

# **LGBTQ+ communities in Manchester deep dive**

## **September 2023**

### **1. Introduction**

Manchester has long been a welcoming place for LGBTQ+ people and we are proud of our traditions of protest and protection for our residents and visitors. The history of Manchester's LGBTQ+ community is an important part of our social and cultural history in the city and the North West. We are home to the UK's largest LGBTQ+ community outside London and the city is renowned for its Gay Village centred around Canal Street. It is the home to festivals such as Pride, Queer Up North as well as celebrations around LGBT history month. Manchester was the birthplace for the Campaign for Homosexual Equality in 1964 and it was in this city that 20,000 people took to the streets to protest Section 28, which was one of the largest LGBTQ+ demonstrations ever to take place in the UK at the time. Section 28 was in place from 1988 to 2003 when it was finally repealed.

However, we also know that LGBTQ+<sup>1</sup> communities face additional barriers to positive outcomes due to structural inequalities, and Manchester City Council remains committed to eliminating discrimination for all residents. This report is part of a series of 'deep dives' which explore inequalities of outcomes for LGBTQ+ communities and provides examples of Council's approach to engagement and involvement, service development and delivery.

Historically, lesbians, gay men, bisexual and trans people have faced similar challenges and discrimination, and an inclusive human rights movement has emerged because some communities, who so often gathered together, began to realise that they were being treated in similar ways just because of who they were, and were seeking similar rights of autonomy, agency, and self-determination. Whilst as a council we recognise the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity, in law as well as in policy and practice, we respond in this report to that collective movement which has significant prominence in Manchester.

#### **1.1 Background**

The LGBTQ+ community has made major strides in terms of LGBTQ+ rights; the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010 protects some, though not all, of our community against discrimination. Same sex marriage and LGBTQ+

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<sup>1</sup> In the 1990s, lesbian, gay, and bisexual activists adopted the acronym LGB to describe their community — a term that has since expanded to be more inclusive. As society's understanding of diverse sexual identities and gender expressions has grown more inclusive, so has the acronym used to describe them. No term can ever encompass the entire spectrum of gender and sexual expression nor should it. In this report, we use the term LGBTQ+ to pay regard to the individuals and communities who can experience discrimination and disadvantage because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or both, including where they intersect with other forms of discrimination such as race or disability. We do not purport to use the term to define any individual or community, but to reference our role as a local authority in relation to the communities we serve to ensure that public services address the disparities caused by unwarranted bias and discrimination. Where research used in this report is focused on sexual orientation but not gender identity, we use 'LGB+'.

adoption are legal. Section 28 was repealed, and local authorities can talk about LGBTQ+ lives. In the 2021 Census LGBTQ+ people were included for the first time.

However, we still face many challenges, and rights that have been hard fought for can be taken away, as we have seen in the USA with a series of anti LGBTQ+ legislative measures in several states. In Europe, anti LGBTQ+ laws have been passed in Russia and Hungary, and most recently in Uganda. Manchester is a global city and as such must recognise the global impacts of discrimination on our citizens.

The UK was once seen as a pioneer of LGBTQ+ rights, but it is gaining an increasing reputation for regression and in particular trans people, are being positioned as a threat to women's and children's rights and a threat to the protection of wider society. We have seen our ranking in terms of [LGBTQ+ rights slip](#) in the European rankings accessed by [ILGA Europe](#); [LGBTQ+ hate crime](#) has increased; our [Home Secretary has indicated](#) that asylum seekers seeking refuge in the UK due to discrimination related to their sexuality may not be protected under the UN Refugee Convention. So-called gay 'conversion therapy' is yet to be banned and many LGBTQ+ people in England and Wales remain at risk of these harmful attempts to 'cure' them. The UK Government has now [committed to bringing forward legislation](#) in this parliamentary session.

## 1.2 Our equality commitments

This report identifies specific issues and opportunities where further consideration can be given to 'due regard' in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, which includes:

- removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics.
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The report builds on the data and insight in [the State of the City annual report](#) and [the Making Manchester Fairer action plan](#) and is structured around the Council's three Equality Objectives. It is also important to note that in 2022 the Council moved a [Notice of Motion](#) that enshrined the principle that trans rights are human rights, and that Manchester will work to ensure it is a place where trans and non-binary people are given equal opportunity.

In this report, you'll find examples of how LGBTQ+ organisations in the city and across Greater Manchester are informing and influencing our policies and practice. The examples shared here are built on strong relationships with such organisations and could not succeed without them. This report presents some of the ongoing work happening in the city and offers ideas for further development following an intersectional approach to our community engagement.

## 2. Strategic Context

The following subsections briefly summarise the key strategies and plans that aim to make Manchester a more equitable place to live and work.

## 2.1 Our Manchester Strategy

The [Our Manchester Strategy](#) was refreshed in 2020 to provide a renewed focus on young people, the economy, health, housing, the environment and city infrastructure, through an analysis of five focus areas for the city. Community engagement was embedded into the development of the refreshed strategy: the consultation in 2020 reached almost 3,700 people through a mix of universal and targeted engagement. It asked respondents what priorities Manchester needs to focus on over the next five years to achieve Manchester's vision for being in the top flight of world class cities by 2025. The Our Manchester Forum, a partnership between the Council, other institutions, businesses, and other stakeholders, oversees the Strategy. The five themes are:

- 1) A thriving and sustainable city
- 2) A highly skilled city
- 3) A progressive and equitable city
- 4) A liveable and low carbon city
- 5) A connected city

These themes are reported annually via the State of the City analysis. The OMS is supported by several other strategies which deliver on the specific strategic priorities of the city. For example, these include:

- Work and Skills Strategy
- Housing Strategy
- Climate Change Action Plan
- Children and Young People's Plan
- City Centre Transport Strategy
- Local Plan
- Culture Strategy
- Digital Strategy
- Age Friendly Strategy

## 2.2 The Council's Corporate Plan

The City Council's Corporate Plan sets out how we will make the Our Manchester vision a reality. It is focused solely on the work of the Council, rather than the work of our partners, and identifies nine corporate priorities that we will focus on. These priorities are underpinned by the Our Manchester Behaviours and an inclusive approach:

- Zero carbon Manchester
- Growth that benefits everyone
- Young people
- Healthy, cared for people
- Housing
- Neighbourhoods
- Connections
- Equality
- Well managed Council

## 2.3 Making Manchester Fairer

Making Manchester Fairer is the city's new action plan to tackle health inequalities – the preventable gap between people with the worst health and people with the best health over the next five years, and with a view to the long-term. The plan is based on what Manchester's residents and staff from various organisations and agencies have told us in recent years and the evidence of what works from research and experts on health inequalities. Its eight themes are:

- 1) Giving children the best start in life
- 2) Addressing poverty
- 3) Good work is good for your health
- 4) Preventing ill health and preventable deaths
- 5) Homes and housing
- 6) Places, environment, and climate change
- 7) Tackling systemic and structural racism and discrimination
- 8) Communities and power

## **2.4 Manchester's Anti-Poverty Strategy**

Manchester's Anti-Poverty Strategy sits within the Making Manchester Fairer plan, focusing on delivering positive changes to tackle poverty in the medium to long term. There are four priorities for Council services:

- 1) Preventing poverty – what we can do to prevent residents experiencing poverty
- 2) Mitigating poverty to make life easier for people experiencing poverty and ensuring their basic needs are met
- 3) Pathways out of poverty – raising people's incomes so they can move out of poverty
- 4) Inclusive and effective delivery ensures that people with lived experience of poverty have a voice in anti-poverty work and that interventions are targeted to ensure we consider inequalities and inequity in how poverty is experienced.

## **3. LGBTQ+ communities in Manchester**

The majority of research and analysis relating to the experiences of LGBTQ+ people is from a national perspective. Subsequent sections in this report use qualitative feedback from surveys and focus groups held with LGBTQ+ community representatives within the city, but except where stated, the statistics and research are generally drawn from national data sets. The Council is committed to improving the data we collect and hold on our workforce and residents who engage with our services. We have recently published our revised data monitoring standards which will enable us to be more consistent in the data we collect, in turn ensuring our analysis of equality data becomes more consistent and comprehensive over time.

### **3.1 Census 2021 overview**

Information on the city's LGBTQ+ population predominantly comes from Census 2021, when residents were asked to self-identify their sexual orientation and gender identity for the first time. The 2021 Census indicates that 6.6% (29,222) of Manchester's population aged over 16 identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other (LGB+). The city remains one of the UK's largest areas for LGBTQ+ resident populations.

Census 2021 was undertaken during the Covid pandemic and lockdown and therefore we estimate that Manchester's Census results are based on a significant undercount of 33,000 people or 6% of residents. The impact of the pandemic created a new set of challenges for delivering a successful and inclusive census, including social distancing, travel and transport, public perception, and respondent behaviour. The Census officially recorded a population of 552,000, whereas the council's own forecasting model (MCCFM) has a much higher number of 585,000. MCCFM brings together a wider range of statistics to give a more accurate prediction of the real population of the city, such as council tax records, housebuilding, university places and GP registrations.

Of particular concern is the apparent reduction in 20–29-year-olds in the city since 2011, which is contrary to local intelligence and will relate to a proportion of the student population. There are higher proportions of LGBTQ+ people in younger age groups and the 25-34 age group remains the largest in the city.

The LGBTQ+ population is likely to be larger than the data shows this is for several reasons; LGBTQ+ people aged under 16 aren't counted, some of those who chose not to respond to questions on gender identity or sexual orientation might well identify as LGBTQ+ in other contexts but didn't wish to share this on the census.<sup>2</sup>

The ONS provided census forms to households rather than individuals. This means that some people may have had inaccurate sexual orientation or gender identity information recorded for them by someone else in their household. This could affect people who aren't out to the people they live with. However, the Census does demonstrate the further increases in the diversity of the city's population during a decade of rapid change.

We are committed to using all relevant data to better understand the diversity of our communities. This data needs to be reinforced by ongoing, culturally competent approaches to ensuring that marginalised communities, including LGBTQ+ people, can influence the design and delivery of services that meet all our diverse needs.

Nationally, 89.4% of respondents identified as straight or heterosexual. Around 3.2% identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or another sexual orientation (LGBTQIA+), in Manchester that figure was 6.6%. 93.5% of residents said their gender identity and their sex registered at birth were the same. Nationally around 0.5% said their gender identity and sex registered at birth were different, with 48,000 people identifying as 'trans man' (0.1%) and another 48,000 (0.1) % identifying as trans woman'. 118,000 (0.2%) did not provide a write in response. A further 30,000 identified as non-binary and 18,000 wrote they had a different gender identity. In Manchester those figures were 0.45% (different from registered at birth but not specified) trans man 0.17%, trans women, 0.17%, non-binary, 0.16% and other gender identities 0.07%. (See Manchester data in Table 1).

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<sup>2</sup> We know that people who can experience discrimination are more likely to avoid answering Census and other official data requests for fear of further discrimination. Where there are large unanswered categories, we can expect significant proportions to be made up of people who experience discrimination. We may then be able to say instead that 15.4% of the Manchester population do not positively define as straight or heterosexual, and 8.4% of Manchester residents do not positively define as being in the same gender as that registered at birth.

The Council will use the Census data alongside our own intelligence to help plan services, better understand our population, and use Our Manchester approaches to align services with the communities that they serve.

<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Gender identity</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Straight or heterosexual	370,576	84.6%	Same as registered at birth (cisgender)	401,445	91.6%
Gay or Lesbian	14,608	3.3%	Different from birth, but not specified	1,988	0.45%
Bisexual	11,782	2.7%	Trans man	751	0.17%
Pansexual	1,853	0.4%	Trans woman	725	0.17%
Queer	429	0.1%	Non-binary	701	0.16%
Asexual	375	0.09%			
All other sexual orientations	175	0.04%	All other gender identities	314	0.07%
Not answered	38,162	8.7%	Not answered	32,034	7.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>437,960</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>437,958</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 1: LGBTQ+ populations in Manchester (Census 2021)*

Manchester has a higher-than-average resident LGBTQ+ population compared to both the northwest and England and Wales as a whole; this is true for both sexual orientation and gender identity. For instance, Manchester Central constituency has almost three times as many LGB+ residents as the England and Wales average.

