

We believe in a fair
and equal society
where all lesbian, gay,
bisexual and trans
people can achieve
their full potential.

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INCLUDING ALL WOMEN



LGBT
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We use “inclusion” in this resource, but you may have heard of intersectionality, to describe the ways in which different forms of discrimination are interconnected.

Check out ‘Learn More’ at the back for more information

WHY THIS RESOURCE?

In society, people are discriminated against for parts of themselves they cannot change. This guide will look at the experiences of those who are at the intersections, meaning lesbian and bisexual (LB) women who may also be older, disabled, women of colour (or **BAME**¹), trans or non-binary.

This guide aims to introduce inclusion to help us better support those with marginalised experiences, its importance and how we can include all womxn*

This resource will not cover all experiences, but we hope to start a conversation about how people's experiences are connected.

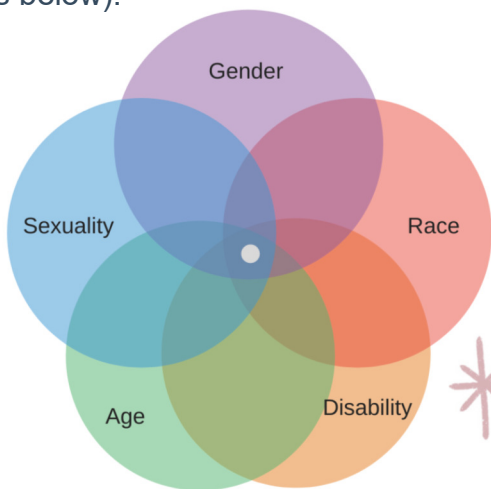
*womxn (women X) is an alternative spellings of women, which is used by some as more inclusive of non-binary and trans people and women of colour.

¹BAME = Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic



WHAT EVEN IS INCLUSION?

Inclusion is about recognising, considering and taking actions to break down barriers for those who are experiencing multiple marginalisation, who exist at the intersections (darker petal shapes below).



This diagram looks at some of the characteristics that are protected under the *Equality Act 2010*. But there are also other things like class and geography that create barriers for individuals.

Discrimination towards people on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, race, age, disability, religion or faith has been happening for a long time.

It's embedded into structures like healthcare, education or employment and greatly affects the everyday lives of those experiencing it.

What does this mean?

For those at the intersections, daily life includes **microaggressions**:

regular verbal, behavioural or environmental responses originating from these structures (eg. racism, homophobia). For example, being asked “so who’s the man in the relationship?”. These have an increasing negative impact on wellbeing.



This does *not* mean those who are not at the intersections won't face difficulties. Learning about the real-world impact of these historical structures can help everyone to break down barriers and create a world that is a little more inclusive.

SEXISM &...

There is a growing public movement around tackling **sexism** and discrimination against women. There are universal experiences for all women, but for lesbian and bisexual (LB) women there are additional barriers because of **heteronormativity** which is the assumption that everyone is straight.

This assumption means LB women experience barriers in daily life, coming from the homophobia and biphobia that is ingrained in society. This has a cumulative effect and is amplified for LB women with multiple minority identities.

LB women often find themselves repeatedly coming out when accessing healthcare:

30% of lesbians &
23% of bi women
have experienced
inappropriate curiosity
from healthcare staff.

Stonewall 2018

More than half of
LGBT women have
experienced depression
and anxiety. Compared
to 1 in 5 (19%) women
overall in the UK.

Stonewall 2018, NHS 2014



“If my Doctors know I have a wife, it saves important time when I need help in a medical crisis as I have life threatening conditions.”

- Rosie, 63

“If I have any specific issues relating to my identity, how would anyone know how to address them with me if they think that I’m straight?” - Tina, 35

WOMEN OF COLOUR

OR BAME WOMEN

You may hear women of colour or BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) used when talking about the experiences of LGBT women who experience: **racism**, sexism and **LGBTphobia**.

The daily discrimination LGBT BAME women face can range from comments like “where are you really from?” to assumptions about family, culture, language ability or if someone is “out”, because of the colour of their skin.



51% of BAME LGBT people have said they have faced discrimination based on their ethnicity from within LGBT communities.

