



Stonewall  
SCOTLAND

# GETTING STARTED

**A ROUTE MAP FOR PUBLIC  
SERVICES IN SCOTLAND**

HOW TO START MAKING SERVICES MORE  
INCLUSIVE FOR YOUR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL  
AND TRANSGENDER SERVICE USERS



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# FROM POLICY TO PAVEMENT

CREATING PUBLIC SERVICES THAT UNDERSTAND,  
VALUE AND RESPECT THEIR LGBT USERS



**Public services are just that; services provided by the government to the public. Why then, do so many people still face discrimination, poor treatment and a lack of consideration from those who deliver services?**

There have been vast changes in equalities legislation over the past few years, bringing more protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. For LGB people, the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 have been established in the workplace and in the provision of goods, facilities and services and the exercise of public functions. Transgender rights have also come a long way thanks to the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999, The Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the Gender Equality Duty protects transsexual people in employment and vocational training. Also, from 6th April 2008 the Sex Discrimination (Amendment of Legislation) Regulations 2008 came into effect protecting transgender people from discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services.

Many organisations now have equal opportunities policies which cover sexual orientation issues explicitly and the obligations under the Gender Equality Duty. However, many of these organisations are beginning to recognise that a policy on sexual orientation is only one side of the coin. A policy document on its own can't change things at the ground level. If a policy is not filtered throughout an organisation right down to the shop floor, then there is every possibility that the LGBT service user's experience will not improve.

This guide helps public services provide a better service for their lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) service users. To do this it will highlight some of the main issues that may prevent LGBT people from having a positive experience when accessing a service and will look at some of the ways that staff can make a difference for LGBT people.

Stonewall Scotland has worked with various public services to identify the key areas where the most basic information is needed to help service providers understand the issues facing LGBT people. Many of these services are making significant progress because they understand that recognising difference can improve their service as a whole. They are committed to ensuring they consider the needs of LGBT people in their service delivery. The information in this guidance document is a direct result from working closely with public services and learning from their experiences.

The outcome is this introductory guide and further, more detailed, guidance to follow at later stages.

***The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 make it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities and services on the grounds of sexual orientation.***

*This guidance includes sexual orientation issues of relevance to lesbian, gay and bisexual people so we often use the term 'LGB'. Transgender people may be lesbian, gay or bisexual, just as anyone else can. However, there are some issues and barriers which pertain to gender identity in particular and these are set out separately. Where the issues or barriers are relevant to LGB and T people we have used the term LGBT.*

# MYTH BUSTER

## 20 THINGS ABOUT LGBT PEOPLE THAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK

### **1 WHY DO SERVICE PROVIDERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER ISSUES?**

If service providers and frontline staff are informed about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues they will be better able to meet the needs of their service users – after all LGBT people pay their taxes too!

### **2 HOW MANY GAY PEOPLE ARE THERE?**

The current government estimate is that six percent of the population is lesbian, gay or bisexual.<sup>1</sup>

### **3 GAY PEOPLE ONLY LIVE IN THE BIG CITIES, DON'T THEY?**

The estimate of six percent covers the population as a whole: not specific areas. It may be that in some urban areas there are more LGB people - but the LGB population is not a homogenous group. It should be recognised that LGB people chose to live in all parts of Scotland and should be provided for accordingly.

### **4 THIS HAS GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH ME; WE DON'T HAVE ANY GAY PEOPLE HERE!**

There are LGB or T people in every area – if you don't know of anyone that means there is some trust-building to be done so that people know that it is safe to be 'out' in the community and that your service will not be discriminatory towards them. Also, there is no easy way of knowing if someone is LGB or T so you should never assume that everyone is straight in your area.

### **5 WHAT PEOPLE DO IN THEIR BEDROOM IS UP TO THEM. IT'S A PRIVATE MATTER AND IT'S NONE OF OUR BUSINESS.**

It's not about sex – it's about providing services to the whole community. Sexual orientation is not about what people do in their bedroom, it is an aspect of a person's social identity and it makes up a part of who they are. There is no suggestion that a heterosexual relationship should be a private matter or that it only boils down to what people do in the bedroom – so why is it different when it comes to LGB people? Heterosexual relationships are recognised and we often assume people are in heterosexual relationships. This is done by the way we speak to people, what language we use and practical things about the way services are delivered – such as forms or assumptions about family make-up.

### **6 HOW DO I KNOW IF SOMEONE IS LGB?**

You will not know if someone is lesbian, gay or bisexual unless they chose to tell you. Lesbians and gay men come in all shapes and sizes; their mannerisms, dress, and lifestyles will be as varied as anyone else. Stereotypes of effeminate men and masculine women do exist, but although some gay people may display these characteristics, many won't - it is quite likely that their sexual orientation will be invisible.

