Lewisham

BARRIERS TO POLITICS WORKING GROUP

Date: WEDNESDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2017 at 7.30 pm

Committee Room 3
Civic Suite
Lewisham Town Hall
London SE6 4RU

Enquiries to: Sarah Assibey
Telephone: 0208 314 8975 (direct line)

MEMBERS

Councillor Suzannah Clarke (Chair)	L
Councillor Jacq Paschoud (Vice Chair)	L
Councillor Colin Elliott	L
Councillor Maja Hilton	L
Councillor Joyce Jacca	L
Councillor Joan Millbank	L
Councillor Hilary Moore	L

Members are summoned to attend this meeting

Barry Quirk
Chief Executive
Laurence House
Catford
London SE6 4RU
Date: 29 August 2017

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

ORDER OF BUSINESS – PART 1 AGENDA

MINUTES OF THE BARRIERS TO POLITICS MEETING

Monday 24 July 2017 at 7.35pm

PRESENT: Councillors Suzannah Clarke (Chair), Jacq Paschoud (Vice-Chair), Joyce Jacca, Paul Bell, Bill Brown and Luke Sorba

Also Present: Ashok Viswanathan (Operations Manager, Operation Black Vote), Will Davis (Advocacy Service Manager, Lewisham Speaking Up), Colin Smith (Lewisham Speaking Up), Peter Crane (Lewisham Speaking Up), Salena Mulhere (Officer), Sarah Assibey (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillors Hilary Moore, Joan Millbank, Maja Hilton, Colin Elliot and David Humphreys (Officer)

1. **Minutes**

   The Chair asked that the following amendments be made to the Minutes of the last meeting:

   Under paragraph 3.6, "women elected" be changed to "female candidates"
   Under paragraph 3.15, "other organisations" be changed to "other local organisations"
   Under paragraph 4.4, "Several years" be changed to make clear that caring responsibilities, particularly those of children with disabilities, can span over the course of a lifetime.
   Under paragraphs 4.6 and 4.7, this a repetition of 4.4 and 4.5 and should be removed.

   RESOLVED subject to the amendments noted, the minutes were agreed as a true record.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

   No interests were declared.

3. **Ethnicity**

   3.1. Salena Mulhere summarised a report on ethnicity barriers in politics, produced by officer, David Humphreys. The report provided context for the Group to consider as part of the evidence session.

   3.2. The most recent Census of Local Authority Councillors (2013) was used to draw data from the report. The following points from the report were highlighted:

   3.3. The vast majority of councillors were white. A greater percentage of councillors from London boroughs were from non-white backgrounds at 15.7%. However compared to the rest of England this figure is still not representative.

3.4. Many disparities in leadership within a local authority were highlighted in the 2013 census. 5.8% of respondents from a BAME background were a directly appointed mayor or deputy mayor; 1.6% of respondents who were non-white were a local authority leader compared to 2.8% of white respondents.

3.5. Comparable time was spent on council business: 20.9 hours was spent by non-white councillors where as white councillors spent 20.7 hours. However, councillors from a non-white background were spending 5.8 hours on party business and an average of 4.2 hours was spent on party business by white councillors.

3.6. The BAME Women Councillors' Taskforce was convened by the Government Equalities Office in May 2008. The Taskforce highlighted the importance of supporting the individual journey to become a councillor. They recommended that a single clear summary of the steps to become a councillor is developed and also that care is taken when matching mentors.

3.7. Ashok Viswanathan, co-founder and deputy director of Operation Black Vote (OBV) gave a presentation, highlighting the focal points of Operation Black Vote, its background and work as follows:

3.8. He gave context of the organisation highlighting that its goal is to encourage and inspire people from BAME communities to take part in the democratic and decision-making process of government.

3.9. This is done primarily through 3 strands of work within the organisation: political education, political participation and political representation.

3.10. OBV has just celebrated its 21st birthday- the organisation launched in the House of Commons in July 1996. The work done founded the nucleus of the operation and found that there were only 4 BAME MPs in the House of Commons- all elected in 1987, after what was effectively a 100 year gap from when the previous BAME MP had been in parliament.

3.11. OBV aims to change the picture of politics by firstly lobbying institutions and secondly encouraging communities, particularly African-Caribbean and Asian communities, which were traditionally less likely register to vote. In these communities, 25% of people are not registered to vote and over 50% would not go out to a polling station (of those registered). This compares to 1 in 16 who are not registered to vote in the wider community.

3.12. A democratic deficit was observed from the representation levels and low levels of participation

3.13. Since 1997, OBV worked with polling companies that have done research on the vote campaign and run campaigns for the organisations and also try to get an idea of the electorate feel about the political process post-election campaign.

3.14. In 2005, within these campaigns, the question "Do you believe there will ever be a Black PM?" was asked: in the 18-25 age bracket, a huge apathy, distrust and alienation was found. This poll has not been undertaken subsequent to the election of Barack Obama but speaking to young people and children showed that they were very pleased to see a black President in the U.S.

3.15. There is still a high level of distrust which manifests itself in the political arena. This distrust stems from and lies within particular encounters with police, local authorities, health bodies, etc.

3.16. Outside of electoral politics, there is still a vast amount of work to be done to engage young people primarily, but also BAME communities. Some work has been done by local authorities, Lewisham being one of them. Lewisham ran its first Councillor Shadowing scheme in 2009, the most recent has been run in 2015 and Ashok commended Lewisham on continuing to strive to improve participation by undertaking this review.

3.17. OBV has recently selected 50 candidates for a parliamentary shadowing scheme, which was being supported by the DCLG as well as other speakers and bodies, including the Parliamentary Speakers Committee, the Z Foundation and other key grant-holders. There has not been a national campaign which runs over a longer period.

3.18. The organisation also plans to campaign further around education; citizenship education has slipped and fallen under the radar, leaving many young people unknowledgeable about politics.

3.19. OBV also works around the election cycles to try to increase the voter registration rates. There has not been a register-to-vote national campaign nor a 'get-out-and-vote' campaign that has run over a long period.

3.20. Ashok Viswanathan concluded his presentation by listing the barriers the Group may want to consider for evidence: the barriers to entering politics in BAME communities include social capital (the networks that are more readily available to, for example, a white middle class middle-aged person, are not as available to people from BAME communities and other communities); educational capital (therefore there is not as much knowledge of the systemic process of politics); and financial capital (which would provide support with an employer, household etc.).

3.21. Councillor Paschoud asked whether it was made clear to those wanting to join the schemes that joining a party would be helpful to them and increase their chances of entering this side of politics. Ashok highlighted that when people come for an interview for any of the schemes they are asked if they are a member to any of the parties that they wish to shadow. When candidates are scored this is taken into consideration. It is not used against them but it is beneficial to those that are willing to join a party. It is hoped that the individual will go back into the community and act as an ambassador and demystify the process for others. The membership fee is a barrier for some, especially with some parties charging more than others, causing some to reconsider wanting to join some parties.

3.22. Councillor Clarke pointed out that trade unions base charges on an individual's income and that political parties could consider this in relation to their membership charges.

3.23. Several of the candidates selected for the schemes were already active in their CLPs or their conservative associations, and even though they were active, they were not progressing. Being on a programme like OBV, facilitated by the organisation with its national profile, would help propel them forward.

3.24. Councillor Bell made a point that social background is a very significant barrier in politics as well as class. The cost to run, join as a member and/or networking required for particular positions is difficult for those from working class backgrounds. In addition to this, the social capital of networks is tightly managed by the middle class and by the people that have the power. The class dynamic and financial aspect feeds into the points raised by OBV.

3.25. Ashok stated that none of the issues raised are solely to do with being BAME-social class is also a large component. In terms of the scheme, it provides subsistence and travel costs to all participants. As well as the 12 days of shadowing, which are split between the constituency and Westminster, training is provided in 6 areas, which includes running for election in local/national government, media training/public speaking and other areas that they may find useful in the political arena but are also transferable skills should they use them in another area.

3.26. Councillors highlighted that there is potentially a barrier in relation to geographical locations. Ashok confirmed that although the majority of candidates applying to take part in the scheme were from London, approximately one third are from other parts of the country; OBV offers travel and subsistence support to increase participation from candidates in other parts of the country.

3.27. Councillor Sorba told the group that he thought that as councillors they were already on the 'inside', and should hence go out and engage the community more rather than leaving in to organisations like Operation Black Vote.

3.28. The Chair raised the argument that studies show there are high numbers of BAME in certain high level industries such as Law and Medicine but in Civil Service and Politics, there are not as many. The Chair told the group that this is often because people in those positions are seen as elevated and this creates an 'us and them' attitude.

3.29. Participants of the meeting also discussed the fact that people vote according to what is a reflection of themselves. It is imperative for them to see themselves represented in their communities and nationally.

The Chair thanked Ashok for his participation.

RESOLVED that this report and evidence given was noted.

4. Disability

The Chair welcomed representatives from Lewisham speaking up, who raised the following points regarding the barriers to politics and generally for those with learning disabilities.

4.1. The representatives from Lewisham Speaking Up first noted that they would be specifically discussing those with learning disabilities. Two of the attendees at the meeting were parliamentary representatives of the Speaking Up People's Parliament. Will Davies, Advocacy Service Manager at Lewisham Speaking Up, said that his colleague had carried out some research in preparation for the Barriers to Politics Working Group meeting and that he could only find information on two councillors with learning disabilities nationwide.

4.2. The representatives made a point that if help was available to all those with disabilities, including those disabilities that are not visible, that this would truly provide equal opportunities.

4.3. The representatives from Speaking Up said that a barrier to getting into politics for those who have learning disabilities is reading or writing difficulties, however this shouldn't be an issue providing they have the right people supporting and also encouraging them.

4.4. The Chair said that those with learning difficulties and disabilities, technology is of great use. There is some technology out there which can provide round the clock support for those who need it, which would be beneficial for those in or trying to enter politics.

4.5. Councillors said reading and writing skills are essential for most jobs including those in politics. However, learning disabilities like dyslexia can effect ones confidence in these positions and make it very difficult to progress.

4.6. Time is also a factor when considering the barriers to politics as it takes those with learning disabilities longer to complete tasks.

4.7. Representatives from Speaking Up said that some of the main things that would stop them from being councillors was the forms and also people asking them lots of questions about their disabilities.

4.8. Councillors said that it would be beneficial for all if people were less judgemental and over-expectant of politicians and if a greater effort was made to communicate clearly, for example not using abbreviations, to ensure that everyone understands what is being discussed and no one is being excluded.

4.9. Councillors agreed that it would also be beneficial to have digests of reports, for example with long reports or agendas; this would make things simpler without losing the quality of work.

4.10. Councillors also queried if there were legal barriers regarding participation. Statistics show that many of those with disabilities do not vote, however, people are concerned about supporting those with learning disabilities being perceived as manipulation.

4.11. Councillors notes that here was a perception that there was a lack of support at polling stations for those with learning disabilities- however, it was noted that support is available for anyone with any disability in polling stations but it is important that people are made aware of the support.

4.12. Will Davies told the group that it was more difficult to prepare and dissipate information to support those with learning disabilities to vote in advance of the previous general election because it was a snap general election.

4.13. Councillors noted the fact that they are not asked of any learning disabilities they have upon appointment of their position, and said that it may be a good idea to change this in time for the appointment of new councillors.

4.14. Councillors also felt that Council documents should also be made dyslexia friendly, such as the options to change font or the colour of paper should be available. The council should take notice of the resources and technology that is available to help people with similar learning disabilities, and also ask councillors about the support they might need.

4.15. The Group stated that it would be more useful for select committee meetings to have people with disabilities, as opposed to those who support them or speak on behalf of them, to attend meetings and speak on how particular issues affect them directly. It was also suggested that ordinary service users speaking at select committees, as the norm, would be better and that agendas and meeting times could be adjusted to better suit people. Salena Mulhere suggested that councillors speak to scrutiny managers to arrange participation/evidence-giving in the future, noting that the committees cannot deal with individual cases. The group noted that there were other ways of engaging service users directly, for example, Healthier Communities Select Committee had run a 'tea party' event previously.