Stonewall 2018

When many parts of you come under constant examination this can be mentally and emotionally draining. Many women of colour find themselves consciously controlling how they talk and act as a result. This is known as: **code-switching.**

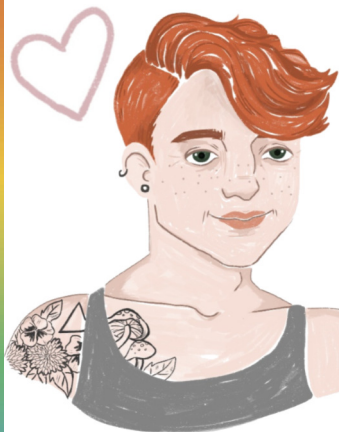
Check out ‘Learn More’ at the back for more information.

“On a night out I was racially profiled and mocked when wearing a bindi, but when a white friend does it it’s fashion” - ND, 25

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT...?

- ☒ We can challenge assumptions about women of colour and who they are. LGBT people are incredibly diverse and experiences are unique to the individual.
- ☒ We can listen to LGBT women of colour and take their issues seriously. Racism, sexism and LGBTphobia can take form in unconscious biases and assumptions.

TRANS WOMEN & NON-BINARY PEOPLE



“I often feel like my gender expression is a tightrope walk – feminine enough to be gendered correctly, but not so feminine as to be seen as a caricature.”
- Emma, 23

For trans women there is often pressure to fit into a certain mould, traditionally feminine, to really be seen as the woman they are.

For non-binary and gender non-conforming people, many feel they have to tone down the way they look to not be “too much”.

Many decide their presentation (how they look) based on safety, as not ‘fitting in’ can mean a heightened level of harassment (verbal and physical).



WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT...?

- ✓ Where possible, challenging misconceptions around trans and non-binary identities. This can make a friendlier and more inclusive world for everyone
- ✓ Supporting, amplifying and celebrating the work and voices of trans and non-binary people is a great way to show solidarity.
- ✓ We can normalise saying our name and pronouns when meeting new people. A **pronoun** is the word we use when not using someone's name. "Hi I'm X, I use she/her pronouns – what about you?"
- ✓ Are there gender neutral toilets on offer? If not, consider renaming them as 'stalls' and 'urinals' if at an external venue.

58% of trans women and **75.3%** of non-binary people have *avoided* expressing their gender identity for fear of negative reaction from others.

National LGBT Survey 2017



DISABLED WOMEN

Disabled women are often not visible in LGBT spaces. This can lead to assumptions being made about disabled women's sexuality, relationship dynamics, living arrangements and needs.

These assumptions mean disabled women find themselves coming out repeatedly and dealing with regular non-consensual touching.

For disabled LGBT women, **accessibility** greatly impacts on being and feeling part of the community.



“When people make real efforts to be inclusive and have clear representation, I feel much more confident to speak up and state my needs.”

- GCB, 30

Can a wheelchair user physically enter a building? Does the lighting make it difficult for visually impaired or autistic women to navigate a venue?

Exclusion can impact on the mental health of LGBT disabled people.

26% of LGBT disabled people face prejudice in the LGBT community because of being disabled

Stonewall 2018

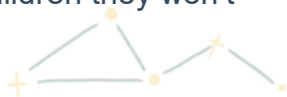
WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT...?



- ☒ Actively consider accessibility when planning: location, transport, steps, lighting, seating, video and photo captions & more!
- ☒ Include LGBT disabled women in planning, publicity and celebrate their work.

OLDER WOMEN

Older LGBT women experience assumptions that they will not be LGBT. Closely linked is an assumption that older women must have children and if they have children they won't (or can't) be LGBT.



These assumptions can make spaces for older people hard to be in. Erasing the unique experiences and needs of older LGBT women from discussions and services that will impact them directly.

“I’m a crown green bowler, and I love it. But I no longer am comfortable playing in mixed teams. Men can be aggressive and gay jokes are curtailed when I’m close. My new (third) team is much better though as they don’t care I’m gay” - Kate, 65

Older LGBT people are more likely to live alone (**41%** vs 28%), and have concerns about ageing because of their sexuality.

Stonewall 2011



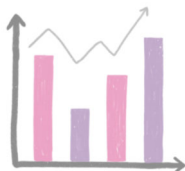
WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT...?

- ✓ Challenge ageism (discrimination based on someone's age) inside and out of LGBT spaces.
- ✓ Challenge stereotypes about older women, especially LGBT women, their families and commitments they may have.
- ✓ Talk about how some kids have two mums, dads, parents or just one (and they may or may not be LGBT!)
- ✓ Ensure services that older people access have sufficient training and awareness around LGBT issues.

