. Participation in Welsh life: culture and sport

Action 38: improve the representation, inclusion, and participation of LGBTQ+ people in sports

How we will achieve it?

- Showcase Welsh Government's values towards LGBTQ+ rights on international Sport platforms.
- Improve LGBTQ+ representation in the Sport sectors in Wales at all levels, including at Board, workforce and volunteers' levels.
- Provide greater focus on equality as part of skills development, work experiences, volunteering, mentoring and apprenticeship activities and opportunities in the sport sector.
- Ensure the sports workforce are engaged and aware of events and activities at local, regional, and national level.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ community is better represented and accepted in the sport sector.
- Contribution to Wales being the most LGBTQ+ friendly country in Europe by 2030.
- Scalable best practice is shared, and this results in better policy.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Culture, Sport and Tourism Group.

Action 39: improve the access and participation of transgender people in sport

How we will achieve it?

- Assess the implementation of the Transgender Inclusion in Domestic Sport Guidance and its effectiveness.
- Commission further research into the experiences of transgender people in sports.
- Work with sports bodies to improve trans inclusion policies and guidance across Wales.

What the impact will be?

- Transgender people feel included and accepted in the sport sector.

When we will do it?

- Medium to long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Culture, Sport and Tourism Group.
- WG Sport Team.
- WG Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit/Knowledge and Analytical

Services (KAS) (see section “Data and Research”).

Action 40: celebrate and improve the representation of LGBTQ+ communities in the heritage and culture of Wales

How we will achieve it?

- Work with partner organisations to support LGBTQ+ communities to collate and donate collections to local archives and museums.
- Establish collaborations with national and local collections to support Pride activity across Wales, including during Pride month.
- Use national and local collections in Wales to celebrate and share LGBTQ+ stories and histories, providing funding where appropriate.
- Improve LGBTQ+ representation in the Culture sector in Wales at all levels, including at Board, workforce, and volunteers’ levels.
- Work in collaboration with LGBTQ+ organisations and key partners to ensure the needs of Welsh language speakers are met in the representation of LGBTQ+ culture. One such example is the Mas ar y Maes partnership.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ culture and history are better represented in the cultural sector.
- The needs of Welsh language speakers are met in the representation of LGBTQ+ culture.

When we will do it?

- Medium to long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Culture, Sport and Tourism Group.
- WG Culture Sponsorship Team.

Action 41: increase the involvement of LGBTQ+ people and organisations in the design of cultural events and activities

How we will achieve it?

- Encourage the culture public bodies to include LGBTQ+ communities in their objectives and outcomes.
- Develop and share scalable best practice.
- Provide greater focus on equality as part of skills development, work experiences, volunteering, mentoring and apprenticeship activities and opportunities in the cultural sector.

What the impact will be?

- Those involved in delivery of cultural services are engaged and aware of events and activities at local, regional, and national level.

When we will do it?

- Medium to long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Culture, Sport and Tourism Group.
- WG Culture Sponsorship Team.

H. Inclusive workplaces

Action 42: remove unnecessary personal identifications from recruitment practices

How we will achieve it?

- Implement a new Welsh Government recruitment system which supports name-free recruitment. Markers such as name, titles, age and gender markers removed or restricted where deemed necessary.
- Review gendered language and gender markers to recognise non-binary and intersex people in Welsh Government recruitment processes.
- Collect equalities information separately from main recruitment documents and anonymise for use in policy planning.

What the impact will be?

- Removed barriers in recruitment practices and increased confidence in applicants.
- Non-binary and intersex people are not required to choose a sex/gender that does not apply to them.

When we will do it?

- By March 2023.

Who will help achieve this?

- Welsh Government HR team.
- WLGA.
- LGBTQ+ civil societies.

Action 43: provide equalities training that includes the needs of LGBTQ+ people to all public sector organisations

How we will achieve it?