4.16. The Chair requested that the Group considered the recommendations set out in the report "Smoothing the Pathway to Politics for Disabled People", appended in the agenda.

RESOLVED that the report and evidence given is noted.

The Chair thanked Lewisham Speaking Up's representatives for their time.

5. Future Meetings

The Group felt that there would perhaps need to be more time spent collating evidence for a wider range of disabilities (including physical and mental health), religion, sexuality and gender reassignment.

As there are 2 meetings left, one being an evidence sessions, there is limited time to get the final report to Council before the end of the year, feedback from the survey should be done via email before the October meeting; any extra meetings could be facilitated if necessary, providing there is an available date. The final draft report will

be circulated in advance of the meeting to ensure that members are prepared to discuss finalising their draft recommendations at the October meeting.

From the evidence taken to date, and suggestions made by members, it seems that there will likely be two "sets" of recommendations: one for those things within the remit of the Council (support, meetings, inductions, allowances etc.) and another set of recommendations for political parties in Lewisham regarding selection, canvassing, mentoring and setting clear expectations.

The meeting finished at 9.25pm

BARRIERS TO POLITICS WORKING GROUP			
Report Title	**Declarations of Interest**		
Key Decision			**Item No. 2**
Ward			
Contributors	**Chief Executive**		
Class	**Part 1**		**Date: 6 September 2017**

Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

1   **Personal interests**

There are three types of personal interest referred to in the Council's Member Code of Conduct :-

(1) Disclosable pecuniary interests
(2) Other registerable interests
(3) Non-registerable interests

2   **Disclosable pecuniary interests** are defined by regulation as:-

(a)   Employment, trade, profession or vocation of a relevant person* for profit or gain

(b)   Sponsorship –payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than by the Council) within the 12 months prior to giving notice for inclusion in the register in respect of expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member or towards your election expenses (including payment or financial benefit from a Trade Union).

(c)   Undischarged contracts between a relevant person* (or a firm in which they are a partner or a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest) and the Council for goods, services or works.

(d)   Beneficial interests in land in the borough.

(e)   Licence to occupy land in the borough for one month or more.

(f)   Corporate tenancies – any tenancy, where to the member's knowledge, the Council is landlord and the tenant is a firm in which the relevant person* is a

partner, a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest.

(g)   Beneficial interest in securities of a body where:-

   (a)   that body to the member's knowledge has a place of business or land in the borough; and

   (b)   either
           (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that body; or

           (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person* has a beneficial interest exceeds 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that class.

*A relevant person is the member, their spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom they live as spouse or civil partner.

(3)   Other registerable interests

   The Lewisham Member Code of Conduct requires members also to register the following interests:-

   (a)   Membership or position of control or management in a body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council

   (b)   Any body exercising functions of a public nature or directed to charitable purposes , or whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy, including any political party

   (c)   Any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25

(4)   Non registerable interests

   Occasions may arise when a matter under consideration would or would be likely to affect the wellbeing of a member, their family, friend or close associate more than it would affect the wellbeing of those in the local area generally, but which is not required to be registered in the Register of Members' Interests (for example a matter concerning the closure of a school at which a Member's child attends).

(5)   Declaration and Impact of interest on members' participation

   (a)   Where a member has any registerable interest in a matter and they are present at a meeting at which that matter is to be discussed, they must declare the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity and in any

event before the matter is considered. The declaration will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the matter is a disclosable pecuniary interest the member must take not part in consideration of the matter and withdraw from the room before it is considered. They must not seek improperly to influence the decision in any way. **<u>Failure to declare such an interest which has not already been entered in the Register of Members' Interests, or participation where such an interest exists, is liable to prosecution and on conviction carries a fine of up to £5000</u>**

(b)   Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest they must still declare the nature of the interest to the meeting at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered, but they may stay in the room, participate in consideration of the matter and vote on it unless paragraph (c) below applies.

(c)   Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest, the member must consider whether a reasonable member of the public in possession of the facts would think that their interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair the member's judgement of the public interest. If so, the member must withdraw and take no part in consideration of the matter nor seek to influence the outcome improperly.

(d)   If a non-registerable interest arises which affects the wellbeing of a member, their, family, friend or close associate more than it would affect those in the local area generally, then the provisions relating to the declarations of interest and withdrawal apply as if it were a registerable interest.

(e)   Decisions relating to declarations of interests are for the member's personal judgement, though in cases of doubt they may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

(6)   Sensitive information

There are special provisions relating to sensitive interests. These are interests the disclosure of which would be likely to expose the member to risk of violence or intimidation where the Monitoring Officer has agreed that such interest need not be registered. Members with such an interest are referred to the Code and advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance.

(7)   Exempt categories

There are exemptions to these provisions allowing members to participate in decisions notwithstanding interests that would otherwise prevent them doing so. These include:-

(a) Housing – holding a tenancy or lease with the Council unless the matter relates to your particular tenancy or lease; (subject to arrears exception)

(b) School meals, school transport and travelling expenses; if you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or a school governor unless the matter relates particularly to the school your child attends or of which you are a governor;

(c) Statutory sick pay; if you are in receipt

(d) Allowances, payment or indemnity for members

(e) Ceremonial honours for members

(f) Setting Council Tax or precept (subject to arrears exception)

Barriers to Politics Working Group			
REPORT	Barriers to entering and progressing in politics faced due to sexual orientation or gender identity		
KEY DECISION	No	**Item No:**	3
WARD	N/A		
CONTRIBUTORS	Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration		
CLASS	Part 1	**Date:**	6 September 2017

1. SUMMARY

1.1. This report provides context for the Barriers to Politics Working Group to consider as part of the evidence session on barriers related to sexual orientation or gender identity which people face when running for and progressing as a local councillor.

1.2. This report provides information on research in to the barriers people face due to their sexual orientation or gender identity whilst running for and progressing in elected office. The report highlights campaigns and research focused on sexual orientation and gender identity.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1. The Barriers to Politics Working Group is recommended to:
- Note the report.
- Consider the evidence provided at the meeting.

3. CONTEXT

3.1. The Equality Act 2010 defines the following characteristics as protected characteristics:
- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

3.2. Lewisham's Comprehensive Equality Scheme (CES) 2016-20 sets out how the Council will meet its duties to improve the quality of life and life chances of all Lewisham's residents as well as the various equality groups afforded specific protection under the Equality Act of 2010. The scheme contains the following five overarching objectives:

- tackle victimisation, discrimination and harassment
- improve access to services
- close the gap in outcomes for our citizens
- increase mutual understanding and respect within and between communities
- increase participation and engagement.

3.3. The London Borough of Lewisham has a population of 306,000 (the 13th largest in London and the 5th largest in Inner London). The population of the borough has increased by 30,000 since the 2011 Census (this represents a 9% increase since 2011). By the time of the next national Census in 2021, the population of the borough is forecast to reach 321,000 (a 16% increase on 2011). Children and young people make up 25 per cent of Lewisham's population, whilst those aged over 65 comprise of 10 per cent of the population.

4. SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY CONTEXT

4.1. Nationally, sexual identity estimates are based on social survey data from the Annual Population Survey (APS). The questions collect information on self-identified sexual identity from the household population aged 16 and over in the UK. In 2015, 1.7 per cent of the UK population identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB). More males (2.0 per cent) than females (1.5 percent) identified themselves as LGB in 2015; 4.6 per cent of respondents identified themselves as "other", "don't know" or refused to respond.

4.2. British voters returned a record number of openly LGB MPs to Parliament in the 2017 General Election; forty-five LGB MPs were elected in June 2017 (approximately 7% of all MPs), six more than in the previous parliament.

4.3. The Census of Local Authority Councillors 2013 did not ask any questions relating to sexual orientation and hence it is not possible to comment on the representativeness of local councils. In the next Census of Local Authority Councillors in 2018, questions on sexual orientation will be included.

4.4. No survey of candidates in local elections in England has asked respondents questions about their sexual orientation. However, the Welsh Government, with the support of Data Unit Wales, carried out a survey of local government councillors and candidates following the May 2012 elections (results from the second survey following the 2017 elections are expected to be published later this year). The survey found that 2 per cent of elected councillors identified as LGB (in line with the national position) in comparison to 5 per cent of unelected candidates. The survey found that the majority of elected councillors identified as heterosexual or straight (98 per cent). The survey did not ask respondents if they identified as transgender, or if their gender identity was different from that assigned to them at birth.

4.5. Despite a growing number of openly LGB Members of Parliament, there are no openly transgender MPs in the UK. Labour Candidate Sophie Cook stood in the Worthing East and Shoreham Parliamentary Constituency in June 2017; although she was unsuccessful in being elected, the Labour party observed gains of 19.8% of the electorate in the constituency compared with the 2015 position (compared to 9.5% increase in vote share nationwide).

4.6. Labour, Liberal Democrats, Conservatives, Greens and UKIP all have councillors who openly identify as transgender. The Labour Party elected its first openly transgender councillor in May 2016.

5. SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY RESEARCH AND CAMPAIGNS

5.1. Research by Stonewall in their report 'Gay in Britain', published in 2013, found that many political parties' own lesbian, gay and bisexual supporters believe they would face discrimination if they were to seek selection as a parliamentary candidate: 52 per cent of gay Conservative Party supporters say they would face barriers in their own party, compared with 23 per cent of gay Labour Party supporters and 20 per cent of gay Liberal Democrat supporters.

5.2. Stonewall has found that those aged 18 to 29 more likely to expect discrimination; 82 per cent say this of the Conservative Party, 45 per cent of the Labour Party and 37 per cent of the Liberal Democrats. However, fewer LGB people in 2013 expected to experience discrimination if they sought selection by a political party to run for parliament than when the survey was conducted in 2008.

5.3. Stonewall's report considered perceptions at a local political level and found that 74 per cent of party supporters thought they would face barriers from the Conservative Party if they were seeking selection to run as a local councillor; 39 per cent would expect to face barriers from the Labour Party and a 33 per cent from the Liberal Democrats (22, 16 and 13 percentage points higher respectively than comparative figures at a national political level).

5.4. Perception in the media and discrimination has been identified as a cause for concern by Stonewall: at the time of their 2013 survey, 76 per cent of gay people believed that LGB politicians were subject to greater scrutiny, including by the media, compared to heterosexual politicians.

5.5. Iain Stewart, Conservative MP for Milton Keynes South, has highlighted the barrier that negative campaigning can play against LGB candidates and argues that "although all parties are signed up publicly and at leadership level, at constituency level there can sometimes be discrimination in subtle or unsubtle ways."

5.6. Stonewall made a series of recommendations to political parties in its 2013 report, 'Gay in Britain', including that parties should ensure that candidates do not produce campaign literature deliberately designed to highlight an opponent's sexual orientation and political parties should monitor the sexual orientation of their members and candidates.

5.7. The Commission on Women in Local Government's report, 'Does local government work for women?' recognised that it is hard to identify whether LGBT+ women are underrepresented due to challenges in measuring these identities in the wider population. Surveys carried out by the Commission did however find that many of the LGBT+ women councillors who responded had experienced multiple discrimination.

5.8. In 2014, Wiltshire Council published 'LGBT Public Sector Forum Role Models' which provides stories and case studies from LGBT leaders across Wiltshire Council, Swindon Borough Council and the wider public sector. Swindon Council Leader 2006-2013, Rod Bluh, shares his personal experience in the publication, he says that "the more you are open and confident about yourself and your relationship, the less it is an issue for others".

5.9. In 2016, media outlets reported that a transgender Conservative councillor was called "he" by a Labour rival at a Bolton Council meeting and this was being treated as a hate incident by police.

5.10. In May 2016, an Equality and Diversity Review Group commissioned by Oxford City Council's Scrutiny Committee recommended, among other things, that the Council adopts gender-neutral terms on forms as part of its ongoing work to be as inclusive as possible, for instance, giving consideration to adding the title Mx in addition to the more established gendered titles such as Mr, Mrs, Miss and Ms.

5.11. Stonewall has run a Leadership programme for senior LGBT individuals for 14 years: the programme brings together senior leaders who identify as LGBT from across a range of sectors and industries.