### **7 I DON'T REALLY MIND, BUT WHY DO LGB PEOPLE HAVE TO SHOVE IT IN MY FACE?**

Society often accuses lesbian, gay and bisexual people of being too obvious about their sexual orientation - basic things can be seen as 'flaunting' your sexual orientation such as displays of affection, holding hands in public or talking openly about your partner. However, these same actions in a heterosexual relationship would rarely be noticed, let alone questioned.

### **8 DO ALL LESBIAN, GAY OR BISEXUAL PEOPLE WANT TO BE 'OUT'?**

Not all LGB people want to be 'out' but very often they don't have the choice because of an actual or perceived danger to themselves or because they are yet to come to terms with their sexual orientation. As a public service, you should ensure that nothing you do prevents LGB people from being open about their identity – especially where it may be helpful for you to know.

### **9 ARE 'SEXUAL PREFERENCE' AND 'SEXUAL ORIENTATION' THE SAME THING?**

Sexual preference and sexual orientation are not interchangeable terms. Sexual preference implies choice, while orientation does not. Sexual orientation is the most widely accepted term, it is also the term referred to and defined in equalities legislation.

### **10 WHAT IS 'SEXUAL IDENTITY'?**

Again, sexual orientation and sexual identity are not interchangeable terms. The use of sexual identity as a replacement for sexual orientation is confusing. Sexual identity asks about how you identify, however, the orientation question is less subjective.

### **11 WHAT IS HETEROSEXISM / HETEROSEXIST?**

Heterosexism is the assumption that everyone is heterosexual. It has the effect of hiding LGB identities. Heterosexism can infer rights and privileges to heterosexuals that are denied to gay, lesbian and bisexual people, such as partnership rights or hospital visiting rights.

### **12 MOST PEOPLE ARE STRAIGHT SO IT'S FINE FOR SOCIETY TO BE HETEROSEXIST. WHY SHOULD WE CHANGE THE WAY WE DO THINGS FOR SUCH A SMALL NUMBER OF PEOPLE?**

Everybody pays the same amount to access public services – you don't get to choose who you cater for. Public services need to adhere to the law just like anyone else. In addition, as part of a public service's core duty they have to provide appropriate, accessible services to all.

### **13 YOU CAN'T SAY ANYTHING THESE DAYS! WHAT ABOUT MY RIGHTS?**

Everyone has the right to express their opinions as long as those opinions don't violate the dignity and rights of other people around them. In places like the workplace, or in the provision of goods, facilities and services, there are legal protections in place to ensure that no one person has a more negative experience than anyone else. As a public service provider, you must take responsibility for the role that you play in the lives of the people that use your service. It's best if you can enable people to be 'out' without having to constantly come out.

### **14 WHAT IS 'COMING OUT'?**

'Coming out' is a phrase that describes LGB people's experience of disclosing their sexual orientation. The term is also used to describe the process through which transgender people acknowledge their gender identity. Coming out is a continuous process which people may have to do every day. At best, this can be a tiring process and at worst something which, depending on experiences, may become stressful or scary. Your service should be responsive enough to be able to make everyone, including LGBT people, feel welcome, safe, secure and valued when accessing your service.

### **15 I DON'T SEE THE DIFFERENCE, WE TREAT EVERYONE THE SAME HERE.**

Treating everyone the same is often part of the problem. LGBT people can face different issues and barriers to other service users and it's important to be aware of this. You may wish to stop and reconsider what the service user journey might feel like and where an unintentional barrier may have been built up in practice. This can help you look at your service provision from a different perspective and some basic awareness raising of the issues should help you to do this. It is helpful to remember that people are often accessing your service with a history of feeling excluded, discriminated against or overlooked. Due to an uncertainty about how they will be treated, many LGBT people feel apprehensive about coming out to you and putting themselves in a vulnerable position, or in an environment that may be hostile.

### **16 I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES AROUND GENDER IDENTITY. CAN YOU EXPLAIN?**

The most common terms such as transgender, transsexual and transphobia are explained in the glossary section of this guidance. A person's gender identity is not the same as their sexual orientation. Gender identity is about the gender you actually are – not necessarily the gender you were assigned at birth.

### **17 SHOULD WE BE MONITORING THE SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF OUR SERVICE USERS?**

In the long term, monitoring sexual orientation will help you to understand the needs of your LGB service users – it can help to make sure that the service you are providing is fit for purpose and that it is effective and efficient. It's essential that the climate is right both internally and externally. This will involve building up trust and confidence with your LGB staff and service users. The same principles that are set out in the 'community engagement' section of this guidance also apply to monitoring sexual orientation.

### **18 SHOULD WE BE MONITORING GENDER IDENTITY?**

It is recommended that before embarking on any monitoring of gender identity of staff or service users that you seek specific advice. (See useful contacts section.)

