



Liverpool Women's  
NHS Foundation Trust

# A guide to the History of attitudes towards

**#LGBTQ+**

## by Decades



**PROUD TO SUPPORT  
THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY**

# Pre 1967

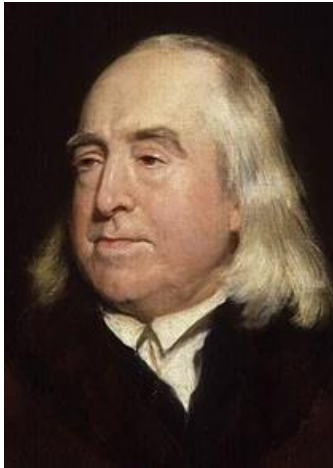


**1533**

Henry VIII made homosexual acts between men punishable by death in The Buggery Act. Female homosexual acts were not mentioned in The Buggery Act.

**1785**

Jeremy Bentham became one of the first people to argue for the decriminalisation of sodomy in England.



**1861**

In England and Wales offences Against the Person Act abolished the death penalty for acts of sodomy and instead made it punishable by up to 10 years in prison. Death penalty was abolished in Scotland in 1889.

**1885**

The offence of 'gross indecency' was created in the UK. The Criminal Law Amendment Act, known as Labouchere Amendment, made homosexual acts punishable. The vague wording made it possible to prosecute even without witness to the act of 'buggery'. The amendment was what led to Oscar Wilde's imprisonment in 1895 for his relationship with Lord Alfred Douglas.

**1897**

George Cecil Ives created the first homosexual rights group in England, the Order of Chaeronea. He believed that individuals attracted to the same sex would not be accepted openly in society, and created the group as a means of safe communication and networking.



## 1912

London's first gay pub, The Cave of the Golden Calf opened in Heddon Street.

## 1945

Laurence Michal Dillon received the first female-to-male confirmation surgery in the UK.

## 1951

Roberta Cowell, a former World War II pilot, is first known British trans woman to undergo reassignment surgery and have her birth certificate changed.



## 1954

The Wolfenden Committee is formed after successions of well-known men are convicted of 'indecent' calling into question the legitimacy of the law.

## 1957

The Wolfenden Committee publishes a report, recommending that 'homosexual behaviour between consenting adults in private should no longer be a criminal offence'. Supporters of this recommendation include the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Geoffrey Fisher, and the British Medical Association. Despite this, the government rejects the recommendations.

## 1958

The Homosexual Law Reform Society is founded to campaign for the legislation of same-sex relationships in the UK.

## 1964

The North West Homosexual Law Reform Committee (NWLRC) is founded to promote legal and social equality for lesbians, gay men and bi people.

# 1967 – 1979



## 1967

The Sexual offences Act 1967 decriminalises sex between two men over the age of 21 'in private' in England and Wales. It did not extend to the Merchant Navy or the Armed Forces, where sex between two men remained illegal.

- 1980 Scotland
- 1982 Northern Ireland
- 1992 Isle of Man

## 1969

North West Homosexual Law Reform Committee becomes a UK-wide organisation and is renamed as the Committee for Homosexual Equality (CHE).

## 1969

Stonewall happened when police raided the Stonewall Inn in New York, a known hang-out for LGBT+ people. People were getting arrested because at the time being gay was illegal, as was wearing clothes that the police deemed inappropriate for your gender. This kind of thing had happened before, but on this occasion the LGBT+ community fought back. This is a key event in the LGBT+ equality movement, inspiring what we now see as "Pride" events.



## 1970

The Corbett v Corbett divorce case establishes a precedent that a person's sex cannot legally be changed from that which is assigned at birth.

## 1970

Street Transgender Action Revolutionaries (STAR) was set up after the Stonewall Riots. It was a group that supported homeless trans young people in New York and was considered ground-breaking in the LGBT+ movement.



## 1971

The Committee for Homosexual Equality, keeping the same initials, becomes the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE).

## 1971

The Nullity of Marriage Act was passed, explicitly banning same-sex marriages between same-sex couples in England and Wales.

## 1972

The first Pride is held in London, attracting approximately 2,000 participants.

## 1973

The Campaign for Homosexual Equality holds the first British gay rights conference in Morecambe, Lancashire.

## 1974

Maureen Colquhoun came out as the first lesbian Labour MP.

## 1974

Stephen Whittle, trans man and prominent activist co-founds a Manchester based "TV/TS" group; a group for trans people and the first TV/TS conference is held in Leeds.

