

CAMBRIDGE CITY AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE LGBTQ NEEDS ASSESSMENT

APRIL 2014



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all those who took part in the needs assessment by completing the online survey and attending the focus groups.

We would also like to thank the former Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership for funding this project.



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Introduction

In 2013 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council commissioned Encompass Network to design and deliver a needs assessment looking at the experiences of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities (LGBTQ). The survey was developed to find out more about LGBTQ needs within Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, with a specific focus on determining whether there were significant gaps in the provision of services for LGBTQ people, and whether specific sub-groups within the LGBTQ community might be in need of additional targeted services.

Encompass Network has previous experience of conducting needs assessments within LGBTQ communities in Cambridgeshire. In 2003 it carried out the Making your Mark survey which highlighted key aspects of the experiences of LGBTQ people living in Cambridgeshire. A subsequent survey was also carried out at the 2008 Cambridge Pink Festival which was run in partnership with Cambridge City Council. The current needs assessment was designed to build on the existing surveys noted above, and to gain a deeper understanding of the local concerns and experiences of LGBTQ people. The survey was designed to identify experiences of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity; barriers to accessing services and resources; and perceived inadequacies in the provision of relevant services. The findings will be used to inform the development of services for LGBTQ communities in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, and to structure the ongoing work of Encompass Network.

Encompass Network is a not-for-profit umbrella body for voluntary and community organisations in Cambridgeshire that serve the needs for people of a minority sexual orientation or gender identification.

The charity's objectives are to support, empower and represent voluntary and community sector organisations in Cambridgeshire for people who experience isolation, exclusion or disadvantage because of a minority sexual orientation or gender identification.

METHODOLOGY, PROMOTION AND DISSEMINATION

The needs assessment was structured in such a way as to identify:

- The diversity of needs and experiences within local LGBT communities, and specific vulnerabilities within these communities
- Specific barriers to accessing service

In order to identify these needs the survey was constructed around the following topics:

- Gender identification and sexual orientation
- Basic demographics (age, ethnic identification)
- General Experiences/Perceptions of LGBT life
- Specific Experiences of Homo/Bi/Trans-Phobia
- Accessing Public Services
- Political representation

This survey was then distributed online through Encompass Network contact lists and the contact lists and newsletters of member organisations.

A thousand flyers promoting the survey were also disseminated through networks, and links included on the LGBTQ History month flyers, both of which were distributed around venues throughout Cambridge and South Cambs.

In addition to the survey, a series of focus groups were also hosted in order to obtain a range of more detailed qualitative responses to supplement the data obtained from the questionnaires. The focus groups were facilitated as informal, but structured discussions, around the following three topics:

- What positive experiences do you have as an LGBTQ person living in Cambridge City or South Cambs?
- What negative experiences do you have as an LGBTQ person living in Cambridge City or South Cambs?
- How would you describe your experience of accessing local services as an LGBTQ person? Have you experienced any difficulties in accessing services as an LGBTQ person? How could services be improved?

Four focus groups were held targeting:

- Younger People
- Students
- Adults
- Trans Adults

In addition to the focus groups, we held a series of telephone interviews to gather the views of under-represented and potentially more isolated LGBTQ groups including:

- LGBTQ older people
- LGBTQ people living in South Cambridgeshire

There were 130 responses to the survey and 38 attendees at the focus groups and telephone interviews.



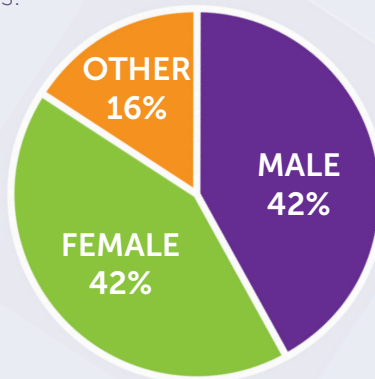
SURVEY - THE RESULTS

The following section briefly presents the results of the survey.

Section: Gender identification and sexual orientation

1: How would you describe your gender?

We asked respondents through an open question to identify their gender. 42% of our survey respondents identified as male, 42% as female, and 16% identified outside of these binary definitions.



Of the 16% of respondents who identified outside of the male/female gender binary:

- 37% identified as Genderfluid, Genderqueer, Bigender, or had more than one gender identity
- 31% identified as being Agender, as having no gender, or did not wish to define their gender.
- 13% were unsure or questioning.
- 13% identified as Trans male
- And 6% identified as tomboy

We then asked if the respondents gender identity was the same as assigned at birth, of all respondents 87% were the same, 8% were not and 5% were not sure. So a greater percentage chooses to describe themselves out of the binary gender roles than those who have gone through a full transition.

2. Would you use any of the following terms to describe yourself?

We gave respondents a list of gender identification terms. Respondents used a very wide range of terms to describe their gender identification

GENDER NEUTRAL

ANDROGYNOUS

NON BINARY

CIS-GENDER

TRANS-GENDER

PAN-GENDER

FTM

A-GENDER

TRANS-SEXUAL

GENDERQUEER

NON-GENDERED

GENDERLESS

BI-GENDER

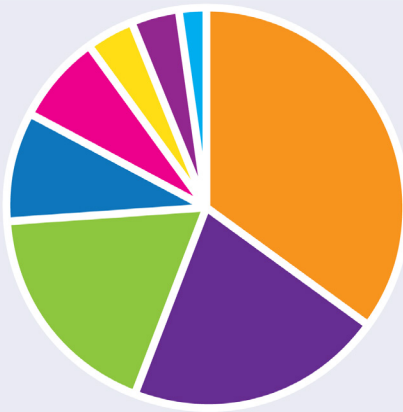
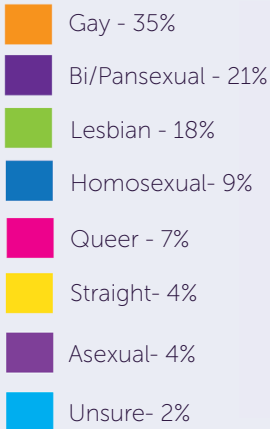
MTF

TRANS-MAN/WOMAN

3: How would you describe your sexual orientation?

We gave our respondents a list of definitions to describe their sexual orientation.

83% described their sexual orientation as LGB or homosexual, with a further 7% identifying as queer. The remaining 10% were split between straight, asexual and unsure.

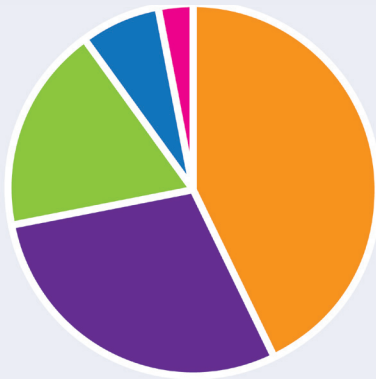
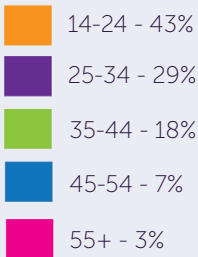


In addition to this, 11% of respondents commented that they identified with a variety or combination of sexual orientations rather than just one. These self-chosen definitions included: homo-romantic, pansexual, homo-flexible, bi-curious and a-romantic

Section: Basic demographics

4: How old are you?

The largest number of respondents were aged between 14-24 with 43% followed by 29% of participants between 25-34 and 18% of participants between 35-44.



In response to a lack of older participants we conducted one to one telephone interviews with a further seven LGBTQ people over 55.

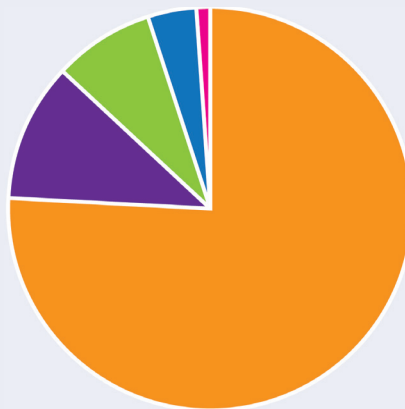
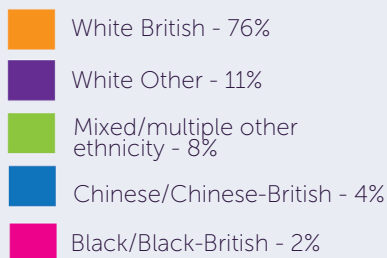
5: How would you describe your ethnic or racial origin?

By comparing the local census data and our survey demographic in Cambridge City, we found that amongst our survey respondents there was an over-representation of White British respondents, and an under-representation of White Other, Black/Black-British and Indian/Indian-British respondents. There was a slight under-representation of Mixed/multiple/other ethnic groups, and our representation of Chinese/Chinese-British respondents was in line with the local demographic.

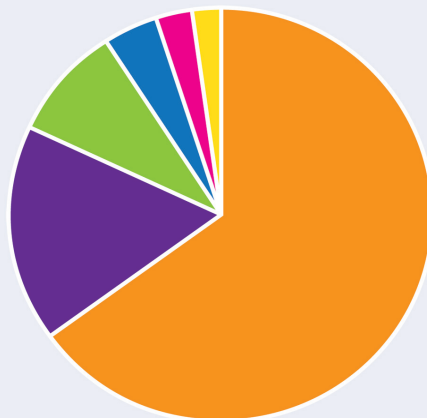
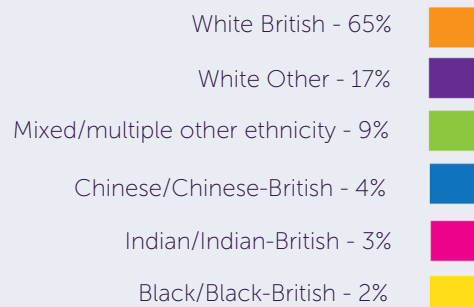
In South Cambridgeshire, there was an over-representation in our survey of Indian/Indian-British participants, a slight over-representation of White British and Other White participants. There was an under-representation of Black/Black-British, Chinese/Chinese-British, and Mixed/multiple/other ethnicity participants.

National research conducted by Stonewall has shown increased levels of hate crime amongst LGB ethnic minorities, barriers to healthcare and education services, and increased heteronormative assumptions, due to the inability of mainstream services to accommodate more than one minority at a time. Due to the limitations of this survey, we were unable to conduct an in-depth analysis of the relationship between ethnicity and sexual orientation locally, and this data is something which could be of future interest.

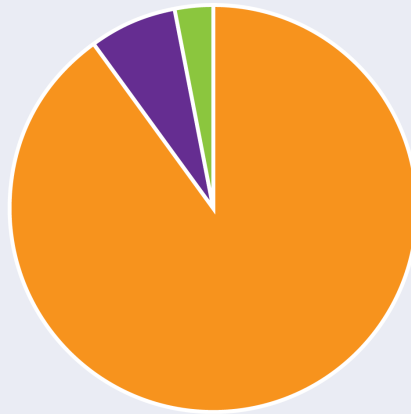
Cambridge City



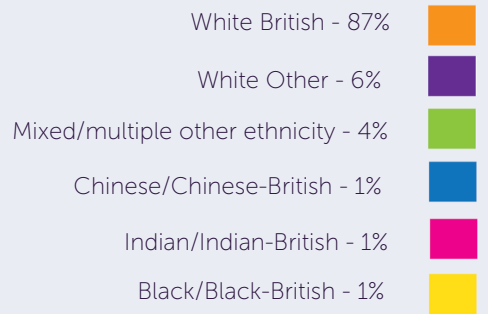
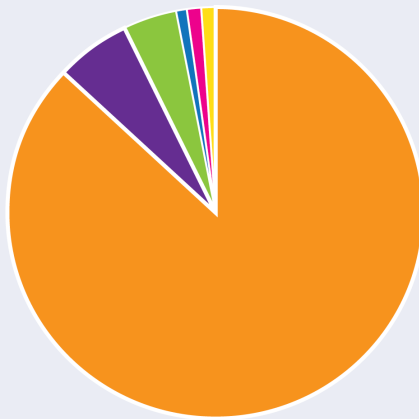
Cambridge City Census 2011



South Cambridgeshire



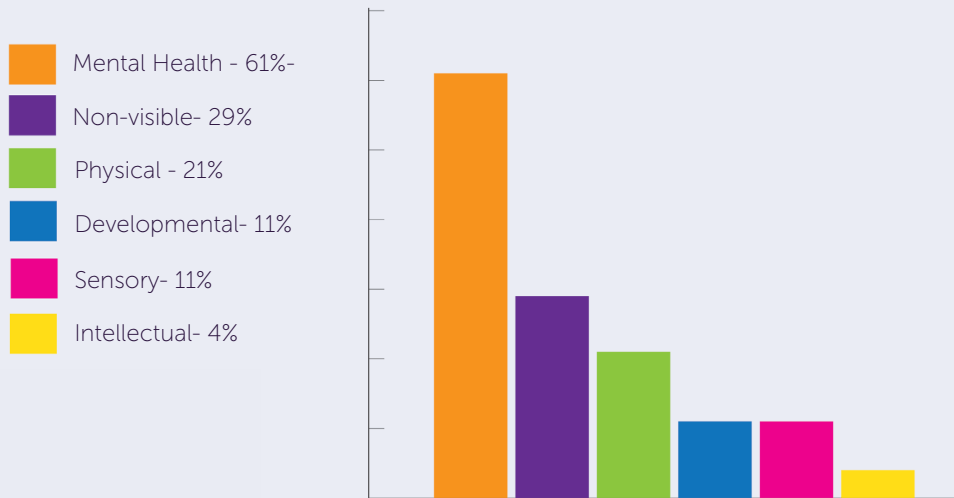
South Cambridgeshire Census 2011



6: Do you consider yourself to have a disability or long-term health condition?

