

A close-up, slightly angled view of a rainbow flag, showing the vibrant colors of the stripes (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple) and the texture of the fabric. The flag is draped, creating soft folds and highlights.

**OUT** IN THE  
WORKPLACE





# Foreword

There are an incredible variety of jobs available in the Public Sector, Local Government, the Police and Further Education; also in our Voluntary and Community Sectors.

These sectors, like the Private Sector, need diverse workforces and places of work that encourage us all to be ourselves, and promote a safe and enjoyable working environment.

This document profiles LGBTQ+ staff as well as their straight colleagues from a multitude of professions, sharing their experiences of working for employers who champion diversity, acknowledging the benefits a diverse workforce brings to any organisation or business.



## **Marvin Rees – Mayor of Bristol**

“I am proud to be leading a city as diverse as Bristol and to represent an organisation that values inclusion and respect of colleagues. We all have a responsibility to treat others with fairness and to foster working environments that are safe and enjoyable. Employers should champion equality and challenge homophobia.

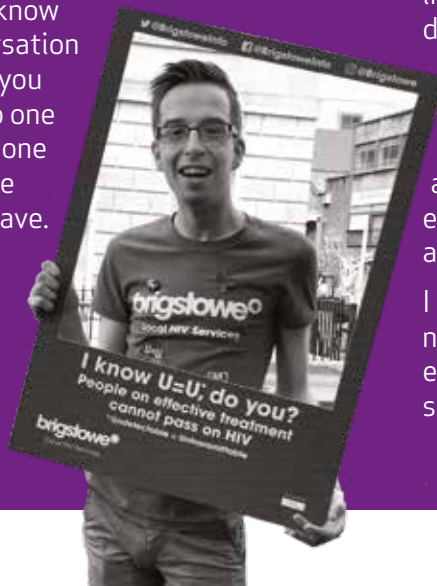
They should work in partnership with their employees to build workplaces that welcome the LGBT+ community. Together we can make sure that Bristol is a place where we stand together with communities and share a message of inclusion, love and respect.”

## **Aled Osborne** **Fundraising and Communications Manager** **Brigstowe**

In all of my years in employment I have been out in my workplace. From my colleagues to my management I have received nothing but support and encouragement.

To be visible in work has allowed me to start and engage in conversation surrounding all issues that affect LGBTQ+ People. These conversations allow awareness and education to take place. You never know the impact one conversation may have. The person you speak to may speak to one other and that person one other and so on and the ripple can become a wave.

The importance of being your authentic self through all aspects of your life should never be underestimated.



## **Ade Olaiya M.A.** **Postgraduate Researcher –** **Department of Health and** **Social Sciences** **University of the** **West of England**

My work experience in the public, private, and voluntary sectors, and as a trade union representative, has increased my awareness of discrimination and inequality based on sexual orientation and other protected characteristics.

As someone who self-identifies as BAME, as well as LGBTQ+, it is important to me that my work environment upholds principles of equity and inclusivity.

I am a member of UWE Bristol's LGBT staff network, and am inspired by ways this university is embedding and creating an inclusive culture for all staff and students.





## **Amy Mosley**

**Senior Housing Advisor, Bristol City Council**

For me it has always been important to be 'out' at work. It can be daunting coming out to new colleagues or in a new workplace but personally my experience has been nothing but positive. I feel that my open attitude has allowed colleagues to talk to me about topics that perhaps they had been afraid to broach with others and it has allowed some myths to be busted!

I would definitely encourage people to get involved with their LGBT staff network – or set one up if there isn't one already. Being involved at Bristol City Council has allowed me to network far wider than my day job would have ever allowed and has brought me valuable new skills and knowledge.



## **Andy Hole**

**Clinical Systems Specialist/LGBT+ Forum Chair**  
**University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust**

I have worked in the Trust for 15 years, and kept my sexuality secret for the first four years. In 2008, I felt confident enough in myself, so was able to come out as a gay man at work and received great support from my colleagues. The support I received sparked my passion for LGBT+ rights, which has led me to be involved in setting up and chairing the LGBT+ Forum for the Trust. Being 'out' both at work and in my personal life has enabled me to be true to myself and support others with their journeys.

Within my role as LGBT+ Forum Chair I am able to provide a voice for LGBT+ Staff at all levels of the organisation, improving the workplace and enabling the Trust to learn from the experiences of LGBT+ employees. I have worked with the Trust to shape policies to support our staff as well as patients/relatives/carers. Sometimes it is the smaller things that make a big difference, for example, using terms like partner, can make it easier for people to feel comfortable to either come out in the workplace or just allow them to be who they are.