### **19 WHAT DO THE EQUALITY ACT (SEXUAL ORIENTATION) REGULATIONS ACTUALLY MEAN FOR PUBLIC SERVICES?**

These regulations apply to the provision of goods, facilities and services. They cover both the private and public sector. In the public sector the regulations cover a wide range of areas including housing, healthcare, education and council services. The regulations make two key kinds of discrimination unlawful: direct and indirect discrimination. They also cover victimisation and direct discrimination on the grounds of someone's actual or perceived sexual orientation. Also, from 6th April 2008 transgender people are similarly protected.

### **20 BISEXUAL PEOPLE ONLY REQUIRE SPECIFIC CONSIDERATION IF THEY HAPPEN TO BE IN A SAME SEX RELATIONSHIP, DON'T THEY?**

No – being bisexual (bi) is a sexual orientation in its own right. It should not be viewed as 'on the way to being gay' or as 'a phase'. It can be very difficult for people who identify as bi to come out as there is still a great deal of negative attitudes and stereotypes about what it means to be bisexual. People who identify as bisexual face similar barriers and invisibility in accessing services as lesbian and gay people.

# BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SERVICES

**There are a wide range of reasons why LGBT people may find it difficult to access public services; things like bad experiences in the past, low expectations, fear of prejudice and confidentiality issues, to name a few.**

Public services are also very diverse and a particular barrier in one service may not be present in another. This can make a generic 'one size fits all' approach somewhat unhelpful as it doesn't identify differing needs in differing situations. However, it is clear that many of the barriers LGBT people face in their day-to-day lives will consistently fall into a few recurring categories. These same issues seem to be present in all public services, although they will occur in different ways.

By developing knowledge and understanding of these issues, your service will be in a position to impact on these reoccurring barriers to participation and will be a step closer to providing a service that is equally accessible to all. Some of these barriers will be highlighted and explained in this booklet. In this section we will take a look at how attitudes and stereotypes can hinder change within an organisation and what inclusive language and external communications can achieve.

## **ACTION - FAIR REPRESENTATION**

*It is often suggested that images of LGBT people or couples should be represented in public services' publications or on advertising and posters - but remember - don't only opt for the stereotypical image! If you get this right, your service will start to send a message to the LGB community that the service is on the way to becoming more inclusive. A good example of this might be a picture of same-sex parents.*

**“ Embarrassment would prevent me from explaining. It would make a difference if I knew they were gay-friendly otherwise they may think the issue is with me.**

LGBT Housing Project,  
Focus Group Participant

## ASSUMPTIONS, ATTITUDES AND STEREOTYPES

**Lesbians, gay men and bisexual people come in all shapes and sizes but many stereotypes exist. Stereotypes are often linked to set ideas about gender roles: how men and women should behave. For example, gay men can be effeminate and fashion conscious or gay women can be assumed to be assertive and butch. Whilst some gay people may display these characteristics, it is fair to say that many will not. It is just as likely that their sexual orientation will be invisible.**

Service providers shouldn't make assumptions about who is LGB or T, or talk differently to someone because of how they look. LGBT people are all different and may have multiple identities. So someone who is black and LGBT may feel even more excluded. A service provider can communicate its awareness of LGBT service users by including a wide range of identities in its advertising material. See "Action – Fair Representation" on page 9.

Recent legislation has helped set the scene for a step-change in society. Developments like civil partnership and protection from discrimination in relation to goods, facilities and services have had a massive impact on the lives of gay people. However, changing legislation alone cannot change deep rooted attitudes and beliefs.

There needs to be ongoing work to educate service providers and change hearts and minds. Stonewall recently published research which suggests that 72 percent of gay and straight people in Scotland want to see prejudice against LGB people being tackled. However, the perception is that public bodies, employers and the media do not always reflect these attitudes and consequently people see significant pockets of discrimination remaining.

**“ People always assume I'm heterosexual, I suppose because of the way I look which is really frustrating. I'm constantly outing myself and constantly met by "but you don't look like a lesbian".**

Public services survey respondent

## LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

**Understanding the right way to communicate with people appropriately is a key part of good service delivery for service providers.**

It can sometimes be difficult to know the right words to use and how to make sure that you are not excluding people with your language. Understanding the issues and how LGBT people can be excluded in everyday life will help you to be confident in choosing the language that you use to speak to everyone. There is a wide assumption that most people are heterosexual and we often use language which reflects this assumption. Keep in mind that you will have lesbian, gay and bisexual service users; however, you may not know who they are. So you should strive to use this inclusive language with everyone, as LGB people may choose to conceal their sexual orientation from service providers and colleagues.

To avoid a service user having a negative experience, service providers should always be sensitive about the way they request information. It can be very helpful if you use non gender specific language. If you use terms such as husband or wife then you are not only excluding lesbian and gay people but also the majority of straight people who are not married.

Developing more inclusive language can be addressed through equality and diversity training but also through customer service training. After all, as a public service you will want to address all your service users appropriately.