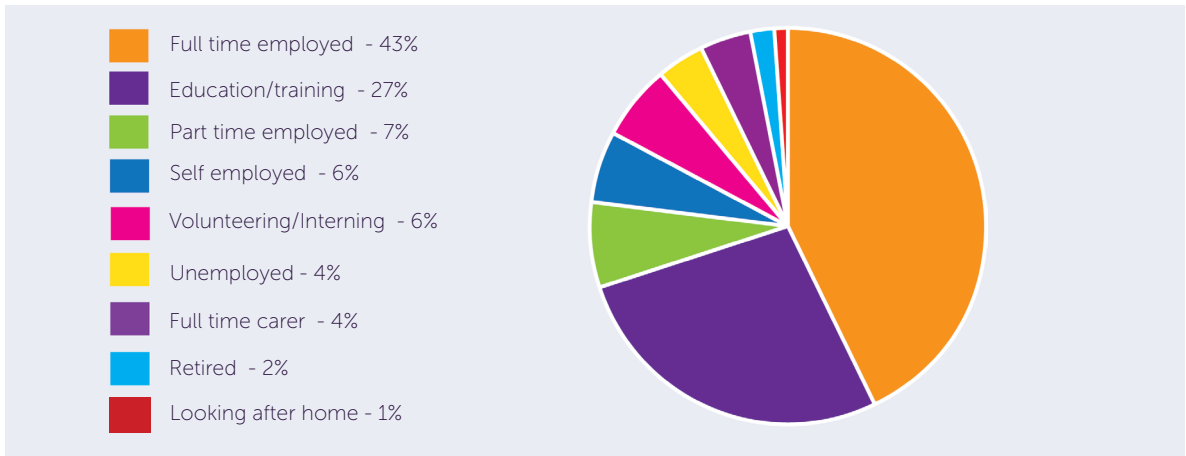
Overall, 24% of respondents described themselves as having a disability. In Cambridge City the figure was 22%, and in South Cambs. 31%

Those who described themselves as 'disabled' categorized their disability as follows:

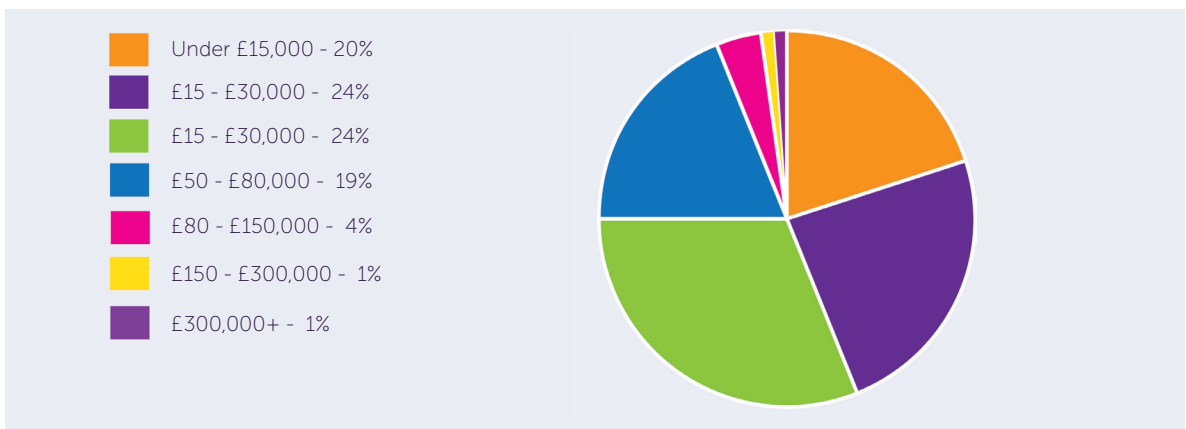


It is worth noting that **13% of total respondents** described themselves as having a mental health disability, **12% of Cambridge City respondents** and **17% of South Cambridgeshire respondents**. This excludes people who may be suffering from common mental health issues who may not classify themselves as suffering from a mental health disability, in addition to those who have not been diagnosed as living with a mental condition.

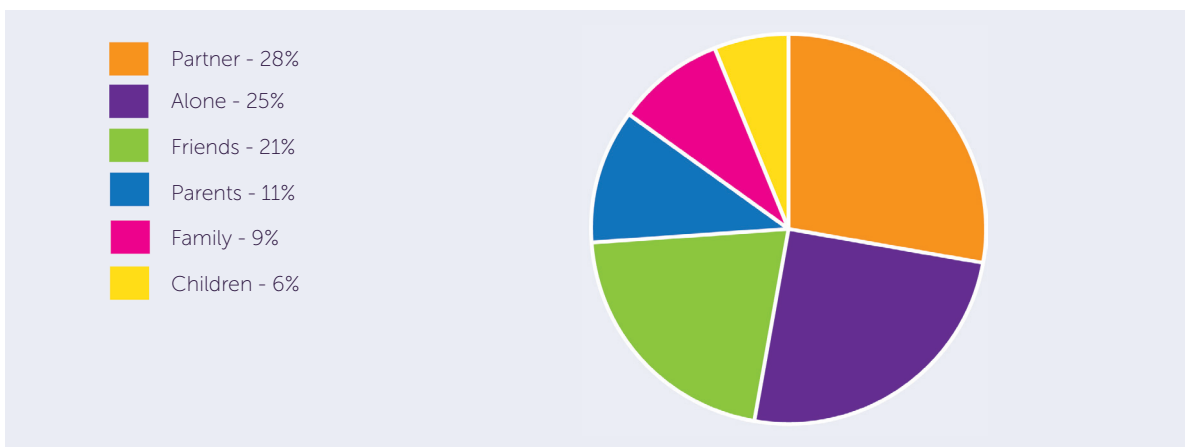
7: What is your current employment situation?



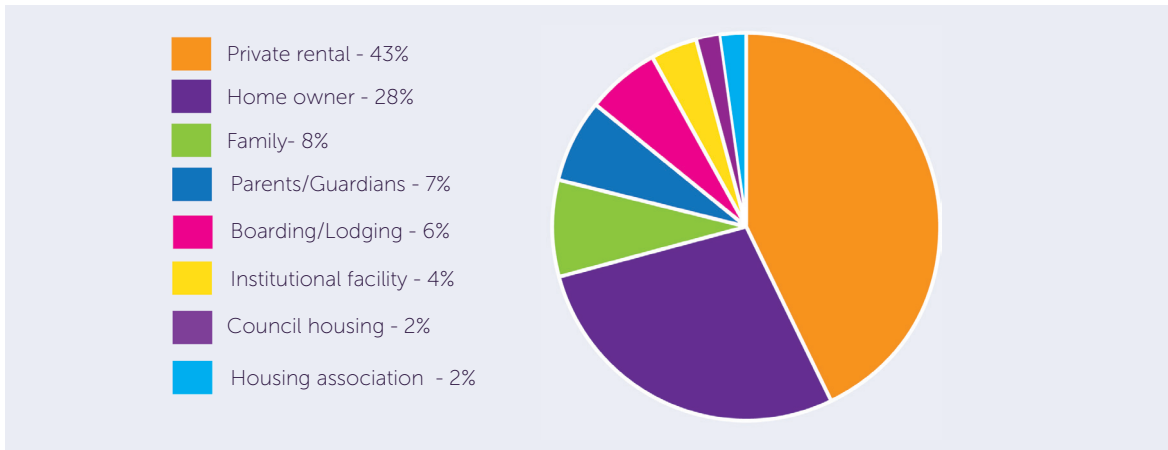
8: What is your annual household income?



9: Who do you live with

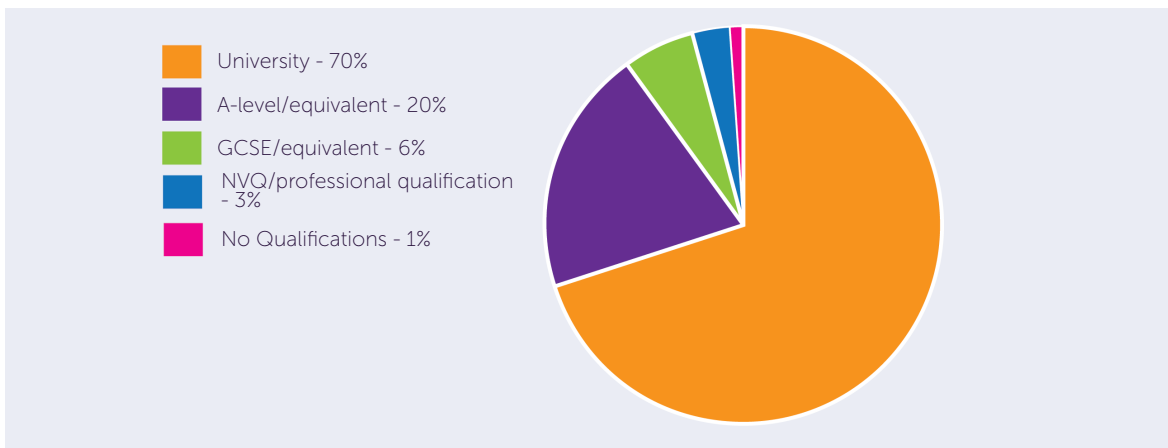


10: How would you describe your housing situation?



69% of survey respondents were from Cambridge City and 31% from South Cambridgeshire. In response to this under-representation we interviewed a further 10 people as part of South Cambs. focus groups, the findings of which are presented in Key Finding 4.

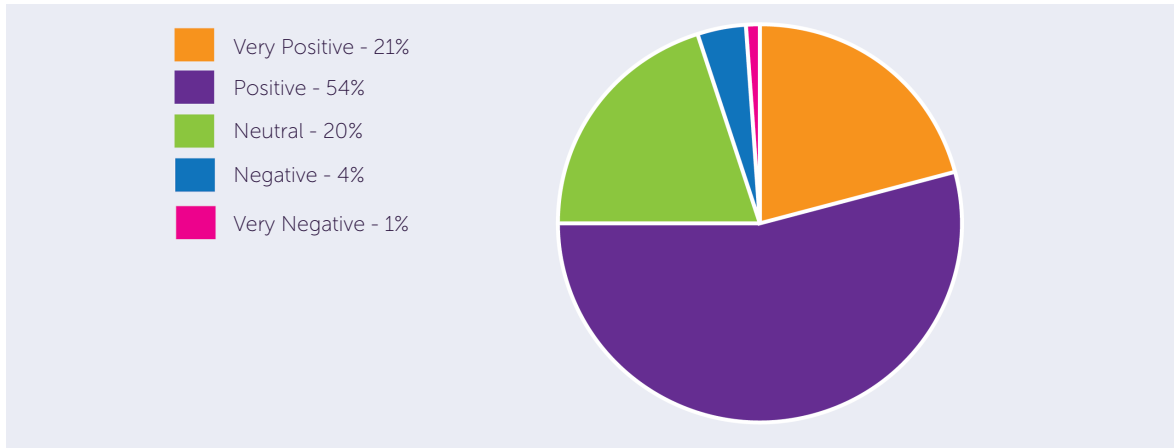
11: What is your level of education



In addition to qualifications already gained, 20% of respondents were current University students.