**Ash Loakes**  
**Economic Adviser**  
**Department for Environment,**  
**Food & Rural Affairs**



I came out as queer at 13 years old and have been very fortunate to be accepted throughout my personal and professional life since. I joined the Civil Service in 2014 – their dedication to diversity, equality and inclusion was a deciding factor in accepting this job offer.

I have felt comfortable enough to come out as transgender in both departments I have worked for. I think it is important to be a visible role model to my current and future colleagues as it allows better quality conversations as a direct result of improved awareness of LGBTQ+ issues.

The Civil Service is very accommodating to my needs, which has enabled me to make positive changes for my community, such as the installation of gender neutral facilities in multiple offices. This support has helped me achieve various awards, such as Stonewall Cymru Role Model of the Year in 2016.

Being respected at work has also allowed me to flourish in my personal life. I am proud to be out as my authentic transgender and queer self.

**Avon & Somerset Police**  
**LGBT+ Liaison Team**

The Avon & Somerset police LGBT liaison team is made up of volunteers who offer an enhanced service to our community.

We are here to provide a trustworthy and sympathetic response and work closely with our partners to offer the best solutions, whatever the issue.

Follow us on #ASPolice LGBT or email  
[lgbtliaison@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:lgbtliaison@avonandsomerset.police.uk)



## **Avril Marshall**

**Business Support Officer Bristol City Council  
Former Co-Chair of BCC Black and Minority Ethnic Employee  
Group Community Activist & LGBTQ+ Ally**

As an LGBTQ+ ally, I am able to extend my support to those who have or have not come out. When I was the Co-Chair of BMEEG I felt it was very important to lead by example and so worked closely with the LGBTQ Staff Led Group in particular. In doing so I gained a better understanding of how excluded the BAME LGBTQ members of staff can be as an over-arching issue. I have learnt so much and was able to meet the nephew of Harvey Milk at a launch event, who was such an inspiring speaker for the LGBTQ+ movement.

Bristol City Council were supportive in helping us to raise the awareness and hopefully to become a trail blazer, but there is much more work to do. Can you/will you become an ally and join me?

I believe that actions speak louder than words, so being an ally is extremely importance to me in the challenges of Inclusion, Diversity and Equality. It is an easy process to become an ally so please send that email today and join me!



**Barry Scrase  
Personal Budgets  
Development  
Manager –  
HR Workforce  
and Organisational  
Design**

**Bristol City Council  
Disabled Employee Group Member  
& LGBTQ+ Ally**

I am passionate about all equalities issues, including the rights of LGBTQ+ staff to be open in the workplace or anywhere else.

It is essential that we all support our LGBTQ+ colleagues to feel comfortable about being out in the workplace, and that we celebrate it as a sign of our open support. People should be measured by what they contribute, rather than their in-built characteristics.





**Ben Whistance**  
**Senior Lecturer & Clinical Coordinator**  
**University of the West of England**

As a senior lecturer in a university, I believe that being out at work is a vital part of empowering young people. You can be from an LGBT+ background, and still have a successful and meaningful career.

I feel it is my responsibility as an educator, to promote the importance of being comfortable with yourself, both mentally and physically. I try to be an authentic leader, and part of that is about being authentic about who I am, with my colleagues, and my students. I would hate to think that anyone was struggling with their sexuality; but in reality I know this is a major issue with so many young adults at university.

If I can be a visible gay man, in a position of responsibility, I hope this will help others battling with the fear of coming out.



**Berkeley Wilde**  
**Founder – The Diversity Trust**

It's no longer about just being 'out', it is about empowering others to be who they really are.

It is about being authentic; and about changing the culture in organisations, and in wider society, so that anyone and everyone can be truly and fully who they really are.

Join us in building a world free from hate and discrimination in which all people regardless of their identity can live, work, succeed and thrive.



## **BNSSG CCG Proud Network** **NHS Bristol, North Somerset & South** **Gloucestershire CCG**

'They asked, we did' The BNSSG CCG Proud Network was formed in July 2019, staff were asked to vote on which diversity strands should be represented by a staff network. Since forming Proud we have raised awareness in the organisation by celebrating Pride, hosting lunch and learns and engaging with staff.

The CCG has joined the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme and has big ambitions for 2019/20. We are keen to form partnerships with other LGBT staff networks across the BNSSG area, please contact us to explore how we make the NHS a more inclusive organisation.



## **Cameron Campbell** **Senior Associate** **PwC LLP**

An open and diverse office environment is crucial for people to feel they can be themselves and come out at work. Work is challenging enough without coupling this pressure with the added stress of hiding your sexuality.

Our office thrives on diversity and employee networks with a positive and inclusive tone encouraged by management and role models. It is amazing how far you can come with the right people and support around you. I would not have imagined I would chair our LGBT+ network in Bristol when I joined the firm in 2015.