- Review Welsh Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) regulations and reporting, including training.
- Identify existing resources for training required by public sector organisations in line with the PSED.
- Identify any gaps in current provision in this area and work with other equalities groups to ensure those gaps are filled.
- Ensure that intersectional equalities training is devised and delivered to public sector organisations in line with the PSED.
- Collaborate, where appropriate and relevant, with Wales TUC and Trade Unions to maximise workplace resources and reach.

What the impact will be?

- All public service workers understand LGBTQ+ rights, needs and barriers.

- Public sector employers understand their legal obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- Training required under PSED meets LGBTQ+ needs.

When we will do it?

- Medium to long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equalities Team, Strategic Equality.
- Local authorities.
- WLGA.
- Public bodies.
- Wales TUC.
- Trade Unions.
- WG Equality and Human Rights Team.

Action 44: encourage private sector employers to be LGBTQ+ inclusive

How we will achieve it?

- Work in social partnership to encourage employers to promote, share and adopt best practice in relation to inclusive workplaces, including the dissemination of case studies.
- Improve access to information, advice, guidance and support for employers on employing LGBTQ+ workers including information on legal responsibilities
- Work in social partnership with trade unions and employers to encourage to employers to adopt equalities policies and procedures that safeguard against

LGBTQ+ discrimination.

- Work in social partnership with trade unions and employers to provide guidance to employers on the importance of collecting diversity data and its use in promoting inclusion.

What the impact will be?

- More LGBTQ+ inclusive workplaces.
- LGBTQ+ people understand and use pathways for reporting LGBTQ+ discrimination in Welsh workplaces.
- Improved knowledge and awareness of LGBTQ+ workplace rights and employer responsibilities.
- Decline in levels of reported LGBTQ+ discrimination in Welsh workplaces.
- Increase in the availability of diversity data from the private sector.

When we will do it?

- Medium to long term.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Fair work Division.
- Wales TUC.
- WG Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit/Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) (see section “Data and Research”).

I. Impact of COVID-19

Action 45: in planning and implementing a recovery response to COVID-19, to consider the experiences of

LGBTQ+ people, particularly on mental health

How we will achieve it?

- Support LGBTQ+ spaces and services with targeted special COVID-related funding.
- Measures put in place to improve LGBTQ+ lives post pandemic.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ people feel supported to overcome negative impacts caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equality and Human Rights Division.

Action 46: undertake a thorough investigation into how LGBTQ+ people, particularly LGBTQ+ young people and LGBTQ+ disabled people, in Wales have been impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic

How we will achieve it?

- Publish a rapid review of available evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on

LGBTQ+ people.

What the impact will be?

- LGBTQ+ people feel supported to overcome negative impacts caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

When we will do it?

- Ongoing.

Who will help achieve this?

- WG Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Unit / Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) (see section “Data and Research”).

Glossary of terms

The following Glossary of Terms gathers some definitions used in previous Welsh Government publications and legislation ([Welsh Government 2019b](#); [Welsh Government 2019c](#)). However, there are some terms that do not have a legal definition. For further information, and for those terms that do not have a legal definition, please check other glossary of terms already available, including the [a:gender \(2022\)](#) page, Stonewall page ([2022](#)), the Glossary for the Welsh Government Report on the Census 2021 ([Welsh Government 2023](#)), and the ONS’s Census 2021 dictionary ([ONS Census 2021](#)). This section should be used to clarify the terminology used in this Action Plan. We acknowledge the importance of understanding how people refer to themselves, and this list of terms does not intend to suggest comprehensive definitions of orientations and identities beyond the purpose of this work.

Ace/Aro, or Asexual/Aromantic

Ace, or “asexual” covers a group of definitions for people whose experience of sexual attraction is either absent or significantly reduced. Aro is an abbreviated term for aromantic, which often refers to someone who have little or no romantic attraction to others.

Conversion practices

Conversion practice is used as an umbrella term to describe interventions of a wide-ranging nature, all of which are premised on the misconception that a person’s sexual orientation and gender, including gender identity and expression, can be changed or suppressed when they do not fall under what other actors in a given setting and time perceive as the desirable norm, in particular when the person is lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary or gender diverse (henceforth “LGBTQ+”). Such practices are therefore consistently aimed at effecting a change from non-heterosexual to heterosexual and/or from trans or gender diverse to cisgender. Depending on the context, the term is used for a multitude of practices and methods, some of which are clandestine and therefore poorly documented.

