#ComeOutVoting and make your voice heard.

This election is an opportunity to decide what sort of country we want to live in.

Instead of creating division, Stonewall is calling on all parties and candidates to support strong, open and inclusive communities, where every lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) person is accepted without exception.
Over the last 30 years, we’ve made brilliant progress on LGBT equality – with victories over employment rights, parenting rights, partnership rights and an equal age of consent.

This progress has only happened because people spoke out for equality and took action to bring about change.

But in the 2017 general election, over 14 million people who could have voted, didn’t. Almost one in three people who were eligible to vote, including LGBT people and their allies, didn’t speak out, so they didn’t get heard.

Our voices matter in this general election because, while we’ve accomplished a lot, there’s still so much left to do. Crucially, we need to protect what we’ve already achieved and keep pushing forward.

We need to stand up for values of acceptance and equality – not division, fear and hatred.

We can’t risk going backwards. Our hard-won rights can’t be undermined. That’s why you need use your vote and your voice and #ComeOutVoting on polling day.

The decisions our MPs make affect every aspect of our lives. They have a say on everything from our education system, and whether schools teach about LGBT families, to criminal justice and how LGBT victims of crime are supported. They even have a say on our legal existence – legislating on how trans people can have their gender identity legally recognised.

Your voice will make a difference. Members of Parliament have changed LGBT people’s lives in the past, and they can do again in future – but only if you ask them to. Urge your candidates to come out in support of LGBT equality this general election.
WE’RE CALLING ON ALL PARTIES AND ALL CANDIDATES TO:

- CREATE UNITED COMMUNITIES WHERE ALL LGBT PEOPLE ARE SAFE AND ACCEPTED.
- PROTECT AND EXTEND LGBT RIGHTS.
- ENSURE EVERY LGBT CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON CAN FLOURISH.
- IMPROVE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES FOR LGBT PEOPLE.
- ENSURE THAT THE UK ACTIVELY SUPPORTS LGBT RIGHTS ACROSS THE WORLD.
REGISTER TO VOTE HERE

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD

There are lots of ways you can show your support for LGBT equality throughout this election, whether or not you are eligible to vote.

- Sign our petition calling on all parties and candidates to support LGBT equality: www.stonewall.org.uk/election
- Follow Stonewall on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, and share our message.
- Find out who your local candidates are (there’s more information on how to do this on page 17). Get in touch with them and attend local hustings (public Q&As with candidates from all parties). Ask them to publicly support our priorities for LGBT equality – and tell us when they do.
- Talk to your friends, family and colleagues about why it’s important to #ComeOutVoting at this general election.
WHY WE NEED OUR NEW MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT TO COME OUT FOR LGBT EQUALITY

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

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

One in five LGBT people (21 per cent) have experienced a hate crime or incident due to their LGBT identity in the last 12 months.

Nearly half of LGBT pupils (45 per cent) – including 64 per cent of trans pupils – are bullied at school for being LGBT.

Trans people still can’t access legal gender recognition without having to go through a lengthy and sometimes humiliating process. It’s so difficult that only 12 per cent of trans men and trans women who responded to the National LGBT Survey had a Gender Recognition Certificate.
Almost one in four LGBT people (23 per cent) have witnessed discriminatory or negative remarks against LGBT people by healthcare staff.

Internationally, LGBT rights are uneven and 69 countries still criminalise same-sex relationships.

Half of black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people (51 per cent) have experienced discrimination or poor treatment from others in their local LGBT community because of their ethnicity.
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.

MSPs in the Scottish Parliament, AMs in the National Assembly for Wales and MLAs in the Northern Ireland Assembly have responsibility for policy areas such as health and education. In the UK Parliament, health and education policy are the responsibility of MPs representing English constituencies.

That’s why some of our priorities for this election, such as making schools safe and supportive, only refer to England – because in these areas, the decisions made by MPs will only have a direct impact on England. Stonewall will continue to work with the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales, and with our partners in Northern Ireland, to achieve our goals in those nations.
WHAT WE’RE CALLING FOR.

This manifesto sets out the five 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.
1. UNITED COMMUNITIES WHERE ALL LGBT PEOPLE ARE SAFE AND ACCEPTED

More and more LGBT people feel able to be open about who they are at home, in the workplace and in their communities. Lots of us can be ourselves with the people who matter most to us, which is critical for our confidence and sense of well-being.

But we can’t be complacent. Hate crime against LGBT people is on the rise and many LGBT people still don’t feel confident being open about who they are in their communities. LGBT people who are black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) or disabled are far more likely to feel this way, even with those closest to them.

