

out for sport



tackling homophobia and transphobia in sport



AWARDS
FOR ALL
SCOTLAND

LOTTERY FUNDED

EQUALITYNETWORK
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights in Scotland



contents

foreword

introduction and background

section 1. research methodology **7**

1.1	Literature Review	7
1.2	LGBT Sports Groups Interviews and Focus Groups	7
1.3	Sports Sector Organisations Interviews and Questionnaires	7
1.4	Out for Sport Survey	8
1.5	Approach	8

section 2. key research findings **9**

2.1	Key Statistics	9
2.2	Key Attitudinal findings	10
2.3	Key Strategic findings	11
2.4	Key Positive findings	12

section 3. the problem of homophobia & transphobia in sport **13**

3.1	Perceptions of Homophobia and Transphobia in Sport	13
3.2	Homophobic and Transphobic Incidents	15
3.3	LGBT Experiences of Mainstream Sport	19
3.4	Information gaps and challenges to research around LGBT Participation	20
3.5	Barriers to LGBT Participation	23
3.6	Transgender Specific Barriers to Participation	27
3.6.1	Different Strokes Transgender swimming – case study	31
3.7	Sports-related Homophobic/transphobic school bullying	32



Margaret Smith
Scott Cuthbertson
Nathan Gale

Published June 2012

section 4. tackling prejudice & improving participation	36
4.1 How to tackle homophobia and transphobia	37
4.2 Leadership	42
4.3 Role Models	50
4.4 Supporting and Safeguarding LGBT Young People	58
4.5 Capacity building within the LGBT sports sector	66
4.5.1 LGBT Sports Groups and SGBs	71
4.5.2 Supporting LGBT Sports Groups	74
4.6 LGBT Equality Policy and Practice in Scottish sport	76
4.6.1 Scottish Governing Bodies of Sport	77
4.6.2 The Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport	80
4.6.3 The SFA and Homophobia/Transphobia in Football	82
4.6.4 The SRU and Homophobia/Transphobia in Rugby	88
4.6.5 Working in Partnership	92
4.6.6 Local Authorities	95
section 5. why tackle homophobia & transphobia in sport?	101
5.1 The need to take action	101
5.2 Positive benefits to Scottish sport community	107
5.3 Benefits for LGBT People of Physical Activity and Sport	109
section 6. recommendations	113
1. Visible Leadership	113
2. National Coordinating Group	114
3. Action Plan	114
4. Policies	115
5. Education	115
6. Changing Attitudes	116
7. Tackling abuse	116
8. Supporting LGBT Participation	117
9. Capacity Building	119
10. Employment	119
background reading	120
helpful websites	121
appendix	122
glossary	123

More information on the Out for Sport research is available at www.outforsport.org.uk including the full survey statistics and respondent demographics.

foreword

by Tim Hopkins, Equality Network

Sport has an important and positive role to play – in our communities, in our culture and in improving Scotland's health. By its very nature, sport is also an ideal arena in which to tackle discrimination and to champion equality of opportunity and fair play for all. There should be no place for homophobia, biphobia or transphobia in sport.

However, some LGBT Scots who either take part in sport, or would wish to take part, encounter barriers because of who they are. This research sought to examine what sport is like for those people.

In undertaking this research the Equality Network has sought to identify and build relationships with key policy makers, interested parties and stakeholders and to explore and assess options for the continuity and sustainability of LGBT sports development in the longer term.

The Equality Network is committed to playing our part in reducing homophobia and transphobia in sport and in increasing LGBT participation, in partnership with key stakeholders. That's why we have pursued engagement with key partners to better understand the reality of sports delivery and development in Scotland across a broad range of sports and across the performance spectrum from community players to elite athletes.

This research seeks to harness and express the views and experiences of both the LGBT community and key partners in Scottish sport, and to deliver recommendations for future action which are positive, proportionate and achievable.

Sport does not exist nor take place in a vacuum. We recognise the huge influence sport has on Scottish society. By tackling homophobia and transphobia in Scottish sport we believe there will be significant benefits to social attitudes towards LGBT people in Scotland.

While the findings in this report may seem in places stark, we believe that the report faithfully reflects what people have told us about their experiences. This report represents a starting point in tackling this issue. We recognise that there is a role for organisations like ourselves in engaging with sporting partners to address the issues highlighted.

The Equality Network wishes to thank all the organisations that have taken part in the research for their involvement, their frankness and their enthusiasm for tackling this issue.

introduction and background

In recent years Scotland's LGBT community have seen improvements in many aspects of their lives. Some of these changes have been brought about by legislation passed at Holyrood and Westminster; some are due to a welcome and growing acceptance within Scottish society.

However, it is clear from research as well as from the day to day experiences of LGBT Scots, that discrimination still exists – in schools, in workplaces, and as revealed by this report, in sport.

In 2011, the Equality Network's LGBT Community Sector Report demonstrated a need to develop and support LGBT sports groups in Scotland, raising concerns about the homophobic, biphobic and transphobic¹ nature of sports environments, and the need to make sports more inclusive.

In response to these concerns, the Equality Network approached the Big Lottery Fund Awards for All Programme to support this research project – Out for Sport.

This research report represents the most comprehensive work so far undertaken into homophobia and transphobia in Scottish sport, and into LGBT sports participation. The key aims of the research project were to

- » Consult with LGBT people, LGBT sports organisations, and other sports bodies in Scotland, to identify the barriers to participation of LGBT individuals in sport and physical activity and to highlight ways in which LGBT participation could be promoted and increased.
- » Publish a report with recommendations to make Scottish sport more LGBT inclusive.
- » Hold an end of project conference to disseminate findings to the LGBT community and other sport stakeholders such as **sportscotland**, Scottish Governing Bodies (SGBs) and the Scottish Government.

¹ By homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, we simply mean prejudice and discrimination against lesbian/gay, bisexual and transgender people, respectively

Interviews with LGBT community sports groups, sports stakeholders, political stakeholders and other key sports sector partners, and a survey of more than 1700 people, have given us a picture of what is happening around LGBT issues in Scottish sport. While there are organisations, including the national sports agency **sportscotland**, which have focussed on improving equality within sport, there is at present a recognisable disconnect between national level policy and pitch or court level delivery.

There remains a hierarchy of equalities: that is, a tendency amongst local authorities, Scottish Governing Bodies and other service providers tackling inequality in sport, to focus on other equality strands such as disability, gender or ethnicity. There is little at present being done specifically to increase participation amongst LGBT people or to tackle homophobia or transphobia. Many sports sector interviewees acknowledged taking no specific action on LGBT issues. There were a number of reasons for this – a lack of knowledge or awareness, the perceived taboo nature of sexuality, a view that barriers to LGBT participation do not exist, or because the needs of LGBT participants had been overlooked or misunderstood.

Prominent in the interviews in this report are the voices of LGBT young people who have experienced homophobia or transphobia in relation to school sport participation to such an extent that they switch off from sport. Here too are the views of those who have experienced homophobia or transphobia first hand in Scotland's football stadiums, rugby pitches and changing rooms. This must be taken seriously and addressed by all partners.

While some key players in the sports sector remain sceptical about there being specific barriers to LGBT participation, this is not a view shared by decision makers within the Scottish Government. There is an opportunity to use the testimonies and evidence contained within this report as a springboard for action and we hope that it is an opportunity that the Scottish Government, the sports sector and the LGBT community will take.

With the Olympics being held in Britain this year, and with the Commonwealth Games set for Glasgow in 2014, this is an ideal time to send a clear message that there is no place for discrimination in sport and that increasing LGBT participation is good for individuals, good for sport and good for Scotland.

section 1

research methodology

The project utilised both qualitative and quantitative research as well as a literature review. The project focuses mainly on Scotland although it draws also on the UK context when relevant. Quotes in this report have come from either the Out for Sport survey or research interviews. Demographic information has been included in the latter case.

1.1 Literature Review

An initial literature review was conducted into relevant research and policy literature concentrating on aspects of sexual orientation and gender identity in sport and physical activity. This included examination of the websites of relevant organisations, including those of UK and Scottish Governing Bodies of Sport. The literature review also included two pieces of unpublished research: (a) the findings of an Equality Network survey into homophobic and transphobic behaviour around football which was undertaken as part of their response to the Scottish Parliament's scrutiny of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2011; (b) the findings of a LEAP Sports survey into the setting up of an umbrella organisation dealing with LGBT community sport.

1.2 LGBT Sports Groups Interviews and Focus Groups

24 Scottish LGBT sports groups, clubs and teams were identified via relevant LGBT Forums, LGBT newspapers and magazines and the programmes of relevant organisations. Organisers, office bearers and members of these 24 LGBT sports groups were invited to be interviewed. Recognising that the vast majority of LGBT sports groups were based in the Central Belt, focus groups were also conducted in Dumfries and Inverness. 48 individuals from across 20 LGBT sports groups were interviewed during January to March 2012.

1.3 Sports Sector Organisations Interviews and Questionnaires

In February 2012 a questionnaire was sent to 37 Scottish Governing Bodies of Sport listed on the [sportscotland](http://sportscotland.org.uk) website. Questionnaire responses were received from 3 sports/physical activities (Canoe Scotland, Scottish Squash and Racketball, and Scottish Yoga). Meetings were also requested with nine sports bodies which represented a mixture of individual and team sports, male and female dominated sports and high and less high

profile sports. Meetings were held with representatives of the four sports who agreed to meet (Badminton, Cycling, Football and Rugby).

In March 2012 questionnaires were sent to three members of the Scottish Women's rugby squad who had said they were happy to fill in a specific questionnaire about their experiences as elite athletes.

In April 2012 a questionnaire was sent to senior managers in local authorities and arm's length leisure trusts. 4 responses were received covering Dundee, East Lothian, Glasgow, and South Lanarkshire. Representatives of Edinburgh and Perth & Kinross Councils were also interviewed as part of the project.

In total, detailed interviews were conducted with 35 interviewees representing 28 Sports Sector Organisations, with a further 7 Sports Sector Organisations and 3 elite athletes submitting written questionnaire responses.

1.4 **Out for Sport Survey**

In order to get as complete a picture as possible, a survey was devised in order to gather quantitative data and capture views of those not captured in face to face interviews. The 20 question survey was completed by 1,722 self-selecting respondents. The survey was advertised through the Equality Network's database and social media. Organisations including **sportscotland** and the Scottish Sports Association circulated the link to people within their networks.

1.5 **Approach**

This report recognises that while tackling homophobia and transphobia in Scottish sport is in its early stages, the approach needs to be a positive one. Little will be achieved by, and this report does not seek to, apportion blame, or pursue a negative agenda. While this report paints an accurate, and, at times, concerning picture, it should be seen as a starting point from where everyone involved, the Scottish Government, the sports sector and the LGBT sector, can take forward actions to achieve the full inclusion of LGBT people in Scottish sport.

section 2

key research findings

2.1 Key Statistics

79%

of respondents think there is a problem with homophobia in sport.

66%

of respondents think there is a problem with transphobia in sport.

62%

of LGBT respondents have witnessed or experienced homophobia or transphobia in sport.

73%

of LGBT respondents think homophobia and transphobia are barriers to people taking part in sport.

5%

of respondents think enough is being done to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport.

94%

of respondents think sport would be better off without homophobia and transphobia.

93%

of respondents think society would be better off without homophobia and transphobia in sport.

79%

of respondents think there should be a high profile campaign to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport.

57%

of LGBT respondents would be more likely to participate in sport if it was more LGBT friendly.

2.2 Key Attitudinal findings

- » LGBT people continue to face homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and other barriers to participating in sport, and to a lesser extent in other physical activity. This has a negative impact on the numbers of LGBT people taking part in sport.
- » While sports bodies are content to take positive action around equality in general there appears to be hesitancy on taking action related to sexual orientation or gender identity.
- » Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying continues to be a major problem. The use of the word “gay” to mean something that is negative is endemic within school sports environments. This often goes unchallenged by teachers or coaches and affects both LGBT and non LGBT people.
- » There is a tendency for Scottish Governing Bodies (SGBs) to assume a tick box approach to the Equality Standard for Sport (the Standard) process as it impacts on LGBT people. Organisations can currently acquire a level of the Standard without addressing any specific issues around LGBT participation.
- » There remains a lack of understanding and awareness of key pieces of legislation affecting LGBT people. These include the Equality Act 2010, the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012 and the Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) (Scotland) Act 2009.

² Brackenridge, C et al, Literature Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport, Sport Scotland, Sport Northern Ireland, Sport England, UK Sport, 2008

³ Government Equalities Office, Charter on Homophobia and Transphobia in Sport, March 2011

2.3 Key Strategic findings

- » Little or no specific action is currently being taken by the Scottish Government and Scottish sports bodies in terms of tackling homophobia, biphobia or transphobia, or increasing LGBT participation in sport.
- » **sportscotland**, SGBs, local authorities and clubs are all looking to the Scottish Government for clear leadership on this issue.
- » There remains a significant disconnect between the aspirations of high level equality policies and legislation and the experience of sport services for LGBT people on the ground.
- » Within SGBs, local authorities and grassroots club provision, there continues to be a hierarchy of equality provision within which LGBT participation is largely ignored. This is due to a number of reasons including:
 - lack of available participation data.
 - work on other equality issues being prioritised within organisations.
 - failure to accept that barriers to LGBT participation exist.
 - risk averse positions taken by organisations and individuals due to reactions or potential reactions from parents, club members or spectators.
- » LGBT young people remain a group with particular needs. Present arrangements around club accreditation and the protection of vulnerable groups can leave teenage LGBT people in positions where it is difficult to access specific LGBT sporting opportunities.
- » The particular sports needs of Scotland's transgender community, for example, in terms of changing facilities, continue to be misunderstood and sidelined. Few SGBs seem to have policies in place covering the issue of transgender people taking part in competition.
- » The recommendations of the 2008 Literature Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport² have not been acted upon in any systematic way.
- » The UK Government's Sports Charter to Tackle Homophobia and Transphobia in Sport³ was generally viewed as a positive action. Of the 3,300 sporting bodies and individuals who have signed it only 3 bodies were from Scotland.
- » There are few examples of best practice in the delivery of LGBT sport and physical activity participation and no evidence of best practice being shared.

2.4 Key Positive findings

- » Hundreds, if not thousands, of LGBT people are taking part in sport and physical activity on a regular basis within LGBT branded clubs, teams and groups. Their experience of sport in those settings is overwhelmingly positive.
- » Unquantifiable numbers of LGBT people are also taking part in sport and physical activity within mainstream sports clubs, teams and groups. However, a high percentage of those people are not open about their sexual orientation or gender identity within those sports environments.
- » Whilst there are no openly LGBT footballers in the Scottish Premier League there are a number of openly LGBT elite athletes playing in other sports, particularly within women's sport.
- » Partly as a result of engagement with the Out for Sport project, there are positive signs that some sports bodies and partners are willing to take action to improve the culture and practice of Scottish sport as it impacts on LGBT people.
- » The Scottish Government has recently funded national LGBT organisations to carry out work in the sports sector. They have also funded the newly constituted LEAP Sports which will act as a support body to Scotland's LGBT sports teams, clubs and physical activity groups.
- » There are opportunities to work with partners on significant pieces of on-going work to make sure that LGBT people's requirements are addressed. These include
 - **sportscotland's** work around refreshing of the Equality Standard and the roll out of the Positive Coaching Scotland programme.
 - Children First and NSPCC's continuing work into sidelining bad and abusive behaviour in sport.
 - work with Scottish Student Sport on links between University sports and LGBT societies and on campaigns to raise awareness.
 - work with the Commonwealth Games Organising Committee around equality issues for the 2014 Games.
- » Each and every one of the sports sector bodies and Scottish Government representatives interviewed were committed to the full inclusion of LGBT people in Scottish sport, and to taking positive steps to remove any barriers to full and active participation, where necessary.

section 3

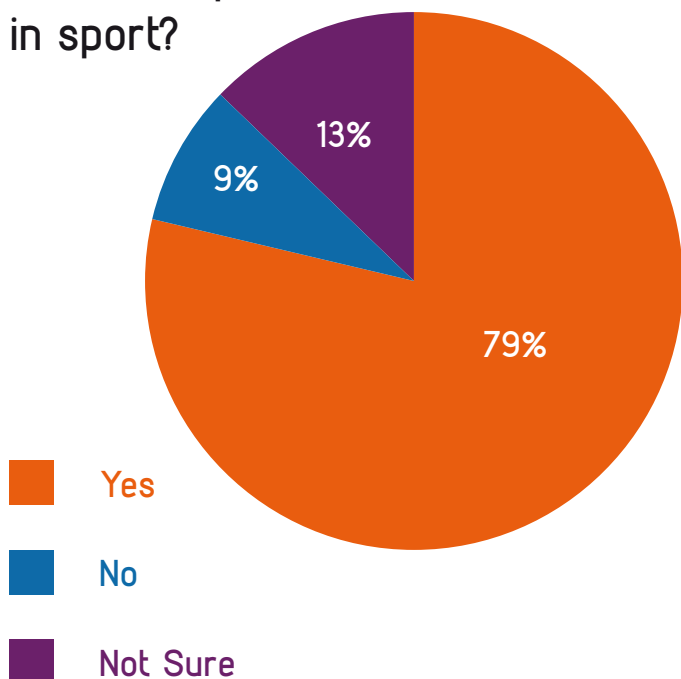
the problem of homophobia & transphobia in sport

3.1 Perceptions of Homophobia and Transphobia in Sport

As one of the key aims of the research was to find ways to tackle homophobia and transphobia in Scottish sport it was important to find out whether or not people taking part in the research felt this problem was significant. Participants in the survey were asked if they thought there was a problem with homophobia in sport.

Figure 1

Do you think there is a problem with homophobia in sport?



79% of people surveyed agreed that there was a problem with homophobia in sport. That figure increased to 89% amongst LGBT respondents; only 3% of LGBT respondents felt there wasn't a problem with homophobia in sport. 65% of non LGBT respondents felt homophobia was a problem.

Survey Comments

"Sport seems the last place in society where it's ok to be bigoted and homophobic. There have been massive moves towards tackling racism, but not sectarianism or homophobia."

"In Scotland, the governing bodies seem to be burying their heads in the sand using their focus on racism and sectarianism as an excuse."

"Hardly any out gay sportspeople, homophobic insults as a norm... Sport is not a safe place to be gay."

"Sportswomen have to battle against stereotypes of feminine behaviour, and there's often a corresponding fear of being labelled gay, due to underlying homophobia."

"I sometimes feel I'm avoided and/or given the 'silent treatment' as an out gay man in sport."

"Even when I go to changing rooms I still hear men use terms and language which they think is banter but is homophobic."

The research also sought to look at the issue of transphobia in Scottish sport. The second question in the survey participants were asked if they felt there was a problem with transphobia in sport.

66% of all those surveyed felt that there was a problem with transphobia in sport, with 7% saying it was not a problem and 26% saying they weren't sure. This may be reflective of a general lack of understanding in society at large about transgender issues. In comparison only 13% of respondents had been unsure if there was homophobia in sport.

Many of the comments left echoed this lack of understanding about what it means to be a transgender person, and particularly a transgender sportsperson. There seems little knowledge of the existence of International Olympic rules and legislation in terms of competition.

Amongst the LGBT people taking part there was a greater sense that transphobia was an issue in sport with 75% of LGBT respondents seeing it as a problem compared to 54% of non LGBT people.

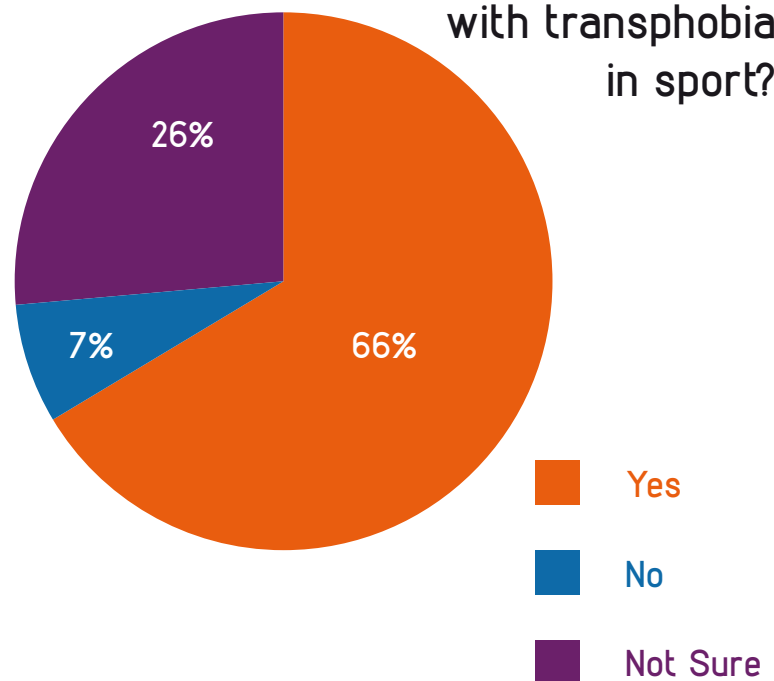
Survey Comments

"There are obvious barriers to transgender people taking part in sport – gendered teams, changing rooms, confidence, etc. – which are rarely tackled."

"I think it's harder because women and men compete separately. Transgender identity makes it difficult to understand where people should compete without them having to explain where they physically sit... which is actually no-one's business. It's a hard one to address."

Figure 2

Do you think there is a problem with transphobia in sport?



"It's not as obvious as homophobia, but there are significant problems for athletes to compete at elite level after gender re-assignment."

"I would imagine that it would be very difficult for a transgender person to join any team."

"I am not comfortable attending sporting events, especially football matches since I went into transition"

3.2 **Homophobic and Transphobic Incidents**

Many LGBT people avoid taking part in sport because they fear that they might be subjected to homophobic or transphobic abuse. To find out whether or not there was any evidence for this fear being well-founded, and to find out what form any abuse or discrimination might take, people were asked if they had personally experienced or witnessed homophobia or transphobia in sport.

Comments from LGBT Sports Groups Interviews and Focus Groups

"At school I was subjected to open, direct abuse. They bullied me, teased me, physically attacked me and called me names. When I was in the 6th form at school we went to a local college to swim. There was a swimming instructor there and one of the kids pointed at me and shouted out that I was gay when we were queuing. The instructor joined in saying "bums to the wall lads". I was shocked. It was bad enough kids saying stuff to me all the time and making my life hellish but he was an adult. That made me even more self-conscious. He wasn't offering me any support – far from it."

(Gay man. 35-44. Badminton)

"The only thing I've ever experienced was when the Hotscots [a gay football club] were playing a straight team and I got a lot of homophobic abuse from their players. It was all "mark that poof", "get that poof", "we can't let a bunch of poofs beat us" – that sort of attitude. The great thing was we beat them and they just couldn't believe it."

(Gay man. 16-24. Football)

"Maybe I was naive but I thought people recognised that it was no longer acceptable to make homophobic comments. In three years I've personally only seen one incident. Someone being called a poof. The manager and the player both apologised to us afterward and we accepted the apology. We've played 30 or 40 games against straight teams and we've experienced 3 or 4 instances of homophobia." (Gay man. 35-44. Football)

"When I was coming out at 17 I was the first out basketball player in my Uni. I played basketball for Scotland U-21s and could have turned professional. I had no problems with the peer group of other players but where I did have problems was with some of the

hierarchy, the management within the sport. Not in a bad way but I think they thought "He's a good player but he's gay, so he's going to have problems in later life if he wants to go professional". So they tried to say to me I shouldn't come out. That was where the barriers were for me. They were more ignorant than homophobic."
(Gay man. 25-34. Basketball)

"I was surprised at how little my 'coming out' affected people's view of me within my Gaelic football team. I had the perception that there would be homophobic remarks made once I'd come out. My team completely dispelled that myth which was wonderful but the myth kept me in the closet for 3 years, and always on the sidelines."
(Lesbian. 25-34.)

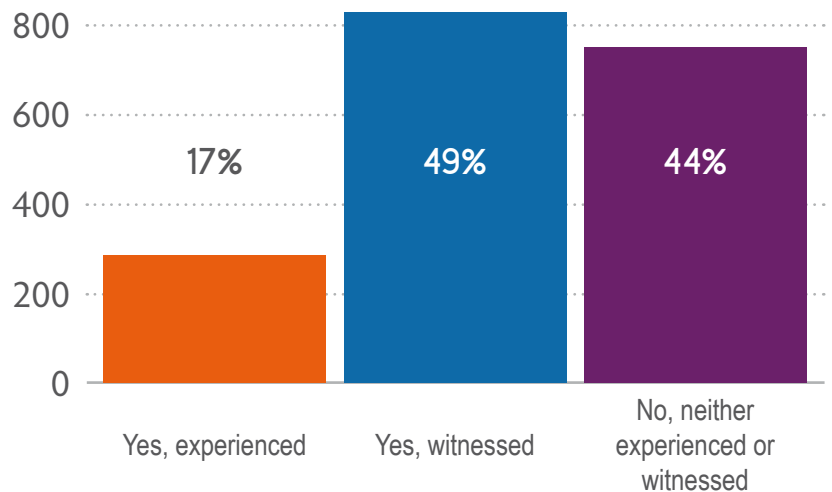
"The majority of the other football teams we play are straight. Last week was the first time there's been a homophobic incident. The manager of the other team shouted something onto the pitch and I think it was borne out of frustration that we were beating them. I was the only one that heard it and I put him in his place. But I don't like making issues out of this. The guy apologised afterwards. The reaction of his players on the pitch at the time was positive. They asked what had happened and when I told them they weren't happy. That was good to see that kind of attitude towards it, in the middle of a game." (Gay man. 24-35. Saltire Thistle)

"I avoided mainstream sport. It comes from the negative experiences at school with sports that I've carried on into adulthood. I wasn't particularly sporty and that was seen as a negative thing in a school environment. If you weren't good at it you were picked on and you suffered." (Trans man. 45-54.)