Section: General Experiences/Perceptions of LGBTQ life

12: As an LGBTQ person, how do you feel about Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire as a place to live?



Respondents overwhelmingly described their the experience of living in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire as a positive one, with 54% rating it to be positive and 21 % Very Positive. The variety of comments used to describe the best and worst parts of Cambridge give an indication of the possible reasons for this, including societal attitudes, the presence of the university and the support groups available. There were differences revealed in the focus groups between South and City in terms of experience which will be discussed in the key findings section.

13: What are the best/worst parts of living in Cambridgeshire as an LGBTQ person?

A variety of terms were used to describe the experiences of living in Cambridgeshire

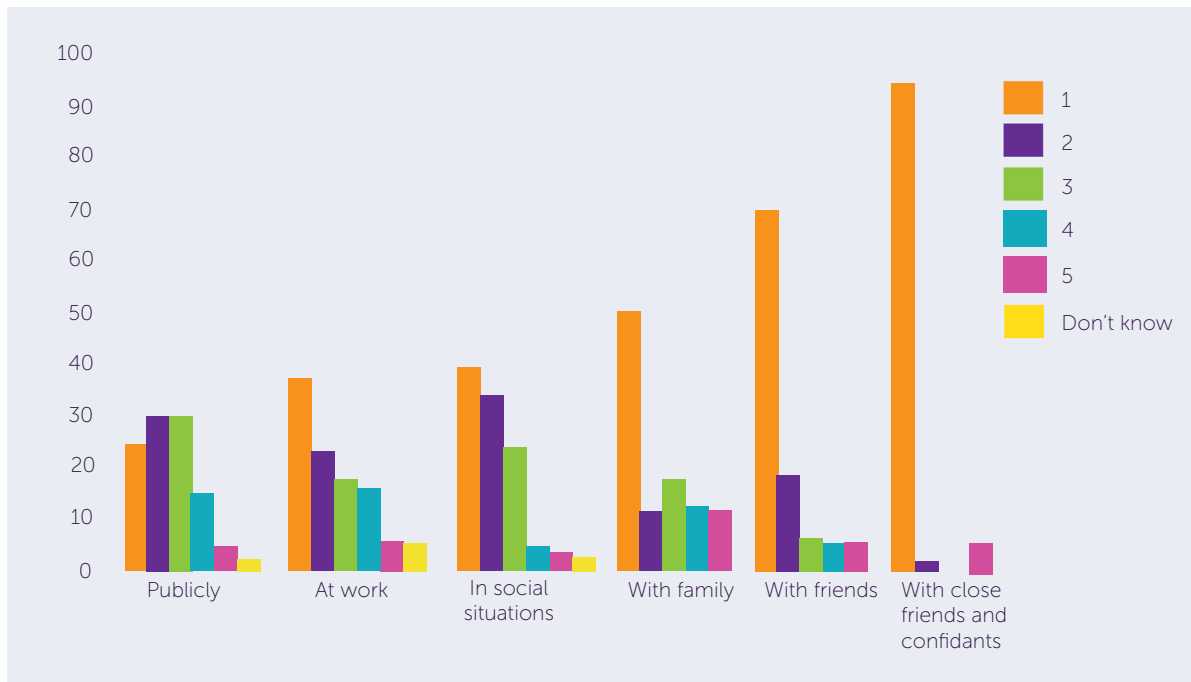
Some of the comments for 'best':

*"Multicultural" "Accepting" "Rainbow flag" "Liberal" "Open-minded"
 "LGBTQ History Month" "SexYOUality" "Encompass" "Safe" "Diverse"
 "Sister Act" "Tolerant" "2byou" "No assumptions" "Julian Huppert"
 "Inclusive" "Lack of discrimination/homophobia" "Youth groups"
 "Open about sexuality" "Mixed toilets" "Vibrant" "Friendly" "Peaceful"
 "Liberal University" "Beautiful" "Good student scene"
 "LGBTQ presence" "Voluntary sector" "Supportive" "Lots of events"*

Some of the comments for 'worst':

*"Lack of queer places to socialise" "Student focussed" "Isolating/lonely"
 "No Pride" "Lack of intellectual gay groups" "Town/gown separation"
 "No gay scene/community" "Lack of places to meet/socialise"
 "Invisibility of LGBTQ community" "Discrimination" "ARU LGBTQ society"
 "Lack of events/not much to do" "Quiet" "Conservative opinions"
 "Lack of understanding of LGBTQ people" "Anti-gay protesters"
 "Expensive" "Tourists" "Little outside University" "Trans people feel unsafe
 near roads" "Unsafe for kink enthusiasts" "No pubs/bars"
 "Homophobia in villages" "Weather" "No resources"*

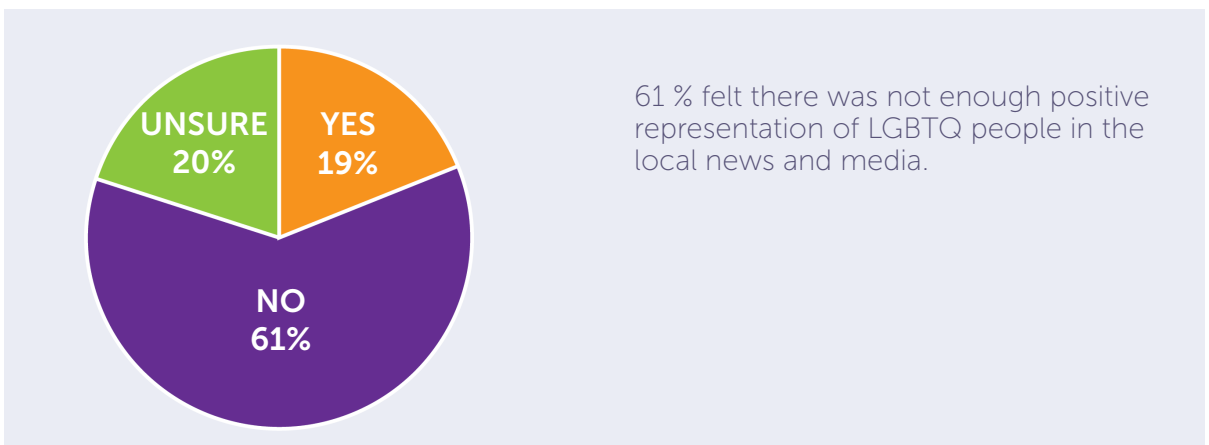
14: On a scale of 1-5, how open do you feel you are able to be about your sexual orientation in the following situations, with 1 being "Completely open" and 5 being "Completely hidden"?



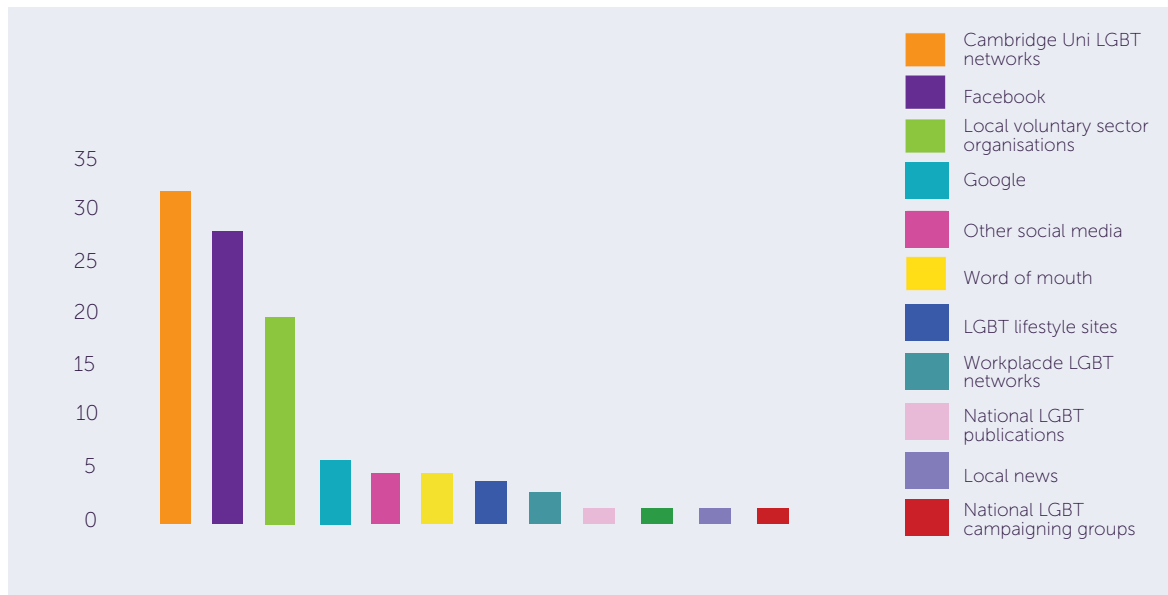
The results were quite varied. Only 24% of respondents felt they could be completely open 'in public', rising to 36% 'at work'. 'In social situations', 'with family', and 'with friends' this percentage rose each time, peaking at 94% being able to be completely open 'with close friends and confidants'. The highest area where people felt they had to stay completely hidden was 'with family', with 11% of respondents choosing this option

This data makes visible the way that LGBTQ people feel they have to hide or moderate themselves in a variety of situations.

15: Do you feel there is enough positive representation of LGBTQ people in local news and media?

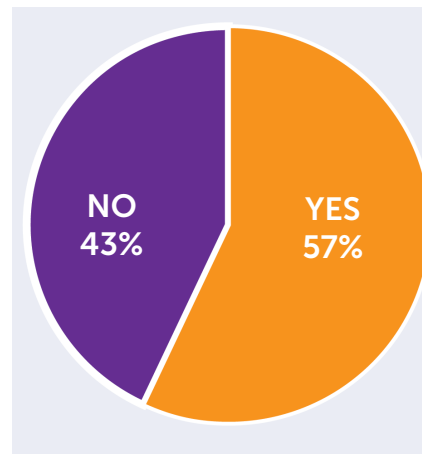


16: How often, if ever, do you use the following sources to find out about LGB&T events in the local area?

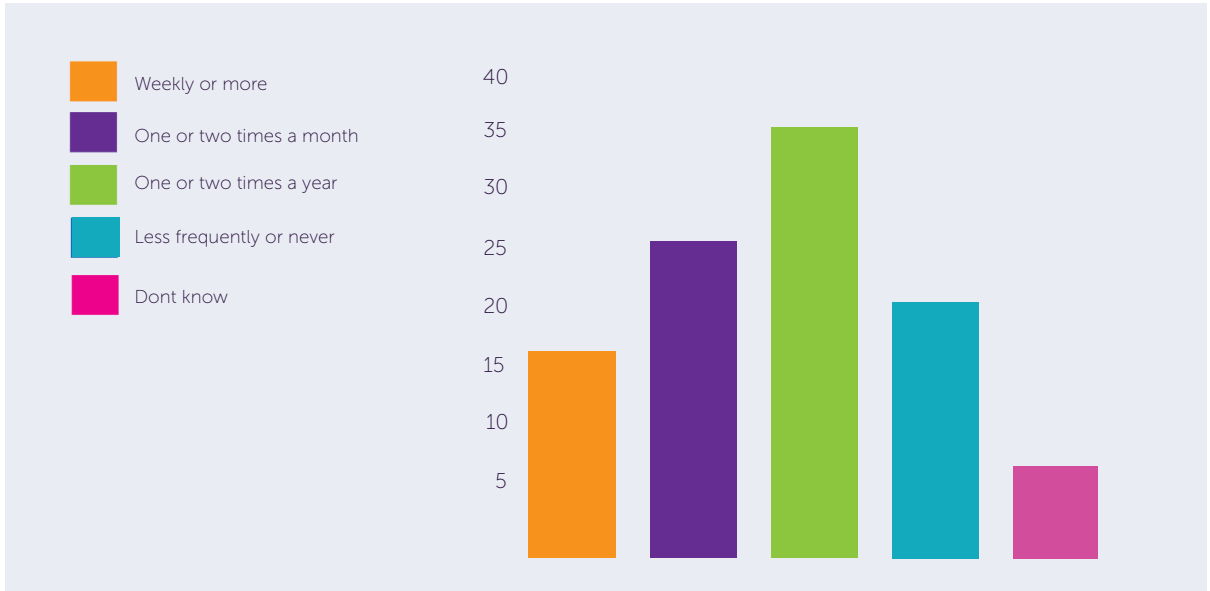


Cambridge University LGBTQ networks were ranked highest when it came to finding out about LGBTQ events, this was followed by social media, specifically Facebook followed by local voluntary sector organisations.

