

# LEEDS LGBT+ MAPPING PROJECT

A SNAPSHOT OF LGBT+ ASSETS AND CHALLENGES IN LEEDS

FULL REPORT



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Acknowledgements .....	5
2. Background .....	6
3. Project Aims .....	7
4. Methods, community governance and participation.....	8
5. Survey sample .....	10
6. Glossary of terms .....	11
7. Executive Summary and Recommendations .....	13
Key findings.....	13
Recommendations.....	15
8. LGBT+ community and communities in Leeds.....	18
LGBT+ demographics in Leeds.....	18
The importance of LGBT+ communities in Leeds.....	19
Do LGBT+ people in Leeds feel part of a community? .....	20
What people value most about LGBT+ community in Leeds .....	21
9. Concerns and needs of LGBT+ people in Leeds.....	24
Need for safer and more accessible spaces for LGBT+ people .....	24
Need to address the negative impact of heteronormativity in services and the need for specialised services for LGBT+ people .....	26
Need for capacity building in LGBT+ community .....	27
Need to address homophobia and transphobia in Leeds.....	28
10. Leeds LGBT+ landscape.....	29
Composition of LGBT+ landscape in Leeds.....	29
Support for additional LGBT+ resources .....	35
Levels of LGBT+ community action and participation.....	37
10. Learning from other cities .....	41
12. Identifying Leeds' LGBT+ community assets.....	43
Yorkshire MESMAC and LGBT+ communities in Leeds.....	45
Leeds 'Gay Quarter' and LGBT+ communities in Leeds.....	47
Wharf Chambers Cooperative Club and LGBT+ communities in Leeds .....	51
Leeds Pride and LGBT+ communities in Leeds .....	53
Other LGBT+ community assets .....	53
How do people learn about LGBT+ activities in Leeds .....	56
13. LGBT+ Leeds health and wellbeing experiences.....	59
Mental Health .....	59

Sexual health.....	61
Safe and welcoming spaces .....	61
Trans health care .....	62
Drug and alcohol abuse .....	62
<i>LGBT+ Health and wellbeing SECTION summary .....</i>	63
<b>14. LGBT + Community Safety .....</b>	<b>64</b>
Community safety priorities for LGBT+ people in Leeds.....	64
Transphobic and homophobic hate crime .....	64
Sexual assault.....	65
Homelessness .....	65
Racist hate crime.....	65
Domestic violence and abuse .....	66
<i>LGBT+ experiences of violence, abuse, discrimination and prejudice .....</i>	66
<i>LGBT+ Community Safety Summary .....</i>	70
<b>15. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>16. Key recommendations .....</b>	<b>74</b>
Safe, inclusive and accesible spaces.....	74
Accessible and up to date information about LGBT+ Leeds.....	74
Sustainable and supported LGBT+ community action .....	74
Addressing health inequalities amongst LGBT+ communities .....	75
Addressing LGBT+ Community safety .....	76
Further consultation with the most marginalised and harder to reach LGBT+ communities .....	76
Works Cited .....	77
Appendix 1. Directory.....	80
A .....	80
B .....	81
C .....	83
D .....	83
E .....	84
F.....	85
G.....	85
I.....	87
L.....	87
M .....	96
N .....	98
O .....	98
P .....	100

Q .....	101
R .....	104
S .....	105
T .....	105
U .....	109
V .....	110
W .....	110
Y .....	111

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all the LGBT+ groups and individuals who gave their time and their knowledge to this project; to Leeds City Council, especially Geoff Turnbull, Rob Wilson, Anna Clifford, Malachi Rangecroft and the Leeds LGB&T\* Community Hub; to Yorkshire MESMAC, Leicester LGBT Centre, Equity Partnership, and LGBT Foundation; to Leeds Community Foundation, particularly Simone Ivatts; Leeds Beckett Students' Union for their work in collecting survey responses.

Thank you to all the readers who gave feedback on this report, Simone Ivatts, Jim Garside, Jean Townsend, Emily Axel, Katharine Terrell and Say Burgin.

Many thanks to the Project Advisory Group members – Ange Dennis, Emily Metcalfe, Frances McClean, Grace Purnell, Howard Beck, Jack Johnstone, Jamie Fletcher, Katharine Terrell, Lauren Blenkinsop, Marvina Newton, Polly Donna McGarey, Sophia Thomas and Susan Phillips.

In the interest of transparency - at the time of writing the author Anne-Marie Stewart was a member of Wharf Chambers Club Collective, and Project Advisory Group member Polly Donna McGarey was a member of Wharf Chambers Coop.

Report authored by Anne-Marie Stewart, April 2017



Physical and  
Sensory  
Impairment  
Network



**volition**  
The voice of Leeds mental  
health voluntary sector



**Leeds**  
CITY COUNCIL



## **2. BACKGROUND**

The LGBT+ Mapping Project is a short piece of exploratory work commissioned by Leeds Community Foundation in conjunction with Leeds City Council as part of their commitment to making Leeds an LGBT+ friendly city. This research was undertaken by Anne-Marie Stewart, Community Development Worker at Leeds Older People's Forum, on behalf of the Four Forums Partnership, between November 2016 and February 2017.

### **3. PROJECT AIMS**

By looking at both formal and informal LGBT+ networks and infrastructure in Leeds the Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project sought to map out LGBT+ activity and assets to provide a snapshot of the city and to build an understanding of the following:

- The levels of LGBT+ community activity and capacity in the city
- How to build on and grow existing LGBT+ assets and activity in the city
- The challenges and exclusions facing LGBT+ people and communities in Leeds
- What LGBT+ people value in Leeds and what they consider necessary to ensure LGBT+ people and communities are supported

This report provides an evidence base for further development, necessary for understanding how to best resource LGBT+ communities in Leeds.

## **4. METHODS, COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

This work took place over a four-month period from November 2016 to February 2017. The project engaged a number of data collection methods and strategies for ensuring the work was participatory and guided by voices from within LGBT+ communities in Leeds.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Information for this work was gathered through community outreach with LGBT+ groups and individuals (both online and face-to-face) including over 25 in-person conversations with key organisations and agencies from across the third sector, public sector and private sector in Leeds for whom LGBT+ people are important stakeholders. Some of these conversations were semi structured and guided, and some were 'getting to know you'.

### **MAPPING**

Mapping was undertaken as a way of identifying strengths and gaps within Leeds' LGBT+ community. Data for an online Google map and an A-Z directory was gathered through desk-based research, outreach in communities, and using social media to engage groups and through community asset mapping. Using this data an online map and a directory of LGBT+ related activity was produced, and activity identified as assets to LGBT+ people in Leeds.

### **SURVEY CONSULTATION**

A survey was developed and circulated online among a number of professional and community networks, across social media platforms, at LGBT+ History Month events and was available in paper format with freepost envelopes for those who don't have access to the internet. The survey focused on three themes: relationship and engagement with LGBT+ communities in Leeds; LGBT+ community safety; health, wellbeing and community support. The survey was live for 6 weeks and received 144 responses. Of these responses, 126 were useable, 15 were incomplete responses and 3 were completed by people who didn't identify as LGBT+.

### **PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP**

The Leeds LGBT+ Mapping project recruited 15 members to a Project Advisory Group (PAG) from LGBT+ communities in Leeds. The PAG has broad

representation across a number of identities, professions and backgrounds — faith, disability, ethnicity, age, caring responsibilities, mental health, gender—and across LGBT+ identities. The PAG offers guidance and governance to the project, and the Project Advisory Group Meetings feed into the development of recommendations, grounding the work within the community.

### **MARKET RESEARCH**

The project looked across the UK to other LGBT+ community resources in other cities to see what learning can be gathered from different organisational models. Visits were made to the LGBT Foundation in Manchester, the Leicester LGBT Centre, and Equity Partnership in Bradford.

### **DESK-BASED RESEARCH**

This report also draws on existing social research on LGBT+ communities in the UK and data sets available through the Leeds Observatory.

## 5. SURVEY SAMPLE

126 LGBT+ people participated in the Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project community survey

### Gender

- 47% Male (including trans men)
- 44% Female (including trans women)
- 9% Non-binary
- 82% gender was the same as registered at birth
- 18% gender was not the same as registered at birth

### Sexuality

- 44% Gay (87% men, 10% women)
- 22% Lesbian
- 25% Bisexual (65% women, 25% men, 9% non-binary)
- 20% Queer (65% women, 26% non-binary, 7% men)
- 3% Asexual

### Age

- 10% were 20 and under
- 31% were 21-30
- 28% were 31-40
- 13% were 41-50
- 10% were 51-60
- 6% were 61-70
- 2% were 70 and over

### Ethnicity

- 85% White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- 5% White Irish
- 1% White European
- 4% Any other White background
- 1% White and Black Caribbean
- 1% White and Black African
- 1% White and Asian
- 1% Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background
- 2% Asian/British Asian Pakistani
- 1% Any other Asian background

### Religion

- 73% No religion

- 16% Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)
- 4% Jewish
- 3% Buddhist
- 2% Other
- 1% Muslim

### Disability under the Equality Act

- 80% said no
- 20% said yes

### Health conditions

- 5% said they had two or more impairments and/or disabling medical conditions
- 8% said they had specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D
- 4% said they had a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder
- 13% said they had a long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
- 30% said they had a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
- 5% said they had a physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
- 2% said they were deaf or had a serious hearing impairment
- 1% said they were blind or had a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses

### Where in Leeds?

- 15% LS6
- 14% LS8
- 12% LS7
- 7% LS10
- 4% LS2
- 3% LS1, LS4, LS12, LS17, LS28
- 2% LS13, LS14, LS15, LS9, LS16, LS19, LS27
- 2% LS11, LS18, LS5, LS20

## 6. GLOSSARY OF TERMS<sup>1</sup>

**Agender** – refers to someone who does not have a gender that is binary, i.e. not male or female.

**Asexual** – refers to somebody who does not experience sexual attraction.

**BME** - acronym for Black and/or minority ethnic

**Cisgender** – refers to somebody who identifies with the same gender they were assigned at birth and is often understood as the opposite of transgender.

**Community assets** – in this report refers broadly to things that are common to a community of people and are of value to them. This can include public institutions or services, such as the NHS, or a local business that serves a community, such as a pub or café, or relationships between people.

**DIY** – in this report refers to a Do It Yourself ethic of self-sufficiency and autonomy. DIY cultures are often associated with queer and punk subcultures.

**DVA** – acronym for domestic violence and abuse

**Gay scene** – often refers to the mainstream commercial gay culture and economy found in cities or towns.

**Genderfluid** – refers to a person who does not experience their gender as fixed but fluctuates between either male, female or neither.

**Genderqueer** – refers to a person who does not experience their gender as either male or female but may identify as both together or neither.

**Heteronormativity** – refers to the dominant view which places heterosexual people, and cisgender gendered male and female people, as the social norm.

**Intersex** – intersex people are born with sex characteristics (including genitals, gonads and chromosome patterns) that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Some definitions taken from Stonewall Glossary of Terms, available at: [www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/glossary-terms](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/glossary-terms) [Accessed on 13 Apr. 2017]

**LGBT+** – acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans. The + signifies it is also inclusive of other non-heterosexual and trans experiences and identities such as agender and asexual.

**MSM** – acronym for men who have sex with men. Some men who engage in sexual activities with other men do not define themselves as gay, bisexual or queer.

**Non-binary** - an umbrella term for those who do not experience binary gender (i.e. male or female), such as genderqueer, or agender.

**Queer** – an umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities. The word has political connotations and is often used by those who are LGBT+ activists and political radicals. The word queer is sometimes used in opposition to 'mainstream' LGBT+ identities and cultures.

**Trans and transgender** – an umbrella term that includes people whose gender identity is the opposite of their assigned sex (trans men and trans women), and people who are not exclusively male or female, such as non-binary or gender-queer.

---

<sup>2</sup> Fact Sheet: Intersex, United Nations for LGBT Equality, available at: [unfe.org/system/unfe-65-Intersex\\_Factsheet\\_ENGLISH.pdf](http://unfe.org/system/unfe-65-Intersex_Factsheet_ENGLISH.pdf) [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].

## 7. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### KEY FINDINGS

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF LGBT+ COMMUNITIES IN LEEDS

- Almost 8 in 10 people said being part of an LGBT+ community was important to them, yet only 3 in 10 LGBT+ people said they felt part of an LGBT+ community. Almost 4 in 10 said they 'sometimes' feel part of an LGBT+ community
- LGBT+ people said they valued the following about Leeds' LGBT+ communities:
  - They are visible (have a presence in the city)
  - Have a DIY and grassroots spirit
  - Are supportive networks, friendships and communities of care
  - They allow people feel part of something larger
  - They are diverse
- Some of the concerns people had:
  - The need for safer and more accessible spaces for LGBT+ people (especially trans and non-binary people, older people, BME people, disabled people and women),
  - Mainstream services should better serve LGBT+ communities
  - The need for capacity building within the LGBT+ community to ensure the sustainability of community action
  - Homophobia and transphobia in the city.

#### LEEDS LGBT+ LANDSCAPE

- The mapping exercise recorded 102 activities – 81% were LGBT+ led and focussed, 19% were LGBT+ friendly
- Most activities took place in Leeds City Centre
- Almost 60% of LGBT+ activities were volunteer or community led – sustained by unpaid work.
- The majority of the activities mapped were social and support
- BME and disabled people are particularly underrepresented in activities and groups

#### LGBT+ COMMUNITY ASSETS

- Leeds Pride – annual city celebration of LGBT + community

- Yorkshire MESMAC – longstanding sexual health organisation with history working for HIV/ADS prevention. MESMAC delivers a number of different services relevant to LGBT+ people
- Wharf Chambers Cooperative – seen as a hub an ‘safe space’ for LGBT+ people in Leeds
- Gay Quarter – Leeds’ commercial gay venues on Lower Briggate and The Calls

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

---

- Findings indicate that sexual health inequalities remain a persistent concern amongst LGBT+ communities in Leeds.
- Although mental health, sexual health, safe and welcoming spaces, trans health care and drug and alcohol abuse are presented separately, for many LGBT+ people these issues are inextricably intertwined, negatively impacting and reinforcing each other.
- The lack of safe and welcoming spaces for many LGBT+ people means an increased risk of isolation and loneliness, as well as reinforcing difficult mental health experiences already associated with discrimination and prejudice, especially for those most marginalised.
- LGBT+ communities are disproportionately impacted by drug and alcohol abuse, driven by experiences of social marginalisation, discrimination and prejudice, and poorer mental health outcomes. Negative experiences with health care lead to and reinforce these poor outcomes.
- Leeds’ LGBT+ communities are experiencing a mental health crisis. In the last 5 years, 90% of respondents to the survey had experienced difficult mental health that severely impacted on their day-to-day functioning.

## COMMUNITY SAFETY

---

- Community safety concerns are intimately connected to health and wellbeing concerns. Literature has shown that social stigmatization and direct experiences of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse are connected to increased levels of stress, anxiety and depression, problematic drug and alcohol usage, smoking, internalised homophobia, and suicide. (Banks, 2003)
- Transphobic and homophobic hate crimes are a concern and a reality for LGBT+ people in Leeds. Only one third of survey respondents said they would have confidence in the police to respond effectively.

- Experiences of violence, abuse, prejudice and discrimination were broad and wide ranging. For many respondents these experiences were related to their actual or perceived sexuality.
- Trans and non-binary people are overrepresented across experiences of sexual assault, physical violence, verbal abuse, negative comments, harassment, bullying and homelessness.
- Women, trans men and non-binary people are overrepresented in experiences of sexual assault. One in four women who responded to the survey had experienced sexual assault. Over half of non-binary people who responded to the survey had experienced sexual assault.
- Addressing domestic violence and abuse amongst LGBT+ was another priority for LGBT+ people in Leeds.
- Racist hate was a concern for LGBT+ people who responded to the survey, and throughout the project people shared their experiences of racism within LGBT+ communities.
- Homelessness amongst LGBT+ people was a concern for over a third of survey respondents. The Albert Kennedy Trust estimates that one in four young homeless people will be LGBT.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### SAFE, INCLUSIVE AND ACCESIBLE SPACES

- Local councils and funders should value and invest in the provision of safe and inclusive LGBT+ spaces.
- An LGBT+ Charter Mark for Leeds that would identify places as inclusive and safe for LGBT+ people. Recognising the intersectional oppressions that face communities this Charter Mark must also be fully inclusive and safe for disabled people, BME people, women, people of faith and older people.
- The development of an inclusive LGBT+ community centre. Staffing of an LGBT+ community centre to be LGBT+ led, with a particular focus on underrepresented or marginalised groups e.g. trans, bisexual people and LGBT+ BME people.
- The development of an LGBT+ housing project that is intergenerational, supporting the needs of older and younger LGBT+ people in Leeds.

### ACCESSIBLE AND UP TO DATE INFORMATION ABOUT LGBT+ LEEDS

- Investigating the feasibility of developing an LGBT+ Hub website for Leeds to ensure information is widely available about what support there is in the city. For the website to be accessible, and include British

Sign Language interpretation and translation into community languages, for the website to be sustainable and adequately resourced.

## SUSTAINABLE AND SUPPORTED LGBT+ COMMUNITY ACTION

---

- Around half the LGBT+ activity identified is community led and volunteer run, which raises sustainability concerns. These efforts require support and resources, including but not limited to:
  - Greater availability of small grants for community groups and for the application process to be accessible.
  - An LGBT+ consortium in Leeds, of smaller groups and organisations, would foster this goal. Those who are most marginalised within LGBT+ communities should be brought to the fore, their voices amplified in the development of a consortium.
  - Building stronger networks – supporting established LGBT+ groups and projects to connect with emerging or smaller projects to share skills and resources, and connect agendas.

## ADDRESSING HEALTH INEQUALITIES AMONGST LGBT+ COMMUNITIES

---

- Inclusion of LGBT+ people in the design of services, to co-produce with LGBT+ organisations, groups and communities
- Development of LGBT+ led mental health services with a range of services including 1:1 counselling services and drop-in. Integrated services are important for people to feel comfortable and that they know where to go and feel trust.
- Addressing practical barriers for LGBT+ people accessing mental health services; ensuring their location is safe and accessible, and affordable.
- Training and accountability around LGBT+ issues for statutory and non-statutory mental health staff.
- Developing and supporting trans-led organisations and groups that provide support and advocacy on issues related to trans health. Recognising that trans people are the experts in their own lives, and best placed to develop supportive services for trans communities.

## ADDRESSING LGBT+ COMMUNITY SAFETY

---

- Greater monitoring of LGBT+ identities when recording hate crimes.
- Begin addressing racism within the gay scene and LGBT+ community. Facilitation of discussion on the issue of racism with LGBT+ communities, and the impact of racism on LGBT+ people of colour, including

collection of testimony from LGBT+ people affected by racism. Build a strategy for ensuring racism is challenged at all levels. Support for existing groups and projects are led by BME LGBT+ people.

- Training domestic violence services staff on how to support LGBT+ people, ensuring the inclusion of trans people and non-binary people in the DVA support services, for services and local authorities to provide clear signposting to local domestic violence services in Leeds that are available to LGBT+ communities.
- Training sexual violence support services staff on how to support LGBT+ people, ensuring the inclusion of trans people and non-binary people in sexual violence survivors' services.

#### FURTHER CONSULTATION WITH THE MOST MARGINALISED AND HARDER TO REACH LGBT+ COMMUNITIES

---

- Though the Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project community survey has successfully engaged many LGBT+ people in Leeds there is the need for further consultation with BME and disabled LGBT+ people.

## **8. LGBT+ COMMUNITY AND COMMUNITIES IN LEEDS**

### **LGBT+ DEMOGRAPHICS IN LEEDS**

With no nationwide collection of data on sexuality or trans status there is a lack of statistical evidence on the size of LGBT+ populations in the UK.

Stonewall estimates that 5–7% of the population is gay or lesbian, an estimate which is accepted by government agencies (Knocker, 2012). However, recent polling on sexuality in the UK also indicates a shift in individual understandings of sexuality; a 2015 YouGov poll found that 1 in 2 young people (18–24 year olds) said they were not ‘100% heterosexual’ (Dahlgreen et al., 2015). The survey sample from the Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project community survey indicates that there is a significant proportion of the LGBT+ community that do not identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender – around 20% of survey participants identified as Queer and around 9% as Non-binary.

There is no official estimate of the trans population in the UK. Home Office funded research carried out by GIRES (Gender Identity Research and Education Society) estimates “the number of trans people in the UK to be between 300,000 - 500,000” (Reed et al, 2009).

The absence of statistical data on LGBT+ populations presents problems for those in the LGBT+ sector, and others working on issues relevant to LGBT+ communities, in securing a robust evidence base to campaign for changes in policy and provision. The absence of this data also makes it difficult to investigate into the health, economic and educational inequalities within and between LGBT+ populations.

Leeds is the third largest city in the UK, and one of the fastest growing, with a population of 751,500. Leeds is also an ethnically diverse city with 140 ethnic groups including Black, Asian and other minority ethnic populations representing around 17.4% (Leeds City Council 2009).