Those who completed the survey were also asked if they had experienced or witnessed homophobia or transphobia in sport.

Figure 3

Have you personally experienced or witnessed homophobia or transphobia in sport? (Tick all that apply)

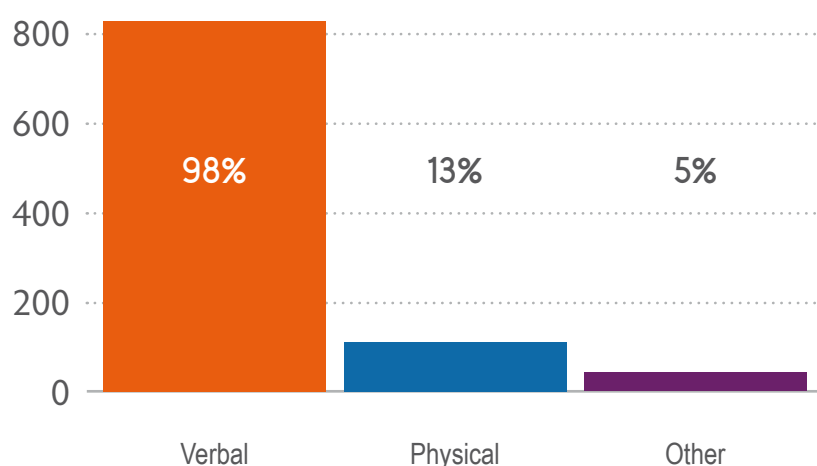


17% had experienced it and 49% had witnessed it. These figures jumped to 24% and 53% respectively amongst LGBT respondents with only 38% of LGBT people saying they hadn't experienced either. Of those respondents who told us they were active in sport, 61% said they had witnessed homophobia and transphobia and 19% said they had experienced either.

It was also important to try to gauge what types of behaviour people were witnessing and experiencing. So survey respondents were asked about the nature of these incidents. 98% of the incidents were described as verbal and 13% as physical. 670 people gave further details of the incidents and their comments are a powerful testimony to the diversity of the abuse, bullying, emotional harm and intolerance experienced and witnessed by both LGBT and non LGBT Scots.

Figure 4

What was the nature of the homophobia or transphobia you have experienced or witnessed?
(Tick all that apply)



Once again, within the representative examples, there are a considerable number of references to abusive, bullying and offensive behaviour within the contexts of football and of school PE. This suggests that these are key areas for future action.

Survey Comments

"Physical and verbal homophobic bullying in school, homophobic jokes from teachers on school sports trips, homophobic chants at football games, and clear homophobia in sports coverage in the media."

"I was hospitalised because the female football team I played for found out I was gay."

"Derogatory homophobic remarks made while playing men's' doubles tennis competitively."

"The reason I do not play either football or rugby is because of homophobic bullying at school. Even the teacher would refer to me as a 'big Jessie' and would line the rugby team in two rows turn his back and those who were failing at the game or 'big poofs' had to traverse this corridor of kicks and punches. I was scarred for life. I have nothing to do with team games."

"Just getting shouted at. People telling me I am worthless and scum."

"Very often I've experienced exclusion, and alienation. It's particularly difficult to participate in team sports if you feel you're not part of the team. I am currently doing a degree in Physical Education and sometimes the guys in the course are so macho (and immature) that they simply don't know how to talk to me. It makes me not want to attend classes, despite the fact that I love all sports."

"When I played football no one wanted to get changed with me."

"Hearing repetitive shouts of "gay f****r" and other abuse from fans"

"Had other members playing football shouting abuse at me, calling me a f****g faggot etc."

"It was a long period of bullying at school, paired with snide comments by other members of the trampolining community."

"When I first went into transition I experienced abuse in public from football supporters."

"As a gay referee one of the players knew I was gay and let it slip to his team mates who abused me, calling me a 'poofy bastard', 'shirt lifter'"

"I remember watching Justin Fashanu playing for Hearts being subjected to the worst abuse I have ever heard at a football match."

"Comments on and off pitch, but enough that I stopped playing the sport."

"Name calling, extreme horse play, theft of personal items, vandalism."

"Repeatedly being verbally abused and told to leave the club."

"Problems with staff at my local leisure centre and from customers / centre users."

"Playing football and hockey with both men and women, as a bisexual, comments were always made. I was sexually assaulted by more than one male under pretence of 'checking' my gender."

“Coach using homophobic language to encourage better performance.”

“I played football for both my school and a Scotland girl’s team, the other people on my team found out I was gay and liked to shout abusive terms at me. Also they refused to get dressed in the same locker room as me in case I was looking.”

“Just the petty name calling of “dyke” – being forced to get changed in a toilet cubicle due to others being openly hostile.”

“Pushed around at school and youth groups when trying to participate in sport. Being yelled at for being gay coz I wanted to play football, not netball, shouted at for not fitting in with stereotypical norms. Transphobia since I have come out, this is mainly in changing rooms... shouting WTF are you doing in here it’s a men’s room.”

“While being recruited for the top women’s football club I was told ‘Welcome to the only lesbian free team in the league’. This was a terrifying welcome. Football was my life but I was made to feel I could not totally be myself while in this environment.”

“Was with a friend at a match and some of the crowd unfortunately started to shout abuse at him. In the end we had to leave.”

3.3 **LGBT Experiences of Mainstream Sport**

Many of those interviewed in LGBT sports groups were also taking part or had taken part in mainstream sports settings. Most of the experiences they had had there were positive however a large number of them chose not to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity at their mainstream clubs.

Many other LGBT people had been put off mainstream sports settings because of earlier negative experiences at school and elsewhere. A number of people felt that while a mainstream setting would be fine for those who were out and confident, it would possibly prove more difficult for those struggling with their sexual orientation or gender identity.

For those LGBT people who played in mainstream teams and clubs there were a number of reasons why they didn’t come out in that setting.

“I’ve played squash at international level and in mainstream clubs since I was 14. I’ve been at my present club for 13 years. I didn’t come out to them when I joined but I’m now out to almost everyone and I don’t have a problem. About 6 years in, I started telling people I played with and chatted with. I hadn’t told people partly because in a mainstream environment you’re there for the sport so my sexuality didn’t feel relevant. I also didn’t

know if I was going to get a hostile reaction if I came out so it was safer not to. As I got higher up the ladder and I had more friendships there I felt more confident because they already know you but you don't know." (Gay man. 25-34. Squash)

"It was good to be part of that group of people but you do overhear guys in the locker room calling each other names. It's not a direct attack on you but it makes you feel uncomfortable. They don't necessarily mean to be exclusive but you are excluded and the things they say can be hurtful." (Gay man. 25-34. Running)

"My yoga group is mainstream. It's a very different experience to playing in a gay badminton club. I've been going for three years and people maybe nod or say hello but they don't engage in conversation to the extent they do at Shuttlescots. It's a bit clique whereas all the LGBT groups I've been involved in are open, friendly and very inclusive no matter what someone's sexuality. We have straight people in both the gay groups I go to. I'm not out at my mainstream sports club. I just do my yoga and then leave." (Lesbian. 45-54. Yoga)

"At badminton clubs I've attended in the past you sort of feel different. I don't let people in, I keep myself to myself and try to have more generalised conversation. Other people would talk about their life but I wouldn't." (Gay man. 25-34. Badminton)

"Even at university I didn't want to mention my boyfriend because you don't know what sort of reaction you're going to get. You were just starting out in a team and you didn't want to be seen as different." (Gay man. 25-34. Running)

"I avoided mainstream sport. It comes from the negative experiences at school with sports that I've carried on into adulthood. I wasn't sporty and that was seen as a negative thing at school. If you weren't good at it you were picked on and you suffered." (Trans man. 45-54.)

3.4 **Information gaps and challenges to research around LGBT Participation**

The Literature Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport which was jointly commissioned by **sportscotland** and the other UK sports councils in 2008 and conducted by Professor Celia Brackenridge and colleagues from Brunel University identified significant gaps in data around LGBT participation⁴.

⁴ Brackenridge, C et al, Literature Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport, Sport Scotland, Sport Northern Ireland, Sport England, UK Sport, 2008

The review examined and critiqued the literature on sexual orientation in sport in order to inform equality impact assessments, support the implementation of the sports councils' equality schemes and inform the advice given by sports councils to key partners developing sports participation among LGBT people. During the review there were a number of interviews undertaken but only one, with the Scottish Government's Health Department, dealt with Scotland specifically.

There are a number of reasons for the gaps in information. These include self-censorship by LGBT individuals and a reluctance by sports organisations to ask for information. The Director of Sport at the City of Edinburgh Council, who are not currently compiling any baseline data about the sexual orientation of people making use of their sports services, raised typical issues about data collection:

"Edinburgh Leisure have always thought they don't know how to go there. They do quite regular user surveys but I don't think they've ever asked about LGBT service users. I think it's something they've shied away from on the basis that it's not something they should ask about. The **sportscotland** market segmentation tool that they've used separates the community into different sections but I don't think that even mentions a percentage that you might have in terms of gay community so I think it's ignored."

sportscotland note that the market segmentation tool operates by comparisons against baseline national data and no baseline data currently exists for LGBT populations. The Scottish Government recently introduced a sexual orientation question into its surveys which over time should remedy this problem for sexual orientation.

UK Government actuaries estimate that 5% of the Scottish population identify as LGB⁵. Due to the legacy of stigma and discrimination it is likely that many studies tend to underestimate numbers.

As a result of this Out for Sport research we now know that there are several hundreds of LGBT people participating in sports clubs and groups which brand themselves as LGBT specific or friendly. We know that there are many other LGBT people taking part in mainstream sport however there is no statistical evidence available to quantify this.

There are a number of reasons why people choose not to disclose their sexual orientation or transgender identity. Previous negative experiences can affect people's trust and confidence, they might still be coming to terms with their sexual orientation or gender identity, they might have concerns about how they might be treated or have concerns related to confidentiality.

⁵ HMT, Civil Partnership Regulatory Impact Assessment, 2003

This invisibility can represent a problem both for LGBT sportspeople themselves and to sports organisations. As this report shows, many LGBT people don't believe that they would be welcome in certain sports environments. By recording data which might show LGBT people were taking part, others might be more inclined to get involved.

“One of the problems is we have no participation statistics for LGBT. If we had them maybe people would be more likely to think sport's for them and come along. People aren't happy to come out in a sports setting so we don't have stats. It's a Catch 22 and it can stop action being taken by governing bodies.” (Gay man aged 25-34 First Steps Fitness)

Lack of data is also problematic when sports sector organisations are making funding decisions or decisions about what work programmes and policies to pursue. Local authorities, arm's length leisure providers or SGB's will all look for baseline demographic data to be able to monitor whether or not a course of action or a funding decision is justified in advance and whether or not it has been successful on completion.

In the interviews conducted with SGBs, local authorities and others as part of this research it's clear that many are reluctant to ask people questions about their sexual orientation and transgender identity in the way that they would ask about other characteristics. There are a number of reasons given for this. Some suggest that “it has nothing to do with sport” and others “that it's a private matter”. Others admit to an embarrassment factor and not knowing how and what to ask.

“We cannot even do the simple analyses – as we can for women, older people, those with a disability or from a minority ethnic background that would tell us to what extent LGBT people undertake different levels of sports participation. Such information would underpin the more in-depth understanding that qualitative investigations can provide and also ensure that sexual orientation is given a more prominent place in the sports policy agenda.”⁶

However, changes in legislation now mean that public bodies need to take account of the needs of LGBT service users and there's an increasing need for action in this area. Given the reluctance of SGBs to ask specific sexual orientation or gender identity questions and the reluctance from LGBT and non LGBT individuals to answer them, practical support for SGBs and others in the extending of their monitoring practice to successfully include LGBT data is needed.

⁶ See footnote 2

3.5 Barriers to LGBT Participation

Another of the main aims of this research was to investigate ways in which the numbers of LGBT people participating in sport might be increased. Central to that is understanding what, if any, barriers are in the way of LGBT people taking part in sport.

Some of the LGBT community participants identified issues around gender discrimination and the hetero-normative nature of sport. The culture of sport is often seen as being a very macho, male dominated one where there is a need for a clear hierarchy and certainty in relation to gender. A few mentioned the fact that a strict adherence to binary genders and separating males and females in sporting competitions and contexts represented particular challenges for those who are transgender.

A number of the research participants flagged up a range of popular gender stereotypes around the labelling of sports as “boys sports” and “girls sports”. For some gay and bisexual men, a limited range of sports available at school, twinned with this gender labelling meant that they had little alternative but to play football, rugby and other ‘male’ sports, when they would have preferred to have played sports that were deemed out of bounds. Meanwhile some women who took part in the research were excluded from playing football, rugby and other sports at school.

Many interviewees including the Operations Director of the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) and the Director of Pride Sports highlighted the early stereotyping at school of boys who didn’t like sport, or didn’t like “male” sports as being gay, and of girls who liked playing sport, as being lesbian. This led to a number of gay male interviewees being told sport “wasn’t for them”. Such broad stereotyping has also led to straight young people being labelled gay and being bullied alongside their LGBT peers.

Research interviews with sports professionals confirmed the view that lesbian and bisexual women were less likely to experience discrimination while participating. However, survey comments suggested that women were still experiencing homophobic abuse.

“I’ve not experienced gender discrimination but I’ve seen it. The need for positive coaching, which is something **sportscotland** is pursuing, is really important. The language and the attitude of coaches is really important. There are definitely lots of gender issues in sport with young LGBT girls being seen as aggressive but gay guys not being seen as manly. If a girl’s into sport she’s called a lesbian; if a guy’s not he’s called gay.”
(Gay man. 25-34. Shuttlescots. Badminton)

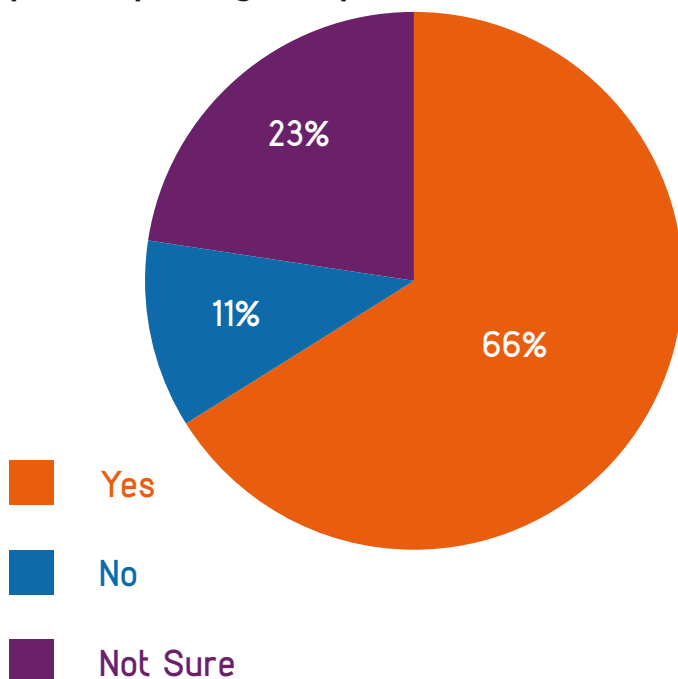
“I have gay friends who’ve had bad experiences at PE who tell me they don’t want to take part because “Gay guys don’t do sports.” (Gay men. 16-24. Football)

The Director of Pride Sports pointed out that gender is a huge issue in sport generally and sexual orientation remains a big issue in women's sport. She believes the sports agenda is unique and needs a specialised approach from LGBT organisations.

"There's a whole gender construct to the way sport operates which is absolutely embedded in the culture of sport and within that environment homophobia and transphobia is almost second nature. Heteronormality is a cornerstone of sport in the UK. There are all the old stereotypes based on gender. All women taking part in sport are perceived to be lesbians so women's sport is on a complete PR mission to heterosexualise women's sport and deny lesbian participation. So some of the work I'm doing now is to say stop blaming lesbians for homophobia, it's not our responsibility. It's not our fault that there are a lot of lesbians involved in sport. It's heterosexuality and the construction of heterosexuality and of femininity that limits it, not lesbians. So gender is a massive issue in sports – there's loads of nuance to sport that isn't there in the rest of society and some of the larger LGBT equality organisations don't get that nuance because they don't really work in sport and they think it's like any other area."

Figure 5

Is homophobia or transphobia a barrier to LGBT people participating in sport?



A considerable number of interviewees felt that there were problems with homophobia and transphobia in sport and that this acted as a barrier to LGBT people taking part. A question on this central issue was put to participants of the survey.

66% of those responding felt homophobia and transphobia was a barrier, with just 11% answering that this was not a barrier. There were a considerable number, 23%, who were not sure. Amongst LGBT survey respondents the percentage answering yes increased to 73% but there was still almost 1 in 5 people who were not sure.

A small number of respondents reworded the question by suggesting that homophobia was less a barrier to participation and more a barrier to LGBT participants being open about their sexual orientation while they were taking part.

Significant numbers of respondents were clear that homophobia and transphobia, and the fear of being subjected to discrimination and abuse were, at worst, stopping them from taking part and, at best, stopping them from being open about their sexual orientation or gender identity in a mainstream sporting setting.

Many people felt that the likelihood of people being deterred from taking part depended on a number of factors including the strength and confidence of the LGBT individual, the sport involved, what level of sport they engaged in, their gender, where they lived and whether or not they had had previous negative experiences.

The majority of people taking part felt there were issues with homophobia and transphobia and the general tone of the responses was that many people taking part would choose to remain invisible because of fear that they might face abuse.

Online survey comments

"Sometimes there might be real barriers around changing rooms but sometimes it's about people's fears that they'll encounter abuse or problems because they're different."

"Large mainstream sports don't seem to be actively LGBT-friendly so it's difficult to know as an LGBT person whether you'd be welcomed or not."

"It stops me."

"Who wants to take part in something where they feel there is a strong chance of being abused in some way?"

"Not a barrier to participation but a barrier to being 'out'"

"I only go swimming but team sports feel very threatening."

"I think many participate but few can be open about it."

"Most individuals avoid it by not coming out"

"Depends on where you are. Some places not at all. Others are a nightmare."

"It is why I don't play anymore, unless it is a PRIDE sporting event."

"I think LGBT people who wish to participate in sport will do so but will choose a sport where they feel less threatened."

While few of the LGBT community sports participants who took part in the face to face interviews had encountered difficulties playing sport in mainstream settings the vast majority of them still felt there were barriers to LGBT people participating in sport.

While some had experienced homophobic bullying at school around physical education and some had experienced real barriers to taking part in adulthood, a large majority felt

that many of the barriers were around people's *perceptions* of what might happen if they tried to take part in sport.

These perceptions were often based on recognition of homophobia and transphobia in mainstream society generally, previous personal experiences at school and elsewhere and the shared experiences of LGBT friends, as well as stereotypes about the homophobic nature of certain sports. This was particularly felt to be the case in male dominated contact team sports such as football and rugby.

However, there were a number of practical barriers mentioned, including lack of sporting skills, lack of an LGBT option in some, mainly rural areas, the financial costs of LGBT sport due to travelling long distances to play other LGBT teams, and concerns around changing rooms both for non-LGBT and LGBT participants.

Transgender interviewees identified a number of issues around changing rooms including the fact that they might be gender specific. Concerns about their ability to pass as their acquired gender, issues around body scarring or body image and fears of being challenged meant that many transgender people were anxious about entering sports facilities and taking part in sport.

Below are a few of the LGBT sports community comments around barriers to taking part in sport.

"I didn't have a very good experience of sporting activities at school so it never really gave me any enthusiasm to join many group based sports activities. I was bullied about my sexual orientation. When it came to sport I tended to be the last person chosen. It never gave me any encouragement to get involved with sport."
(Gay man. 35-44. Shuttlescots. Badminton).

"As LGBT people are growing up and developing they think there are barriers. And if they're not developing an interest in sport, not developing skills they're not going to be as good as someone who has been encouraged to take part." (Gay man. 25-34. Squash)

"The biggest barrier is fear. People have worries about homophobia but also there's a perception that LGBT people are sexualised, that we're sexually predatory. It's nonsense but it's a barrier and it does tend to put gay people off from getting involved."
(Gay man. 25-34. Badminton)

"There are barriers. The barriers are mostly other people's attitudes and the LGBT person's own insecurities." (Gay man. 45-54. Walking)

"I think there are general barriers of homophobia and LGBT sport isn't accepted. Neither is women's sport. Sport is still a male hetero world." (Gay man. 35-44. Badminton)

"I think there's a difference between how people view male only sports. There's a stereotype that gay guys can't be any good at those sports while there's another stereotype that women's sport is all lesbian." (Gay man. 25-34. Running)

"Endemically there are still problems in people accepting other people's sexual orientation – in all sorts of areas just as much as sport. There are still people who are homophobic, in sport, as elsewhere so you don't know if that's going to be a place where you can be yourself." (Gay man. 35-44. Badminton.)

"I don't think there are real barriers but it's not always comfortable to be part of a straight club, particularly in shower situations." (Bi woman. 16-24. Glasgow Front Runners.)

"There are also barriers around geography. If I'm gay and I live in Glasgow I have a choice of LGBT sports groups as well as mainstream clubs. If I'm gay and I live in Fort William or Auchtermuchty I guess there's not going to be a group for me." (Gay man. 25-34. Glasgow Front Runners.)

"It's an attitude thing. It's fear and the mind-set of straight players that don't want to play with a gay player because of changing room issues. Looking at our team, we've got quite a mix. There's four straight guys playing today. We all shower together and it's just not an issue. We're all pals so no-one cares." (Gay man. 25-34. Saltire Thistle. Football)

"Leisure centres, with communal changing areas, communal showers – I think for trans people that's a huge barrier when playing sport. You have to almost call attention to yourself to do something different. I'll just come in my kit and I'll go home and shower. It does curtail my socialising after playing." (Trans man. 45-54.)

3.6 **Transgender Specific Barriers to Participation**

While LGBT people are often grouped together, there are issues that affect transgender people only. Transgender issues are concerned with gender identity, not sexual orientation. People who are transgender may be straight, lesbian, gay or bisexual. Trans people should be treated in a way appropriate to the gender they identify as regardless as to whether they have undergone any part of a gender reassignment process.

There are particular barriers to transgender people taking part in sport both at community and elite performance levels. The two major issues raised by transgender people who took part in the research were issues around changing rooms and access to competition.

In terms of competition, there can be a lack of clarity from sports governing bodies about which rules will be applied as they don't have a specific policy or criteria in place. SGBs

should address this so that potential trans participants are clear about how they will be dealt with.

Some FtM⁷ players, particularly in contact sports such as rugby union, have also had issues obtaining insurance. Caledonian Thebans players initially had such difficulties because the insurance company felt they'd be at greater risk playing against (biological) males.

For MtF⁸ people the biggest issues tend to come from other peoples' concerns about fairness of competition and the potential physical risks of competing against them.

The UK Government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport have issued useful guidance for sporting bodies on "Transsexual people and sport" however it predates the Equality Act 2010 which supersedes the legislation in place when the guidance was written. The guidance states,

"The legal requirements need to be understood and taken into account by sporting bodies in their dealings with transsexual people, whether as participants in sport or as employees. However, S19 of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 does not give transsexual people an automatic right to participate in competitive sport alongside other people of their acquired gender. In certain circumstances the participation of transsexual people in sporting events may be legitimately restricted in order to ensure fair competition or the safety of competitors."⁹

This may only be done where the body is responsible for regulating an event, where the sport is a "gender-affected sport" which means one where the physical strength, stamina, or physique of average persons of one gender would put them at a disadvantage to average persons of the other gender, and where the prohibition is necessary to secure fair competition or the safety of competitors, including the safety of the transsexual competitors. Where these conditions are not fully met, transsexual competitors should be allowed to compete in their acquired gender. The restriction only applies to competitors.

The DCMS guidance suggests that individual sports are best placed to decide on issues around safety and fair competition rather than the application of one model set of regulations.