There is much more to communication than just the language that we use. Communication also relates to any publications or written materials that a public service may produce, the physical environment and how it is experienced by the service user and the attitudes or banter that we observe or hear while we are accessing a service. If a service user has a negative experience through any of these forms of language or communication, it can be damaging to their perception of your service and to the way that they feel when using your service. See “Action” below.

### ACTION - COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE

- ***Try to use gender non-specific language with everyone (such as partner).***
- ***Don't assume that everyone is heterosexual.***
- ***Be professional - don't make inappropriate jokes with colleagues or service users.***

**“ I used a council service recently with my girlfriend. I gave over a piece of paper to the guy behind the desk; he said I should check that I wasn't giving away any boys phone numbers and laughed. I know it's just a wee thing - but it really made my heart sink.**

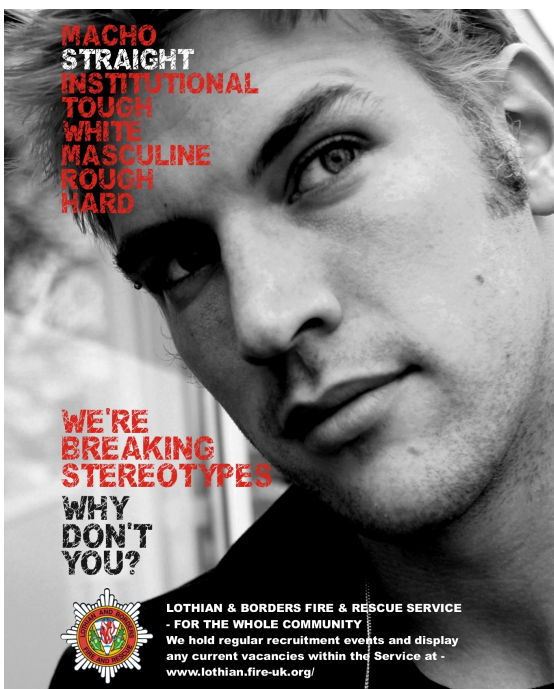
Public services survey respondent

# WHAT CAN AN ORGANISATION DO TO CHANGE?

There are various ways that an organisation can influence change within their own structure. This relies on champions at all levels working together to make a difference for their LGBT service users.

Communication is key to ensuring that the whole workforce is committed and understands the reasons for change. In this section we will look at how an organisation can empower its people to deliver change and to impact on staff attitudes and beliefs through training and skills development, the use of leadership, and how an organisation can begin to better understand the needs of their LGBT service users through meaningful community engagement.

## Fire brigades target gay bars in drive to broaden recruitment



### CASE STUDY - LEADERSHIP

*A good example of leadership in action is the fire service's recent recruitment campaign involving four Scottish fire brigades. The campaign saw posters and adverts in gay establishments and publications; officers from the service also attended Pride marches and recruitment fairs.*

*The specific desired outcome was an attempt to broaden recruitment. However, this type of activity can often have an added impact, such as a change in perceptions of the service. It also sends a message to all staff and service users, gay or straight, that the organisation is striving to be more inclusive. This type of senior leadership also gives permission to all staff to tackle inappropriate banter or comments of colleagues. The public commitment involved in something like having a fire engine on a Pride march cannot be underestimated.*

*The fire services were also keen to involve the press even though there was potential for negativity from the media, however, this simply reinforced their public commitment and goes towards changing people's attitudes and perceptions of both the service in question and the importance of public services which are inclusive and representative of the community they serve.*

## LEADERSHIP - TAKING A STAND

**Leadership is a term which is often used but rarely explained. In different positions it will mean different things in practice but it does concern all employees and all those who deliver a public service. To be a leader in LGBT equality you need to believe in what you are doing and understand the issues for LGBT people. Furthermore, you need to be able to communicate this to others and empower them to make a difference to the lives of LGBT people.**

At a senior level such an approach is crucial. A confident and well informed Chief Constable, Chief Executive or Director can make a huge difference. As a senior leader you have a unique opportunity to build confidence – to “give permission” to tackle LGBT inequalities and then continuously encourage and press for change. This booklet and successive materials can impart some guidance and knowledge but senior leaders need to ‘take a stand’ and make the case for LGBT equality and why all those who deliver services should be concerned. This means making it clear why a bit of LGBT knowledge is pertinent to a nurse’s job, a police officer’s job or a school teacher’s job and letting them know very clearly why it matters. Often this can best be done by highlighting a specific issue, for example a senior figure could do some press work around tackling homophobic bullying in the classroom, improving social services for LGBT parents or highlighting crime against LGBT people in a particular area.