17: Do you use any LGB&T specific services, networks, or social groups? This could be an LGB&T pub or a club you attend, an LGB&T reading group, an LGB&T support group, an LGB&T parenting group, an LGB&T online discussion group, an LGB&T organisation, etc?



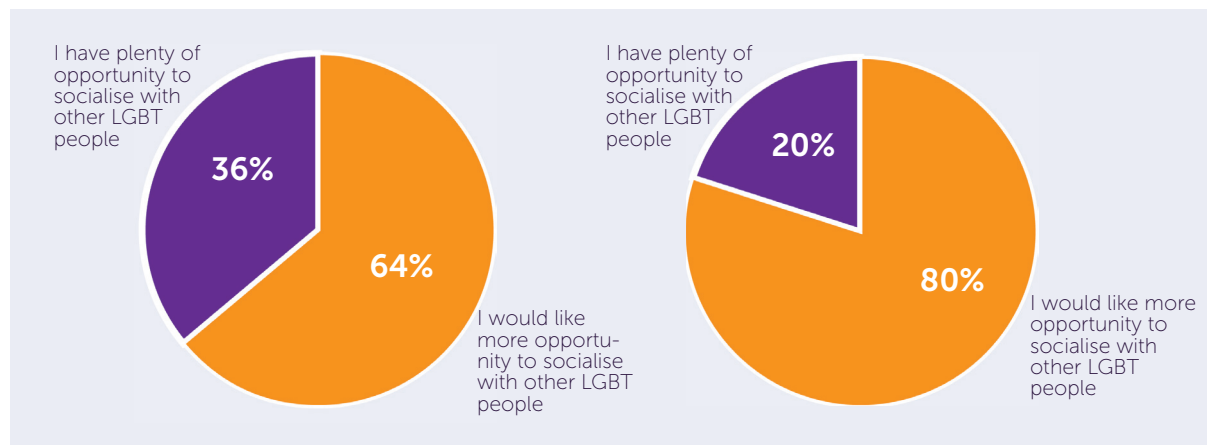
18: How often would you say you use or attend LGB&T specific services, such as those listed above, on average?



One notable difference here between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire survey respondents is that whilst 15% of city dwellers attend weekly LGBTQ events, only 4% of South Cambs respondents do.

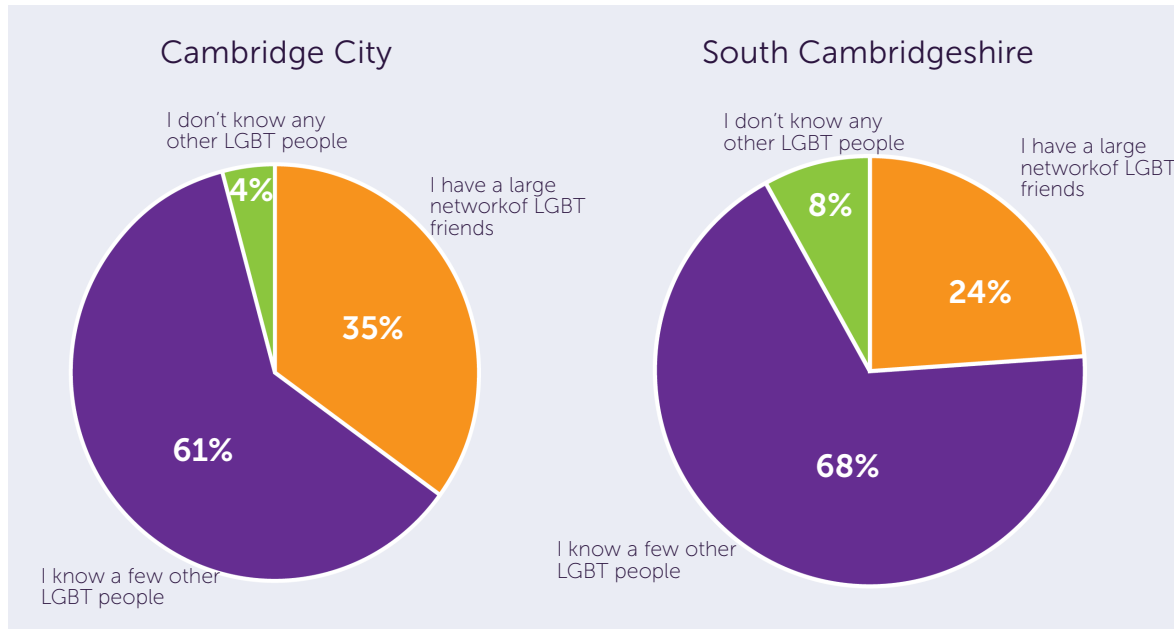
Also whilst 17% of city dwellers attend LGBTQ events less frequently than a few times a year or never, this rises to 29% of South Cambridgeshire dwellers.

19: Would you like more opportunity to socialise with LGBTQ people?



An overwhelming 64% of Cambridge City respondents wanted more opportunity to socialise with other LGBTQ people and an even more striking 80% of South Cambridgeshire participants wanted this.

20: How many LGBTQ people do you know?

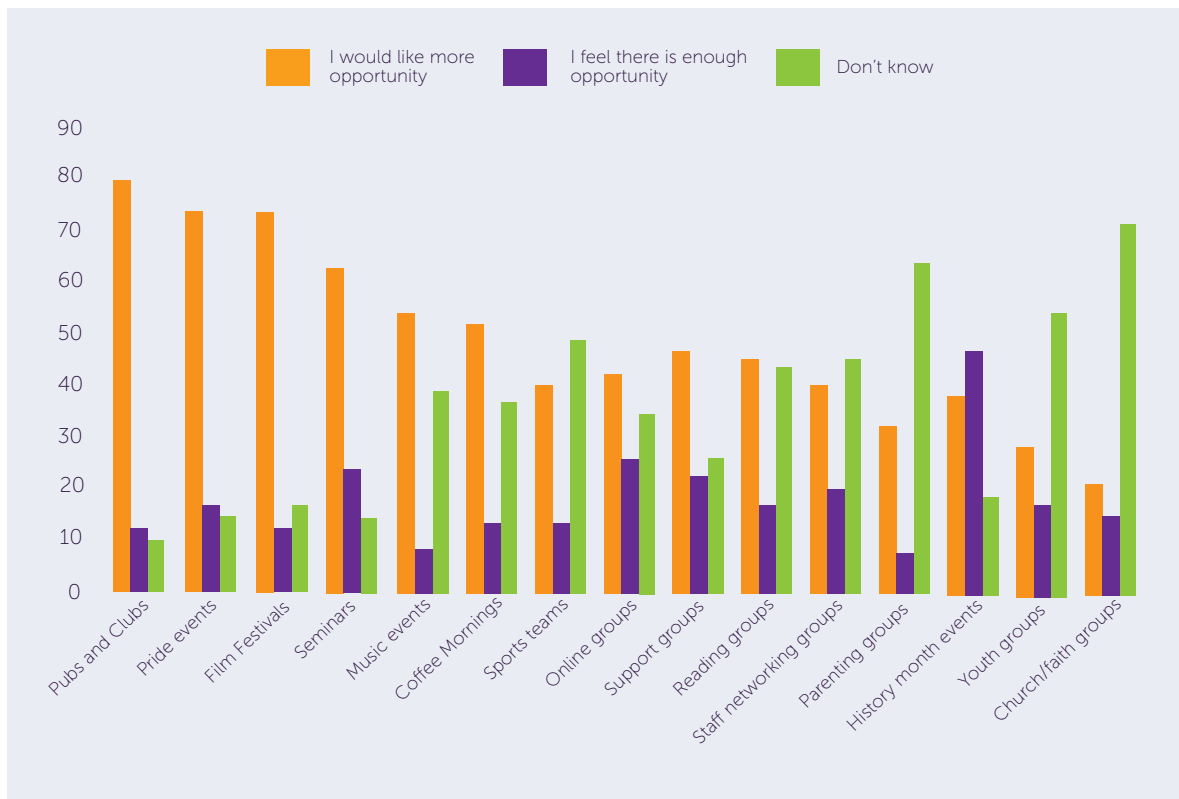


Respondents in South Cambridgeshire were twice as likely to know no other LGBTQ people as Cambridge City respondents and were roughly a third less likely to have a large network of LGBTQ friends.

We asked respondents if they would like more opportunity to socialise with lesbians, gay men, transgender people, or bisexual people, and roughly a third of respondents would like more opportunity to socialise with other LGBTQ people.



21: From the list below, please choose whether you would like more opportunity to take part in each type of event, or whether you feel there is enough opportunity to take part in this type of event in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.



There was an overwhelming response for the following types of events: 80% of respondents wanted more LGBTQ pubs and clubs, 73% wanted to see pride events, 73% wanted LGBTQ film festivals, 61% wanted LGBTQ talks or seminars, 55% wanted LGBTQ music events, and 51% LGBTQ coffee mornings.

There was also a significant demand for LGBTQ sports teams, online groups, support groups, reading groups, and staff networking groups.

There was less demand for more parenting groups, church and faith groups, youth groups and history month events, possibly because these are already taking place and well used.

22: If you have any other comments or suggestions for local LGB&T specific services, please write them down here.

Specific suggestions included:

“LGBTQ community centre” “More activities through the year”

“Queer space” “LGBTQ friendly space”

“Pub” “Cafe” “Football”

“representation of LGBTQ in mainstream events”

“Pride” “Photography group” “Trans youth group” “Pink”

Section: Specific experiences of Homo/Bi/Trans-Phobia

23: Have you ever experienced direct or indirect homo/bi/transphobic bullying or harassment at your place of work or study?

28% of respondents have experienced some form of homo/bi/transphobic bullying or harassment at work

Some examples of discriminatory experiences at work included:

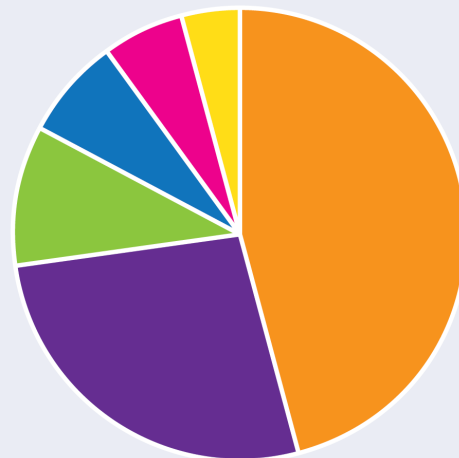
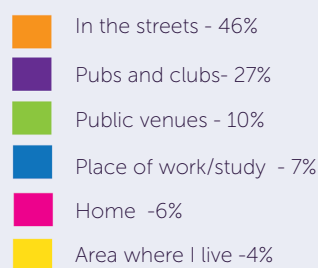
- People hiding their sexual orientation or gender identity to counter homophobia
- Indirect homophobia
- Being shunned by colleagues when sexual orientation/gender identity is revealed
- Ignorance of LGBTQ issues
- Heteronormative assumptions of sexual orientation and gender identity
- Heteronormative work policy
- “Banter” - verbal abuse

- Binary gendered forms
- Gay jokes
- School bullying
- "That's so gay"
- Colleagues at meetings focussing on gender identity/sexual orientation rather than topic at hand
- Local Authority staff lack of awareness with clients/service users

24: Have you experienced any form of homo/bi/transphobia or hate crime in Cambridge City or South Cambridgeshire?

40% of all respondents had experienced some form of homo/bi/transphobia or hate crime in Cambridge City and South Cambs. Of South Cambridgeshire respondents this rose to 48%.

25: Where did this/these incidents happen?



The vast majority of these incidents occurred in public places, with 45% taking place in the street, 27% in pubs and clubs and 10% in other public venues.

26: Have you reported any homo/bi or trans-phobic incidents to the police or another official at the place where it happened?

89% of participants did not report these incidents to anyone.