⁷ FtM means Female to Male transsexual

⁸ MtF means Male to Female transsexual

⁹ Department for Culture, Media and Sport and UK Sport, Transsexual people and sport: Guidance for sporting bodies, May 2005., at page 5, para 12

In terms of high performance sport, the International Olympic Committee set out its policy on selection and participation in the Olympic Games in 2004 and this may form the basis on which International Federations set their own policies and direct their national federations.

The DCMS guidance also covers sports club membership and states that transsexual people should expect to gain access to such clubs in the same way as any other individuals, 'provided they can show suitable identification in the appropriate gender'¹⁰.

They suggest that it is good practice to provide changing facilities with cubicles and where none are available club officials should discuss with the individual where they would be most comfortable changing. There should also be an equality policy that outlines the facility or club position on transsexual people.

It advises NGBs and others to review existing policies and procedures in light of the Gender Recognition Act to ensure transsexual people aren't being discriminated against illegally.

Two of the SGBs we spoke to reported having to deal with a transgender issue around participation. The SFA had an approach made to them some years ago by a player who had undergone gender reassignment from male to female, however, they were unable to recall the conclusion of this. The SRU has successfully dealt with a request from a player who had undergone gender reassignment from male to female. Their head of Women's Rugby had worked with medical colleagues and others to develop a policy and procedures for this because the enquiry was in regard to participation in the women's game.

"We had a specific request from the player involved who said she wanted to join a particular team and participate in competitions. Our process involved checking all the regulations coming out from the International Olympic Committee and the International Rugby Board. We devised a flow chart to make sure we're meeting all of those regulations. She's now playing. The players playing with her don't know, that was one of the areas we had to ensure was how we maintained the confidentiality of that request both internally and externally while we were processing the application. I think she was quite happy with the outcome."

The Scottish Transgender Alliance estimates from the number of people who have changed their gender on documents such as NHS records, driving licenses and passports, that there are approximately 1,000 Scots who have already undergone gender reassignment. Based upon transgender support group enquiries, the Scottish Transgender Alliance also estimates that there are over 10,000 people who struggle with transgender feelings but who have not permanently changed the gender in which they live.

¹⁰ See footnote 9 at page 11, para 30

The Coordinator of the Scottish Transgender Alliance (STA) suggested that trans people have concerns about participation.

“Many trans people feel very self-conscious about any aspects of their body which don't match yet with their gender identity or which have scarring that might lead people to think they might have undergone gender reassignment. Trans people often worry about the negative reactions they may face from others.”

The Scottish Transgender Alliance would like to see leisure centres describe more clearly their changing facilities in order to increase trans people's confidence

“It would be useful if they said if there was any gender neutral changing areas and what level of cubicle privacy there was within different changing areas. I think that would be appreciated not only by trans people but by a range of people who would feel more comfortable changing in privacy.”

Even where there are changing facilities that are gender neutral or private cubicles people can still be nervous about how to maintain a clear gender presentation while taking part in sport without the usual clothes, makeup, prosthetics etc they usually wear. People will often have to make a judgement call about how many of their usual ways of coping with their body's characteristics they can continue to take without impairing their ability to exercise or take part in sport.

From the survey: “A transgendered friend of mine had scars on his chest from his mastectomy and a stupid man at the swimming-pool, who probably knew what the scars were about started calling him names.”

While some trans people, particularly those who also see themselves as LGB, may feel more comfortable participating in an LGBT sports group the STA felt that this would not necessarily be the case.

“Some trans people might be more wary because the chance of someone noticing that they are trans is potentially greater because more LGB people might be aware of trans and of characteristics that might out someone as trans. It isn't necessarily the case that LGB people are more trans friendly than non LGB people. Attending an LGBT group therefore brings an increased chance of being identified as trans without an increased benefit of people being respectful of their identity. Potential participants would therefore look to see if information provided by clubs has made specific reference to trans issues in an informed and knowledgeable way. This would suggest that they are genuinely trans inclusive and haven't just included the T in LGBT as a matter of course. Some, particularly transsexual, trans people may want to get to the point where they don't want to discuss their trans identity. For them part of being comfortable in a sports club would be about being accepted in the gender they identify as and their trans history being irrelevant.”

While the **sportscotland** Institute of Sport has not dealt with a transgender elite athlete, preparatory background work is being carried out by their Performance Lifestyle team. A senior member of the team explained,

“In terms of my work with the institute and elite athletes, I’ve not dealt with a transgender individual. However, I work closely with the medical team and we do case studies if we see world examples come up that we might need to understand. There was one track athlete in Beijing and my heart went out to the young girl, who looked like a man but was tested in the full glare of the world press and she was a girl. We looked at that in terms of what a governing body would do, what the British Olympic Association would do, what sort of support we would give. We looked at it from that point of view but in terms of direct involvement, working with an athlete, I haven’t come across that yet.”

3.6.1 **Different Strokes Transgender swimming – case study**

One successful initiative has been the Different Strokes Transgender swimming sessions held at Glenogle Swim Centre by the LGBT Centre for Health and Wellbeing in partnership with Edinburgh Leisure.

In January 2010, the LGBT Centre facilitated a consultation workshop with 19 transgender people in partnership with the STA, with the purpose of finding gaps in service and support needs. One outcome was a call for transgender exclusive swimming opportunities. Edinburgh Leisure agreed to provide a session at Glenogle Swim Centre, specifically catering for the transgender community and closed to the general public. Importantly, they also committed staff time for the LGBT Centre to deliver preparatory transgender awareness training. This was designed to educate, break down barriers, dispel misconceptions, and provide a forum for staff to ask questions. The staff members at Glenogle were eager to contribute to the discussions and gave positive feedback afterwards.

The ‘Different Strokes’ swimming sessions launched in July 2010, and have taken place on a number of occasions since, twice monthly within quarterly sessions. Each session has been well attended with participants travelling from as far as Dumfries to take part. An LGBT Centre staff member is present at the beginning of each session to welcome attendees, receive feedback and check in with Glenogle staff. Robust engagement with the transgender community has allowed for effective promotion of the initiative.

Different Strokes filled a gap in the needs of the transgender community. The sessions have produced a number of benefits, including the provision of a social opportunity and the promotion of physical activity. The feedback demonstrates the personal impact of the swimming for many members of the transgender community has been extremely powerful:

“For me being taught to swim at Glenogle, at the age of 56, is like being given a wonderful gift that turns out to be even more exciting and more life-changing than I had ever anticipated. Apart from the child-like joy of being in the water, it gives me a real sense of achievement and increases my self-esteem. I have had gender dysphoria all my life and so could never allow myself to wear a female swimming costume even as a child. I am now able to use a public swimming pool for the first time in my life in a safe, supportive environment where I can wear whatever feels comfortable to me. It is also very moving to be swimming in a group with other transgendered people, all of us enjoying together an activity which is so often inaccessible or unavailable to us.”

“I hadn’t been swimming for nearly 10 years and this helped me reconnect with the experience. It has improved my confidence and I’ve even managed to use some hotel pools. Without the trans swimming sessions, I couldn’t possibly have tried this.”

“It made a huge difference not having people staring at me and I felt a lot more confident and comfortable in my body. I’m going to try to make swimming a regular thing.”

“I used to swim all the time and even completed a Swimathon event for charity but felt I could not go swimming in a public pool owing to being in transition – MTF. The Glenogle sessions have been wonderful and I am so pleased to be swimming again. My feedback is 100% positive.”

3.7 **Sports-related Homophobic/transphobic school bullying**

Many people shared examples of having experienced or witnessed homophobia or transphobia. For many these experiences were rooted in childhood and early adulthood in school.

“I hated it just for the changing room element alone. You were expected to shower together, you were forced to. In a same sex changing room the peer group support was greater for the bully. But there are also schools that just see being gay as wrong and will not discuss it. How do you deal with that if you’re being bullied cos you’re gay?”

While it would be reassuring to think that these incidents were diminishing as Scottish society becomes more tolerant, quotes from LGBT Youth’s work with schoolchildren and PE teachers in the Borders suggests that homophobic bullying remains a major issue¹¹.

“In PE it started in the changing room, when I bent down the girls all shouted she’s looking up so and so’s skirt. When I’m getting changed they accuse me of flashing my boobs and trying to lure them in. I hate PE. I write my own notes to get out of it.” LGBT Young person

¹¹ LGBT Youth Presentation to PE Teachers, Meeting the needs of LGBT Young People in Schools, 2011

"I walked into the changing rooms the day after I came out. All the boys turned to me and said you're not welcome here. I refused to go. A couple came right up to my face and started shoving me and got my hands behind my back. At this point, I couldn't move then one smacked me in the face. I was too scared to go back to PE and I didn't tell anyone."

Young person from Earlston

"I dreaded whenever I saw PE on the timetable. I was being bullied because people thought I was gay. I was so uncomfortable in the changing rooms, people accused me of looking at them. I was always picked last and could hear them saying, "don't want the gay boy". One of the male teachers told me to man up and take part in the male sports instead of gymnastics. I was good at gymnastics and wanted to take part in that more."

Young person from Hawick

LGBT Youth Scotland are one of the partners in respectme, the national anti-bullying programme. Their Director of Development believes there's a major problem in Scotland's schools and within PE, he says there is a lot of evidence that negative experiences of PE has had an impact on the participation of LGBT young people.

"We have a situation where a lot of young people may have been engaged with sport, may have been good at sport but their experiences have turned them off at such an early age that they're not coming back to it until later in life or at a point when thoughts of 'I could have been better at this' bothers them.

One young man told us he used to be good at sports but because he was being bullied he stopped going. He got overweight and tried to take his own life. Luckily he's now at a stage where he wants to get involved with sport again."

He believes it is important to demonstrate that a poor participation rate has its roots in early experiences of prejudice, from other pupils and sometimes from teachers and coaches as well.

The Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) are the other partners in the respectme programme. They are clear that people switch off or are excluded from sport for a number of reasons, often due to multiple deprivations including mental health issues, bullying, self-stigma and lack of sports choices at school partly due to gender stereotyping.

The Director of the respectme programme highlighted that there can be legitimate grounds for the changing room banter.

"People in sports teams are slagged off and ribbed. A lot of it's inappropriate but when you've got a team, part of the camaraderie, the team building and the development of hierarchies is dressed up as banter. There's a level of it which is legitimate in terms of how people come together and how leaders emerge and how your role in the team changes. However, it's the stuff that goes on under that that's quite unhealthy."

SAMH cited the recent NSPCC's report into children's experiences in sport¹², which says that children and young people are reporting emotional and physical harm, sexual harassment, and bullying taking part in sport. SAMH plan to work with both the NSPCC and Children 1st to build the capacity of coaches to recognise and respond to this.

As a result of their respectme work SAMH have re-defined what bullying is, moving it away from the traditional notion of bullying being something which had to happen deliberately and repetitively. Their new definition is grounded in the experience of the individual who's experiencing the bullying.

Bullying is a mix of certain types of behaviour like name calling, leaving someone out, being hit, fearing violence and what this behaviour does to people that makes it bullying is it takes away their ability to feel in control of themselves. It takes away what we call someone's "agency". It's a mixture of behaviour and impact that makes something bullying, not how often it happened or what the intention was of someone doing it because that's impossible to prove. We challenge labels of "Bully and Victim". You need to tell children "That's bullying behaviour" rather than saying "You are a bully." One person's acceptable banter is another's loss of agency. The reason we define bullying in that way is so an adult's focus is not on establishing whether there was or wasn't bullying but the focus is on restoring and rebuilding the agency of the person affected. *SAMH Definition of Bullying*

SAMH's Operations Director felt it was important for coaches or teachers to understand the extra vulnerabilities of LGBT young people and that young people, who identify as LGBT, are highly vulnerable to bullying because they don't feel they have the self-confidence to be themselves.

"They feel excluded and may already lack self confidence and self-esteem. These are young people who have a heightened sense that they won't be listened to anyway, who may have to in effect 'out' themselves to somebody to report bullying. They may stay silent as a result."

The CEO of SAMH agreed, "The hyper nature of a changing room, the adrenaline rush, the camaraderie and then putting vulnerable people within that context does open them up to bullying. There is a disproportionate importance to sport and maybe that makes the homophobia associated with it so intense. Sport is such a mass participation issue – it's a big thing to be left out of. Sport is about winning and losing, about a sense of belonging, about body image, self-esteem, self-worth – it's a mental health minefield for young people."

¹² Alexander K, Stafford A, Lewis R, The experiences of children participating in organised sport in The UK, The University of Edinburgh and NSPCC, Child Protection Research Centre, October 2011

SAMH and LGBT Youth aren't alone in identifying that the intensity around sport can spill over into behaviour which is challenging, bullying and abusive. The NSPCC's report¹³ showed that while young people painted a mostly positive picture of sport participation there were a range of more negative and harmful experiences associated with taking part.

75% of 18-22 year olds questioned said they had experienced emotional harm while taking part in sport as a child up to the age of 16¹⁴. The report showed worrying levels of emotionally harmful treatment and unacceptable levels of sexual harassment. It highlights that most harm experienced was non-physical (verbal bullying, negative comments etc) however both physical and sexual harm were reported.

Peers were the most common perpetrators of all forms of harm. Coaches were the second most common perpetrators with one third of saying coaches were involved. Coaches involvement in harm could be direct or indirect, by condoning it or not dealing with it. There appeared to be widespread acceptance of all forms of harm as normal elements of sport. The report highlights some serious reports of sexual harm, "some of which were suggestive of there being particular issues for young gay men".

The report concludes, "The research raises important issues about the inter relationship between sport and body image, diet, cultures of excellence and a sporting ethic which accepts as normal a culture of bullying , humiliating treatment, sexualised behaviour and of training and competing through exhaustion and injury."

¹³ See reference 12

¹⁴ See reference 12, at page 33

section 4

tackling prejudice & improving participation

As demonstrated in the previous section there is a clear view amongst both LGBT and non-LGBT people that homophobia and transphobia are significant problems in Scottish sport. Having identified the problem and detailed the issues it is important that we should now turn our attention to the solutions.

It is important to recognise that improving participation and tackling homophobia and transphobia in sport are not mutually exclusive, and tackling discrimination will undoubtedly have a big impact on participation while the reverse will also be true. It is also important at this stage to emphasise that a positive approach, of partnership working and engagement, we believe will have the greatest impact on tackling the problem.

Sport does not exist in a vacuum and it is important that organisations within the sports sector do not feel more is being expected of them in this respect than is expected of society in general. This was a view echoed by officials at **sportscotland** who are supporting SGBs in their equality work and expressed the need for the Scottish Government to create a culture of inclusion.

"Sport is something that someone may do for an hour a fortnight, however, they live in a culture that for the rest of that time may also give them various issues to deal with. That's where the Scottish Government can help us quite a lot by creating some of that wider climate and expectation and setting the tone that sits across the country, at school and within sport in that school. That really helps us because if a lot of our sports organisations think they're having a spotlight or focus turned on them which isn't what's happening elsewhere that makes it even harder for us to engage with them on this issue and suggest that this is just the right thing for them to do."

Pride Sports is a charity which describes itself as the UK's organisation for LGBT sports development and equality. Their director feels that lack of statistics, lack of investment, a general feeling from many National Governing bodies (NGBs) that 'it's not an issue' and that other equality strands are more in need of support, have all meant that many in the sports industry have not seen homophobia and transphobia as issues to be addressed. She believes strongly that key issues like the impact of homophobic bullying and lack of specific investment in LGBT participation mean that homophobia and transphobia must be tackled.

4.1 How to tackle homophobia and transphobia

Research participants made a number of suggestions as to how these issues might be tackled as well as raising the need for improved communication and partnership working between key partners.

A number of interviewees, including the Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils, Scottish Student Sport, the Scottish Sports Association, **sportscotland**, Scottish Cycling, Badminton Scotland and SportsCoach UK, expressed the view that having a single point of contact on LGBT sports issues which could give support and advice to governing bodies, **sportscotland** and local authorities would be helpful.

While it's clear that little has been done to date around LGBT issues in a sporting context in Scotland there is a need and an opportunity for LGBT national and community organisations to engage with sports sector partners to address the gaps, challenges and issues raised by this research in a way that has not been done previously.

Critically the fight to tackle homophobia and transphobia is one which requires clear and visible leadership from the Scottish Government, UK Government, **sportscotland** and SGBs. Many sports sector professionals interviewed during this project still believe there are few, if any, barriers to LGBT participation a view which will need to be addressed if progress is to be made.

The vast majority of SGBs and local authorities did not engage with this research project. However, amongst those that did there was a willingness to build relationships and to improve and increase LGBT sports participation. A lack of knowledge and understanding of LGBT issues and LGBT people means many organisations lack the information, skills and confidence to take positive action to tackle homophobia and transphobia or increase participation. This is an area which requires early action by all partners, including LGBT organisations.

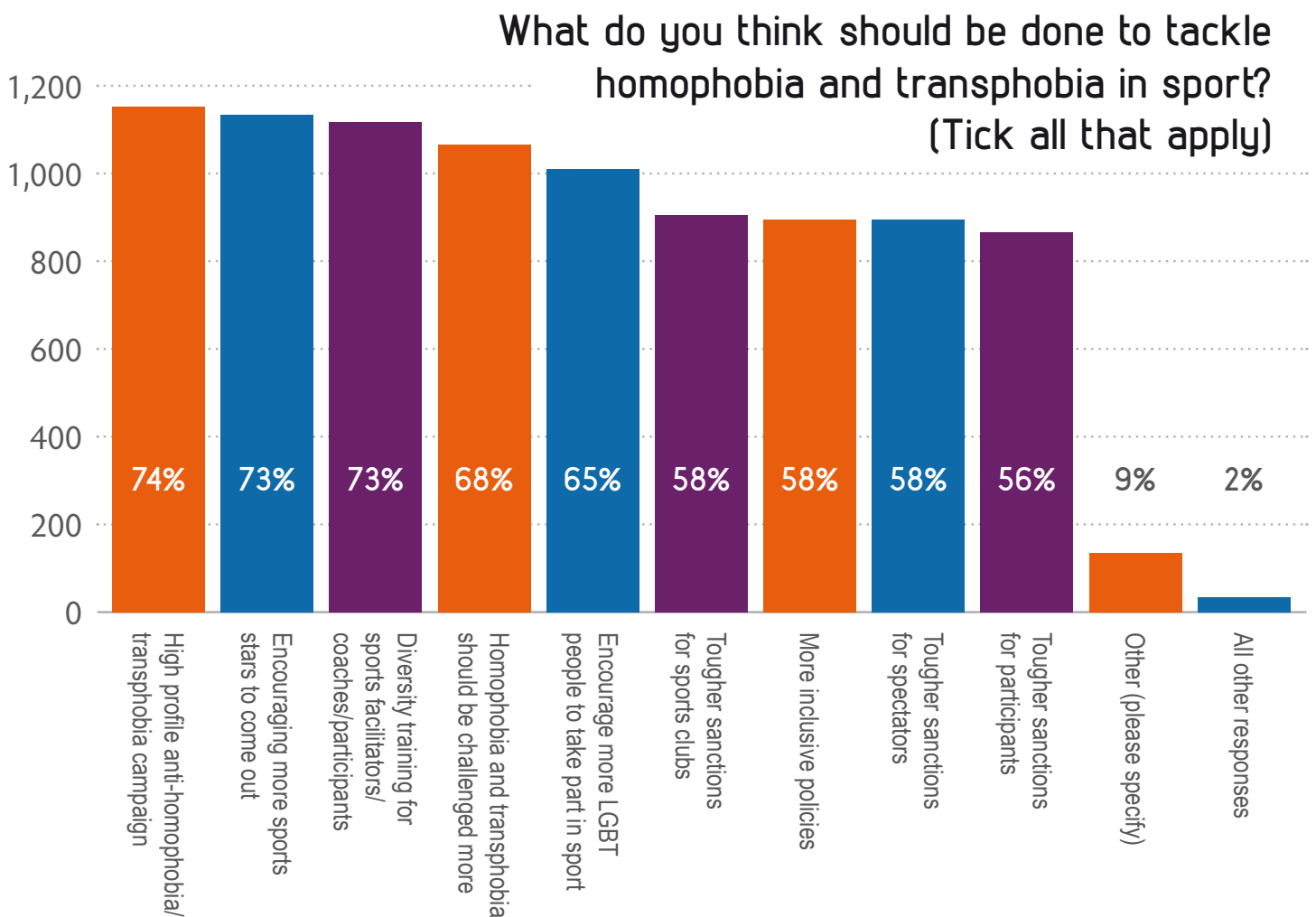
In England, Pride Sports are working with the Football Association, the English Cricket Board and the Rugby Football League delivering training on LGBT sports issues. Their director believes there are a number of reasons why partners within the sector do not approach the tackling of homophobia or transphobia in the same way they address racism, including a lack of understanding of the issues and a tendency to see tackling it as a bigger problem than the solution it offers. She is clear that most people working and taking part in sport are not bigoted but there has been a tendency to see LGBT issues as a problem to address.

“The Equality Standards have been reviewed recently and I'm sure that sexual orientation and gender identity are now part of the preliminary level but they didn't used to be. They were at a higher level than other strands. I'd say that sexual orientation has been 'problematised', it's been made to seem more difficult to address than the others. That makes people feel there's nothing they can do about it.

“At the end of my training talks I give people top tips for LGBT inclusion – don’t be afraid of the issue; set a zero tolerance agenda for homophobia and transphobia; make sure the agenda’s embraced by people throughout your organisation, not just at the top. They need advice about taking this forward – they need this agenda legitimised.”

We asked participants in the survey what action should be taken to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport.

Figure 6



A high profile anti-homophobia/transphobia campaign was the most popular of the suggestions with 74% of respondents selecting this option, encouraging more sports stars to come out came a very close second with 73%; 72% favoured diversity training for sports facilitators/coaches and participants while 68% believed that homophobia and transphobia should be challenged more.

It is important to note that suggestions which focused on positive actions tended to be more supported by survey respondents, such as training or campaigns. Suggestions that focused on punitive measures gained less support, especially among non-LGBT respondents.

Opinions were divided around the issue of tougher sanctions on participants, spectators and sports clubs with 56-58% saying they should be toughened. There was greater support for this amongst LGBT respondents with 62-65% favouring this in a range of questions.

Interestingly only 2% of survey respondents felt nothing should/needed to be done. Amongst non LGBT people the figure was still very low at 4%. A number of people focussed on the need for education, not only in schools but in a range of sporting clubs and environments.

Survey comments

"I think high profile campaigns condemning homophobia in sport are the best way to go, as well as campaigns run by openly gay athletes."

"Training for generalist teachers in primary schools and PE teachers in secondary schools."

"The carrot not the stick, education is the key"

"Campaign groups like Show Racism the Red Card and Nil by Mouth have done a great deal to highlight racism and sectarianism. Similar bodies are needed to highlight the issue of homophobia."

"Racism in sport has received a great deal of focus but the problem stems from the top down where bigotry goes unchallenged."

"Role models are important but sports governing bodies must take a strong stance and show leadership on this"

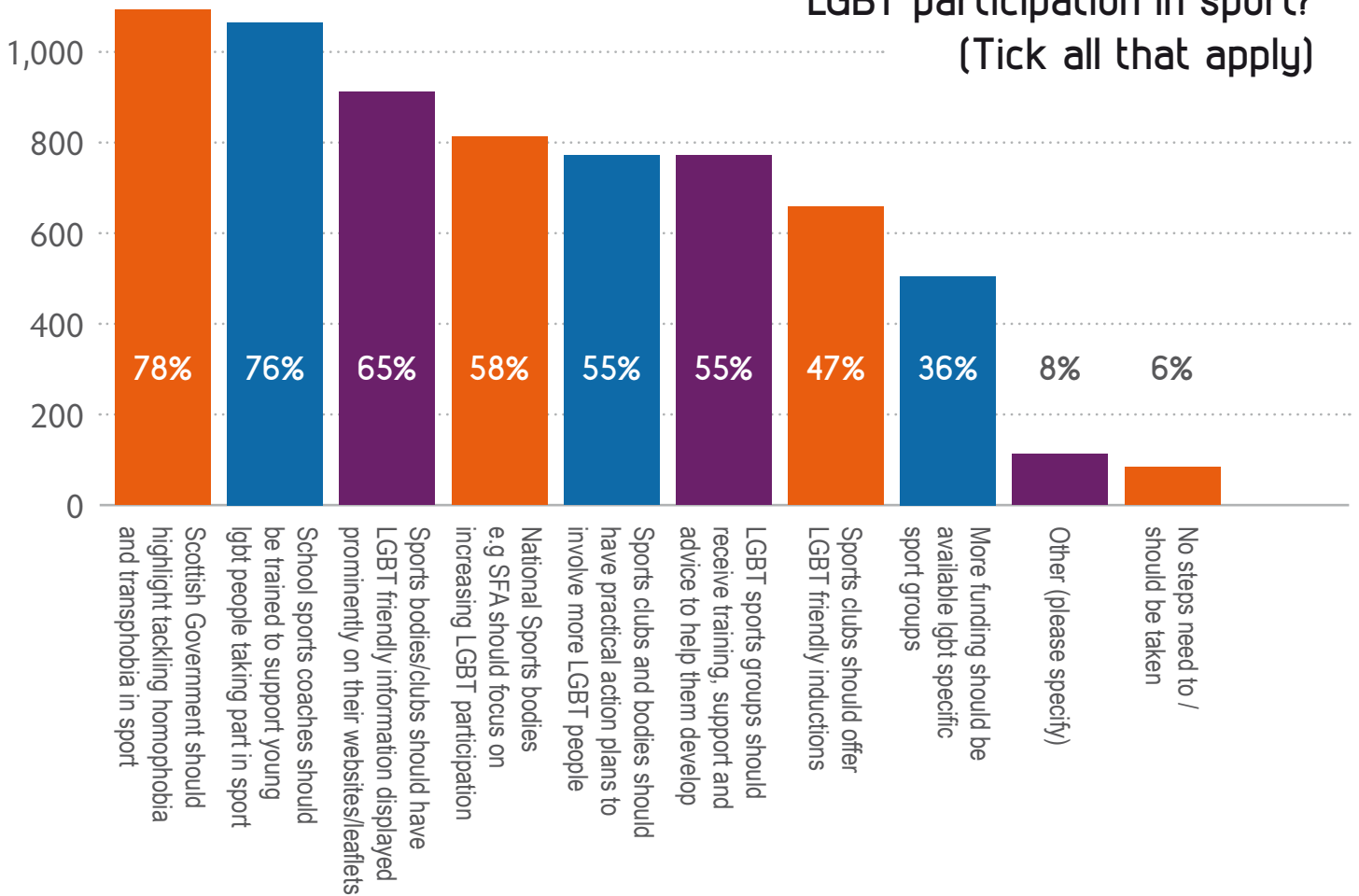
"Education, education, education! This is the way forward, teach people in the sport, both player and spectator."