### **3.2 Quality of life**

Feelings of acceptance, comfort and satisfaction will affect our everyday lives. The Government Equalities Office reported in 2018 that LGBTQ+ respondents were less satisfied with their lives than the general UK population, with an average life satisfaction score of 6.48 out of 10, compared to 7.66 for the general UK population. Of the LGBTQ+ population surveyed:

- Gay and lesbian respondents were the most satisfied with their lives (averaging 6.88 out of 10) and the most comfortable being LGBT in the UK (63% scoring comfort as 4 or 5 out of 5)
- Asexual respondents were the least satisfied with their lives (averaging 5.88 out of 10) and the least comfortable being LGBT in the UK (49% scoring comfort as 4 or 5 out of 5)
- Trans respondents were also less satisfied with their lives, scoring their life satisfaction on average 5.40 out of 10; trans respondents were also less likely to feel comfortable being LGBT in the UK, with 37% scoring their comfort as 4 or 5 out of 5, than cisgender respondents, 59% of whom scored their comfort as 4 or 5 out of 5

That said, the most recent research undertaken by the British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey, which marked its 40<sup>th</sup> year in 2023, has described the transformation in public opinion on many moral and social issues and particularly in attitudes towards same sex-relationships. 50% of respondent said they were 'always wrong' in 1983, compared with 9% in 2022.

The study notes, however, that attitudes towards trans people – recorded only since 2016 - appear to be more volatile, with a more recent sharp decline in public support. The proportion of the British public describing themselves as 'not prejudiced' towards trans people fell from 82% to 64% between 2021 and 2022, when the last survey took place. Similarly, whilst 58% of the British public agreed in 2016 that trans people should be able to have the sex on their birth certificate changed if they wanted, that figure has dropped to 30% by 2022, suggesting an overall gradual erosion in support towards trans rights since 2018. The change may reflect the intense political, public and media discussion on trans rights and inclusion. Women were more likely to express liberal views on trans people - 71% said they were 'not prejudiced' against 57% of men. Among people aged 18-34, the figure was 69%, compared with 51% among over 70s.

### **3.3 Intersectional approach to LGBTQ+ inclusion**

The ways in which different forms of marginalisation, prejudice and oppression can combine in certain contexts – known as 'intersectionality'- have in recent years become more widely acknowledged though still overlooked by many health researchers, policy makers and practitioners. For many working in frontline community services, there is often neither the time nor the resources to consider intersecting vulnerabilities facing, for example, trans young people who have been rejected by their families and are consequently struggling to find somewhere to live, and trans young people from certain ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds are likely to need more help. In addition to the institutional barriers they may face for being trans, it is also fair to assume they experience similar hurdles because of their race. Taking an intersectional approach is essential to understanding the multiple and overlapping structures of oppression, for the LGBTQ+ community members who bear witness to simultaneous experiences of discrimination based on their sex, race and class, sexual orientation, or gender-identity, religion, disability, ethnicity and citizenship status. Whilst LGBTQ+ individuals share some common experiences and protection concerns, failing to disaggregate the ways in which inequalities affects various groups will make it difficult for policy and programming to offer appropriate services.

An intersectional approach to analysis can identify particularities and new challenges. For example, half of Black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people (51%) have experienced discrimination or poor treatment from others in their local LGBTQ+ community because of their ethnicity (Stonewall and YouGov, 2018). Three in five Black LGBTQ+ people (61 percent) and four-fifths of older LGBTQ+ people do not trust professionals to understand their culture or lifestyle (Ageing Better, 2018), and just 25% LGBTQ+ people of faith think their faith community is welcoming of trans people (Stonewall, 2018).

Intersectional LGBTQ+ data tells a nuanced story that better reflects the overlapping experiences of peoples' everyday lives. An intersectional approach to data collection

(both qualitative and quantitative) is fundamental to raise awareness, demonstrate where problems exist, challenge misinformation, galvanise communities and hold decision-makers to account. This can only be achieved in a meaningful way, which brings everyone on board, when intersectionality is embedded throughout the life journey of data, from its collection to use for action.

### **3.4 Education**

#### **3.4.1 Qualifications**

Census 2021 data shows that LGBTQ+ residents in Manchester are more likely to have higher qualification levels than people identifying as straight or heterosexual, but less likely to have completed apprenticeships. 55% of those identifying as lesbian or gay, and 46% of those identifying as bisexual, have a Level 4 qualification (undergraduate degree) or above, compared to 38% of straight or heterosexual people.

Of those who stated their gender identity as trans, non-binary or other, 40% stated they held a Level 4 qualification or higher. Trans and non-binary people are slightly less likely than cisgender people to state they have no qualifications, with 15% vs 19%, whereas just 6% of LGB+ people had no qualifications.

#### **3.4.2 Young people: sense of wellbeing**

The Greater Manchester #BeeWell survey 2021 asked secondary school students to rate their sense of wellbeing, aspirations, and readiness for next steps after school. The survey found that LGB+ young people scored lower averages on life satisfaction measures than straight students and that 50% non-binary young people reported high levels of emotional difficulties. Wellbeing inequalities were found across ethnicity, SEND, caregiving responsibilities, socio-economic status, and age differences, but to a far lesser extent than for sexual orientation and gender identity.

#### **3.4.3 Young people: bullying and harassment**

Anti-LGBT bullying and non-inclusive school environments limit engagement with school and can lead LGBTQ+ young people to change their future plans. In school, isolation resulting from a non-LGBT inclusive learning environment, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and a lack of LGBT-specific support, had a negative impact on participants' mental health, their ability to engage in education, and their plans to continue in post-16 education.

