

Our Rainbow City Commitment





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Foreword

Wolverhampton is a city that is proud of its rich, diverse cultural heritage and history. As a local authority over the past few years, we have been on a journey, exploring what equality, diversity and inclusion means not only to us as an organisation but to our wider communities.

As a local authority, we listen to our citizens about how our city can be more welcoming and inclusive. Rainbow City is first and foremost a celebration of our city's commitment to the values of equality, diversity and inclusivity which aims, through a number of positive steps, to ensure that we treat all of our citizens with fairness, dignity and respect.

This commitment sets out our vision for what Rainbow City will achieve, why we are taking action now, what we will deliver and how we will keep Wolverhampton residents engaged throughout. The work of Rainbow City so far would not have been possible without input from our key partners. We would like to thank all those who responded to the Rainbow City consultation, as well as the City of Wolverhampton Council Rainbow Staff Equality Forum, Wolverhampton Business Improvement District (BID), Wolverhampton LGBT+, and Wolverhampton Homes. We look forward to continuing to work with them while developing new relationships with other partners as we collectively shape our Rainbow City.



Councillor
Paula Brookfield
**Cabinet Member for
Governance and Equalities**



Tim Johnson
**Chief Executive,
City of Wolverhampton
Council**



LGBT+ communities in Wolverhampton

OVER
6,600
RESIDENTS
IDENTIFY AS
LGBT+
IN OUR CITY

Thousands of Wolverhampton people identify as LGBT+. While we don't have an exact number, we can make estimates of this figure based on regional data from the Office of National Statistics.¹ This estimates that **3.2% of the West Midlands' adult population** (aged 16+) identify as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or 'other'. This means that there are over 6,600 residents aged 16 and above who identify as LGBT+ in our city. The actual figure will be even higher, given that the official statistics do not include those aged below 16.

In the UK, there is no regular collection of data to estimate the number of individuals who identify as trans. While the Government Equalities Office estimates that there could be between **200,000 – 500,000 trans and non-binary individuals across the UK**,² we do not yet have a reliable estimate for how many trans individuals live in Wolverhampton. One of our Rainbow City commitments, which are presented later in this document, is to collect local data which will allow us to estimate this.

1. Sexual Orientation, UK data from 2019. Available through <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/datasets/sexualidentityuk>.

2. Government Equalities Office LGBT Factsheet. Available through https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721642/GEO-LGBT-factsheet.pdf.



DEFINITIONS

LGBT+ is an umbrella term used to describe an individual who identifies as either Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, or for anyone that identifies within the wider boundaries of the LGBT Community. Some may use the term 'LGBT' while others may use the term 'LGBTQ+'. Language is a powerful tool and is constantly evolving, which is why the Council uses Stonewall's list of terms as a guide.¹ Some of these definitions are listed below.

Lesbian refers to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.

Gay refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also used as a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality - some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.

Bi is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender. Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) bisexual, pan, or queer.

Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, gender-queer, gender-fluid, or non-binary.

Non-binary is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

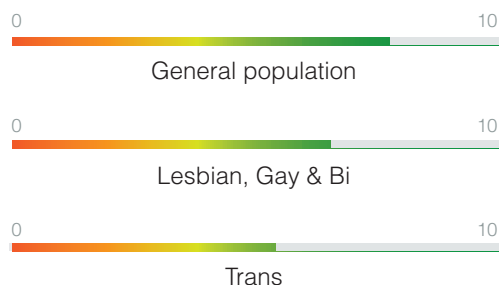
Gender is often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity. It is largely culturally determined and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth.

Sexual Orientation describes a person's sexual attraction to other people, or lack thereof. Along with romantic orientation, this forms a person's orientation identity.

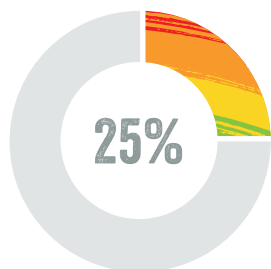
1. List of LGBTQ+ terms, Stonewall. Accessible through <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/faqs-and-glossary/list-lgbtq-terms>.