6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

6.1. It is not possible to identify the representativeness of local and national politics in relation to the sexual orientation or gender identity of politicians as this information is not routinely collected. In instances where the information is requested, it is not always shared.

6.2. An increasing number of openly LGBT individuals are entering politics at a national and local level however, many people still perceive they will face barriers from political parties should they wish to stand for election. More people expect barriers at a local level than at a national level, and this could be due to both subtle and unsubtle discrimination.

6.3. Senior leaders believe that a culture of openness results in fewer issues and Stonewall recommends that political parties collects monitoring information about candidates and members – although this information is not currently readily available publically.

6.4. Language plays a key part in engaging LGBT individuals in political life and more broadly.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The equality implications are set out in the body of this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report at this time.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1. The legal implications are set in the body of the Report.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1. Appendix A: Stonewall, 'Gay in Britain' (2013)

GAY
IN BRITAIN

LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL PEOPLE'S
EXPERIENCES AND EXPECTATIONS
OF DISCRIMINATION

Stonewall

GAY
IN BRITAIN

LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL PEOPLE'S
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Stonewall

INTRODUCTION

The historic passage of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill means that one strand of Stonewall's domestic focus – legislative equality – is effectively complete. However, we've always been mindful that legal success does not necessarily change attitudes and outcomes overnight.

This research, conducted by YouGov for Stonewall, examines the expectations and lived experiences of Britain's 3.7 million gay people. For all the progress that's been made, they continue to face disadvantages in many walks of life; from education and healthcare, to playing sport or reporting a crime. Many lesbian, gay and bisexual people also expect to be discriminated against if they stand for political office, want to foster a child or

consider becoming a magistrate or a school governor.

This hard evidence presents clear challenges to many organisations across both the public and private sectors. Gay people may need to be treated differently, for example, in order to have equal access to public or commercial services. Employers and schools may have to think differently about how to stop bullying of employees and pupils.

These findings send a strong message that there remains much to be done until equality is meaningful for many citizens in twenty-first century Britain.

Ben Summerskill
Chief Executive

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KEY FINDINGS

▶ SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES

Lesbian, gay and bisexual people often expect they will be treated worse than heterosexual people when they deal with schools and family services.

Three in five (61 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect their child would be bullied in primary school if it were known that the child had gay parents. More than four in five (83 per cent) expect the same for a child in secondary school.

Seven in ten (70 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to face barriers because of their sexual orientation if they apply to become a school governor.

▶ ADOPTION AND FOSTERING

Eight in ten (80 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people would expect to face barriers if they applied to become foster parents. Almost half (46 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to be treated worse than a heterosexual person by an adoption agency if they want to adopt a child.

▶ POLITICS

Significant numbers of gay people fear they would still face discrimination if they sought to play an active part in politics, whether as a potential Member of Parliament or local councillor. And many of the political parties' own gay supporters believe that gay candidates would face discrimination.

Three quarters (74 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people think they would face barriers from the Conservative Party if they wanted to stand as an MP, more than a third (37 per cent) would expect to face barriers from the Labour Party and more than a quarter (29 per cent) from the Liberal Democrats.

Three quarters (76 per cent) of gay people believe that lesbian, gay and bisexual politicians are subject to greater scrutiny, including by the media, compared to heterosexual politicians.

▶ EQUAL LEGAL TREATMENT

In contrast to claims made by anti-gay campaigners, there is overwhelming support among gay people for equal marriage.

Nine in ten (91 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people support the Government's recent moves to extend the legal form and name of civil marriage to same-sex couples.

This support rises to 96 per cent among gay people under 35.

▶ POLICE AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The criminal justice system presents a host of barriers for lesbian, gay and bisexual people who fear they will be treated worse than their heterosexual counterparts whether they are reporting crimes, suspected of committing crimes or dealing with police and prison staff.

Almost six in ten (56 per cent) gay and bisexual men and almost half (46 per cent) of lesbian and bisexual women believe they would be treated worse by a prison officer than a heterosexual person.

One in five (20 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people would expect to be treated worse than heterosexual people when reporting a crime if the police officer knew their sexual orientation. A quarter (24 per cent) expect discrimination if reporting a homophobic hate crime.

Almost one in five (18 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to receive poorer treatment if they appeared before a judge for a major criminal offence and one in six (16 per cent) if appearing before a magistrate for a minor criminal offence.

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SOCIAL CARE, HOUSING AND HEALTH

Significant numbers of gay people fear poorer treatment from health, social care and housing providers despite their legal right to equal treatment.

- **Almost a third (31 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect they would be treated worse than heterosexual people by staff in a care home.**

- **Almost one in five (18 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to be treated worse than heterosexual people when applying for social housing.**

- **One in eight (12 per cent) gay young people aged 18 to 24 expect to be treated worse than heterosexual people by their GP.**

LOCAL ENGAGEMENT

Despite clear evidence that gay people experience inequalities and disadvantages when accessing a whole range of public services, providers are failing to engage with gay service users.

- **Nine in ten (88 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people have never been asked by their local service providers about their views on those services.**

- **Two in three (67 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people say if asked, they would offer their views and experiences to local service providers such as a council, police force, school or health trust.**

SPORT

Sport, with its significant place in British life, has so far failed to create an equal and welcoming environment for gay people.

- **More than six in ten (63 per cent) gay and bisexual men and four in ten (38 per cent) lesbians and bisexual women expect to experience homophobia if they take part in a team sport and are open about their sexual orientation.**

MEDIA

The broadcast media's portrayal of lesbian, gay and bisexual people continues to be judged both sparse and unrealistic by a significant number of gay people.

- **More than half (57 per cent) of gay people say there is 'too little' portrayal of lesbian, gay and bisexual people on television and half (49 per cent) think current portrayal of lesbian, gay and bisexual people on UK television is unrealistic.**

WORK

The lives of many gay people at work remain difficult, despite major efforts from leading employers and employment protections having been in place for ten years. They often face bullying and feel unable to be open about their sexual orienation with colleagues and managers.

- **One in five (19 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual employees have experienced verbal bullying from colleagues, customers or service users because of their sexual orientation in the last five years.**

- **One in eight (13 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual employees would not feel confident reporting homophobic bullying in their workplace.**

- **A quarter (26 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual workers are not at all open to colleagues about their sexual orientation.**

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SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES

> I've been bullied since I was in Year 6. I've been called numerous names in the corridor, I've been hit. A lot of people have argued with me about how being gay is wrong. I've had a death threat sent to me saying how someone wanted to '...shove a knife up my arse and in my throat' because I'm gay.
>
> **David, 17,** secondary school, *The School Report,* Stonewall, 2012

Lesbian, gay and bisexual people often expect they will be treated worse than heterosexual people when they deal with schools and family services.

Schools

Homophobic bullying of pupils remains widespread in schools, often seriously affecting pupils' performance and achievement. Stonewall's 2012 *The School Report* found that **more than half** (55 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people experience homophobic bullying at school and most hear homophobic language on a frequent basis.

These early experiences in education can affect gay people's later interactions with the education system, leading many to fear what they will find when they re-engage in education as learners, parents or governors. **Two in five** (40 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual adults expect to experience some discrimination or harassment from fellow learners because of their sexual orientation if they were to pursue a course at a further education college today.

Government estimates suggest that there are now 19,000 children in same-sex parent families yet concerns about bullying in schools remain widespread. Despite the fact that schools have a clear duty to tackle homophobic bullying, **three in five** (61 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect their child would experience bullying in primary school if it were known that their child has gay parents. More than **four in five** (83 per cent) expect the same for a child in secondary school.

Would you expect that your child would experience bullying at school if it were known they have gay parents?

In secondary school — 83%
In primary school — 61%

Lesbian, gay and bisexual people who expect bullying
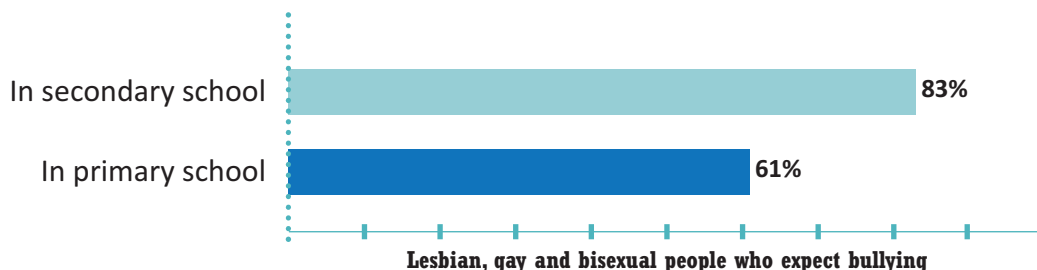
> Well a boy in Year 6 came up to me and said have you got a dad? And I said... I was quite afraid to say it, and I said no. And he said well that's stupid isn't it, and I was like... no. He said yes it is, and he started... he tried to chase me and he got me once and he kicked me.
>
> **Alisha, 7,** primary school, *Different Families: The experiences of children with lesbian and gay parents,* Stonewall, 2010

Stonewall

We will help schools to tackle bullying in schools, especially homophobic bullying. Coalition Agreement 2010

More gay people express concern about the treatment they would receive if they enrolled their child in a school outside of local authority control. **One in eight** (13 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect they will be treated worse than heterosexuals when enrolling their child in primary or secondary free schools and academies, compared to just **one in twenty** (five per cent) in maintained schools. However a significantly higher number of gay people, **three in five** (61 per cent), would expect poorer treatment if they enrol their child in a faith primary or secondary school.

A significant majority fear discrimination if they wanted to become more involved with the school on a formal level. **Seven in ten** (70 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to face barriers because of their sexual orientation if they applied to become a school governor, increasing to almost **eight in ten** (78 per cent) black and minority ethnic gay people.

Families

Many gay people foresee major barriers to becoming parents, often based on an expectation of discrimination from the institutions that deal with families and children.

The Fostering Network estimates a shortfall of around 9,000 foster carers across Britain. However, **eight in ten** (80 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people would expect to face barriers if they applied to become foster parents. **Almost half** (46 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to be treated worse than a heterosexual person by an adoption agency if they want to adopt a child.

Almost a third (31 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to be treated worse than heterosexuals if they appear before a family court in a divorce or custody case.

Three quarters (74 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people consider the bullying at school of children with gay parents a barrier to becoming a parent. **More than half** (56 per cent) say lack of information and support on starting a family is a barrier to becoming a parent.

Four in five (79 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people consider society's attitudes towards gay parents a barrier to becoming a parent. **Two in five** (39 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people say they consider their own family's attitudes a barrier to becoming a parent.

▶ RECOMMENDATIONS

Primary and secondary schools should create an environment where the children of same-sex parents feel supported and included in their learning by talking about the diversity of family life in the curriculum and taking a zero tolerance approach to homophobic bullying and language.

Further and adult education institutions should be aware that prospective gay students may have had their previous experience of education impacted by homophobic bullying. These institutions should launch campaigns aimed at encouraging more gay adults to apply which highlight their commitment to equality and diversity.

Academy and faith school trusts should reassure gay parents that they will not be treated less favourably by having trust-wide policies to tackle homophobia and training for member schools. Trust prospectuses and open evenings should make clear that their schools value diversity and difference.

The Department for Education, The School Governors One Stop Shop and individual schools need to do more to challenge the barriers that exist to gay people becoming Governors. Opportunities for becoming a Governor should be proactively promoted to gay people.

Adoption and foster agencies should use targeted advertising campaigns to recruit more gay adopters and foster carers. This should include monitoring application and acceptance levels from gay people. These organisations should also provide more information aimed at prospective gay parents on the process of adopting or fostering a child.

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▶ RESOURCES

Different Families
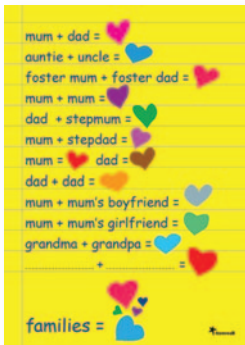The experiences of children with gay parents (2010)

The School Report
The experiences of gay young people in Britain's schools in 2012

The Teachers' Report (2009) YouGov polling of over 2,000 primary and secondary school staff about homophobic bullying

FIT – Stonewall's feature-film for secondary schools and colleges

Different Families posters help schools to celebrate difference

Your local school can become a **Stonewall School Champion** for support in tackling homophobic bullying

Some People Are Gay. Get Over It! posters, postcards and stickers. Posters are also available in a range of different languages.