Stonewall's School Report 2017 stated that nearly half of lesbian, gay, bi and trans pupils (45 per cent) – including 64 per cent of trans pupils – are bullied for being LGBT at school. All of these young people described the damaging impact this bullying had on their ability to thrive at school, and on their self-esteem in the long-term. Day-to-day, it often discouraged LGBTQIA+ young people from attending school, leading them to fall behind with their studies.

The government's 2018 National LGBT Survey found that:

- 33% of those in education in the 2016/17 academic year had experienced a negative or mixed reaction from others due to being LGBT, or being thought to be LGBT, for example someone disclosing that they were LGBT without



their permission (21%) and verbal harassment, insults, or other hurtful comments (19%)

- When asked about the most serious incident they had experienced during the 2016/17 academic year, the majority of incidents were perpetrated by other students (885) but 9% were by teachers
- 83% of the most serious incidents experienced by respondents in educational institutions had not been reported, primarily because respondents had considered them too minor, not serious enough or to 'happen all the time', or because they had felt that nothing would happen or change as a result.

Additionally, a 2021 report from UCAS and Stonewall found that nine out of ten LGBTQ+ students applying to university have a positive or neutral experience of the UK education system, with 75% saying this was due to them being accepted by their peers. Students also indicated that they intended to be more open about their sexual orientation and gender identity in higher education, with overall levels of openness increasing from 64% at school to 82% at university or college. However, students identifying as transgender were more likely (17%) to report having a bad experience at school or college, predominantly through bullying. This, coupled with the lower attainment and higher rates of mental health conditions among trans students, highlights the additional issues faced by this group of students at school or college.

#### 3.4.4 The higher education sector

The University of Manchester produces an annual equality report which discusses student sexual orientation and gender identity. In 2021, 12.5% of their UK undergraduate students identified as LGB or another non-heterosexual sexual orientation, 79% identified as heterosexual and 8.6% did not answer. In the same survey 0.6% students identified as trans, with 2.7% not answering. These figures are higher than average for the city as a whole as recorded in the census.

A 2019 Trendence (now Cibyl) report into students' wellbeing found that only 38% of LGBTQ+ people at university say their sexuality is public knowledge, as compared to 93% of non-LGBTQ+ people. LGBTQ+ students from racially minoritised backgrounds were less likely to make their sexuality public at university (30%). 64% of LGBTQ+ students reported experiencing discriminatory remarks, with one in two (56%) experiencing sexual harassment and a third experiencing sexual assault or hate crime.

### **3.5 Employment**

#### 3.5.1 Career development

Census 2021 data for Manchester showed that LGB+ people were more likely to be in employment (57% vs 50%), and more likely to be in management or senior roles and in professional occupations (40% vs 32%). Conversely, people identifying themselves as trans or non-binary were more likely to be in 'elementary' occupations (22%, the largest group), with 13% of cis people and 9% of non-heterosexual people in these occupations. This indicates that greater employment opportunities for LGB+ communities are not translating to wider trans inclusion given that cohort face additional barriers in finding and keeping work (LGBT Health and Wellbeing report,

2021). It may also be useful to explore intersectional employment data by gender, age, and ethnicity.

### 3.5.2 Bullying and harassment at work

Research undertaken for the CIPD in 2021 found that;

- 40% of LGB+ employees, and more than 50% of trans employees have experienced a form of workplace conflict in the past year – significantly higher than heterosexual workers.
- close to half of trans workers believed that inclusion and diversity training, education and guidance for line managers was inadequate in their workplaces.
- Almost 70% LGBTQ+ workers have been sexually harassed or assaulted at work, many have not told their employer, in some cases due to fear of being outed at work.
- Of those who had experienced harassment at work, 13% reported it related to sexual orientation and 4% to gender reassignment.

A TransActual study in 2021 found that:

- 63% of respondents reported experiencing transphobia while seeking employment, rising to 73% of Black people and people of colour (BPOC) respondents.
- 69% of Black people and people of colour (BPOC) respondents reported experiencing transphobia from their line manager at work, and reported consistently higher rates of experiencing transphobia from colleagues (88% compared to 73% of non-BPOC), friends (81% compared to 69% of (non-BPOC) and family (95% compared to 84% of non-BPOC)
- 80% of non-binary people reported having experienced transphobia from colleagues compared to 73% of trans men and 73% of trans women.

### 3.5.3 Manchester City Council workforce

The diversity profile of staff at Manchester City Council shows that in 2023, 4.9% of staff identified themselves as LGB+, though the question has been answered by only 66% of staff. This is less than the city's average in Census 2021, which may be due to the lack of adequate data sets or non-disclosure by staff. The Council's Workforce Equalities Strategy includes a focus on workforce demographic targets so that we accurately reflect and represent the communities we serve. A focus on trans awareness has also begun, including the establishment of a Trans Inclusion Working Group (TIWG), which is referenced later in this report.

## 3.6 Housing

The LGBTQ+ community is over-represented within the statistics for homelessness nationally; Stonewall and YouGov (2018) research into the experiences of over 5,000 LGBTQ+ people across Britain, found that **nearly one in five** LGBT people (18 per cent) – including **25 per cent** of trans people, and **28 per cent** of LGBT disabled people – have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. In the context of homelessness, we have limited LGBTQ+ data – this is something we are hoping to work on. The Homelessness Better Outcomes Better Lives principle

focuses on ensuring people have equal access to services to help them become more resilient and to move towards independence.

24 percent of the youth homelessness population across the UK identify as LGBTQ+ this means they are overrepresented within this demographic - the same is true in Greater Manchester. The lack of infrastructure and support in place for LGBTQ+ young people cause many to sleep rough. However, the increased vulnerability and exposure to violence and exploitation that can come with sleeping rough, drives many LGBTQ+ young people to seek safety in being invisible in their homelessness, or as it's more widely known 'hidden homeless'. Thus, resorting to sofa surfing; sleeping in bus shelters; using gay saunas and hook-up apps. Hidden homelessness often stems from a deep-rooted mistrust of authoritative figures amongst LGBTQ+ young people because of rejection and abuse experienced at home from parents, relatives, or older siblings. This is highlighted in the fact that 77% of the LGBTQ+ young people supported by akt (the Albert Kennedy Trust) cite familial rejection as the driving force behind their homelessness.