Why are we taking action now?

Despite sexual orientation and gender reassignment being protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, we know that many people from LGBT+ communities face unfair discrimination and harassment which has a huge detrimental impact on their health and wellbeing. The National LGBT Survey, led by the Government Equalities Office,¹ found that:

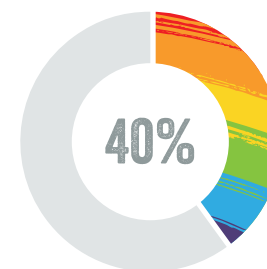


LGBT+ people show lower satisfaction with their lives than the general population. LGB people gave an average rating of 6.5 out of 10, while trans respondents gave an average rating of 5.4. For the general population, the average rating is 7.7.



Mental health issues in the LGBT+ population

A high proportion of LGBT+ people suffer from mental health issues. 1 in 4 survey respondents said that had experienced mental health issues in the 12 months prior to the survey, with evidence showing that anxiety, depression, self-harm, and suicide are more prevalent in LGBT+ communities.



Victims of Hate Crime in the LGBT+ population

LGBT+ individuals are more likely to be victims of hate crime, and this is often unreported. Over 40% of respondents had suffered verbal harassment and/or physical violence because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity within the preceding 12 months.

Over 90% of these incidents went unreported because respondents felt that reporting would not make any difference.

Feedback collected during Wolverhampton's LGBT+ health conference in 2019 suggested that these national findings apply to city residents.² Other feedback collected during this conference indicated that LGBT+ services were often difficult to find, and that there was a desire for the Council to strengthen its work with key city partners (including the NHS, local businesses, and charitable organisations) to champion LGBT+ rights across our city.

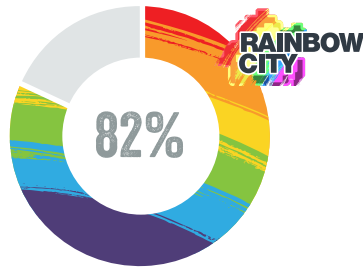
This was echoed by members of the Council's internal Rainbow Staff Equality Forum, who worked with the Council's senior leadership to identify steps that we could take to support LGBT+ residents, making Wolverhampton a more fair, equal, and diverse city. These initial ideas were shared through an online public consultation which ran from May to July 2021. The key findings from can be found on page 8



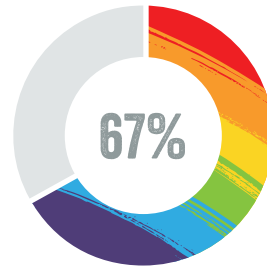
Wolves Pride 2019

1. National LGBT Summary Report, 2018. Available through <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report>.
2. Conference write-up of 'Improving the Health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ Communities in Wolverhampton', 2019. Available through <https://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g15600/Public%20minutes%2007th-Nov-2019%2009.00%20Conference%20Improving%20the%20Health%20and%20wellbeing%20of%20LGBTQ%20Commun.pdf?T=11>

Health and Support Services



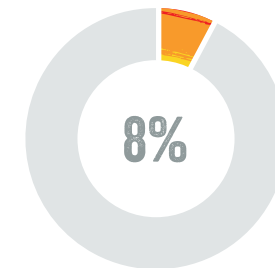
82% agreed with the initial principles, vision and objectives of the Rainbow City



67% wanted to see **wellbeing services** as the top priority for what they wanted to see for Health and Support Services

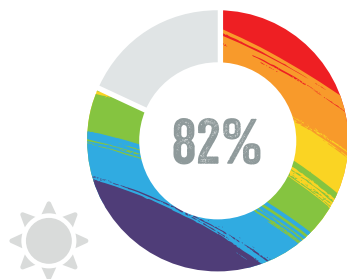


60% get their information on health and support services from **Google**



8% get their information on health and support services from **Wolverhampton Information Network**

Daytime/ nighttime economy



82% wanted to see **cafés** as the top priority for what they wanted to see in the day time economy



71% wanted to see **bars** as the top priority for what they wanted to see in the night time economy

Following the Rainbow City Public Consultation, the Rainbow City Project Board have reviewed the results of the consultation. The initial ideas and principles have now been developed into 5 key themes with a number of actions per theme that can be seen on pages 11-13.