## 1975

The Liberal Party (now the Liberal Democrats) became the first UK political party to support LGBT rights, passing a motion at conference to support 'full equality for homosexuals', including equalising the age of consent.

## 1976

The Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement is founded at a public meeting at the Sir John Cass School in the City of London.

## 1977

The first gay and lesbian Trades Union Congress (TUC) conference takes place to discuss workplace rights.

## 1977

A Bill to reduce the age of consent to 18 is defeated in the UK House of Lords.

## 1978

Artist Gilbert Baker created the Pride flag. It was created as a positive symbol of solidarity for LGBT+ people. The colours on the flag represent the diversity that exists in the LGBT+ community.



## 1979

Founding of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, now known as the World Professional Association for Transgender Health.



**1980's**



## 1980

The first Black Gay and Lesbian Group is formed in the UK.

## 1981

A landmark court case finds that Northern Ireland's criminalisation of same-sex acts violates the European Convention on Human Rights.

## 1981

The first UK case of AIDS was recorded when a 49 year old man was admitted to Brompton Hospital in London. He died ten days later.

## 1982

Terry Higgins dies of AIDS in St Thomas' Hospital, his partner Rupert Whittaker and friends set up the Terry Higgins Trust, the UK's first AIDS charity.

## 1983

Men who have sex with men are asked not to donate to UK blood banks amid the AIDS crisis.

## 1984

Lesbians and Gays support the miners (LGSM) was a group of people that formed to show their support to the striking British miners. The miners were on strike, due to widespread pit closures. LGSM raised money to support them. In turn, miners groups supported LGBT+ people including leading London Pride 1985. There is a 2004 film called Pride which is based on this true story.



## 1984

Chris Smith, Labour MP speaks openly about his sexual orientation and becomes the first openly gay MP, 10 years after Maureen Colquhoun came out as the first lesbian MP.

## 1986

Mark Rees, a trans-man, brings a case to the European Court of Human Rights, stating that UK law prevented him from gaining legal status recognising him as male. The case was lost but the court note the seriousness of the issues facing trans people.

## 1987

The International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) is founded to promote acceptance for transgender people.

## 1987

ACT UP was formed in response to the perceived social neglect, government negligence and the complacency of the medical establishment towards the AIDS crisis in the 1980's. ACT UP campaigns for research into new medicines and treatments for HIV/AIDS, equitable access to prevention and care for people with HIV/AIDS, as well as tackling the structural drivers of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, such as stigma, discrimination and poverty.



## 1988

UK Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, introduces Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988. The Act states that a local authority “shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality” or “promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship”.

## 1988

Sir Ian McKellan comes out on the UK's BBC Radio in response to the government's proposed Section 28 in the British Parliament. Sir Ian McKellan and Michael

Cashman become founding members of Stonewall UK in response to Section 28 and other barriers to equality.

### 1988

Never going underground was a movement protesting against Section 28 law which made it illegal to talk about LGBT+ topics in schools in the UK. This law was abolished in Scotland in 2000, and in England and Wales in 2003, after which time LGBT History Month was set up, so that LGBT+ lives could be explored and celebrated in schools.



### 1988

Denmark becomes the first Country in the world to give legal recognition to same-sex partnerships.

# 1990's



## **1990**

Candlelit vigil is held in London after five gay men are murdered within months of each other. This leads to the formation of OutRage, who call for police to start protecting gay and bi men instead of arresting them.

## **1990**

Lesbian and gay police officers established the UK's Lesbian and Gay Police Association.

## **1990**

The first Pride event in the UK city of Manchester.

## **1990**

Northern Ireland holds their first Pride parade.

## **1991**

Sir Ian McKellen meets UK Prime Minister John Major. This is the first time any Prime Minister has met with LGBT activists.

## **1992**

World Health Organisation declassifies same-sex attraction as a mental illness.

## **1992**

First Pride Festival is held in Brighton

## **1992**

Following a fringe meeting at the Liberal Democrat Federal Conference in 1991, Press For Change, a key lobbying and legal support organisation for trans people in the UK is established.

## **1992**

Stonewall begins its first major campaign for an equal age of consent in the UK.

## **1994**

The UK House of Commons moves to reduce the age of consent for same-sex relations between men to 16. The vote is defeated and the age of consent is instead lowered to 18. An age of consent for same-sex relations between women is not set.

## 1995

Mermaids is a charity that was set up to support the parents, carers and families of trans children and young people. The organisation runs a help line, support groups and organises proms and camping trips. The organisation also provides peer support for people who might be experiencing transphobia.