In Manchester, the provision of commissioned supported housing and floating services is tailored to the LGBTQ+ community:

### 3.6.1 LGBT+ A Bed Every Night Scheme

As part of the A Bed Every Night offer, Manchester has dedicated LGBTQ+ accommodation and support, which is currently the only dedicated LGBTQ+ provision across Greater Manchester. It is therefore in great demand, especially for younger people aged under 30. The service provides an extremely high level of accommodation and support. There are 6 fully furnished 1 bed flats.

LGBTQ+ people stay longer than average across ABEN; this is because people are often in a flux point in their lives; sometimes changing gender, and dealing with subsequent ID change, which can take up to 2 years. In addition, people are often experiencing complex emotional change and sometimes trauma in their lives.

Move on is generally to the private rented sector, which can provide challenges for younger people in obtaining guarantors and deposits, and also Riverside step-down properties, who also provide onsite support. Evictions tend to be low and abandonments zero.

### 3.6.2 Specific support for young people

akt are commissioned to provide a specialist floating support and resettlement service for LGBTQ+ young people aged 16-25 years old in Manchester. The service forms part of our young persons' pathway, working closely with other organisations to provide support for young LGBTQ+ people in supported accommodation services, as well as providing support for young people who are at risk of becoming homelessness, are street homeless or who are living in an unsecure or hostile environment. In addition to the housing-related support they provide, akt also helps to young people to secure safe homes, and access wider training and advocacy services.

### 3.6.3 The LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation service

This service has been operating successfully since 2016 and is delivered by the LGBT Foundation. They have access to 6 fully furnished flats that are constantly occupied and are now looking to acquire more properties to start a designated LGBT+ refuge. People using the service have access to one-to-one counselling, group work and holistic therapies to help them recover from the trauma of domestic abuse. They are also supported to find longer term accommodation.

#### 3.6.4 Outreach support services

Manchester has a combination of in-house and commissioned rough sleeping outreach support services. Triage on street outreach includes data collection on sex, age and ethnicity adopting a brief interventions model. Having identified that interactions with people sleeping rough, who often present as both having multiple and complex needs, as well as having a hostility or an aversion to authority figures, the collection of demographic data bases on protected characteristics can be challenging. In the interim, basic details are cross referenced with further demographics/protected characteristics information on a secure database system, which has shared access across the Homeless Partnership with information sharing protocol and GDPR requirements.

As part of the Council's commitment to better understanding of all communities, our new data monitoring standards will also be applied within homelessness services, with utilisation within rough sleeping outreach provision as well.

### 3.7 Health and care

The evidence that LGBTQ+ people have disproportionately worse health outcomes and experiences of healthcare is both compelling and consistent. With almost every measure we look at, LGBTQ+ communities fare worse health outcomes than others.

The LGBT Foundation's Hidden Figures report (2020) demonstrates that these inequalities persist across a range of issues, including mental health, drug and alcohol consumption, smoking, sexual health, and HIV. Despite these well-documented disparities, many LGBTQ+ people experience barriers to accessing primary care services, ranging from outright discrimination through to supportive healthcare professionals lacking the knowledge or confidence to provide inclusive and equitable care.

The [2017 National LGBT survey](#), with over 108,000 responses, described a situation where LGBTQ+ communities face discrimination, felt their specific needs were not being met, had poorer experience and had major concerns about accessing healthcare that should be a right for all, including the following:

- at least 16% of survey respondents who accessed or tried to access public health services had a negative experience because of their sexual orientation, and at least 38% had a negative experience because of their gender identity.
- 51% of survey respondents who accessed or tried to access mental health services said they had to wait too long, 27% were worried, anxious or embarrassed about going and 16% said their GP was not supportive.
- 80% of trans respondents who accessed or tried to access gender identity clinics said it was not easy, with long waiting times the most common barrier.

The [NHS LGBT+ Action Plan](#) focuses on advice and influence partners to reduce health inequalities, developing inclusive sexual orientation and gender monitoring, developing the evidence base, and education and training.

### 3.7.1 Primary Care

The 2021 Pride in Practice Patient Experience Survey across Greater Manchester led by the LGBT Foundation through the Pride in Practice Team reflects the wider challenges reported by many when accessing primary care services during the pandemic and, healthcare professionals, should be especially concerned when access and experience worsens for populations that already face significant barriers to healthcare. Similar to what we see in other surveys, experience is significantly worse for trans and non-binary people, with fewer respondents from these groups stating that their GP meets their needs. The picture is also worse for LGBT people of colour and disabled LGBT people with both groups reporting higher rates of discrimination and unfair treatment.

Key findings included:

- 59% of respondents felt their GP met their needs as an LGBTQIA+ person
- 50% of trans people felt their GP met their needs
- 36% of non-binary people felt their GP met their needs
- LGBTQ+ people at Pride in Practice registered GP practices were 18% more likely to say that their GP met their needs compared to people at non-registered practices
- LGBTQ+ people at a Pride in Practice registered GP practices were 12% more likely to report a positive response when sharing their sexual orientation with their GP and more likely to report a very positive response when sharing a trans or non-binary identity with their GP
- People using primary care services displaying a Pride in Practice Award, LGBTQ+ posters or literature are 30% more likely to say those services met their needs
- Across all primary care services, queer, trans and intersex people of colour (QTIPoC) respondents were six times more likely to have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment than white LGBTQ+ respondents
- Disabled respondents were 14% more likely to be regular users of community pharmacies than non-disabled people, and 7% more likely to be registered with a GP practice

### 3.7.2 Mental Health

A review of studies on mental health issues in LGBTQ+ communities by Mental Health UK found that LGBTQ+ people are more likely to experience poor mental health or a mental illness than those who do not identify as being LGBTQ+. They also found that:

- LGBTQ+ people are at more risk of suicidal behaviour and self-harm than non-LGBTQ+ people
- Gay and bisexual men are 4 times more likely to attempt suicide across their lifetime than the rest of the population
- LGBTQ+ people are 1.5 times more likely to develop depression and anxiety disorder compared to the rest of the population
- 67% of trans people had experienced depression in the previous year and 46% had thought of ending their life
- 13% of those who identify as LGBTQIA+ who are aged 18-24 have attempted to take their own life in the last year

- Young LGBTQ+ adults are more likely to show symptoms of eating disorders
- Symptoms of depression are more common and severe in young people who identify as LGBTQ+
- Of all the common sexual identity groups, bisexual people most frequently have mental health problems, including depression, anxiety disorder, self-harm and suicidality.