Gender

A term that is used to refer to whether someone’s internal sense of themselves is female, male or non-binary. People’s gender does not always align with the sex they were assigned at birth (see transgender/trans). This term is sometimes used in the context of gender expression or gender identity.

Gender Diverse

The term "gender-diverse" is used to refer to persons whose gender, including

their gender identity and gender expression, is at odds with what is perceived as being the gender norm in a particular context at a particular point in time, including those who do not place themselves in the male/female binary.

Gender Expression

This refers to how an individual chooses to present themselves in society to reflect their gender in conjunction with certain social and cultural norms and differences that societies have about how people behave, express themselves, look or dress. People often find an important sense of identity in these, but they can also perpetuate discrimination, inequalities and harms.

Gender Identity

This term is often used interchangeably with gender and ultimately means the same thing, someone's internal sense of themselves. The term "gender identity" has been the source of polarising rhetoric around the phrase "identify as..." and has been rejected by some people and groups who favour the more straightforward "gender".

Gender Reassignment

This is a term describing transgender people who are legally protected from discrimination. Under Section 7 of the Equality Act 2010. A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Intersectionality

It is related to the way in which different types of discrimination (i.e., unfair treatment because of a person's protected characteristics) are connected to and affect each other. Intersectional discrimination, sometimes known as combined discrimination, is where a person is discriminated against because of a particular combination of two or more protected characteristics.

Intersex and VSC

An intersex person is someone who does not fit conventional expectations for male or female development in terms of anatomy, metabolism or genetics. The opposite of intersex is endosex, which is where a person does fit conventional expectations.

Some clinicians use the term differences in sex development (DSD), but this term is unpopular among intersex groups as it is connected to the former meaning of DSD as “disorders of sex development”. The term “disorder” is felt to be pejorative. Similarly, the term intersex is sometimes rejected by some groups and may prefer to refer to “Variations of Sex Characteristics” (VSC) or “variations in reproductive or sex anatomy”.

LGBTQ+

Refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual/bi, transgender/trans people, queer or questioning. Other letters can be added to the acronym to include other groups, orientations and identities, such as I (intersex) and A (asexual/aromantic). The + (plus) in the acronym is used as a shorthand to include and acknowledge other diverse terms people identify with and use to describe their identities and orientations, including intersex, asexual and aromantic people.

Non-binary

A non-binary person is someone whose gender lies outside the traditional male/female binary idea of gender.

Protected Characteristics

Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out what are protected characteristics, which are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Queer

A term used mainly by people who identify with a minority sexual orientation or gender identity, sometimes rejecting other labels of orientations or identities. Although it was used in the past as derogatory term for LGBTQ+ individuals, and some people view the word as a slur, it has now been reclaimed by many LGBTQ+ communities.

Sex

attributed to a person on the basis of a range of characteristics including chromosomes, hormone profiles and reproductive anatomy and functions (e.g., genitalia). Some people's gender does not match with the sex they were assigned at birth (see transgender/trans). Currently in the UK, only 2 sexes can be recorded at birth, which excludes intersex people. In Section 11 of the Equality Act 2010, it says that "in relation to the protected characteristic of sex (a) a reference to a person who has a particular protected characteristic is a reference to a man or to a woman".

Sexual Orientation

This term is defined in Section 12 of the Equality Act 2010. Sexual Orientation means a person's sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, persons of the opposite sex or persons of either sex. People might use the terms heterosexual, gay, bisexual/bi, lesbian or straight to describe their sexual orientation.

Transgender/trans

An umbrella term used to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. The opposite of transgender is cisgender, which describes people whose gender is the same, and sits comfortably with their sex assigned at birth. Some non-binary people regard themselves as falling under the trans umbrella, but not all.

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