> I teach PSHE (sex and relationships education), so it's a regular theme. Homosexuality is a deviant behaviour… If you want to be a sexual deviant, fine, in the privacy of your own home and if it's between consenting adults. Just don't do things in public that offend.

Martin, *teacher,* faith independent secondary school
The Teachers' Report, Stonewall, 2009

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POLITICS

> We should ask ourselves why certain groups are under-represented. The reason is not that the electorate will not vote for women, people with disabilities, people who are gay or people from ethnic minorities – they clearly will; otherwise many of us would not be here – but that political parties do not choose enough candidates from diverse backgrounds to fight winnable seats.
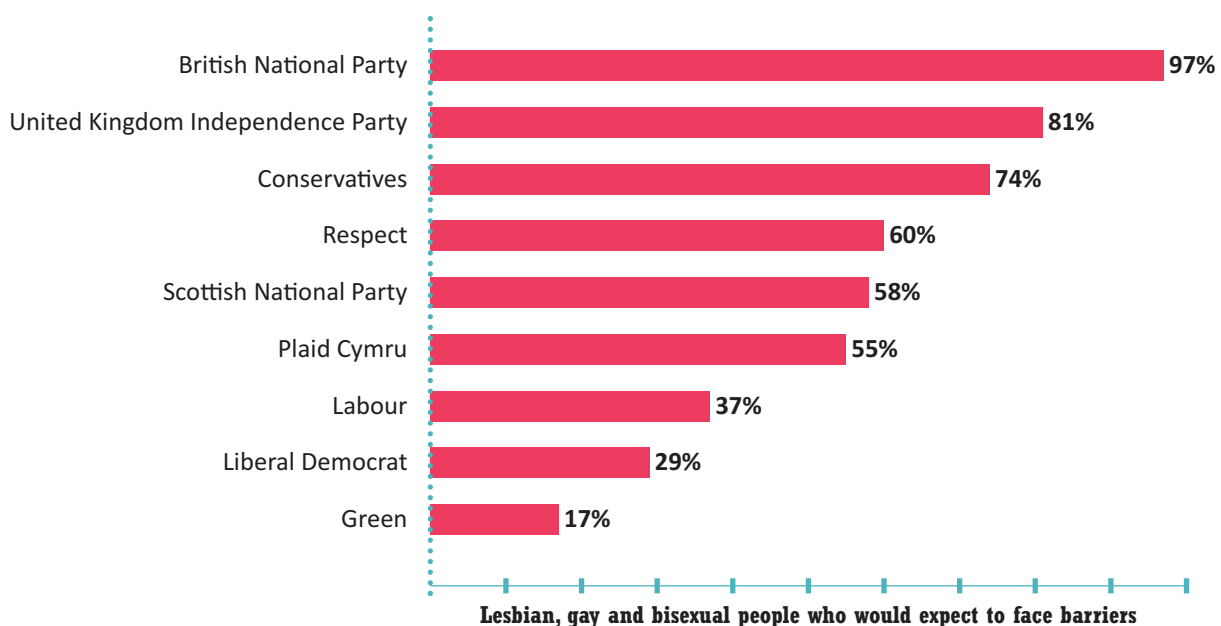>
> Dame Anne Begg, *Labour MP for Aberdeen South,* 2012

The 2010 General Election saw a record number of openly gay MPs elected. The Conservative Party now has more openly gay MPs than all of the other parties combined. Despite this progress many lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Britain feel alienated from the democratic process with large numbers expecting to face discrimination if they sought selection by a political party to run for parliament.

The Conservative Party is seen to present more hurdles than other parties. **Three quarters** (74 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people think they would face barriers if seeking selection as a Conservative Party candidate, **more than a third** (37 per cent) expect they would face barriers from the Labour Party and **three in ten** (29 per cent) expect to face barriers if they seek selection from the Liberal Democrats.

Confidence is lowest amongst younger lesbian, gay and bisexual people with those aged 18 to 29 more likely to expect discrimination; **82 per cent** say this of the Conservative Party, **45 per cent** the Labour Party and **37 per cent** the Liberal Democrats.

However, there has been some improvement. Fewer lesbian, gay and bisexual people in 2013 expect to experience discrimination if they seek selection by a political party to run for parliament than in 2008. In 2008 **nine in ten** (89 per cent) gay people thought they would face barriers from the Conservative Party, **six in ten** (61 per cent) thought they would face barriers from the Labour Party and **nearly half** (47 per cent) expected to face barriers from the Liberal Democrats.

Would you expect to face barriers to selection if you wanted to run as an MP?

Party	Percentage
British National Party	97%
United Kingdom Independence Party	81%
Conservatives	74%
Respect	60%
Scottish National Party	58%
Plaid Cymru	55%
Labour	37%
Liberal Democrat	29%
Green	17%

Lesbian, gay and bisexual people who would expect to face barriers

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Tellingly, many political parties' own lesbian, gay and bisexual supporters believe they would face discrimination if they were to seek selection as a parliamentary candidate. Again the Conservative Party fares worst. **More than half** (52 per cent) of gay Conservative Party supporters say they would face barriers in their own party, compared with **almost a quarter** (23 per cent) of gay Labour Party supporters and **one in five** (20 per cent) gay Liberal Democrat supporters.

Lesbian, gay and bisexual party supporters who expect to face barriers from their own party if wanting to run as an MP

Conservatives	**52%**
Labour	**23%**
Liberal Democrat	**20%**
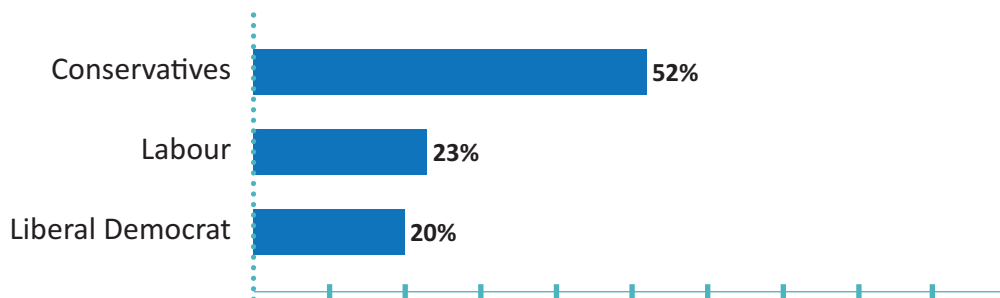
Perceptions of the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru are better in Scotland and Wales respectively compared to perceptions in Britain overall. However, **a third** (34 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Scotland still say they would expect barriers from the Scottish National Party to selection as a parliamentary candidate and **more than two in five** (43 per cent) gay people in Wales say they expect barriers from Plaid Cymru.

The situation is similar at a local level with lesbian, gay and bisexual people expecting to face difficulties if entering local politics.

Three quarters (74 per cent) think they would face barriers from the Conservative Party if they were seeking selection to run as a local councillor. **Two in five** (39 per cent) would expect to face barriers from the Labour Party and **a third** (33 per cent) from the Liberal Democrats.

There is clear concern about the media's portrayal of gay politicians with **three quarters** (76 per cent) of gay people believing that lesbian, gay and bisexual politicians are subject to greater scrutiny, including by the media, compared to heterosexual politicians.

There is still sometimes a stigma, however, and some negative campaigning still goes on. Although all parties are signed up publicly and at leadership level, at constituency level there can sometimes be discrimination in subtle or unsubtle ways.

Iain Stewart, *Conservative MP for Milton Keynes South,* 2012

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Equal legal treatment

In contrast to claims made by campaigners against equality, there is overwhelming support among gay people for equal marriage. **Nine in ten** (91 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people support the Government's moves to extend the legal form and name of civil marriage to same-sex couples. Support rises to **96 per cent** among gay people under 35.

International

Gay people also strongly support tackling homophobic abuse around the world. **Almost nine in ten** (86 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people believe Britain has a moral and social responsibility to challenge human rights abuses against lesbian, gay and bisexual people abroad. When considering holiday destinations abroad, **eight in ten** (80 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people say the poor treatment of a country's gay citizens makes them less likely to visit that country on holiday.

> **When gay marriage arose as an issue, I didn't think it was the most important thing in the world. But all the hurtful comments that people have made during the debate have definitely made me feel more strongly about it. Equality is all we want. I simply don't understand how it can possibly hurt other people to allow it... A union is about love, friendship, support and respect.** Alice Arnold
> *former BBC newsreader,* 2013

▶ RECOMMENDATIONS

Political parties should commit to increasing the number of openly-gay MPs, peers, MSPs and Assembly Members. This will require specific steps to ensure that lesbian, gay and bisexual people are selected to stand as candidates in at least 6% of *winnable* seats.

Political parties should make sure that lesbian, gay and bisexual candidates don't face inappropriate questions from selection panels. Parties should also ensure that candidates do not produce campaign literature deliberately designed to highlight an opponent's sexual orientation.

Political parties should monitor the sexual orientation of their members and candidates alongside other monitored characteristics like disability, ethnicity and gender.

Political parties must make clear their commitment to lesbian, gay and bisexual people. The Scottish Government should stick to its commitment to extend marriage to same-sex couples and the Government in Westminster should continue to seek ways to promote equality for gay people around the world. Political parties must make a clear commitment to delivering public services effectively to lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

▶ RESOURCES

Role Models
A range of interviews which help inspire gay people not to curb their ambitions because of their sexual orientation
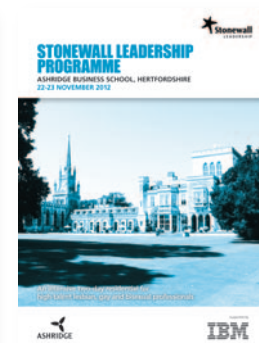
The *Stonewall Leadership Programme*, now in its ninth year, expertly supports the career and personal development of experienced organisational leaders who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual

Stonewall also runs a comprehensive one day *Authentic Role Models Programme* for lesbian, gay and bisexual staff. For details visit **www.stonewall.org.uk/ rolemodels**

有些人
就是
同志。
接受吧！

Some People Are Gay. Get Over It! posters are available in multiple languages. **www.stonewall.org.uk/ international**

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POLICE AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Many lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect they will be treated worse than heterosexual people if they report a crime or are suspected of committing one.

A significant number of gay people worry about reporting crimes to the police. **One in five** (20 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people would expect to be treated worse than heterosexual people when reporting a crime if the police officer knew their sexual orientation. Lesbian, gay and bisexual people aged over 50 are more likely to expect poor treatment when reporting a crime (22 per cent) than gay people aged 18 to 29 (16 per cent).

This concern about poor treatment is higher when reporting hate crimes. A **quarter** (24 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect discrimination if reporting a homophobic hate crime to the police. There's been no material improvement in the last five years; **a quarter** (26 per cent) said the same in 2008. Lesbian, gay and bisexual people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (**37 per cent**) are significantly more likely than white lesbian, gay and bisexual people (**24 per cent**) to expect poorer treatment from the police if they report a homophobic hate crime.

How would you expect to be treated by a police officer if reporting a homophobic hate crime?