Below is some data on the percentage of people in Manchester classed as being disabled under the Equalities Act 2010 by sexual orientation. It shows that people from all sexual orientations other than straight or heterosexual were more likely to be classed as being disabled under the Equalities Act 2010.

	Disabled under the Equality Act 2010	Not Disabled under the Equality Act 2010	Total
Straight or Heterosexual	19.8%	80.2%	100.0%
Gay or Lesbian	23.1%	76.9%	100.0%
Bisexual	32.3%	67.7%	100.0%
All other sexual orientations	35.5%	64.5%	100.0%
Not Answered	21.3%	78.7%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	20.5%	79.5%	100.0%

Being LGBTQ+ does not cause mental health problems. But some things an LGBTQ+ person may go through can negatively impact their mental health. This includes:

- [Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia](#)
- [Experiences of stigma and discrimination](#)
- [Difficult experiences of coming out](#)
- [Social isolation, exclusion and rejection](#)
- ['Conversion therapy'](#)

Embracing being LGBTQ+ can have a positive impact on someone's well-being. It might mean they have more confidence, a sense of belonging to a community, feelings of relief and self-acceptance, and better relationships with friends and family.

### 3.7.3 Sexual Health Services

The Northern, at Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (MFT), is now one of the largest providers of sexual health services in England, with access open to anyone to use regardless of their area of residence (or refugee or asylum status). The service is free and confidential and also has responsibility for the provision of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) to support the work on Fast Track Cities which aims to end new transmissions of HIV within a generation. There is also outreach provision of HIV/STI testing and, provision of HIV/STI self-sampling kits via online offer. 'Onyx' is a dedicated clinic for trans and non-binary people, it is important to note that this is a sexual health clinic not a gender reassignment

service. 'Reach' is the dedicated Chemsex clinic in partnership with Change Grow Live (CGL) who provide drug and alcohol treatment services in Manchester.

The Passionate about Sexual Health (PaSH) service is a strong collaborative partnership between the LGBT Foundation, George House Trust (GHT) and BHA for Equality. PaSH is commissioned by all ten Greater Manchester Local Authorities, with Manchester City Council as the lead commissioner. PaSH also work with other VCSE providers such as Men's Room (who support sex workers) as well as delivering clinical outreach services in conjunction with Northern. There are excellent bespoke community campaigns alongside sexual health promotion services (ie cervical screening promotion to women who have sex with women and trans men).

Finally, GHT continue to provide support for people living with HIV, including peer support and have played such a leading role in the City's response to HIV/AIDS for almost 40 years.

#### **4. Delivering our Equality Objectives**

The Council has set three Equality Objectives for our services to support the city in becoming more progressive and equitable. These will be refreshed in 2024. The following sections of this report describe initiatives and collaborations with LGBTQ+ people and organisations across the city, outlining how Manchester is progressing outcomes against each equality objective.

Our objectives are:

##### *1. Knowing Manchester Better*

- working with partners and citizens to improve the data we hold about our residents.
- using this data more effectively to build relationships and support community cohesion.
- delivering policies and services which meet everyone's needs.

##### *2. Improving Life Chances*

- ensuring that everyone living in Manchester can access the services and opportunities they need
- proactively removing disadvantage and reducing inequalities

##### *3. Celebrating Our Diversity*

- using events and initiatives to showcase our city's diversity and the strengths that come from our commitment to equality and diversity

#### **4.1 Engaging communities**

To understand the needs and aspirations of the LGBTQ+ communities we serve, officers undertook a limited number of focused conversations with representatives from VCSE organisations working across the city. We intend to continue these discussions as part of an ongoing engagement process with representatives from marginalised communities across the city.

Community representatives were invited to attend sessions in person, online, and through completion of surveys, in order to give feedback and insight into perceptions



of how Manchester City Council supports and engages with the LGBTQ+ community across the local authority area. This feedback is key to providing a sound basis on which to build a wider framework with citizens in the next stages of consultation and evaluation of both the services delivered and commissioned. Four separate sessions were held, incorporating the views and feedback from both a service delivery and policy perspectives.

In the main, community representatives were positive about partnerships the council has built relating to public health, sexual health, and trans healthcare. The council's support for improving GM Police's dialogue with the community was also acknowledged. Events in LGBT History Month, connections with Archives+ and neighbourhood teams were also referenced as demonstrating support for the LGBTQ+ community in the city.

One consistent area of concern from community voices was about the support for and limitations of the Gay Village in the city centre as a safe space for LGBTQ+ residents and visitors. While there is recognition of the historic nature of the area, concerns were highlighted around accessibility (both in the risks of using public transport from other areas of the city and in physical spaces in the area), gatekeeping (experiences of racism in certain venues), safety and hate crime (risk of assault; transphobia from venue staff and other customers), and a lack of variety of spaces available (i.e. the Village is the main destination, but is perceived to be a place for cis white gay men to drink and dance, and feels less welcoming to other LGBTQ+ groups, or those who may want to remain sober).

Due to Manchester's reputation as a welcoming place for LGBTQ+ people, we know that higher numbers try to access housing and homelessness services. The level of available emergency accommodation under A Bed Every Night is not enough for the numbers presenting. Specific feedback of transphobic responses from some staff are concerning and trans inclusion training was recommended as a priority for frontline services.