Some common reasons cited for this were:

- "It was just a passing comment of 'fag'"
- "Did not feel it would have a positive effect"
- "Just verbal comments"
- "Mostly it has been verbal abuse, and once I had a drink thrown over me. I didn't think this warranted police involvement"
- "I didn't feel like it was a big deal"
- "Didn't feel it was worth it"
- "Didn't know who the people were who did it"
- "Didn't feel they would be sympathetic/view it as a valid complaint"
- "I did not think it was important enough"
- "I didn't feel that it was serious enough to take to the police. It was a fairly common thing to happen"
- "I did not feel they were significant enough"
- "Didn't think the police would care/do anything about it. Not an extreme enough crime to follow up"
- "Uncomfortable"
- "I prefer to deal with insults personally, by discussing them with the person who voiced them"

- “When it happened I had just come out and didn’t really think about reporting it”
- “Mostly not as didn’t think it was appropriate at the time, and would have made the situation more drawn out or worse”
- “Didn’t seem the sort of thing the police might be able to affect”
- “I tried to report some homophobic graffiti to the Open Out scheme but it had closed down”
- “It was not a serious incident – more like stupidity... Didn’t effect me”
- “I would be barred from the only pub I felt I could socialise in”
- “Didn’t feel it was worth it”

27: Do you feel there is a need for LGBTQ specific services in your area to improve safety?

27% of Cambridge City respondents feel there is a need for LGBTQ specific services in their area to improve safety, and this increased to 48% within South Cambridgeshire .

28: If you have any suggestions regarding homo/bi/trans-phobia in your local area and how you could feel safer, please write them here.

Suggestions for improvements included:

- More events
- Better education
- Inter-cultural events
- Police training
- Awareness of what harassment is
- LGBTQ only spaces
- LGBTQ hate crime service
- More encouragement to report in rural areas
- Press awareness of issues

Section: Accessing Public Services

29: How comfortable are you accessing public services?

We asked our survey respondents to feed back to us on 10 main public sector services: Housing, Health, Crime and Safety, Employment, Voluntary sector, Education, Transport, Social welfare, City and Couth Cambs. Council services, Leisure and Recreation..

Generally respondents felt comfortable accessing services. We then asked for specific comments on accessing public services. The majority of comments given, 73%, were relating negative feedback about health services, and prejudice experienced by LGBTQ people from health professionals, including:
relating negative feedback about health services, and prejudice experienced by LGBTQ

- a lack of understanding of LGBTQ issues by staff
- indirect homophobic attitudes of fertility health professionals
- heteronormative and cissexist assumptions from GPs, Genitourinary Medical (GUM) staff and other health professionals
- direct homophobic treatment by health professionals
- a GP asking one participant invasive questions about their partners genitalia during a routine GP appointment

There was one positive comment about the adoption and fostering service, where a same sex couple felt well supported throughout the process of their adoption.

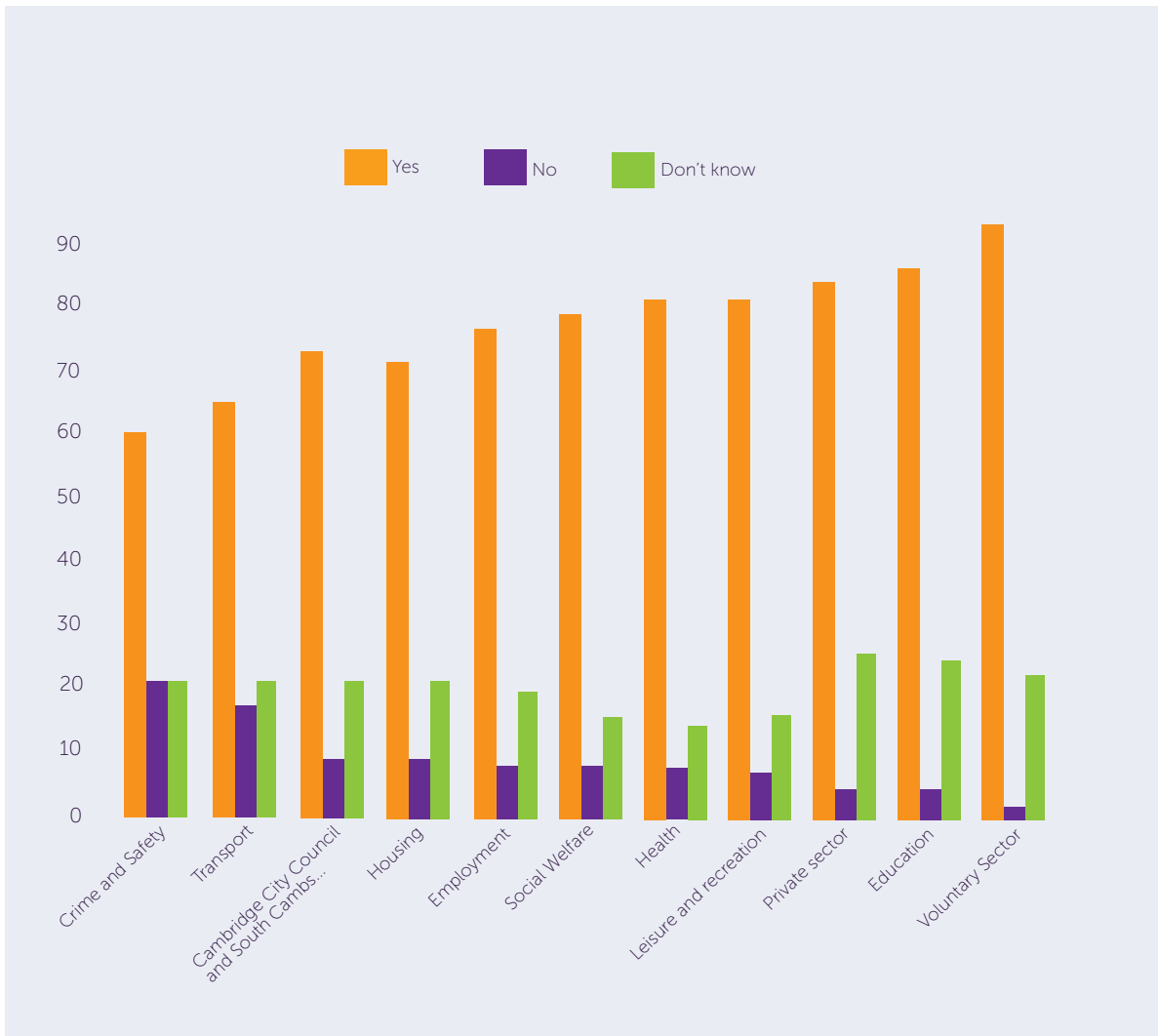
One unemployed LGBTQ respondent with a combination of physical and mental health disabilities described the jobcentre as "terrifying from a mental health perspective".

Other respondents pointed out the barriers of expensive transport services, and unfriendly police attitudes

30: If you have had negative experiences of accessing public services, what do you think could have helped you in that situation?

- Specialist staff to work with LGBTQ people
- Non-heteronormative leaflets and posters included in public service information
- Reduced waiting list times for mental health services
- Training to include public facing admin staff
- More affordable and reliable transport in rural areas
- Training of GPs in working with LGBTQ patients
- Trans awareness training for frontline staff
- Being treated like any other couple
- Trans services
- LGBTQ Housing support
- LGBTQ friendly legal services
- LGBTQ specialist financial service advisor
- Better sex education in school

31: Would you feel comfortable applying for jobs or voluntary positions in the following sectors?



Overall respondents reported feeling reasonably comfortable applying for jobs or voluntary positions in all of the sectors shown above. There was a clear trend in favour of the voluntary sector with only 1% saying that they would not feel comfortable. This compared to the highest percentage where 20% of participants would not feel comfortable applying for work in the Crime and Safety sector as an LGBTQ person

Section: Political representation

32: Would you consider standing for local government (e.g. parish or city councillor) as an openly LGB&T candidate?

44% of LGBTQ people would not stand for political office

33: What, if anything, prevents you from considering this?

Some comments were specifically related to LGBTQ identity:

- "My fear would be that I would be then used as a token representative for the LGBTQ community, when that may be an area that I chose not to focus on in my career"
- "Hate crime"
- "Fear of retaliation"
- "My parents don't know I'm bisexual"
- "Fear of negative backlash"

Some comments were not related to respondents LGBTQ identity, and many expressed a general lack of respect for political representatives or the political system:

- "I am disgusted by government"
- "I wouldn't want to make public my private life"
- "Intrusion and public profile"
- "I don't want to stand for government – nothing to do with being gay!"
- "I am sceptical about the abilities and intentions of all current political parties (and, indeed, party political democracy in general)"
- "Not interested"
- "Not a safe environment for women"
- "No party represents me"

34: Do you feel involved in local decision making in your area?

Only 18% of LGBTQ respondents felt involved in local decision making in their area, with 67% of respondents not feeling represented.

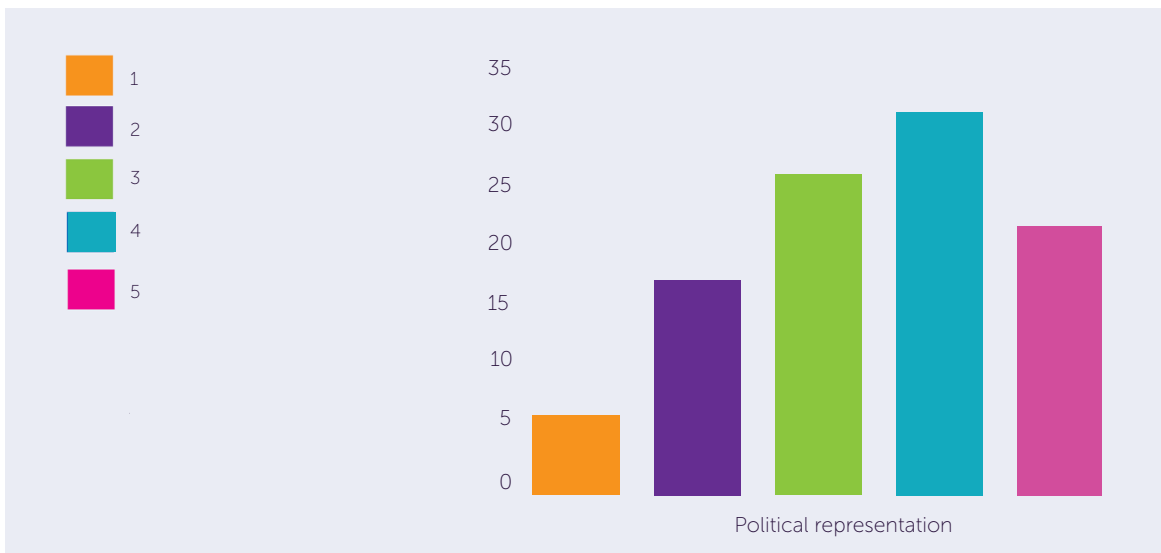
35: Please specify any committees or meetings which you attend here.

Only 4% of respondents attended any local political meetings or committees.

36: Have you ever spoken to your local MP or councillor about your views on LGBTQ issues in your area?

Only 18% of LGBTQ respondents had spoken to their local MP about LGBTQ issues in their local area. 79% of Cambridge City respondents said they would feel comfortable to do so, whereas 70% of South Cambridgeshire respondents said they would.

37: Have you ever spoken to your local MP or councillor about your views on LGBTQ issues in your area?



Only 5% checked 1 for "very well represented".

38: If you have any further comments to make on the subject of local political representation for LGB&T people, please write them here

- "I feel any representation is tokenistic and used to benefit party support rather than any real values of the politicians"
- "Small village 'issues' have no relation to LGBTQ people"
- "Cambridge has been something of trailblazer in terms of city council representation of LGBTQ people"
- "I have never seen any politician in this city even mentioning gay issues"
- "I am not aware that any LGBTQ issues have ever been discussed at the level of the Council"
- "I have a general impression of Julian Huppert as good on LGBTQ stuff"
- "There seems to be a stigma surrounding LGB&T when it comes to politics"
- "I don't feel represented at all in general, it has nothing at all to do with being gay"
- "Having an openly transgendered mayor a few years back signified a good political representation to me"
- "I contacted my MP to vote for same sex marriage and had a positive response"
- "We have one of the very few parliamentarians who will speak in parliament about trans issues"
- "Cambs Lib Dems are brilliant on LGBTQ issues, especially Sarah Brown"

KEY FINDINGS

The following section discusses the findings of the survey, and relates them to the data obtained from the focus groups and telephone interviews

1 - Gender Identification and Terminology

“[I] spent the entire appointment explaining non-binary trans to [my] GP, including increasingly intrusive questions about [my partner’s] assigned gender at birth, ending in questions about my partner’s genitalia” (survey respondent)

One of the most significant points to emerge from the survey (see Questions 1 and 2) is that those who are traditionally categorised as ‘transgender’ are using a huge variety of terms to describe their gender identification and that the majority of the survey respondents described themselves as having a fluid gender identity, or more than one gender identity. This was closely followed by the high number of respondents who described themselves as having no gender identity. This reflects the diversity within LGBTQ communities, and that there is no one single trans identity. The trans focus group in particular highlighted the fluidity of members’ gender identities, with some participants describing themselves as “part-time” and others as “full-time”.