"The diversity training should not just be a tick box approach. Sanctions make it a negative. Positive role models will ultimately do more to change attitudes before a fine or charge."

Survey participants were asked about what steps should be taken to improve LGBT participation in sport. 78% of people wanted to see the Scottish Government highlight the need to tackle homophobia and transphobia. This action had the support of 82% of LGBT respondents and 69% of non LGBT. People also agreed there was a key role for training of sports coaches in terms of support for young LGBT people (77%); for sports bodies and clubs to have LGBT friendly information displayed on their websites and leaflets (65%) and for National Sports bodies to focus on increasing LGBT participation (58%).

Figure 7

What steps should be taken to improve LGBT participation in sport?
(Tick all that apply)



Survey Comments

“Large sporting bodies should publicly support LGBT inclusion and embed this inclusion in all their policies and practices.”

“Needs to be an all in approach with young people learning more about LGBT issues at school, and within youth groups. More emphasis on ALL young people being better engaged in sport”

“Government should make it compulsory for organisations receiving funding that they actively demonstrate LGBT friendly policies.”

“LGBT people should be supported to become sports coaches – then they can be role models for many more to come.”

“It’s not going to get better overnight, but starting with youth groups/schools, similar campaigns like ‘Show Racism The Red Card’ need to be developed.”

LGBT community interviewees were keen to see action taken to increase the numbers of LGBT people taking part.

People wanted to focus on engaging with SGBs and others such as university LGBT groups to support grassroots LGBT sport. A number mentioned the need for on-going support for initiatives like the newly formed LEAP Sports and the LGBT Centre for Health and Wellbeing's LGBT Active programme which has supported the setting up of many LGBT sports clubs. They also wanted to see particular assistance so that LGBT sports groups could advertise and network, for example SGB's putting LGBT club information on their websites.

A substantial number of LGBT community interviewees felt that there was a need for high profile national campaigns similar to Show Racism the Red Card.

Community comments

"I still think tackling homophobic bullying in schools is behind where it should be. I think it could be a real success if sports coaches were pro-active in making their sports, their teams, openly gay friendly and inclusive. National organisations should show they'd be supportive if someone came out. I expect to look at any SGB website and see something that shows they're supportive of LGBT participation."

(Gay man.25-34 Squash)

"There needs to be much better information about what's going on. That means people like the Equality Network and the LGBT Centre sitting down with **sportscotland** and others to talk about what needs to be done." (Gay man 25-34 Basketball)

"There has to be an awareness from SGBs and local community sports centres that sport transcends all sexualities. Scotland has such big public health issues- alcohol, smoking, obesity. Helping LGBT people play sport and be more active is one part of tackling those." (Lesbian 45-53 Cycling)

"The efforts that should be made are about raising awareness that it's okay to be gay and to play football or to enjoy football or to watch football. That's the issue for me. That's the frustrating thing. There's thousands of cost effective things the SFA could do, it's about having the motivation, not about throwing money at it." (Gay man. Football)

"I think it's important that all sports clubs have clear equality statements on show – in clubhouses and on websites." (Lesbian. Badminton)

"You should be able to look up the Badminton Scotland website and find out about LGBT badminton clubs. Any governing bodies should advertise their LGBT clubs." (Gay man. Badminton)

“The biggest problem is in schools where there’s still abuse and bullying so education is where it has to start. Teachers and coaches are important in this. We have to teach the teachers.” (Gay man. 24-35 Football)

There were concerns amongst community participants that despite equality legislation which highlighted all nine protected characteristics as being of equal importance, the social reality was that continued homophobia and transphobia, lack of understanding and a history of marginalisation meant LGBT issues were not featuring prominently in the agenda. Amidst the hierarchies of the different equality needs it was felt LGBT needs were largely ignored.

Representatives of a number of sports organisations felt that there hadn’t been high profile campaigns about homophobia in the way that campaigns such as Show Racism the Red Card and Kick it Out had focussed on racism and that lack of visibility might explain why less action had been taken in the past both nationally and at community level to tackle the problem.

4.2 Leadership

It’s clear from many of the comments made by sports sector representatives, LGBT community sportspeople and those taking part in the survey that many are looking for strong and decisive leadership on the issue of homophobia and transphobia in Scottish sport from both the government and from the decision makers within Scottish sport.

Survey comments

“Need to see more vocal leadership on this from the Scottish Government and major sports bodies.”

“Sports bodies need to show leadership on the issue of homophobia and clamp down harshly on those who abuse others verbally or physically.”

“Political leadership is lacking, as is leadership in sporting bodies, who talk the talk but do not walk the walk.”

“Change will require real leadership from governing bodies and clubs. A lot is said about the need for high profile sports men/women to come out and that would indeed be helpful but that isn’t going to happen until the circumstances for that to go well are put in place by strong leadership.”

“Needs leadership from the top, from Government and managers/directors/owners etc of football or other sports clubs.”

“Scottish Government should show some leadership, like they have on sectarianism.”

While responsibility for Equalities legislation remains with the UK Government and Westminster Parliament, responsibility for health, sport and physical activity rests with the Scottish Government and Parliament.

Shona Robison, the Minister for Sport and the Commonwealth Games agreed to be interviewed as part of this research. The Minister felt the research would help to create a better understanding of the issues and barriers for LGBT people and in her interview she stated that she would be surprised if the research concluded there were no issues or problems.

The Minister confirmed her willingness to lead on the issue of tackling homophobia and transphobia in sport making it clear she will consider actions and approaches which will have the greatest impact. She made it clear she was willing to look at a number of ways in which the agenda could be taken forward, including high profile public awareness campaigns.

“We need to make sure that as well as the high level things that we’re doing through **sportscotland** that the work we’re funding on the ground is having the impact we want. There is work being done on equality issues when it comes to training coaches and club policies but whether it’s deep enough to have an impact on the day to day practice is maybe something we need to pick up on. Again it’s that national –local disconnect. It might be fine on paper but whether that then translates to the experience of how every club or coach operates is a question I’m not sure we’re able to answer with any confidence. We’d look to **sportscotland** to be in contact with all the LGBT national organisations but it’s also about how we encourage our local authority partners to also be in contact because most of the sport delivery is at the local level”

The Minister said that one of her key roles was to make sure that public money was spent wisely and that with public money comes with responsibilities.

“The Equality Standard is a work in progress. I think there’s a danger that it ends up as a tick box exercise. That’s why in the partnership agreements **sportscotland** have with the SGBs we need to make sure that the equality issues and the Standard are not just tokenistic.”

As Minister for the Commonwealth Games, the minister also acknowledged the opportunities around equalities and the legacy of the Games. She outlined that she was keen to use the Games to celebrate diversity and suggested a role for the Equality Network in the production of equality codes of conduct for the Games. The delivery of 150 community sports hubs will be one of the main legacies of the Games and the Minister also highlighted the opportunities these developments will deliver as they bring together clubs, SGBs and Schools.

“Given that **sportscotland** fund them they’re in a good position to make sure that some of the principles around openness, affordability, equality are in there. Opening up facilities

for community use should be for everyone, so we don't want any barriers perceived or otherwise."

The Minister's concerns about the disconnect between strategic, high level commitments made by Government and others not being carried through to clubs and coaches on the ground were shared by members of the LGBT community as well as both Scottish Government Health Department civil servants and **sportscotland**.

One senior civil servant said that while the Scottish Government wasn't doing anything directly on LGBT issues in sport, they would have expected it to be on 'the radar of **sportscotland**'. He felt that the sports agency had put a lot of effort in the past year into developing SGBs' approach to equality issues and participation and in terms of stipulating what the outcomes are that they expect from the investment of public money. He felt they had been far more robust at holding SGBs to account across a whole range of criteria across governance and accountability than in the past. He felt that SGBs had had a long time to address equality issues and he retained concerns about how equality minded some sports are.

One area on which he was very clear was that the Government expected increased participation across the equalities board and not just in terms of the male/female or ethnicity characteristics, a commitment which would very much welcomed by the LGBT community.

There was an acceptance both from the Minister and from civil servants that there was a need for **sportscotland** to follow through to ensure that SGBs can deliver the equality agenda.

Civil servants made it clear that the Scottish Government are fully committed to increasing all levels of participation in physical activity and sport but stated they have a general problem with the quality of the existing data about levels of participation, something that is apparent across the board and highlighted in section 3.4.

"We've already said to sports bodies and all the people we fund in physical activity that an absolute basic requirement we have of them is complete clarity about the baseline – where you start, what difference you are making. It's important for us to be able to demonstrate the significance of the public money going into these projects and how we are making a difference. It is a gap at the moment in that we have no data on LGBT participation but equally we have very little data on ethnic minority participation. So, I would be quite happy to have some sort of all-encompassing push with governing bodies to get this further up the agenda."

sportscotland's comments differed:

"Reaching Higher is the national strategy for sport in Scotland, it outlines clear a target for sport and progress toward this is measured by the Scottish government via the Scottish

Household Survey. The target is that 60percent of the population will participate in sport at least once a week by 2020. We ask our SGBs to collect membership data, including data on all equalities groups. We do however recognise that there are some challenges; members are not always willing to disclose this type of information and in addition this only measures membership and not necessarily participation."

Interviewees and respondents also sought strong leadership from the sports sector. **sportscotland** are the lead agency for the development of sport in Scotland, and also participated in the research.

"I think **sportscotland** are committed to getting everyone out doing sport and eating healthily. I think they'll work with anyone to do that however, I don't think **sportscotland** are making it clear they're committed to this particular issue. They need to be more pro-active about supporting the LGBT community. I don't know if they're scared someone at the top doesn't want to talk about it but generally their ethos is to support all sport so I'd like to see them be more open about this." (LGBT Community Coach)

Officers at **sportscotland** outlined recent and welcomed changes to their delivery expectations of governing bodies based on the amount of public funding a SGB receives. These changes introduce a level of proportionality which is something SGBs have requested. For smaller SGBs receiving under £35k they will be expected to have an updated, publicly available equality policy and statement that's signed off by their board and advertised to their members and employees.

As many of the sports which **sportscotland** invest in haven't updated their Equality Policies following the Equality Act 2010, the agency have set a target that by next year all sports in which they invest will have an updated Equality Policy.

SGBs attracting public investment of between £35K and £100K will be expected to be at the Foundation level of the Equality Standard, the Preliminary level is expected for those receiving between £100K and £500K. At £500K and above SGBs are expected to be at Intermediate level within the Equality Standard.

A significant amount of **sportscotland**'s work will be about supporting governing bodies to deliver on their legal requirements, on increasing participation in sports and also getting SGBs to truly engage with the Standard and focus on more protected characteristics. The organisation recognises that SGBs are trying to run a national sports organisation with a largely volunteer workforce so they will provide an expert resource to assist with monitoring membership, signposting resources, engaging with equality groups and writing policies. They want to change the perception of how sports engage with the equality standard.

They cited a number of pieces of work which they felt were a starting point to tackling the problem, including updates to the **sportscotland** website, good signposting for governing

bodies and updated monitoring forms that SGBs will use which now include a question covering transgender people. **sportscotland** have also started to establish partnerships with organisations like Equality Network and Stonewall Scotland.

They are also one of the signatories to the UK Government's Sports Charter, to date only three Scottish SGBs, has followed suit. **sportscotland** officials felt this was due to a general lack of understanding amongst SGBs about the issue,

"I think that might be because SGBs are not seeing LGBT issues on their agenda. The reason we signed it was because we recognise that the delivery has got quite a long way to go, as it has with many equality issues in sport. We think the work we're doing through the refreshed Standard and the resources we're giving to sport will help raise awareness of LGBT issues in sport. As a national agency of the government, we are responsible for advising the Scottish Government and supporting the implementation of its key strategies and policies for sport. Our current focus is on developing a world class sporting system at all levels, investing in joining up the people, places, partnerships and planning that make sport happen. LGBT issues will be part of what we do in this context but is not seen as the major driving force in everything we do."

While **sportscotland** accepted there are issues with lack of data around the sexual orientation and gender identity characteristics, they believed that data coming through from the Scottish Household Survey and other surveys would create a better statistical picture over the next few years.

It was an acceptance that SGBs had managed to progress through the foundation and preliminary levels of the equality standard without being required to monitor sexual orientation and gender identity. However **sportscotland**'s more recent Standard templates require monitoring of staff for sexual orientation and gender identity, but do not currently require LGBT community engagement, until preliminary level.

The newly amended Equality Standard now requires that SGBs will collect/monitor data for their organisation at Foundation level and for their membership and volunteers at Preliminary level.

The UK Government's Charter for Action against Homophobia and Transphobia in Sport¹⁵ was launched in March 2011 with the backing of England's big 5 NGBs (FA, RFU, ECB, RFL, Lawn Tennis Association). The Charter has been signed by the sports councils of the four home nations, including **sportscotland** as well as the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG).

¹⁵ Government Equalities Office, Charter on Homophobia and Transphobia in Sport, March 2011

The Charter contains four clear statements

- » We believe that everyone should be able to participate in and enjoy sport – whoever they are and whatever their background
- » We believe that sport is about fairness and equality, respect and dignity. Sport teaches individuals how to strive and succeed, how to cope with success and disappointment and brings people together with a common goal
- » We are committed to making these values a reality for lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender people. We will work together, and individually to rid sport of homophobia and transphobia
- » We will make sport a welcome place for everyone – for those participating in sport, those attending sporting events and for those working or volunteering in sports at any level. We will work with all these groups to ensure they have a voice, and to challenge unacceptable behaviour.

In June 2011 Prime Minister David Cameron met LGBT sports people at a high profile No 10 reception to highlight the Sports Charter and to date more than 3,300 sporting bodies, clubs, professional athletes, celebrities and sports fans have signed it. Signatories include all the professional football clubs in the English Leagues and LGB sporting stars such as Martina Navratilova and Gareth Thomas as well as former England rugby player Ben Cohen.

Civil servants in the UK Government Equalities Office outlined the reasons why the UK Government felt that their Sports Charter was needed.

“The UK Government thought that with the Olympics coming up there was a particular, new public focus on sport. We knew there were a number of issues for LGBT people in sport, including the fact that they couldn’t be themselves and that there were issues around football. There was a general sense that homophobia and transphobia in sport were issues that didn’t get attention. So we saw the Sports Charter as a good opportunity to raise awareness at a time when sport is in the forefront of people’s minds. The Charter is a way of getting a conversation going about homophobia. Sport has a power to change things, to do a great deal of good. The Charter has been successful and we now have a lot of committed people who are taking this on and attitudes are really changing. The Charter and the actions of some NGBs have acted as an impetus on others to follow. Sometimes organisations don’t know what to do so we’re developing guidance behind the Charter to give people ideas about how they can take this forward.”

Despite the relatively high profile of the Charter, it was clear that when Out for Sport community interviewees were asked for feedback on what actions key leaders had

been taking to increase LGBT participation there was limited awareness of any actions or programmes. Only a handful of people were able to pro-actively mention any initiatives.

Beyond work undertaken by the Equality Network, organisers of LGBT sports clubs and the LGBT Centre for Health and Wellbeing there was little knowledge of any actions. A few interviewees felt **sportscotland** were taking some actions however they didn't know any details. Four interviewees were aware and supportive of the UK Government's Sports Charter.

As well as a lack of awareness about any positive actions being carried out there was also confusion about the scope of Scottish legislation covering hate crimes and offensive behaviour at football matches.

Leadership is a crucial issue and questions about it were asked of both LGBT sports groups and those taking part in the survey. Community interviewees were asked which organisation or individuals did people believe had the biggest/most important role to play in improving LGBT participation rates and they were asked to pick from a suggested list.

Of those community interviewees who expressed an opinion, the largest number felt that the Scottish Government should take the lead, followed by **sportscotland**, the SGBs then the UK Government and LGBT community sports teams. However, many focussed on the responsibility of individuals themselves to get involved and to take part.

"I think you need to go straight to the top if you want to tackle homophobia. To the Government. Everything filters down from there so it's a job for Ministers."
(Gay man. 25-34. Badminton)

"I think **sportscotland** and local authorities have the biggest role but national governing bodies could list LGBT clubs on their websites. Government has to help create a general climate against homophobia in sport." (Gay man. 25-34. Badminton)

"Governments and LGBT charities like the Equality Network can do stuff on a wider scale but I think it's down to national governing bodies of sport to play the biggest role in tackling homophobia and increasing LGBT participation in their particular sport."
(Gay man. 25-34. Running)

"LGBT clubs are doing it at a grassroots level. We're encouraging LGBT participation. I think the SFA could and should do more and that would make it easier for people in professional sport to come out as well. Even just an SFA endorsement or recognition of teams like ours, just by putting us on their website would help us recruit members and increase the numbers of LGBT Scots playing football." (Gay man. 35-43. Football)

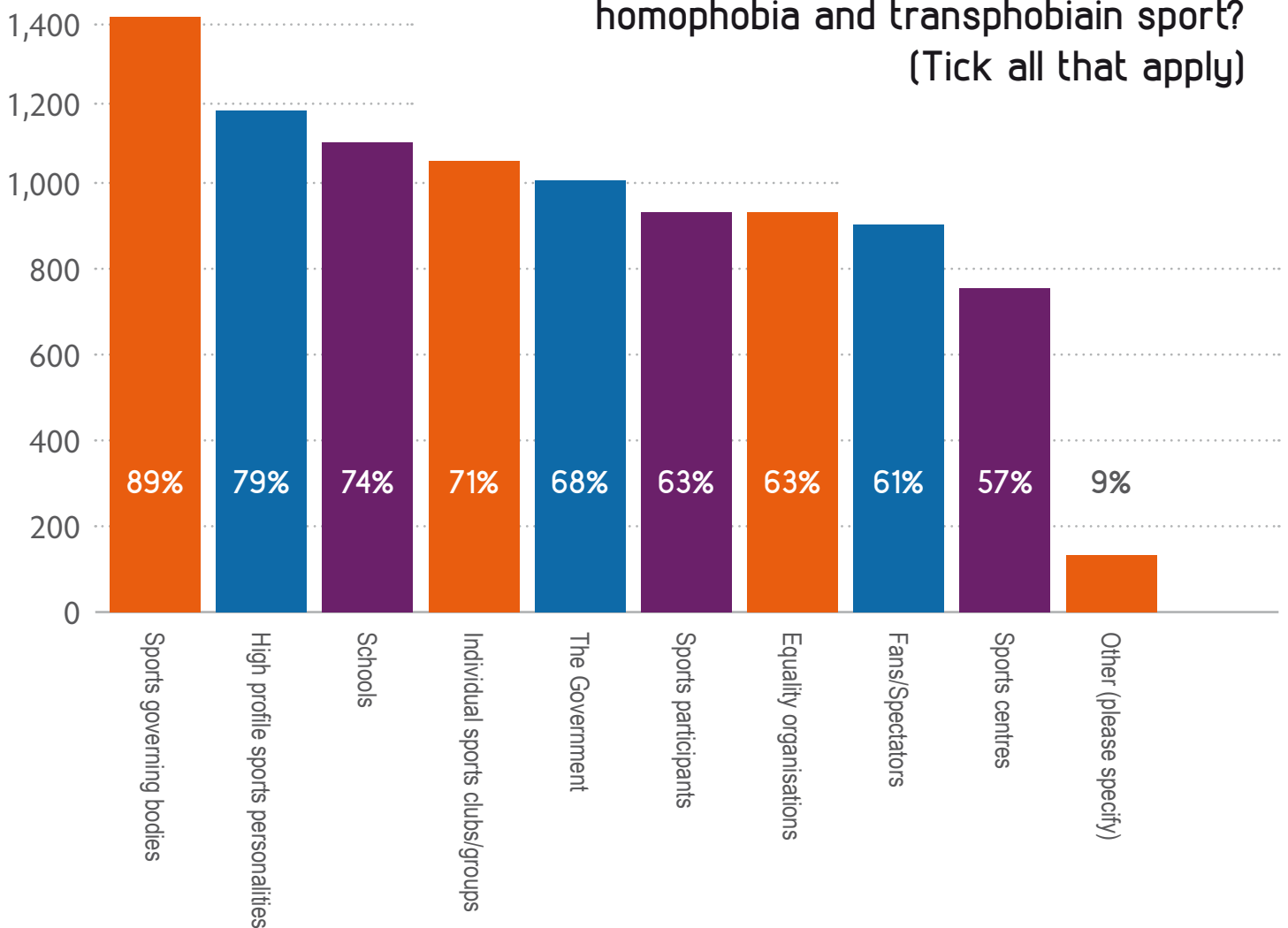
"I think **sportscotland** are doing some things. I'd like to see them focus on good coaches who have knowledge and understanding of LGBT issues. You do need to look hard to find LGBT

coaches and I think they're important, not just as role models. Investing time, money and effort on coaches is really important." (Gay man. 25-34. Basketball)

"I know the UK Government have had the Sports Charter but the Scottish Government have been quite silent on this issue within sport." (Gay man. 25-34. Football)

Figure 8

Who should be taking a lead on tackling homophobia and transphobia in sport?
(Tick all that apply)



Looking at the Scottish survey responses alone we can see that 90% thought the SGBs should take the lead, followed by high profile personalities, then schools, individual sports clubs and then the Government.

In terms of exactly who should take a lead, there were some differences from those suggested by the LGBT community interviewees who had said the fight against homophobia should be led primarily by the Scottish Government, sportscotland, the National Governing bodies and the UK Government.

While many of the survey respondents identified the need for clear leadership to come from the top it was also very clear from the survey comments that people felt that everyone had a role to play in tackling and challenging homophobia and transphobia from grassroots sport in clubs and schools to elite sport.

Some responses also suggested the need for an “LGBT governing body of sport” which could work in partnership with others in the sports sector.

Survey Comments

“Action should be encouraged at all levels – but the Government and governing bodies need to lead.”

“All, really, but the governing bodies of sports need to take a stand against homo/transphobia.”

“I believe it is everyone’s responsibility to tackle it but it will definitely take major awareness raising and campaigning from high up bodies and ensuring that filters down through sports clubs and communities.”

“An LGBT governing body of sport that can work with clubs, other governing bodies and the local authorities (is needed).”

“There is no single answer – a combined approach – as is being used in workplaces throughout the country.”

“Nothing will happen until the governing bodies of the various sports start to take a very public hard line on this. The only other realistic possibility would be grass roots action by the fans reacting to specific instances of homophobia and transphobia.”

4.3 Role Models

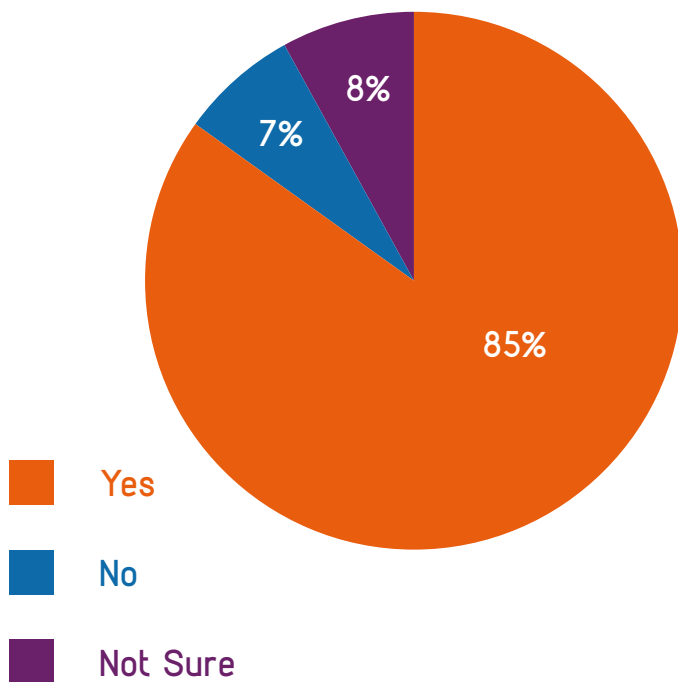
Elite LGBT athletes occupy a number of different positions within any examination of LGBT sport. They can be role models and leaders but they can also be examples of LGBT people who are experiencing difficulties as a result of discrimination and prejudice.