Another key concern raised by participants was around the continued risk of violence and hate crime, in the city centre and across the city, for LGBTQ+ people going about their lives. The Council's Gender Based Violence work is welcome but there is concerns that intersectional perspectives, particularly the voices of trans and non-binary people, may not be heard.

## **4.2 Objective 1: Knowing Manchester Better**

The indicators for Objective 1 include:

- stronger approaches to community engagement, including co-production built into service development.
- targeted and effective services, with a clear evidence base and shared work with partners
- capacity building for the city's VCSE sector
- a focus on partnership working to support and improve community engagement and involvement.

These indicators fit with the Our Manchester strategic theme of a progressive and equitable city, where 'everyone can thrive at all stages of their life, and quickly and easily reach support to get back on track when needed'.

Some examples of work include:

### **MCC Trans Inclusion Working Group**

An internal trans inclusion working group has been established to support the Council to become a more trans inclusive place, by removing barriers to employment and service provision and redressing disparities in experiences and outcomes for both our staff and for the communities we serves.

The Council recognises the need to for a consistent organisational approach to trans inclusion, which includes developing guidance and a framework to support policy and practice with further engagement work to be undertaken with wider internal and external stakeholders. This work builds on the research commissioned by the council through the LGBT Foundation into trans citizens' lives in the city. The Council has also commissioned training on trans inclusion and awareness with sessions being held for senior leaders across the organisation.

### ***Next steps:***

This is an ongoing commitment to making services, facilities, and opportunities as fair and inclusive as possible to all. We are carefully considering how to deliver effective interventions at the right pace, with a focus on understanding and then developing practical solutions to removing bias from systems, structures and processes to tackle the underlying causes of inequalities.

## **UN Visit on violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI)**

Manchester City Council was invited to present evidence to the United Nations Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in April of this year. The Independent Expert travelled to England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales to meet with government officials, political representatives, and civil society organisations working on issues related to the human rights of LGBT persons, and others.

MCC was the only council visited in England. During the visit, the Independent Expert sought to gather evidence on implementation of existing national and international human rights standards to combat violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other gender diverse persons (LGBT) people. We provided evidence on the work being done to address inequalities and advance equality for LGBTQ+ people in the city, including presentations from senior leads in public health, strategy, housing, homelessness, health care, community safety partnership and the GM LGBTQ+ Panel.

### ***Next steps:***

Interim initial findings have been published, pending a full report to the United Nations in 2024. The Independent Expert highlighted that best practice seems to emerge from partnership approaches. All stakeholders with whom the Independent Expert met in Manchester agreed that the key to all the city's success in a series of health, education, housing, and employment outcomes had been their design, implementation, and evaluation in partnership with civil society organisations, which in turn consider the participation of populations and communities as a fundamental part of their business model: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/05/1136567>

### **4.3 Objective 2: Improving Life Chances**

Commitments under this objective also align with the Our Manchester themes of 'a thriving and sustainable city', 'a highly connected city', 'a highly skilled city', and 'a liveable and low carbon city'. Commitments under this objective align with the Our Manchester themes of 'a thriving and sustainable city', 'a highly connected city', 'a highly skilled city', and 'a liveable and low carbon city'. Indicators of progress include:

- ensuring that everyone living in Manchester can access the services and opportunities they need
- proactively removing disadvantage and reducing inequalities

Some examples of commissioned work include:

## **LGBT Extra Care housing development**

Joint working with the Russell Road Community Steering Group of LGBTQ+ people, LGBT Foundation and Great Places Housing Group was undertaken to enable scheme proposals to be taken forward in building and managing the UK's first purpose-built LGBTQ+ majority older person's housing scheme in Whalley Range, south Manchester. The project will deliver more than 100 apartments for people aged 55 or over, with a mix of affordable homes that are as accessible as possible to Manchester people.

## **Trans Inclusive Training and Toolkit - The Proud Trust**

A consultation took place with children and young people, parents, carers and professionals in 2018 to share experiences of being LGBT+ or supporting LGBT+ young people within educational settings. This included giving feedback gaps in support provision as well as in Information, Advice and Guidance services.

Training was then commissioned for education settings in LGBT inclusion, with a focus on trans inclusion and gender identity. Training comprised four sessions delivered by the Proud Trust, covering age groups from nursery provision up to post-16 education. A trans-inclusive toolkit is currently in development, and is scheduled for launch in early 2024, and funding is in place with enough capacity for a launch and training session for each local authority area across Greater Manchester. The format is similar to one adopted in Brighton and Hove but will be bespoke for this region.

Schools are also able to sign up to the Rainbow Flag award, an accredited framework for LGBTQIA+ inclusivity, which has been developed and is managed by The Proud Trust. The development of a trans inclusion tool kit and quality assurance framework will equip school settings to support the development and welfare of young LGBTQ+ people in their progression through their education.

## **Pride In Practice**

LGBT Foundation's Pride in Practice programme develops LGBTQ+ inclusive healthcare through training and recognises best practice with an accredited award.

Pride in Practice is a quality assurance support service that strengthens and develops relationships with LGBTQ+ patients within local communities. The training enables the workforce to better understand the barriers faced by LGBTQ+ communities in accessing services and why there is a higher prevalence of inequalities in health outcomes. The service is commissioned through the LGBT Foundation, and they work with GP practices, dentists, optometrists, and community pharmacies. Originally commissioned to be delivered within general practice in Manchester this is now delivered in Greater Manchester as well as Lambeth, Lewisham, and areas of Essex.

## Consultation on the future development of the Gay Village

*Working with:* Manchester City Council commissioned Hatch consultancy to engage with businesses, residents and members of the LGBTQ+ community about the Gay Village area of the city in 2019, with a view to formulating a vision for future growth and opportunities in this area.

*How:* The consultation was carried out on multiple platforms. An online survey, face to face meetings and focus groups were held with multiple participants. These included community groups such as Friends of Sackville Gardens, LGBT Foundation and other LGBTQ+ groups operating within the vicinity. The report provided a comprehensive history of the area and involvement of both Manchester City Council and the LGBTQ+ community in activism in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries in to achieve equality and challenge discrimination but did not define a forward action plan for the future of the area.