**Cheryl Morgan**  
**Presenter – Ujima Radio**

One of the most important things for any member of a minority group is to be seen doing many different things, not just those things for which your group is recognised. This helps people to view you as an ordinary member of society, and not as an outsider.

Consequently I feel very lucky to have been able to work with Ujima Radio on a show that focuses on women's issues rather than on LGBT issues. We have done some Trans segments on Women's Outlook, but the vast majority of material I have presented has been much wider ranging. Given how hostile some feminist spaces are to trans-women, I am delighted to have been able to help present a show with a firm feminist agenda.

My thanks to the Ujima management and all of my colleagues at the station for giving me this opportunity.

## Crover Bluejay

**Enterprise, Inward Investment & Trade Advisor  
West of England Combined Authority (WECA)**

As someone who naturally attempts not to make initial bias judgements based on factors such as gender and sexuality it has been a long journey understanding that many people do! At WECA, I work with small businesses and entrepreneurs on their growth plans. A large focus of my role is supporting minority communities, particularly looking at BAME integration/representation and gender equality. My role has challenged me to realise I'm also part of a minority group and acknowledge the bias I receive for my sexuality.



I've referred to myself as gay for most of my life, but this label has never felt quite right. There are expectations from both mainstream society and the gay community of what it means to be a gay man and I never found myself fitting these. I now use the term

Queer. For me, Queer is embracing and celebrating the social politics of inclusion and acceptance. It's an acknowledgement that a person's birth gender, chosen gender, and whether they're sexually or romantically attracted to other genders (singular, a mix or none) shouldn't have any bearing on how others perceive them. Queer is still a difficult word to normalise. For some generations, queer was the playground insult meaning gay and for others it means odd or unapproachable.

It's important that we all recognise our own unconscious biases and work to challenge perceptions we hold based on protected characteristics. Being 'out' is something that comes up naturally in conversation for me but can still be a cause of dread at others' attitudes in new working environments. I'm happy to say that my colleagues in WECA are dedicated to embracing difference and diversity.

**Ewa Zdebelak**  
**Social Worker**  
**Bristol City Council**

I'm bisexual. Coming out is never a one off process and I probably came out to some of you just now! Being out in my team feels safe and my immediate managers are supportive of any issues I may experience.

Coming out always comes with massive anxiety to me especially that I identified myself as lesbian before.

I'm also a migrant and I have a disability. While I find most of BCC inclusive, I am aware that it is important that we continuously support and educate ourselves, our colleagues, and communities about the challenges that people with protected characteristics face.

**Fiona Hackett**  
**Inclusive Communities Facilitator**  
**Bristol City Council**

Championing equality and inclusion in communities is part of my daily work, but it's important that this translates into my own working environment, too. I am part of a diverse and accepting team and have found it very easy to be 'out'. It's often said that 'coming out' at work isn't the big reveal moment people might anticipate, but rather a perpetual process triggered by everyday conversations.

For example, if colleagues ask me what I did over the weekend, I don't feel the need to hide my partner's gender by using gender-neutral pronouns so they don't realise I'm gay. It's the small things that count!



## Gavin Williams

**Associate and Osborne Clarke Pride Co-Chair  
Osborne Clarke**

I feel really fortunate to be co-chair of Osborne Clarke Pride and also chair of PROUDbristol, a professional LGBT+ network for the Bristol region.

I identify as a gay man but I'm very keen for Osborne Clarke and PROUDbristol (and Bristol itself!) to be increasingly diverse and inclusive spaces for everyone, regardless of their sexual or gender identity or otherwise. Working with both these networks means I can help work to achieve this for the benefit of our great and wonderful community!

I feel we must look beyond two dimensional identities and widen our conversations to focus on intersectionality with a more holistic view of what identity is so that no facet of a person's self is left at the front door and everyone can bring their true whole self to work!

I feel lucky to work in a truly supportive firm as we try to be bold and be the change we want to see in supporting the LGBT+ community.

Working with others, I hope that everyone can have the same experience where ever they work!



## Sergeant Helen Riddell

**Economic Adviser  
Avon & Somerset Police**

It's important to me to be part of an organisation that values Inclusivity and Diversity and supports colleagues to be all that they can be.

As one of the LGBT Liaison Officers for the constabulary I strive to demonstrate our commitment to my community and show that we are a welcoming service that wants to attract the best people to work with us.





## Henry Poultney

**Team Manager – Freedom Youth, Off the Record, Bristol Group Facilitator – Transcaf**

Bristol is a city of communities, creativity and action which is what drew me to make my home here.

As an openly out LGBTQ+ person, I believe passionately in creating spaces for all communities to grow, build and recognise all our diversity as a strength.

I am proud to be part of Freedom Youth, Bristol's youth LGBTQ+ project, this year celebrating 25 years of support and information since 1995. As a project, we are standing on the shoulders of activists who have and continue to fight for equality for all.