Leadership at the Executive level can lead to real cultural change on LGBT matters. Being in charge of a team or unit a manager can ‘take a stand’ when colleagues use inappropriate language or stereotype LGBT service users. They can make the need to understand LGBT matters relevant to day to day work. So, for example, does a team of social workers understand LGBT family situations, do care home workers understand that an elderly gay man may have a same sex partner who wishes to visit him, or do the class teachers in a school understand how to look out for and deal with homophobic bullying?

At the front line, leadership is as important as it gets. This is where individual responsibility is crucial. A police officer, nurse or classroom assistant may not have responsibility for other staff but will have a significant opportunity to show leadership by example. By ensuring that you are well-informed and aware of what LGBT issues you might face day to day you can provide the best service possible to LGBT people. You can also help others in similar roles to understand. In this regard acting as an LGBT “champion” can be both empowering for you in your role and motivate others to change.

## STAFF TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**Awareness-raising and training for public service staff is essential to develop understanding of the reasons why LGBT people may find it difficult to access public services. Because of the existing legal duties to promote equality for other groups - such as gender, race and disability, staff may already be more aware of factors that impact on these service users. However, more targeted training may be needed to ensure there is good understanding around the issues relating to faith, age and sexual orientation.**

Training should be dedicated to LGB and T issues and should not be seen as an add-on or short section of a generic equality and diversity training package. This is an important part of establishing the organisational commitment to LGBT issues and sets the tone for the expectation that will be placed on staff to deal with the issues appropriately and with care.

Staff at all levels; volunteers, board members and anyone else who may come into contact with service users, should undertake training appropriate for their needs and to their requirements. Training on barriers facing LGBT people should be viewed as essential staff development; not as an optional extra. If this is the case, it will be easier to engender a cultural change throughout the organisation as a whole. It's important that staff are confident in dealing with matters that may arise in both their workplace and during service delivery.

The way we represent and display our attitudes is very closely related to our personal experiences, opinions and beliefs. Training which changes behaviours can sometimes make participants apprehensive or defensive. However, getting these attitudes out in the open is the first step to changing behaviour; which ultimately changes attitudes. In a training environment, using case studies to analyse an experience of a LGBT person often makes the issue more real for the participant and often this case study will be the first time that a person has had a chance to stop and contemplate how it might feel to be LGBT.

Training should allow participants to discuss their perception of the issues in a non judgemental way and there should be clear ground rules set at the beginning of the session; these might include: confidentiality, non judgemental environment, appropriate use of language. All of these will encourage confidence in talking about the issues and will enable staff to air views that would otherwise go silent and consequently unchallenged.

An increased understanding of what it might mean to be LGBT will have a positive impact on the service deliverer's confidence and ability to talk to colleagues and service users. It should be a step on a journey towards a whole cultural and organisational shift to a preferred environment of understanding and inclusiveness.

### EXAMPLE: LUNCH BITES

*Bank of Scotland Corporate runs a series of informal equality and diversity workshops with lunch included. The workshops are interactive and look at different topics each time. They encourage debate, discussion and networking among employees.*

**“** *My partner and I were attending the adoption course run by the council. They didn't acknowledge our sexuality, no books, stats or case studies. An inappropriate joke with the word 'dyke' was shared. Parents were referred to as Mummy & Daddy throughout the three days.*

**”** Public services survey respondent

### TOP TIPS

- Introduce LGBT specific training.*
- Ensure that all staff are equalities trained, not just new recruits.*
- Evaluate training needs and deliver tailored courses.*
- Does your training department have an appropriate level of understanding of specific LGBT needs? If not, consider getting in an external trainer.*
- Evaluate effectiveness of training.*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**We often hear that service providers want to reach their local LGBT community through community engagement. There is a very real desire to engage with the LGBT community but not necessarily the understanding of why this is important and what engagement should yield.**

Often community engagement is a requirement to fulfil certain obligations, whether they are statutory or set by a policy or action plan; this sounds like the right steps are being taken to ensure that LGBT people are considered and consulted on their opinions. However, the difficulty arises when no initial steps have been taken to lay the foundations for this type of engagement. The result is that organisations do not know how to find the LGBT people in their area – this can sometimes lead to organisations thinking that they do not exist.

The National Standards of Community Engagement, published by Communities Scotland, set out useful overarching principles for community engagement which highlight the importance of equality and recognising the diversity of people and communities. However, involvement is not the first step. You need to take action to raise the confidence of your LGBT service users before you begin to ask them to be open and forthcoming about issues that affect them within their local community.

In order to engage your local LGBT service users, you must first ensure that the climate is right. Any organisation which is looking to engage LGBT people should first consider what their reasons for engagement are and make sure that these are well thought out and are intended to bring about real, positive change. An organisation must be prepared to act on the information that is gathered. If you ask what needs to be changed for your service to become more inclusive, then you must be prepared to act on the information that you gather. Failure to do so will result in LGBT people becoming reluctant to engage with you next time around. This is key to building a relationship of trust with your service users.