THE NUMBERS...

Women, especially LB women, experience greater health inequalities. Those experiencing multiple forms of marginalisation face these at an intensified level.

In understanding this we are able to tackle some of those additional barriers:



ACCESSING HEALTHCARE

22% of BAME LGBT people have experienced homophobia, biphobia or transphobia from their GP, compared to 13% of white LGBT people.

LGBT Foundation 2018

MENTAL HEALTH

59% of LGBT disabled people have felt life was not worth living at some point in the last year, compared to **31%** of LGBT people who aren't disabled.

Stonewall 2018

THE NUMBERS...

SEXUAL ASSAULT

In the UK women with long-term illness or disability are **twice** as likely to experience sexual assault.

ONS 2017

DOMESTIC ABUSE

17% of BAME LGBT people experienced domestic abuse from their partner in the last year, **15%** for disabled LGBT people compared to **11%** for LGBT people overall

Stonewall 2018

HOMELESSNESS

1 in 4 (25%) of trans people have experienced homelessness compared to 1 in 6 (16%) of people who aren't trans.

Stonewall 2018

LEARN MORE

A Guide to Being a Trans Ally

www.lgbt.foundation/downloads/transalliesguide

Code-switching – case studies from LGBT and BAME people

www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-45978770

Disability and non-consensual touching – first hand experiences for disabled women (content warning)

www.privateplacespublicspaces.blog/blog-feed

Intersectionality – Search www.ted.com talks: *“The urgency of intersectionality”* by Kimberlé Crenshaw.

LGBT Foundation Evidence Exchange

www.lgbt.foundation/evidence

Microaggressions – an analogy with mosquito bites:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDd3bzA7450

Supporting BAME Trans People

www.gires.org.uk/inclusivity-supporting-bame-trans-people



GROUPS

(Greater Manchester)

LGBT Foundation delivering advice, support and information services to LGBT communities.

www.lgbt.foundation

0345 3 30 30 30

Rainbow Noir a social group for QTIPOC (queer, trans and intersex people of colour)

www.facebook.com/rainbownoirmcr

GMCDP Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People promotes the rights of disabled people and inclusion in society

www.gmcdp.com

Age UK advice for LGBT older people

www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/relationships-family/lgbt

GLOSSARY

Accessibility



How an environment has been designed or set up for people with disabilities. Includes barriers other than physical (structural, mental, financial) for all people who experience marginalisation.

BAME

Abbreviation of the term Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. BAME and people (or women) of colour may both be used.

Biphobia

The hatred, fear or lack of understanding of people who are bisexual, or those who are perceived to be.

Disabled

(Social model) Disabled women are disabled because of barriers that prevent them from fully participating in society. Disability is an inclusive term, which may include those with long term conditions, mental health conditions.

Gender identity

Any word(s) that you use to describe your gender. This may include: man, woman, non-binary, genderfluid, agender etc.



Heteronormativity

When a service or person does not consider the needs of people who are LGB / The assumption that everyone is straight.

Homophobia

The hatred, fear or lack of understanding of people who are gay or lesbian, or those who are perceived to be.

Intersex

Intersex people are individuals who are born with anatomy or physiology differing from stereotypes of what constitute typical “male” and “female”.

LGBTphobia

Used as a catch all term for discrimination towards someone who identifies as LGBT.

Marginalised

A term to describe communities that face issues and barriers, often based on their identity or social class. This may include to housing, employment or healthcare.

People may belong to more than one marginalised community.

Misgender

Using words, phrases or pronouns that don't match a person's gender identity, e.g. referring to a trans man as 'she' or referring to a butch woman as 'he'.

Non-Binary

Describes someone who identifies as a gender outside the binary identities of “man” and “woman”. This might mean they experience a fluid or fixed gender, multiple genders, a different gender, or no gender.



GLOSSARY

CONTINUED

Racism

Discrimination based on the ethnicity of a person, linked to the colour of their skin.

Sexism

Discrimination based on the gender of a person

Transphobia

The hatred, fear of trans people or people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the gender they were assigned at birth.

Trans woman

A woman who is trans, and was assigned differently at birth

Women of Colour

A term used by a number of women from non-white backgrounds to reflect their collective identities and experiences.



Although this resource looks at the experiences of LGBT women, there is a lot of crossover for many who also have minority or marginalised identities.

You may find it useful to apply the same principles around inclusion to all marginalised groups

Small changes can make a big difference.

Thank you for reading.