One of the aims of the research was to examine LGBT participation and the impact of homophobia and transphobia in sport at all levels from community sport through to elite athletes.

The vast majority of those taking part in the survey thought that it was important that there are ‘out’ sports stars. 85% thought it was important with only 7% taking a different view. Amongst LGBT respondents the figure was even higher with 90% thinking it was important. Many people view elite LGBT athletes as important leaders in this arena.

Figure 9

Do you think it is important that there are 'out' LGBT sports personalities?



Large numbers pointed to the importance of high profile LGBT sports stars as role models, particularly for young LGBT people. Many people felt that the visibility of 'out' LGBT stars was helpful in encouraging others to feel comfortable about being open about their own sexual orientation or gender identity whatever level of sport they were engaged in.

A number clarified that their support for this didn't extend to 'outing' or disclosing an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity against their will, agreeing that this was a decision for the individual alone to make. While some questioned whether or not this was a private or a public matter the general view was that LGBT sports role models helped to normalise the idea that LGBT people could play sport as well as anyone else.

There was also recognition that some LGBT sports people, including people playing at international level, had already 'come out' across a range of sports. However, the lack of out stars in football and other high profile male dominated sports generated significant comment.

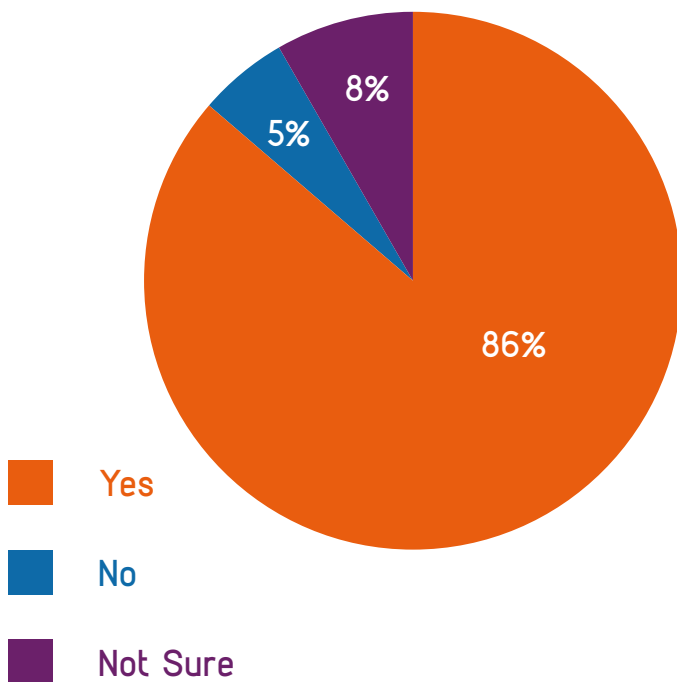
The Out for Sport survey and community interviews/ discussions around elite athletes tended to be dominated by discussion about football. With half a million footballers in the world, a number commented that it was statistically impossible that there was only one who was gay – Swedish third division player Anton Hysen.

A number of contributions referred to the first out gay professional player, Justin Fashanu, who played for a number of clubs including Hearts in the Scottish Premier League, and who committed suicide in 1998. He was the inspiration behind the Justin Campaign, a campaign group who work to stamp out homophobia in football. His birthday, 19th February, now marks their annual Football v Homophobia campaign day. Many felt that football's treatment of Justin Fashanu had a legacy of deterring other footballers from coming out.

Survey respondents thought it was difficult for sports personalities to be openly LGBT. 86% said that this was the case while only 5% disagreed.

Figure 10

Do you think that it is difficult for sports personalities to be openly LGBT?



I'd had from my mother was based on a lie. I needed to start being truthful. I had suicidal thoughts just so I didn't have to tell people the truth. What's important is the legacy you leave behind so I decided to stand up for the rights of people who were in the same position I was in. When you're truthful it sets you free. If you lie you live in fear. When you tell the truth you control your own destiny."

Speaking on television Gareth Thomas said he recognises the importance of role models.

"Times have changed. I wanted to be the kind of sports role model I'd never had. There are a lot of athletes who are gay. I don't try and coax people to come out because it needs to be right for them. I just think with the power and the influence sports people have on the world – on children and on adults – if they come out with a positive story and message it changes the world. Sport is something that can change the world and with somebody being gay in sport, being able to continue their sport that sends such a positive message to everyone¹⁷."

There have still been no more than 100 out gay sports stars worldwide however some of them are amongst the greatest athletes of all time, including Martina Navratilova and Billie Jean King.

More recently former Welsh and British Lions rugby international, Gareth Thomas, has inspired many of those taking part in this research, by coming out.

As part of the It Gets Better project, Gareth Thomas has spoken of the difficulties of staying quiet about his sexual orientation¹⁶.

"I was different but I couldn't explore it because I needed to be the same as everyone else. I had to be tough, to be macho and I didn't equate that with being gay. So I became a fraud to people, I lied to people, and at the age of 35 I realised everything I had in my life, every friend I had, every team-mate I had, every hug

¹⁶ Gareth Thomas. It Gets Better. www.itgetsbetter.org

¹⁷ Ellen DeGeneres Show – Openly Gay Rugby Star Gareth Thomas 4 January 2011

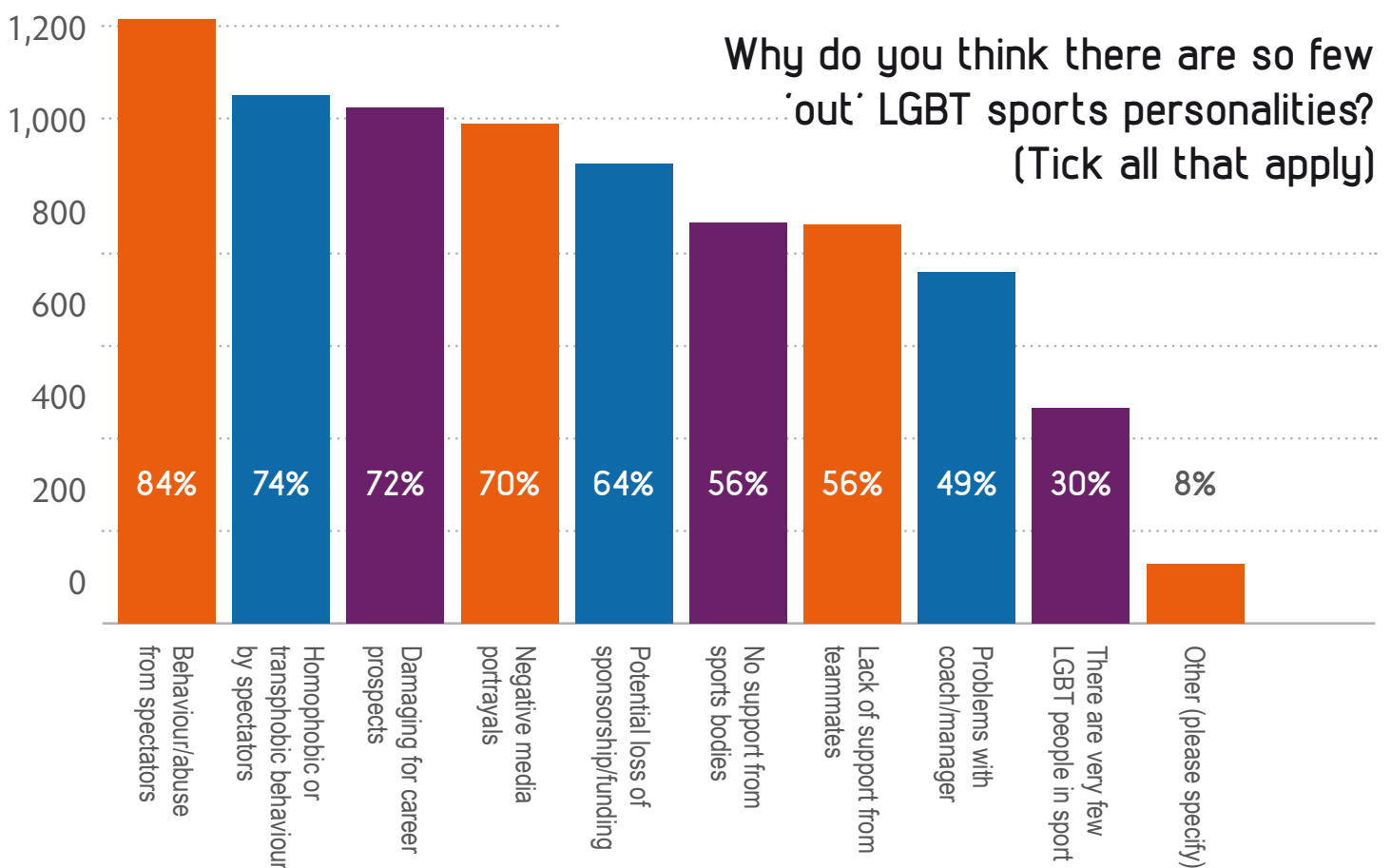
Martina Navratilova came out in 1981 at the height of a career that saw her win 167 tennis singles titles including 59 Grand Slam titles.

“It’s hugely important for kids to see there are people like us so they don’t feel alone in the world. Too many gyms, locker rooms and playing fields are often perceived as unsafe places for LGBT students. That can discourage the spirit and natural gifts of athletes. Athletes themselves should not fear coming out. Nobody should be able to stop you from playing. If you are good enough, you get to play and you get to win.¹⁸”

Several people pro-actively mentioned the importance of straight sports celebrities standing up against homophobia. Examples included former England Rugby Union player Ben Cohen who heads up an anti-homophobic bullying campaign, the StandUp Foundation.

Survey respondents were asked why they thought there were so few ‘out’ sports personalities. People felt the biggest worry for elite sports stars would be the behaviour and abuse they might receive from fans (84%); the homophobic/transphobic behaviour of opponents (74%); the damage done to their career prospects (72%); negative media portrayals (70%) and potential loss of sponsorship (64%).

Figure 11



¹⁸ BBC News, Gay sports stars in No 10 to back anti homophobia plan 23 June 2011

Survey comments

"Sports models are role models and by 'coming out' set an example for others who are still afraid to do so."

"There simply has to be LGBT players within every sport using the law of averages. Over 5000 professional male footballers in Britain and none of them are LGBT – I think not."

"There shouldn't be pressure on people to come out – it has to be up to them. It's probably more important to have straight people come out in support of gay colleagues."

"Role models are THE most powerful changers of current opinions."

"There are many, many out sports people in Scotland. Loads of them across so many sports, so many out LGBT people at the top of their game or representing Scotland. Netball, women's football, bowls..."

"Youngsters need role models. It's important LGBT young people see it's possible to be LGBT and achieve, and feel good about themselves"

"There are very few out sportspeople, I can't even count on one hand! As for transgender, can't name one. Says it all really, no-one to relate to and no role models is kind of crushing to be honest."

"They will get ripped to shreds by the papers."

"Depends upon which sport you play – tennis seems to have a fair few out players, football not so. I think it also depends on gender – it is harder for men. Bisexual people have a low profile in general and I think it's harder for them to come out without having to refute being gay, straight or confused!"

"In alpha-male dominated sports I believe it's a career destroying move."

Participants at the Inverness Focus Group felt the reasons why elite athletes didn't come out were worries about losing their jobs, homophobic abuse from fans and peers, impact on selection, changes to relationships with coaches, possible loss of sponsorship deals and the impact on friends and family. Many participants focussed on the need for governing bodies of sport, Government and others to address homophobia in sport, to make it easier for LGBT sportspeople to come out.

Community comments

“There is fear. You don’t know till you’ve come out whether or not people will have a problem.” (Trans woman. 35-44. Walking)

“In an individual sport like tennis it’s easier to do your own thing and not worry about other people’s perceptions. You don’t need to worry about team mates’ attitudes, there’s no kickback to a team, no issues about other team members feeling vulnerable to getting abused, called gay cos someone on their team is.” (Gay man. 25-34. Squash)

“Obviously there are gay footballers out there, they’re just too afraid. I think most fans wouldn’t care as long as the player did what they were meant to do on the pitch. If they were gay and scored 30 goals a season home fans wouldn’t care.” (Gay man. 25-34. Football)

This final comment echoes the view of several interviewees who felt that times were changing and that football fans would be more receptive to LGBT players as a result. This view chimes with the findings of the 2007 Stonewall “Living Together” research into British attitudes to lesbian and gay people which showed that 92% of people would be very comfortable, comfortable or neutral if a footballer in the team they supported was gay¹⁹.

Meanwhile 2010 research at Staffordshire University by Professor Ellis Cashmore and Dr. Jamie Cleland²⁰, which involved 3,000 football fans, professional players, referees, and managers showed that football fans are relaxed about the presence of gay footballers in the English leagues and would “welcome more honesty from players about their sexuality”.

The Top Fan survey found that 91% of respondents believe that only a player’s performance on the pitch is relevant, while only 9% oppose gay players. Meanwhile 30% of football professionals know gay players currently in the game. However, 84% felt that there is pressure on gay players to stay silent.

The survey comments still showed a substantial degree of homophobic comment and dismissal of concerns about language used on the terraces as being simply “banter”²¹, something that we also experienced when posting links to the survey onto sports forums and websites.

¹⁹ Cowan K, Living together British attitudes to lesbian and gay people, Stonewall, 2007, at page 6

²⁰ Cashmore E and Cleland J, Top Fan Survey, Staffordshire University 2010

²¹ See reference above

While there are a number of openly LGBT people in sports which are less high profile than football, many still remain hidden. Within the research interviews a number of people felt that not being open was likely to have an impact both on a sportsperson's performance and health.

SAMH felt that there was likely to be an impact.

"Individuals do handle it differently but I think there's a cost at some point for elite athletes who aren't out. It's about things like self-medication as well. We know of people beating themselves up for being externally seen as a captain, a leader, but not challenging homophobic remarks and keeping quiet about being gay. How can you possibly hold that all together within your head and it not have an impact on your mental health. That might come out as an eating disorder, as depression, anxiety, it might come out as suicide."

Similarly, professionals working in the Performance Lifestyle department within the **sportscotland** Institute of Sport believed that living a lie can affect performance.

"A successful performance seldom happens by chance and it can easily be disrupted by numerous factors or distractions. It depends on how comfortable the person is in themselves but the person's life-style is crucial to their ability to succeed. If there's something troubling them, something getting in the way, they're not going to be able to perform to 100% of their ability. It would depend on the individual, but for those that are really struggling, hiding their sexuality I think it probably would affect performance. I'd say that about any major issue. Performance Lifestyle is about managing the factors that influence performance and those factors are multi-faceted. Sexuality is one of them. I do a presentation about distractions to athletes and parents and I do have on it "boys, or girls or both" because sexuality is a factor."

There were specific recommendations made in the Literature Review into Sexual Orientation commissioned in 2008 by **sportscotland** that centred on the need for greater support for elite athletes and those around them. With the key driver being improved performance they try to get very close to all sorts of intelligence and data that will deliver a cutting edge performance advantage and within that they'll focus on factors that affect performance, either negatively or positively. Within the Performance Lifestyle (PL) team they concentrate on supporting the person behind the performance and building a one to one relationship.

"We deal with a lifestyle profile, with education and career guidance, health and wellbeing, rest and recovery and referral to specialists like clinical psychologists if someone is struggling with bereavement or their sexuality. PL is one of the few services that doesn't deal with selection and because of that the athletes do come and pour their heart out because we're not selecting them for anything. This is one of the

reasons why sexuality can be discussed because they feel safe and not judged. I would say there are sports where your sexuality is not an issue. There can be national squads where there's a relatively high percentage of lesbian women and that's just not an issue. For gay men it's less visible. That's certainly to do with society generally but there a lack of understanding at times and with some SGBs about what being a gay man is. I think many SGBs are getting better. I've had some very positive conversations when the governing body have been involved and I think they've been extremely grateful to have had my input. People just want to know what the solutions are. They want to know what they can do to help or they ignore it because they don't want to do the wrong thing."

The PL team have dealt with a number of occasions when athletes have come out. A senior member of staff said they would never advise an athlete whether to come out or not. They would work with them. She felt that there would be a range of different inter-related factors affecting how that might be dealt with. These would include the attitudes of the people around the athlete including their family and coach, how comfortable the athlete is within themselves, whether they take part in an individual or team sport, whether it's a female or male orientated sport and what's the philosophy and culture of the particular sport.

The SRU's Head of Women's Rugby was very positive about former Welsh rugby internationalist Gareth Thomas' decision to come out.

"I would love to see a high profile Scottish senior player come out because I think it would make a big difference to younger players, it would make it so much easier to look after younger players if that happened. I'm absolutely certain there must be gay men playing rugby. I'd love it if we had a gay or bi senior rugby player but I think there'd possibly be problems within peer groups. Team sport creates a particular environment and the elite end creates an environment where people are fairly vulnerable because they are competing intensely for places so anything which increases that vulnerability can create problems... It wouldn't be a good career move for them to come out. That's why people come out towards the end of their careers when selection is no longer an issue. Selection is the prime issue for young men who want to make a career in rugby."

Meanwhile, the SFA's Head of HR felt there were no out players in the male professional game because of homophobia as a wider societal issue.

"There are issues about coming out in any profession. It's not necessarily linked to being a football player. Look at the professions- legal practices, accountancy- I'm not sure they're being open to partners or clients about being gay for the same reason footballers aren't. They are reliant on others for their livelihood. I think it's probably easier for women ...but it's an issue at the elite level in all sorts of male dominated environments."

Elite athletes can be highly effective role models and effectors of positive change in terms of the public's views of LGBT people. However, if they choose to come out it appears that they are likely still to experience difficulties, particularly in certain professional male contact sports. There is much work that still needs to be done to ensure a positive experience for LGBT sports people who do decide to come out. Not least is the need to ensure that they get fair media coverage, as mentioned by many of the comments.

4.4 Supporting and Safeguarding LGBT Young People

Both the Minister for Sport and **sportscotland** focussed on the need to address problems with young people dropping out of sport.

Pride Sport's director feels that issues around LGBT young people in sport have not been tackled for a number of reasons.

"We have massive issues around the teenage drop off and we know that LGBT young people are being switched off. We've recently done research for the English Cricket Board (ECB) and we found that LGBT young people had extremely negative experiences of school sport. It's a focus for homophobia and transphobia for young people. You go to maths and it doesn't matter if you're gay in maths but it matters if you're gay in PE. That's backed up by research done by Sheffield Hallam University where they found that LGBT young people in more than one school had been expected to change in areas away from the communal changing rooms. When I'm speaking to groups, to NGBs, I specifically ask what they think this experience does to LGBT young people's engagement with sport."

Homophobic and transphobic bullying (covered in Section 3.7) can have a massive impact on young people's enjoyment of and participation in sport.

The Minister agreed with many of the survey responses when she focussed on the important part education should play in the equality agenda and the fight against homophobic and transphobic bullying.

"Education is a key issue and there has been a lot of work done on homophobic and transphobic bullying. There are opportunities through Curriculum for Excellence to make sure that's not ignored, opportunities to work with Education Scotland to make sure it's there in the curriculum and also in school sport because we know lots of people have real challenges in PE."

"We've just come up with a new funding package to deliver the 2 hours of PE a week and we're asking each local authority to tell us how they're going to do that. I think we could capture the equalities agenda within that to make sure that's improved. There are a lot of

training issues around training teachers. We need to ask how confident are teachers around some of these equality and LGBT issues.”

While elite athletes can be role models for LGBT young people, at the grassroots level physical education teachers and coaches can also occupy a significant position as role models for young people. They are also central in creating an inclusive sports environment within PE classes and sports clubs.

The importance of the coach’s role was picked up on by a large number of survey respondents, community interviewees and sports professionals. They all saw better equality and diversity training for coaches, which specifically focused on LGBT issues, as being fundamental in raising coaches’ awareness and in improving LGBT participation in sport.

SAMH felt that coaches had considerable power and responsibility and that SGBs should be working to build the capacity of these grassroots leaders around LGBT issues and inclusion more generally.

“In terms of adults who are important in young people’s lives, sports figures are probably disproportionately important in terms of potential impact. Coaches are important, they’re leaders in their field- they have power, responsibility and position that goes way beyond their sport. If SGBs aren’t giving them the tools to deal with homophobia they are leaving them unskilled. They need to establish a framework to give coaches and welfare officers the skills around LGBT issues.”

Sportscoach UK is the strategic UK agency for coaching. They work with coaches and the national sports councils to deliver coaching education in a broad coaching framework, including delivery of training workshops and the UKCC coaching certificate across several sports. They also work with **sportscotland** on coach education.

Their inclusion development lead officer agreed that coaches have an important role in encouraging participation meaning it was even more pertinent that they signal 'zero tolerance' of bullying or homophobic abuse and that they are given the advice, skills and training they need to deal with LGBT issues. Sportscoach UK worked with Pride Sports to raise awareness amongst coaches, but while they are part of a disability reference group responsible for co-ordinating action and sharing best practice between the 4 national sports councils on disability issues, they weren't aware of a similar approach to LGBT issues. They felt such an approach would be useful.

"Coaches are huge role models. Young people hang on their every word. As far as equity is concerned it's fundamental that they have certain knowledge and awareness in place. We do have a huge issue that there's a disconnect between strategic national bodies' equity policies whether it's sports councils or governing bodies and what's happening in clubs and with coaches. LGBT issues don't get the same coverage as other equality issues. If you're dealing with disability there are lots of courses and that can give coaches more confidence but there's nothing like that in terms of gay people. What happens if, as a coach, you're dealing with a young person who trusts you and feels they can come out to you? We need to give them the tools, information and understanding to deal with this."

Pride Sports have assisted Sportscoach UK to make sure their equity training covers LGBT issues. However, as Sportscoach UK explained, the majority of coaches are probably still not being taught anything about these issues.

"Not all coaches will access equity training. For some coaches they will be motivated to do equity training because of their experiences and the needs of particular participants, some will do it as a tick box exercise and others won't see this as an issue. Most, who don't access our three hour equity training course will get little on diversity in basic level training. That's why; in terms of the UK Coaching Certificate we'll start filtering in awareness regarding equity so it's being mainstreamed into coaching. It's also important that the training around this issue is specifically grounded in sport rather than just a generic approach which could be used with any type of organisation because sport has a different culture to the workplace generally and each sport has its own different culture."

There are just over a million coaches in the UK. 76% are volunteers, 69% of them are male and they are predominantly white, and from more affluent backgrounds. Just as there is an invisibility of LGBT people in mainstream sports clubs, amongst elite high profile athletes and in particular sports there is a lack of openly LGBT coaches and other

role models as well. This is something that Sportcoach UK's inclusion lead believes needs attention.

"It would be great if we could have more out LGBT coaches, more black coaches, more female coaches. We need to inspire young people to aspire to be coaches, whatever their background. We're not helping young LGBT people to access role models."

Children 1st, who are partners with **sportscotland** in Safeguarding in Sport, also identified that there was an issue about the lack of LGBT coaches.

"There is an issue about the demographics of coaches. My opinion is there are barriers to an openly LGBT person coaching. The general understanding would be that there would still be impediments. I think this is another area where clubs and coaches would be dealing with people's perceptions about why a gay person would want to be a coach of young people. I think it's to do with the over sexualisation of gay people generally by society that people tend to think about a gay coach's sexuality in a way they wouldn't think about a straight coach's. I also think LGBT people know this and say 'I'm not going to put myself into that situation. It's too much hassle.' Because of that I think we're missing out on coaching talent and important role models."

Senior staff at the Institute for Sport also saw coaches as potentially central characters for LGBT athletes. They shared their own experiences of dealing with athletes coming out to them.

"In my experience of dealing with elite athletes who are coming out they can really struggle to come to terms with the feelings they're having. If a coach has never come across this before and it's disclosed to them they should remember that it's the first reaction that the athlete sees will be the one they remember. My perspective to staff is that it's very much about unconditional, positive regard, to be recognising and say 'that must have been an incredibly difficult thing for you to have said and I want to let you know how humbled I am that you have shared that with me' And if a coach or someone has the ability just to say that, at that point, that can be such a crucial moment."