What is Rainbow City?

Rainbow City is a collective term for a series of initiatives that will celebrate and put into practice Wolverhampton’s commitment to being a fair, diverse, and inclusive city. While many of these initiatives are targeted towards supporting Wolverhampton’s LGBT+ communities; the benefits they will bring will be shared by all.

Key to Rainbow City’s success will be making the most of our strong working relationships with key city partners, including health providers, local businesses, charities, and community groups. Only through working together can we ensure that the voice of our city’s

LGBT+ communities are heard and that our Rainbow City actions are designed around their needs.

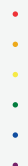
Rainbow City will see action taken ‘on the ground’ to make our city more welcoming to LGBT+ people: making it easier for them to find support services, providing them with more opportunities to improve their wellbeing, tackling hate crime, and increasing awareness of the challenges they can face. We are aiming to implement all of these changes by the end of 2025.

OUR VISION FOR A RAINBOW CITY

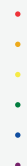
A city that is fair, equal, diverse and inclusive



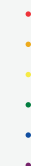
A city where everyone feels safe and free to be themselves



A city with a dedicated offer to our growing LGBT+ community



A city with a vibrant day and night life where all are welcome



A city that celebrated its commitment to being fair and inclusive

Rainbow City aligns with and progresses multiple city priorities, including:

- the cross-cutting theme of 'Fair and Inclusive' is a key element of both our Relighting Our City coronavirus recovery commitment and our Council Plan.¹ This commits to tackling any inequalities in our communities which impact on the opportunities of our local people.
- our commitment to building healthy, inclusive communities, as set out in our Council Plan
- our commitment to deliver inclusive, responsive, and accessible services that actively address inequality and exclusion in our city. This is a key priority area outlined in our most recent Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy, aiming to promote greater equality and community cohesion in the city.²



1. <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/your-council/council-plan>

2. City of Wolverhampton Council Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2024. Available at <https://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s196323/Updated%20Appendix%201%20-%20Equality%20Diversity%20and%20Inclusion%20Strategy%202022-2024.pdf>.

Our Commitments

The delivery of Rainbow City will be delivered around five themes, which emerged through the responses we received during the Rainbow City consultation. Our commitments under each of these themes are set out over the next few pages.

We will publish a Rainbow City Action Plan alongside this commitment document. This will provide details on the actions that we will deliver under each theme, as well projected timelines for each. An equalities impact analysis will be undertaken for all actions to make sure that any activity is fair and inclusive.



THEME ONE

Digital

Our aim:

A dedicated digital offer for Wolverhampton's LGBT+ communities, serving as a single access point for information relating to LGBT+ themed city events, communications, and signposting to sources of support.

What we will do to achieve this:

- Create a dedicated Rainbow City website collecting dedicated information for Wolverhampton's LGBT+ communities.



THEME TWO

Culture and Creative

Our aim:

A city whose public institutions celebrate diversity, working alongside a thriving LGBT+ voluntary and community sector that has access to meeting space and funding opportunities to host their own inclusive events.

What we will do to achieve this:

- Create a visual statement in the city centre that publicly exhibits the city's commitment to inclusivity.
- Source a dedicated safe space for the city's LGBT+ community groups to meet and grow.
- Produce a training and development offer for new and existing community groups, supporting them to develop sustainable operating models.
- Support the delivery of a series of inclusive events in the city.
- Launch training for local businesses on how they can support our LGBT+ communities.
- Embed a Rainbow City Charter into the Council's procurement processes to ensure that our suppliers share our commitment to inclusivity in the city.

THEME THREE

Health and Wellbeing

Our aim:

A city where LGBT+ residents have equal access to services to support their mental and physical health needs. Residents can access these services free of any judgement or discrimination, and effective signposting is in place for any specific health services that are not available locally.