For a large city like Leeds with an established gay social scene, business and support network, Stonewall estimates that “at least 10% of the population would identify themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual.” (BBC News, 2012) This would put the gay, lesbian and bisexual population of Leeds at around 75,150. This is more than the total residents of Leeds’ two most densely populated wards, Harehills and Gipton ward (29,553) and City and Hunslet ward (40,919), combined. (Reports.esd.org.uk, 2017)

Data from the 2011 Census shows that the percentage of those same sex cohabiting or in Civil Partnerships for wards in Leeds range from 0.5% to 1.9%. The total of number of same sex cohabiting and people in a Civil Partnership 5,038. The two wards with the most registered same sex civil partnerships or same sex cohabiting are City and Hunslet (1.9%) and Armley (1.3%). Although registered same sex partnerships or cohabiting households isn't a proxy for identifying where LGB people in Leeds are living, it may offer some indication as to where some LGB people in Leeds are likely concentrated. Moreover, this data indicates that across all of Leeds there are residents who are in same sex Civil Partnerships or same sex cohabiting.

The patient population of Leeds' Gender Identity Clinic also indicates Leeds is an important city for trans people in Yorkshire accessing gender affirming care. The Guardian reported that at the Leeds GIC "referrals tripled from 131 in 2009-10 to 414 in 2015-16. The increase put such a strain on the service that last October it estimated that new patients would have to wait four years for their first appointment." (Lyons, 2017)

The survey asked if Leeds was a good city for LGBT+ people. The majority of survey respondents' answered this question positively:

- 45% Yes
- 42% Somewhat
- 3% No
- 3% I don't know
- 4% Other

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF LGBT+ COMMUNITIES IN LEEDS**

The Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project community survey builds an understanding of how LGBT+ individuals in Leeds understand themselves in relation to LGBT+ communities and how important community is to LGBT+ people in Leeds.

There is no single LGBT+ community in Leeds; rather a number of different communities of people who identify as LGBT+ in the city. People's social lives are complex and shaped by their relationships and social networks as well as their own sense of identity, informed by their politics, gender, ethnicity, faith, class and sexuality.

In this report reference to any 'LGBT+ community' in Leeds refers to those within Leeds who identify as LGBT+ and are not necessarily known to each other.

Community is used broadly to refer to a number of different social concepts, such as geographical communities, communities between people who know each other, and communities based on the idea of shared experience and identities. The notion of an 'LGBT+ community' is widely invoked by LGBT+ people and non-LGBT+ people, yet is also a highly contested idea. For broader discussion on the idea of LGBT+ community or communities see Eleanor Formby's recent work 'Solidarity but not similarity? LGBT communities in the twenty-first century.'

Identifying if LGBT+ people feel part of a community offers some indication of how socially connected people feel and how they understand their responsibility and relationship to others.

Formby's research on LGBT+ communities in the UK found that "A sense, or experience, of community was reported to be clearly linked to LGBT wellbeing, for instance in combatting isolation and heightening confidence and self-esteem in terms of mental health and emotional wellbeing, and as well as contributing to physical health for some." (Formby, 2012)

#### **DO LGBT+ PEOPLE IN LEEDS FEEL PART OF A COMMUNITY?**

The survey asked 'Do you feel like you are part of an LGBT+ community in Leeds?'

- 31% Yes
- 20% No
- 37% Sometimes
- 5% I don't know
- 10% I feel part of a gay community
- 4% I feel part of a lesbian community
- 2% I feel part of a bisexual community
- 3% I feel part of a trans community
- 14% I feel part of a queer community
- 3% Other

More people answered this question positively than negatively, however 20% of people said they did not feel part of an LGBT+ community.

'Sometimes' was the most frequently given answer which suggests that for many LGBT+ people feeling part of a community was contingent on other factors. Feeling part of a community may come at times when these communities feel available to people, such as when attending Pride events, or other LGBT+ activities and spaces that are accessible to them.

It is unclear, through the survey answers, whether the communities people say they feel a part of are based on personal relationships they have with other LGBT+ people, or a sense of shared experience and identity with LGBT+ people who aren't known to them, or degrees of both.

The survey also asked how important it was to them that they were part of an LGBT+ community. 77% of people answered that being part of an LGBT+ community was either very important, important or somewhat important.

The survey asked participants how important it was that there are LGBT+ spaces and activities that cater to them and if there were any LGBT+ spaces and activities in Leeds that catered to them. 90% of respondents said that LGBT+ spaces and activities were either very important, important or somewhat important, however only 6% of people said there were many LGBT+ spaces and activities in Leeds that catered to their interests and needs. Participants also wrote that while there may be LGBT+ spaces and activities that catered to them they only knew of those that were the most visible in the city, such as club nights and bars.

### ***How important is it to you that you are part of an LGBT+ community?***

- 29% Very important
- 28% Important
- 20% Somewhat important
- 12% Not important

### ***How important are LGBT+ spaces and activities in Leeds that caters to you?***

- 48% Very important
- 21% Important
- 21% Somewhat important
- 6% Not very important

### ***Are there LGBT+ spaces and activities in Leeds that cater to your interests and needs?***

- 6% Yes, many
- 66% A few
- 11% No
- 11% I don't know

## **WHAT PEOPLE VALUE MOST ABOUT LGBT+ COMMUNITY IN LEEDS**

The survey asked people what they value most about the LGBT+ community in Leeds, what three things in Leeds have a positive impact on them as an

LGBT+ person, and the reasons why.

A picture of an LGBT+ community in Leeds emerged which was highly visible, active, caring, supportive and diverse.

Some people responded to this question by highlighting specific organisations, groups or venues and some offered more general comments related to what they consider the quality and character of LGBT+ communities in Leeds to be. Some participants also questioned the notion that there was an LGBT+ community at all; pointing to ways in which LGBT+ people are divided from each other and the frictions between communities. Others said they did not feel the need to seek out LGBT+ community in Leeds, and felt they were able to access what they needed within mainstream social and community life.

### **LGBT+ VISIBILITY IN LEEDS**

Some people commented that they valued how visible the LGBT+ community is in Leeds, for example in the visibility of Leeds' Gay Quarter and celebration events such as Pride. People also valued the support of Leeds City Council to Leeds' LGBT+ community. The LGBT\* Community Hub (a community forum through which LGBT+ people can feed back issues and concerns to the City Council) was viewed by many as something which signified LGBT+ people were welcome in the city. A few survey respondents also commented on the visibility of the queer community in Leeds and how valuable the visibility of this community was to LGBT+ people who don't identify or feel welcomed within the more commercial and mainstream LGBT+ activities.

### **DIY AND GRASSROOTS**

Survey participants commented on the 'DIY' and 'grassroots' spirit of some aspects of the LGBT+ community. They saw people working hard to create spaces that were safe and accessible for LGBT+ people. This in particular was spoken of in the context of queer communities and activists. One respondent wrote "*In my queer community I love that many people are activists and want things to change. People look after each other.*"

### **SUPPORTIVE NETWORKS, FRIENDSHIPS, AND COMMUNITIES OF CARE**

Many survey respondents saw LGBT+ communities in Leeds as supportive and kind and people said they valued the support they received from their social networks and their friendships with other LGBT+ people. 'Friends', 'friendships' and 'networks' were the most frequently written words in relation to what people valued most about LGBT+ community in Leeds, and what had the

most positive impact on them.

### **BEING PART OF SOMETHING**

Many survey respondents expressed that being able to participate, attend, and be part of a variety of LGBT+ related activity in Leeds was a benefit to them and something they valued. This included participation on steering groups of LGBT+ related projects, being part of LGBT+ choirs and sports, and social and support groups.

### **DIVERSITY AND VARIETY OF LGBT+ LIFE IN LEEDS**

Many survey participants said they saw LGBT+ Leeds as diverse and valued this sense of diversity in LGBT+ communities. However it was unclear what this diversity was in reference to – people, cultures, nightlife or something else. People also commented on the variety of things for LGBT+ people to do in the city. One participant said there was a '*vibrant alternative LGBT+ community in Leeds.*' However some also felt that the LGBT+ community in Leeds was limited, and that gay men dominated the community.

## 9. CONCERNS AND NEEDS OF LGBT+ PEOPLE IN LEEDS

### NEED FOR SAFER AND MORE ACCESSIBLE SPACES FOR LGBT+ PEOPLE

The importance of 'safe spaces' for LGBT+ people was highlighted throughout the survey and other consultations. There was no consensus on what a 'safe space' constituted. For many people a safer/safe space was one that was attentive to the intersecting oppressions and experiences felt by LGBT+ people regarding disability, race and ethnicity, religion, age, gender, and economic and social class. Safe spaces were places where there would be no tolerance of behaviours that were transphobic, homophobic, racist, sexist, ageist, classist etc. Some people called for the need for safe spaces for particular groups of LGBT+ people, such as trans and non-binary people, LGBT+ women, LGBT+ older people and LGBT+ BME people and families. The provision of more 'safe spaces' was also highlighted as essential to LGBT+ people who didn't live in safe or supportive home environments.

There were a number of comments throughout the survey that indicated that for many people LGBT+ spaces, or spaces in the 'gay scene', weren't emotionally or physically safe or accessible.

This related to spaces where the built environments weren't accessible to disabled people (i.e. no accessible entry to floors or accessible toilets), or weren't accessible for many trans and non-binary people (i.e. no provision of gender neutral toilets, or 'policed' gendered toilets).

Some people commented on hierarchies within the 'gay scene' and what was seen as the privileging of young gay men, which made these spaces feel inaccessible and unwelcoming for older LGBT+ people, bisexual people, trans and non-binary people, LGBT+ BME people, and LGBT+ women.

*"Bars having higher percentage of men and younger people not always welcoming to older lesbians."*

*"I find the mainstream gay bars unfriendly as a queer woman."*

*"Ageism is the reason I no longer frequent LGBT venues in Leeds."*

*"I don't always feel safe in 'gay bars' on the scene as someone who is not cis."*

*"Loud, noisy commercial venues that don't cater for older people."*

People also commented on examples of transphobia, biphobia, sexism and racism they had witnessed or experienced in these spaces.

*"I don't think the gay scene is welcoming to people of colour, and when racism in the scene has been brought up in the past the response had been inadequate if not outright offensively ignorant."*

*"The attitudes and practices of the commercial 'gay' venues are abhorrent and have been for a long time. This is a gay cisgender male environment that doesn't tolerate black or Asian people, Disabled people, Trans, Lesbian or Bi women."*

Many people felt that the LGBT+ social scene in Leeds was heavily bar focused and there was nowhere for LGBT+ people to socialise that didn't revolve around alcohol.

The need for more LGBT+ spaces that don't centre on bar culture or alcohol was expressed by many throughout the survey and during outreach consultation. For some people alcohol free or 'dry' spaces were implicitly a safer space; this was related to the recognition that abusive and problematic drinking and drug taking disproportionately affect LGBT+ people. For some LGBT+ people who were recovering from experiences of problematic drinking and drug taking, the lack of alcohol free spaces, or spaces that were not bars and clubs, meant that they had limited access to LGBT+ social life in Leeds, increasing risks of isolation and loneliness.

*"I find the way so much of LGBT+ life is focused on the scene and around alcohol to be really difficult. I think alcoholism and substance abuse is a problem for a lot of queer people and certainly when I was younger, drinking heavily was part of the culture. I'm sober now and it's hard to find queer spaces to socialise informally that aren't pubs/clubs. It seems like the only alternative is organised interest groups once a month. I wish there was a cafe or something."*

Reference was made to cafes and venues that exist in Manchester's Gay Village as an example of more diverse and inclusive LGBT+ spaces.

Some people commented on the closed nature of some LGBT+ social and support groups, and some felt that it was difficult to access some of the organised LGBT+ groups and it was hard for new people to feel welcome or included.

The need for an LGBT+ social centre was highlighted by many people as a way of addressing the need for more accessible and safer spaces. The LGBT+ centre would be a place all LGBT+ people could have an equal stake in, and access to, and provide opportunity for LGBT+ communities to share resources and meet together. That an LGBT+ social centre would also provide a non-commercial space for people to socialise in was seen as a benefit to the community.

*"I think certainly a non-licensed, non-money making, full-time drop-in/resource/community space in or very close to the LGBT+ quarter needs to be established; not only to provide services, resources and a positive space off the scene, but which would also encourage more community interaction from members of the LGBT+ community."*

Some people also felt that LGBT+ spaces were 'ghettoised' or segregated from the mainstream, and that this had negative impacts on the community.

*"The few LGBT+ activities etc. that do exist seem to be segregated from the rest of the Leeds community, rather than helping the LGBT community become a part of it!"*

People also called for the need to de-centre the 'gay scene' and to highlight and recognise the existence and contribution of other LGBT+ communities and cultures in the city. That most LGBT+ activity was located in the city centre was also inaccessible for some people.

#### **NEED TO ADDRESS THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF HETERONORMATIVITY IN SERVICES AND THE NEED FOR SPECIALISED SERVICES FOR LGBT+ PEOPLE**

During consultation a number of people pointed to the negative impact heteronormativity in mainstream services had upon LGBT+ people in Leeds. The lack of or limited understanding of LGBT+ experiences or cultures amongst some mainstream services was seen as a barrier to LGBT+ people accessing the appropriate support they needed in areas such as health care, housing, policing and domestic violence.

*"Health service needs educating – professionals just need to be aware that person they're talking to might be LGBT – so if you're prescribing medicine and you ask if the person is sexually active then you ask if they're using contraception/birth control you don't need to immediately jump [to the conclusion that] they're not being careful etc. without considering they may be gay."*

*"Generic services not targeting their services effectively/responding to LGBT community's needs."*

*"Mental health support is hard to access and a lot of professionals aren't trained in trans issues."*

Attention was also called to the health needs of trans people, in particular during the times at which trans people are on waiting lists to access Gender Identity Services. Many trans people fear that accessing mental health support while they are in receipt of care or awaiting care from Gender Identity Services risks their access to treatments as they worry they may be deemed too mentally unwell.

*“Access to mental health services in the wait for GIC [Gender Identity Services] appointments.”*

*“I have been turned down for mental health support because I am transgender by the NHS.”*

The need for more training for services on LGBT+ community needs was highlighted as well as the development of good practice guidelines for services that work with LGBT+ people that hold services to account.

*“More quality training for professionals to provide equally and fairly for trans people – healthcare etc. and then a monitoring that training outcomes are positive and action made where not.”*

*“Commissioners to hold organisations to task about their delivery of services to meeting the health needs of LGBT + communities, LA and stat bodies to take seriously – put money where mouths are, the commissioning of appropriate services to meet the health needs of LGBT+.”*

The need for specialised services for LGBT+ people in Leeds was also highlighted, particularly in the areas of mental health, homelessness, and LGBT+ asylum seekers.

### **NEED FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN LGBT+ COMMUNITY**

The provision of additional resources for LGBT+ communities to develop capacity for action and support was seen as essential.

The need for more support to be made available to LGBT+ community groups was highlighted, as well as the need for LGBT+ services to focus support on LGBT+ women and trans and non-binary people. Some people understood that without access to support in the form of resources, funding or skills training the sustainability and longevity of LGBT+ community action and groups was at risk. As the majority of LGBT+ led work is done on a voluntary, unpaid and unfunded basis many are concerned that this means those active and working in these areas will become exhausted without support and resources. One person said she felt there was an ‘activist glass ceiling’ for many queer people doing LGBT+ work, and that if you didn’t know the language of the third sector or have connections with the ‘right people’ there was little chance of being able to access the resources necessary to do community work.

Having access to a dedicated LGBT+ social centre in the city was also viewed as a necessary community resource for LGBT+ people in Leeds. The centre would function as a space where resources could be held such as

information and literature, but also a space that would serve as a hub for LGBT+ community action and support.

The lack of available and accessible information about LGBT+ activities and support available was seen as a hindrance to LGBT+ community in Leeds. The need for an online resource for LGBT+ Leeds was also recommended to ensure that information about different groups and services for LGBT+ people was centrally available.

### **NEED TO ADDRESS HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA IN LEEDS**

When asked what negatively impacted LGBT+ people in Leeds many people highlighted their experiences of homophobia and transphobia. Homophobia and transphobia manifests through harassment, violence and prejudiced attitudes.

*"There are still homophobic attitudes voiced amongst some demographics – I come across this at work (clients, not colleagues) and on social media."*

*"Reports of attacks on LGBT people. Some areas of the city do not seem LGBT friendly."*

Not feeling safe in the city and feeling the need to 'self-censor' (i.e. by changing behaviours or presentation) had negative impacts on LGBT+ people.

*"Still not 100% comfortable being completely open about my sexuality at work."*

*"Not feeling safe enough to hold my boyfriend's hand in public."*

*"I have definitely felt stared at when I've been out with a same-sex partner – like even now that's still something that's outside of the norm."*

There was also the concern that shifting social attitudes towards more conservative values (with people making reference to Brexit) and increasing vulnerability to poverty in the UK have negative impacts on the lives of LGBT+ people in Leeds.

## 10. LEEDS LGBT+ LANDSCAPE

### **COMPOSITION OF LGBT+ LANDSCAPE IN LEEDS**

The information collected here reflects what was identified through a two month long exercise mapping LGBT+ activities in Leeds. Information on LGBT+ activity was gathered through online searches and through outreach.

The inclusion criteria were kept purposefully broad to capture:

- Formal and informal activity (i.e. activities undertaken by large charitable organisations such as Yorkshire MESMAC and or unfunded community groups such as Trans Leeds)
- The social and cultural LGBT+ landscape of Leeds (i.e. commercial gay bars and clubs or LGBT+ events organised by volunteers)
- Groups and organisations that exist primarily to serve LGBT+ people and communities in Leeds
- Groups and organisations that are not primarily LGBT+ focused but were identified by LGBT+ people as assets to LGBT+ communities

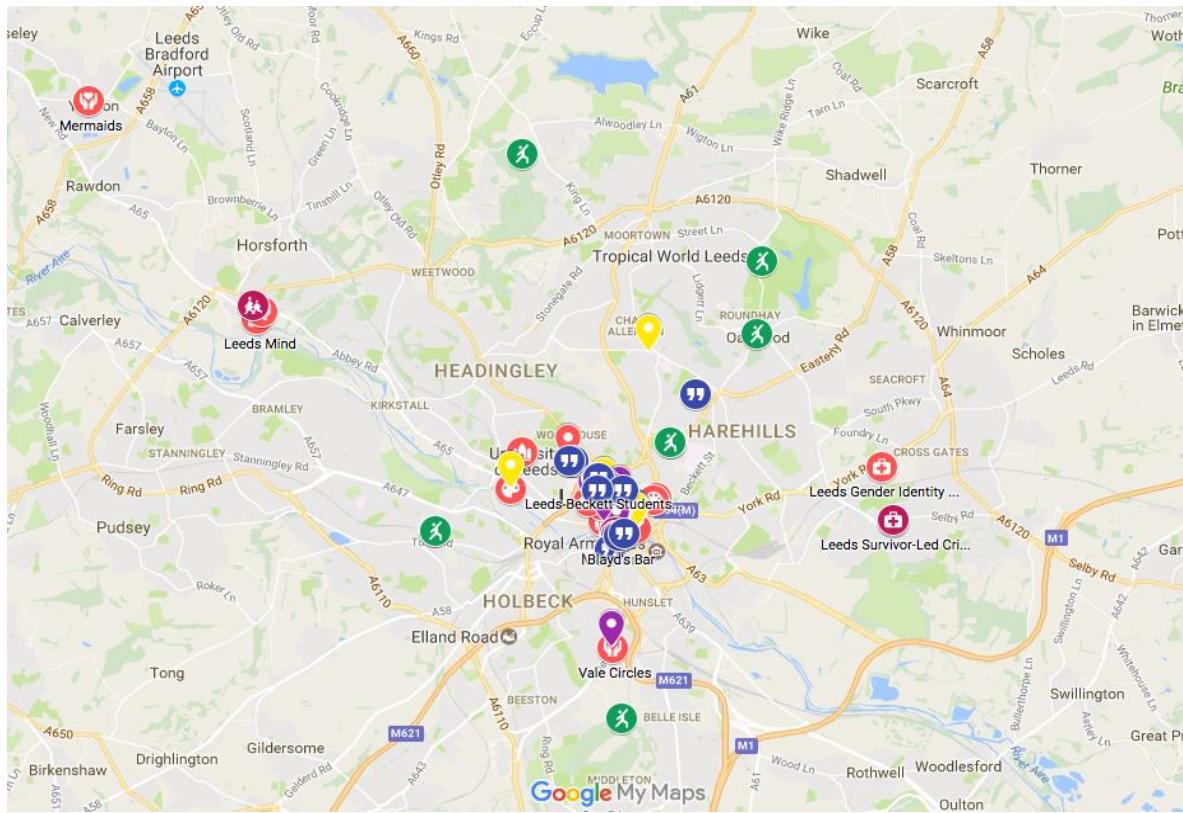
This provides an indication of the scale and nature of LGBT+ activity in Leeds. While this doesn't represent a complete picture of all LGBT+ activity in Leeds, it is a snapshot of the more immediately accessible activities available to LGBT+ people in the city.

The Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project Google Map<sup>3</sup> shows where some of these activities take place. The map illustrates that the majority of LGBT+ related activity is concentrated in the city centre.

All LGBT+ led volunteer groups rely on the provision of space from other charitable organisations, or commercial venues. The majority of these activities take place at the offices of Yorkshire MESMAC, Wharf Chambers Cooperative Club, or at venues within the commercial gay scene. While these are important hubs for many LGBT+ groups, it also highlights a limited provision of space for these community groups and that these groups aren't resourced with their own space.

---

<sup>3</sup> Access Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project Google Map here - : [goo.gl/W7CuWh](http://goo.gl/W7CuWh)



## LGBT+ OR LGBT+ FRIENDLY

Of the 102 recorded LGBT+ related activities and projects:

- 81% were LGBT+
- 19% were LGBT+ friendly

<b>LGBT+ and LGBT+ friendly</b>	
LGBT+	83
LGBT+ friendly	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>

## LGBT+ AND LGBT+ FRIENDLY GROUPS/ORGANISATION/BUSINESS TYPE

Due to the breadth of the scope and inclusion criteria there are challenges to categorising the 102 LGBT+ related activities recorded through this project.

What is presented in the table below reflects these 102 activities in relation to the organisational structure they exist as or are supported by.

- Almost 50% of the 102 activities were volunteer and community led
- 16% were undertaken by charity/third sector organisations
- Around 10% were commercial
- Around 10% were forums, unions, professional networks or society groups

<b>LGBT+ and LGBT+ friendly organisation, group, business type</b>		
Arts/Cultural/Heritage Organisation	3	2.94%
Charity/Third Sector	16	15.69%
Commercial	10	9.80%
Cooperative	2	1.96%
Council Service	2	1.96%
Faith/Religious Organisation	2	1.96%
Forum/Union/Professional Network/Society	10	9.80%
NHS	3	2.94%
Online Community	4	3.92%
Volunteer/Community Led Group	50	49.02%
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100%</b>

## LGBT+ GROUPS/ORGANISATION/BUSINESS STRUCTURE

The table below reflects these LGBT+ activities only, in relation to the organisational structure they exist within.

- 59% of LGBT+ led or focussed LGBT activities in Leeds were volunteer and community led
- 8% of LGBT+ led or focussed LGBT activities were charity/third sector organisations
- 12% of LGBT+ led or focussed LGBT activities were forums, unions, professional networks or societies

<b>LGBT+ organisation, group, business structure</b>		
Arts/Cultural/Heritage Organisation	1	1.20%
Charity/Third Sector	8	9.64%
Commercial	8	9.64%
Council Service	2	2.41%
Forum/Union/Professional Network/Society	10	12.05%
NHS	2	2.41%
Online Community	2	2.41%
Volunteer/Community Led Group	50	60.24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100%</b>

## LGBT+ ACTIVITY TYPE

Categorisation of activities was done through gathering information from groups and organisations, about their main activities, and taking account of information available online from groups and organisations. This table reflects primary activities that these groups or organisations undertake.

Looking across both LGBT+ friendly and LGBT+ led, and LGBT+ led only, the majority of activities undertaken were social; followed by support. The first table shows variety and number of activities undertaken by both LGBT+ led and LGBT+ friendly groups/organisations, and the second table shows activities undertaken by LGBT+ led groups/organisations.

<b>Activities for LGBT+ and LGBT+ friendly groups/organisations</b>	
Advocacy	4
Arts and Creative Activities (e.g. performance)	15
Campaigning	5

Commercial	9
Education (i.e. in schools)	1
Events	10
Forum/Network	11
Health and Wellbeing	6
Helpline	1
HIV/AIDS Prevention and Support	3
Information/Advice/ Signposting/Referrals	2
Mental Health Services/Counselling	6
Media	2
Other	4
Outreach	1
Religious/Spiritual Worship	4
Service Industry	11
Social	46
Sport	8
Support	26
Trans Healthcare	5
Training (e.g. of public sector staff)	1
Venue	10
Youth Work	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>

<b>Activities for LGBT+ Groups/Organisations</b>	
Advocacy	4
Arts and Creative Activities (e.g. performance)	12
Campaigning	5
Commercial	7
Education (i.e. in schools)	1
Events	10
Forum/Network	10
Health and Wellbeing	1
Helpline	1
HIV/AIDS Support	1
Information/Advice/Signposting/Referrals	2
Media	2
Mental Health Services/Counselling	1

Other	3
Outreach	1
Religious/Spiritual Worship	2
Service Industry	8
Social	43
Sport	8
Support	19
Trans Healthcare	5
Venue	5
Youth Work	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>

#### TARGET GROUPS OF LGBT+ LED AND FOCUSED ACTIVITIES

The majority of groups and projects were aimed at all LGBT+ people. Following LGBT+ the target group with the greatest number of activities was Gay, Bisexual and Trans men, and LGBT+ people part of a union or network.

LGBT+ Women's, LGBT+ BME, Bisexual, and LGBT+ disabled groups are underrepresented pointing to barriers in accessing LGBT+ social life and spaces. Some of these barriers are highlighted in this report including experiences of racism and discrimination within LGBT+ spaces (such as racism and sexism), the inaccessibility of built environments for disabled people etc.

The overrepresentation of groups serving trans communities speaks to the levels of need within these communities, and also reflects a gathering momentum in trans activism and community action in the city. That there are no groups for LGBT+ people who are disabled highlights how inaccessible LGBT+ social life and spaces are for disabled LGBT+ people.

<b>LGBT+ target groups and communities</b>			
LGBT+	36	41.86%	
BME LGBT+ People	2	2.33%	
Gay/Bi Men/MSM	9	10.47%	
Bisexual People	1	1.16%	
Young LGBT+ People	3	3.49%	
Trans and Non-binary People	5	5.81%	
Older LGBT+ People (50+)	2	2.33%	
LGBT+ People of Faith	2	2.33%	
LBT+ Women	3	3.49%	

People Affected by HIV/AIDs	2	2.33%
Non-binary People	1	1.16%
Trans Women	1	1.16%
LGBT+ Asylum Seekers/Migrants/Refugees	1	1.16%
Asexual People	1	1.16%
Trans Men/Cis Men/Non-binary People	1	1.16%
Trans and Non-binary Young People	3	3.49%
LGBT+ Students	2	2.33%
LGBT+ Members of a Network/Union	7	8.14%
Autistic LGBT+ People	1	1.16%
LGBT+ People with Mental Health Difficulties	1	1.16%
LGBT+ Parents	1	1.16%
LGBT+ Deaf	1	1.16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## SUPPORT FOR ADDITIONAL LGBT+ RESOURCES

The survey asked participants how much they thought they would benefit from the addition of different LGBT+ community resources in Leeds; specialised housing and social care for older people, a physical LGBT+ community and resource centre, a website providing comprehensive information on all LGBT+ social activities and support services in Leeds, and an LGBT+ friendly charter mark for businesses and services

### *Specialised housing and social care for older LGBT+ people*

- 27% (35) Benefit greatly
- 23% (30) Benefit somewhat
- 32% (41) Little to no benefit
- 14% (18) I don't know

### *A physical LGBT+ community and resource centre*

- 41% (52) Benefit greatly
- 34% (44) Benefit somewhat
- 14% (18) Little to no benefit
- 8% (11) I don't know

### *A website providing comprehensive information on all LGBT+ social activities and support services in Leeds*

- 68% (86) Benefit greatly
- 22% (28) Benefit somewhat
- 3% (5) Little to no benefit
- 4% (6) I don't know

*An LGBT+ friendly charter mark for organisations to sign up to proving they are LGBT+ friendly*

- 48% (61) Benefit greatly
- 32% (41) Benefit somewhat
- 7% (19) Little to no benefit
- 3% (4) I don't know

People said they would benefit most from a website with comprehensive information on LGBT+ activities in Leeds (90%), an LGBT+ charter mark for businesses and services (80%), a physical community and resource centre (75%), then for specialised housing and social care for older LGBT+ people (50%).

Generally, across categories of age, sexuality, gender and trans status most people in the survey answered this set of questions similarly.

Support for specialised housing and social care for older people had similar levels of support across all age groups. 46% of those under 30 said they would either benefit greatly or somewhat, and 55% between the ages 31 to 60, and 55% over the age of 60+ said they would either benefit greatly or somewhat.

The findings suggested older people (over 60) were less likely to consider themselves to benefit from an LGBT+ friendly charter mark, and more likely to benefit from an LGBT+ resource and community centre. This may be because existing social and commercial venues in Leeds are not seen to cater to older communities, and the provision of more age friendly LGBT+ spaces are needed.

The findings also indicated that people who identified as queer, people who identified as non-binary, and people who said their gender was different to that assigned at birth were most likely to say they would benefit from an LGBT+ community and resource centre.

People under 30 were most likely to say they would benefit greatly from a website providing information on LGBT+ Leeds. Men and women were more likely to greatly benefit from a website than non-binary people.

## **LEVELS OF LGBT+ COMMUNITY ACTION AND PARTICIPATION**

The survey asked what LGBT+ related activity people had participated in over the last 12 months.

### **ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATED**

---

#### **GAY QUARTER**

- 66% of survey participants had visited a club or bar in the Gay Quarter (i.e. venues on Lower Briggate/Call Lane)
- 54% were men, 39% were women, and 6% non-binary

#### **LEEDS PRIDE**

- 58% of survey participants had attended Leeds Pride
- 48% were women, 48% were men, and 4% were non-binary

#### **LGBT+ SOCIAL GROUP**

- 47% of survey participants said they had attended an organised LGBT+ social group
- 48% were women, 44% were men, and 7% were non-binary

#### **LGBT+ FRIENDLY VENUE**

- 46% had visited a venue because it is LGBT+ friendly
- 49% were women, 38% were men, 12% were non-binary

#### **LGBT+ ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITY**

- 32% had attended an LGBT+ arts and cultural activity (including music, exhibitions, film screenings)
- 47% were women, 35% were men and 18% non-binary

#### **LGBT+ SUPPORT GROUP**

- 25% had attended an LGBT+ support group
- 48% were men, 35% were women, and 16% were non-binary

## LGBT+ RELATED ACTIVISM

- 24% have participated in LGBT+ related activism
- 53% were women, 33% were men, and 13% were non-binary

## LGBT+ SPORT ACTIVITY

- 15% had participated in an LGBT+ sport activity
- 47% were women, and 52% were men

## SAUNA

- 9% had visited a Sauna
- 10 were men and 2 were women

## OTHER

- 8% Other - this included LGBT+ university societies

Results from the survey show that visiting a club or bar in the Gay Quarter and visiting Leeds Pride were the most frequently participated in LGBT+ activities in Leeds.

The findings suggest that LGBT+ women and non-binary people were more likely than GBT+ men to visit a venue because it is LGBT+ friendly.

GBT+ men were overrepresented in their participation in LGBT+ sport and in visiting a club or bar in the Gay Quarter. GBT+ men were underrepresented in their participation in LGBT+ cultural activities, and LGBT+ related activism.

LGBT+ non-binary people were overrepresented in participation in LGBT+ cultural activity, attending LGBT+ support groups, and LGBT+ related activism. No LGBT+ non-binary people reported participating in LGBT+ sport. A barrier to non-binary people accessing sport activities may relate to the limited availability of gender neutral or non-gendered changing and washing facilities in sports centres.

LGBT+ women were overrepresented in LGBT+ related activism and underrepresented in attending an LGBT+ support group.

## ACTIVITIES INVOLVED IN ORGANISING

---

The survey also asked what LGBT+ related activity people had been involved in organising. The activities that participants collectively had the most

experience in organising were political and campaigning, and social activities

#### MUSIC AND CLUB NIGHTS<sup>4</sup>

- Currently involved in organising – 0% (0 people)
- Have been involved in organising – 30% (38 people)
- Have never organised – 64% (81 people)

#### SUPPORT GROUP

- Currently involved in organising – 10% (13 people)
- Have been involved in organising – 14% (18 people)
- Have never organised – 66% (84 people)

#### POLITICAL AND CAMPAIGNING

- Currently involved in organising – 4% (6 people)
- Have been involved in organising – 29% (37 people)
- Have never organised – 57% (73 people)

#### SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

- Currently involved in organising – 15% (19 people)
- Have been involved in organising – 28% (36 people)
- Have never organised – 53% (68 people)

#### SPORTS

- Currently involved in organising – 7% (9 people)
- Have been involved in organising – 8% (10 people)
- Have never organised – 71% (90 people)

#### ARTS AND CULTURE

- Currently involved in organising – 8% (11 people)
- Have been involved in organising – 21% (27 people)
- Have never organised – 5% (7 people)

Across all activity types there were more people who had been involved in organising than were currently organising activities. Though survey

---

<sup>4</sup> Not all respondents chose to answer all the questions in the survey. These results may not always total 100%.

respondents weren't asked why they were no longer active in organising LGBT+ related activity, the data supports the comments made throughout the consultation that there is a current risk to the sustainability of LGBT+ community.

Social activities (15%) and support groups (10%) was where there is the most current involvement in organising. This points to an investment amongst LGBT+ people in Leeds in creating and sustaining communities' that are sociable and supportive.

Activism and campaigning is where the most people indicated that they had previously been involved in organising but were no longer. This may be because of 'burn out' in activist communities (where people heavily involved and committed to activism and campaigning become too emotionally and physically exhausted to continue), or because the last two decades weren't characterised by LGBT+ mass action like that mounted against the AIDS crisis and the campaign to repeal Section 28 in the late 1980s.

## **10. LEARNING FROM OTHER CITIES**

LGBT+ centres and resources across the north were visited to see what organisational models and LGBT+ resources existed in other cities and what learning could be drawn. While the projects, services and practices in other cities may have relevant application in Leeds, the visits to these other sites also revealed that due to the context and history of some of these organisations some examples may not be replicable in other cities.

### **LGBT FOUNDATION, MANCHESTER**

The LGBT Foundation in Manchester, formally the Lesbian Gay Foundation (LGF), is a registered charity. The Foundation has a long history that stretches back to the mid-1970s. The Lesbian and Gay Foundation formed in 2000; a merger of Healthy Gay Manchester (formed in 1994) and Manchester Lesbian and Gay Switchboard Services (1975). In 2015 it became the LGBT Foundation. Since the inclusion of Trans people the LGBT Foundation has developed a Trans Programme.

The Foundation has a diverse portfolio of services including outreach, counselling and HIV prevention, helpline, policy and research. LGBT Foundation spends around £1.8 million annually on the delivery of its services; they receive their largest contracts from Manchester Public Health and Manchester CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group).

LGBT Foundation offices are based in the heart of Manchester's Gay Village, where they exist across 3 floors, and offer free spaces to local LGBT+ community groups and charge for other organisations to use its conference space. The Foundation employs the equivalent of 38 full-time staff members. The LGBT Foundation has a board of Trustees and is led by CEO Paul Martin OBE.

### **LEICESTER LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER CENTRE, LEICESTER**

Leicester LGBT Centre is a registered charity with a history that stretches back 40 years. In 1976 The Help Line, a Lesbian and Gay telephone helpline, was set up; which in 1981 became the first LGB group to receive public funding in the UK. The group established a community centre in 1995. The LGBT Centre serves Leicester, Rutland and Leicestershire. The centre delivered an LGBT+ sexual health project called Trade; in 2000 this became a separate organisation.

In the mid-1990s the centre received National Lottery development funding and was able to employ 8 people and manage 20 volunteers. In 2001 cuts to the voluntary sector saw the centre reduce its services and staffing.

Leicester LGBT Centre provides space for LGBT+ community groups to meet and has a foyer/café space accessible to the public serving basic hot drinks. The centre had previously run a restaurant and a café, up until 2000. This was reportedly popular, but wasn't managed as a sustainable business. The centre offers counselling services; support services for young Trans people funded by BBC Children in Need (Transgender Centre for Excellence).

The Leicester LGBT Centre has a board of Trustees, and until recently had a CEO. The centre has revised its organisation structures and now operates a flatter management structure with three co-managers (finance manager, projects manager, and partnership and strategic manager). The organisation currently employs 8 staff. The centre has strong ties to De Montfort University; since 2015 the Vice Chancellor of University of De Montfort has given funding for the equivalent of 1 full-time post to Leicester LGBT Centre. The centre rents 4 floors of office space in the centre of Leicester, with rents, rates and water totalling around £20,000 annually.

### **EQUITY PARTNERSHIP, BRADFORD**

Equity Partnership, (tradename of Bradford LGB&T Strategic Partnership), was formed in a merger of the Bradford LGB Network and the Equity centre Steering Group. In 2006 they opened an LGB centre, providing space for Bradford's' LGB community. The centre provides meeting space for LGBT+ community groups for free and raises some funds through hiring out meeting rooms to other organisations. Total annual cost for renting and maintaining the space is over £16,000.

Equity Partnership currently employs 7 workers, a Strategic Development Manager, a Finance Worker, a Community Development & Outreach Worker, an Administration Worker, a BME Visibility Worker, an Older & Bolder Worker, and a Trans Worker. The charity is overseen by a Board of Trustees. Equity Partnership receives funding from Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, The Tudor Trust and Henry Smith Charitable Fund, among others. Equity Partnership have commissioned and undertaken a number of needs assessments and pieces of research related to LGBT+ communities in Bradford which include topics such as health and wellbeing, BME women, same sex domestic abuse and violence.

## 12. IDENTIFYING LEEDS' LGBT+ COMMUNITY ASSETS

The Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project aimed to find out what LGBT+ people in Leeds considered as assets to the community and to their life as an LGBT+ person in Leeds.

Asset mapping is valuable for understanding what it is that people feel makes a positive impact in their lives. Through mapping LGBT+ assets in Leeds we are able to see how LGBT+ assets are differently valuable and accessible to different communities. Mapping community assets also helps us identify community strengths and gaps. Identifying and understanding the strengths that exist in Leeds' LGBT+ communities provides a basis for ensuring that efforts to develop or invest in the LGBT+ community are informed and build on existing strengths.

LGBT+ community assets were identified through the community survey, community mapping exercises with LGBT+ people, and through conversations and outreach.

The community survey asked for "up to three things in Leeds that have a positive impact on you as an LGBT+ person. This could be anything from an organisation, a social group, a bar or venue, health service, social networks etc."

The most frequently cited things in Leeds that have positive impact on respondents' lives were:

- Yorkshire MESMAC
- Commercial venues in Leeds' Gay Quarter/Lower Briggate (including Viaduct, Queens Court, New Penny, Bar Fibre, Mission)
- Wharf Chambers Cooperative
- Leeds Pride

Many of the assets identified through the project weren't common across LGBT+ people in Leeds.

Certain assets were of greater value to some LGBT+ communities than others. In addition, what was identified by some LGBT people was identified as negative by others.

## PROFILE ON YORKSHIRE MESMAC



[photo credit Yorkshire MESMAC)

Yorkshire MESMAC is one of the oldest and largest sexual health organisations in England. Established in 1990, with offices in Bradford, Leeds, Wakefield, York, North Yorkshire, Hull and Rotherham.

MESMAC stands for 'Men who have Sex with Men – Action in the Community.' Yorkshire MESMAC was formed at the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, when many thousands of Gay and Bisexual men were dying. The organisation was given financial support from the UK government; recognising that community based health response was needed and that the best placed people to do such work were Gay and Bisexual men who were active in communities.

Their work is underpinned by a commitment to supporting individuals by giving them access to accurate and up-to-date information so that they can make informed choices about their emotional and sexual lives, and challenging the structures of inequality that stand in the way of individuals making informed choices.

MESMAC currently undertake HIV prevention and sexual health promotion work with men who have sex with men, BME communities, young LGBT+ people, women who are dating after divorce or separation and other community groups. MESMAC offer a range of services including: one-to-one information and support – in person or by telephone or email – on issues such as HIV; sexual health; coming out and how to contact community groups;

free access to a professional counselling service, free HIV testing, chlamydia and gonorrhoea screening; outreach on the Gay 'scene' (i.e. Gay pubs and clubs) and in public sex environments (cottages, cruising areas and saunas) for the purposes of HIV prevention and sexual health promotion; support for existing and new LGBT+ community groups (free access to meeting space, training on boundaries, confidentiality and support techniques, photocopying and printing, money holding for small groups, the chance to apply for small grants, etc.).

Yorkshire MESMAC encompasses a number of different services in Leeds, as well as its HIV prevention projects, including:

The BLAST project – the UK's only male-only child sexual exploitation project, working with boys and young men at risk of or currently being sexually exploited and also with professionals across the country to ensure they include boys in their work.

Sage – working with older LGBT+ people to address social isolation by offering opportunities for social inclusion and supporting people to access existing opportunities. Older people are leading the project though it makes use of intergenerational volunteering opportunities.

Young Educators – a project directed at engaging young men who have sex with men to take control of their sexuality, sexual health and anti-stigma messages through community workshops and training.

Yorkshire MESMAC currently hosts regular LGBT+ projects/groups in their Leeds building, including Reach OUT, Gendered Intelligence, Leeds Gay Community, Trans Leeds, Lees non-binary group, Leeds male survivors group, Proud and diverse, and Leeds Bi Group. Yorkshire MESMAC also works in partnership with local service providers to increase their reach to LGBT+ communities. As part of this work there are currently drop-ins held at Yorkshire MESMAC's office and with support from Yorkshire MESMAC team members around mental health, drug and alcohol and housing issues.