My employer, OTR Bristol is a mental health social movement – a progressive, inclusive and forward thinking charity which inspires change and campaigns for equality every day and working with Bristol's Voice and Influence Partnership is passionate about increasing participation, representation and involvement of all LGBTQ+ people across the city.



**James McNamara**  
**Assistant Relationship Director**  
**NatWest Corporate Banking**

I work in a sector which has historically been seen as very white, male and middle aged but the reality is far from that. Banking is a fast changing environment, constantly changing to meet the needs of our colleagues, customers and wide variety of stakeholders and this includes members of the LGBT+ community. I feel really proud to work for an organisation which has a very clear message of Zero Tolerance for discrimination on any grounds. It is also an organisation which is clear that we will undertake positive actions to support anyone facing barriers based on bias to overcome them. The work we have done in India and Poland to support our LGBT+ colleagues in a political and social environment which is quite hostile to LGBT+ individuals speaks for itself.

Being out in the office and an advocate of Inclusion and Intersectionality is a hugely important thing for me to do. Being visible and a voice for positive change sends a message to others that whilst we may not be perfect we are trying and we are changing for the better. I have the honour of working with all 7 of our Employee Led Networks locally to help drive activity to create a clear message about the importance of Equality Diversity and Inclusion. Our aim is to reduce unconscious bias by raising awareness and understanding of the multitude of facets in our vibrant and diverse workforce and customer base.



**Jen Kingsmill**  
**Senior Legal Advisor**  
**RAC**

As a pansexual woman working in the legal sector there is the ability to hide your sexuality through terms such as 'Partner' and 'they' rather than

'her' and 'she'. The legal sector especially, as a white, male, and heterosexually dominated sector, lends itself to the feelings of not fitting in if you do not fall within that category.

However, knowing this and working at a couple of companies where I did hide myself I realised how much I needed an ally, and if I needed an ally how much someone else would too. We spend so much of our time at work, to not be your full self can put a strain on your ability and your relationships in and outside of work.

At my next company, I ensured I was out from day one and worked to create an LGBT+ internal network, and later I joined the Proud Bristol Committee. As a member of a minority community it is essential to look out for each other and let people know that we are here. We are not alone and we must be visible!



**Lucy Ann Triggles**  
**Business Support Assistant –**  
**Housing Benefit Revenues & Benefits**  
**Department**  
**Bristol City Council**

I feel comfortable as part of the LGBT+ group and find a lot of support and help from the members and events that I attend.

As an Asexual person I often encounter stigma in the face of coming out, but after admitting to my team and being 'out' recently I feel as if I have overcome a huge hurdle for those of us that don't automatically get thought of when people think of LGBT.



**Mairead McLoughlin**  
**Person Centred Planning Co-ordinator –**  
**Bristol Community Links South (BCLS)**  
**LGBT+ Ally**  
**Bristol City Council**

I work at Bristol Community Links South and I am a Proud LGBTQ+ Ally.

I attended my first Pride event in 2019 with my niece, a work colleague and her granddaughter, I was so excited. We did the parade. The day was vibrant and full of fun, it was a really great day. I loved the inclusiveness and that people could be free to be themselves.

I first got in contact with Chair of BCC LGBT+ Group as I wanted to get some LGBT+ rainbow lanyards for Bristol Community Links Teams and South Bristol Re-enablement Team.

I have since caused somewhat of a riot and everyone's asking me for them everywhere I go! This can only be seen as a positive movement and shows that BCC Colleagues are happy to show their support.

As an LGBTQ+ Ally I feel it is very important to celebrate the diversity of our workforce and for those that identify as LGBTQ+ are able to feel that they can be out at work if they choose without fearing any negative reactions or intolerance.



## **Marie Mighty**

**Social Worker – Hospitals & Front Door  
BCC Disabled Employee Group Chair – LGBT+ Ally  
Bristol City Council**

As a black, disabled woman, I can fully comprehend the challenges faced by LGBT+ colleagues every day.

I feel it is important that we support one another, embrace our differences, accept people for who they are, be kind to one another and have minds that are open to learning about those around us, which can enrich our own life experience and increase our understanding.

I am very proud to be an LGBT+ ally, and I really enjoy working with my LGBT+ colleagues, learning about the challenges they face, and working together to see how we might overcome them, fight prejudice and ignorance and achieve true equality.



## **Mark Williams**

**Head of Human  
Resources  
Bristol City Council**

As an organisation we are striving ensure inclusion at the heart of everything we do. We are on a journey and have much more work to do.

Being an ally helps me to understand and appreciate the challenges that the LGBT+ community face, not just in our workplace but throughout society and the world. I am very proud to be an LGBT+ ally and through my own leadership will publically advocate LGBT+ rights to enable us to become a truly inclusive community and organisation.