You must also be clear about how much you can change and what leadership buy-in you have secured to be able to deliver on changes. Services sometimes think that the onus is on the service user to feedback on what barriers or problems they have using a service. However, the responsibility lies with the service provider to ensure that they are providing an appropriate service to all its users. See “Top Tips”.

### TOP TIPS

***Confidentiality and anonymity is essential – the only way to get meaningful engagement from your service users is to ensure that they feel safe and confident in disclosing information. Ways of achieving this will vary for different services. However, these generic top tips can help:***

- ***Use existing complaints procedures. This is an easy way to find out more about what your service users think about your service.***
- ***Make your complaints procedure easily accessible and confidential – create a comments box and situate it somewhere that isn't generally staffed, like a waiting room, entrance hall or anywhere that people won't feel they are being monitored.***
- ***Set out guidance on how to complain if necessary or a service level agreement that is LGBT inclusive so that people know what to expect when they take a complaint forward.***

# GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

Stonewall Scotland strives to use 'plain English' throughout our work, both spoken and written, but we're aware that some expressions often used in the equalities environment are not necessarily in common usage. Please see the list below for definitions.

## **BISEXUAL**

Bisexuality (or bi) is generally defined as an attraction to both men and women. However, members of bisexual communities tend to prefer the definition which recognises that a sexual and emotional attraction to people can be changeable, and gender may not be a defining factor.

## **CIVIL PARTNERSHIP**

A legal union between two partners of a same sex relationship carried out by a registrar. Civil partnership affords pension rights and the same legal rights and responsibilities that married opposite sex couples enjoy, including being recognised as 'nearest relative'.

## **COMING OUT**

An accepted phrase that describes LGB people's experience of disclosing their sexual orientation. In this report 'coming out' is also used to describe the process through which transgender people acknowledge their gender identity. As the coming out process is never over for LGBT people, this is an ongoing, sometimes daily, decision and can cause significant stress.

## **GAY**

A person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to people of the same sex. The term is more commonly applied to men who self identify as attracted to the same sex, rather than men who have sex with men but do not self identify as gay. While many women identify as gay, the term lesbian is commonly used to describe same sex attracted women.

## **GENDER IDENTITY**

This relates to the way a person experiences their gender. Some people find the gender they were assigned at birth does not match the gender that they actually are.

## **HETEROSEXUAL**

A person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to people of the opposite sex.

## **HOMOPHOBIA**

An irrational fear and dislike of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, which can lead to hatred resulting in verbal and physical attacks and abuse.

### **HOMOSEXUAL**

A person whose attraction is toward people of the same sex. This term is primarily used as a medical classification and is a term that lesbians and gay men rarely use to define themselves. Historically this term has been used to medicalise or criminalise lesbian and gay people, and many experience it as a stigmatising term. Best practice is to avoid it.

### **INTERNALISED HOMOPHOBIA**

For many people, regardless of sexual orientation, homophobia can be internal and not recognised by the individual. However, internalised homophobia, negative feelings about being gay, lesbian or bisexual can and does cause adverse effects for lesbian, gay and bisexual people. It can affect the way people see themselves and the way others treat them. Internalised homophobia can lead to denial of one's true sexual orientation in situations that are threatening or require the individual to 'come out'.

### **LESBIAN**

A woman who is sexually and emotionally attracted to other women. This term often refers to women who are attracted to the same sex rather than women who have sex with women but do not self identify as lesbian.

### **MULTIPLE IDENTITY**

Coming from more than one defined community, e.g. being black and gay, or lesbian and an older person, or Muslim and bisexual.

### **ORGANISATIONAL OR INSTITUTIONAL HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA & HETEROSEXISM**

This is systematic discrimination of LGBT people by government, business, employers, public services or other organisations. This might include issues such as invitations to a company event for an employee and their husband or wife. This exclusion is not necessarily deliberate but means that institutions have not considered same sex partners as an option. Also, requesting someone's birth certificate as proof of identification when a driving licence is acceptable – this could exclude someone who has changed their gender.

### **OUT**

Openly lesbian, gay or bisexual.

### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

Everyone has a sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is a combination of emotional, romantic, sexual or affectionate attraction to another person. In other words, it's about who you are attracted to, who you might fall in love with or want to live your life with. Sexual orientation should not be regarded as just about sex – it is also about a person's identity.

### **SOCIETAL OR CULTURAL HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA & HETEROSEXISM**

This relates to the general assumption of heterosexuality and gender norms in society. This means that social and cultural norms promote discrimination against LGBT people. Homosexuality is often considered as something 'different' to be welcomed, tolerated, or despised. The media, film, TV, books, holiday brochures, insurance companies, religious institutions, schools and other aspects of society sometimes back this up.

### **TRANSGENDER**

Transgender is an inclusive, umbrella term used to describe the diversity of gender identity and expression. The term can be used to describe all people who do not conform to common ideas of gender roles, including transsexuals.