What we will do to achieve this:

- Perform a detailed health and wellbeing needs assessment of our city's LGBT+ communities, providing a clearer picture of Wolverhampton's LGBT+ communities and identifying what needs are not being met. We will use the findings from this to identify next steps for our Action Plan.
- Develop a yearly strategy for Health and Wellbeing campaigns, including topics that our LGBT+ communities tell us are important to them.
- Develop a dedicated offer for the trans+ community to reduce isolation.



THEME FOUR

Community Safety

Our aim:

A city where everyone feels confident to be who they are without fear of judgement and abuse, where any discriminatory behaviour is challenged and actioned against.

What we will do to achieve this:

- Develop a training offer for local businesses and city partners to raise awareness of hate crime, including how to challenge it and report it, promoting community tolerance and cohesion.
- Work with our LGBT+ communities to identify any barriers to reporting hate crime in the city and take action to address these. For example, this could include strengthening and expanding existing hate crime reporting campaigns, or expanding the number of reporting centres in the city if required.
- Review the city's current sanctuary provision and expand this if required.
- Launch a Rainbow City accreditation scheme for local businesses and organisations, recognising those that have undertaken inclusion training and show continued commitment to making their premises a safe space.
- Support and develop safety initiatives across the city, such as Ask Angela and Ask Marc.

THEME FIVE

Education

Our aim:

A city that actively promotes awareness of the challenges faced by its LGBT+ communities, providing accessible information for all residents who wish to find out more, and where professionals working with the LGBT+ community have access to appropriate training and development opportunities.

What we will do to achieve this:

- Support our city's schools to embed the new curriculum for Relationships and Sexual Education, which includes positive portrayals of non-heteronormative relationships.
- Develop a training model to equip teachers with the necessary tools to meet the needs of trans children in primary and secondary schools.
- Launch a city-wide LGBT+ Ally training offer, accessible by anyone in the city who wishes to know more about the challenges faced by LGBT+ communities.
- Working with specialists, develop a training package that will be available to all public sector workers whose roles involve supporting LGBT+ individuals.

Monitoring and sharing our progress

We are committed to measuring the success of all initiatives introduced as part of Rainbow City. Each action in our Rainbow City Action Plan will list specific measurables that will be regularly monitored to check that we are on track to meet our objectives.

Our findings will be shared with the people of Wolverhampton through our website, social media channels and via the Rainbow City Charter Network.



Cabinet

The elected members of the Council's Cabinet will have oversight of the Rainbow City project, with the Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities receiving regular progress reports through the Strategic Executive Board.

Strategic Executive Board

NEW

Rainbow City Project Board

Our Rainbow City Project Board will make strategic decisions on the delivery of Rainbow City and has overall responsibility for ensuring that our commitments are delivered. They will regularly review performance data to check whether Rainbow City is meeting our vision and objectives, sharing the findings with the Council's Strategic Executive Board.

NEW

Rainbow City Operational Steering Group

Our Rainbow City Operational Steering Group will lead on the 'on the ground' delivery of the actions in our action plan. This group includes a lead expert for each of Rainbow City's five themes, who will lead on all activity under that theme. The Steering Group will provide regular progress updates to the Rainbow City Project Board.

Three new groups will be set up to ensure that our Rainbow City commitments are delivered

NEW

Rainbow City Charter Network

Our Rainbow City Charter Network will include representatives from our partner organisations and from members of Wolverhampton's LGBT+ communities. The views of this network will be sought to shape the delivery of all Rainbow City actions, with regular communication with both the Project Board and Operational Steering Group. The organisations of the Charter Network will develop and sign a Rainbow City Charter to show commitment to our shared vision of Wolverhampton as a fair and diverse city where everyone is free to be themselves.

You can get this information in large print, braille,
audio or in another language by calling 01902 551155

wolverhampton.gov.uk 01902 551155

  WolverhamptonToday  Wolverhampton_Today  @WolvesCouncil

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