Yorkshire MESMAC also currently host NHS outreach workers seconded from the Gender Identity Clinic in Leeds.

## **YORKSHIRE MESMAC AND LGBT+ COMMUNITIES IN LEEDS**

Yorkshire MESMAC surfaced as one of the key community assets for LGBT+ people in Leeds. In community mapping exercises MESMAC was identified as a linchpin in the LGBT+ community, offering physical resources and expertise

to many smaller LGBT+ community projects and groups. The mapping work also identifies Yorkshire MESMAC as a key hub for LGBT+ support and social groups and advocacy-based activity.

When asked, “What do you value most about the LGBT+ community in Leeds?” three survey respondents answered “Yorkshire MESMAC.” Some people indicated that MESMAC was the only support they had and that the organisation was crucial to their wellbeing. One participant said that MESMAC was a “*great organisation helping me when I was at rock bottom.*”

A number of people referred to MESMAC’s counselling service as something that had positively impacted them. Two respondents to the survey indicated that they had accessed MESMAC’s counselling services, after experiencing difficulties with their mental health, and rated it ‘excellent’ and ‘effective.’

26% of people said they found out about LGBT+ related activity in Leeds through Yorkshire MESMAC. 26 of these people were men, 3 were women, and 4 non-binary. 17 survey participants (13%) wrote that Yorkshire MESMAC was one of three things that positively impacted them as an LGBT+ person. Of these respondents, 15 were men, one was a non-binary LGBT+ person and one was an LGBT+ woman.

The findings indicate that LGBT+ women in Leeds don’t generally view Yorkshire MESMAC as an asset to them. It may be that the history of the organisation as one rooted in Gay and Bisexual communities, and its continued focus on HIV prevention services, has meant that LGBT+ women don’t view MESMAC as an organisation that represents their experiences or needs.

## PROFILE ON LEEDS 'GAY QUARTER' - COMMERCIAL LGBT+ BAR SCENE



[photo credit Joe Burke]

Leeds has an established and busy commercial 'gay scene' located in the city centre area of Lower Briggate and The Calls.

The New Penny is one of the oldest, continuously running, gay bars in England. Other venues central to the scene include Blayd's bar, Viaduct Showbar, Queens Court, The Bridge, Fibre, Club Mission, The Cosmopolitan Hotel and the gay male sauna Steam.

Signifying their recognition of LGBT+ communities in Leeds, Leeds City Council, with support from Network Rail, have invested in developing the area by transforming the railway bridge that runs across Lower Briggate into the 'Freedom Bridge.' The bridge has been painted in the rainbow colours of the Pride flag.

### **LEEDS 'GAY QUARTER' AND LGBT+ COMMUNITIES IN LEEDS**

The survey highlighted some very pronounced differences in LGBT+ people's experiences and perceptions of the commercial gay scene in Leeds. For many participants the scene was cited as something that positively impacted

them as LGBT+ people. A number of bars were named as having a positive impact on people's lives, including The Viaduct Showbar, Queen's Court, Cosmopolitan Hotel and The New Penny.

Some respondents said they didn't visit the Gay Quarter/Lower Briggate often but they felt that 'knowing it was there' had a positive impact on them. Leeds City Council's support painting the railway bridge that runs across Lower Briggate in the rainbow colours of the Pride flag was also seen to have a positive impact as this was seen as sign that Leeds was valuing its LGBT+ community.

A significant number of respondents held more critical views of venues in the Gay Quarter and bar scene cultures. Some of these views were based on an individual's own personal tastes and preferences and some were informed by negative experiences or perceptions. Critical views were expressed across all genders, trans status, age and sexualities.

The survey found that women who held critical views of the Gay Quarter felt they were excluded and unwelcome in these spaces, as they saw these venues as predominantly spaces for gay men.

Some respondents reported being refused entry into venues in the Gay Quarter – for what they perceived as discriminatory practices in these venues towards people who didn't fit a particular profile; i.e. people who were non-binary or did not dress in a certain way.

Some male respondents, who held negative opinions of these spaces, felt that the Gay Quarter was only accessible or welcoming for a minority of gay men, who were characterised as young, non-disabled, white and conventionally attractive. Some men who felt they didn't fit this description reported feeling alienated from these spaces. These comments also indicate that for some older LGBT+ people the Gay Quarter doesn't feel like an age-friendly or inclusive space.

*"My experience of the Leeds LGBT community is that it is somewhat insular and caters to a stereotype. Having been told I should not be in a particular bar because I was too old (I was 44 at the time) I felt this was not a community that was inclusive."*

*"The scene is too orientated toward the student and younger crowd and not enough effort is put into catering for the older generation."*

*"Much of the LGBT scene in Leeds is geared towards white cis able-bodied gay men."*

Some people expressed the view that the Gay Quarter lacked diversity, while

others more specifically commented on their experiences and perceptions of racism and transphobia. In the survey people reported that they have experienced racist hostility and discrimination from door staff, club hosts, DJs and drag queens working in some venues in the Gay Quarter. The entertainment offered by these bars was also seen by some survey participants as offensive and racist.

*"Racist drag acts. Men touch women up and think it's ok because they are gay. A lot of trans men are transphobic and staff ill-informed."*

*"No matter what sexuality you are people can still be bigoted and I have overheard several comments about black people, Asian people and older people in bars."*

*"There are issues with racism, sexism, transphobia still on the scene. The scene is fairly ageist and focused towards younger (over 18) people. Most venues aren't accessible to those with physical disabilities."*

*"I belong to a religious and ethnic minority and feel like I'm viewed with suspicion a lot. I often feel like I have to justify my presence and sometimes consciously dress a particular way to try and fit in with expectations of what LGBT people look like."*

The survey asked how safe people felt, emotionally and physically, in a number of different spaces including the Gay Quarter. 60% of survey respondents said they felt 'very safe' or 'safe.' Of these respondents 53% were men, 41% women and 5% non-binary, age ranged from 20 and under to over 71 years, cut across sexualities (though 50% identified as gay), and included both white and BME, disabled and non-disabled.

15% of people reported that they felt either 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe' in the Gay Quarter; these responses also came from a broad cross-section of LGBT+ people which included trans, non-binary and gender variant people and cisgender people, women and men, gay, lesbian, bisexual and queer people, age ranged from those 20 and under to those between 61–70, and both white and BME, disabled and non-disabled.

There were also significant numbers of comments through the survey that expressed feelings of discomfort around the presence of people they understood to be non-LGBT+ in these bars, which they felt threatened the safety of the space for LGBT+ people, and disrupted their sense that this was a space for them.

## PROFILE ON WHARF CHAMBERS COOPERATIVE CLUB



[photo credit James Braithwaite]

Wharf Chambers is a multi-space venue in the city centre open since 2012. It is run as a workers' cooperative, and a members' club, and has a strong DIY ethos and history. The venue was previously known as The Commonplace, a social centre rooted in grassroots activism and values of 'autonomy' and 'anti-capitalism.'

The co-op aims to run an ethical, affordable and sustainable city-centre venue in Leeds with multiple uses, aiming to provide a flexible space for art, film, music, politics and discussion that brings together people from communities across Leeds. Wharf Chambers has a 'Safer Spaces' agreement to hold its members and guests to account for any prejudicial or abusive behaviour.

The members of Wharf Chambers, who are invited to use the space to put on fundraisers, club nights, film showings, and gigs, shape the programme for the venue. Wharf Chambers is a hub for much of Leeds' queer organising and activity such as Queer Fest. Wharf Chambers also draws in punk and indie queer bands from around the world.

## **WHARF CHAMBERS COOPERATIVE CLUB AND LGBT+ COMMUNITIES IN LEEDS**

Wharf Chambers Cooperative Club emerged as a key LGBT+ community asset. A picture of Wharf Chambers emerges through this work as Leeds' hub for queer community and 'alternative' LGBT+ community.

21 survey participants named it as one of the three things in Leeds that had a positive impact on them as an LGBT+ person and specifically as a queer person.

Of this 21, 11 of these were women, 7 were non-binary, and 3 were men. 9 were not the same gender they were assigned at birth. 15 identified their sexuality as queer, 8 as bisexual, 4 as lesbian, 2 as asexual, 1 as gay and 1 as pansexual sapiosexual. 11 were 21 - 30, 9 were 31 - 40, and 1 was between 51 and 60. 7 said they had a disability under the Equality Act, 95% said they had no religion.

Many people commented that Wharf Chambers was a safe and accessible venue for LGBT+ people.

*"Wharf Chambers in Leeds City Centre, it's possibly the best LGBT safe space I've ever been to."*

*"Wharf Chambers is a really friendly venue."*

*"Wharf Chambers is a safe space for queer people to socialise that often hosts events organised by and/or that cater to queer people."*

Wharf Chambers operates a 'safer spaces' policy, which provides its members and guests with guidance on what kind of behaviour is expected, and what behaviour won't be tolerated, as well as what people can do if they feel their safety and comfort in the space to be challenged.

*"Wharf Chambers – great range of events, openness to queer activism, visibly queer staff makes all the difference!"*

*"Wharf Chambers feels like a genuinely safe space; I totally trust the staff to step in if anyone ever says anything transphobic or was aggressive towards me."*

The mapping work also identifies Wharf Chambers as a key hub for LGBT+ cultural activism and queer events. A number of queer-led and focused events in Leeds have been hosted at Wharf Chambers including Queer Fest, Leeds Queer Film Festival and Cafe Queero.

## PROFILE ON LEEDS PRIDE



[photo credit Joe Burke]

Leeds Pride, the annual celebration event of LGBT+ communities in Leeds, has been running since 2006. The event is free and celebrated its 10th year in 2016. The event has grown in scale and attendance year on year. Leeds Pride takes place in August and takes place across the city, in Millennium Square, in Leeds' Gay Quarter and other locations. The celebrations include live music from artists such as Alexandra Burke and Marc Almond, speakers from the local community, stalls for community groups, charities and businesses and a pride march and parade through the city. A number of community events across the city, such as workshops and talks, are also held under the banner of Leeds Pride.

A committee of volunteers from Leeds' LGBT+ community runs Leeds Pride. Tom Doyle (chief executive of Yorkshire MESMAC) chair and co-founder of Leeds Pride stepped down in 2016. Pride is funded through fundraising, grant funding, and corporate sponsorships. Sponsors have included ASDA, Sainsbury's, Leeds Trinity Shopping centre and First Direct. Leeds City Council also supports Leeds Pride.

The impact report for Leeds Pride 2016 showed that on Lower Briggate

alone there were 35,000 attendees in a 6 hour period. The economic impact of Leeds Pride was calculated at over £3 million in 2016 (Wales, 2016).

## **LEEDS PRIDE AND LGBT+ COMMUNITIES IN LEEDS**

Leeds Pride was named in the survey by 20 people as one of the three things in Leeds that has positively benefited them as an LGBT+ person. Of those that named Pride as something that benefited them 70% (14) were women, 30% (6) were men and 10% (2) were trans. 8 identified as gay, 7 as lesbian, 7 as bisexual and 1 as asexual. 18 were white, 17 had no religion, 2 were Christian and 1 was Buddhist. 4 had a disability under the Equality Act.

For many of these people the experience of attending Leeds Pride was affirming and had a positive emotional impact.

*"Leeds Pride always gives a boost to my mood."*

*"Leeds Pride for showing me just how large our community is."*

*"Pride is our annual big presence that proclaims that we are part of this city too."*

*"Leeds Pride is great, last year I took part in the parade, but just going there and seeing so many other queer people and allies all gathered to celebrate queer culture and existence is amazing!"*

Public Health England consider LGBT+ Pride events in the UK to have positive effects on the health and wellbeing of the LGBT+ community through promoting community cohesion and social connectedness. (Varney and Fenton, 2015)

## **OTHER LGBT+ COMMUNITY ASSETS**

More information on these groups, projects and networks can be found in the A-Z Directory (in the appendix)

### **SOCIAL AND SUPPORT GROUPS**

Survey participants named a number of social and support groups as having a positive impact on them as an LGBT+ person. These included Sage, Out in Leeds, Leeds Gay Community, Leeds Gay Men, Leeds First Friday, LGBT Parents Group, Aven, Leeds Alternative Community, Yorkshire Relish, Trans Leeds, Leeds Non-Binary group, Cafe Queero, Fierce Babe Facebook group, Leeds Bi Group and Gay Abandon.

#### PROFILE ON SAGE

Sage is a partnership project between Yorkshire MESMAC and Age UK Leeds, and part of the Time to Shine programme. Sage aims to address social isolation amongst LGBT+ older people in Leeds. Sage provides training to services and businesses on how to be inclusive and accessible and understand the needs of older LGBT+ people. Sage also offers drop-in sessions for older LGBT+ people and has run activities related to LGBT+ social history in Leeds.

#### FORUMS, NETWORKS AND SOCIETIES

The forums, networks and societies named as having a positive impact on LGBT+ people in Leeds were Leeds City Council's LGB&T\* Hub, Leeds City Council LGBT Staff Network, Leeds University LGBT society, Rainbow Rose LGBT+ Staff and Student network at Leeds Beckett and Leeds Beckett Students Equals Society.

#### PROFILE ON LEEDS LGB&T\* HUB

Leeds City Council's LGB&T\* Hub is a forum for LGBT+ people in Leeds to feed back to the Council any issues related to the LGBT+ community, as well as for the Council to update LGBT+ people in Leeds on any developments relevant to the community and steps taken to address community concerns.

The LGB&T\* Hub is one of the Equalities Assemblies set up to "ensure Leeds City Council is engaging with and involving the full range of citizens that live in Leeds in the decisions it makes."<sup>5</sup> The LGB&T Hub has grown in attendance over the last two years and has subcommittees for LGBT+ BME and Faith, Trans people, and LGBT+ Women. The LGB&T Hub has worked on a number of issues that include LGBT+ inclusive sports, hate crime and homelessness. The LGB&T\* Hub meets quarterly at The Cosmopolitan Hotel.

<sup>5</sup> Taken from <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/council/Pages/Equality-Assembly.aspx>

## SPORTS AND SPIRITUAL

A few LGBT+ sports activities were highlighted through the survey including Yorkshire Terriers, Leeds Frontrunners, Bad Mittens and Strike Back Kickboxing. One participant also named All Hallows Church as having a positive impact on them as an LGBT+.

### PROFILE ON LGBT+ INCLUSIVE SPORTS NETWORK

The Leeds LGBT+ Inclusive Sports Project (ISP) was created following an open discussion at the LGBT\* Community Hub in the summer of 2015. The meeting raised issues around gender inequality for LGBT+ women, the lack of visible LGBT+ role models in sports, difficulties of 'coming out' in some sports, and poor experiences of sport for younger LGBT+ people. The discussion led to action from Leeds City Council with two key aims; to promote and support LGBT+ inclusive sports and groups and activities in Leeds, and to develop and implement a plan to bring about national and international unity competitions in Leeds. Practical steps towards growing an LGBT+ Inclusive Sports Network included creating a webpage on the Council's sports page on LGBT+ inclusive sports activities, and delivering LGBT+ awareness training.

Leeds LGBT+ Inclusive Sports Network has successfully launched two new sports groups, the Leeds Hunters RUFC and The Bad Mittens badminton group. Currently the LGBT+ Inclusive Sports Network produces a monthly newsletter, and runs regular social events for members of the different sports groups to get together.

Each sports group is independent, with their own priorities and aims for development. The Bad Mittens have received funding to run once monthly free sessions for beginners and other groups have been successful in receiving funding or sponsorship from the Leeds City Council and private business.

## LGBT+ ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

A number of people named things related to Leeds' LGBT+ arts, cultural and heritage landscape as having a positive impact on their lives. This includes Leeds Queer Stories, Lavender Cafe Orchestra, Gay Abandon, Leeds Queer Film Festival and more generally Leeds' queer punk music scene.

## PROFILE ON LEEDS QUEER FILM FESTIVAL

The first Queer Film Festival was in 2005 and organised by Queer Mutiny North, a DIY collective that organised free queer events and gatherings in Leeds. Queer Mutiny North, who are no longer active, organised queer events aiming to "create an alternative to the manufactured, over commodified gay scene; an alternative where all genders and sexualities are welcome."<sup>6</sup> The second Queer Film Festival happened five years later in 2010, and took place in a squatted building in Leeds.

Since 2013 the Leeds Queer Film Festival has been running in city centre venues in Leeds.

The festival is not for profit and is run by a volunteer collective who aim to "screen films that elevate and prioritise the voices and work of those most marginalised within our queer communities." The Queer Film Festival also holds events in collaboration with political groups in Leeds like Leeds No Borders and Queer and Now.

Leeds Queer Film Festival says that their events "provide a space by and for the LGBTQ+ community in Leeds to get together and watch queer films, take part in workshops, and socialise in a non-alcohol-focused environment. It gives a platform for voices that face oppressions and marginalisation both outside the LGBTQ+ community and also within it. It's also a space of support and appreciation for queer artists and cinema and for us to see representation of our identities that is lacking in mainstream media."

Leeds Queer Film Festival has grown its audience significantly since 2005, and this year organised an International Women's Day event in Leeds City Museum.

## HOW DO PEOPLE LEARN ABOUT LGBT+ ACTIVITIES IN LEEDS

The survey asked how people found out about LGBT+ events in Leeds. Facebook was the most frequently cited way that people got their information and the second most frequent was from friends. This result points to how crucial people's social networks are for finding out about LGBT+ related activity in the city.

1. Facebook (67%)
2. From friends (60%)

---

<sup>6</sup> All quotations have been taken from direct correspondence with LQFF organisers, or their promotional communications.

3. Yorkshire MESMAC (26%)
4. Posters and fliers (23%)
5. Email mailing list (22%)
6. Twitter (20%)
7. I struggled to find out about information in the city (15%)
8. GayLeeds.com (now Freedom Quarter) (14%)

The survey found that a higher percentage of LGBT+ women than GBT+ men use Facebook to get their information. 26 men said they get their information from Yorkshire MESMAC but only 3 women.

For older LGBT+ respondents, over the age of 60, the most frequently cited way of finding out about LGBT+ activity in Leeds was from friends (50%) and the second most frequent cited way older people get their information was email mailing lists (40%) and Yorkshire MESMAC (40%), then Facebook (30%), Sage newsletter (20%) and posters and fliers (20%).

For younger respondents up to 30 years, the most frequently cited way of finding out about LGBT+ activity is Facebook (72%), friends (64%), and Yorkshire MESMAC (33%).

In the survey 18 people said they got their information from GayLeeds.com (though it was not specified if this was through their Facebook page or Twitter profile), 14 of these were men.

The Leeds University Union LGBT Society was also named as a source of information.

The findings show that the way people learn about LGBT+ activities in Leeds is fragmented; different communication platforms and mediums have different audiences within LGBT+ communities. There is no single form of communication that serves all groups. While the majority of people receive information through social media or their social networks the information they receive through these networks will be determined by what and who they already know, and the diversity of their networks. The findings also indicate that audiences are gendered, and in LGBT+ communities' gender plays a major role in determining who are the stakeholders and recipients of communications.

## PROFILE ON GAY LEEDS/FREEDOM QUARTER

Gay Leeds began in 2010, and originally produced a paper copy each month, though "as generations began to rely on social media more"<sup>7</sup> the outlet realised there was more potential to reach a wider audience online. The website and Facebook group were introduced, shortly followed by the Twitter account. Gay Leeds notes "It all began because there was a general consensus that mainstream media did not serve the LGBT community like it should have done at the time."

Gay Leeds is a guide for LGBT+ Leeds on restaurants, bars, clubs, accommodation and events in the city. Gay Leeds features columnists and bloggers from the LGBT+ community. It also positions itself as a platform to promote and advertise LGBT+ groups and support services. The aims of Gay Leeds are to provide the LGBT+ community with a platform for the latest news, to provide information on venues, events, groups and services, to act as a support mechanism for anyone inside or outside of the LGBT+ community, and to provide a safe space for all within the LGBT+ community. Gay Leeds is run by the telecommunications company All Points North (based in Leeds on Lower Briggate) and exists to be an independent guide for the community.

The website has a strong focus on promoting LGBT+ life in Leeds positively, and will "always post articles and content which is positive and motivating. We're against negativity, and anything that encourages it."

Since March 2017 Gay Leeds became Freedom Quarter. The rebranding included both an update of the website and an additional focus on the economy and businesses in the 'Freedom Quarter' (the area of Call Lane and Lower Briggate).

---

<sup>7</sup> All quotations have been taken from direct correspondence with Gay Leeds/ Freedom Quarter organisers, or their promotional communications.

## 13. LGBT+ LEEDS HEALTH AND WELLBEING EXPERIENCES

The survey asked what respondents thought were LGBT+ health and wellbeing priorities in Leeds. Of those who answered this (122) the top five were:

- Mental health (86%)
- Sexual health (50%)
- Safe and welcoming spaces (46%)
- Trans health care (43%)
- Drug and alcohol abuse (31%)

### MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health was the top health and wellbeing priority for LGBT+ people in Leeds. 86% of survey participants said it was a priority for LGBT+ people. Experiencing mental health difficulties is a concern that cuts across all LGBT+ identities and communities.