## Martin Spellacey

Trainer  
Bristol City Council

What exactly is an LGBT+ Role model and what are they supposed to do?

A question I've asked myself many times since the time when I was Chair of the LGBT+ Employee Group for Bristol City Council. I attended a role model workshop and I realised that there are as many different types of role model as there are people. But anyone who identifies as LGBT+ and who displays aspirational behaviour is well on the way.

Now, if I hear any inappropriate comments in the workplace I use the UHT method to challenge them by saying something like "I **Understand** that you didn't mean to be offensive, **However**, that language is stigmatising. **Therefore**, please refrain from using it".



## Michael Bray

Senior Associate – Real Estate  
Freeths LLP

I am very proud to be part of the progressive and inclusive culture at Freeths. I have been able to bring 100% of myself to work since my very first day. Diversity and inclusivity is pivotal not only to delivering excellent client service but also in bringing together and motivating successful teams in terms of output, as well as diversity of thought and ideas. We want people to come to work and do their job in an open and supportive environment without wasting energy on being anything other than who they are.

I am a committee member of a professional LGBT+ network, ProudBristol, and I co-lead its Partnership and Community Engagement Initiatives. ProudBristol brings together LGBT+ individuals, allies and employee networks from across Bristol to share best practice, promote inclusive workplaces and connect people across the Bristol region and beyond.

I have also been profiled as a role model in Stonewall's Starting Out Guide, and I often speak at LGBT+ events, seminars and panel sessions on LGBT+ issues.







**Michelle Graham-McMorrow**  
**Youth & Community Worker**  
**Bristol City Council**

Hello I am a BCC youth and community worker for LGBT+ young people. Part of my job spec is to be positively identified as LGBT and this has never been difficult. In my work place I have felt comfortable and supported being LGBT+ and even received a special bouquet from the team when I got married this year. It is so important to have validation and acceptance which has always happened in this organisation.



**Mike Jackson**  
**Executive Director of Resources**  
**– Head of Paid Service LGBT+ Ally**  
**Bristol City Council**

Like everyone else, I want to be myself at work. I'm proud of our commitment to equalities, and as senior equalities champion for the council I'm determined to do everything I can to create the kind of environment in our workplace where everyone can bring all of themselves to work.



**Monika Swiatek**  
**Senior UX and Content Designer**  
**Bristol City Council**

Living in Bristol and working for BCC I feel that finally I don't have to worry that when I talk about my wife people will make unpleasant comments. In Poland discriminative comments directed to LGBT+ people are sadly still present even in a public debate.

Knowing that in my workplace I have a formal protection against discriminative behaviours and I have a supportive colleagues and LGBT+ employee group I feel like I can live my life without worry that my sexual orientation can affect my professional life in any way.

While UK dropped to the forth position in European LGBT rights ranking (ILGA Europe 2018) Poland fell to the almost bottom of the ranking (38 out of 49). Poland, along with Armenia, Moldavia and Belarus are criticised for their poor environment for LGBT people. Unfortunately, I can feel this difference when I visit Warsaw, city where I lived for 33 years.

My family seeing how my life looks in the UK is not asking me if I will move back to Poland any more.



**Dr Nigel Jones**  
**Consultant Physician**  
**North Bristol NHS Trust**

I have been an “out” Doctor in the NHS since the late 1990’s and an “out” Consultant for 20 years now.

I am currently proud to be the LGBTQ+ Champion for North Bristol NHS Trust.

Being able to be what and who you are in the workplace and in society is vital for our sense of worth and well-being.

Sadly there are some parts of the world where not only is this not possible but it’s getting harder. Challenges to our understanding of what equality means have emerged this last year in such discussions as those around education in schools in Birmingham. To quote Peter Tatchell you are not equal until you ARE equal. It is so important to recognise and challenge behaviours that prevent us from reaching this and this has never been more important in this country and the world than it is now.



**Paul McAlary**  
**Social Worker Bristol City Council**

As a Social Worker, part of my role is to promote and encourage equality and diversity.

It is therefore really important to me that my actions in the workplace are congruent with my values and beliefs. Luckily, working at Bristol, City Council I feel able to 'be myself' and practice in a way that doesn't compromise my integrity or self-respect. In this way, I am able to be a 'role model' for service users and citizens who I come into contact with every day.

Irrespective of whether they identify as LGBT+, my feeling able to be appropriately transparent about my own identity also allows for me to foster collaborative relationships, which are key to person-centred practice."



**Pete Badger MTCP**  
**Associate Sustainability & Planning Consultant**  
**Stride Treglown**

When I entered the workplace after university, initially I felt like I needed to retreat into the closet – I was uncertain how people would react to my sexuality.