White lesbian, gay and bisexual people: **24%**

Black and minority ethnic lesbian, gay and bisexual people: **37%**

Worse than a heterosexual person
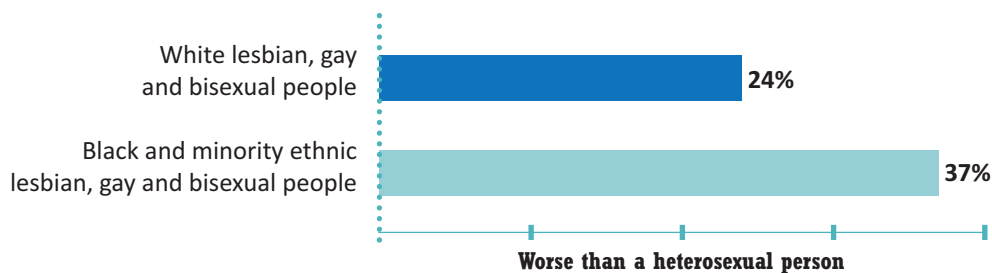
> I got onto a bus late at night with a friend and the driver made remarks about us both. He kept making remarks about his bag, the way he was dressed. I turned around and said 'you are being extremely rude to me and my friend, what is your problem?' and he told us to get off the bus. I complained to the bus company not the police. They dealt with it well. The police would have handled it completely differently.
>
> **Hafeez, 30**
> *One Minority at a Time,* Stonewall, 2012

Two in five (39 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to be treated worse than a heterosexual person by the police if they commit a crime or are suspected of committing a crime. **More than half** (52 per cent) of gay people aged over 65 expect poorer treatment from police in this circumstance. Gay and bisexual men are more likely to expect poorer treatment than lesbians and bisexual women (42 per cent compared to 34 per cent).

Gay people fear discriminatory treatment from judges and magistrates too. **Almost one in five** (18 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect they would receive poorer treatment than a heterosexual person if they appeared before a judge for a major criminal offence. **One in six** (16 per cent) expect worse treatment if appearing before a magistrate for a minor criminal offence.
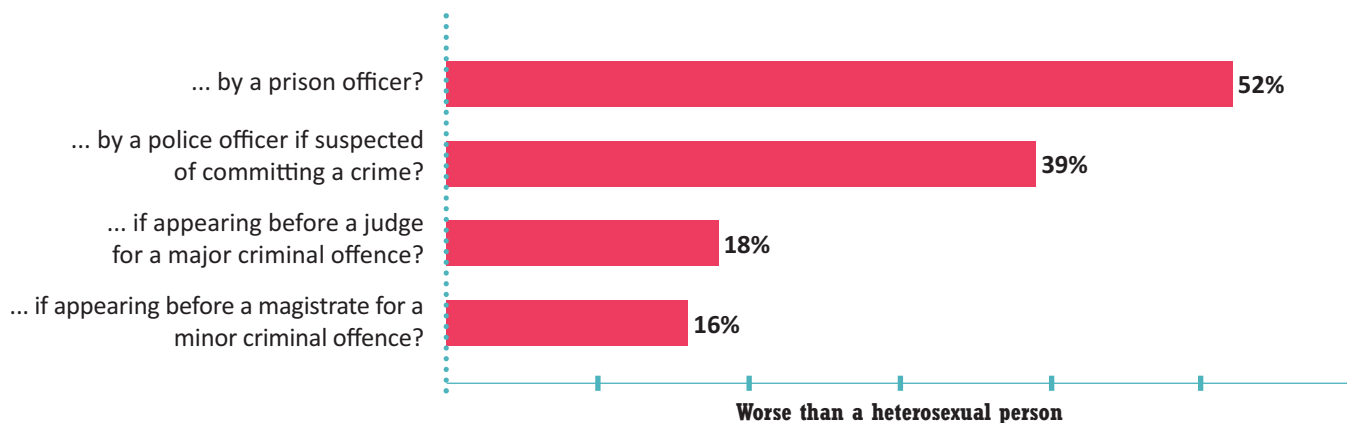
There is a clear worry about the prison system with almost **six in ten** (56 per cent) gay and bisexual men and **almost half** (46 per cent) of lesbian and bisexual women believing they would be treated worse by a prison officer because of their sexual orientation.

> ## It would be foolish to pretend that judges were not occasionally influenced by unconscious stereotyping and by perceptions of ability moulded by their own personal experience. **Lord Sumption,** Justice of The Supreme Court, 2012

Mistrust in the criminal justice system extends to gay people's views of the work and career opportunities it offers. **Half** (50 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people would expect to face barriers to becoming a magistrate because of their sexual orientation and almost half (48 per cent) similarly expect they would face barriers to becoming a Police Community Support Officer. **Almost two thirds** (63 per cent) expect to face barriers to being elected as a Police and Crime Commissioner if their sexual orientation were known.

How would you expect to be treated if it were known you are lesbian, gay or bisexual...

... by a prison officer?	**52%**
... by a police officer if suspected of committing a crime?	**39%**
... if appearing before a judge for a major criminal offence?	**18%**
... if appearing before a magistrate for a minor criminal offence?	**16%**

Worse than a heterosexual person

RECOMMENDATIONS

Police forces should publicly communicate the value of reporting homophobic hate crimes and make it easier for lesbian, gay and bisexual people to do so.

Police forces should engage with lesbian, gay and bisexual people in their area, including by publicly talking about work they are doing to support lesbian, gay and bisexual police staff and officers and by having a visible presence at lesbian, gay and bisexual community events.

Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales should consult lesbian, gay and bisexual people in their local area to ensure the force is meeting their needs.

The Judicial Appointments Commission and local Advisory Committees for magistrates' court should actively encourage applications from lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

Prisons and probation trusts should train staff how to work appropriately with lesbian, gay and bisexual offenders.

RESOURCES

Blow the Whistle on Gay Hate is Stonewall's guide for lesbian, gay and bisexual people on what to do if you've experienced a homophobic hate crime or incident.

Stonewall's latest research and guidance on homophobic hate crime can be found at **www.stonewall.org.uk/hatecrime**

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SOCIAL CARE, HOUSING AND HEALTH

The Equality Act 2010 placed a clear duty on those delivering public services to act to end discrimination against gay people. However lesbian, gay and bisexual people still remain uncertain about how they will be treated across all parts of the health and social care system.

There is real fear about what a future in a care home could hold with **almost a third** (31 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people (35 per cent of those aged over 50) expecting they would be treated worse than heterosexual people by care home staff if they were a resident.

Almost one in five (18 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to be treated worse than a heterosexual person if they need the support of a paid carer in their own home. Disabled lesbian, gay and bisexual people are more likely to expect poorer treatment from a paid carer in their own home (22 per cent compared to 16 per cent).

These negative expectations extend to a host of other services including housing and welfare rights advice. **Almost one in five** (18 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to be treated worse than heterosexual people when applying for social housing and this rises to **one in four** (25 per cent) among gay people aged over 65.
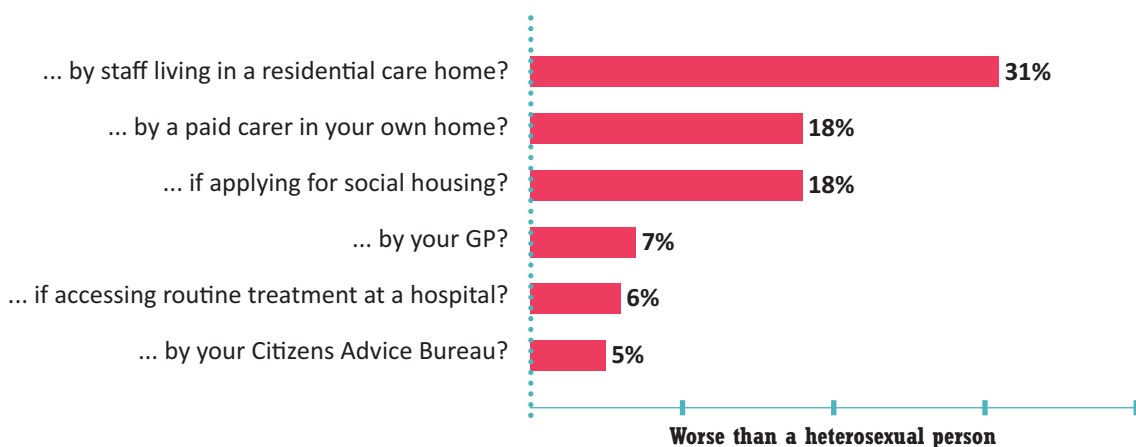
Five per cent of lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect they would be treated worse than heterosexual people when seeking help from a Citizens Advice Bureau.

> **I came out to my new local GP and when I informed her she physically moved back in her chair.** Cliff, 40
>
> *Gay and Bisexual Men's Health Survey,* Stonewall, 2012

Six per cent of lesbian, gay and bisexual people still expect to be treated worse than heterosexual people when accessing routine or emergency treatment at a hospital. Gay people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are twice as likely as white gay people to expect poorer treatment when accessing routine treatment at a hospital (12 per cent compared to 6 per cent). Disabled lesbian, gay and bisexual people are twice as likely as gay people who are not disabled to expect poorer treatment during a routine hospital visit (11 per cent compared to 5 per cent).

Seven per cent of lesbian, gay and bisexual people expect to be treated worse than heterosexual people by their GP but this increases to **one in eight** (12 per cent) gay young people aged 18 to 24.

How would you expect to be treated if it were known you are lesbian, gay or bisexual...

... by staff living in a residential care home?	31%
... by a paid carer in your own home?	18%
... if applying for social housing?	18%
... by your GP?	7%
... if accessing routine treatment at a hospital?	6%
... by your Citizens Advice Bureau?	5%

Worse than a heterosexual person

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Stonewall

Care homes should take steps to make sure older lesbian, gay and bisexual people feel comfortable and safe. They should provide the same space and rights for same-sex partners as heterosexual couples.

Social landlords, such as housing associations, should have policies in place that make clear to lesbian, gay and bisexual people that they can expect to be treated equally when applying for housing.

Healthcare organisations should increase visibility of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in healthcare settings through posters, leaflets and information to create a welcoming environment and improve overall experience of their lesbian, gay and bisexual patients.

> I would, by virtue of the need to have carers in my home, be at a particularly vulnerable stage of life. The thought of being in my own home requiring help from someone who brings in with them the prejudices and judgements of the world I experience 'out there' fills me with dread.
>
> **James, 55,** *Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People in Later Life,* Stonewall, 2011

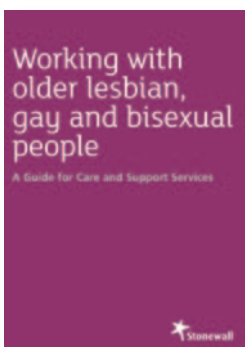## RESOURCES
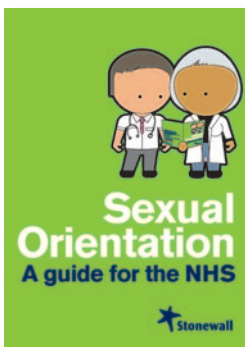
Sexual Orientation:
A guide for the NHS

Prescription for Change:
Lesbian and bisexual women's health check
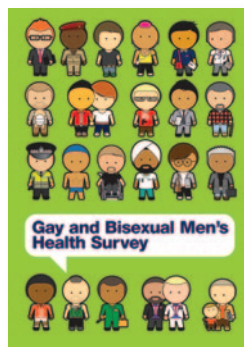
Gay and Bisexual Men's Health Survey

Lesbian health posters

Working with older lesbian, gay and bisexual people:
A guide for care and support services

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People in Later Life

Different Families Same Care posters

Health Briefings

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LOCAL ENGAGEMENT

There is clear evidence that gay people experience inequalities and disadvantages when accessing a whole range of public services. This is in spite of the Equality Act 2010 which says public bodies must consider the needs of their lesbian, gay and bisexual service users when planning and delivering their services.

Nine in ten (88 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people have never been asked by their local service providers about their views of those services. However, there is a clear opportunity to improve. **Two in three** (67 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people say, if asked, they would offer their views and experiences to local services, such as a council, police force, school or health trust.

Gay people also recognise that gathering data about the sexual orientation of service users can be an important way to improve services. **Three in four** (74 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people say they feel 'very comfortable', 'comfortable' or 'neutral' about being asked to provide their sexual orientation on feedback forms from service providers alongside other requests for information such as their age or gender.

> **By doing this work we've been able to get a far richer picture of what people think, want and expect, and as a result we've started to prioritise where we put our money and resources to make sure people really feel satisfied with the service they're getting.**
>
> **Darren Oakey,** Staffordshire Police
> *How to Engage Gay People in Your Work*
> Stonewall, 2011

▶ RECOMMENDATIONS

Service providers should collect equality monitoring information of service users, including on sexual orientation. Service providers should make clear that the information is being gathered in order to improve services and should publicise any action taken following analysis of the data.