## 1995

Rank Outsiders and Stonewall launch a major campaign to end the ban on LGB people openly serving in the British military.

## 1996

The landmark case P vs S and Cornwall County Council finds that an employee who was about to undergo gender reassignment was wrongfully dismissed. It was the first piece of case law, anywhere in the world, which prevented discrimination in employment or vocational education because someone is trans.

## 1997

Stephen Twigg becomes first openly gay MP at the time of his selection. Ben Bradshaw, also openly gay, is also elected just 21 minutes later.

## 1997

UK Government recognises same-sex partners for immigration purposes.

## **1998**

In June, The House of Commons votes to lower the age of consent for same sex relations between men to 16 in England. However, a month later the House of Lords defeats the clause.

## **1998**

Waheed Alli becomes the first openly gay member of the House of Lords and one of a few openly gay Muslims.

## **1998**

The Bolton 7, a group of gay and bi men, are convicted of gross indecency. They take their case to the ECHR claiming a violation of Article 8 and the right to a private life. After a campaign by Outrage and Amnesty International they are awarded compensation by the UK Government.

## **1999**

Trans Day of Remembrance is founded to memorialise those who have been murdered as a result of transphobia and to bring attention to the continued violence endured by the trans community.

## **1999**

Former British National Party member David Copeland bombs the Admiral Duncan, a gay pub in Soho. The attack kills three people and wounds at least 70.

## **1999**

European Court of Human Rights unanimously finds that the investigation into, and subsequent discharge of, two personnel from the Royal Navy on the basis of their sexual orientation is a breach of their right to a private life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.



# 2000 – 2020

## Post Millennium



## **2000**

The UK Government lifts the ban on lesbians, gay men and bi people serving in the armed forces.

## **2000**

Legislation is introduced to repeal Section 28 in England and Wales. The bill is defeated and remained in place in England and Wales. Scotland abolishes Section 28.

## **2000**

Stonewall's campaign to reduce the age of consent for same-sex relations between men aged 16 is successful as changes are made to the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000. Group sex between men is also decriminalised.

## **2001**

The age of consent is lowered to 16 making it equal to age of consent for straight people.

## **2002**

Same sex couples given equal right when it comes to adoption.

## **2002**

In the Goodwin v the United Kingdom case judges rules that the UK Government should accommodate the needs of trans people by issuing new birth certificates and permitting marriage to someone of the opposite gender.

## **2003**

Section 28 is repealed, lifting the ban on local authorities from 'the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality'.

## **2003**

Gross indecency removed as an offence.

## **2003**

Sexual orientation regulations becomes law in the UK making it illegal to discriminate against lesbians, gay and bi people in the workplace.

## **2003**

Celia Kitzinger and Sue Wilkinson, both British university professors, legally marry in Canada. On their return, their same-sex marriage is not recognised under British law.

## 2004

The Civil Partnership Act is passed, granting civil partnership in the United Kingdom. The Act gives same sex couples the same rights and responsibilities as married straight couples.

## 2004

The Gender Recognition Act is passed giving trans people full legal recognition in their appropriate gender. The Act allows trans people to acquire a new birth certificate.

## 2005

Section 146 of the Criminal Justice Act empowers UK courts to impose tougher sentences for hate crime offences aggravated or motivated by the victim's sexual orientation, or their presumed sexual orientation.

- 2005 Sexual orientation across the UK
- 2009 Transgender: Scotland
- 2012 Transgender: England, Wales, Northern Ireland

## 2005

The adoption and Children Act 2002 comes into force allowing unmarried couples, including same-sex couples, to apply for joint adoption.

## 2005

LGBT History Month UK was set up by Schools OUT UK, in response to the abolition of Section 28, a law that prevented schools talking to students about LGBT+ people and identities. LGBT History Month gives us the whole month of February to educate, explore and celebrate the rich history of LGBT+ people, events and activism.



## 2005

Christopher Cramp and Matthew Roche become the first couple to complete a Civil Partnership in the UK.

## 2005

Transgender Europe is founded. The organisation campaigns for the quality of all trans people in Europe.

## 2006

In the case of *Grant v the United Kingdom* the European Court of Human Rights held that denying a state pension at the age of 60 from a male-to female trans person was a breach of the right to respect for private life.

## 2006

UK Black Pride is a celebration and protest. It is an event that was set up in recognition that BAME (Black, Asian and other Minorities Ethnicities) are often missing from conversations around LGBT+ people.



## 2007

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 outlawed the discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

## 2007

Stonewall launches its iconic 'Some People Are Gay. Get over It!' campaign.