Becoming involved in the 'Proud Bristol' professional networking group helped me to feel more confident to raise issues LGBT+ issues in my workplace and I'm pleased to say that Stride Treglown have since supported my continued involvement in ProudBristol, hosted multiple LGBT+ events, and have supported grass-roots initiatives to become involved Bristol Pride.

It's my hope and belief that increased LGBT+ visibility in the workplace and in professional networks will enable more LGBT+ people to feel able to bring their whole self to work from day one.



**Robert Kerse**  
**Chief Operating Officer**  
**University of Bristol**

Being out at work can make a difference to the lives of others in ways that we may not see or ever be aware of. We all need to feel that 'people like us' are valued and respected in our workplace. It's the only way that each and every one of us can reach our potential at work and have a positive experience.

The wellbeing of our staff and the creation of an inclusive environment where every individual can thrive is at the heart of my role as the University of Bristol's Chief Operating Officer.

Phobias of LGBT+ people remain an issue. We can all make a difference through being out at work in whatever way, big or small, that you feel comfortable.



**Ros Jiggins**  
**Contract Manager - HR Workforce and**  
**Organisational Design LGBT+ Ally**  
**Bristol City Council**

As a passionate advocate for wellbeing for all employees, I am humbled by the struggles some experience. I believe BCC a diverse employer and we are developing an awareness of how we can improve the lives of all through acceptance.

We are individuals and unique; though we need to seek to understand, than demand sameness. We are ahead when compared to other organisations though we can improve further to embrace rather than to judge. I am proud to be an LGBT+ Ally.



## Shout Out Radio

### Bristol Community Radio Show

Original brain child of Terry Starr and created by BCfm's Mary Milton, Andy Shilton and Terry. ShoutOut Radio reaches 10years of broadcasting a weekly LGBTQ magazine show in 2020. Broadcasting from its home station of BCfm in central Bristol, it now covers multiple stations across the West and South West.

The show gives voices to groups within the LGBTQ/ QTPOC communities, including youth group Just Like Us, BAME group KiKi & Under The Brolly, covering the minorities and multiple genders within the community as well as Brigstowe, the Bristol based HIV charity.

2019 saw Bristol Pride reach 10years and a special multiple station broadcast including Ujima, BBC Radio Bristol and BBC Somerset, was organised by ShoutOut's Steff Barnett. We cover the serious, the funny and the ridiculous, news, views with a few tracks dropped in as well. We continue to reach out and work with groups such as Avon & Somerset Police and the NHS. The show has reached final nominations at The British Podcast Awards twice, alongside BBC and Channel 4 podcasts.





**Simon Nelson**  
**Equalities and Community**  
**Cohesion Officer**  
**Bristol City Council**

For me being out at work is crucial – it's important as a black man to ensure that the stereotypes of gay and black people are challenged; and that the myths surrounding race and sexuality can be openly discussed and explored.

My role brings me into contact with diverse people from members of all communities working towards even greater understanding of diversity and inclusion. Ensuring that mine and other organisations realise the potential and the benefits of a diverse workforce to

our city, one that is inclusive and that equally celebrates the lives of LGBT+ people – regardless of our differing journeys.



**Simone Burke**  
**Continuous Service Improvement**  
**Manager – Group Infrastructure**  
**and Operations – Digital Data and**  
**Technology Services, Department for**  
**Environment, Food & Rural Affairs**

After I got engaged under the northern lights in Norway, I went back to work and at first I didn't say a thing. It felt wrong and unfair. I wanted to celebrate with my colleagues and invite some of them to our wedding.

Back then I was working in IT in financial services. I was not involved with the employee LGBT+ network and hadn't come across many people who were out at work. It turned out it was easier for me to come out at work than with my family.

During my interview for the Environment Agency it was really comforting my interviewer mentioned all the employee networks that were available and after starting work there I immediately felt comfortable I could be myself and not go back playing the pronoun game.

Now at the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs I talk about my wife in conversation at work just as anyone else who uses that term would. It is easier and easier and has made me more relaxed and interactive at work.





**Steph Baker**  
**Head of Profession for Cost Engineers Defence Equipment & Support (part of MOD)**

Sometimes the most difficult and agonising decisions in life, once made, can turn out to be the most rewarding.

My decision or persuasion to come out and be myself at work was a pivotal point in my life. My work life has changed beyond recognition for the good and socially too being a more confident and relaxed person in my skin, has meant I am now able, with my friends to lead a normal life and to be accepted for who I am.

Key to my transformation was the support of my work colleagues who encouraged me. And with management that supported me and a fabulous Pride Network group to guide me I felt I could finally be the person I've long wished to be. I would never have been able to do it alone, but to draw strength from the people around you made it all possible.