One further education sports lecturer, who also runs a coaching business, suggested there's a need for a specific organisation that can give coaches and clubs the LGBT information they need. He suggested that **sportscotland**, SGBs and equality organisations should package an equality tool, potentially online, which might form part of coach education and assist sports clubs to deal with LGBT issues.

"On the whole equalities scale LGBT issues are very much the poor relation. It's just not been talked about enough... One of the solutions could be around coaching... Why when you go on a level 1 or 2 coaching course are you getting taught nothing about equality and diversity? I've been taught about using wind direction so my voice carries but no-one's ever

said to me this is how to deal with a young man coming out to you or this is how to deal with a couple of your ethnic kids getting bullied by teammates. We need to make sure coaches know how to deal with these and that athletes know they'll be listened to and supported."

One former Football club community development officer said there are a number of role models and they weren't all high profile players. He focussed on the importance of SGB community development officers.

"There's an awful lot of money spent on having football and rugby development officers. Why not have them going round local clubs delivering a workshop to every under 12s team about equality. I think if a man with a SFA or SRU tracksuit does a 45 minutes coaching session and then does a talk on stereotypes, equality, bullying that would be worthwhile. Will those kids listen? Damn right they will. I've seen it. I've done it... Development officers have such an opportunity to influence young people and amateur leagues. There's a lot of crossover with sectarianism, with racism. We need to get away from the thought that you have to be LGBT to be part of the process of educating about it. The message needs to come from straight ex professional footballers too."

Both the SRU representatives interviewed agreed that coaches were central figures in tackling abuse and that people can potentially leave rugby because of coach behaviour. The SRU have just refreshed their coach's code of conduct with input from Children 1st. One of the areas added is around unacceptable behaviour, including the shouting of racist, sexist or homophobic abuse from the touchline. However, coaches don't currently get equality training. Within their 'Rugby Ready' qualification and other entry level courses there will be modules which will touch on abuse and bullying but there's nothing specifically about LGBT issues. The SRU and other SGBs face a challenge in getting coaches to undertake more advanced specific equity CPD because the vast majority of coaches are volunteers. **sportscotland** is now working with the SRU and others on the Positive Coaching Scotland (PCS) approach which is a double goal approach which coaches both the person and player.

The Minister for sport also believes PCS represents a positive way forward.

"We're doing good work through **sportscotland**, the SFA and others on the Positive Coaching Scotland programme. That's all about respect and responsibility and tackling unacceptable behaviour whether it's player to player, coach to player and from parents."

The SRU's Regional Development Manager felt there is a role for the Equality Network and others in assisting SGBs, through the production and circulation of easy to understand information for coaches which would assist them in dealing with bullying or with players coming out.

One key issue which came up during the research interviews was the issue of safeguarding, and the confusion that safeguarding was an LGBT issue.

'Safeguarding in Sport', delivered by Children 1st together with **sportscotland**, provides expert advice and guidance on child protection and welfare to SGBs, sports clubs, local authorities and leisure trusts. Their '10 Steps to Safeguard Children in Sport' are aimed at young people under 18 taking part in sport. Within it they instruct clubs and schools that "creating an anti-bullying ethos is the best prevention. We should not underestimate the importance of the behaviour of adults as they are role models for children and young people".

They instruct clubs and others to take all signs of bullying very seriously highlighting prejudice-based bullying particularly. They suggest coaches look out for signs such as a child being the last one chosen for a team or group for no apparent reason or being picked on by others when they think the coach's back is turned.

The Project Manager says Children 1st have had very few inquiries about LGBT issues. They often highlight preconceived issues that organisers and parents can have about the actions of LGBT people.

"We had an inquiry about some sports teams going away on a residential weekend. The young people were 16 and the majority were girls but there were 3 boys, one of whom was openly gay. They were asking – Is this okay? Do we need to have this person in a different room? Sometimes there is a sense that a person is gay and so de facto he will abuse. So we say to them to do a risk assessment of people concerned not just because of a misconstrued opinion. Just because someone's gay he doesn't pose more of a problem than anyone else. People also have in their mind – what will parents say? It's all to do with perceptions and with misunderstanding of the behaviour of gay people. We wouldn't tailor or change advice we'd give to any club just because it's an LGBT inquiry but we recognise they may need greater support to answer any concerns they might have raised with them by parents."

Children 1st are clear that LGBT young people should be assisted and protected like any other in taking part in sport and that that participation may take place within an LGBT sports group or club.

"My advice to any SGB faced with a LGBT club inquiry would be that they should be trying to get the young people involved in sport just like anyone else. It should be treated no differently to any other inquiry about 15 year old girls wanting to play sport in any club. There is within the new Protection of Vulnerable Groups legislation, through the incidental test, scope for adult clubs to have a few young people involved in their sports club. So unless you're specifically setting up a young persons group you're not having to go through all the steps (to full disclosure). It would still help to have a Child Protection Officer

because it would also help with dealing with other aspects of life the young person might be facing such as bullying.”

Several LGBT community sports groups who were interviewed said they weren't able to take people under 18 for a number of reasons including a lack of understanding of the new disclosure arrangements.

The Safeguarding in Sports project manager also flagged up that as they dealt with young people up to age 18, young people are likely to be forming romantic and sexual relationships at that age. Children 1st tell sports clubs and schools to remember that a:

“young person becomes an adult at 16 and the age of consent is 16, irrespective of sexual orientation. Issues involving young people between the ages of 16 and 18 need to be handled sensitively but two young people, of whatever sexual orientation, having a consensual sexual relationship should be of no interest to their sports club. However, a relationship between a young person and a coach, for example, would be different because that involves one person being in a position of trust. They expect clubs to address those sorts of issues”.

Training in Child Protection is one of the few basic minimum requirements for coaches working with children. However, there is little evidence that that training covers protecting children and young people from homophobic or transphobic bullying from peers or from others. Children 1st suggested this is an area where more work would be helpful

The Director of Pride Sports believes there are issues about safeguarding which are tied up in a lack of understanding of LGBT people, a tendency to look at LGBT involvement as a problem and a lack of relevant training.

“There is still a reticence in sport to raise the issue of sexual orientation because people see it as a safeguarding issue. They think that you're trying to sexualise children. People still think gay men are paedophiles and lesbians are trying to recruit girls. Yet, LGBT inclusion is a huge safeguarding issue because the average age of coming out in the UK is now 14 or 15. It's dropped from 18 in the past 10 years. So, homophobic bullying and LGBT welfare issues are going to be a massive problem as young people come out, more and more, within school age. Do peoples' safeguarding policies prepare them for that? Have they prepared and educated their coaches?”

A number of local authorities have club accreditation schemes in place which they use to improve standards and to support local clubs. Edinburgh City Council's Director of Sport accepted that local authorities can use these schemes to instigate change but that some of their criteria can be unintentionally exclusive.

“We have more levers than governing bodies have. Most people we work with have to

have Pathways of Performance in terms of young through to old people. We want to see people progressing through and staying with a club. I accept that LGBT people maybe hit a point when they come out when they might want to move to a gay rugby club for example. Currently, if you've not got that pathway, if you're adult only clubs we're generally not wanting to work with you. I can see that's a problem for gay clubs because I accept because of people's perceptions, parents won't want to send kids to a gay club or the kid or their family won't know they're gay. We do still support adult only but generally where big investment is going in it has to be to a multi-sport club which covers all ages and stages. Maybe all sexualities and equality areas is the next step. Maybe there's an issue about how this is done. I think the perception is if you're a lesbian club or a gay male club that's code for there are child protection issues. I've not been around our child protection training recently but I don't know if the training we do gets people to think about this. My guess is it doesn't. So there could be practical stuff done in training to make sure it's talked about."

The representative of SportsCoach UK shared these concerns.

"Club accreditation practices don't support LGBT clubs because to be accredited you need to have junior sections. Clearly we still live in a society where many believe gay men are paedophiles so it's unlikely many straight parents would send their kids to a junior group at a gay club and many gay clubs would possibly think it's not worth the hassle. I think it's tragic that a 14 or a 15 year old young gay person can't access a club where they might be supported at a crucial time in their life because of outdated, wrong perceptions. That's the reality and because of it gay clubs don't get accreditation. Organisations and funders treating them like every other club doesn't take into account this social reality. There's a danger that people and organisations think that by simply saying "we welcome everyone and so we don't single out any particular group" that that's enough. It's not. We still need to be explicit and to raise awareness specifically."

sportscotland also recognised there were particular issues dealing with sexual orientation and young people.

"We have some quite specific sensitivities that we would really welcome guidance and support on, how we approach our priorities around young people incorporating some of these LGBT issues into it, sensitivities around how would parents react, how would teachers react, how would different local authorities with different policies react, there's a lot of anxieties around LGBT issues and young people."

It is clear that while programmes to safeguard and protect young people taking part in sport are necessary there is a danger that prevalent stereotypes around LGBT people might well be acting as a barrier to LGBT young people's participation. This matter must be addressed sensitively and effectively within the current protection framework with advice which focuses specifically on LGBT young people.

4.5 Capacity building within the LGBT sports sector

Over the past decade or so many LGBT people have opted to take part in LGBT sports teams and clubs. They tend to be less well established than their mainstream counterparts but, similarly, they range from fairly informal groups to more organised, constituted teams and clubs. They are more likely to act in isolation and not affiliate to SGBs and they are much less likely to be involved in local sports councils.

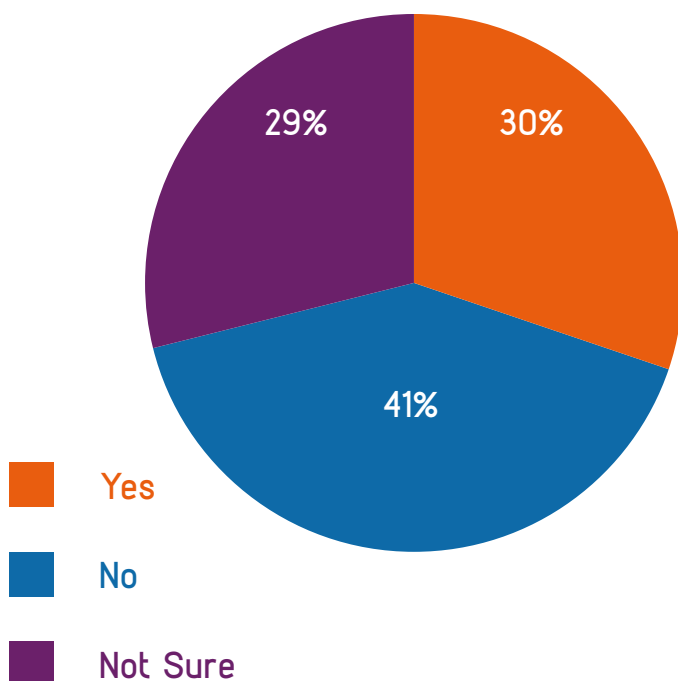
There are a wide range of groups and teams covering sports as diverse as football, badminton, running and climbing. The majority are located in Edinburgh and Glasgow with only a few located outwith the Central Belt in Aberdeen and Inverness.

Comments within the survey and interviews with mainstream sports organisations and professionals highlight a lack of awareness and understanding of LGBT sports groups.

The existence of LGBT branded teams and clubs is welcomed by many as a safe, welcoming environment in which to play sport. Others, including some of the mainstream sports policy makers interviewed were more sceptical and felt LGBT people should be encouraged to take part in all inclusive, mainstream sports clubs. This formed the basis for one of the questions in the survey.

Figure 12

Do you think there is a need for LGBT-specific sports clubs, teams or activities?



This was one of the few questions within the survey where there was a substantial difference in view between LGBT and non-LGBT responses. 40% of LGBT people felt there was a need for LGBT specific sports clubs however only 13% of non-LGBT respondents shared that view. Interestingly, a third of both LGBT and non-LGBT participants were not sure. This was one of the most complex set of results within the survey. Many people could see both sides of the argument and this was reflected in many of the survey comments.

It's clear from the survey comments that there is a degree of misunderstanding about the composition of such clubs. Both LGBT and non LGBT people raised concerns about exclusivity and discrimination if non LGBT people were excluded from these groups. There were also concerns that a more open,

inclusive approach to mainstream sport might be jeopardised by the segregation of LGBT participants into LGBT only clubs. However, a significant number of respondents acknowledged that LGBT participants might feel more confident about taking part in sport in an LGBT friendly environment.

As part of this research, in depth and wide ranging interviews were conducted with 20 LGBT sports groups. Interviews covered their history, membership demographics, difficulties they've faced, as well as their views on the role of LGBT specific clubs. The following testimonies from club organisers give a flavour of the diversity of the groups available.

"Most of the girls are gay but there are 3 straight women and it covers a range of outdoors sports including climbing, kayaking and mountain biking. We have about 80 people involved in our forum but not all participate, the most we've had was 18 women at one climb. It's a very active group." (Go Active, a women's outdoors sports club)

"We've competed in the Bingham Cup which is the Gay Rugby World Cup. We play other gay teams internationally and across the UK but we also play local straight teams. We have a couple of straight guys who come along but it's a gay focussed, straight friendly club. We have 33 active players registered this season. We have about the same number of supporters, coaches, committee members and so on." (Caledonian Thebans, Rugby Union)

"I've had to work hard to persuade [the local leisure centre] to describe our group in their literature as LGBT friendly and not just as any other group. That's not been easy. We need their help if we're to be successful as an LGBT friendly group." (Inverness Running)

"It started off as a jogging, fitness, running club, meeting once a week for an hour and we had between 5 and 8 people taking part." (First Steps, LGBT fitness group)

"We've had a great response. I'm coaching roughly 20-25 people at a time. $\frac{3}{4}$ of them are women and $\frac{1}{4}$ are men. It's a drop-in session in an LGBT space which is inclusive to straight people. We have a couple of trans guys that come along. It's a big thing for them but they have a passion for it." (LGBT Outdoor Basketball)

"We play in a mainstream snooker hall I know well. It was important that I knew the environment if I was going to bring an LGBT team into a straight hall. We don't advertise it here as a LGBT group but the staff know and it's a welcoming environment." (LGBT Snooker)

"The team is competitive but it's meant to be there for everyone to play. We've got people who come along who've never really played before and who come for fun; we have players who've played regularly but they didn't feel they fitted in to their

mainstream team and we've got guys who are very competitive. We have gay players, bi players, female players, straight players. It's a great mixture." (Hotscots, Football)

"We have about a dozen people coming along to weekly sessions. The club strikes a balance between social play and inclusion with some coaching and people trying to get better. I'm straight and I got involved through a gay friend. It's a welcoming place. Here, I'm not having to perform for anyone else. I'm just playing sport and having fun." (Shuttlescots, Badminton)

"We have up to 26 members with around 24 taking part regularly. It's 50/50 male female. If someone says they want to come along with a straight ally then that's fine with us. One issue we do have is we can't take youngsters because we're not signed up to the child protection scheme so we can't take anyone under 18." (Racqueteers, Badminton)

"In 2 years it's gone from being a group of 5 to a club of 65 people. I think that's because we're a social club, a friendly club and running's part of it. We have people who come along to do 5k and it's more a social thing for them and there are others who want to improve their running." (Gay Front Runners)

There was a significant difference between the views expressed in the survey on this issue and those expressed by people who are taking part in sport and physical activity within LGBT groups. Amongst those taking part in LGBT sports groups there was, perhaps not surprisingly, overwhelming support for these clubs and the need for people to have a choice about where they took part in physical activity or sport.

Part of the reason for this disparity may be due to the perceptions amongst both gay and straight people alike who don't take part in these groups that they are for LGBT people only, or the view that playing sport in an LGBT specific club is a form of segregation. Having interviewed office bearers, organisers and members from the vast majority of these groups, the reality is that there are, or there have been, straight people taking part in every LGBT sports group in Scotland.

LGBT and straight people taking part in LGBT sports clubs shared their views on this issue.

"I think there are arguments on both sides. It's good being with your peers especially in rugby because it's a contact, quite aggressive sport and maybe that puts some people off going to straight teams." (Gay man. 25-34. Thebans. Rugby)

"I think it's good that there are LGBT specific teams that are open to anyone. I don't think it can do any harm. It's one of the areas we get most criticism. Sometimes people think, wrongly, that we're only, exclusively LGBT, which we're not. I know there are LGBT people in mainstream teams who feel they're the odd one out" (Gay man. 35-44. Hotscots. Football)

“Sports teams and clubs can be homophobic environments.” (Bi woman. 25-34. GFR. Running)

“The team is aimed at LGBT people but it’s open to everyone. I have thought about the guys who play in our team and I sometimes ask if the Hotscots didn’t exist how many of them would play in a straight football team or be out in a straight team. I think a handful would but most wouldn’t.” (Gay man. 25-34. Hotscots. Football)

“It helps newly out people who may be struggling with low self-esteem or struggling to make gay friends. It also helps people who have experienced problems being out in a hetero club. It could be people’s only avenue for playing sport or for getting out and meeting people.” (Gay man. 35-44. Racqueteers. Badminton)

“I don’t know if I would have had the confidence to go and join a straight badminton group. Saying you’re gay can still sometimes be difficult and even now at my age fills me with a sense of apprehension because you don’t know what the person’s reaction is going to be. So that makes it a completely relaxed environment where I’m able to just enjoy the sport.” (Gay man. 35-44. Shuttlescots. Badminton)

“I’ve no sense of there being barriers to me playing sport here. I can be 110% myself at this club and I’m never embarrassed, I’m never made to guard what I’m saying and that’s quite liberating. It’s idealistic and a little naive to think that we don’t need LGBT groups in all sorts of fields.” (Gay man. 25-34. GFR)

“Society still has an issue about gay players in football so until it becomes more accepting you’ll still need LGBT football teams. Some people are outright afraid, that if they’re the only gay person in their team they’re going to get picked on but there are people here who could easily play professional level football with the skills they’ve got.” (Gay man. 25-34. Saltire Thistle. Football)

Within the LGBT Community sports interviews there were a number of specific questions asked of the organisers of LGBT community groups including their views on the biggest difficulties facing LGBT clubs or teams. Many raised funding issues, problems with advertising and the difficulties of attracting and retaining players. However, a few organisers raised concerns that most people taking part in LGBT sports groups are men between the ages of 25 and 40.

Given comments elsewhere within this report about the greater levels of lesbian involvement in mainstream sport, lower women’s participation rates in LGBT sports groups suggest they may not feel the same need to take part in LGBT specific groups.

“I think some groups can struggle to let people know they exist. I’m also concerned that within the clubs there’s not training to help organisers deal with challenging members, for example those with mental health issues.” (Lesbian. 25-34. Amazing Gracies. Football)

“One big problem we’ve had is that there’s been no Scottish based research about LGBT participation or about homophobia in Scotland. Any funding requests any LGBT clubs or voluntary sector bodies have submitted have lacked that research and evidence base. Groups need practical help and funding but if we had more statistics about people taking part that would help.” (Gay man. 25-34. Shuttlescots. Badminton)

“The Thebans play other gay rugby teams all around Britain and there are a lot of travel and accommodation costs involved in that. Some players just can’t afford it. Another difficulty for us in comparison to a straight team is in terms of recruitment and retention... while an established straight team might have progression through the ranks we don’t have junior sections so it makes it more difficult to build a squad.” (Gay man. 25-34. Thebans. Rugby)

However, LGBT Sports organisers felt many of the challenges they faced were also issues for mainstream clubs. They had the same needs around raising funds for travel, kits, training and venue fees. Some teams had sponsorship, usually from LGBT specific businesses such as pubs, clubs and dating websites.

“Promotional support would be most helpful. We’ve had issues around a Facebook page with people feeling that it outs them and they’re not ready for that. I’m not sure we’ve got group marketing right.” (Gay man. 25-34. GLC. Badminton)

“A lot of LGBT people who haven’t focussed on sport earlier in life or have been marginalised in sport at school maybe aren’t as skilful or they lack confidence in their sport as a result. It’s good to be able to get coaching and training. We’re lucky we’ve had a grant which allowed us to have a coach.” (Gay man. 35-44. Shuttlescots. Badminton)

“I think just general governing body support and recognition for LGBT sport would be a big boost.” (Bi woman. 24-33 GFR. Running)

There were also many significant survey comments about LGBT specific clubs.

“Safe spaces are important.”

“I’m not sure this would help or exacerbate the problem. However, I do think specific LGBT teams would help LGBT people become more interested in taking part in sport.”

“In current homophobic climate there is a need for supportive clubs”

“I think there is a great sense of community and belonging that can come from LGBT-specific sports activities.”

“Generally I am not in favour of LGBT specific activities as it encourages alienation. This ultimately undermines the goal of changing non-LGBT people’s view of LGBT people because they do not get to interact together and built positive relationships. However, if LGBT people are not comfortable with mainstream sports teams then given the importance of sports I am not against LGBT specific teams.”

“At present, yes – in ideal world, no. It’s also beneficial as a support structure in itself.”

“LGBT teams may increase participation in sports but will not necessarily reduce the discrimination against wider participation.”

“Regular competition by an openly LGBT side breaks down barriers and removes the stigma”

“I can see this as a transitional thing but it could quickly become a temptation to ghettoise LGBT people and avoid mainstream sport acknowledging the issues or moving to change.”

“I don’t think it helps. I think it’s about making sport inclusive.”

4.5.1 **LGBT Sports Groups and SGBs**

Most of the LGBT sports groups interviewed were informal groups so the vast majority had had little to do with SGBs or organisations such as **sportscotland**. Amongst the larger and more established teams there had been some engagement with SGBs with differing levels of success.

Generally speaking, teams had asked for minimal support or assistance from their relevant Scottish Governing Body. They had approached them for a number of reasons: for affiliation or recognition, for assistance with training, for information about club accreditation and child protection as well as for assistance in dealing and making contact with mainstream teams in the same sport. Very few (Glasgow Front Runners, Caledonian Thebans) were affiliated to an SGB although some were considering it.

Community comments on SGB links

“As far as Scottish Basketball’s concerned they’re doing not bad but it’s not their priority even though there are players who might be gay. I don’t think they’re giving the support to individuals. They need systems in place to support people. They still don’t know how to deal with it and it’s many years since they dealt with me coming out. It’s not that they don’t want to but they don’t know how.” (Gay man. 25-34. Basketball coach)

“Two years ago Hotscots the football team I played with were denied access to the SFA’s public liability insurance because they didn’t play in a league. When they did play straight

teams they were subjected to homophobic abuse. Yet we were the team not getting SFA support. I don't think homophobia is on the SFA's agenda. Through work, I've spoken with the English Cricket Board and was really impressed that they see this as part of the work they do with families and they've recognised that families are changing. They want to send a clear message that cricket is for everybody. I want Scottish sports bodies to share that attitude." (Gay man. 25-34. Hotscots. Football)

"We have quite a close relationship with the SRU. We host a rugby weekend every year with about 9 or 10 teams coming to play from around the country and overseas. For the past 6 or 7 years the SRU have sent 4 of their development coaches to work with us and support us. We couldn't do it without them and I know all the players who come along really appreciate it. I think they were ahead of their time in this. We're registered with them and we get insurance and support I feel we're treated the same as everyone else and that's a good thing. We don't ask for anything else from them, we're very happy with the support they give us." (Gay man. 25-34. Thebans. Rugby)

"We contacted the SFA originally in 2008. The FA were having adverts in programmes saying homophobia isn't acceptable and I approached the SFA to say this is what's happening down south. Essentially we were told the FA was awash with money, and the SFA said that they had bigger problems to tackle in sectarianism and racism. We weren't looking for money, we were just looking for some form of recognition of us and of homophobia. We could have simply been included somewhere on the website or there could have been a campaign against racism, sectarianism, homophobia and any other abuse that was happening within football" (Gay man. 35-44. Hotscots. Football)

"We just discussed affiliating to Badminton Scotland at our last committee meeting. We discussed what we'd get out of it if we joined because we're not competitive at all. So we wondered what it would add to us as a club." (Straight woman. 25-34. Shuttlescots.)

"We have membership with Scottish Athletics and we also have membership with International Frontrunners. We pay fees to Jog Scotland for their training of our jog leaders. Anyone who has that has indemnity insurance which is crucial. It's important to do this properly. We have 8 jog leaders. The previous Secretary contacted Scottish Athletics and they did point us in the right direction about getting started and getting funding. That was positive. We've received some grants from Glasgow City Council and from LGBT West of Scotland Forum who gave us funds to pay for advertising." (Gay man. 25-34. GFR. Running)

"It's a good idea to encourage LGBT teams. We got £5k from the Lottery this year to help with travel and accommodation costs of being in the Gay Football Supporters Network – the gay league. We've got games coming up in Bristol and Birmingham. The Bristol trip costs us almost £2k for 20 flights. When we play London we travel by Megabus and stay in a hostel. It's an expensive league to be in." (Gay man. 25-34.)

