This election is a chance for us to decide what sort of society we want to live in, and at Stonewall, we are campaigning for acceptance without exception.

LGBT rights and equality have progressed significantly in the last 25 years, but now we need the new UK government to make a commitment to protecting these rights. It’s vital that we address the discrimination that continues to limit many lesbian, gay, bi and trans people from living a safe and prosperous life here in the UK and in other countries.

We are seeking commitments from all parties and all candidates to help us achieve true equality, where everyone is accepted without exception, whoever they are, wherever they are.

We can’t make this happen alone. We need you to help us get real commitments for change and acceptance from those people who want to become our new Members of Parliament.

**ASK YOUR CANDIDATES:**

1. Will you protect LGBT rights, and commit to improving them?
2. Will you take hate crimes against LGBT people seriously, and give them the punishments they deserve?
3. Will you take a zero tolerance approach to bullying in schools?
4. Will you make the NHS a better service for LGBT people?
5. Will you commit to kicking homophobia out of sport?
6. Will you stand up for LGBT people abroad?

**TAKE ACTION TODAY AND VOTE FOR ACCEPTANCE WITHOUT EXCEPTION:**

- Follow Stonewall on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), and share our calls to action so they reach the widest possible audiences.
- Register to vote, and encourage others to do the same and have their say.
- Talk to your friends, family and colleagues about why building acceptance in your community is important to you and should be at the heart of this election campaign.
- Find out who your local candidates are. Ask them to publicly support our priorities for LGBT equality – and tell us when they do.
DISCRIMINATION AGAINST LGBT PEOPLE TODAY

Discrimination remains an everyday reality for many LGBT people at home, at work and in their communities.

> More than half of lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people are bullied at school.¹

> Two in five trans people have been physically intimidated.² One in six lesbian, gay and bi people have been victims of a hate crime in the past three years.³

> Many LGBT people are afraid to do things other people take for granted, like holding hands in the street.

> Three-quarters of football fans have heard offensive anti-LGBT language at a match, online or watching football in a pub.⁴

> Millions of LGBT people around the world face violence and persecution. 73 countries still criminalise same-sex relationships. Most countries do not allow trans people’s gender identity to be recognised.

> LGBT people often face multiple forms of discrimination because of other aspects of their identity, including their gender, ethnicity, faith, disability or age.

These are just some of the barriers that LGBT people face, here and abroad.

This manifesto sets out the six priority areas where the next UK government must act to address the discrimination that LGBT people continue to experience.

We will only achieve true equality when everyone is accepted without exception, whoever they are, wherever they are.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

This general election will elect a new UK Parliament and UK Government in Westminster, which will have responsibility for all policy areas relating to England, and some areas relating to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Scottish Parliament, Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies have responsibility for policy areas such as health, education and criminal justice. This is why some of our priorities for this election, for example making schools safe and supportive, only refer to England. Stonewall will continue to work with the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, and with our partners in Northern Ireland, to achieve our priorities in those nations.

Governments in the UK should be proud of their record on LGBT rights. The rights they have established in the last 25 years have transformed life for millions of LGBT people.

The EU also played an important role in driving that progress, including triggering the extension of protections against discrimination at work on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Once we leave the EU, protecting our rights will be wholly the responsibility of UK governments. This means it’s vital that the next UK government is committed to maintaining the laws that are in place to ensure that every UK citizen is protected.

In addition, we need the UK government to continue extending rights in areas where LGBT people still face discrimination, including vital changes needed to improve equality for trans people.5

HELP US SECURE A COMMITMENT FROM THE NEXT UK GOVERNMENT TO:

- Keep the Human Rights Act and the UK’s signature to the European Convention on Human Rights. These are vital to ensure the fundamental rights of every UK citizen are protected.
- Establish equal access to pension rights for same-sex couples.
- Reform the Gender Recognition Act 2004 to get rid of the intrusive medical tests that trans people must go through to have their gender recognised, and provide recognition for non-binary identities.
- Reform the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that it protects all trans people by changing the protected characteristic of ‘gender reassignment’ to ‘gender identity’ and removing all outdated terminology including ‘transsexual’ and ‘gender reassignment’.
- Review the need for gender markers in official documents and introduce an ‘X’ category where markers are needed to enable non-binary identities to be recognised.

5 See A Vision for Change – acceptance without exception for trans people
2. TACKLE HATE CRIME AND DISCRIMINATION

LGBT people face increased levels of abuse and violence.

One in six lesbian, gay and bi people have experienced a hate crime within the last three years, while 38 per cent of trans people have experienced physical intimidation. Most of these crimes go unreported, with many victims feeling they would not be taken seriously.

LGBT people often face multiple forms of discrimination because of other aspects of their identity, including their gender, ethnicity, faith, disability or age.

HELP US SECURE A COMMITMENT FROM THE NEXT UK GOVERNMENT TO:

- Bring the law on LGBT hate crimes into line with hate crimes based on race and faith, by making them aggravated offences. This would increase the maximum sentence available to judges on conviction.

- Educate and inform LGBT communities about what constitutes a hate crime, both online and offline, and how it can be reported.

- Increase confidence that the criminal justice system will support victims, by updating guidance and delivering targeted compulsory training to police and others in the justice system.

- Work with local communities to address everyday discrimination faced by LGBT people, including those who experience multiple forms of discrimination based on their gender, ethnicity, faith, disability or age.
3. MAKE OUR SCHOOLS SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE FOR LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE

Every school needs to create a culture of acceptance and inclusivity that lets all students – including LGBT students – thrive and be themselves. Some are doing this well, but too many are not.