My philosophy in life is to be happy, positive and proud of who you are. Just smile, it's infectious.

**Stephen Beet**  
**Head of Service – Adults Care & Support – People Directorate Bristol City Council**

When I joined BCC in 2000 I was still quite private about my sexuality and unsure about being out in the workplace.

Thankfully the world has changed and nowadays I am relaxed and open about who I am and it just doesn't feel like an issue. In my role I try to act as a positive role model so that other staff feel safe to be open about their lives at work.

I know that in some places people do still experience discrimination at work so it's still really important that we tackle this and ensure everyone is safe.



**Steve Clampin**  
**Parks Development Officer**  
**Bristol City Council**

For me being out at work is being myself and part of who I am as an LGBT person.

Knowing that my employer is supportive of all equalities issues is important as I know that if there are any issues I have the support of management and colleagues.

I would always encourage others to be 'out' at work, it makes life much easier in the long run to be yourself.



## Stuart Harbut

**Day Service Worker – Adult Social Care  
LGBT+ Ally Bristol City Council**

I am a Person Centred Planner and Inclusion Worker for Bristol City Council. I am incredibly proud to be an LGBT+ Ally. That is me on the left playing trombone with The Ambling Band at 2019's Pride March. I find it a great privilege to be part of the procession, to share and contribute to this amazing experience. It is one of my favourite gigs of the year. There is joy in the Pride march that you don't find anywhere else. As well as joy there is a defiant pride, a unity and a shared purpose to challenge discrimination. Every year it gets bigger with greater numbers with a real party, carnival atmosphere. A time of celebration.

We live in a fearful partisan time. Where change is being resisted by aspects of our communities. It is more important than ever to challenge prejudice and discrimination in all of its forms. It is essential for us as

local council representatives to promote diversity, inclusivity and to bring about meaningful change for all people. To be on the right side of history. It is through these every day challenges that we collectively push back against prejudice and make our communities a safe, nurturing, environment for our friends, colleagues, families and children.



## Su Akgun

**Diversity and Wellbeing Manager – LGBT+ Ally  
Osborne Clarke**

As Diversity and Wellbeing Manager for Osborne Clarke I am proud to support and be an ally to LGBT+ people both at Osborne Clarke and in the wider community. I am lucky that I feel able to be myself everywhere, both in and outside of work, and I want everyone to be able to both be themselves and be comfortable with the way they are treated and seen by others.

At Osborne Clarke we have started a great LGBT+ network called Osborne Clarke Pride and I am proud to be associated with it and to stand up for LGBT+ people wherever they are.

It is so important that people from all backgrounds and identities feel a sense of belonging and are able to be the best they can be, without restrictions.

For a more inclusive world we need to stand together and I am very happy to be doing so with my LGBT+ colleagues and friends.



## Suzanne Doyle

**Executive and Governance  
Manager, Bristol SU Co-Chair of  
the University of Bristol LGBT+  
Staff Network**



Bristol SU is a fantastic organisation to work for. In 2018 we became 43rd in the Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers for all the work we do around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), including our Chief Exec Samantha Budd winning the Diversity Champion Award for the Education Sector. This is a real testament to the work our student leaders, and the staff team do to support LGBT+ staff and students.

Bristol SU is part of the University of Bristol and as Co-Chair of the LGBT+ Staff Network being myself at work is really important to me. With the LGBT+ Staff Committee and EDI Team of the University, led by Tracy Brunnock, we created a role models and supporters programme to ensure that there is visibility, awareness and understanding about the LGBT+ community. Working in a University environment is great but it is important that you encourage and support diversity of staff and students to make work a more inclusive, happy and positive experience.



**Tamsila Tauqir**  
**Materials Engineer Technician**  
**University of the West of England**

I work as a materials engineering technician at UWE and at first I wasn't sure how an all-male technician team would react to my joining. I was really pleased with the fact that everyone was so nonplussed when I came Out during passing conversations and I was referring to 'she/her' in context of partners.

I think people were more surprised by my commitment to my faith and had questions about that, particularly as I'm also an Imam with the Inclusive Mosque Initiative, which I co-founded several years ago.





## **Tim Borrett**

**Director: Policy, Strategy and Partnerships  
Bristol City Council**

I started at Bristol City Council in 2013 and it was actually the first time I'd been out at work. There hadn't been much of a conscious choice in that, it hadn't really come up outside of an immediate circle of friends, family and close colleagues. I remember being struck by the difference of working somewhere that showed an interest and was actively interested in equality, diversity and inclusion.

As my career progressed I really started to understand the importance of diversity in the workplace from lived experience, rather than it being a positive but largely notional concept. Now I'm really pleased to have a job where I can make a difference and have the opportunity to show leadership.