Following on from these comments on gender identity and the ways we use to describe our gender identifications, attendees at the student focus group discussed the use of over-simplified gender categories in equal opportunities monitoring forms. For a person who has difficulty defining their gender identity, having to categorise your gender identity in a simplistic way could be intimidating, particularly as a first point of access to a service. Equal opportunity monitoring processes need to give service users the opportunity to express their identity clearly but flexibly, rather than feeling ‘pigeon-holed’ through the use of inappropriate categories. A key recommendation from the student focus group was the provision of a template Trans policy which could be implemented by a range of services.

A further recurrent theme raised by respondents in the survey followed by the student focus group, and the adult focus group, was the impact of the lack of training around non-binary gender identifications.

2 - Sexual Orientation

“I’m homoromantic, but mostly asexual.”Lesbian” works for a first approximation” survey respondent

Just as respondents used a wide range of terms to describe their gender-identification they used a similarly wide range of terminology in response to Question 3 on sexual orientation. Rather than simply using ‘heterosexual’, ‘homosexual’, or ‘bisexual’ respondents also used a combination of categories to describe their sexual orientation. This reflects the diversity within the LGBTQ community, and that there is no one single LGBTQ identity. This evidences the need for more sophisticated and responsive equal opportunity monitoring processes, and LGBTQ policies for all services.

Whereas trans respondents were more likely to report intrusive questioning about their gender identity, LGB survey respondents reported facing heteronormative assumptions or lack of understanding by staff when accessing a wide variety of services. This was also reflected in the discussions with the adult and student focus groups. This suggests the need for training to all public facing staff on trans issues.

3 - Mental Health and Self Esteem

“We have a general list of mental health counsellors - that is something I feel is missing – LGBTQ specific mental health services. You’re just set adrift” Student focus group participant

Responses to the question around disability in Question 6 showed a striking number of individuals reporting issues with mental health. This is in line with national data which indicates continuing low levels of self-esteem, and high levels of mental health problems among LGBTQ people. In addition to the survey findings, the student and adult focus group attendees discussed the need for LGBTQ-specific mental health services. More specifically, both the adult and the student focus groups noted that a publicly available list of LGBTQ friendly counsellors would be a huge benefit to LGBTQ people.

In the adult group one participant discussed his experience of counselling, and that he had not felt able to mention his sexuality to a counsellor until a number of weeks into the sessions, when trust was established. Due to the fact that homo/bi/trans-phobia can be found in all strata of society, including professionals, there are clear reasons why an LGBTQ person may take longer to establish trust with a counsellor. As the success of a counselling relationship is dependent on the client’s ability to trust and be open with their counsellor, this is a severely limiting factor on the effectiveness of NHS-provided counselling services for LGBTQ people.

The survey findings indicated that 61% of respondents felt LGBTQ people were poorly represented in local news and media. Participants at the adult focus group felt that a lack of positive LGBTQ role models contributes to poor self-esteem in LGBTQ people.

The group also went on to discuss some of the effects of homophobia on the mental health of LGBTQ people who do not feel able to be completely open in public spaces. One individual noted that although they had been with their partner for 10 years, they had never held hands in public. This was comparable to feedback in the younger persons group, where they stated that walking hand in hand with their partner was one of the best things about living in Cambridge. The telephone interviews with older LGBTQ participants confirmed that people still had strong memories of hate crime from the past, showing that although society has moved on in terms of legislation and social attitudes, we should not discount the traumatic long-term effect which experiences of homophobic abuse may have on individuals.

4 - Isolation

“I feel really alone. I am a professional but all the LGBTQ nights out seem to be for students. I don’t know any other LGBTQ people at all……. I have never been so lonely.” Survey respondent

Isolation was key factor which was mentioned repeatedly in the survey and at all the focus groups. An overwhelming 67 % of people wanted more opportunity to socialise, and 63 % said that they knew few LGBTQ people.

Isolation appeared to be a significant negative aspect of the experience of LGBTQ people locally – in fact, “isolating” was overwhelmingly the most common word used by respondents to describe their experience of living in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire as an LGBTQ person. Respondents to the survey and participants of the focus groups expressed feelings of isolation, low self-esteem, and lack of opportunities to socialise and network with other LGBTQ people. One older participant discussed the importance of faith and a need for faith groups to be more open to LGBTQ people, to prevent isolation of those where faith may be an important part of their lives.

This highlights the importance of having support groups for LGBTQ people in both South Cambridgeshire, and Cambridge City, along with the need for LGBTQ events and spaces to prevent isolation.

5 - LGBTQ Events and Spaces

“I went to a LGBTQ staff social but it was nearly all men, I am very depressed over this. I cannot come out at work. I would love to socialise and meet other people like me, but there don’t seem to be any. I wish I could meet other professional people who are like me. “ Survey

Something that came up repeatedly through both the survey and the focus groups was the need for more LGBTQ events, and the need for a specific LGBTQ space for people to go.

In response to Question 19, 67% of survey respondents wanted more opportunity to socialise with LGBTQ people, and when presented with a range of types of events in Question 21, there was a clear demand for a wider variety of LGBTQ events.

Whilst there was a strong call for LGBTQ pubs and clubs (with 80% of survey respondents wanting more of these in Question 21 of the survey), there was an equally strong call for a variety of events and LGBTQ spaces across all the focus groups. Participant’s suggestions for activities/events included LGBTQ film festivals, LGBTQ talks or seminars, LGBTQ music events, and LGBTQ social coffee mornings.

In the focus groups and the telephone interviews, participants felt that the LGBTQ events that did take place were too targeted on the younger generation or students:

“The emphasis on pubs and clubs is heavily around sex and relationships, and there is a need for spaces where richer and more varied LGBTQ relationships can develop – friendships, links, and a sense of community” Adult focus group participant

Interestingly younger participants and students also expressed the need for a ‘community’ and also wanted events that did not solely focus around drinking or dating.

LGBTQ History month was noted as one of the best things about living in Cambridge, along with the raising of the rainbow flag during the month. 41% of respondents to the survey attend LGBTQ history month events. However, respondents and participants of the focus group also stressed the importance of a need for continuity and regularity of events, following on from LGBTQ History Month, and it was noted that there was a need for LGBTQ events throughout the year.

During all focus groups, participants spoke about the importance of maintaining a diversity of events to respond to the needs of sub-groups within the LGBTQ community. In the adult focus group a number of gay men highlighted a lack of services specifically for gay men, and during telephone conversations some older members of the LGBTQ community expressed a fear of integrating into mainstream older peoples events due to a perceived high level of prejudice in the older generation. In addition an LGBTQ needs to be routinely included in 'mainstream' events, such as the 'Big Weekend'. It was felt that this was important as it would promote inclusion and increase visibility of the community.

73% of respondents to the survey stated the need for a pride event in Cambridge. This was also raised in the focus groups, specifically the young people's group, the adult and student groups. Many respondents also stated that they would like to see the return of the Pink Festival.

These findings clearly highlight the need for a more diverse and consistent range of LGBTQ events in Cambridge that meet the needs of the community.

Spaces

Another clear finding from both the survey and focus groups was the need for LGBTQ-only spaces.

This ties in with the survey findings from Question 14, on how open respondents feel in certain situations, where only 24% of respondents felt able to be completely open about their sexual orientation in public. In the adult focus group all participants expressed a hesitance to hold hands with their partner in public, one striking fact which sheds some light on the continuing need for a variety of LGBTQ public spaces through which people can network and communicate.

Although survey respondents, in response to Question 13, on experiences of living in Cambridge, overwhelmingly felt 'safe' the questions around homophobia, biphobia and transphobia revealed that incidents were high, particularly in public spaces, which acts as evidence of a continued need for a safe space for LGBTQ people, despite a perceived sense of safety.

It was suggested in the student and trans focus groups that a physical resource for LGBTQ people, such as a library would be useful, so people could access a list of service providers, LGBTQ friendly venues, and LGBTQ trained professionals. Suggestions were made for the venue such as a cafe, or a community centre.

6 - The Role of the Voluntary Sector

“If it wasn’t for the group, I wouldn’t be here now” (Trans focus group participant)

The role of voluntary sector played an essential part in whether the experience as an LGBTQ person, was a positive or a negative one. This came through in both the survey and focus groups.

The younger people’s focus group strongly expressed the importance of the 2byou group run by SexYOUality as a support group for them. Other voluntary sector services mentioned were Centre 33, Sister Act, and the University LGBTQ societies. One of the participants in the telephone conversations described Sister Act as playing a fundamental role in their positive experience of being a gay woman in Cambridge. In the trans focus group Diamonds was mentioned by all participants as a vital social support group for trans people in Cambridge. Where people did not attend support groups such as in the adult focus group, there were higher reports of isolation compared to those who attended support groups.

7 - Homo-Bi-Transphobia and Hate Crime

“I’ve had ‘faggot’ yelled at me near the rail station by workers. More generally I get hostile looks” Survey respondent

A high percentage of respondents reported having experienced a hate crime.

A striking feature of respondents’ replies to questions 24 and 26 in this section was the disparity between the relatively high rate of experienced hate crime and homophobia (40%) and the relative infrequency with which these events were reported (89% had not been reported).

A number of themes emerged to explain the reasons for this:

Downplaying the incidents

There was a tendency by respondents in Question 26 to downplay incidents, and to view them as “nothing unusual”, with respondents saying things such as “it was just a verbal insult” or “it was just a drink thrown over me” or “I didn’t think it was a big deal” These kind of responses were also reflected in telephone conversations with older LGBTQ participants, and discussions with the trans focus group. This suggests to ‘normalise’ hate crime and to consider it just a part of LGBTQ life.

Despite downplaying of incidents, 33% of respondents felt that there was a need for LGBTQ specific services in their area to improve safety.

When asked for suggestions of how they could feel safer, respondents stated that more was needed to increase awareness of what actually constitutes harassment and increased public campaigns to raise awareness of the issues that have now become normalized.

Resilience

The frequency of the incidents reported and the apparent tolerance of them, suggest a high level of resilience toward homophobic incidents. The topic of resilience was discussed with one person in a telephone conversation, who noted that even though they had recently experienced verbal abuse due to their sexual orientation, they had not reported it, because they had been unaffected by it, and able to shrug it off because they were out and proud, so felt able to handle it.

The impact of hate crime on wellbeing

The potential impact of hate crime on a person's wellbeing cannot, however, be underestimated. One participant of the trans focus group described being brutally attacked near their home in Cambridge City. She did not report this at the time, and described how it pushed her back "into the closet" for 4 years. She acknowledged that she is a much stronger, happier person now that she is living fully in her chosen gender. It appears that the current system puts too much pressure on the individual to both report and deal with incidents alone rather than 'reaching out' to those involved

Trust in the police and not knowing who to turn to

LGBTQ people reported being suspicious of the police's ability to understand LGBTQ issues and did not know who to turn to with the closure of the Open Out reporting scheme. The lack of a widely advertised specific LGBTQ contact for reporting hate crimes to police was cited by many in the focus groups as something which would discourage them from reporting. The disappearance of the Open Out scheme was not only mentioned independently by a number of survey respondents, but was also discussed widely in the trans focus group. The need for an LGBTQ liaison officer was also mentioned in the adult and student focus groups. When discussing their reluctance to report hate crimes, members of the focus groups cited this lack of an LGBTQ liaison figure, and also more complex reasons such as their stage in transitioning at the time of the incident. Overwhelmingly participants mentioned negative experiences of having to explain their sexual orientation or gender identity to untrained or prejudiced professionals. The student focus group reported that students who did not feel comfortable speaking to police were turning to student LGBTQ societies at University with incidents who felt untrained to deal with incidents, not being police officers.

8 - Safety

Although survey respondents, reported overwhelmingly that they felt 'safe' in Cambridge, the focus groups revealed a more complex picture.

When asked whether they had experienced homo/bi/transphobic bullying or harassment at work and/or area of study, 28% of respondents reported having experienced some form of homo/bi/transphobic bullying or harassment. Furthermore, in Question 14. Only 24% of respondents felt they could be completely open 'in public', and only 36% of people felt they could be open at work.