Following the pandemic, the Growth and Development team have recommissioned a consultation to provide an updated version, with a key focus to highlight areas which are within the remit and scope of current deliverables for the Council. Areas such as tree trimming, tree pit maintenance, signage, bespoke litter bins, highways maintenance could all be incorporated into this scope of works and would demonstrate the integral role played by the authority in this area, alongside residential, business and community interests and stakeholders. Other added value would be to identify any space which could be utilised for community groups, and not attached to the nighttime economy. There is potential for an art trail and mural, representing the history of LGBTQ+ activism, and helping to define this unique area of the city.

*Learning:* Recognition of the need for more diversity in the community feedback, to understand areas of concern as well as identifying barriers to creating more inclusive spaces.

## Indigo Gender Service

This is an NHS adult gender service pilot in Greater Manchester, which has been commissioned to provide care that is local, timely and easier to access. Indigo is a partnership between gtd healthcare, a not-for-profit organisation with an established presence of primary care and urgent care services in the northwest, and LGBT Foundation, a national charity delivering services, advice and information for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities. The service has been designed by and for trans communities.

Launched in December 2020, our service is an innovative model of trans healthcare, which is based in primary care. All of our appointments are delivered by our clinical team - GPs, Physician Associate and Specialist Nurses, who are trained in trans healthcare, from practices across Greater Manchester, with additional services being delivered in community settings.

#### 4.4 Objective 3: Celebrating Our Diversity

For this objective, progress indicators include:

- supporting and delivering events that promote the achievements and contributions of our diverse communities
- achieving and maintain the highest standards in meeting the needs of key stakeholder groups

Some examples include:

##### **Neighbourhood Community Development team**

The Council's NCD team (previously known as buzz) provide funding and support for local community projects. They explore impact of their work by engaging with people where they live or socialise on the basis on protected characteristics, for example identifying a gap in offering support to LGBTQIA+ people, which then led to work with the LGBT Foundation. NCD Officers carry out opportunistic engagement – a key distinction of their role is that it is their job meet people where they are and to focus on turning conversations (engagement) into activity (projects or connections).

*“The massive role that buzz played in the community during COVID-19 has been enormous. Not only their ability to connect with local people on a very human and compassionate level but to also connect the dots and bring people together. The success of the mutual aid group in Ardwick and Longsight sits largely with the magnificent buzz employees” Cllr Amna Abdullatif, Manchester City Council councillor for Ardwick*

##### **2023 Pride Celebrations**

*Working with:* Manchester City Council has been a significant supporter and stakeholder of Manchester Pride in all of its guises since the first established event in 1985. The 2023 entry to the walking parade attracted over 100 members of staff and elected members, the highest number of participants ever from the Council.

*How:* As well as visibility within the parade, funding is provided to Manchester Pride as an organisation to support this event, which takes place over the August Bank Holiday each year. In addition, the Council also provided financial support through the Neighbourhood Investment Funding (NIF) to Didsbury Pride in 2022. Support with capacity building and assistance to secure alternative funding for this event in the longer term has been provided by Neighbourhood Offices. Funding was also allocated for Chorlton Pride 2022, although this event was postponed to 2023, owing to the period of national mourning following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

*Learning:* Council support for LGBTQ+ communities has to be visible and inclusive.

## **5. Conclusion**

Discriminatory practices, legislation and sociocultural norms continue to marginalise and exclude LGBTQ+ people from education, health care, housing, employment and occupation, and other sectors. This environment of exclusion leads to inequalities of opportunity and of access to resources.

Public services in the broadest possible sense should be LGBTQ+ inclusive and acceptable, full stop. All people, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation, should be supported to reach their full potential. The Council are committed to addressing inequality and advancing equality in the discharge of our duties.

Social inclusion requires dismantling all structural policies, processes and procedures that excludes sexual orientation and gender identity or expression, and that negates a person's identity. It also requires urgent measures to dismantle the systems of repression that enforce the idea that diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity is somehow harmful to society, that LGBTQ+ people are somehow disordered or that their identities are invalid.

We recognise that we are on a journey and there is more to do because barriers still exist in engaging with LGBTQ+ communities across the city, and thus the influence those communities can have in sharing their voices and developing a trusting relationship with the Council. The case studies and feedback included in this report echo other work done around best practice in effective and culturally competent community outreach and engagement. Some of the opportunities for development and collaboration given here are building on good practice taken from the engagement and co-production projects aimed at other marginalised groups. If services supporting LGBTQ+ people are offered the right support, structures, and funding to incorporate these approaches into their provision, we will be able to offer more targeted, tailored services reaching the right people at the right time.

### **5.1 Recommendations**

Through this report, we have identified areas where further work needs to be undertaken to support our workforce to lead high-quality, culturally competent community engagement work.

- Ensuring we meet the needs of our LGBTQ+ communities by consistently reaching out to engage and involve partners and stakeholders for input and improvement to services and providing ongoing feedback as to the impact of their work with the Council
- Better collection and use of data both quantitative and qualitative to inform decisions and support teams to undertake effective consultation and engagement with LGBTQ+ to improve service design and delivery
- Refreshing the Council's corporate equality objectives for 2024-28 ensuring that LGBTQ+ inclusion is firmly embedded
- Develop a framework for how we engage with communities that enables us to build and maintain trust, improve data and intelligence, embed a consistent approach across our services and workforce

- Improve how we deliver trans inclusive services by developing our organisational approach to trans inclusive policies and practice
- Improve staff awareness and confidence on LGBTQ+ inclusion through education initiatives and development programmes
- Integrating and embedding approaches to intersectionality into how we design, develop, and deliver work for and with our LGBTQ+ communities

The Committee is recommended to:

- (1) consider the progress made to date and comment on the information provided
- (2) support the approaches to working with the LGBTQ+ communities in the city set out



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[Sexual orientation by disability](#)

[Sexual orientation by general health](#)

[Gender identity by disability](#)

[Gender identity by general health](#)