

Stonewall

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource is produced by Stonewall, a UK-based charity that stands for the freedom, equity and potential of all lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people.

At Stonewall, we imagine a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere can live our lives to the full.

Founded in London in 1989, we now work in each nation of the UK and have established partnerships across the globe. Over the last three decades, we have created transformative change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK, helping win equal rights around marriage, having children and inclusive education.

Our campaigns drive positive change for our communities, and our sustained change and empowerment programmes ensure that LGBTQ+ people can thrive throughout our lives. We make sure that the world hears and learns from our communities, and our work is grounded in evidence and expertise.

To find out more about our work, visit us at www.stonewall.org.uk

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Stonewall is proud to provide information, support and guidance on LGBTQ+ inclusion; working towards a world where we're all free to be. This does not constitute legal advice, and is not intended to be a substitute for legal counsel on any subject matter.

Young Futures Aviva Transcript – Libby's Story

My name is Libby. My pronouns are she/her. I am working in savings and retirement complaints at Aviva. I've been at Aviva for two and a half years in total.

Once I left school, I was adamant that I was going to be an actor. That's what I wanted to do as a career. That's the path I went down. I went to drama school, I moved to London, and I studied in New York as well. It was really great fun. I was really accepted like when I came out.

After about six years in that creative industry, I didn't feel that I had as much control over my life and what I wanted to be doing. So I decided to move out of London. I moved back to Norfolk, which is where I grew up, where my family are.

I really love working with people. I really love meeting new people and networking and things like that. So recruitment seemed like a really good choice for me. While the job itself was something that was well suited to me, the company that I worked for, I had a really bad experience in that they told me point blank, we don't want you coming out, it makes people uncomfortable.

And I felt that that was really unfair and I didn't overly dwell on it. I just left. I just said to them, "I'm really sorry. I'm not going to work somewhere that I can't come and be myself" about something so, in my mind, so basic. I didn't have another job to go to or anything like that, but it was absolutely the best decision for protecting myself.

I started Aviva at the beginning of 2020. I was in two minds coming into Aviva of: how guarded do I keep myself? Being a lesbian is something that is part of me. I didn't want to live the rest of my life being totally guarded, having to hide it.

And one of the first things I saw when I was looking through is the Pride community. I asked to join it and I started following the posts and what people were talking about. It was incredible. It was amazing. They encourage everybody to come in and be themselves and that's what they want. So it was really wonderful.

It led to me understanding and learning about all these different other things that I could get involved with. And one of the ones that I very quickly got involved with was my areas Diversity and Inclusion Working Group.

When I joined, we discuss how we can acknowledge different religions, neurodiversity, racism. The diversity and inclusion working group is there so everyone feels they have a space and everyone feels they have a voice.

The advice that I would probably give a younger person is, whatever your dream is, go and do it. While it happened to me and it has happened to other people that I know and we can't ignore the fact that it still happens. Most people, I think, shouldn't fear going into things because they think they'll have to hide their queerness or anything. I think go. And if people don't like it, then you're going to have a whole army of people behind you that will support you.