## 2007

Engendered Penalties Transsexual and Transgender People's Experience of Inequality and Discrimination' is published. This is instrumental in ensuring the inclusion of trans people in the remit of the UK's new Commission for Equalities and Human Rights.

## 2007

Muslims for Progressive Values affirms the equal worth of all human beings, seeking to educate and to dismiss false ideologies about Muslims and Islam. The organisation supports inter faith and LGBT+ partnerships and marriages. The organisation centres on Muslim women's issues and they have supported a controversial public women's prayer gathering in New York.



## 2008

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 recognises same-sex couples as legal parents of children conceived through the use of donated sperm, eggs or embryos.

## 2008

Gendered Intelligence (GI) is founded in the UK to increase the understanding of gender diversity.

## 2009

David Cameron apologises on behalf of the Conservative party for the introduction of Section 28.

## **2010**

The Equality Act 2010 adds gender reassignment as a protected characteristic.

## **2010**

A new offence of 'incitement to homophobic hatred' comes into force in the UK.

## **2011**

The Department of Health lifts the lifetime ban on gay and bi men donating blood, although a 12-month celibacy clause is still in place in order for men who have sex with men to be eligible to donate.

## **2011**

An amendment to the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) (Amendment) Regulations 2011, tabled by Lord Waheed Alli, permits the celebration of civil partnerships in religious buildings in the UK.

## **2011**

Ruth Davidson is elected to lead the Scottish Conservatives. She is the first openly gay leader of a political party.

## **2011**

UK Courts rule in favour of gay couple, Martin Hall and Steven Preddy, when owners of a bed and breakfast refuse to provide them with a double room.

## **2012**

Protection of Freedoms Act is passed in the UK allowing for historic convictions for consensual sex between men to be removed from criminal records.

## **2012**

Explicit reference to homophobic bullying in schools is introduced into Ofsted's inspection framework in the UK.

## **2013**

Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act is passed in England and Wales.

## **2013**

Alan Turing is given a posthumous royal pardon for his conviction of 'gross indecency' which resulted in his being chemically castrated and later taking his own life.

## **2013**

The first Trans Pride event takes place in Brighton.

## 2014

The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 officially comes into force, with the first same-sex marriages in England and Wales taking place on 29 March 2014.

## 2015

The Royal Vauxhall Tavern becomes the first ever building in the UK to be given a special listing status based on its LGBT history.

## 2016

The Stonewall monument was created around the area of the Stonewall Inn in New York, the place where the Stonewall Riots had broken out in 1969. This is the first national monument in the USA dedicated to LGBT+ rights and history, recognising the pivotal importance of this event.



## 2016

David Mundell announces he is gay on his personal website. He becomes the first openly gay Conservative cabinet minister.

## 2016

Prince William appears on the front cover of gay magazine, Attitude, stating that no one should be bullied because of their sexuality.

## 2017

The Government issues a posthumous pardon to all gay and bi men who were convicted under pernicious sexual offences laws in the last century which enabled police to criminalise people for being gay or bi.

**2017**

Amendments made to the Children and Social Work Bill, which will make relationships and sex education (RSE) mandatory in all schools in England and Wales from 2019.

**2017**

The UK Supreme Court rules that the discrimination against same-sex couples on pensions rights needs to end immediately.

**2017**

The Department of Health reduces the deferral period for gay and bi men wishing to donate blood from 12 months to three months.

**2017**

Protests that were attended by thousands of people took place across Brazil. This was in response to the murder of a politician, who stood up for the rights of LGBT+ people, black people and other minority groups.





## 2018

#StandByYourTrans and #LwiththeT Twitter campaigns were started in response to a small group of cis lesbians who led their London Pride parade in 2018 with anti-trans messages. The campaigns have demonstrated the overwhelming solidarity and support shown by many other cis lesbians towards trans women. These hashtags have gone on to be used in public protests against transphobia at Pride parades.



## 2019

The new Pride Flag design is released on the LGBT History Month website in February 2019.



## 2019

The World Health Organisation declassifies transgender health issues as a mental and behavioural disorders. 2020 saw big changes to how transgender health issues are classified under the World Health Organisation's global manual of diagnoses.

## 2020

Same-sex marriage is legalised in Northern Ireland from January 2020 allowing same-sex couples to register to marry with the first marriage ceremony occurring in Northern Ireland on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020.



## 2021

Megan Rohrer was instated as a Bishop in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, becoming the first openly transgender and non-binary bishop in any Christian denomination.