Data on Mind's website suggests that 1 in 4 adults in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year (Mind.org.uk, 2017). Mental Health Foundation reported that 8-10% of people in the UK will experience depression in their lifetime (Mental Health Foundation, 2015).

The prevalence of experiences of mental health difficulties is higher among LGBT+ people than the wider population. Data from the LGBT Foundation suggests that "LGB people are twice as likely as heterosexual people to have suicidal thoughts or to make suicide attempts" and that "LGB people are two to three times more likely than heterosexual people to suffer from depression." (LGBT Foundation, 2017)

For trans people mental health inequalities are even starker. Trans mental health survey research funded by the Scottish Government found that 84% of trans people had thought about ending their life at some point and 48% of trans people had attempted to end their life. (McNeill, J. et al 2012)

Research suggests high rates of mental health difficulties among LGBT+ populations are driven by the experiences of discrimination, violence, bullying, social isolation, and alienation that many LGBT+ people experience throughout the course of their lives. Another factor driving mental health inequalities is the limited access to culturally appropriate mental health services and support for LGBT+ people, and a lack of trust in mental health practitioners.

The results from this survey shows the percentage of LGBT+ people who reported difficult mental health experiences that impacted significantly on their day to day functioning in the last five years was very high across all sexualities and genders.

- 30% of survey respondents said they had a “A mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder”
- 90% of survey respondents reported having a difficult mental health experience/s that impacted severely on their day to day functioning in the last five years
- 65% of respondents who reported having been severely impacted by the experience of difficult mental health experience did not have a mental health diagnosis, and over half of these respondents did not seek support for their difficulties

Of those who answered the survey question on their experiences of difficult mental health (114):

- 73% said they had been impacted severely by stress
- 71% said they had been impacted severely by low mood
- 64% said they had been impacted severely by confidence and self-esteem issues
- 61% said they had been impacted severely by excessive worrying
- 57% said they had been impacted severely by significant emotional distress
- 41% said they had been impacted severely by isolation
- 25% said they had been impacted severely by over reliance on alcohol or drugs

Others said that anxiety, depression, self-harm and bereavement had impacted them severely.

A 2010 report from Equity Partnership on the health needs of LGB people in the Bradford District reported that 55% of those who completed their survey had reported having had an experience of ill mental health in the last 5 years. (Equity Partnership, 2012)

Although there are a number of non-statutory mental health services in Leeds that provide support for LGBT+ people in Leeds, such as Leeds MIND, Yorkshire MESMAC and Community Links, the survey results point to a need for more support from both statutory and non-statutory providers.

## **SEXUAL HEALTH**

The survey indicated that sexual health was a priority concern for LGBT+ people in Leeds. 48% of survey participants chose sexual health as a health and wellbeing priority for LGBT+ people. It is important to note that in the survey participants were also able to choose 'reproductive health' as a health and wellbeing concern, and so it can be assumed that sexual health here excludes issues specifically related to reproductive health. It is not clear if concerns are related to LGBT+ people's access to sexual health services, poor sexual health experiences, or both.

Sexual health inequalities among LGBT+ populations in the UK are longstanding. MSM (men who have sex with men) are the group most affected by HIV infection and other sexually transmitted infections. (Gov.uk, 2017)

A Department of Health briefing says "There has been no decline among the number of domestic HIV infections, suggesting that the number of people living in the UK who acquire HIV (sexually) continues to grow. About 80% of all domestically-acquired HIV infections occur as a consequence of sex between men." (Fish, 20107)

The briefing also highlights how lesbian women are often perceived as the group least at risk of contracting STIs, and are as a consequence not targeted in sexual health education or campaigns. Although lesbians are less likely to have some sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia, it is more common among lesbians than heterosexual women to have BV (bacterial vaginosis).

A number of people in the survey commented how valuable the preventative and supportive work of Yorkshire MESMAC, BHA SkyLine and Leeds Sexual Health were.

## **SAFE AND WELCOMING SPACES**

46% of people said that safe and welcoming spaces are a priority for LGBT+ people in Leeds, over 60% of these respondents were women.

Throughout this project LGBT+ people have highlighted the need for safe and welcoming spaces. In particular people commented on the need for more safe and welcoming spaces for LGBT+ women, trans and non-binary people, and BME people. People also spoke of the need for more spaces that were alcohol free, or didn't revolve around alcohol. Safe and welcoming spaces

for LGBT+ people are connected to wider positive health and wellbeing outcomes, and are essential to the wellbeing of those who often find themselves on the margins of society.

## **TRANS HEALTH CARE**

Trans health care was a priority health and wellbeing issue in Leeds for 42% of survey respondents. A number of people in the survey commented on how long waiting lists to access trans healthcare in Leeds had a negative impact on physical and mental health. Leeds has two main health institutes in the city that provide health provision to trans people. The Tavistock and Portman Gender Identity Development Service provide support for children, young people and families, and Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Leeds Gender Identity Service provides services to adults in the area.

Leeds Gender Identity Services have been highlighted as one of the Gender Identity Services in the UK with a long waiting list. The GIS in Leeds also receives a lot of referrals to its services from outside Yorkshire and Humber, many from the North West where there are no GIS. In 2016 the BBC reported that “NHS guidelines say patients should have an initial appointment within 18 weeks, but in Leeds the average is about 83.” (BBC News, 2016)

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE**

Drug and alcohol abuse was a key health and wellbeing concern for 30% of survey respondents. The need for safe spaces for LGBT+ people that don't revolve around alcohol was raised by many throughout the survey.

A UK Drugs Policy Commission evidence review finds that “drug use among LGBT groups is higher than among their heterosexual counterparts, irrespective of gender or the different age distribution in the populations.” (Reuter, P. and Stevens, A. 2007)

Research from the LGBT Foundation found that problematic drinking was higher amongst LGB populations, with lesbian and bisexual men and women being twice as likely to binge drink once a week than the general population. The prevalence of drug and alcohol abuse within LGBT+ populations is connected to poor mental health outcomes for LGBT+ people. 1 in 4 respondents to our survey said they had been severely impacted by over reliance on alcohol and drugs in the last 5 years. Yorkshire MESMAC and Forward Leeds are working together to provide drug and alcohol support to LGBT+ people in Leeds.

## **LGBT+ HEALTH AND WELLBEING SECTION SUMMARY**

Sexual health inequalities amongst LGBT+ communities are longstanding, and the findings indicate that sexual health remains a persistent concern amongst LGBT+ communities in Leeds.

Although mental health, sexual health, safe and welcoming spaces, trans health care and drug and alcohol abuse are presented separately, for many LGBT+ people these issues are inextricably intertwined, negatively impacting and reinforcing each other.

The impact of poor experiences in trans related health care or sexual health, of having limited or no opportunity to access safe and welcoming spaces, and of experiencing drug and alcohol abuse are all likely to lead to poorer mental health outcomes.

The lack of safe and welcoming spaces for many LGBT+ people in Leeds connects directly to poorer mental health outcomes. Throughout this report examples of the lack of safe and welcoming spaces for many LGBT+ people in Leeds are highlighted, and for those people that are most marginalised, this lack of safe and welcoming space means an increased risk of isolation and loneliness, as well as reinforcing difficult mental health experiences already associated with discrimination and prejudice.

LGBT+ communities are disproportionately impacted by drug and alcohol abuse, driven by experiences of social marginalisation, discrimination and prejudice, and poorer mental health outcomes. This report also makes the connection between drug and alcohol abuse and the lack of safe and welcoming spaces for LGBT+ people in Leeds.

The findings from the survey and other supporting consultation strongly indicate that Leeds' LGBT+ communities are experiencing a mental health crisis. 90% of respondents to the survey had experienced, in the last 5 years, difficult mental health that severely impacted on their day-to-day functioning. Poor experiences of mental health cut across all LGBT+ communities in Leeds.

## 14. LGBT + COMMUNITY SAFETY

### COMMUNITY SAFETY PRIORITIES FOR LGBT+ PEOPLE IN LEEDS

The survey asked respondents to pick three issues related to LGBT+ community safety that they felt are the biggest priorities to tackle in Leeds.

For the respondents that chose to answer this question (118), priorities were:

- Transphobic hate crime (55%)
- Homophobic hate crime (48%)
- Sexual assault (37%)
- Homelessness (35%)
- Racist hate crime (34%)
- Domestic violence and abuse (32%)

### **TRANSPHOBIC AND HOMOPHOBIC HATE CRIME**

Transphobic hate crime and homophobic hate crime was the most frequently cited community safety concern for LGBT+ people in the survey.

The Galop Hate Crime Report found that experience of hate crimes was consistently high across all sexual identities and genders and that LGBT+ people have experienced hate crime related to their gender or sexuality (Antjoule, 2016). The results from the Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project Community Survey also indicate high levels of abuse and discrimination against LGBT+ people.

A Freedom of Information Request made by BBC Radio Leeds in 2001 indicates that people in Leeds are reporting homophobic hate crime at increasing rates year on year. The BBC reported that West Yorkshire Police said it indicated people were more confident to report homophobic and transphobic hate crimes to the Police (BBC News, 2015); however, the results from the survey suggest that confidence in the Police to respond effectively remains low.

The survey asked LGBT+ people about their experiences and expectations of reporting hate crimes or crimes committed against them to the Police.

The survey asked 'Do you have confidence the Police would respond effectively to a hate crime or crime committed against you?'

- 32% said No
- 31% said I don't know
- 31% said Yes

10 people said they didn't receive a Crime Reference number after reporting a hate crime to the Police.

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT**

Sexual assault was a key priority area for LGBT+ people in Leeds. The survey didn't focus on understanding the scale and nature of sexual assault amongst and against LGBT+ people in Leeds, but almost 20% of survey participants indicated that they had experienced sexual assault in the last 5 years, and that in some of these cases former partners were the perpetrators. Results from the survey also indicate that sexual assault perpetrated against people is seen as related to their sexual identity or gender. A Galop survey found that 1 in 10 people said the hate crime they had experienced involved sexual violence (Antjoule, 2016), results from the Leeds survey put that higher – almost 1 in 5 people who responded to the survey had experienced sexual assault in relation to a hate crime.

## **HOMELESSNESS**

Homelessness amongst LGBT+ people emerged as a key concern in the survey. A number of people highlighted homelessness as one of the things that most negatively impacts LGBT+ people in Leeds. The Albert Kennedy Trust research on the prevalence of LGBT+ homelessness finds that "young people who identify as LGBT are grossly over-represented within youth homelessness populations." They estimate that one in four young people who are homeless are LGBT. (Bateman, 2015)

Some of the risk factors related to LGBT+ homelessness include LGBT+ younger people being more likely to be forced out of home due to parental or family rejection, LGBT+ people having a high prevalence of mental health difficulties, and LGBT+ people experiencing higher rates of abuse and discrimination compared to non-LGBT+ people.

## **RACIST HATE CRIME**

Although the survey didn't have many BME respondents racism and racist

hate crime was identified by people as a key issue of concern for LGBT+ community safety. This indicates that racism within LGBT+ communities is readily observable to non-BME people. The survey collected a number of comments from LGBT+ people in Leeds that indicated some spaces and scenes in the LGBT+ Leeds were hostile and unsafe for non-white people and that there were issues with racism within LGBT+ communities in Leeds (see Section 9 and 12 for some discussion of racism in Leeds within LGBT+ communities). This reflects a broader picture that can also been seen at a national level. The Fact Site conducted a survey among gay men in the UK (including men from Leeds) about their experiences of racism on the scene. The survey found that 80% of black men, 79% of Asian men, 75% of South Asian men and 64% of mixed-race men had experienced racism on the scene. It also found that for most Black and Asian men the experience of racism was a bigger issue for them than that of homophobia. (The Fact Site, 2017)

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE**

Domestic violence and abuse was a key concern for over 30% of survey respondents. Literature on domestic violence in LGBT+ relationships suggests it has an equal or higher prevalence than in heterosexual relationships (Walters, M.L et al 2013); however LGBT+ people are less likely to seek help or report experiences of domestic violence and abuse. This is due to a number of factors that include historical dismissal of same sex violence in relationships, mistrust in the police, and the lack of specialist services that are equipped to understand the dynamics and effects of domestic violence in LGBT+ relationships. Recent survey research undertaken by Leeds Women's Aid indicates that many LGBT+ people do not seek help from services because they don't believe that help is available to them, or trust that organisations will have knowledge and cultural understanding of their needs. This particularly reflects the concerns of LGBT+ people who are trans and non-binary, who often fall down the cracks in domestic violence service provision (Stewart 2016).

## **LGBT+ EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE, ABUSE, DISCRIMINATION AND PREJUDICE**

The survey asked about violence, abuse or discrimination that people had experienced in relation to different aspects of their perceived or actual identity, to build a better understanding of the intersecting experiences.

People said they experienced violence, abuse and discrimination across most categories most frequently in relation to their sexuality with the exception of sexual assault. Sexual assault was experienced more frequently in relation to a person's gender.

#### SEXUAL ASSAULT

- 19% (24) of respondents said they had experienced sexual assault in the last 5 years. 14 were women (including 1 trans woman), 5 were non-binary, and 5 were men (all of which were trans men). 2 were androgynous identified, and 1 was agender.
- 12 respondents said they had experienced sexual assault related to their sexuality, 5 because of their trans status, and 16 because of their gender.
- Of those who said the sexual assault was related to their trans status (5) 2 were non-binary, 2 were trans men, and 1 a trans woman.
- Of those who said the sexual assault was related to their gender (16) 13 were women and 3 were non-binary.
- Of those who said the sexual assault was related to their sexuality (12) 5 were queer, 2 asexual, 4 bisexual, 3 gay, and 1 lesbian.

#### PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

- 15% (19) said they had experienced physical violence in the last five years. 10 were men (including 3 trans men), 7 female (1 trans woman), and 2 non-binary.
- 12 people said they had experienced physical violence related to their sexuality (7 men, 3 women, and 2 non-binary). 6 were gay, 4 bisexual, 2 queer, and 1 lesbian.<sup>8</sup>
- 5 people said they had experienced physical violence related to their trans status. 2 were trans men, 1 trans woman and 2 non-binary.
- 2 people said they had experienced physical violence related to their disability (which included a physical and sensory impairment).
- 7 people said they had experienced physical violence related to their gender. 5 were women and 2 were men (both of whom were trans men).
- 1 person said they had experienced physical violence related to their religion, but they did not disclose what their religion was in the survey.

---

<sup>8</sup> Where numbers for breakdown of identities is more than the total number of people, some survey respondents have identified into more than one category.

## CRIMINAL DAMAGE

- 7% (9) said they had experienced criminal damage in the last five years. 5 were men (including 1 trans man) and 4 were women.
- 8 people said they had experienced criminal damage related to their sexuality. 4 were gay, 2 were lesbians and 2 were bisexual.
- 1 person (a trans man) said they had experienced criminal damage related to their trans status.
- 2 people said they had experienced criminal damage related to their gender, 1 was a cis women and 1 a trans man.

## HARASSMENT

- 43% (55) said they had experienced harassment in the last 5 years. 26 were women (including 3 trans women), 24 were men (including 9 trans men), and 6 were non-binary.
- 42 people said they had experienced harassment in the last 5 years that was related to their sexuality. 19 were gay, 9 were lesbian, 14 were bisexual and 11 were queer.
- 3 people said they had experienced harassment related to ethnicity. 2 were of mixed ethnicity, and 1 was white other.
- 12 people said they had experienced harassment related to their trans status. 4 were non-binary, 6 were men, and 2 were women.
- 4 people said they had experienced harassment related to their disability.
- 27 people said they had experienced harassment related to their gender. 20 were women, 5 were non-binary, and 2 were men.
- 1 person said they had experienced harassment related to their religion, but did not disclose their religion.

## VERBAL ABUSE

- 62% (81) said they had experienced verbal abuse in the last 5 years. 36 were women, 37 were men, and 8 were non-binary.
- 67 people said they had experienced verbal abuse related to their sexuality in the last 5 years. 32 were gay, 16 were lesbian, 17 bisexual, 15 queer, 2 asexual, and one 'no fixed sexuality.'
- 5 people said they had experienced verbal abuse related to their ethnicity. 2 were white background, 2 were mixed ethnicity background, and one did not disclose.
- 15 said they had experienced verbal abuse related to their trans status. 6 were non-binary, 6 were men, and 3 were women. 9 were trans men, 3 were trans women, 5 were genderqueer, 1 was a cross-

dressing/transvestite person, and 2 were other kind of gender variant.

- 11 people said they had experienced verbal abuse related to their disability.
- 38 people said had experienced verbal abuse related to their gender. 24 were women (including 1 trans woman), 7 were men (all of which were trans-men), and 7 were non-binary.
- 3 said they had experienced verbal abuse related to their religion. 1 was Christian, 1 was Jewish and 1 did not disclose.
- 1 person said they had experienced verbal abuse related to their HIV status.

#### NEGATIVE COMMENTS

- 71% (90) had experienced negative comments related to their identity in the last 5 years. 40 were men (including 11 trans men), 40 were women (3 trans women), and 10 were non-binary.
- 79 had experienced negative comments related to their sexuality. 34 were gay, 16 were lesbian, 24 were bisexual, 21 were queer, 4 were asexual, 1 was pansexual, and 1 had 'no fixed sexuality.'
- 6 had experienced negative comments related to their ethnicity. 3 were from white backgrounds, and 2 were from mixed ethnicity backgrounds.
- 16 people had experienced negative comments related to trans status. 8 were men, 3 were women, and 3 were non-binary.
- 14 people had experienced negative comments related to disability.
- 36 people had experienced negative comments related to gender. 24 were women, 6 were non-binary, and 6 were men.
- 6 people had experienced negative comments related to religion. 2 had no religion, 2 were Christian and 1 was Jewish.
- 2 people had experienced negative comments related to HIV status.

#### BULLYING

- 27% (35) had experienced bullying in the last 5 years. 20 were men (including 5 trans men), 11 were women (including 2 trans women), and 4 were non-binary.
- 27 people had experienced bullying related to their sexuality. 14 were gay, 7 bisexual, 5 lesbian, 5 queer, 1 asexual, and 1 pansexual.
- 2 people had experienced bullying related to their ethnicity, 1 from a mixed background and 1 Latino.

- 7 people had experienced bullying related to their trans status. 4 were trans men, 2 were trans women, and 2 non-binary. (Some people identified into more than one category)
- 7 people had experienced bullying related to their disability.
- 6 people said they had experienced bullying related to their gender. 4 were women (including 1 trans woman), 1 was a man (who was trans) and 1 was non-binary.

#### HOMELESSNESS/EViction FROM HOME

- 5 people said they had experienced homelessness or eviction from their home in the last 5 years that was related to their identity. 3 were men, and 3 were non-binary. 1 was queer, 2 were bisexual and 1 was gay.

#### ONLINE BULLYING

- 20% (26) said they had experienced online bullying in the last 5 years. 14 were men, 10 were women, and 2 were non-binary.
- 18 people said they had experienced online bullying related to their sexuality. 10 were gay, 3 were lesbian, 3 were bisexual, and 4 were queer.
- 1 person said they had experienced online bullying related to ethnicity – they had a white background.
- 8 people said they had experienced online bullying related to trans status. 4 were men, 2 were women and 2 were non-binary.
- 3 people said they had experienced online bullying related to disability.
- 8 people said they had experienced online bullying related to gender. 6 were women and 2 were non-binary.
- 1 person said they had experienced online bullying related to religion. They were non-religious.

#### LGBT+ COMMUNITY SAFETY SUMMARY

Community safety concerns are intimately connected to health and wellbeing concerns. Experiences and fear of physical and sexual violence, harassment, verbal abuse, bullying and negative comments have an effect on a person's health and wellbeing. The health and wellbeing impact of experiencing homophobic or biphobic has been well documented; literature has shown that social stigmatization and direct experiences of homophobic abuse are connected to increased levels of stress, anxiety and depression,

problematic drug and alcohol usage, smoking, internalised homophobia, and suicide. (Banks, 2003)

Transphobic and homophobic hate crimes are a concern and a reality for LGBT+ people in Leeds. The findings also suggest that trust and confidence that the police would respond effectively to a hate crime, or crime committed against an LGBT+ person was low; only one third of survey respondents said they would have confidence in the police to respond effectively.

The survey found that for LGBT+ people experiences of violence, abuse, prejudice and discrimination were broad and wide ranging. For many respondents these experiences were related to their actual or perceived sexuality; the result of homophobia or biphobia. Negative comments, bullying and harassment related to sexuality are common experiences for many LGBT+ people in Leeds.

The findings also indicate that a significant level of violence, abuse and discrimination experienced amongst LGBT+ people in Leeds is related to a persons' gender and or a persons' trans status. Trans and non-binary people are overrepresented across experiences of sexual assault, physical violence, verbal abuse, negative comments, harassment, bullying and homelessness.

Sexual assault surfaced as a key area of concern for LGBT+ people in Leeds. The findings show that women, trans men and non-binary people are overrepresented in experiences of sexual assault. One in four women who responded to the survey had experienced sexual assault. Over half of non-binary people who responded to the survey had experienced sexual assault.