### **TRANSPHOBIA**

An irrational fear and dislike of transgender people, which can lead to hatred resulting in verbal and physical attacks and abuse.

### **TRANSSEXUAL**

Transsexual people are usually distinguished from other transgender people by their strong desire to live completely and permanently as the gender opposite to that which they were originally labelled.

### **TRANSVESTITE**

A person who dresses in clothes associated with their opposite gender, as defined by socially accepted gender dress codes, but who still identifies with their biological sex. There are both female-to-male (FTM) and male-to-female (MTF) transvestites.

# CONTACTS

## LGBT ORGANISATIONS

### **STONEWALL SCOTLAND**

Campaigns for equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people living in Scotland.

9 Howe Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 6TE

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

### **LGBT CENTRE FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Works to promote healthy lifestyle and promote accessibility of health services.

9 Howe Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 6TE

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

### **LGBT YOUTH SCOTLAND**

Provides a range of services and opportunities for LGBT young people to reduce isolation.

John Cotton Centre  
10 Sunnyside  
Edinburgh  
EH7 5RA

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

### **SCOTTISH TRANSGENDER ALLIANCE**

Works to improve civil rights for all transgender people.

30 Bernard Street  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6PR

[www.equality-network.org](http://www.equality-network.org)

### **EQUALITY NETWORK**

Undertakes LGBT campaigning and consultation work in Scotland.

30 Bernard Street  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6PR

[www.equality-network.org](http://www.equality-network.org)

## EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

If your organisation would like advice on employment issues, help facilitating working environments where lesbian and gay staff can be themselves, or help understanding and complying with employment equality legislation please see the Workplace section of the Stonewall Scotland website, or contact Nicola Swan, the Scottish Workplace Officer, on 0131 557 3628.

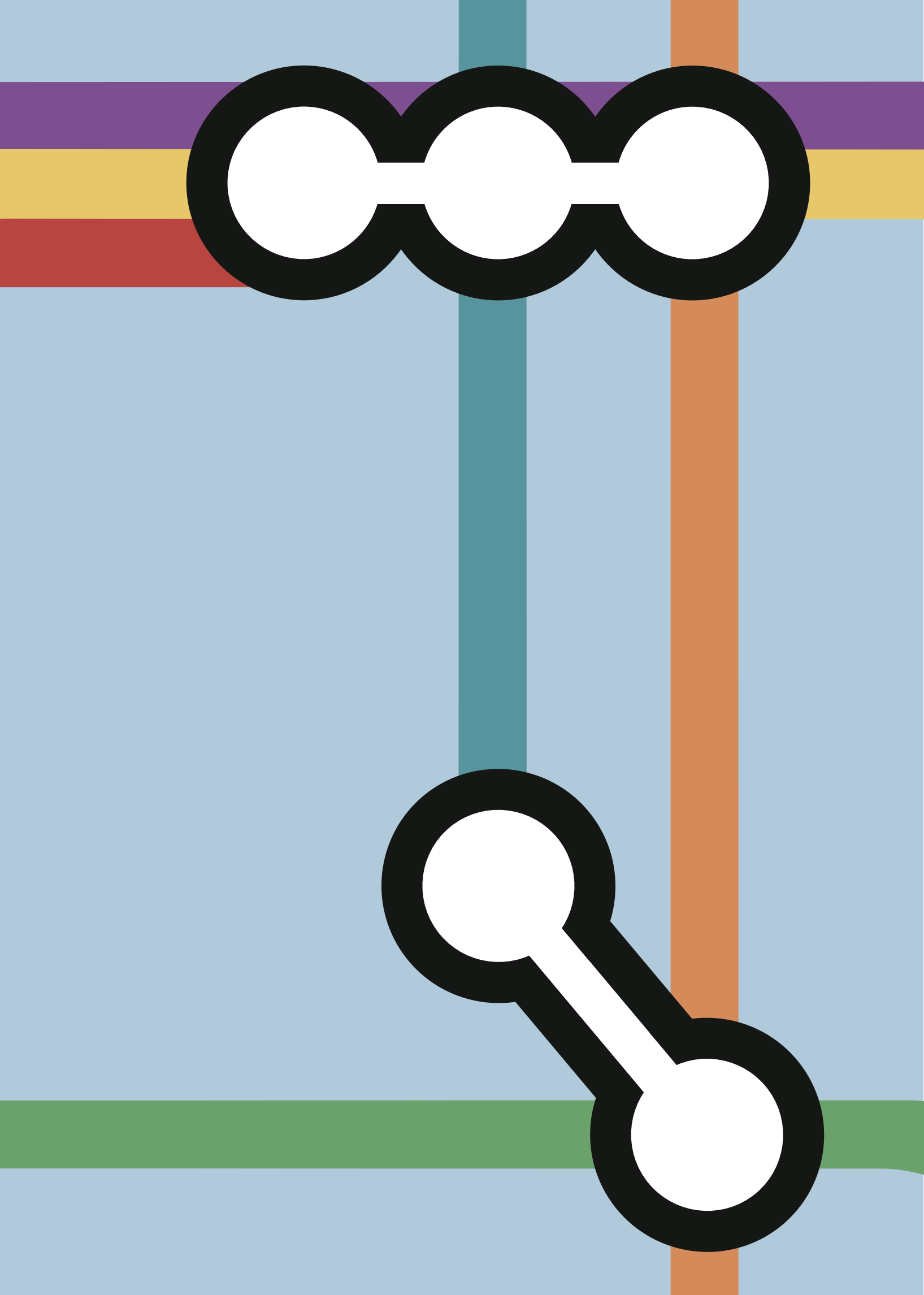
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