Making the UK a country where all LGBT people are accepted without exception can only happen when there is a sustainable approach to building acceptance, rejecting attempts to divide us, and tackling hate at a local and national level.

We need to take steps to create inclusive communities and reduce the conditions that lead to hate crime taking place. Local LGBT community infrastructure – from Prides to youth support groups – is vital to building strong local communities that celebrate diversity and ensure all LGBT people are accepted.

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

- Challenge and reject hate in our communities. Stand against any attempt to target minorities and create division in our country.
- Commit to delivering the National LGBT Action Plan and develop it into a cross-Government strategy on LGBT equality.
- Update legislation in England and Wales so that hate crimes based on sexual orientation, gender identity or disability are treated equally to those based on race and faith. This should include classing these crimes as aggravated offences, which would increase the maximum sentence for judges to apply on conviction.
• Ensure that local LGBT groups and Prides have the resources they need to improve inclusion and to challenge prejudice in their local communities.

• Increase confidence that the criminal justice system will support victims, by updating guidance and delivering targeted compulsory training to all police officers, frontline staff and others in the justice system in England and Wales.

• Continue to educate and inform LGBT communities about what constitutes a hate crime, both online and offline, and how it can be reported.

• Ensure all social media platforms deal with incidents of online anti-LGBT abuse seriously and swiftly and hold them to account if they fail to do so. This must also include clear communication to all users that anti-LGBT abuse is unacceptable, with privacy, safety and reporting mechanisms made easily accessible.

• Legislate to include voluntary questions on sexual orientation and gender identity in the 2021 census, so that public services can meet the needs of LGBT people in their local area.

• Ensure that LGBT people can fully participate in local community events, including grassroots sport. Work with Sport England and other governing bodies to kick homophobia, biphobia and transphobia out of sport.

• Take measures to ban the harmful practice of conversion therapy.

In the 2017 General Election, 31 per cent of those who could vote didn’t. That’s over 14 million people – including LGBT people and their allies – who didn’t make themselves heard.

That’s why it’s so important that LGBT people and our allies #ComeOutVoting on election day.

Your voice can make a difference. Members of Parliament can change LGBT people’s lives – but only if you ask them to.
2. PROTECT AND EXTEND LGBT RIGHTS

Over the last 30 years we’ve won the right to be protected at work, to raise a family and to serve in the armed forces. This is brilliant progress. But there’s still more to do.

While we’ve seen considerable gains for lesbian, gay and bi people, progress for trans people has been slow. Since 2004, there’s been no change to the way the UK legally recognises trans people.

Equality for lesbian, gay and bi people isn’t consistent across nations. Even though a law has been passed that compels the UK Government to legalise same-sex marriage in Northern Ireland, this won’t happen until 2020 at the earliest.

Leaving the European Union (EU) will mean that our rights will be the responsibility of the UK Government. Already they’re under threat, as the law now says that we’ll lose protections such as the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights on the day the UK exits the EU.

We must not lose the protections we had as members of the EU, and we must ensure that our rights are extended post-Brexit. In the future, our law must continue to protect LGBT people from discrimination and ensure the equal treatment of every citizen.

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

- Ensure there is legislation that promises UK citizens will never have fewer human rights and equality protections than we did as EU members.
- Protect citizens’ rights by keeping the Human Rights Act, and the UK’s signature to the European Convention on Human Rights, after the UK has left the EU.
- Improve the Gender Recognition Act 2004 to streamline and de-medicalise the process for legal gender recognition. Reform must remove the requirement for intrusive medical tests, introduce a simple administrative process based on the principle of self-determination, and provide recognition for under 18-year-olds and non-binary people. This will bring us in line with international best practice.
- Review the need for gender markers in official documents. Where markers are needed, introduce an ‘X’ category to enable non-binary people to be recognised.
- Ensure the historic John Walker ruling on pension rights for same-sex couples is retained following EU withdrawal, so that inequalities in private and public sector survivorship schemes are permanently addressed.
- Support the Love Equality campaign in Northern Ireland and make sure that, now marriage equality is set to be introduced, law is swiftly passed so that LGBT people, wherever they live in the UK, can marry the person they love.
In recent months, several schools have been targeted by disruption because of their commitment to teaching about LGBT families. There has been a clear echo of Section 28, the 1989 legislation which banned conversations about same-sex relationships in school, forced LGBT teachers into the closet or out of a job, and scarred a generation of young LGBT people. We can’t go backwards. Creating the inclusive communities we need starts at school.

When our schools, youth groups and youth services are built on a culture of acceptance, every LGBT young person can thrive and be themselves.

LGBT young people continue to suffer from bullying in schools, and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language is widespread. Nearly half of LGBT pupils – including 64 per cent of trans pupils – are bullied for being LGBT in Britain’s schools.