“The SFA are absolutely terrible about tackling homophobia. Saltire Thistle approached them about what sort of policies they had and they don't have one. They have an equity policy for all strands which isn't good enough because LGBT get forgotten about. The FA are starting to do good stuff on this, supporting the Football against Homophobia campaign but the SFA is silent. It's too old school and stuck in the 1960s to do that sort of thing. They need modernised. There are other issues in Scottish football right now but this issue has been raised and the time is right to have a campaign but it's just silence. We didn't really approach them after that because they sort of brushed us off. We were offering to work with them and we were just blanked so it's put us off.”

Gay man. 25-34. Saltire Thistle. Football)

“I contacted Jog Scotland when we were setting up the running group and they've been great” (Gay man. Inverness Running Group)

“Two of us are trainers and we're self-funding so we haven't asked for support. I sometimes feel quite guilty that if I could get my act together and affiliate to a national body it might be beneficial to the group. Some of us are members of the Scottish Canoe Association and the Mountaineering Council and we have funding from them as individuals to do courses. I think they're both excellent bodies so I wouldn't want to say that we don't want to affiliate.” (Lesbian. 35-44. Go Active. Climbing)

Many sports professionals interviewed believed that SGBs and clubs would be happy to engage with LGBT clubs and potential LGBT participants however, it was felt they lacked knowledge about how to go about engaging with the LGBT community.

Research participants suggested a number of ways in which SGBs and sports clubs might engage with LGBT issues:

1. Identify and contact national or local LGBT organisations including LGBT sports clubs. Discuss options for engagement and linking with LGBT organisations and sports groups.
2. Specifically include LGBT issues in any statements about equality and/or community engagement.
3. Display LGBT friendly logos on organisational websites.
4. Attend community oriented LGBT events e.g. Pride.
5. Place adverts and features in LGBT press and on LGBT organisation's websites.
6. Organise events tackling homophobia and transphobia or have a focus on LGBT sports stars.

4.5.2 Supporting LGBT Sports Groups

Edinburgh currently has more LGBT sports groups than any other part of the country. This is, in part, testimony to the success of the LGBT Centre for Health and Wellbeing's LGBT Active programme which sustained and supported LGBT clubs.

Development support is crucial to the establishment of LGBT clubs in Scotland. As LGBT sports clubs are less likely to be affiliated to SGBs the support provided to LGBT sports groups by organisations like the Equality Network and the LGBT Centre for Health and Wellbeing played an important role in the development and sustainability of new groups.

It is therefore welcome that a new national organisation which aims to support the development of LGBT sports clubs has now been established. LEAP Sports (standing for Leadership, Equality and Active Participation) was formed when a number of LGBT community sports activists came together. The organisation is now fully constituted and has secured Scottish Government funding.

The Chair of the new body acknowledges a difference of opinion within the group on whether or not there should be LGBT sports groups, which mirrors the difference of opinion in the Out for Sport survey.

"There's a bit of a split on our committee and it came through strongly in the survey, between those who think we do need specific LGBT groups and those who don't. A lot of people who might argue that we don't, achieve highly and are possibly more likely to be involved in elite sport. I think when you're more likely to succeed at that level then you're more accepted anyway. It doesn't really begin to tackle the numbers of people who've never had the opportunities to either demonstrate that competence or because of the negative experiences they've had have not quite lived up to their sporting potential. We do believe there's a place for LGBT specific groups but we're also committed to mainstreaming and LGBT people having positive experiences no matter where they play."

Rurality is an issue which has been raised with LEAP Sports because of the lack of LGBT teams and other community support outwith the central belt of Scotland. Generally speaking LGBT people in rural areas are less likely to have disclosed their sexual orientation or gender identity²². Stonewall Scotland's City Lights report showed that three quarters of LGBT people living in rural areas felt they had to leave their hometown before they could 'come out' as LGBT²³.

²² Stonewall Scotland City Lights; A study of Scottish LGBT Migration Patterns, 2009

²³ See reference above

The LEAP Sports chair said,

“There’s not the critical mass of people for there to be viable LGBT sports teams but these are areas where people do feel they’re more likely to face discrimination so people feel doubly excluded. If there’s an area where there aren’t LGBT sports options we’re interested in finding out if there are particular mainstream clubs that are LGBT friendly, possibly where other LGBT people have had good experiences. Almost like a referral system. We’re looking at the possibility of some form of LGBT sports charter of rights so people can say we’re an LGBT friendly club, a way in which clubs can market themselves as being inclusive because there are some very good examples out there.”

He envisages a role working with mainstream clubs, giving clubs an idea of the kinds of things they can do in order to engage and increase LGBT participation.

The current plans are that LEAP Sports will work through sub groups or regional forums, possibly with LGBT sports groups as members of LEAP with representatives on the committee or in the regional forums. The Edinburgh LGBT Sports Forum includes two representatives from each of the local LGBT sports teams and is already operating with the assistance of Edinburgh Leisure.

At a national level, Equality Network, LGBT Youth Scotland and Stonewall Scotland, the three national LGBT organisations, have been funded to work on the sports agenda, which includes sharing best practice, developing the policy agenda and building an LGBT legacy for the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. LEAP Sports three year funding will secure a part time member of staff to take its work forward, beginning with the setting up of a central web portal for LGBT sports groups and outdoor activities. Other commitments include establishing two new sports clubs outwith the Central Belt, producing a national toolkit for new sports groups, providing multi-activity taster events for LGBT young people encouraging them to try out new sports and supporting Scottish teams taking part in the Gay Games and the Out Games.

Community comments on LEAP Sports

“I think it’s a fantastic idea to provide support and best practice for fledgling and established sports clubs. I’ve been involved in something similar in my workplace so I know these networks have value. It’s an opportunity for those involved in LGBT sport to have a community of people who think like them and who are facing the same issues.”
(Gay man. 25-34)

“LEAP also want to look at representation at events like the Gay Games and the Out Games. There are good sportswomen and men out there and it would be great if Scotland could send a national delegation – like Ireland do – to events where up to 18,000 people are taking part in sport. Right now it’s just individuals.” (Gay man. 25-34)

“I haven’t heard of LEAP but a central website for all LGBT sports teams would be a huge benefit. Right now people just tend to do their own thing. Support for organisers would be good.” (Gay man. 25-34. Badminton club organiser)

“Edinburgh Council Sports Development Officer gave us sample constitutions and information but I don’t know how visible that is. I think we had to go looking for it. It would be good to have easily accessible information and best practice in a one stop shop.” (Chair. Hotscots)

LEAP Sports will, to some extent, model themselves on Pride Sports which is the UK’s foremost LGBT Sports Development and Equity organisation. They work across sports to challenge homophobia and transphobia and ensure LGBT people are able to participate in sport and physical activity.

4.6 **LGBT Equality Policy and Practice in Scottish sport**

The equality policies of both UK and Scottish Governments and Parliaments are taken forward by a range of key sports sector partners including local authorities, national governing bodies, sports clubs and the justice authorities.

The challenge for all partners is that delivery on the ground should mirror the national political aspirations of a fairer, more just Scotland which is embodied in a number of pieces of equality legislation.

As organisations that are focussed on improving the day to day lives of Scotland’s LGBT community there is a central role for LGBT equality groups and it is essential that both nationally and locally they play an active part. This will mean that for many such organisations there will need to be a greater focus on sports policy and practice and on building partnerships with the sports sector than there has been in the past.

There was a recognition amongst many service providers that more should be done to tackle LGBT issues. The Director of Sport within the City of Edinburgh Council acknowledged that while some action had been taken there was a gap between work being done on gender and race and that being done on sexual orientation and gender identity.

“There’s a hierarchy of equalities and this is down at the bottom. It’s seen as being about lifestyle. It probably hasn’t helped that legislation has covered different strands at different times but when it gets into large organisations like councils it becomes institutionalised again and for all that we’ve had legislation then people see it as a big problem. I accept that it doesn’t have to be difficult and the cost doesn’t have to be high but it can become a major issue. Just go and ask people what they’re wanting and generally what will come back to councils and trusts will be quite straightforward. I

accept we sometimes have to take a stand and discriminate in favour of certain sections otherwise it won't change."

4.6.1 **Scottish Governing Bodies of Sport**

Scottish Governing Bodies of sport have a key role to play in addressing inequalities in sport. 90% of survey respondents felt they should be taking the lead in tackling homophobia and transphobia in sport.

SGBs are not a homogenous group; they consist of everything from voluntary bodies with no staff to organisations which have several hundred employees. It is important therefore that there is an appreciation from LGBT groups and others that not all SGBs can tackle issues of equality policy and practice from an equal footing. There is therefore a particular role for **sportscotland** and LGBT organisations in supporting smaller SGBs to improve LGBT participation.

The Out for Sport project has set out to gather as complete a picture of LGBT people's sporting experiences as possible across a range of sports and physical activities.

A number of different approaches were made to SGBs for information. Questionnaires were sent to 37 governing bodies listed on the **sportscotland** website asking about their Equality policies, work on the Equality Standard, monitoring of LGBT participation and any initiatives they had undertaken in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity. They were also asked about any barriers to LGBT participation or instances of homophobia or transphobia within their sport.

Disappointingly, information was only received from three sports. Questionnaire responses were received from one physical activity SGB, Scottish Yoga, and e-mails with information were received from the Scottish Canoe Association (SCA) and Scottish Squash and Racketball. All three SGBs had equality policies in place and on their websites. Scottish Squash are currently working towards the Preliminary (second) level of the Equality Standard while the Scottish Canoe Association is working towards the third level, Intermediate. Both were in regular contact with **sportscotland** for support.

As a result of that, the SCA are currently collecting statistics on all equality strands and encouraging their members to complete an equality profile form. This is being promoted through their website and their member's magazine as well as being incentivised through the offer of a prize draw. SCA also include equality training in the education of their coaches both within specific course modules and as part of coaching conferences.

None of the respondents had engaged in particular LGBT work or campaigns. The CEO of Scottish Squash said that while he was not aware of any LGBT issues in Squash it didn't

mean there were none. The CEO of the SCA said “We have not run a tackling homophobia campaign in canoeing. There are a number of other areas of focus currently within our action plan”, while the Secretary of Scottish Yoga, which receive no funding from **sportscotland**, felt that there were no LGBT issues to address and nor were they aware of there ever having been any issues. They continued that they have no plans to introduce policies ‘which are not necessary’.

Additionally, helpful and informative meetings were held with BADMINTON Scotland, Scottish Cycling, the Scottish Rugby Union and the Scottish Football Association.

Scottish Cycling are currently working towards the third stage of the Equality Standard, Intermediate, with assistance from **sportscotland**. Their CEO felt there weren’t barriers to LGBT people taking part in cycling.

“Cycling is very much an individual sport. People meet in a car park, take part and then go so we don’t have the same issues about changing rooms. I wouldn’t say we’re pro-active about it but I wouldn’t say we’re not gay friendly. It’s not been an issue in cycling. We’ve got some early British Cycling participation statistics which suggest 5.6% are gay men or bisexual but we’ve just started monitoring for sexual orientation. We haven’t had any reported incidents or complaints.”

He also highlighted the pressures facing volunteer reliant SGBs in servicing the needs of members and taking on particular policy issues such as equality.

“SGBs have to recognise that sport receives a considerable amount of public money. British and Scottish Parliaments have signed up to legislation so there has to be an expectation that people will abide by that but what’s in place to support SGBs to do this day to day? We’ve got SDS to cover disability – people know there’s a place to go. If you look at Children 1st, there’s been huge investment to support SGBs and local authorities in terms of child protection. The reality is without these groups it would be difficult. It would be helpful to have somewhere you could go to that covered LGBT issues in sport or to have an equalities organisation which covers all the strands with expertise within that. Sports clubs need advice.”

His suggestion of a central contact point covering LGBT equality sports issues was one which was echoed by a number of other SGB interviewees. He also raised concerns about the lack of a national club accreditation framework given the need to change the culture of grassroots clubs and the possibility of using accreditation schemes as a lever for insuring clubs are at a certain standard in terms of equalities.

Badminton Scotland’s equity officer felt the sport was “gay friendly”. Badminton Scotland have an Equality Policy and are working towards the Intermediate level of the Equality Standard. They haven’t had anyone come forward with any LGBT issues however she wasn’t complacent on that point.

“It’s not to say they don’t exist but we haven’t had them raised with us. It could be happening at club level and that’s not communicated to us as the governing body. I don’t think there are barriers to LGBT people taking part but as people are coming from a group that have been discriminated against we have more responsibility to try to eliminate any perceived problems, to do some specific targeting as well as just saying we’re open to everyone.”

They were positive about further engagement with the Equality Network.

“Our Equality Action Plan at the moment doesn’t include anything about sexual orientation. So as it’s a live document, that’s something we can add and we will revise it, particularly because of these discussions, as we move to intermediate level. Sexual orientation is listed in our general equality policy but only as one of the protected characteristics. The CEO sees engagement on this as positive in terms of increasing participation, getting to know our members, supporting clubs and, hopefully, getting new affiliated LGBT clubs. As a governing body we’re only going to benefit. Engagement with this research project has been a good exercise for us. It’s a bit of a starting point.”

Badminton Scotland were pleased to hear that there were already four LGBT badminton clubs in Scotland and were keen to see groups affiliated.

“Any club can affiliate with us because there’s different strands so if you’re a social club, without a committee or office bearers you can still affiliate. We’d be happy to think about a Badminton Scotland LGBT competition and would be interested in kick starting extra connection.”

Following the meeting with Badminton Scotland they began work on updating their Action Plan to include sexual orientation and engagement with the LGBT community. They are also preparing a paper to go to their Board about transgender participation.

4.6.2 **The Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport**

The Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport was launched by the UK Sports Councils, including **sportscotland**, in 2004, to help address the inequalities that exist within the sports sector. The Standard is owned and managed by the Sports Councils Equality Group whose members are **sportscotland**, Sport Northern Ireland, Sport Wales, Sport England and UK Sport. It is a framework to guide SGBs, and national sports organisations towards achieving equality.

The Standard has been developed to reflect current legislation and has been recently refreshed by the Sports Councils Equality Group. The Standard now reflects the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and the nine protected characteristics including sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

There are four levels of the Standard, starting with Foundation, then Preliminary, then Intermediate and finally Advanced level. The principles of each level are

Foundation

The organisation is committed to equality and that commitment is communicated to all staff and volunteers.

Preliminary

The organisation is clear about what it needs to do to achieve equality, it understands the issues and barriers faced by under-represented groups in sports and has a robust equality action plan which all staff, volunteers and key stakeholders understand.

Intermediate

The organisation is increasing opportunities for participation and involvement by diverse range of people including representation on its own leadership, staff, board and senior volunteers. All internal policies pay due regard to diversity.

Advanced

Leadership and staff, including coaches and officials as well as participants, are offered a fair and equal opportunity and are reflective of the community the organisation serves. Equality is central to the way an organisation carries out all of its work. All affiliated organisations and clubs are able to engage and develop participants, coaches, officials and administrators from underrepresented groups.

To date, as a minimum investment requirement, **sportscotland** has required all sports to have an Equality Policy. **sportscotland** gives guidance and support to SGBs who are working towards the different levels.

Currently 30 Scottish sports have achieved the Foundation level, 14 have gone on to achieve Preliminary but none have achieved either Intermediate or Advanced levels.

sportscotland suggest that the benefits of the Equality Standard include:

- » Helping to ensure democracy and sound governance of the sport.
- » Mitigating against legal action and helping to meet legal duties.
- » Enhancing the skills and knowledge base of staff and volunteers.
- » Increasing involvement in equality at all levels of the organisation.
- » Helping to open sport up to all sectors of the community.
- » Encouraging more potential administrators, coaches, officials and volunteers.
- » Increasing participation by reaching new audiences.

Their recently published updated guidance for sports organisations notes that “The Standard is one mechanism through which the sports councils are able to meet their public sector equalities duties. It also supports sports organisations to consider and engage with equality, both within their internal structure and process, and in the form of developing actions and initiatives which encourage participation in sport by people who share one of the protected characteristics.” (Draft Version, March 2012).

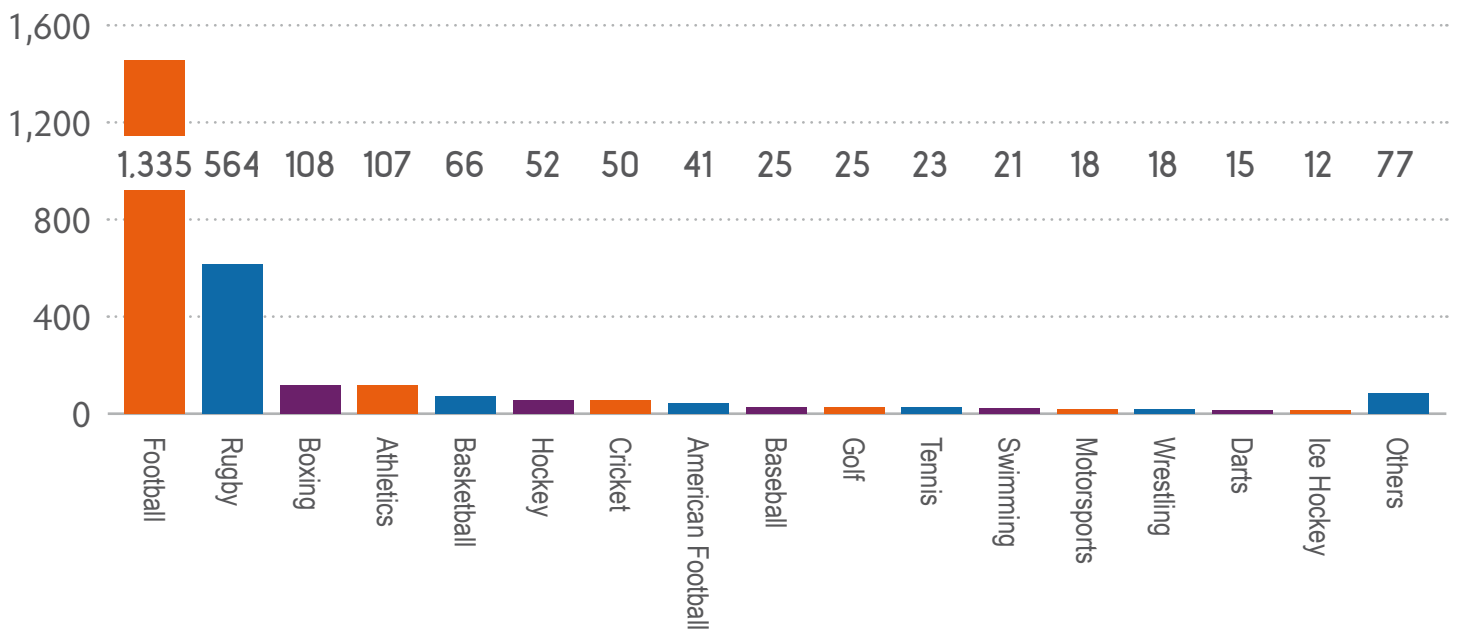
If the principles of the Standard are to be achieved, equality must be embedded and mainstreamed into the work of SGBs and other sports bodies. However, there is a great deal of anecdotal evidence identified in the Out for Sport research which suggests that a number of organisations are still paying lip service to the Standard and that it is seen by many as simply a tick box exercise to secure funding. sportscotland have indicated that they are making efforts to address this.

4.6.3 The SFA and Homophobia/Transphobia in Football

Not surprisingly, given its prominent role and impact on Scotland's sporting culture, football figured significantly in the comments and views expressed by research participants and was identified through the survey respondents, by a significant margin, as the sport which had the greatest problems with homophobia and transphobia.

Within the survey, people were asked which sports, if any, have the greatest problem with homophobia or transphobia. 1,382 respondents answered the question. 1,335 suggested Football, 564 Rugby, 108 Boxing and 107 Athletics.

Figure 13



Both in the survey and in interviews with LGBT community groups, more respondents identified problems in football than in any other sport. This may, in part at least, reflect the fact that football is the highest participation sport in Scotland. However, it should also be noted that because football is one of the most popular sports, problems of homophobia and transphobia in football can have a particularly significant impact on people and society.

Interviews were carried out with a number of people associated with the Scottish Football Association over several months, including the Head of Human Relations, who is the officer in charge of the SFA's Equalities work at a senior management level, and the Head of Women and Girls' football. Although the response to some questions, and contact made by some of the LGBT football teams, reflect historic inaction on homophobia and transphobia,

actions taken during this recent period appear to suggest that this is an issue which the SFA are now seeking to address.

In response to questions about whether or not there had been complaints about the treatment of LGBT people within football, the SFA said that they had not had any reports but this was an issue that should be taken up with the Scottish Premier League, the Scottish Football League and the football clubs. To date they confirmed that the SFA had not taken part in, led or joined any special initiatives or campaigns to tackle homophobia or transphobia.

The SFA had recently undertaken some diversity monitoring among the board, staff, and a statistically significant number of match officials, coaches and elite players. 650 people were monitored in total and LGBT people accounted for around 2%. They had also undertaken diversity work in a number of areas including age, ethnicity, gender and disability, but not yet on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The SFA were currently engaged in on-going discussions with the Amazing Gracies, LBT women's football team, about accessing a coach. There have been changes to club accreditation which meant more help was now potentially available to LGBT teams. They accepted that previously LGBT teams might have been told there was nothing Regional Development Officers could do to assist them because the Quality Mark club accreditation scheme was only available clubs which had junior teams. It was now available to adult teams and LGBT clubs could potentially access coaching and development officer time through that.

New opportunities for joint working between LGBT teams and the SFA were confirmed by the Regional Development Manager for South East Scotland.

"When I was contacted by the Hotscots about 3 years ago our remit within grassroots football was about developing youth sport and it didn't really go into the adult game at all. Maybe we should look at sign posting to LGBT clubs because of the work we're now doing in the adult game. Our Quality Mark says "we rubber stamp this club, it's a club of good practice". It could be a single adult team, a straight team or an LGBT team. Part of the existing criteria is that the team is affiliated to a national affiliation for example Scottish Amateur Football through Scottish Youth Football Association and they didn't fulfil that. But there could be ways in which we could look at it. Because part of the affiliation is to demonstrate that they've got insurance for their players and I know that the Hotscots have gone out and got insurance for themselves. We recognise what they are doing. There's no Scottish National Association for it but if the Gay Football Supporters Network is looked at as the organising league we could look at that on a case by case basis. Hopefully they could get the Quality Mark and maybe that opens the doors for others and helps them."

He continued by explaining that the SFA have had concerns previously about working with LGBT sides.

“There was one women’s club who did contact us talking about trying to build a bigger community club. It may come down to the fact that we’re not educated in the area. They were talking about youth sections and things like that and it just flagged up to us that we weren’t too sure if this was the right direction. Is it the right thing to do, to have u-13, u-15 girls to be part of an LGBT football team? Is that the right thing for us to do and if not, why not? So this is the bit that was uncomfortable for us, for us to then start to work with a club, particularly one that wanted to work with youth, which specifically said we want to work with a gender would be an issue.”

He felt football was getting better at tackling equality issues and pointed to the effort and financial investment being put into specific development officers for Women’s and Girls’ football and BME, with 5 new BME posts being set up across the 6 regional development regions. There are coach education courses specifically for women and recognised coaching course for coaching players with a disability. However, there are no specific efforts being put into increasing LGBT participation. He believed that LGBT issues were still a taboo subject, and because of that people don’t know where to go to get advice.

“So I can appreciate that sometimes it’s easier to just put it to the side but we’d be happy to have LGBT partners. I’m not really aware of people having to deal with homophobia or with people coming out but I don’t know if that’s because people don’t want to be open while playing football or because they’ve maybe chosen to give up playing football because of it.”

The head of the Women’s game was clear that there was a difference between the men’s and women’s game in terms of LGBT participation.

“There are more out players in the women’s game than the men’s, a lot of lesbian women players are integrated into the mainstream but the women’s game is different. For a start, it’s not their livelihood.”

The Scottish FA achieved Foundation Level of the Equality Standard in 2009 and have recently achieved Preliminary level. They’re establishing an action plan to address under representation as identified from the foundation level audit and have been working with Stonewall Scotland to take forward their Good Practice Guide approach and to become a Diversity Champion. They’ve just appointed their first Equity Officer and updated their Equity Policy in February 2012 to include reference to all protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010. The Head of HR confirmed that their Action Plan for 2014 would include some equality work with coaches and they had looked at what other NGBs had done, including the FA and RFL.

The Regional Development manager felt that derogatory, negative terms and the desire to fit into a team would keep professional footballers from coming out. However, he did feel that a more LGBT friendly approach would be positive for Scottish football.

“The positive for football in increasing LGBT participation would be that you might have the most talented player that’s ever graced the game in Scotland who at 15 years old chooses not to play football anymore because of abuse he’s getting because he’s gay or because he just doesn’t want to go into that environment. So, for me, the more open everyone is, and the more educated people are towards it, that can only be a positive. It’s positive, that you’re an inclusive sport.”

One bisexual Grade 6 SFA referee also raised concerns.