The issue of safety was a particularly significant issue for members of the trans community who felt significantly more unsafe in streets and public spaces, and had experienced a higher level of verbal and physical harassment in public spaces. The level of physical violence and hate crime against trans people emerged clearly from the focus group discussions. Common experiences included having objects thrown at them from moving cars – so much so that we discovered through several discussions that trans people will physically alter their routes when moving around, to avoid walking next to roads. One participant described a complex system of monitoring what times of day are safe for her to leave her house, as she experiences so much aggression in her local community in South Cambridgeshire. She does not leave her house at night, and she avoids the afternoons - when the school bus arrives into the village. Mornings are her safest time for getting things done.

Interestingly, however, participants in the trans focus group reported feeling 'safe' and described Cambridge as the safest place for them to be, compared to other areas due to the relative levels of tolerance in the community. Most however had sustained violent attacks or constant verbal harassment in the area where they lived. This suggests once again, the normalization and acceptance of such attacks and also reveals the national scale of transphobia.

More work is needed to ensure that LGBTQ people not only feel safe but comfortable in their environment be it in their place of work or in public spaces.

These findings taken together suggest a clear need for LGBTQ only spaces, and for improved safety services for LGBTQ people

9 - Health Services

“Cambridge desperately needs a Gender Identity Service” Trans focus group participant

One of the key findings relating to respondents experiences of public services, highlighted issues with health services specifically. 73 % of comments given relayed negative experiences of accessing health services and prejudice from health professionals. This included a lack of understanding of LGBTQ issues by staff, direct homophobia, and heteronormative and cissexist assumptions from staff. Other services attracting negative comments were the Job Centres and the police.

Survey respondents reported varying degrees of harassment or prejudice from healthcare professionals. Fertility services and GP services were mentioned particularly in answer to Question 29. Several participants of the trans focus group had never discussed their gender identity with their GP, and would actively avoid GP appointments for this reason.

These responses suggest that it is key to have better training for all health professions on LGBTQ issues, particularly homophobia/ transphobia and its impact on mental health, gender identification terminology and trans awareness. All public facing staff should have basic level awareness training to remove barriers to accessing health services for LGBTQ people. This was recommended by the respondents to Question 30, and the student, adult, and young people's focus groups independently also.

Trans participants in the focus group reported that there is a huge need in the trans community for a health service specifically for trans people, with trained staff. At the moment the closest clinic is in London and waiting lists were reported by our trans participants to be a huge barrier. Transition can be a vulnerable time for trans people, and having to wait months and even years for appointments can be mentally and emotionally damaging. Taking into account the points raised about safety in public spaces for trans people, it is reasonable to assume that many trans people may feel uncomfortable travelling long distances to a gender identity clinic.

10 - Education

“It’s an uphill struggle in the education system” Younger people’s focus group participant

28 % of respondents had experienced some form of bullying and harassment in their area of study or work. A number of examples were cited including school bullying, and verbal abuse such use of the terms ‘that’s so gay’

In the young person’s focus group, there was a mixed response when it came to discussing people’s experiences of school. 30 % said their school was accepting, however, there were many in the group who had negative experiences, particularly in relation to gender.

It was widely felt, that there was a lack of knowledge of gender equality by teachers. The younger peoples focus group were concerned about gendered PE lessons and the facilities in schools such as the changing rooms and non-unisex bathrooms. They also called for these to be incorporated into the education systems in schools, along with the need for books used to include information on different types of families.

The call for better training of staff went higher up the education system, with the student focus group highlighting a lack of knowledge of LGBTQ issues by staff

A key recommendation by the student focus group was the provision of a template LGBTQ policy and LGBTQ training for Universities and affiliates, something that could be adopted across the board.

11 - Older LGBTQ People

“It is also about older lesbian and gay people who still struggle. There’s times when you just want to be free” Older focus group participant

There was a low level of response to the survey from older LGBTQ people with only 3 % over 55 and 7 % 45-54. Given the growing aging population, this in itself is indicative of the need to better reach out to older LGBTQ people. Further investigations were therefore carried out through telephone conversations and emails

Whilst feedback from some older LGBTQ people was positive, this appeared to be from those that were in partnerships, or who reported attending groups such as Sister Act. Isolation nevertheless was a key issue for many. One older LGBTQ person expressed a lack of confidence in attending mainstream older peoples events, due to perceived higher levels of prejudice amongst the mainstream older population.

One older participant described her desperate need for computer training, saying that she simply does not know how to find out about LGBTQ events in the local area without using a computer. Again, she was reluctant to access a mainstream computing course due to fears about experiencing homophobia. The same participant relayed past accounts of homophobic abuse

Another older participant discussed the importance of faith and the real need for faith groups to be more open to LGBTQ people, to prevent isolation of those where faith may be an important part of their lives.

Another older participant shared their concern about care homes for the elderly and felt there was a need for care providers to be active in promoting that they are welcoming of someone who identifies as LGBTQ.

Where isolation is already an issue for many in the older population, evidence shows that being LGBTQ was a further barrier. Given the historical experiences of homo/trans phobia of some older LGBTQ people, it seem even more important that there are services that are either specifically catering for older LGBTQ people or services that actively show that they are accepting of people who are LGBTQ.

12 - Reaching Out

“We are far more likely to attend events if friends are attending or have been talking about it on Facebook. People wait for things to come to them” Student focus group participant

Most survey respondents find out about LGBTQ events through Cambridge University, Facebook, and the local Voluntary sector. Mainstream local media played virtually no role in informing LGBTQ individuals about services and events. In the student focus group, the importance of social networking was also discussed. Participants at the student focus group discussed their nervousness about attending generic LGBTQ events if they are unsure about who is attending, or what sort of event it is. Seeing friends talking about or attending an event makes it easier for them to think about attending. This was of particular importance to trans participants who were more likely to be weighing their personal safety into any decision to attend an event.

The fact that Cambridge University is the most widely used resource in Cambridge highlights the divide in the local area between LGBTQ people who are able to access Cambridge University services and those who cannot. Through our student, adult, and older peoples focus groups this was also highlighted as a gap in services available to non-University affiliates.

13 - Political Representation

“it’s nice living in a city where you know there are politicians who are LGBTQ friendly” survey respondent

Respondents to Question 38 noted that fears around inadvertent disclosure of sexual orientation/gender identification, and a ‘homophobic backlash’ were still important factors in discouraging LGBTQ individuals from standing for public office. However respondents in Question 38, and Question 13, as well as during the student focus group noted the positive role of local ‘gay-friendly’ MPs and Councilors.

14 - Experiences of living in Cambridge City and South Cambs

“One of the best things about living in Cambridge is walking hand in hand with my partner” Young Adult Group

In response to Questions 12, & 13, overall the experiences of living in Cambridge and City and South Cambs was reported as being a positive one, with 54% of respondents rating it to be positive and 21 % very positive. Terms used to describe the area included: liberal, open minded, accepting, tolerant and multicultural. Other topics mentioned were the number of support groups available, and the fact that people felt safer compared to other areas that they had lived in. Through further analysis of the data and after conducting the focus groups, differences of experiences were found however for participants living in Cambridge City compared with those living in South Cambridgeshire. Differences were noted particularly when it came to isolation, disability, ethnicity, and homo/bi/trans-phobia and hate crime.

Key differences from the survey data which stood out were as follows:

- In line with the census data for the area there were more ethnic minority LGBTQ people living in Cambridge City than South Cambridgeshire – this is something which should potentially be explored in more depth in future, to cross-reference the effects this may have on isolation and mental health.
- There was a substantially higher level of (self-defined) disability amongst South Cambridgeshire respondents as compared with Cambridge City respondents, with almost 10% more South Cambridgeshire respondents reporting a long term disability or health condition. Also of note – whilst 12% of Cambridge City respondents had a mental health disability, this rose to 17% for South Cambridgeshire.
- One of the key differences coming through from the data was the frequency with which South Cambridgeshire respondents reported attending LGBTQ only events, with South Cambridgeshire respondents almost 4 times less likely to attend weekly LGBTQ events and more than 70% more likely to attend less than a few times a year or never. Tying into this, South Cambridgeshire respondents were twice as likely to know no other LGBTQ people as Cambridge City respondents, and were roughly a third less likely to have a large network of LGBTQ friends. On top of this roughly 25% more South Cambridgeshire respondents called for more opportunities to socialise with other LGBTQ people than Cambridge City respondents, a total of 80% of South Cambridgeshire respondents.

- Whilst 40% of Cambridge City respondents had experienced some form of homo/bi/trans-phobia or hate crime, this rose to 48% in South Cambridgeshire respondents, a rise of 20%. Strikingly, almost 78% more South Cambridgeshire respondents called for LGBTQ specific safety services in their local area.
- South Cambridgeshire respondents reported a decrease in feeling confident to speak to their local MPs about LGBTQ issues. Whilst 21% of Cambridge City respondents would not feel comfortable to do so, this rose to 30% of South Cambridgeshire respondents, a rise of almost 43%.

Further issues were explored at the Focus Groups: one trans participant described being 'plagued constantly' by people in her local area. Another trans participant we spoke to had previously lived in a rural area, but had been forced to relocate to Cambridge City due to hate crime from local people in the area. A member of the student focus group who previously grew up in South Cambs. also felt that homophobia in rural areas was much more rife.

LGBTQ parents in South Cambs also reported feeling isolated, and invisible in their parenting community, and felt they often suffer covert homophobia or are shunned by other parents. A South Cambridgeshire younger participant described being rejected from their local church group due to their gender identity and an LGBTQ older person from South Cambs also described similar experiences.

Another participant described his decision to move to a rural area with his partner, because they felt that the mainstream LGBTQ scene was heavily based around sex and drinking. However, in doing so now felt very isolated and did not socialise with many people. A theme that arose from both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire in the survey and the focus groups was an expressed need for more LGBTQ events and spaces as noted above.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

EXPRESSION OF GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The range of terminology which respondents and participants used to identify their gender and sexual orientation was striking in its variety and fluidity, as was the frustration which was felt when accessing services which seemed unsympathetic or were simply unaware of the issues involved. Participants were aware of the importance of equal opportunities monitoring but often felt that forms were poorly designed and didn't offer the opportunity for respondents to record their feelings about gender identity and sexual orientation accurately and appropriately.

Key recommendations:

- Comprehensive gender identity training for all public-facing staff in public services.
- Comprehensive training on sexual orientation and avoiding hetero-normative language/practices for all public-facing staff
- Trans policies to be in place in all workplaces, to ensure equality of access for trans people.
- More responsive and up-to-date equal opportunities monitoring.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN LGBTQ COMMUNITIES

Mental Health

The results of the survey indicate that an astonishingly high percentage of respondents perceived themselves as having a 'mental health disability' and this was strongly reinforced by comments on feelings of isolation and lack of opportunities for social networking which were expressed by respondents and at focus groups.

This 'base level' of poor mental health was reinforced by the difficulties experienced in accessing appropriate mental health services and resources. Respondents felt unsure whether mental health professionals would respond sensitively to LGBTQ issues.

The survey also revealed a continuing high incidence of homophobic experiences and a distressing tendency to accept such experiences as 'normal', part of everyday life' and not worth reporting to the police.

Overall, there seemed to be a self-reinforcing link between of isolation, low self-esteem, barriers to accessing services and the ongoing experience and normalization of homophobia which needs to be broken if the mental health of LGBTQ people is to be significantly improved.

Key recommendations:

- a publicly available list of LGBTQ trained mental health practitioners, including counsellors.
- Better training for mental health professionals around gender identity, sexual orientation, the effects of homo/bi/transphobia on mental health, and avoiding heteronormative terminology and practices.
- A stronger and more diverse network of events, services, and spaces for LGBTQ people to link up and reduce isolation
- A focus on targeting homo/bi/transphobia and hate crime by all services

General Health Services

In addition to the specific issues around mental health noted above, there was clear picture of negative experiences within the health sector more generally, and this is one public service which emerged as particularly in need of training. There were high levels of reporting of homo/bi/transphobic treatment and heteronormative assumptions at the hands of various health professionals in comparison to other types of service. This provides an obvious barrier to accessing health services, particularly for more vulnerable members of the community.

One way suggested to counter this barrier is the pro-active inclusion of non-heteronormative or cis-sexist health information for all patients.

Finally a clear need was identified for a local trans health service, with trained staff and the ability to specialise in gender identity health issues

Key recommendations:

- Comprehensive training for all public-facing health staff
- Inclusion of non-heteronormative/cissexist health information to all patients
- A local trans specialist health service

Regional Differences between Cambridge City and South Cambs.