Addressing experiences of domestic violence and abuse amongst LGBT+ was another priority for LGBT+ people in Leeds.

Racist hate was a concern for LGBT+ people who responded to the survey, and throughout the project people shared their experiences of racism within LGBT+ communities.

Homelessness amongst LGBT+ people was a concern for over a third of survey respondents. The Albert Kennedy Trust estimates that one in four young homeless people will be LGBT.

## 15. CONCLUSION

Leeds' LGBT+ population is active, and belonging to a community matters to many LGBT+ people in the city. This investment in the idea of community is evident in the number of LGBT+ led efforts in Leeds that focus on building social and supportive networks.

LGBT+ people have a long history of addressing their own social and support needs by taking action in their communities. This action can look like setting up a social group, campaigning for inclusion and against discriminatory policies, developing networks of emotional support, or putting on cultural events celebrating queer life.

Data gathered through mapping LGBT+ activity in Leeds shows that 60% of this activity is driven by volunteers or community led, which indicates there is a lack of resources and investment, and therefore a risk to the sustainability of action.

The survey highlighted issues related to intersecting oppressions and experiences felt by LGBT+ people in Leeds regarding disability, race and ethnicity, religion, age, gender. Many LGBT+ people felt that the LGBT+ social and cultural landscape in Leeds, currently, is not accessible or inclusive to them because of discrimination and prejudice they experienced in these settings - discrimination and prejudice related to their ethnicity, age, gender, disability or trans status.

Many of the concerns that LGBT+ people in Leeds have around health and wellbeing and community safety are persistent issues that communities and researchers have been highlighting for decades; such as poor mental and sexual health, homophobia and transphobia, youth homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse.

Whilst this community action is a strength and an asset, it also can also reveal where mainstream services and society is inaccessible to some LGBT+ people. LGBT+ community led action around issues related to health inequality or

creating safe spaces, indicate not just a connectedness between LGBT+ people, but also that services are not meeting the needs of these communities, and that these communities are not always safe in the mainstream.

## **16. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **SAFE, INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE SPACES**

- For local councils and funders to value and invest in groups and projects that are working towards the provision of safe and inclusive LGBT+ spaces.
- The development of an LGBT+ Charter Mark for Leeds that would identify places that are inclusive and safe for LGBT+ people. Recognising the intersectional oppressions that face communities this Charter Mark must also be fully inclusive and safe for disabled people, BME people, women, people of faith and older people. For this Charter Mark to be maintained to a high standard and performance of those who apply to be regularly reviewed by a board comprised of people from LGBT+ communities in Leeds.
- The development of an inclusive LGBT+ community centre – addressing the need for the provision of safe and inclusive spaces for LGBT+ people in Leeds that don't revolve around alcohol consumption, and the provision of safe and inclusive spaces for LGBT+ women/ LGBT+ BME people/ LGBT+ disabled people/ LGBT+ older people. Staffing of an LGBT+ community centre to be LGBT+ led, with a particular focus on underrepresented or marginalised groups e.g. trans, bisexual people and LGBT+ BME people.
- The development of an LGBT+ housing project that is intergenerational, supporting the needs of older and younger LGBT+ people in Leeds.

### **ACCESSIBLE AND UP TO DATE INFORMATION ABOUT LGBT+ LEEDS**

- Investigating the feasibility of developing an LGBT+ Hub website for Leeds to ensure information is widely available about what support there is in the city. For the website to be accessible, and include BSL interpretation and translation into community languages, for the website to be sustainable and adequately resourced.

### **SUSTAINABLE AND SUPPORTED LGBT+ COMMUNITY ACTION**

- There is a risk to the sustainability and effectiveness of LGBT+ groups and projects in Leeds; around half the LGBT+ activity identified is community led and volunteer run. These efforts require support and resources to ensure these groups can grow and develop in self-determined ways.

- Need for greater availability of small grants for community groups and for the application process to be accessible.
- The development of a strong collective community voice is essential to ensure the demands of LGBT+ people are met and that action taken is coordinated and strengthened. This can be fostered through establishing an LGBT+ consortium in Leeds, of smaller groups and organisations. It is important that those who are most marginalised within LGBT+ communities are brought to the fore, and their voices amplified in the development of a consortium.
- The development of a consortium of groups would also make it easier for groups to bid for larger funding amounts.
- Building stronger networks – supporting established LGBT+ groups and projects to connect with emerging or smaller projects to share skills and resources, and connect agendas.
- The development of a ‘code of conduct’ for larger organisations and public bodies who engage and consult with LGBT+ groups and individuals. Ensuring that the time, knowledge and expertise of LGBT+ communities are valued through providing remuneration or resources in exchange.

#### **ADDRESSING HEALTH INEQUALITIES AMONGST LGBT+ COMMUNITIES**

- Include LGBT+ people in the design of services, to co-produce with LGBT+ organisations, groups and communities
- Development of LGBT+ led mental health services with a range of services including 1:1 counselling services and drop-in. These services could be integrated as part of an LGBT community centre. Integrated services are important for people to feel comfortable and that they know where to go and feel trust.
- Addressing practical barriers for LGBT+ people accessing mental health services; ensuring their location is safe and accessible, and affordable.
- Training and accountability around LGBT+ issues for statutory and non-statutory mental health staff. For mental health services in Leeds to ensure all staff are trained on how to support LGBT+ people, and increase organisational knowledge of the challenges facing LGBT communities.
- Developing and supporting trans led organisations and groups that provide support and advocacy on issues related to trans health that are led by trans people. Recognising that trans people are the experts in their own lives, and best placed to develop supportive services for trans communities.

## **ADDRESSING LGBT+ COMMUNITY SAFETY**

- More detailed monitoring of LGBT+ identities when recording hate crimes.
- To begin addressing racism within the gay scene and LGBT+ community. For LGBT+ organisations and groups in Leeds to facilitate a community discussion on the issue of racism with LGBT+ communities, and the impact of racism on LGBT+ people of colour, to collect testimony from LGBT+ people affected by racism and build a strategy for ensuring racism is challenged at all levels. Support for existing groups and projects are led by BME LGBT+ people.
- Addressing the need for greater support around domestic violence and abuse amongst LGBT+ people and communities. For domestic violence services in Leeds to ensure all staff are trained on how to support LGBT+ people, and increase organisational knowledge of the challenges facing LGBT communities, strategic partnership working between domestic violence services and agencies in Leeds and LGBT+ organisations and groups, ensuring the inclusion of trans people and non-binary people in the DVA support services, for services and local authorities to provide clear signposting to local domestic violence services in Leeds that are available to LGBT+ communities.
- Addressing the need for greater support around experiences of sexual assault among LGBT+ people in Leeds, particularly non-binary and trans people. For sexual violence survivors services in Leeds to ensure all staff are trained on how to support LGBT+ people, and increase organisational knowledge of the challenges facing LGBT communities, strategic partnership working between sexual violence services and agencies in Leeds and LGBT+ organisations and groups, ensuring the inclusion of trans people and non-binary people in sexual violence survivors services.

## **FURTHER CONSULTATION WITH THE MOST MARGINALISED AND HARDER TO REACH LGBT+ COMMUNITIES**

- Though the Leeds LGBT+ Mapping Project community survey has successfully engaged many LGBT+ people in Leeds there is the need for further consultation with BME and disabled LGBT+ people

## WORKS CITED

1. A., Dahlgreen, W. and Shakespeare, A. (2015). YouGov | 1 in 2 young people say they are not 100% heterosexual. [online] YouGov: What the world thinks. Available at: [yougov.co.uk/news/2015/08/16/half-young-not-heterosexual/](http://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/08/16/half-young-not-heterosexual/) [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
2. Antjoule, Nick, (2016) The Hate Crime Report 2016: Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia in the UK, GALOP
3. Banks, C., Muhajarine, N., Waygood, K., Duczek, L. and Hellquist, G (2003) The cost of homophobia: Literature review on the human impact of homophobia in Canada. Gay & Lesbian Health Services of Saskatoon.
4. Bateman, Wayne (2015),LGBT Homelessness: A UK National Scoping of Cause, Prevalence, Response and Outcome, The Albert Kennedy Trust
5. BBC News. (2012). Leeds gay quarter proposals examined by council - BBC News. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-20235476> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
6. BBC News. (2015). Homophobic hate crime victims 'more willing to come forward' - BBC News. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-34268592> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
7. BBC News. (2016). Measures to tackle Leeds transgender clinic waits - BBC News. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-37014442> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
8. Equity Partnership (2010) The Challenge for Change, Health Needs of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People in Bradford and District
9. Fish, Julie, (2007), 'NHS Sexual Health Briefing 10', Department of Health UK
10. Formby, Eleanor (2012). 'Solidarity but not similarity? LGBT communities in the twenty-first century.' Project Report. Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University.
11. FS | The Fact Site. (2017). Racism and the gay scene. [online] Available at: <https://www.thefactsite.org.uk/fs148-racism-and-the-gay-scene> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
12. Gov.uk. (2017). PHE action plan tackles health inequalities for men who have sex with men – GOV.UK. [online] Available at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/phe-action-plan-tackles-health-inequalities-for-men-who-have-sex-with-men> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
13. Knocker, Sally. (2012) 'Perspectives on ageing: lesbians, gay men and bisexuals', JRF
  14. Leeds City Council. ( 2012) 'State of the City report', [online] Available at: <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/council/Pages/State-of-the-city-report.aspx> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017]
  15. LGBT Foundation (2017). Facts and figures [online] Lgbt.foundation. Available at: <http://lgbt.foundation/About-us/media/facts-and-figures/#mental> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
  16. Lyons, K. (2016). Gender identity clinic services under strain as referral rates soar. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jul/10/transgender-clinic-waiting-times-patient-numbers-soar-gender-identity-services> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
  17. McNeil, J., Bailey, L., Ellis, S., Morton, J. and Regan, M., (201). Trans mental health study 2012. Scottish Transgender Alliance.
  18. Mental Health Foundation, (2015) 'Fundamental Facts About Mental Health', Mental Health Foundation, UK
  19. Mind.org.uk. (2017). How common are mental health problems? [online] Available at: <http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/statistics-and-facts-about-mental-health/how-common-are-mental-health-problems/> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
  20. Reed, B., Rhodes, S., Schofield, P. and Wylie, K (2009) 'Gender Variance in the UK: Prevalence, Incidence', Growth and Geographic Distribution Gender Identity Research in Education Society
  21. Reports.esd.org.uk. (2017). Basic facts about Leeds by Ward. [online] Available at: <https://reports.esd.org.uk/reports/14?pa=E08000035:AdministrativeWard> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
  22. Reuter, P. and Stevens, A., (2007). An analysis of UK drug policy. London, UK Drug Policy Commission.
  23. Stewart, A-M. (2016) 'Leeds Women's Aid research into the accessibility of domestic violence support in Leeds for LGBT+ people', Leeds Women's AidStonewall. (2017). Glossary of terms. [online] Available at: <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/glossary-terms> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].Fact Sheet: Intersex, United Nations for LGBT Equality, Available at:

- [https://unfe.org/system/unfe-65-Intersex\\_Factsheet\\_ENGLISH.pdf](https://unfe.org/system/unfe-65-Intersex_Factsheet_ENGLISH.pdf)  
[Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
24. Varney, J. and Fenton, K. (2015). *LGBT health – celebrating with pride | Public health matters*. [online] Publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk. Available at: <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2015/06/26/lgbt-health-celebrating-with-pride/> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
25. Wales, T. (2016). *Impact Survey 2016*. [online] Leeds Pride. Available at: <http://www.leedspride.com/news/2016/impact-survey-2016> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2017].
26. Walters, M.L., Chen, J. and Breiding, M.J., (2013) The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 findings on victimization by sexual orientation. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 648(73), p.6.

## APPENDIX 1. DIRECTORY

# LEEDS LGBT+ MAPPING PROJECT: A - Z DIRECTORY OF LGBT+ ASSETS IN LEEDS

All venues, activities, events, organisations, groups included in this directory have been identified through community mapping, and are either explicitly LGBT+ in their focus or have been identified by LGBT+ people in Leeds as assets to the community.

## A

### Action for Trans Health Leeds

**Location:** Leeds

*Trans men and women, intersex, agender and non-binary individuals of all ages*

**About:** Action for Trans Health is a U.K based organisation which aims to improve trans access to healthcare through funding 'access to healthcare' grants and through engagement with trans communities and medical professionals. The Leeds group meets on the first Sunday of the month at Yorkshire MESMAC, from 3pm-5pm.

**Activities:** Advice, Campaigning, Trans health

**Contact:** [leedsactionfortranshealth@gmail.com](mailto:leedsactionfortranshealth@gmail.com)

**Online:** [www.facebook.com/leedsactionfortranshealth](https://www.facebook.com/leedsactionfortranshealth)

[www.actionfortranshealth.org.uk](http://www.actionfortranshealth.org.uk)

---

### Aire Place Studios

**Location:** Aire Place Studios

Unit 2C

Aire Place

Kirkstall Road

Leeds

LS3 1JL

**About:** Aire Place Studios is a multipurpose venue and ‘a growing creative community and a place for people to work, learn and meet informally.’ Recently Aire Place Studios have hosted Queerology exhibition.

**Activities:** Creative Workspace/Hot Desking, PAYF Junk Food Café, Creative/Educational Workshops, Gallery / Creative Events Space, Fabrication Workshop

**Contact:** [info@aireplacestudios.co.uk](mailto:info@aireplacestudios.co.uk)

**Online:** [www.aireplacestudios.co.uk](http://www.aireplacestudios.co.uk)

---

### All Hallows Church

**Location:** All Hallows Church,  
24 Regent Terrace,  
Leeds  
LS6 1NP

**About:** All Hallows Church is an inclusive and LGBT+ positive Christian church.

**Activities:** Spiritual, Community, Yoga, PAYF Cafe

**Contact:** 0113 242 2205 / 07595 261 389

**Online:** <http://allhallowsleeds.org>

---

### The Asexuality Visibility and Education Network (Leeds Meetups)

**Location:** Online

**About:** AVEN is an online forum and network for asexual people. Members on AVEN meet have regular meetups across the world, including Leeds.

**Activities:** social, support, network

**Online:** <http://www.alexuality.org/en>

B

### The Bad Mittens

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** The Bad Mittens is Leeds only LGB T\* inclusive badminton team, which launched in July 2016. The group meeting every Wednesday evening and Sunday afternoon at the Armley Leisure Centre, and is open for levels from absolute beginners to intermediate skills. Bookings for the sessions must be made in advance via their website; it isn't possible to just turn up as there are limited spaces available. The Bad Mittens has a focus on creating a fun &

friendly space, with mixed games and sociable opportunities.

**Activities:** Badminton, social, sports

**Online:** <https://mobile.twitter.com/LeedsLGBTSport>

**Contact:** <https://www.meetup.com/The-Bad-Mittens/>

---

## BE LGBTQ R'N'B With Edges

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** BE is a club night welcome to all, but with a focus on the LGBTQ community that would like to hear R'n'B (Rhythm and Blues) blended with Soul, Disco, House, Edgier Pop, Rap, Dance Hall & Dub/Broken Beat present & past. It is influenced by the New York's Club scene in particular Larry Levan's Paradise Garage in the 80s, Soul II Soul's Fairplay nights in the late 80s early 90s and most recently the eclectic London Shoreditch sound. BE has been hosted by a number of Leeds venues, including Wharf Chambers and Queens Court.

**Activities:** social, club night, music

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/BELGBTQ>

---

## Bar Fibre

**Location:** Bar Fibre  
168 Lower Briggate,  
Leeds,  
LS1 6LY

**About:** Bar Fibre is a multi-floor bar in the centre of Leeds' gay quarter.

**Activities:** Bar, Club nights, Private functions

**Contact:** 0870 120 0888

**Online:** <http://www.barfibre.com/>

---

## Barnardo's Positive Identities LGBT Services for schools

**Location:** Yorkshire

**About:** Barnardo's Positive Identities LGBT service for schools is a programme to tackle homophobic, biphobia, and transphobic bullying in schools.

**Activities:** anti bullying, LGBT awareness and equalities training, education, schools

**Contact:** Yasmeen.sharif@barnardos.org.uk

**Online:** [http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/lgbtq/lgbtq-work/wakefield-leeds.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq/lgbtq-work/wakefield-leeds.htm)

---

---

## **Base**

**Location:** Base,  
7 Heaton's Court  
Leeds  
LS1 4LJ  
Men 18+

**About:** Sauna, steam and spa facility for gay and bisexual men. 18+

**Activities:** Social, Spa, Sauna

**Contact:** 0113 242 7730

**Online:** <http://www.base-leeds.com/>

C

## **Café Queero**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Café Queero is a monthly social event, for LGBTQ people and friends, hosted by Queer and Now Leeds and hosted at Wharf Chambers Cooperative

**Activities:** Social, Discussion, Activism

**Contact:** <https://www.facebook.com/Caff%C3%A8-Queero-684926608257170/>

**Online:** <https://queerandnowleeds.wordpress.com/>

---

## **The Cosmopolitan Hotel**

**Location:** Cosmopolitan Hotel,  
Lower Briggate,  
Leeds LS1 4AE

**About:** The Cosmopolitan Hotel is in the centre of the gay quarter of Leeds and a popular venue for LGBT+ community events and meetings. The Cosmopolitan Hotel hosts Leeds City Council LGBT\* Community Hub

**Activities:** hotel, bar, hospitality, private functions

**Contact:** 0113 243 6454

**Online:** <http://www.peelhotels.co.uk/hotels/cosmopolitan-hotel-leeds-yorkshire-england>

D

## Dancing Bear Trilogy

**Location:** Leeds and UK

**About:** Dancing Bear Trilogy is an art project from Jamie Fletcher and Company. It is a series of experimental films, theatrical performances and publications that aim to engage different audiences (particularly Christian communities although not exclusively) in conversations about LGBTQ issues. Jamie Fletcher & Company are currently working on Dancing Bear, a multi-disciplinary theatre show exploring faith and sexuality. The work has been supported by Leeds Inspired and Leeds Church Institute. Dancing Bear Trilogy events have been held at Mill Hill Chapel.

**Activities:** theatre, dance, faith, performances

**Contact:** [info@dancingbeartrilogy.com](mailto:info@dancingbeartrilogy.com)

**Online:** <http://www.dancingbeartrilogy.com>

---

## Deep C Divas

**Location:** Leeds, Yorkshire

**About:** The Deep C Divas is “a small but perfectly formed lesbian a capella singing group based in Yorkshire.” The Divas do performances in Leeds.

**Activities:** singing, performances

**Contact:** <https://www.facebook.com/Deepcdivas>

**Online:** <http://deepcdivas.org.uk/>

---

## Dial House (Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service)

**Location:** Dial House,  
12 Chapel Street,  
Halton,  
Leeds,  
LS15 7SW

**About:** Dial House is a non-statutory crisis service providing sanctuary and support.

Open 6pm to 2am Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday

**Activities:** mental health, peer support, crisis service

**Contact:** call 0113 260 9328, text 07922 249 452

**Online:** <http://www.lslcs.org.uk>

E

## EQUALS society (formerly Leeds Beckett LGBT\* Society)

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** The EQUALS Society at Leeds Beckett is an LGBTQ\* community for Leeds Beckett students, established to promote the wellbeing and happiness of its members.

**Activities:** social, community, member's society

**Contact:** [equalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:equalsociety@gmail.com)

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/EqualsSociety>

F

## Fierce Babe Network Leeds

**Location:** Online

**About:** Fierce Babe Network Leeds is a community page on Facebook. An inclusive feminist community network that exists to 'uplift and support one another and to end girl on girl hate'.

**Activities:** discussions, social, information sharing, support

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/fiercebabenetworkleeds/>

G

## Gay Abandon

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Gay Abandon is a LGBT choir, performing classical and camp classics since 1997.

**Activities:** social, singing, performances

**Contact:** [info@gayabandon.org.uk](mailto:info@gayabandon.org.uk)

**Online:** <https://gayabandon.org.uk/>

---

## Gay Leeds / Freedom Quarter

**Location:** Leeds/Online

**About:** Gay Leeds is an online resource for LGBT activity and news in Leeds. Gay Leeds has regular LGBT bloggers, interviews and promotes LGBT events in Leeds.

Since March 2017 Gay Leeds became Freedom Quarter. The rebranding included both an update of the website and an additional focus on the economy and businesses in the 'Freedom Quarter' (the area of Call Lane and Lower Briggate).

**Activities:** promoting LGBT news, events, blogs

**Online:** <http://www.gayleeds.com/>, <http://www.freedomquarter.com/lgbt>

---

### **Gender Identity Service Leeds**

**Location:** Leeds Gender Identity Service  
Management Suite  
1st Floor  
The Newsam Centre  
Seacroft Hospital  
York Road  
Leeds  
LS14 6WB

**About:** Leeds Gender Identity service offers assessment and support to people aged 18 and above with Gender Dysphoria. The service provides assessment which allows the team, in conjunction with the individual, to consider the diagnosis of gender dysphoria and readiness to move forward. The team complete a holistic assessment which includes looking at mental, social and physical health. Once the assessment stages have been completed including the confirmation of a diagnosis, and the service user is ready to move forward with treatment; the care pathway can then be considered. The care pathway includes a prescribing clinic that can initiate hormone treatment, voice workshops we are able to refer individuals for treatments, surgical opinions and gender reassignment surgery as appropriate.