Too few schools provide good quality Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), which enables and encourages young people to make informed decisions and develop healthy relationships.

Thanks to Government and cross-party support, a law was passed in 2017 that will make RSE compulsory in all of England’s schools. This is great progress, but we must ensure that the way it is implemented is LGBT-inclusive.

Outside of school, we need to make sure that LGBT youth groups are properly funded. Finally, we need to ensure apprenticeships, universities, and colleges are supporting LGBT young people, so that no young person is left behind.

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

- Provide sufficient funding for every school in England to access face-to-face training on delivering LGBT-inclusive Relationships and Sex Education and engaging with parents.

- Take action to tackle anti-LGBT bullying and support LGBT pupils at schools, by making sure that all teachers receive initial and ongoing training on how to prevent, recognise and address incidents, and support LGBT pupils.

- Properly resource LGBT youth services.

- Commit to LGBT inclusion across all areas of education and training, including university, apprenticeships and supporting young people in the workplace.
4. IMPROVE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES FOR LGBT PEOPLE

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

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

A significant number of LGBT people experience discrimination from professionals who should be there to care for them. **Almost one in four** LGBT people have witnessed discriminatory or negative remarks against LGBT people by healthcare staff.

In the past year alone, **six per cent** of LGBT people – including **20 per cent** of trans people – have witnessed these remarks.

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

- Address LGBT health inequalities by developing and implementing a strategy that crosses all health and social care agencies, led by the National LGBT Health Advisor.
- Improve access to Gender Identity Services, which are currently not equipped to meet the needs of all trans people seeking their services.
- Train all frontline health and social care professionals across England to understand and meet the needs of LGBT patients and service users.
- End discrimination in blood donation by regularly reviewing the blood donation deferral period for men who have sex with men, setting a clear goal to introduce a system based on individual risk rather than blanket exclusion.
- Make sure that gender-neutral HPV vaccination includes a one-year-only catch-up programme in the 2020/21 school year for boys up to the age of 18.
- Deliver on the commitment to end new HIV transmissions by 2030, including by making PrEP available through routine commissioning from April 2020.
- Update surrogacy law to accurately reflect societal change and meet the needs of surrogates and prospective parents, including LGBT people.
5. ENSURE THAT THE UK ACTIVELY SUPPORTS LGBT RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD

In many countries, LGBT people experience rejection from their communities and appalling discrimination.

This can include physical and sexual violence, which often goes unreported.

In 69 countries around the world, same-sex relationships are criminalised. Most governments still deny trans people the right to legally change their name and gender from those that were assigned to them at birth.

As a result, many LGBT people have no choice but to seek asylum. But many LGBT asylum seekers who arrive in Britain face unfair treatment and endure horrendous conditions in detention centres.

However, there are LGBT campaigners, organisations and allies across the world working to change this situation. The UK Government need to support their essential work.

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

• Respond strongly, quickly and effectively when LGBT people face violence or persecution overseas.
• Put LGBT people at the heart of its agenda when working with other countries through diplomacy and trade deals.
• Make sure UK aid goes to organisations that don’t leave LGBT people behind.
• Provide clear leadership across Government, so that the UK’s commitment to champion global LGBT equality is strategic and co-ordinated.
• Treat LGBT people who have fled persecution and seek asylum in the UK with fairness and respect. This includes ending the detention of LGBT asylum seekers, alongside ending indefinite 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.

In 69 countries around the world, same-sex relationships are criminalised.
TAKE ACTION FOR EQUALITY BY:

REGISTERING TO VOTE HERE

Your voice matters. If you are not registered to vote, your voice won’t be heard. Encourage your friends and family to register too.
www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

SIGN OUR PETITION
Call on all parties and candidates to support LGBT equality:
www.stonewall.org.uk/manifesto
FIND YOUR LOCAL CANDIDATES

Ask your candidates to support our manifesto for the next Parliament and UK Government.

Find out who your local candidates are on your local council’s website. You can identify your local council by entering your postcode here. www.gov.uk/find-local-council

Speak to your candidates on social media, at public meetings and when they’re on your doorstep. You don’t have to be an expert – all you need to do is:

- Ask them what they will do to protect and improve LGBT rights. Hearing this question from potential voters will help candidates understand why this matters.
- Encourage them to publicly support our priorities for a fair and inclusive society which values LGBT people.
- Ask them to work on your behalf to achieve these goals if they’re elected.
- Let us know what they say by emailing campaigns@stonewall.org.uk, so we can help you hold them to account.

ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?

Get in touch with our team: campaigns@stonewall.org.uk
COME OUT VOTING.