Isolation in South Cambs emerged as a more prevalent issue than in city areas. Public transport was cited as a difficulty by several in the questionnaire, and this can only exacerbate rural isolation, especially taking into account reports from trans participants about feeling unsafe in public spaces. People who had moved to more rural areas in South Cambs to settle down with a partner or to start a family reported strong feelings of isolation and feeling excluded from the local community. The survey clearly articulated that people in South Cambridgeshire were attending events less frequently, knew fewer LGBTQ people to socialise with, and wanted more opportunity to do so.

It was suggested by participants that homo and transphobia is more prevalent in rural areas, and anecdotally it did appear that people experiencing hate crime in smaller, more isolated communities did seem to be more likely to be repeatedly victimised by people known to them. There were higher reports of homo/bi/trans-phobia and hate crime amongst South Cambridgeshire respondents to the survey and a much higher call for LGBTQ specific safety services.

There is a potential link between these findings, and the increase in reported mental health disability in South Cambridgeshire as opposed to Cambridge City.

Rural participants were the only ones to mention faith as an important aspect of their lives, and reinforced the call for LGBTQ friendly faith groups to accommodate vulnerable LGBTQ people who may experience exclusion from their faith community as a direct result of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

South Cambridgeshire participants to the survey felt less able to be politically involved by speaking with their local MP.

Key recommendations:

- Partnership work to encourage a greater welcome for LGBTQ people within faith groups.
- Provision of a variety of accessible services to cater to the social needs of isolated rural LGBTQ communities.
- Police hate crime service to target rural areas.
- Increased promotion and awareness raising of LGBTQ issues and events in local schools.
- Political focus on engaging rural LGBTQ people and issues.

OLDER PEOPLE

There was strong evidence from our older participants that homo/bi/transphobia is still acting as a barrier which prevents people from accessing mainstream older peoples services. As a group already at risk of isolation due to their age, it is imperative that we take notice of the additional risk factors introduced by a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. There is a real need for inclusive services due to perceived homo/bi/transphobia and barriers to mainstream services for older people.

Key recommendations:

- Promoting LGBTQ inclusiveness within faith groups
- A wider variety of services targeted to reduce isolation and include older LGBTQ people
- Key skills classes targeted to LGBTQ older people to reduce isolation and provide ongoing skills for social engagement and independence
- Care services to actively engage and promote they are welcoming of LGBTQ older people.

LGBTQ PLACES, SPACES AND EVENTS:

The relationship between isolation and poor mental health emerged as one of the key patterns in this needs assessment, and complementary to the negative effects of isolation, was the expressed need for a wider variety of opportunities and events to socialise.

Key factors in promoting social activities were;

- The need to promote events effectively, particularly through social networking sites
- The need to find safe accessible community venues
- The need to 'bridge the gap' between 'Town' and 'Gown'

Respondents noted the key role of voluntary sector organisations in promoting events, and felt that mainstream media was more or less irrelevant.

There was a huge call for a greater variety and frequency of LGBTQ events, in particular to respond to the needs of the many sub-groups which exist within the LGBTQ community. Older people, rurally isolated people, families, gay men, trans people, and non-University affiliates emerged as key groups. Across the board there

was a call for a variety of social events to cater to different tastes, but a key theme was that people felt they were in need of a dedicated LGBTQ only space, which they could drop into, and which could host a wider variety of events than those held by the mainstream industry. The need for this was linked to continuing prejudice, and people reporting feeling unsafe and unable to be open in their identity.

The need for pubs and clubs is not something that should be ignored as there was a clear and strong call for these as an important social resource for the LGBTQ community.

We found that there was a call for wider LGBTQ visibility in the community, and for LGBTQ issues and events to be incorporated into mainstream community events. There was also a call for LGBTQ pride events to increase pride and visibility in the community.

Key recommendations:

- Provision of an LGBTQ only space as a central point for communities to rally, for events, and people to access services and information to begin to redress isolation of LGBTQ people in the area
- Better Promotion of events – particularly to encourage student participation in 'Town'
- Provision of a wider variety of LGBTQ social activities, to include pubs and clubs, and more cultural activities aimed at couples, older people and other more isolated groups
- To have a Pride type event back in the City- such as the Pink Festival.
- Inclusion of LGBTQ events and elements into mainstream community activities such as 'Big Weekend'
- A physical resource to be incorporated into a library or community centre with information on LGBTQ public services.

HOMO/BI/TRANSPHOBIA AND HATE CRIME:

It became clear that a mixture of a high level of tolerance of hate crime against the LGBTQ community, complex interpersonal issues which may accompany the transitioning/coming out process, a lack of training on trans and sexual orientation issues in the mainstream police, and a lack of an LGBTQ specific liaison officer, make hate crime in the LGBTQ community a very serious issue. Too often the responsibility is with the individual to report rather than the organisation seeking engagement with the community.

There were high rates of homo/bi/transphobia and hate crime being reported, and people clearly articulated time and again their need for an LGBTQ hate crime liaison service similar to the one previously provided by Open Out. There was a continuing fear of police attitudes in the LGBTQ community, with people tending to turn to LGBTQ friends rather than the police with issues.

The scale of under-reporting of hate crime was indicated through the survey, with 89% of not reporting incidents, and this was confirmed through the focus group data. It must be understood by crime and safety services that there are self esteem and mental health factors to take into account which prevent people reporting crimes, and the emphasis should be on the crime and safety services to actively reach out to vulnerable communities.

Trans people stood out as a group experiencing alarming rates of hate crime and abuse, and having very little support infrastructure to assist them with this.

Key recommendations:

- Training for all crime and safety professionals and public-facing staff, to begin to reduce the stigma around police within the LGBTQ community. Training should be comprehensive, cover sexual orientation and gender identity, and include awareness of appropriate terminologies
- An LGBTQ hate crime service, to act as liaison for vulnerable LGBTQ people experiencing crime, and to provide signposting and information as a preventative service for those experiencing less severe forms of prejudice. This service should be effectively promoted to vulnerable LGBTQ communities
- A campaign to promote a lack of tolerance for hate crime against LGBTQ people, and to teach raise awareness of hate crime and homo/bi/transphobia among LGBTQ people.
- To develop a service that actively engages with the community rather than putting all the responsibility on victims.

EDUCATION:

Education emerged as a key topic in discussions with our younger peoples' and our adult focus groups. Young people reported a need for increased training in schools and educational facilities. This should be tailored to address the issues facing both LGBTQ pupils and LGBTQ parents and should be aimed at pupils and staff. In order to protect LGBTQ children, LGBTQ families should be supported and included in their child's schooling. Training should include awareness of issues facing LGBTQ families and children at schools, and challenges to heteronormative assumptions and homo/bi/transphobic attitudes.

A specific emphasis needs to be placed on gender identity training, to enable teachers to be able to support more effectively trans students at a time when they may be questioning their gender identity.

Schools and educational facilities should take a proactive approach to including LGBTQ families, through the use of gender neutral toilets, structuring lessons in a gender neutral way, and incorporating books and resources on different types of families.

Key recommendations:

- Comprehensive LGBTQ training across the education sector
- A specific emphasis on gender identity training to support young trans people at a vulnerable stage of transition/questioning
- Inclusion of non-heteronormative/cis-sexist resources to fully include LGBTQ families in schools
- Bringing in external LGBTQ groups to deliver work in schools as they act as positive role models and can signpost and refer through to other local services



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A-gender:

Also known as “genderless,” “non-gender” or “neutrois,” agender describes a person who is internally ungendered or does not have a felt sense of gender identity.

A-romantic:

is a person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others.

Asexual:

The lack of sexual attraction to anyone, or low or absent interest in sexual activity.

Androgynous:

neither clearly masculine nor clearly feminine in appearance or self-identification, in some contexts – combining masculine and feminine elements of appearance or self-identification.

Bicurious:

a heterosexual or homosexual individual who shows some curiosity for a relationship or for sexual activity with a person of the gender they do not typically favour for romantic or sexual relations.

Bi-gender :

Also called “gender fluid,” a person who alternates between identification with male, female and mixed gender states.

Biphobia:

fear or hatred of bisexual people.

Bisexual:

romantic and sexual attraction toward both men and women.

Cis or Cisgendered:

A person who identifies with the gender assigned to them at birth.

Cissexism:

prejudice and discrimination against people who are not cis, or the assumption/presumption of cisgender.

Coming out:

revealing one's own status publicly or to individuals as LGBTQ for the first time.

Female-to-male/FTM:

see 'trans man'.

Full transition:

generally referring to both the social and surgical change from the gender an individual is assigned at birth, though surgery is not necessarily required for this process.

Gay:

sexual and romantic attraction to a person of the same gender as the individual.

Gender:

Gender consists of two related aspects: gender identity, which is a person's internal perception and experience of their gender; and gender role, which is the way in which the person lives in society and interacts with others, based on their gender identity.

Genderfluid:

see 'bigender'.

Genderless:

see 'agender'.

Genderqueer:

A person whose gender identity is neither man nor woman, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders.

Gender Binary:

The notion that there exist only two genders, each solidly fixed, biologically based and attached to various expectations for behaviour, appearance and feelings.

Gender Identity:

a person's internal perception and experience of their gender.

Gender Neutral:

a person who is ungendered or does not have a felt sense of gender identity, or one who feels they fit in the middle of the gender binary, rather than to either side..

Heteronormativity:

the assumption that heterosexuality is the 'normal' or 'natural' way to conduct romantic or sexual relationships and that men and women have distinct and exclusive roles to fulfil.

Heterosexual:

a sexual or romantic identity whereby an individual is attracted to those of the opposite gender.

Homo-flexible:

a sexual or romantic identity where the primary identity is homosexual, but there is some flexibility for attraction to genders other than one's own.

Homophobia:

fear or hatred of those who are, or are perceived to be, gay or lesbian, often demonstrated in a negative way against the gay/lesbian individual.

Homo-romantic:

an individual who has romantic, but not necessary sexual, attraction to people of the same gender as themselves.

Homosexual:

an individual who has romantic and/or sexual attraction to those of the same gender as themselves.

Intersex:

People who are born with sexual characteristics (sex chromosomes, external genitalia, or internal reproductive systems) that aren't considered 'typical' for either male or female.

Lesbian:

a woman who is primarily or solely attracted (romantically and/or sexually) to other women.

LGBTQ:

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer/Questioning.

Misgendering:

a process often suffered by trans people either during or after transition whereby they are identified as the previous or incorrect gender.

Male-to-female/MTF:

See 'trans woman'.

Non-binary:

An umbrella term used to describe gender experiences, expressions and identities that fall outside of the male/female gender binary.

Non-gendered:

see 'agender'.

Pan-gender:

A person whose gender identity is comprised of all or many gender expressions.

Pansexual:

an individual who is sexually and romantically attracted to towards people of any sex or gender identity, including those who do not identify with binary genders.

Part time/full time :

often referring to the early stages of gender transitioning where the individual may live as their preferred gender in particular circumstances such as in safe/accepting spaces and environments (i.e. part time) as opposed to other trans individuals who permanently live their preferred gendered identity, to everyone (i.e. full time).

Queer:

Queer is an umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities that are not heterosexual or gender-binary, or individuals who reject such notions.

Questioning:

the process of questioning your sexual identity as a current personal definition in itself.

Rainbow flag:

the flag generally used to signal or celebrate by LGBTQ individuals or at events.

Sex:

The term 'sex' refers to the biological difference between men and women in terms of sex chromosomes, external genitalia, or internal reproductive systems.

Sexist:

preferential treatment of one sex/gender over another.

Sexual Orientation:

Describes an individual's enduring physical, emotional, romantic and/or spiritual attraction to another person.

Straight:

see 'heterosexual'.

Tomboy:

a female identified person, often a girl, who enjoys and/or engages in stereotypically masculine activities/interests.

Trans:

An umbrella term for gender identities that aren't cis, including transsexuals, transvestites, transgendered people, genderqueers and others.

Transgender:

A person whose gender identity differs from the social expectations for the physical sex they were born with.

Trans man:

A person who is transitioning, or who has already transitioned, from female to male, in terms of gender, sex or both.

Transsexual:

A person who experiences a mismatch of the sex they were born as, and the sex they identify as. Some, but not all, transsexuals undergo medical treatment to match their physical sex and gender identity.

Transvestite/cross-dresser:

An individual who wears clothing traditionally associated with the other gender either occasionally or more regularly, usually for fun or sexual excitement.

Trans woman:

A person who is transitioning, or who has already transitioned, from male to female, in terms of gender, sex or both.

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