The service is commissioned by NHS England and accepts referrals from across England.

**Contact:** 0113 855 6346

**Online:** <http://www.leedspft.nhs.uk/our-services/gender-identity/>

---

### **Gendered Intelligence Under 21 Youth Group**

**Location:** Leeds

Trans, non-binary and gender variant and questioning people aged 13 – 21

**About:** This is the first Gendered Intelligence group outside of London, we set up our Leeds youth group in October 2014. The group welcomes all trans, non-binary, gender variant and questioning young people aged 13 or over and under 21. The youth group runs on the 1st Wednesday of every month between 6.00 pm– 8.00 pm. The group meets at Yorkshire MESMAC. Gendered Intelligence is a national community interest group with the mission of increasing understanding of gender variance.

**Activities:** youth group, trans support

**Contact:** [kerri.green@genderedintelligence.co.uk](mailto:kerri.green@genderedintelligence.co.uk)

**Online:** <http://genderedintelligence.co.uk/>

I

## Inkwell Arts

**Location:** Inkwell Arts  
31 Potternewton Lane,  
Chapel Allerton,  
Leeds  
LS7 3LW

**About:** Inkwell Arts is a Leeds Mind project, based on developing creative skills whatever an individual's background or ability, as part of the journey towards recovery from mental health issues. Inkwell Arts has premises in Chapel Allerton with a cafe, running events, performances and exhibitions as well as art classes and mindfulness.

**Activities:** community mental health and wellbeing, arts, music, poetry, cafe, craft

**Contact:** Tel: 0113 3070108

**Online:** <http://www.inkwellarts.org.uk/>

L

## Lavender Cafe Orchestra

**Location:** Yorkshire

**About:** Lavender Cafe Orchestra formed to play live dance music (Latin, Ballroom and sequence) at lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered and queer community events. The orchestra formed in the early 90s and has recently revived.

**Activities:** music performances, community events

**Contact:** wendy@thelavcaf.co.uk

**Online:** <http://thelavcaf.co.uk/home.html>

---

## Leeds Beckett Rainbow Roses

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Rainbow Roses is forum for Leeds Beckett staff and students. Rainbow Rose received the Highly Commended Network Group Award 2015.

**Activities:** staff and student network, forum

**Contact:** [equality@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:equality@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**Online:** <https://twitter.com/RainbowRose2014>

---

## **Leeds Bi Group**

**Location:** Leeds  
*Bisexual, all genders*

**About:** Leeds Bi Group is a social and support group that meets twice a month in Leeds.

The group was established at BiCon (a yearly bisexual convention) in August 2014. Leeds Bi Group is for people aged 18 years old or over who are, or think they might be, attracted to more than one gender. This can include, but is not limited to, people who are: bi, pansexual, polysexual, queer, unlabelled or questioning. Leeds Bi Group organisers also offer advice, training and talks on bi inclusivity.

**Activities:** community, social and support, training

**Contact:** [leedsbigroup@gmail.com](mailto:leedsbigroup@gmail.com)

**Online:** <http://www.leedsbigroup.org.uk/home.html>

---

## **Leeds Centre for Sexual Health**

**Location:** The Centre for Sexual Health  
Merrion Centre -1st Floor  
50 Merrion Way  
Leeds  
LS2 8NG

**About:** The Sexual Health Clinic in the Merrion Centre is open Monday – Thursday 08:00 until 20:00 (last admission at 19:30); Friday 08:00 until 17:00 (last admission at 16:30); and Saturday 11:00 – 15:00 (last admission at 14:30). Working with partners at Yorkshire MESMAC and Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust, the Sexual Health Team at LTHT are now part of Leeds Sexual Health and will be working as part of an integrated team to provide services.

**Activities:** public health, sexual health, Emergency Contraception, Pregnancy Testing, Chlamydia Testing, Support and Advice, STI Testing, Contraception, HIV Testing, PePSE (HIV treatment), Condoms (over 25s), Drop-in Clinic-C- Card Registration (free condoms for under 25s), C-Card Pick Up (free condoms for under 25s)

**Contact:** 0113 3926762

**Online:** <http://leedssexualhealth.com/services/merrion-centre>

---

## **Leeds City Council LGBT\* Staff Network**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Leeds City Council LGBT\* Staff Network for employees of Leeds City Council

**Activities:** Staff network, forum, social

---

### **Leeds First Friday (LFF)**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Leeds First Friday is a large monthly social gather for trans women and their friends in Leeds, every first Friday of the month. The gathering takes place across a number of bars and clubs in the Gay Quarter (Lower Briggate).

**Activities:** Social

**Online:** Leeds First Friday has a private group on Facebook you can request to join

---

### **Leeds Frontrunners**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Leeds Frontrunners is an inclusive running club for LGBT+ and gay-friendly people who love running. Leeds Frontrunners encourages those of all abilities to join them.

**Activities:** Sport, social

**Contact:** [Leedsfri@virginmedia.com](mailto:Leedsfri@virginmedia.com)

**Online:** <https://leedsfrontrunners.wordpress.com/>

---

### **LGB&T\* Monthly Social Gathering**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Every month members of the Leeds City Council LGB T\* Staff Network join together with members of the LGB T\* Community Hub group come together for a regular social event.

You don't need to be a member of either group to join, it open to all members of the community. There's the choice of finding out about some of the equality & development work being undertaken in the city, or just general chit chat and meeting new people. These gatherings are hosted in venues in the Gay Quarter – often at Bar Fibre.

**Activities:** social, community, networking

**Contact:** <https://www.facebook.com/TheLGBTAgendaLeeds/>

---

## The LGBT Show

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** The LGBT Show is a show that broadcasts live from Leeds Student Radio every Sunday from 12pm. Its aim is to bring the listeners the latest LGBT news - in particular, it focuses on stories that are likely to affect students. Each week, a range of songs from LGBT artists appear on the show, ranging from student singers to Elton John.

**Activities:** radio, news and topics, student community

**Contact:** [www.facebook.com/thelgbtshowleeds](http://www.facebook.com/thelgbtshowleeds)

**Online:** [thisislsr.com](http://thisislsr.com)

---

## Leeds Gay Community

**Location:** Leeds  
Gay and bisexual men

**About:** This is a member's social group for Gay and Bisexual men of all ages; their aim is to provide a space where Gay people can meet and be themselves. It is mainly non-scene, has discussions, presentations, social outings etc. They meet regularly on Friday evenings, usually at a venue in Leeds city centre. LGC (Leeds Gay Community) was founded in September 1982 and is the direct descendant of gay groups which had been meeting since 1971. The group welcomes men of all ages, though most of LGC members are 50+.

**Activities:** Social, outings, discussion

**Contact:** 0113 255 9973 or on LGC mobile 07986 615 912.

**Online:** <http://www.mesmac.co.uk/find-help/support-groups/leeds-gay-community>

---

## Leeds Gay Men

**Location:** Leeds  
Gay and bisexual men

**About:** This is a group for gay and bisexual men in Leeds. They organise social events and provide an additional option to the commercial scene. Leeds Gay Men aim to create an environment in which gay and bisexual men can meet, relax and make friends while having a great time together. Any member of the group can propose a meetup.

**Activities:** Social, Outings and meetups, Discussion

**Contact:** <http://www.meetup.com/LGMGroup/>  
**Online:** <http://www.facebook.com/LeedsGayMen>

---

### **Leeds Hornets RFC**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Leeds Hornets RFC is an inclusive rugby team and welcomes all players irrespective of age, experience, fitness or sexuality. They train on Monday & Wednesday evenings at Leodensians Rugby Ground, Alwoodley, Leeds, LS17 5PR.

**Activities:** Sport, Rugby

**Contact:** <https://www.facebook.com/leeds.hornets>

**Online:** [www.leedshornetsfc.co.uk](http://www.leedshornetsfc.co.uk)

---

### **Leeds Jewish LGBT**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Leeds Jewish LGBT is a new social group in Leeds.

**Activities:** community, social, events, faith

**Contact:** [leedsjewishlgbt@gmail.com](mailto:leedsjewishlgbt@gmail.com)

---

### **Leeds LGBT\* Community Hub (Leeds City Council)**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** As part of Leeds City Council's commitment to Making Leeds an LGB T\* friendly city Leeds LGBT\* Community Hub is a public forum bringing together, public sector, private sector and community members to feedback on LGBT+ issues to Leeds City Council. A sample of projects currently under development within this Hub include: Sports inclusion, LGB&T\* BME, Leeds 2023, Hate Crime, Domestic Violence, bullying, housing services, mental health alongside various awareness dates and campaigns. The Hub meets quarterly at Cosmopolitan Hotel in the heart of Leeds' Gay Quarter.

**Activities:** Community forum

**Contact:** [LeedsLGBT@Leeds.gov.uk](mailto:LeedsLGBT@Leeds.gov.uk)

**Online:** <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/council/Pages/Equality-Assembly.aspx>

---

### **Leeds MIND**

**Location:** Clarence House  
11 Clarence Road  
Horsforth

Leeds  
LS18 4LB

**About:** Leeds MIND is an independent mental health charity that promotes positive mental health and wellbeing, and offer help and support to those who need it. Leeds MIND are currently developing mental health group support for LGBT+ people in Leeds.

**Activities:** counselling, group therapy, social support, peer support, self-directed support, social prescribing, housing support, employment support, suicide bereavement support, mental health training.

Leeds Mind has launched Prism this year, a mental health peer support project specifically for LGBT+ people.

**Contact:** [info@leedsmind.org.uk](mailto:info@leedsmind.org.uk) , 0113 305 5800

**Online:** <http://www.leedsmind.org.uk/>

---

### Leeds Pride

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Running since 2006 and is now the largest Pride in the UK to still be a completely free event with over 40,000 people attending over the weekend. Leeds Pride is run by volunteers with close links to local Leeds LGB&T community and the event is funded through community fundraising, grant funding and sponsorship agreements with national brands such as First Direct, Sainsbury's and ASDA.

**Activities:** community, event

**Contact:** <https://twitter.com/LeedsPride>

**Online:** <http://www.leedspride.com/>

---

### Leeds Queer Film Festival

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Leeds Queer Film Festival, which began in 2005, is a non for profit, volunteer run and led community film festival which aims to create space to showcase queer cinema with a focus on independent and DIY films.

**Activities:** community, film festival, workshops, discussions

**Contact:** [leedsqueerfilmfestival@gmail.com](mailto:leedsqueerfilmfestival@gmail.com)

**Online:** <https://www.leedsqueerfilmfestival.co.uk/>

---

### Leeds Queer Stories

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Leeds Queer Stories is a cultural and social history project with a focus on LGBT+ heritage in Leeds and Yorkshire. The project had an exhibition and events in Leeds City Museum in 2015 and 2016; it has now been funded by Heritage Lottery Fund and is being hosted by Yorkshire MESMAC.

**Activities:** arts and heritage, social history, education

**Contact:** j.woods@mesmac.co.uk

**Online:** <http://www.mesmac.co.uk/news/leeds-queer-stories>

---

### **Leeds SkyLine (BHA)**

**Location:** Leeds Skyline

131 The Headrow,

Leeds

LS1 5RD

All genders, over 50+

**About:** BHA Leeds Skyline provides prevention and support services for anyone at risk of, living with or affected by HIV in Leeds

**Activities:** HIV support outreach, community health, HIV testing

**Contact:** 0113 244 9767

**Online:** <http://thebha.org.uk/leedsskyline>

---

### **Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service**

**Location:** Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service

Dial House

12 Chapel Street

Halton

Leeds

LS15 7RW

**About:** Leeds Survivor Led Crisis Service offers person centred, radical and innovative services to people experiencing mental health crisis. LSLCS offer an LGBT Group and a Trans Group.

### **LGBT Group, Fridays, 11am-2pm**

This group is for anyone in the LGBT community, including (but not limited to) people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, asexual, intersex or are questioning their identity. We are a safe, supportive space where you can share your thoughts and feelings and discuss coping strategies, alongside other LGBT people. We look at issues around being LGBT, as well as general mental health issues and how we can work with them. This

group is peer-led so everyone who attends identifies as LGBT, including volunteers and group workers.

### **Trans Group, Fridays, 2pm-4pm**

This group is for anyone who identifies as transgender, or has identified as transgender in the past. This includes non-binary people and anyone questioning their gender identity. We offer a therapeutic, relaxed, non-judgemental space where you can discuss the difficulties you're facing and explore coping strategies.

**Activities:** crisis support, group support, peer led, mental health and wellbeing

**Contact:** 0113 260 9328, patrick.gatewood@lslcs.org.uk

**Online:** <http://www.lslcs.org.uk/>

---

### **Leeds Survivors Support Group**

**Location:** Leeds

*Men, Trans men, Non Binary*

**About:** A support group for men and non-binary people who have experienced sexual abuse. The group meets fortnightly on Mondays at **Yorkshire MEMSAC** 6.30-8.30pm.

**Activities:** group support, wellbeing

**Contact:** Jack: ls1mssg@gmail.com or Paddy Mesmac:  
p.hands@mesmac.co.uk / 07767 668428

---

### **Leeds University LGBT Staff Network**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** The University of Leeds LGBT Staff Network exists to ensure that the views and concerns of LGBT staff are represented and considered at organisational level, and that their interests continue to form a part of the University's wider equality and diversity agenda. It provides a safe, welcoming space and group for LGBT identifying staff – and colleagues, whatever their orientation, with an interest in LGBT equality to meet, socialise, and/or benefit from mutual support.

**Activities:** Staff network, forum, social

**Contact:** LGBT@leeds.ac.uk

**Online:** <http://www.facebook.com/LeedsLGBTcommunity>

---

### **Leeds University Union LGBT Society**

**Location:** Leeds

*Leeds University Students*

**About:** The LGBT Society for LGBT+ students that put on social events. LUU LGBT Society holds Coffee Hours Monday-Friday, 12-2pm on the second floor of Leeds University Union. They host a regular LGBT club night at Leeds Students' Union called Curious.

**Activities:** students' union society, social

**Contact:** [luu.lgbt@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:luu.lgbt@leeds.ac.uk)

**Online:** <https://www.luu.org.uk/groups/lgbt/>

---

## Lesbian Socials

**Location:** Leeds, Yorkshire  
*Lesbian and bisexual women*

**About:** Lesbian Socials is a group for lesbians, with a social hub in York and in Leeds. The group holds meetups across the city, and Yorkshire.

**Activities:** social, meetups, community

**Contact:** <https://www.meetup.com/lesbiansocialsinleeds>

**Online:** <http://lesbiansocials.in/>

---

## LGBT Parents

**Location:** Online/UK, Leeds

**About:** LGBT parents is a network of LGBT\* parents & those thinking about becoming parents.

**Activities:** community network, peer support, online forum, meet-ups

**Contact:** <https://www.facebook.com/LGBTparentsUNITE/>

**Online:** <http://lesbiangayparents.ning.com/>

---

## Live Art Bistro

**Location:** Live Arts Bistro  
1, 2 Regent S  
Leeds  
LS2 7QA

**About:** Live Art Bistro is an artist led venue and curatorial team based in Leeds. Live Art Bistro aims to support the growth of Live Art practices in the region by providing space and opportunities to local artists, whilst also encouraging artists from further afield to present work in the city. Live Art Bistro is voluntarily run and relies heavily on the support given by the local artistic community. Live Art Bistro often showcases LGBTQ performances.

**Activities:** Theatre, live art, festivals, comedy, performance

**Contact:** liveartbistro@gmail.com

**Online:** <http://www.liveartleeds.com/>

---

## Love Muscle

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Love Muscle is a 'pumping gay disco' night which plays a mix of funk, soul, techno and disco. They describe themselves as a 'real LGBT alternative for the more discerning nightlife enthusiast.' Love Muscle is held regularly at Wharf Chambers Cooperative.

**Activities:** dance, disco, party

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/lov3muscl3/>

M

## Mermaids

**Location:** Mermaids  
Suite 5,  
High Street House,  
2 the High Street,  
Yeadon,  
Leeds,  
LS19 7PP

**About:** Mermaids is a charity which supports children and young people up to 19 years old suffering from gender identity issues, and their families, and professionals involved in their care. It also provides resources and training to services working with young people and their families.

**Activities:** helpline and email support, training and education, campaigning

**Contact:** [info@mermaidsuk.org.uk](mailto:info@mermaidsuk.org.uk), 0844 334 0550

**Online:** <http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk>

---

## Mill Hill Chapel

**Location:** Mill Hill Unitarian Chapel,  
City Square,  
Leeds,  
LS1 5EB

**About:** Mill Hill Chapel is a progressive, inclusive community which seeks to approach the sacred in participation and worship. It is an LGBT+ friendly

Chapel and performs same sex marriage ceremonies and hosts the Monthly Dry LGBT Drop In.

Mill Hill Chapel is a Unitarian Chapel

**Activities:** faith, social, community events

**Contact:** Tel: 0113 243 3845, email: jojames.email@gmail.com

**Online:** <http://www.millhillchapel.org/>

---

## Mission

**Location:** Mission,  
8 Heaton's Ct,  
Leeds  
LS1 4LJ

**About:** Mission is a nightclub in Leeds in the heart of the Gay Quarter.

**Activities:** Club nights, dance

**Contact:** 08701 220 114

**Online:** <http://www.clubmission.com/>

---

## Monthly Dry LGBT Drop In

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** This monthly social gathering is being hosted for members of the LGBT communities (and those questioning their sexuality/gender identity) to provide a dry (alcohol-free) safe space for socialising, meeting new people and finding out about other social events and groups across the city. This is held at Mill Hill Chapel, and is organised by Leeds City Council and is supported by ASDA Pride and West Yorkshire Police.

**Activities:** community, social

**Contact:** LeedsLGBT@Leeds.gov.uk

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/pg/TheLGBTAgendaLeeds>

---

## My Queer Culture

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** My Queer Culture is a project in Leeds, supported by Angels of Youth, with the aims of ensuring visibility, acceptance and inclusion of those who are LGBTQ+ and BME in services, government and wider society. My Queer Culture has put on a number of events that explore the intersections of sexuality and ethnicity.

**Activities:** community, social, campaign, support, education

**Contact:** info@angelofyouths.com

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/My-Queer-Culture-1638365259771976/>

N

## Non-Binary Leeds

**Location:** Leeds

Trans\*, Non-binary, genderqueer, questioning

**About:** A space for Trans\* Non-Binary Queer people in Leeds to share stories, experiences & support each other. Non-Binary Leeds group meeting/gathering takes place every month at Yorkshire MESMAC. This is an opportunity for non-binary people in Leeds and surrounding areas to gather together as a community.

**Activities:** social, support, community

**Contact:** <https://www.facebook.com/nonbinaryleeds/>

O

## Out 2 18

**Location:** Leeds

Young people, LGBT 13 – 18

**About:** The group is a LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans\* and Questioning) group for young people aged 13 to 18 that is run through the Leeds City Council, Youth Offer Improvement Team. to support the young people with issues with homophobia, housing, scene life, sexual health and is also somewhere to meet in a safe environment and not feel threatened. Out 2 18 meets on alternate Thursdays at a city centre location (6.30pm – 8.30pm).

**Activities:** Social group and support group, young people

**Contact:** Tel: 07712 214421 email: [Samantha.Horsfield@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:Samantha.Horsfield@leeds.gov.uk)

---

## Out autistic and proud

**Location:** Vale Circles,

12 Tunstall Road,

Leeds

LS11 5JF

Autistic LGBT adults

**About:** Autism AIM (Advocacy Information Mentoring) holds an LGBTQIA\* support group for autistic adults.

**Activities:** Social and support group  
**Contact:** leedsautismaim@advonet.org.uk  
**Online:** <http://www.advonet.org.uk/leeds-autism-aim>

---

## Out in Leeds

**Location:** Leeds  
All genders, 50+

**About:** Out in Leeds is Age UK's social group for LGBT communities over 50 years of age. They are a friendly, informal, social group who get involved in a variety of activities including coffee and chat, walks, taking part in LGBT projects and events, quizzes and activities, debates and guest speakers. They have about 30 registered members and would welcome more, as they plan more social activities.

**Activities:** Social group  
**Contact:** Tel: 0113 389 30007 email: [sarah.prescott@ageukleeds.org.uk](mailto:sarah.prescott@ageukleeds.org.uk)  
**Online:** <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/leeds/our-services/lgbt-older-people/>

---

## Out in Yorkshire

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Out in Yorkshire is a group in Yorkshire for lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer women, and women who are questioning their sexuality. Female or male partners and gay-friendly friends are welcome too. There is also the opportunity to bring children along to some of the events. Out in Yorkshire meet upstairs in Blayd's Bar in Leeds on the 1st Thursday of every month at 8.30 pm for drinks and a catch-up.