Service providers should cultivate relationships with lesbian, gay and bisexual community groups in their local area so that the views of local gay people can be fed into the development of services.

Service providers should encourage local lesbian, gay and bisexual people to participate in public consultations, including by publicising them in gay venues.
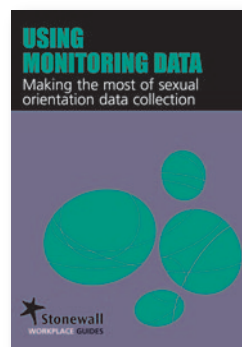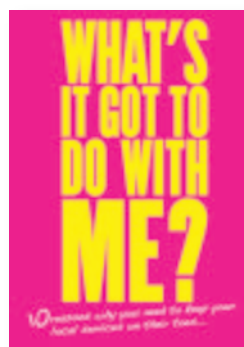
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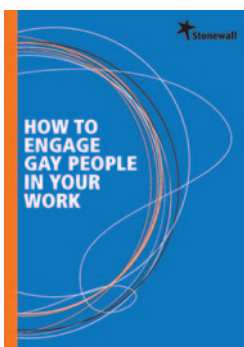
How to engage gay people in your work
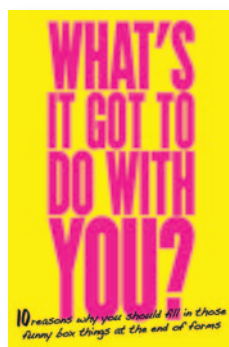
Stonewall's short, plain-English guides for people on the importance of monitoring and how they should keep their local services on their toes

Using Monitoring Data
Making the most of sexual orientation data collection

Local lesbian, gay and bisexual community groups can be found at **www.stonewall.org.uk/ whatsinmyarea**
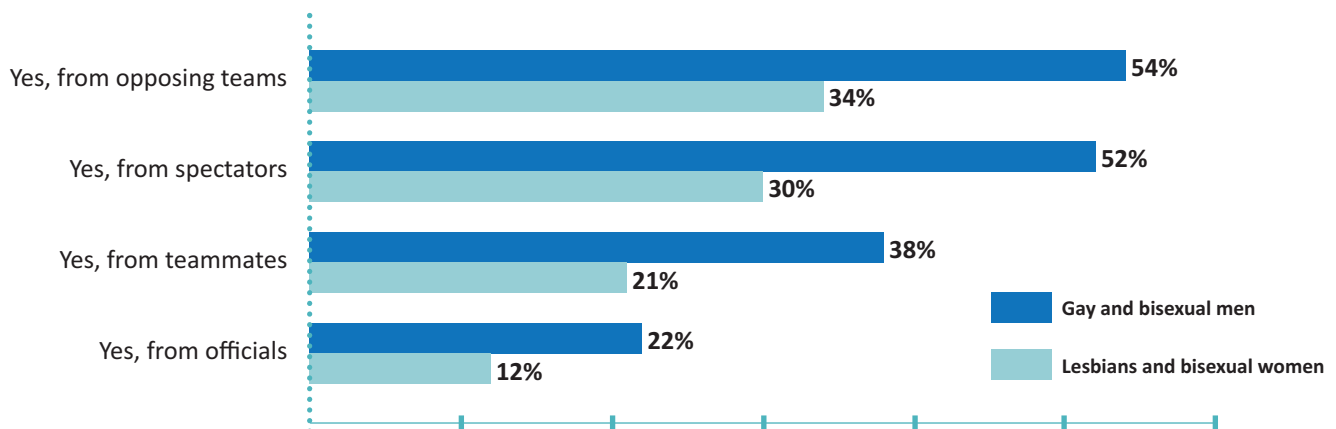
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SPORT

Sport, with its significant place in British life, has so far failed to create an equal and welcoming environment for gay people.

More than six in ten (63 per cent) gay and bisexual men and **four in ten** (38 per cent) lesbians and bisexual women would expect to experience homophobia if they took part in team sport and were open about their sexual orientation. They expect some level of homophobia from opposing teams, spectators, officials and their own teammates.

If you were to participate in organised team sport and were open about your sexual orientation, would you expect to experience homophobia?

	Gay and bisexual men	Lesbians and bisexual women
Yes, from opposing teams	54%	34%
Yes, from spectators	52%	30%
Yes, from teammates	38%	21%
Yes, from officials	22%	12%

The impact seems to be greatest on men, with low numbers taking part in sport. Just **one in twenty** (five per cent) gay and bisexual men participated in an organised team sport in the last year. Lesbians and bisexual women are twice as likely to have participated in an organised team sport; **one in ten** (ten per cent) have done so in the last year.

> **Two thirds of lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils say they don't like team sports. At school, three in ten experience homophobic bullying in changing rooms and a quarter are bullied during sport. 'It happens anywhere, but particularly in sports lessons. I have to change in a separate changing room now because of the abuse.**
> Alex, 15, secondary academy, *The School Report,* Stonewall, 2012

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▶ RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools and youth sports clubs should tackle homophobic bullying on the sports field and encourage lesbian, gay and bisexual young people to participate in team sports, laying the foundation for them to be active adults.

Sports teams and associations should promote a zero tolerance approach to homophobic abuse both on and off the playing field.

National Governing Bodies of sport should promote the participation of lesbian, gay and bisexual people at all levels by training coaches and officials to tackle homophobic abuse and by supporting and celebrating gay athletes.

National Governing Bodies should make a public commitment to eradicate homophobia from their sport and encourage senior spokespeople and high profile athletes to champion the issue.

▶ RESOURCES

Stonewall resources on gay people in sport include:

Leagues Behind
Detailed research into homophobic abuse in English football

The School Report:
The experiences of gay young people in Britain's schools in 2012 – including those participating in school sports

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People in Sport:
Understanding LGB sports participation in Wales, Sport Wales and Stonewall Cymru, Stonewall (2012)

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MEDIA

It's still rare that we see ourselves depicted on telly so it's a wonderful thing when it happens, and is done well.

Jane Hill, BBC news presenter
Diva, 2013

The broadcast media's portrayal of lesbian, gay and bisexual people continues to be judged as both sparse and unrealistic by a significant number of gay people.

Overall, **more than half** (57 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people say there is 'too little' portrayal of lesbian, gay and bisexual people on UK television. Those aged 18 to 29 are more likely to think so (68 per cent) compared to those aged over 50 (48 per cent). Lesbians (77 per cent) and bisexual women (70 per cent) are more likely than gay men (55 per cent) and bisexual men (31 per cent) to say there is not enough portrayal of their real lives on UK television.

Many gay people find the depictions of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in broadcasting to be unrealistic.

Half (49 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people think the portrayal of lesbian, gay and bisexual people on UK television is unrealistic and gay people aged 18 to 29 are more likely to think so (60 per cent). There has been no improvement in perceptions in
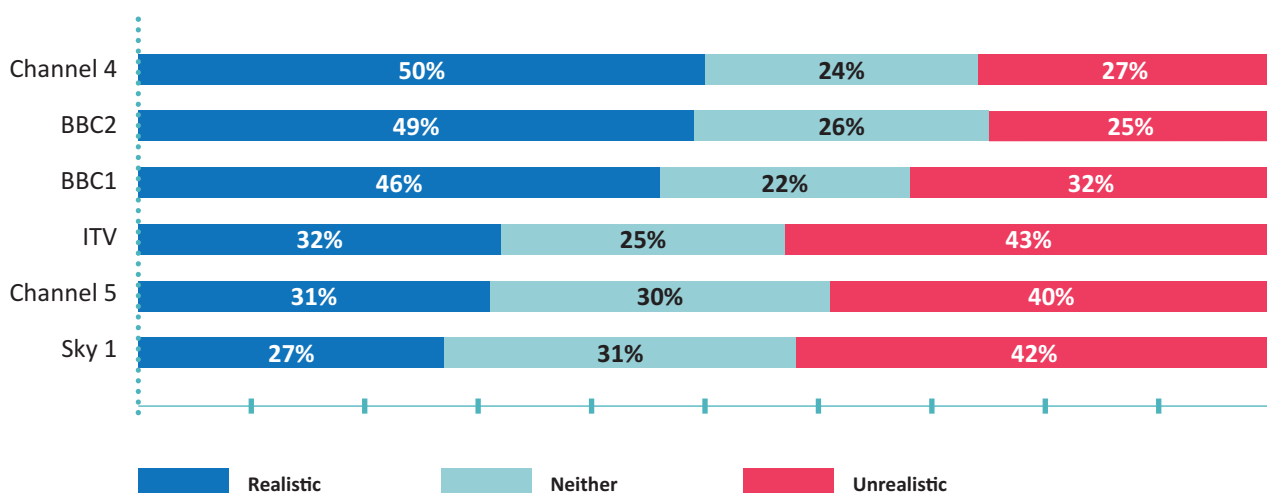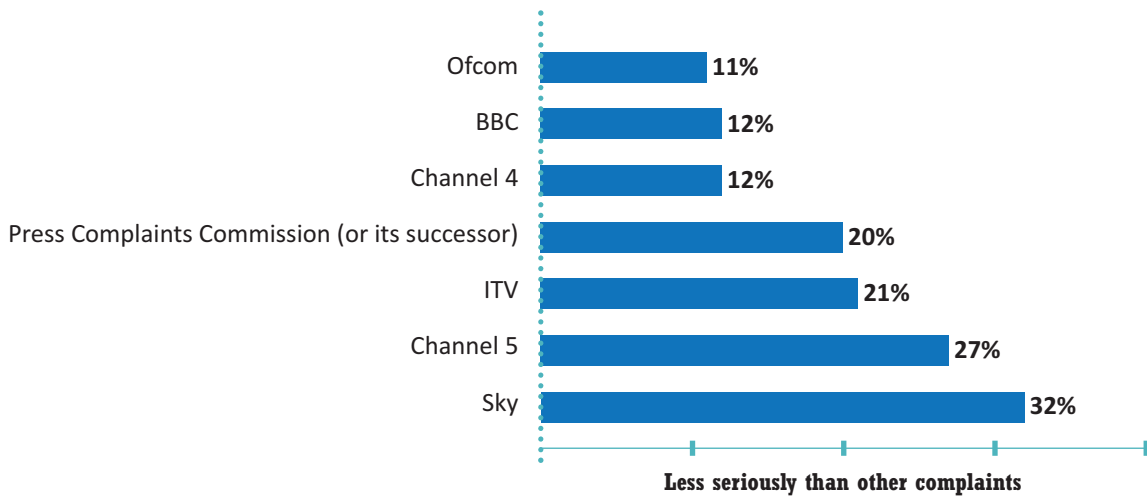
the last five years. 46 per cent of lesbian, gay and bisexual people said the same in 2008.

Some TV channels do better than others; lesbian, gay and bisexual people think that Channel 4, BBC1 and BBC2 broadcast more realistic portrayals of gay people than ITV, Channel 5 and Sky 1.

Do you think the portrayal of lesbian, gay and bisexual people on UK TV is realistic or unrealistic?

Channel	Realistic	Neither	Unrealistic
Channel 4	50%	24%	27%
BBC2	49%	26%	25%
BBC1	46%	22%	32%
ITV	32%	25%	43%
Channel 5	31%	30%	40%
Sky 1	27%	31%	42%

Realistic   Neither   Unrealistic

Three quarters of people in Britain (77 per cent) think the media still rely heavily on clichéd stereotypes of lesbian, gay and bisexual people. *Living Together,* Stonewall, 2012

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More gay people also expect Channel 4 and BBC to take complaints about homophobia as seriously as, or more seriously than, other complaints compared to Sky, Channel 5 and ITV who they say are less likely to take such complaints seriously.

How seriously do you expect each of the following to take a complaint of homophobia compared to other complaints?

Ofcom	11%
BBC	12%
Channel 4	12%
Press Complaints Commission (or its successor)	20%
ITV	21%
Channel 5	27%
Sky	32%

Less seriously than other complaints

▶ RECOMMENDATIONS

Broadcasters should make sure that their output includes realistic and non-clichéd portrayal of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, in both factual and dramatic programming. This should include lesbian, gay and bisexual people and characters where their sexual orientation is incidental to the subject or storyline.