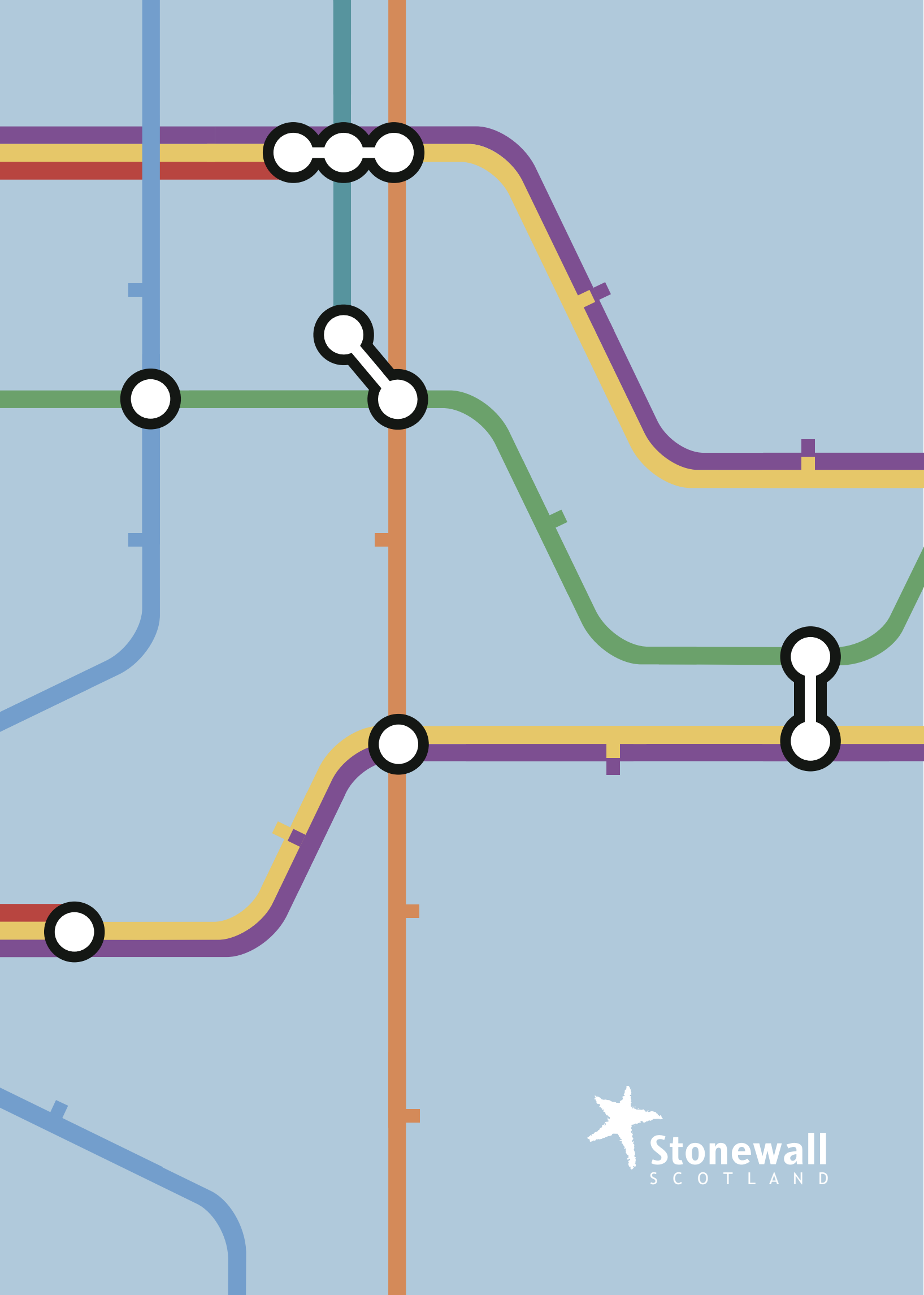
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