**Activities:** Social group  
**Contact:** [outinyorkshire@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:outinyorkshire@yahoo.co.uk)

---

## The Owlies LGBT Awards

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** The Owlie Awards is a longstanding annual awards event, celebrating individuals and groups who have made outstanding contributions to the Leeds LGBT community. The Owlie winners are voted for by the public. The categories include Best Social Group, Best Volunteer, Best Venue, Best Doorperson, and Best Drag Act.

**Activities:** community awards, social  
**Contact:** [info@theowlies.co.uk](mailto:info@theowlies.co.uk)  
**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/TheOwlies/>

## Pedallers' Arms Bike Coop

**Location:** Pedallers' Arms  
37 Mabgate Green  
Leeds  
LS9 7DS

**About:** The Pedallers' Arms is a place to come and learn how to repair your bike in a friendly atmosphere. They are a co-operative of people, all volunteers, who want to help people fix up their own bikes. The Pedallers' Arms is LGBT+ inclusive and friendly

**Activities:** Bike mechanics, Drop in, volunteering

**Contact:** 01132457274

**Online:** <https://pedallers-arms.org/>

---

## Pink Pals

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Pink Pals is Touchstone's (a charity that provides health and wellbeing services across Leeds communities) staff LGBT allies programme.

**Activities:** Events, awareness and equalities trainings

**Contact:** 0113 271 8277

**Online:** <http://www.touchstonesupport.org.uk/about-us/pink-pals/>

---

## The Pink Ping Pong Pals

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** The Pink Ping Pong Pals the UK's first LGB T\* inclusive Table Tennis group, and has been set up by the team running **The Bad Mittens** with support from Table Tennis England and Armley Leisure Centre. The group meets fortnightly on a Wednesday evening before The Bad Mittens session, and is overseen by Rick, a Table Tennis England qualified coach to help develop the involved players.

**Activities:** table tennis, sport, social

**Contact:** <https://twitter.com/LeedsLGBTSport?lang=en>

---

## Plastic Ivy Sauna

**Location:** Plastic Ivy,  
33 Leeds Road,  
Dewsbury,  
South Leeds,  
WF12 7BB

**About:** Sauna, steam and spa facility for gay and bisexual men. 18+

**Activities:** Social, Spa, Sauna  
**Contact:** 01924 455 600  
**Online:** <http://www.plasticivy.co.uk/>

---

### Pop -Out Salon

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Pop-out Salon provide spaces for self-taught/training stylists and make-up artists to develop their skills whilst providing cheap salon services and a welcoming space for everyone, including people of all genders. Pop-Out Salon runs Thursdays 11-4pm at Wharf Chambers.

**Activities:** Hairdressing, barbers, beauty, tarot  
**Contact:** popoutsalon@gmail.com  
**Online:** <http://popoutsalon.weebly.com/>

---

### Proud 'n' Diverse

**Location:** Leeds  
All genders, 18 – 25

**About:** Proud 'n' Diverse is a group for LGBTQI people between 18-25 years old. The group meets every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at Yorkshire MESMAC.

**Activities:** social and support group  
**Contact:** proudndiverse@outlook.com  
**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/Proudndiverse/>

Q

### Queen Bee Leeds

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Queen Bee Leeds is a volunteer run Drag Pageant set up to raise funds and awareness for mental health provision in Leeds following the loss of Matthew, a member of Leeds' LGBT community.

**Activities:** Annual Drag Pageant, and events fundraising for LGBT mental health  
**Contact:** info@queenbeeleeds.co.uk  
**Online:** <http://www.queenbeeleeds.co.uk/>

---

### Queens Court

**Location:** Queens Court,  
167-168 Lower Briggate,  
Leeds,  
West Yorkshire,  
LS1 6LY

**About:** Queens Court is a bar and club in the heart of Leeds' gay quarter, putting on regular weekly drag nights and club nights.

**Activities:** Bar, drag, club nights, food  
**Contact:** email: [enquiries@queenscourtleeds.com](mailto:enquiries@queenscourtleeds.com) Tel: 0113 2459449  
**Online:** <http://www.queenscourtleeds.com/>

---

### Queer Alternative (Northern Division)

**Location:** Online/Leeds

**About:** Queer Alternative is a small charitable organisation that originated in London, which exists to serve alternative LGBT+ subcultures (including goth, cyberpunk, heavy metal, cosplay). Queer Alternative has Northern Division active in Leeds', which holds events and meet-ups.

**Activities:** social, events, meet ups  
**Contact:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/793048920775527/> Queer Alternative North Division Facebook group  
**Online:** <http://www.queeralternative.com/>

---

### Queer Church Leeds

**Location:** Online/Leeds

**About:** Queer Church Leeds is a Facebook group which actively celebrates LGBTQ+ people and aims to create a safe and open space for both fellowship and discussion.

**Activities:** discussion, faith forum  
**Contact:** <https://www.facebook.com/QueerChurchLeeds/>

---

## **Queer Leeds**

**Location:** Online

**About:** Queer Leeds is a virtual space where you can find out about a range of LGBTQ+ organisations, activities, groups, events and performances in Leeds.

**Activities:** community, social, information

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/QueerLeeds/>

---

## **Queer and Now Leeds**

**Location:** Online/Leeds

**About:** Queer and Now is group Leeds organising around LGBTQ issues. Queer and Now put on Cafe Queero event at Wharf Chambers.

**Activities:** social, events, political, organising, DIY

**Contact:** <https://www.facebook.com/Queer-and-Now-1418812015075304/>

---

## **Queer Fest**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Queer Fest is a DIY Queer music festival organised by Queer We Go! Collective. The festival runs workshops, STI testing, discussions as well as operating a dry alcohol free space. Queer Fest was held across 2 venues in 2016 - Wharf Chambers and Symons' House.

**Activities:** music festival, DIY

**Contact:** [info@queerwego.com](mailto:info@queerwego.com)

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/queerwego/>

---

## **Queer Karaoke**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Queer Karaoke is a regular event hosted by **TransLeeds** at **Wharf Chambers**. It is open to all

**Activities:** social, karaoke

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/TransLeeds/>

---

## **Queer We Go!**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Queer We Go! is a Leeds based collective who put on regular events for the local queer community. They aim at showcasing the best talent from across the UK and the world, in an affordable and accessible way, while creating a space for artistic cooperation. Queer We Go! has a DIY ethos.

**Activities:** music, events, DIY

**Contact:** [info@queerwego.com](mailto:info@queerwego.com)

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/quwego/>

---

## Queerology

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Queerology is project about queer art in Leeds in celebration of the 50th anniversary of homosexuality being decriminalised in England. Queerology exhibits in Aire Place Studios and Inkwell Arts (part of Leeds MIND) in February.

**Activities:** music, events, DIY

**Contact:** [QueerologyLeeds@gmail.com](mailto:QueerologyLeeds@gmail.com)

**Online:** <http://queerologyleeds.weebly.com/>

R

## Rainbow Roofs

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** The Rainbow Roofs group represents Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender tenants and leaseholders. The group is involved in reviewing and developing policies to ensure that the needs of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities are met.

**Activities:** housing, forum

**Contact:** 0113 378 1349

**Online:** <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/HSG-RainbowRoofs.aspx>

---

## Reach OUT

**Location:** Leeds

*LGBT+ refugees, asylum seekers and migrants*

**About:** ReachOUT is a charity for those who have had to flee their home countries because of the fear of physical or structural violence and discrimination directed towards them because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. ReachOUT is also for organisations, agencies and

friends of the LGBT+ or refugee services community who seek to further their understanding of the issues faced by this group.

**Activities:** group support, advocacy, social

**Contact:** [reachoutleeds@gmail.com](mailto:reachoutleeds@gmail.com)

**Online:** <http://www.reachoutleeds.org/>

S

## Sage

**Location:** Yorkshire MESMAC,  
22/23 Blayds Yard,  
Leeds,  
LS1 4AD  
*All genders, over 50+*

**About:** This is a partnership project between **Yorkshire MESMAC** and AgeUK Leeds. It is part of the Time to Shine programme to address the social isolation faced by older LGBT+ people and is led by Leeds Older People's Forum.

**Activities:** social, support

**Contact:** [j.woods@mesmac.co.uk](mailto:j.woods@mesmac.co.uk)

**Online:** <http://www.mesmac.co.uk/projects/sage>

---

## Strike Back- LGBT Kickboxing and Self-Defence

**Location:** British Military Martial Arts,  
2 Grant Avenue,  
Leeds,  
LS7 1RQ

**About:** An LGBT kickboxing group which wants to challenge the homophobic views while developing self-defence and kickboxing skills.

Classes are every Tuesday at 7:30pm at British Military Martial Arts, 2 Grant Avenue, Leeds, LS7 1RQ.

**Activities:** sport, martial arts, classes

**Contact:** Steve 07932033512, email [strike.back.kickboxing@gmail.com](mailto:strike.back.kickboxing@gmail.com)

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/904473859642830/>

T

## Technicolour Socials

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** A twice-monthly social group for LGBT people experiencing mental health difficulties.

The 2nd Thursday of the month: The group meets in the evening at Yorkshire MESMAC for tea, coffee, chats and board games or films in a safe and supportive space 4th Thursday of the month: Out and about to do activities chosen by the group, such as going for meals, bowling, visiting museums, playing pool, and much more. There is usually some funding to help subsidise these trips. This is a partnership between Community Links, Yorkshire MESMAC and Leeds Mind.

**Activities:** Social, support, mental health

**Contact:** 0113 305 5803 or [peersupport@leedsmind.org.uk](mailto:peersupport@leedsmind.org.uk)

---

### **The Bayard Project**

**Location:** Leeds/Online

**About:** The Bayard Project is a social and support based in Leeds interested in the issues of BME (Black, Minority and Ethnic) LGBT communities. The Bayard Project is interested in creating a fun safe and inclusive space and provides support for those who may feel alienated from the LGBT or BME communities. The Bayard Project has meetups in Leeds as well as a Facebook group.

**Activities:** social, support, community, discussion

**Contact:** bayardproject@outlook.com

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ethniclgbtyorkshire/>

---

### **The Bridge**

**Location:** 1-5 Bridge End  
Leeds

**About:** The Bridge is an LGBT bar in Leeds' Gay Quarter. The Bridge holds popular weekly karaoke nights.

**Activities:** bar, food, karaoke

**Contact:** 0113 244 4734

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/pg/TheBridgeGBTBarLeeds/about/>

---

### **The Hills have Gays**

**Location:** Leeds, Yorkshire

**About:** LGBT friendly walking/adventure and social activity group. This is open to all, Gay, Straight, Bi, A-sexual, Trans. Dogs are welcome on walks. The Hills have Gays organise through their Facebook group

**Activities:** walking group, social, community

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1069684236446149/>

---

### The Leeds Hunters RUFC

**Location:** Leeds  
Men

**About:** The Leeds Hunters launched in November 2016 as the new inclusive Rugby Union team for Yorkshire, based in Leeds. The team currently train every Saturday morning, and are usually attended by 20+ guys for each session. Training is at the rugby post in Roundhay Park, near to the Oakwood Clock tower. All gay, bisexual and straight men are welcome to join them. No need to book, you can just turn up on the day to train with the team, is open to all ages and skill levels (including those new to the game). Leeds Hunters RUFC is sponsored by Viaduct Showbar.

**Activities:** sport, rugby

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/TheLeedsHunters/>

---

### The Market Place

**Location:** The Market Place  
8-18 New Market Street,  
Leeds,  
LS1 6DG  
All genders age 13-25

**About:** The Market Place is a charitable organisation that offers health and wellbeing support and services to young people.

**Activities:** group support, drop in, counselling

**Contact:** 0113 2461659, admin@themarketplaceleeds.org.uk

**Online:** <http://www.themarketplaceleeds.org.uk/>

---

### The New Penny

**Location:** The New Penny  
57/59 Call Lane  
Leeds  
LS1 7BT

**About:** The New Penny is the oldest Gay bar in Leeds (since 1953), located in the Gay Quarter of Leeds, it was awarded a Blue Heritage Plaque in 2016.

**Activities:** bar, music

**Contact:** 0113 243 8055

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/TheNewPennyLeeds/>

---

### The Sacred Wing

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** An LGB inclusive choir singing religious chorus since 1999. The Sacred Wing is active during the Christmas period.

**Activities:** faith, choir, performances, chorus

**Contact:** info@sacredwing.org.uk

**Online:** <http://www.sacredwing.org.uk/>

---

### Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust - The Gender Identity Development Service

**Location:** 8 Park Square  
Leeds  
LS1 2LH

**About:** The Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS), established in 1989, is a highly specialised clinic for young people presenting with difficulties with their gender identity. GIDS are commissioned by NHS England who set the service specifications for how we work.

**Activities:** children's' service, NHS, health, trans health care

**Contact:** email [gids@tavi-port.nhs.uk](mailto:gids@tavi-port.nhs.uk) , Tel: 0113 247 1955

**Online:** <http://gids.nhs.uk/>

---

### Trans Leeds

**Location:** Leeds  
Trans

**About:** Trans Leeds runs a monthly support group and online community for the trans people of Leeds. Trans Leeds aim to provide practical help with learning to live in a new gender role, whether it's full or part-time. TransLeeds meet in Leeds on the first Monday of the month from 6.00pm to 8.00pm. It is a great opportunity to meet up with other Trans people and to make friends at a secure location in the City Centre.

**Activities:** social, support, community

**Contact:** [Transleedscontact@gmail.com](mailto:Transleedscontact@gmail.com)

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/TransLeeds/>

---

---

## Trans Mission

**Location:** Bradford, West Yorkshire  
Trans

**About:** Trans Mission is a Trans and gender variant Information and Support group based in Bradford, but active in West Yorkshire. Trans Mission hosts social and support group holds weekly meeting for anyone on the trans spectrum and their allies in Bradford, and have a monthly Trans Masculine only space, a mental health support project and peer mentoring. Trans Mission also offer trans awareness training.

**Activities:** social, support, community, health and wellbeing, awareness training

**Contact:** 07946 072565

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/UKTransMission/>

---

## Transtastic

**Location:** Leeds  
Trans, age 13- 18

**About:** Transtastic is a Trans\* youth group for people who identify as Trans\* aged 13 to 18 years old that is run through the Leeds City Council Youth Services. It aims to support Trans\* people with a wide range of activities and mutual peer support. A wide range of group work on issues affecting young people, trips out, residential weekends with other GBTQ friendly groups from around the country, Social activities like Art based activities such as DJ workshops, dance, photography, self-defence, graffiti art, film nights, bowling, and much more. Transtastic meets every other Thursday from 6.30pm till 8.30pm in a central Leeds location.

**Activities:** youth group, social, support, community, health and wellbeing

**Contact:** 07712 214421 or email [Samantha.Horsfield@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:Samantha.Horsfield@leeds.gov.uk)

**Online:** <http://www.mesmac.co.uk/find-help/support-groups/transtastic>

U

## Unison Yorkshire and Humberside LGBT Group

**Location:** Leeds  
Unison members

**About:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender members' Self Organised Group in Yorkshire & Humberside, part of UNISON, the public sector union

**Activities:** union, organising, member's network, forum

**Contact:** UnisonYHLGBT@outlook.com

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/unisonYHLGBT/>

---

## Unite NEYH LGBT

**Location:** Leeds  
Unite members

**About:** Unite the union in the North East, Yorkshire and Humber region are actively involved in campaigning to further LGBT issues and to protect their members from discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity. They have a regional LGBT committee that holds regular committee meetings.

**Activities:** union, organising, member's network, forum

**Contact:** sue.pollard@unitetheunion.org

**Online:** <http://www.unitetheunion.org/how-we-help/listofregions/northeastyorkshirehumber/side/neyh-equality/neyh-lgbt/>

V

## Viaduct Showbar

**Location:** The Viaduct Show Bar  
Lower Briggate  
Leeds  
LS1 6ER  
18+

**About:** Viaduct Showbar is a bar and club in Leeds' Gay Quarter.

**Activities:** bar, cabaret, live entertainment, drag shows, music

**Contact:** 0113 344 9552

**Online:** <http://www.viaductleeds.com/>

W

## Wharf Chambers

**Location:** Wharf Chambers  
23-25 Wharf St,  
Leeds  
LS2 7EQ

**About:** Wharf Chambers is a bar and multi-use venue in the centre of Leeds run by a workers' co-op in partnership with a members' club. Wharf Chambers hosts regular LGBT+ club nights and live music, such as Love Muscle, and Queer We Go.

**Activities:** Bar, club nights, DIY scene

**Contact:** info@wharfchambers.org

**Online:** <http://www.wharfchambers.org/>

---

### **White Rose Bears**

**Location:** Leeds

Gay and bisexual men

**About:** White Rose Bears host events for the bear, cub, otter and admirer community covering the whole of Yorkshire. They run social activities both scene and non-scene and openly encourage individuals to organise and promote their own events across Yorkshire. White Rose Bears have over 1000 members in their Facebook group.

**Activities:** social, community group, events

**Contact:** whiterosebears@gmail.com

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/WhiteRoseBears/>

---

### **Women's Counselling and Therapy Service (WCTS)**

**Location:** Women's Counselling and Therapy Service  
Oxford Chambers,  
Oxford PI,  
Leeds  
LS1 3AX  
Women

**About:** WCTS offers a free or low cost accessible counselling and psychotherapy service for Leeds women on low incomes. Venues are in the city centre and in communities around Leeds. They are a member of the LGBT Consortium and welcome LGBT clients.

**Activities:** counselling, psychotherapy, group support

**Contact:** 0113 2455725

**Online:** <http://www.womenstherapyleeds.org.uk/>

Y

### **Yorkshire O.P.E.N (Open Relationship, Polyamorous, Ethical Non Monogamy)**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Yorkshire O.P.E.N (Open relationships, Polyamory & Ethical Non-monogamy) is a monthly discussion, support and social group for people in or curious about non-monogamous relationships. Their meetups are on the first Thursday of every month, in a pub in central Leeds.

**Activities:** social, community, discussion,  
**Contact:** <https://www.meetup.com/y-open/>  
**Online:** <http://y-open.org.uk/home>

---

## Yorkshire Bears

**Location:** Leeds  
Gay and bisexual men

**About:** The Yorkshire Bears social group was formed back in 2012 by former Mr Bear UK winner Geoff Widdop, with the aim of providing an opportunity for likeminded guys to get together and socialise both on & off the gay scene venues across the area. Although coined with the title 'Bears', the group openly welcomes guys of all states and statures, bears & cubs, twinks & twonks, otters & ewoks, chubs & chasers – and the majority of people who just like to be known as a 'person'. The Yorkshire Bears is all about providing a fun and supportive environment for gay men to socialise and for friendships to grow.

**Activities:** social, community, events  
**Contact:** admin@yorkshirebears.co.uk  
**Online:** [www.facebook.com/groups/TheYorkshireBears](http://www.facebook.com/groups/TheYorkshireBears)  
<http://www.yorkshirebears.co.uk>

---

## Yorkshire MESMAC

**Location:** Yorkshire MESMAC Leeds office:  
22-23 Blayds Yard  
Leeds  
LS1 4AD

**About:** Yorkshire MESMAC is one of the oldest and largest sexual health organisations in the country. We offer services to various communities including men who have sex with men, BME people, people misusing drugs, sex workers and LGB&T\* young people and adults.

**Activities:** sexual health, community health, outreach, community development, counselling, HIV testing  
**Contact:** 0113 244 4209  
**Online:** <http://www.mesmac.co.uk/>

---

## **Yorkshire Relish LGBT Dining Group**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** A dining group formed in 1994 exclusively for members of the LGBT+ community (and their guests). The group meets weekly to visit and dine at restaurants across Leeds.

**Activities:** social, meet-ups, dining

**Contact:** yorkshirerelishdining@gmail.com

**Online:** <http://yorkshirerelishdining.co.uk/>

---

## **Yorkshire Riders - Deaf Lesbian Gay Bisexual & Trans**

**Location:** Yorkshire, Leeds  
*LGBT+ Deaf people*

**About:** Yorkshire Riders is a Deaf Gay community based in Leeds. They meet every three months, with the purpose of socialising and meeting new people. Yorkshire Riders has a Facebook Group for people to join to find out more about their activities.

**Activities:** meetups, social, community

**Online:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/79966107131/>

---

## **Yorkshire Terriers**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Yorkshire Terriers were one of the first gay-friendly football teams to be founded in the UK, in 1997 and were a founder member of the GFSN National League at the start of the 2002/3 season. The Yorkshire Terriers train most Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

**Activities:** Sport, football

**Online:** <http://www.terriersfc.co.uk/>

---

## **Yorkshire Trans Support Network**

**Location:** Leeds

**About:** Yorkshire Trans Support Network is an umbrella network established in 2013 by a small group of likeminded individuals, committed to transgender equality, advocacy and education. YTSN long term aim is to act as a resource enabling all transgender people to access up-to-date information about support groups, events, advocacy, safe places, welfare and resources across Yorkshire. Yorkshire Trans Support Network is volunteer run, and

currently inactive due to low capacity but are looking for members interested in delivering its aims.

**Activities:** community, support, advocacy, education

**Contact:** YTsupportnetwork@live.com

**Online:** <http://www.ytsn.org.uk/>