Producers should find creative ways of incorporating lesbian, gay and bisexual people and characters in their programmes.

Ofcom and broadcasters should train their staff to handle complaints about homophobia on screen appropriately and should consult with lesbian, gay and bisexual people to better understand their concerns.

The Creative Diversity Network should promote and encourage realistic portrayal of lesbian, gay and bisexual people on TV by sharing and celebrating good practice.

Talent executives and other recruiters into the media industry should take specific action to address the shortage of openly lesbian and bisexual presenters.

Almost half of people in Britain (47 per cent) think the media have a responsibility to tackle prejudice against lesbian, gay and bisexual people. *Living Together,* Stonewall, 2012

▶ RESOURCES
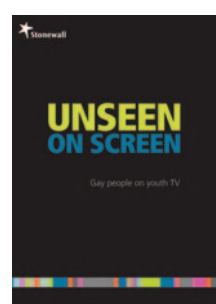
Unseen on screen – Gay people on youth TV
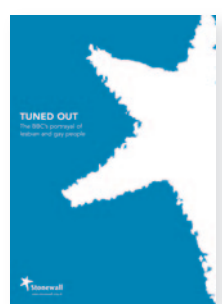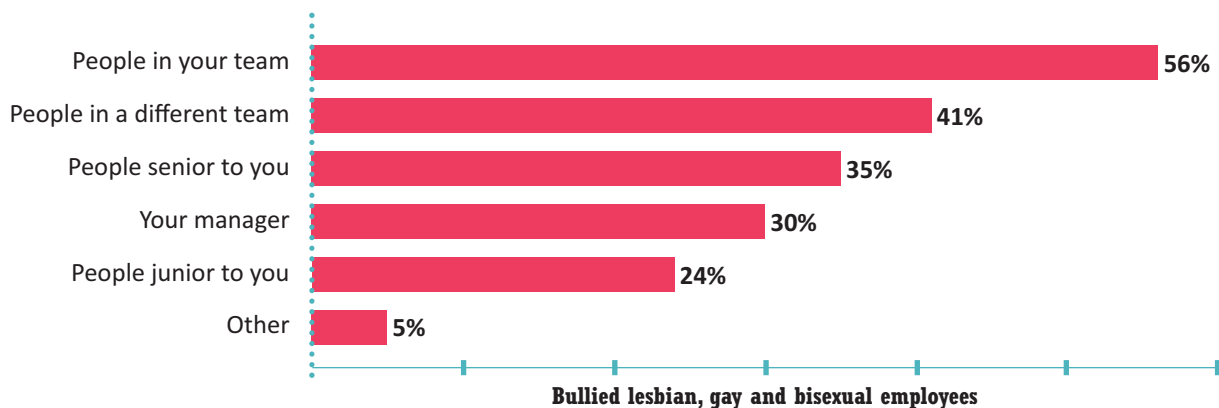
Tuned Out The BBC's portrayal of lesbian and gay people

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Stonewall

WORK

Despite employment protections having been in place for ten years and considerable efforts from leading employers to tackle homophobia, bullying at work remains a significant problem for gay people. **One in five** (19 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual employees have experienced verbal bullying from colleagues, customers or service users because of their sexual orientation in the last five years. **One in six** (15 per cent) have experienced verbal homophobic bullying from their colleagues in the last five years and **one in twelve** (eight per cent) have experienced verbal homophobic bullying from customers, clients and service users in the same period.

Homophobic bullying happens at all levels of an organisation. **Almost a third** of those who have experienced this bullying have been bullied by their manager, **more than half** by people in their own team and **a quarter** by people junior to them. Homophobic bullying is a problem regardless of employer size with lesbian, gay and bisexual employees in small to medium-sized organisations as likely as those in large organisations to experience bullying from colleagues.

One in eight (13 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual employees would not feel confident reporting homophobic bullying in their workplace.
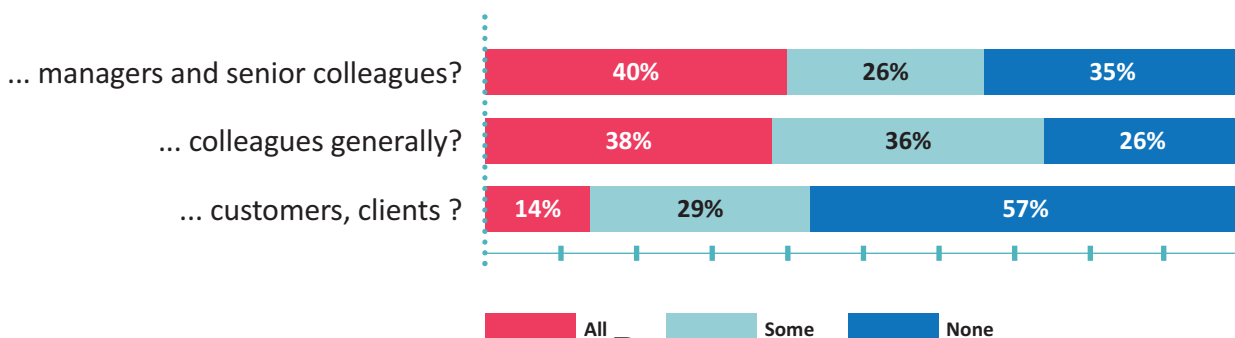
Which colleagues were responsible for this verbal bullying?

People in your team	56%
People in a different team	41%
People senior to you	35%
Your manager	30%
People junior to you	24%
Other	5%

Bullied lesbian, gay and bisexual employees

Previous Stonewall research has demonstrated the material benefit to productivity when gay employees are open and supported at work. However many gay people lack the confidence to be open at work with a **quarter** (26 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual workers not at all open to colleagues about their sexual orientation. A **third** (35 per cent) aren't open to any of their managers or their senior colleagues and **three in five** (57 per cent) aren't open about their sexual orientation with customers, clients or service users.

Are you open about your sexual orientation at work with...

	All	Some	None
... managers and senior colleagues?	40%	26%	35%
... colleagues generally?	38%	36%	26%
... customers, clients ?	14%	29%	57%

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Bisexual men are less likely to be out to colleagues than gay men; **60 per cent** are not out to any of their colleagues compared to **15 per cent** of gay men. Bisexual women are also less likely to be out to colleagues than lesbians; **37 per cent** are not out to any of their colleagues compared to **six per cent** of lesbians.

There are also differences in openness at work according to age and social group. Lesbian, gay and bisexual people in occupational groups C2DE are less likely to be out to colleagues than those in groups ABC1; **31 per cent** in C2DE are not out to any colleagues compared to **23 per cent** in ABC1.

Lesbian, gay and bisexual employees in the youngest and oldest age groups are less likely to be out to colleagues than gay people aged 30 to 50; **35 per cent** of those aged 18 to 29 and **31 per cent** of over 50s are not out to any colleagues compared to **19 per cent** of those aged 30 to 50.

One in eight (12 per cent) lesbian, gay and bisexual people don't believe their workplace is a good place for gay people to work. Only **a third** (37 per cent) of gay people say their heterosexual colleagues understand the issues lesbian, gay and bisexual people can face at work.

Employer workplace practices directly impact the purchasing decisions of gay consumers. **More than half** (54 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual people say they would be more likely to buy the products or services of a company that showed a positive commitment to recruiting gay people. **More than two in five** (44 per cent) say they would be more likely to buy products from companies that use images of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in their advertising.

▶ RECOMMENDATIONS

Employers should communicate zero-tolerance policies on homophobic bullying and promote different routes to reporting, including through working with gay employee network groups and developing straight allies programmes.

Employers should cultivate the development of openly gay leaders and role models in the organisation and encourage and support their visibility.

Employers should undertake specific work to support bisexual employees and make them a visible, valued part of the workplace alongside gay men and lesbians.

Employers can join Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme for one-to-one advice from Stonewall's dedicated Workplace team as well as networking with hundreds of high profile employers
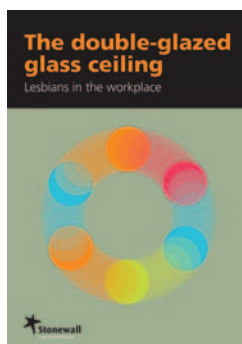
▶ RESOURCES

Stonewall Workplace Equality Index

Peak Performance Gay people and productivity

The Double-Glazed Glass Ceiling Lesbians in the workplace

Role Models
A range of interviews which inspire gay people of all ages not to curb their ambitions because of their sexual orientation

Stonewall's 10 Workplace Guides including: *Bullying* Preventing the bullying and harassment of gay employees; *Marketing* How to market to gay consumers

Stonewall Diversity Champion Programme

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RECOMMENDATIONS

SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES

▶ Primary and secondary schools should create an environment where the children of same-sex parents feel supported and included in their learning by talking about the diversity of family life in the curriculum and taking a zero tolerance approach to homophobic bullying and language.

▶ Further and adult education institutions should be aware that prospective gay students may have had their previous experience of education impacted by homophobic bullying. These institutions should launch campaigns aimed at encouraging more gay adults to apply which highlight their commitment to equality and diversity.

▶ Academy and faith school trusts should reassure gay parents that they will not be treated less favourably by having trust-wide policies to tackle homophobia and training for member schools. Trust prospectuses and open evenings should make clear that their schools value diversity and difference.

▶ The Department for Education, The School Governors One Stop Shop and individual schools need to do more to challenge the barriers that exist to gay people becoming Governors. Opportunities for becoming a Governor should be proactively promoted to gay people.

▶ Adoption and foster agencies should use targeted advertising campaigns to recruit more gay adopters and foster carers. This should include monitoring application and acceptance levels from gay people. These organisations should also provide more information aimed at prospective gay parents on the process of adopting or fostering a child.

POLITICS

▶ Political parties should commit to increasing the number of openly-gay MPs, peers, MSPs and Assembly Members. This will require specific steps to ensure that lesbian, gay and bisexual people are selected to stand as candidates in at least 6% of *winnable* seats.

▶ Political parties should make sure that lesbian, gay and bisexual candidates don't face inappropriate questions from selection panels. Parties should also ensure that candidates do not produce campaign literature deliberately designed to highlight an opponent's sexual orientation.

▶ Political parties should monitor the sexual orientation of their members and candidates alongside other monitored characteristics like disability, ethnicity and gender.

▶ Political parties must make clear their commitment to lesbian, gay and bisexual people. The Scottish Government should stick to its commitment to extend marriage to same-sex couples and the Government in Westminster should continue to seek ways to promote equality for gay people around the world. Political parties must make a clear commitment to delivering public services effectively to lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

POLICE AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

▶ Police forces should publicly communicate the value of reporting homophobic hate crimes and make it easier for lesbian, gay and bisexual people to do so.

▶ Police forces should engage with lesbian, gay and bisexual people in their area, including by publicly talking about work they are doing to support lesbian, gay and bisexual police staff and officers and by having a visible presence at lesbian, gay and bisexual community events.

▶ Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales should consult lesbian, gay and bisexual people in their local area to ensure the force is meeting their needs.

▶ The Judicial Appointments Commission and local Advisory Committees for magistrates' court should actively encourage applications from lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

▶ Prisons and probation trusts should train staff how to work appropriately with lesbian, gay and bisexual offenders.

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SOCIAL CARE, HOUSING AND HEALTH

▶ Care homes should take steps to make sure older lesbian, gay and bisexual people feel comfortable and safe. They should provide the same space and rights for same-sex partners as heterosexual couples.

▶ Social landlords, such as housing associations, should have policies in place that make clear to lesbian, gay and bisexual people that they can expect to be treated equally when applying for housing.

▶ Healthcare organisations should increase visibility of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in healthcare settings through posters, leaflets and information to create a welcoming environment and improve overall experience of their lesbian, gay and bisexual patients.

LOCAL ENGAGEMENT

▶ Service providers should collect equality monitoring information of service users, including on sexual orientation. Service providers should make clear that the information is being gathered in order to improve services and should publicise any action taken following analysis of the data.