There is still much more to do, whether as an organisation, a city or a country. All sorts of under-representation, particularly in senior roles, is still a real issue and prevents us truly benefitting from the rich diversity society has to offer. Publications like this are a welcome contribution to that, demonstrating that this is an inclusive, welcoming place and, I hope, one that always offers support and reassurance to anyone who might need it.



# Q&A

## **How are LGB & T people discriminated against?**

Heteronormativity is the cultural bias in favour of opposite-sex relationships and against same-sex relationships.

Heteronormativity means that heterosexual relationships are viewed as normal and lesbian, gay and bisexual relationships as not normal. This view can manifest as Heterosexism – Prejudice against individuals and groups who display non heterosexual behaviours or identities which can lead to homophobia.

## **How does sexual orientation relate to Transgender people?**

A Transgender person is somebody who identifies as a gender which is different to the gender with which they were born. Transgender people can be gay, straight, Bisexual or Asexual - sexual orientation is not dependent on gender identity.


Transgender people are protected under the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, NOT sexual orientation.

## **What is Transphobia?**

Transphobia is intolerance of gender diversity and is based around the idea that there are only two sexes – male or female that you have from birth and that people who fit gender stereotypes (by sounding, looking or behaving like men and women are 'supposed to') are somehow superior to those that do not.

## **What is a Straight or LGBT+ Ally?**

"Straight Ally" is a term used to describe Heterosexual people who believe that Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people should experience full equality



in the workplace. Good Straight Allies recognise that gay people can perform better if they can be themselves and Straight Allies use their role within an organisation to create a culture where this can happen.” Stonewall resource Straight Allies.

### **What about people who are Bisexual?**

Bisexuality generally refers to having attraction to more than one gender. It is a broad term which may include the following groups and more: people who see themselves as attracted to both men and women, people who are mostly attracted to one gender but recognise this is not exclusive, people who experience their sexual identities as fluid and changeable over time and people who see their attraction as regardless of gender.

### **Who is protected under the protected characteristic of sexual orientation?**

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of a protected characteristic. One of these characteristics is sexual orientation, which protects lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people from harassment and discrimination.

## Contacts list for included organisations

### **Bristol City Council LGBT+ Employee Group**

[lgbtplus@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:lgbtplus@bristol.gov.uk)

### **Osborne Clarke Pride**

[gavin.williams@osborneclarke.com](mailto:gavin.williams@osborneclarke.com)

### **UWE** [lgbt@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:lgbt@uwe.ac.uk)

### **Police** [lgbtliaison@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:lgbtliaison@avonandsomerset.police.uk)

### **Environment Agency**

[lgbt.network@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:lgbt.network@environment-agency.gov.uk)

### **Ministry of Defence** [@MODLGBT](mailto:@MODLGBT)

### **University of Bristol**

[staff-lgbtx-committee@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:staff-lgbtx-committee@bristol.ac.uk)

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, audio tape, large print, easy English, BSL video or CD rom or plain text please contact **0117 922 3300**.

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## Community contacts

### **Bivisible Bristol** [bivisiblebristol@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bivisiblebristol@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Bristol LGBTQ+ VIP** [VIP@otrbristol.org.uk](mailto:VIP@otrbristol.org.uk)

### **Bristol Pride** [www.bristolpride.co.uk](http://www.bristolpride.co.uk)

### **BS3 LGBT** [bs3lgbt@gmail.com](mailto:bs3lgbt@gmail.com)

### **Freedom Youth**

[www.facebook.com/freedomyouthlgbtq](http://www.facebook.com/freedomyouthlgbtq)

### **Indigo** [www.indigonetwork.co.uk](http://www.indigonetwork.co.uk)

### **LGBT Bristol** [www.lgbtbristol.org.uk](http://www.lgbtbristol.org.uk)

### **LGBT Health Forum**

[www.lgbthealthforumbristol.co.uk](http://www.lgbthealthforumbristol.co.uk)

### **Members** [www.members-bristol.weebly.com](http://www.members-bristol.weebly.com)

### **Off the Record Bristol** [www.otrbristol.org.uk](http://www.otrbristol.org.uk)

### **Out Stories Bristol** [www.outstoriesbristol.org.uk](http://www.outstoriesbristol.org.uk)

### **PROUDbristol** [proudbristol1lgbt@gmail.com](mailto:proudbristol1lgbt@gmail.com)

### **SARI Bristol Hate Crime Services** [www.sariweb.org.uk](http://www.sariweb.org.uk)

### **Shine Network** [ishine@freeths.co.uk](mailto:ishine@freeths.co.uk)

### **Trans Bristol** [www.transbristol.wordpress.com](http://www.transbristol.wordpress.com)

### **Vision BAME** [Visionbme@yahoo.com](mailto:Visionbme@yahoo.com)