LGBT young people continue to suffer from bullying in schools, and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language is widespread. In addition, too few schools provide good quality relationships and sex education to enable and encourage young people to make informed decisions and develop healthy relationships.

Thanks to government and cross-party support, a law was passed just before the election that will make age-appropriate relationships and sex education compulsory in all schools. This is great progress, but we must ensure that the way it is implemented is LGBT inclusive.  

HELP US SECURE A COMMITMENT FROM THE NEXT UK GOVERNMENT TO:

• Ensure that the new guidance for relationships and sex education is LGBT inclusive and supported by high quality resources and training for teachers.

• Intensify activities to tackle bullying of LGBT young people in all schools by ensuring that all teachers receive initial and ongoing training in this area.

• Develop practical statutory guidance on supporting trans young people at school.
4. IMPROVE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

LGBT people are more likely to suffer from poorer mental and physical health than the wider population, with healthcare professionals often unable to meet their health needs.

Trans people in particular face huge hurdles when trying to access Gender Identity Services, including poor referral processes and long delays.

Alarmingly, a significant number of LGBT people experience discrimination from professionals who should be there to care for them. A quarter of patient-facing staff have heard their colleagues make negative remarks about lesbian, gay or bi people, or use discriminatory and offensive language while at work in the past five years. One in five have heard similar negative remarks about trans people.7

HELP US SECURE A COMMITMENT FROM THE NEXT UK GOVERNMENT TO:

- Train all frontline health and social care professionals to understand and meet the needs of LGBT patients and service users.
- Ensure NHS England completes the trial programme to provide PrEP as quickly as possible, and fully roll out the treatment to high risk groups to help reduce HIV infection.
- End discrimination in blood donation, while maintaining a safe supply of blood. Screen donations according to individual risk rather than excluding men who have sex with men as a group.
- Improve access to Gender Identity Services, which are currently not equipped to meet the needs of all trans people seeking their services.

7 See Unhealthy Attitudes, Stonewall August 2015
5. MAKE SPORT EVERYONE’S GAME

Many LGBT people, including fans and players, continue to feel unwelcome in sport.

It’s unacceptable that LGBT people continue to hear offensive comments about lesbian, gay, bi and trans people at matches, online and while watching sport.

These barriers extend to everyday sport and para-sport: more than 60 per cent of gay and bi men, and 40 per cent of lesbians and bi women, fear they’d experience homophobia and biphobia if they took part in team sport and were open about their sexual orientation. Trans people are particularly vulnerable to discrimination, with more than half of trans people avoiding gyms and other leisure facilities.

HELP US SECURE A COMMITMENT FROM THE NEXT UK GOVERNMENT TO:

• Hold sports governing bodies and Sport England to account on tackling anti-LGBT abuse. Ensure frontline staff – including coaches and stewards – receive training to ensure their sport is welcoming to LGBT people.

• Support high-profile campaigns to end homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in sport, such as Stonewall’s Rainbow Laces campaign.
In many countries LGBT people experience rejection, isolation from their communities and appalling discrimination. This can include physical and sexual violence, which often goes unreported.

In addition, same-sex relationships are criminalised in 73 countries across the world, and most governments deny trans people the right to legally change their name and gender from those that were assigned to them at birth.

However, there are LGBT campaigners, organisations and allies in every region working to change this situation. The UK Government has a vital role to play in supporting their work both directly and indirectly.

HELP US SECURE A COMMITMENT FROM THE NEXT UK GOVERNMENT TO:

- Respond strongly, quickly and effectively where LGBT people face violence or persecution.

- Put the human rights of LGBT people at the heart of the government’s agenda when working with other countries through diplomacy, trade deals and ensuring organisations receiving UK aid don’t leave LGBT people behind.

- Make sure the work of government departments to champion global LGBT equality is strategic and co-ordinated, with clear ministerial leadership.

- Treat LGBT people who have fled persecution and seek asylum in the UK with fairness and respect, including not exacerbating the abuse they have experienced by placing them in detention.  

- Provide direct support, including specific funding, to human rights defenders in other countries working to improve the lives of LGBT people and achieve equality.

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8 See No Safe Refuge, Stonewall and UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group, 2016.
TAKE ACTION NOW

Now is your opportunity to get involved. Take action now to make this election a vote for acceptance without exception.

1. SPREAD THE WORD

Follow Stonewall on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram; and share our calls to action so they reach the widest possible audience.

Talk to your friends, family and colleagues about why building acceptance for LGBT people in your community is important to you and should be at the heart of this election campaign.

2. ASK YOUR CANDIDATES TO SUPPORT OUR LGBT PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT UK GOVERNMENT

It’s important that candidates in your constituency understand that making progress on LGBT equality is important to their voters.

Find out who your local candidates are on your local council’s website. You can identify your local council via your postcode at Your Vote Matters.

Contact them via social media, talk to them at public meetings and when they are on your doorstep.

Ask them to publicly support our priorities for LGBT equality and commit to work on your behalf to achieve them if elected.

Tell us when your candidates have made this pledge.

3. REGISTER TO VOTE

Your voice matters. If you are not registered to vote, it won’t be heard.

Register by 22 May 2017, here.

And if you find it difficult to get to the polling booth, apply for a postal vote by 23 May 2017.

Encourage your friends and family to register.