▶ Service providers should cultivate relationships with lesbian, gay and bisexual community groups in their local area so that the views of local gay people can be fed into the development of services.

▶ Service providers should encourage local lesbian, gay and bisexual people to participate in public consultations, including by publicising them in gay venues.

SPORT

▶ Schools and youth sports clubs should tackle homophobic bullying on the sports field and encourage lesbian, gay and bisexual young people to participate in team sports, laying the foundation for them to be active adults.

▶ Sports teams and associations should promote a zero tolerance approach to homophobic abuse both on and off the playing field.

▶ National Governing Bodies of sport should promote the participation of lesbian, gay and bisexual people at all levels by training coaches and officials to tackle homophobic abuse and by supporting and celebrating gay athletes.

▶ National Governing Bodies should make a public commitment to eradicate homophobia from their sport and encourage senior spokespeople and high profile athletes to champion the issue.

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WORK

▶ Employers should communicate zero-tolerance policies on homophobic bullying and promote different routes to reporting, including through working with gay employee network groups and developing straight allies programmes.

▶ Employers should cultivate the development of openly gay leaders and role models in the organisation and encourage and support their visibility.

▶ Employers should undertake specific work to support bisexual employees and make them a visible, valued part of the workplace alongside gay men and lesbians.

▶ Employers can join Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme for one-to-one advice from Stonewall's dedicated Workplace team as well as networking with hundreds of high profile employers

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Written by **April Guasp**

Edited by **Adele Kimber**

Designed by **Lucy Ward**

▶ RESOURCES

All resources included in this publication are available at **www.stonewall.org.uk**

METHODOLOGY

GAY
IN BRITAIN

Stonewall

Barriers to Politics Working Group			
REPORT	Barriers to entering and progressing in politics faced due to religion or belief		
KEY DECISION	No	Item No:	4
WARD	N/A		
CONTRIBUTORS	Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration		
CLASS	Part 1	Date:	6 September 2017

1. SUMMARY

1.1. This report provides context for the Barriers to Politics Working Group to consider as part of the evidence session on barriers related to religion or belief which people face when running and progressing as a local councillor.

1.2. This report provides information on research and campaigns which have looked at the perceptions of politics and the barriers people might face whilst running for and progressing in elected office.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1. The Barriers to Politics Working Group is recommended to:
- Note the report.
- Consider the evidence provided at the meeting.

3. CONTEXT

3.1. The Equality Act 2010 defines the following characteristics as protected characteristics:
- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

3.2. Lewisham's Comprehensive Equality Scheme (CES) 2016-20 sets out how the Council will meet its duties to improve the quality of life and life chances of all Lewisham's residents as well as the various equality groups afforded specific protection under the Equality Act of 2010. The scheme contains the following five overarching objectives:
- tackle victimisation, discrimination and harassment

- improve access to services
- close the gap in outcomes for our citizens
- increase mutual understanding and respect within and between communities
- increase participation and engagement.

3.3. The London Borough of Lewisham has a population of 306,000 (the 13th largest in London and the 5th largest in Inner London). The population of the borough has increased by 30,000 since the 2011. By the time of the next national Census in 2021, the population of the borough is forecast to reach 321,000 (a 16 per cent increase on 2011). Children and young people make up 25 per cent of Lewisham's population, whilst those aged over 65 comprise of 10 per cent of the population.

4.   RELIGION OR BELIEF CONTEXT

4.1. At the time of the United Kingdom Census 2011, the breakdown of religions across the London Borough of Lewisham, London and England as a percentage of the total population was as follows:

Religion	Lewisham (% of total population)	London (% of total population)	England (% of total population)
Has religion	63.9	70.8	68.1
Christian	52.8	48.4	59.4
Buddhist	1.3	1.0	0.5
Hindu	2.4	5.0	1.5
Jewish	0.2	1.8	0.5
Muslim	6.4	12.4	5.0
Sikh	0.2	1.5	0.8
Other religion	0.5	0.6	0.4
No religion	27.2	20.7	24.7
Religion not stated	8.9	8.5	7.2

4.2. Christianity was the most populous religion for Lewisham residents. The biggest change between the United Kingdom Census 2001 and 2011 was an 8.4 per cent percentage point reduction in Lewisham residents citing Christianity as their religion (down from 61.2 per cent to 52.8 per cent); this is in line with the position nationwide (in London, the number of residents citing Christianity as their religion reduced from 58.2 per cent in 2001 to 48.4 per cent in 2011, and across England the figure reduced from 71.7 per cent to 59.4 per cent).

4.3. Over a quarter of Lewisham residents have 'No Religion', and this increases to a third of residents in Blackheath, Brockley, Crofton Park, Forest Hill and Telegraph Hill. Between 2001 and 2011 there has been a 6.8 per cent overall increase in the per cent of residents with 'No Religion' (up from 50,780 to 75,155 residents).

4.4. No comprehensive details about the religion or belief of MPs is routinely collected.

4.5. The Census of Local Authority Councillors 2013 did not collect any information on the religion or belief of councillors so it is not possible to comment on the representativeness of local politics.

4.6.	The only survey collecting information on the religion or belief of local election candidates was carried out by the Welsh Government, with the support of Data Unit Wales, following the May 2012 elections (results from the second survey following the 2017 elections are expected to be published later this year). Of the sample of elected councillors, 83 per cent said they were Christian in comparison to 70 percent of unelected candidates (this compares to 57.6 per cent of the Welsh population at the time of the UK Census 2011). The survey found that 15 per cent had no religion (compared to 32.1 per cent of the Welsh population at the time of the UK Census 2011) and 2 per cent responded 'Other'. 'Other' comprises the responses Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and 'any other religion' (compared to 2.7 per cent of the Welsh population at the time of the UK Census 2011).

## 5.	RELIGION OR BELIEF CAMPAIGNS AND RESEARCH

5.1.	In 2015, Baroness Butler-Sloss chaired the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life. The Commission's report 'Life Living with Difference: Community, Diversity and the Common Good' noted the decline in Christian affiliation and made recommendations to increase diversity in political representation (including representation of different religious groups in the House of Lords). The report also noted that the way different religions are represented can create polarisation, particularly in relation to the way Islam is portrayed in the media.

5.2.	Former Liberal Democrat party leader Tim Farron recently stood down from his position, citing that a focus on his faith has meant that he found himself "torn between living as a faithful Christian and serving as a political leader".

5.3.	Cathryn Victoria Haigh in PoliticsMeansPolitics.com, a UK weekly politics magazine, argues that the electorate is voting for "political representation, not religious representation", and for politicians "to speak as though [they] are first and foremost representing everyone, so long as they fall in line with [their] own beliefs, is a potentially dangerous road to tread". A ComRes poll, commissioned by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association in 2016, found broad support for separating religion and politics: 62% of 2000 people across all faiths surveyed said there is "no place in UK politics for religious influence of any kind". A 2012 Ipsos MORI survey of those who ticked 'Christian' on the UK Census 2011 found that 73% strongly agree or tend to agree that religion should not have a special influence on public policy.

5.4.	A 2015 YouGov poll asked the public whether they view party leaders at the time more positively or negatively because of their religious beliefs. The overwhelming majority (71-75%) said that in each case it would make no difference, but slightly more people were likely to view politicians more positively due to their atheism than negatively, while about the same number of people viewed politicians more positively than more negatively due to membership of the Church of England.

5.5.	Sam Killermann, author of 'A Guide to Gender: the Social Justice Advocate's Handbook', argues that "in a society where most people (politicians in particular) have some sort of faith that guides their decisions, it's impossible to have a true separation of church and state." Killerman proposed a system where political decisions are made based on arguments "that stand on their own merits without a religious crutch".

5.6. Ekaterina Kolpinskaya, Associate Lecturer in Quantitative Methods at the University of Exeter, in her paper 'Does religion count for religious parliamentary representation? Evidence from Early Day Motions' studied Jewish and Muslim parliamentary representation. Kolpinskaya found that having a religious minority background alone does not make MPs more likely to raise issues of concern for their respective minority groups and argues that this is because the constraints of party discipline and parliamentary procedure limit the opportunities MPs have to act on behalf of their backgrounds. Kolpinskaya found that having a religious minority background meant that MPs were more likely to raise 'minority issues' generally, through analysis of 5,160 Early Day Motions (EDM) sponsored by all politicians from Jewish (38) and Muslim (11) backgrounds elected to the House of Commons between 1997 and 2012 and a control group of 25 non-minority politicians.

5.7. In terms of wider community engagement and religion or belief, figures released by the Department for Communities and Local Government published in the report following the last Citizenship Survey in September 2011 demonstrate that there is almost no difference in participation between those with no religion (56%) and Christians (58%). The proportion of Hindus and Muslims participating in civic engagement and formal volunteering was the lowest of all religion or belief groups, at 44% respectively.

5.8. Religious groups can provide networks for supporting politicians with shared religion or beliefs: for example, Christians in Politics is an all-party, non-denominational organisation which seeks to encourage and inspire Christians to get involved in politics and public life. Christians in Politics is constituted by the Conservative Christian Fellowship, the Liberal Democrat Christian Forum and Christians on the Left. Christians in Parliament is a group which supports and encourages MPs and House of Commons staff through, weekly Bible study and prayer groups, events and written briefings to bring "Biblical reflection to contemporary political discussions".

5.9. Religion or belief as set out in the Equality Act 2010 also covers non-belief or a lack of religion or belief. The National Secular Society has called for local government meetings to be "conducted in a manner equally welcoming to all attendees", and has argued that formal council meetings should be conducted without any form of religious worship. In 2012, the High Court ruled that the prayers as part of the formal meeting of a Council was unlawful (under the Local Government Act 1972). The Local Government (Religious etc. Observances) Act 2015 now permits "prayers or other religious observance" as part of business at a meeting of a local authority.

6.   SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

6.1. It is not possible to identify the representativeness of local and national politics in relation to the religion or belief of politicians as this information is not routinely collected. In instances where the information is requested, it is not always shared.

6.2. A national and local decline in the percentage of residents citing Christianity as their religion can be observed: Lewisham saw an 8.4 percentage point reduction in residents identifying as Christian between the 2001 Census and 2011 Census (down from 61.2 per cent to 52.8 per cent).

6.3. When surveyed, the majority of respondents believed that religion and politics should be separate, and 73 per cent of Christians strongly agree or tend to agree that religion

should not have a special influence on public policy (based on a 2012 Ipsos MORI survey of those who ticked 'Christian' on the UK Census 2011). Politicians have described being unable to reconcile their religion or beliefs and their political role.

6.4. Studies at a national level have found that having a religious minority background does not make politicians any more likely to raise issues of concern for their respective minority groups, however, it does make them more likely to raise 'minority issues' more broadly.

6.5. Community engagement does not differ greatly between those with a religion and those who identify as having no religion, however, some particular religious groups are less likely to volunteer in the wider community for example.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The equality implications are set out in the body of this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1. The legal implications are set in the body of the report.

Agenda Item 5

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4" align="center">Barriers to Politics Working Group</td></tr>
<tr><td>REPORT</td><td colspan="3">Future Meetings</td></tr>
<tr><td>KEY DECISION</td><td>No</td><td>Item No:</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>WARD</td><td colspan="3">N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td>CONTRIBUTORS</td><td colspan="3">Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration</td></tr>
<tr><td>CLASS</td><td>Part 1</td><td>Date:</td><td>6 September 2017</td></tr>
</table>

1. SUMMARY

1.1 A timeline of meetings and reporting is suggested for members to agree a date for the final session of the Barriers to Politics Working Group to agree its recommendations.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The group is recommended to:

- Agree the date for the final meeting of the Barriers to Politics Working Group.

3. FUTURE MEETINGS

3.1. The Barriers to Politics Working Group will make its final recommendations to Full Council on 22nd November.

3.2. It is proposed that the next meeting of the Barriers to Politics Working Group, currently scheduled for 3rd October, is rescheduled for the end of October; this is to allow residents and councillors more time to respond to surveys and to allow more time for meaningful analysis of responses.

3.3. For the October meeting, it is proposed that a draft report is presented to the Barriers to Politics Working Group and final recommendations agreed.