“There’s a real visibility problem in terms of not only gay footballers but also gay or bisexual referees. I’ve certainly witnessed abuse at matches and I don’t see anything being done about it by the authorities in the way that they’re just starting the scratch the surface of sectarian and racial abuse. What I do come across in training sessions mostly is homophobia amongst other referees. It’s background banter: they don’t know I’m bi. It’s casual homophobia but it’s still abuse even though it’s not directed at anyone. It’s certainly oppressive to anybody who’s gay who might hear it. I think it’s probably similar to what’s going on at elite level in wider football. There’s been an improvement in attitudes in sport generally but not in football. It’s important that the SFA takes this seriously but as far as I can see they have no policy. The English FA have, but they don’t.”

The SFA are working on a new Scottish Football Supporter’s Charter. The project manager sought a meeting to discuss the Out for Sport research, particularly in relation to football.

“We’re at the beginning of a process which is following on from the Offensive Behaviour legislation. Moving on to address behaviour that’s not extreme enough to land someone in court but is still not acceptable.”

The new charter is an attempt to address spectator behaviour in a way which involves spectators themselves, through local workshops, in setting their own code of conduct.

“It’ll be interesting to put some of these issues, homophobia included, to spectators’ workshops. I expect I’ll get some push back, “it’s only banter” “is it really an issue?” sort of stuff, but I think we have to think about what kind of environment we’ve created for families and LGBT fans. Is this really the best we can be? It’s not about taking away the humour or the spirit of the terraces but looking at when it goes too far.”

He also suggested that there was a difference in the way football supporters viewed racism, in comparison to other issues like sectarianism and homophobia.

“We found from some behavioural research we did that racism for a lot of fans was something which was reasonably clear cut and understandable. In terms of self-policing in the stadium they felt that if they said something to someone about their racist behaviour there would be other supporters who agreed and police and stewards would back them. We were looking at sectarianism as an issue and when it came to that people didn't have such a clear understanding about what was bigoted and what wasn't. So just like homophobic remarks they'd sit on their hands because they felt if they said something they wouldn't necessarily get backing from the crowd, stewards and the police... I get the feeling the homophobic stuff is similar in this culture. So we're focusing on fans, clubs, stewarding and policing as the key, critical relationships.”

The Equality Network has made early results from the Out for Sport survey and the research project available to the Supporter's Charter project team as well as suggesting they look at work done by the RFL (Rugby Football League) in England who have taken a zero tolerance position against homophobia. The RFL have fined clubs for the homophobic behaviour of fans and have devised and published guidance for clubs both in the community and professional levels of the game as part of their anti-homophobia campaign, Tackle It!²⁴

The testimonies of those who responded to the Out for Sport research suggest a similar approach in Scottish football is needed and would be welcomed by both LGBT and straight fans alike.

It's worth noting that behaviour/abuse from spectators is cited in the survey as the main reason there's so few out LGBT sports personalities.

A number of responses commented on the lack of an openly gay professional footballer in the SPL, football spectator behaviour, peer group pressure, a different approach being taken to homophobia than that taken against racism and a lack of action on these issues by key bodies, like the SFA.

Survey comments

“If only one professional footballer has 'come out' in 140 years there is a problem!”

“The Scottish FA has no campaign addressing or combating homophobia and one is sorely needed, partly due to the place that football has in society and the influence such a campaign would have. It's needed for the safety and welfare of LGBT footballers.”

“I recently attended an old firm football match with my young cousin and I was disgusted with the homophobic language that some fans were using against players of the other

²⁴ Stonewall Scotland City Lights; A study of Scottish LGBT Migration Patterns, 2009

team. When I politely asked them to stop, I was bombarded with the same offensive language. A steward who was standing less than 5 feet from where I was chose to ignore this abuse. When I asked to report it, I was told that "It's just a bit of banter mate". It's not just "banter", this language and behaviour is preventing a lot of LGBT people across the country from taking part in sport. The football organising bodies need to work a lot harder on this issue."

"Amongst fans while we seem to have made a huge amount of progress in terms of racism, it seems acceptable to use homophobic insults."

It is routine in football for people to be called gay or 'fags' or other choice homophobic epithets if they miss the ball, or anything similar. There is also a culture of homophobia generally in the dressing room."

"Homophobic chants at football matches put me off attending."

"There is a reluctance with the clubs themselves to put forward positive messages around sexuality or gender identity in sport; this is indirect homophobia because it simply compounds the problem."

"The sports authorities are very vocal in their opposition to bigotry/racism/sexism but silent on homophobia."

While LGBT community comments were predominately negative and also included concerns about homophobic abuse at football matches there were other, more positive comments.

"I'd like to think sport's less homophobic than twenty years ago because society generally is. Anton Hysen, the Swedish footballer is the first professional footballer since Justin Fashanu to come out and he seems to get positive tweets and stuff. But you don't know what happens privately. They're bound to be young players coming through who are gay and people playing alongside them who don't care. Most young people don't care about their friend's sexuality." (Gay man. Hotscots)

"There's a new generation of fans. The majority of Scots don't have a problem with someone being gay so why should football fans have a problem. There's year on year improvement in social attitudes. So hopefully the environment at football matches will change too and be more amenable to LGBT fans and to a footballer coming out."

The Equality Network conducted a previous survey in 2011 asking for people's experiences of behaviour at football matches prior to the organisation giving evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee on the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2011.

There were 179 responses to that survey and 55.9% said they had witnessed or experienced homophobic, biphobic or transphobic behaviour at football matches or associated with football matches e.g. in a pub where a match is being shown on television.

The comments mirror those received in response to the Out for Sport survey in terms of the prevalence of homophobic abuse, the threatening nature of the experience and the effect they had on supporters, passers-by or players. They also highlighted the high level of homophobic postings on online football forums.

When people were asked in the earlier survey if they had experienced homophobic behaviour in other sports 72.9% said no and 27.1% said they had, with the largest numbers of incidents being identified around rugby.

4.6.4 **The SRU and Homophobia/Transphobia in Rugby**

Within the Out for Sport survey rugby was identified as the sport which, after football, had the greatest problems with homophobia and transphobia. While there were a number of negative comments about rugby these were balanced to some extent by positive comments, for example, around how rugby handled the coming out of Gareth Thomas or the greater acceptance of lesbian and bisexual women.

Survey comments

"I used to play rugby and was a prop forward, after rumours went round that I was gay, comments were made, players refused to go in the scrum with me and I received threats when I went to use the showers and changing rooms. I stopped playing because of this."

"Being called a dyke regularly by members of the public whilst wearing rugby kit. Within the game it's the men that seem to have an issue with gay female players. It's completely accepted by those playing the game."

"Homophobic comments from the crowd at a professional rugby match at Goldenacre. I'd taken my then 14 year old son. We never went back."

"My son had to give up rugby when he came out as he wasn't welcome."

"I think that Gareth Thomas coming out was very brave, and opened the way for a discourse about homophobia within the rugby world."

"At school I witnessed someone get beaten up who was on the rugby team after he came out."

Constructive meetings were held with the Head of Women and Girls rugby and the Regional Development Manager (RDM) for Edinburgh as part of the Out for Sport research.

The SRU completed the second level of the Equality Standard (Preliminary) in December 2008. Although the SRU govern rugby they could only look at the SRU itself as an equitable organisation because it's only able to influence and apply those standards over the people they employ/appoint, not over the clubs who are the SRU's members, who all function independently. The Head of Women's rugby explains.

"I couldn't go to a club and say you have to allow women to play here. We can encourage them and try to support them but we can't require them. We're focussing on the issue of child protection and welfare because there's a strong legal imperative there so I can point out where the law is and what they must do and ways in which we can help them with advice and best practice. We would be able to do the same under equality legislation, we probably should."

The RDM for Edinburgh has worked with the Thebans who are Scotland's only gay rugby team and recognises some of the issues they face in building their experience.

"We've done a lot of work with the Caledonian Thebans over the past 5 or 6 years. We send coaches along to do development sessions at their annual tournament. There's a huge range of abilities in the Thebans."

Meanwhile, a significant number of lesbian women are playing in mainstream women's rugby teams. The Head of Women's Rugby for the SRU spoke to us about this:

"Female rugby players are a significant factor within the landscape of gay sport because it's an almost totally open, "out" sport. You can assume that all women's clubs are gay friendly. For a women's rugby team to declare themselves as an LGBT friendly team would almost be irrelevant and there are other reasons why they wouldn't do it. WRU has tried to send out a message that you don't have to be gay to play women's rugby. It's a massive issue. The homophobia works in reverse in women's rugby and it's a massive barrier to us building our participation numbers. The assumption is neither gay men or straight women play rugby. I suppose it's progress that after 25 years we've reached a place where rugby's viewed as a sport for straight men AND gay women but we still haven't gone as far as it's a sport for gay men or straight women. The one that's highest on our agenda honestly is straight girls because we have stated strategic aims around increasing participation of women. We don't have stated aims around participation by other groups within equality strands."

She accepted that rugby would not be an easy environment for an out player.

"You are training in a very intimate way, not just in the changing room like other sports, but the scrum is a deeply intimate situation. If you've got young players, they may not have the maturity to deal with difference so to introduce a newly out man into a culture where we don't have out men I'd imagine the first few times that's going to be really difficult."

Her SRU colleague believes more needs to be done to tackle bullying in sport.

"It's an anti-bullying thing more than anything. We had one example where at a coaching session a coach made a comment about a 10 year old's shirt being pink. His friends started picking on him, he complained to his parents and that kid then stopped playing rugby, just like that. So for me anti-bullying messages are the strongest ones here. If there was a much stronger anti-bullying message nationally in sport then people would maybe not be so afraid to say "I'm gay." There's still abuse, in the changing room and on the touchline. I'm a respectme anti-bullying trainer but I think Scottish sport needs a specific anti-bullying in sport programme workshop. Child protection doesn't cover it, equity doesn't cover it. We don't have a specific anti-bullying sports message. respectme will work with people going to them but we need something that goes out pro-actively to people. I've actually piloted an anti-bullying programme and we linked it in with Positive Coaching Scotland which is a good approach."

Having met with representatives of the SRU it was clear that there were major differences between the men's game and women's game in terms of the numbers of

LGBT players as well as in terms of attitudes. A specific questionnaire was devised which the SRU circulated to the Women's national squad to capture the views and experiences of international female rugby players. Three members responded to the questionnaire. Two players identified as lesbian, one as straight and all were open about their sexuality within the team. All three players felt that women's rugby was open to everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation. However, they all agreed there were perceptions about the sexuality of female players. One respondent said:

"There's the perception that all women's rugby players are lesbians and this is certainly not the case. There are a high number of gay people who play women's rugby but I think the same can be said of any women's sport, especially at higher levels. I think it can have a detrimental effect since some people can be put off, think they don't fit or wouldn't be comfortable with this stereotype. Once they come down to a training session this problem becomes null and void. In the youth game I think some parents put pressure on their daughters not to play."

One Scotland internationalist felt that, "there's more heterosexual than lesbian and bi players but the perception is damaging to the sport as it can discourage young girls from taking up or continuing with the sport. This pressure comes more from other people outwith the rugby environment rather than within it."

Only one player could recall witnessing a homophobic incident.

"Recently I heard a comment made by a male home supporter to a visiting player when she was leaving after a women's league match. Normally nothing bothers the player but the remark clearly upset her. I spoke to the guy and genuine apologies were made and accepted."

One player saw the biggest benefit she received from rugby as being the social aspects and the sense of belonging. She saw her team as being a source of support and reported that she had seen people who were struggling to come to terms with their sexuality being helped and supported. She also felt that she had seen some women who felt slightly pressurised into identifying as gay.

"There are a number of highly thought of senior and national team players that are openly gay and some of the youngsters look up to them and it can take a while for them to figure out exactly what they want. I guess that's all part of growing up anyway and it's not a major issue."

None of the players had played in LGBT specific teams and felt that within women's rugby there was no need for them. They all felt there were benefits in elite players being open about their sexuality but that it was a personal decision. They had

differing views on whether or not an elite athlete's performance might be impaired if they weren't out to teammates and others.

One lesbian player felt "it would depend on the individual but I doubt it would, unless it was having severe mental health effects on the person. Being an elite athlete is indicative of a fairly strong mental attitude so I would think they have worked out ways of dealing with it."

While another believed that performance could be impaired. "It's maybe not so important on the training pitch as everyone has a job to do, but in sport there's always a lot of time off pitch in social situations. These are the times in which if an individual has to worry about being themselves, this will definitely impact on pitch performance."

All felt that women's rugby didn't really need to do anything to increase participation but one felt that it might be useful to, "identify mentors in a number of different clubs that LGBT people could be put in touch with who are friendly and will help people take that step into sport."

4.6.5 Working in Partnership

There are a number of key intermediate organisations working in Scottish sport to assist local sports clubs, SGBs, higher and further education and individuals. Many LGBT community participants expressed the view that the national LGBT equality organisations such as the Equality Network should work in partnership with **sportscotland**, SGBs and other groups to improve participation. Respondents also felt there were roles for local authorities and university sports providers.

The Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils (SALSC) has a membership of over 40 Local Sports Councils, representing over 3000 sports clubs. SALSC represents the views of Scotland's grassroots sports clubs. Their Chief Operating Officer didn't have any examples of sports councils coming to him to ask about LGBT clubs. He says his members would see their role as supporting all clubs and would not discriminate positively or negatively. They would tend to engage with equality issues and partners on an ad hoc basis.

"The services they [local sports councils] develop are generic and applicable to all clubs regardless of their membership. Their focus is about grassroots sport and representing the community, they are there to offer support to all clubs on any topic. I feel confident saying that local sports councils would welcome any club from their local community wishing to become members."

Similarly, the Scottish Sports Association is the representative body of Scottish Governing Bodies of sport and they weren't aware of any occasions when SGB's had approached them in connection with LGBT participation or homophobia /transphobia in sport.

Their Policy and Communications Officer outlined their position.

"As the SSA we only take views on things our members ask us to take views on and we've never been asked to take a view on this. I would be hopeful our organisation would support any action against homophobia or transphobia as we would racism and any prejudice. Homophobia in sport must exist, if for no other reason than the cliché of no out footballers, but it doesn't seem to be a pressing issue. The SSA would guarantee that as an organisation we would assist with any sportsperson who felt they were being dealt with in a prejudicial manner, likewise we'd help a governing body with the legal framework, with best practice, with transgender issues."

Scottish Student Sport (SSS) was created in June 2011 as a partnership within the sports related units within Universities and colleges across the country. The member institutions represent 600 sports clubs and 25,000 competing students within a student population of 500,000. Their Chief Operating Officer wasn't aware of any specific LGBT sports clubs in the universities and colleges.

"I would hope that our members in universities... are slightly more liberal and modern and there are slightly fewer barriers in sport than there are in the general population but I can't prove that. My hunch is that people will feel they're less likely to face homophobia at university than elsewhere so they're not feeling the need to set up LGBT only clubs. We're just doing a sector wide audit of participation and facilities, and we gather some data through that but sexual orientation isn't on the radar. Maybe it should be. It's an interesting issue for our facility partners whose buildings are strongly used by the wider community that they should think seriously about this. I think the Equality Act is just starting to hit the organisations."

SSS contacted all the Sports Unions in Scotland's Universities on behalf of the Out for Sport research project and asked if any of them had run targeted LGBT participation programmes, had worked with LGBT societies in their universities or had collected any relevant data on LGBT participation. They received responses from Aberdeen, Abertay, Glasgow, Heriot-Watt, Queen Margaret and RGU. Most said that it hadn't registered as an issue and hadn't been the focus of any dedicated work or information gathering. However a couple of projects had been undertaken at Glasgow University. They had co-ordinated an "It Gets Better" campaign featuring sports students and others talking about sexuality and they had been involved in taking part in the LEAP Sports survey.

In response the Chief Operating Officer said:

"I think that an LGBT sports survey may be usefully replicated elsewhere. I think Sports Unions could do more in the way of data capture and "intelligence" about their active membership to try to identify gaps and target those who aren't engaged. The other more practical strand is to encourage LGBT Societies to be active within sports clubs/gym

facilities/intra-mural programmes. A prompt from these societies to the sports unions could be productive. It's worth trying to identify a project that can bring the societies and the sports clubs together around this. Glasgow had another good concept which was to use their annual sports club photographs as a chance to promote a sport for all ethos e.g. Show Racism the Red Card."

A number of people within SGBs and elsewhere expressed support for a link organisation or organisations between **sportscotland**, the SGBs, other sports bodies, the different LGBT sports groups and the wider LGBT community. The general feeling was that this would be useful in terms of information sharing in both directions. SSS was quite clear:

"For an organisation like ours which is an intermediary group, we need to have a better awareness of some of the issues and we can and will cascade some of that down but it's never going to be enough of a priority or a focus for us to be policing this or doing detailed reports about it. I think the existence of Scottish Disability Sport (SDS) and their regional infrastructure which is now in place and the existence of Paralympics is bound to accelerate work on disability issues. SSS and our university and college networks are very open to working with LGBT organisations, telling us what good practice looks like."

The Chief Operating Officer of SALSC agreed that a body focussing on LGBT sport would be helpful.

"If there's one assistance or support that I could identify as being useful, it would be having one partner organisation identified that you could contact for support. If we have a child protection issue we know who to go to, for disability issues we know to go to SDS. If we had some clear contact whether that's an organisation or a person within an organisation with a remit to cover sport that would be incredibly useful. Then if we got asked about LGBT issues we'd know who to go to or to refer to. That way there's a consistent message given and dialogue built. Sport's organisations would be more receptive if it was to do with sport but we're not opposed to getting and sending out generic information."

4.6.6 Local Authorities

Scotland's local authorities and arm's length leisure trusts are responsible for more than 90% of the nation's sport and physical recreation spending. They have a crucial equalities role to play in the provision of sports facilities, the accreditation of local sports clubs and in ensuring the inclusion of minority groups. They are directly affected by the new public sector duty within the Equality Act 2010 as a key provider of services to the public.

In 2010 the Accounts Commission reported that:

“Councils have a major role in physical recreation (including sport) and are responsible for almost 60% of Scotland's sport and recreation facilities. There are weaknesses in strategic planning and strategies often lack clearly defined target groups, baseline information (which is needed to set meaningful targets and measure progress) and specific and measurable targets. Around 60% aren't using baseline information about levels of physical activity, which is needed to demonstrate progress and fewer than 20% collect information on how often their priority groups are getting exercise.²⁵”

The Commission recommended that councils should 'ensure physical recreation strategies contain specific measurable targets' and, 'improve their understanding of which people do not use services and the reasons why. Councils should use this information to set priorities, to help develop effective pricing policies and to target priority groups.'

Given the importance of local authorities in this policy area and the concerns raised by the Accounts Commission about data it was decided to request information from local authorities as part of this research. A questionnaire was sent to senior managers in local authorities and arm's length leisure trusts via the offices of their representative body, VOCAL (The Voice of Chief Officers of Culture and Leisure Services in Scotland). The questionnaire covered a range of issues from baseline data to the recording of homophobic Hate Crimes. 4 responses were received covering Dundee, East Lothian, Glasgow, and South Lanarkshire. Interviews were also undertaken with representatives of Edinburgh and Perth & Kinross Councils.

Dundee City Council only responded to some questions as they were not the sports provider. They do have a strategic sport/physical recreation plan but it does not specifically mention LGBT residents. The council does have a club accreditation scheme, which allows accredited clubs to enjoy benefits over other clubs. The scheme doesn't mention LGBT equality specifically. Dundee City Council weren't aware of any LGBT sports groups in their area. They are currently producing a report for their Child Protection Committee about support for LGBT young people but it does not reference sport or physical activity.

²⁵ The Accounts Commission, Physical recreation services in Local Government, Oct 2010.

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Ltd completed the questionnaire and reported that their current single equality scheme, strategy and policy covers all the protected characteristics. They have a 3 hour in-house training scheme which backs that up. They changed their monitoring forms at the introduction of the Equality Act in 2010. They are currently reviewing their customer satisfaction surveys and weren't aware of this data being used to plan, design or help provision of services. In partnership with South Lanarkshire Council an LGBT Employee Forum had recently been re-established. They were holding a general public consultation in May 2012 in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council to find out more about their local LGBT community. They were currently developing a club accreditation scheme which will include equality issues. They didn't currently record homophobic or transphobic incidents in their sports facilities or disaggregate health and safety incidents in any way. They have no specific LGBT participation monitoring in place to see how successful they had been at attracting LGBT residents. They did say that they would be happy to support LGBT sports clubs however they weren't aware of any in the area and that they would be happy to work with the Equality Network and other national and local LGBT organisations and felt they would benefit from information, advice and training.

East Lothian Council completed the questionnaire and outlined on-going workplace and schools work that they were doing with Stonewall Scotland. They also work with LGBT Youth and LGBT Health and Wellbeing on certain specific projects and are in the process of launching an LGBT Youth group. They have provided LGBT awareness training to customer services staff in the past 6 months. Their equalities officer is leading on the consultation and construction of equalities outcomes as advised by the EHRC in response to the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010. They have revised their Equality Impact Assessment procedures and policies to include all 9 protected characteristics in the Act.

East Lothian Council have a strategic sport & leisure plan but it does not make a specific reference to LGBT residents. They are not compiling any data about LGBT people and the current data collection does not specifically ask any questions about LGBT participation. They do make use of baseline demographic and participation data in their planning, design and provision of services including targeted programmes of activity. They have a variety of user satisfaction surveys in operation but nothing specifically for LGBT linked to sport and activity. There's no specific targeting or monitoring of LGBT people's sports participation taking place. They have club accreditation schemes in place that promote Equality in general rather than specifically LGBT. All violent and aggressive incidents are recorded and there's the opportunity for further commentary on an incident where appropriate. East Lothian Council said it would be happy to engage with the Equality Network or any LGBT organisation if it supported sports participation.

"In completing this there is a sense of do we need to do more? I sense we will have LGBT individuals as members of a range of sports clubs. However we do not specifically target or monitor this and I do not feel the clubs themselves do formally either. But I am confident that we and our Leisure Trust colleagues do promote Equalities across our clubs and

sporting organisations through appropriate constitutions, education & training activity programmes.”

Like other respondents, Glasgow Life, Glasgow’s culture and sport delivery mechanism, pointed to the lack of data about LGBT participation saying.

“There is insufficient data collected in the Scottish Household Survey to make an accurate prediction of the participation rates amongst LGB people. In two years time, the Scottish Government will be able to collate four years worth of data which may provide us with national figures for LGB participation. However the range of evidence suggests that LGBT people still face a wide range of barriers to being full participants and spectators in sport.”

Glasgow Sport works in partnership with **sportscotland**. They gather gender information in relation to its Glasgow Club membership but not about sexual orientation. Services take account of current available information to inform their Service Plans. There is no formal process to monitor or attract LGBT people to participate. There is recognition that there are gaps in information and there are plans to roll out a logic modelling approach across all services which will inform service planning. They undertake service user satisfaction surveys but there is not a question which target questions to LGBT service users. Glasgow City Council undertakes a bi-yearly Glasgow Household Survey on customer usage and satisfaction of services, which includes attendance at culture and sports venues. It does not provide information relating to LGBT people.

Glasgow Sport has a sports club accreditation scheme – ClubMark – which makes significant reference to the principle of equity, the 9 protected characteristics and the need for clubs to address barriers to participation.

Glasgow Sport have either supported or provided information or access to lets at their sporting venues to three LGBT groups – Glasgow Frontrunners; Team Scotland Badminton and Saltire Thistle FC.

They are taking forward two specific pieces of work which directly relate to LGBT people. Glasgow Life have developed Guidance on Accessing Sports Facilities and Services by Transgender People. This is to be rolled out once each venue develops an access plan and staff have been briefed. Currently, Health and safety incidents are recorded but hate crime incidents are not. However, a hate crime reporting procedure has been developed and this is to be implemented across all venues during 2012/13.

In an interview with the Chair of VOCAL (The Voice of Chief Officers of Culture and Leisure Services in Scotland) and Head of Cultural and Community services at Perth and Kinross Council she agreed there was a need to keep council websites updated to make sure “LGBT participation is explicitly covered there not just implicitly covered”.

She also raised the issue of lack of data:

“In Perth and Kinross we’ve produced a review of our Strategic Framework for Sport & Active Recreation and engaging with this Out for Sport research has made me think about widening the range of our local partners. There isn’t anything specifically there about LGBT people. We’ve got evidence bases for other groups but not for LGBT. A lot of this agenda is about leadership, telling people that this is something we should be doing. We should be doing data disaggregation of LGBT as a matter of course. Are we doing it and if we are what are we doing with it in terms of the evaluation of our services? There is an invisibility challenge which is similar to the one we face with people with mental health issues. Understanding your baseline is important in terms of monitoring how successful you’re being and what services are needed. I think there’s a risk of us just looking at service delivery generally. Thinking that if we’re getting equality of access right, engaging with the widest range of people that’s all we need to do. Both ourselves and sports clubs want the mainstream provision to be open to all however I appreciate, if you don’t have evidence you can be probably be excluding by default so we need to have a better understanding of the barriers.”

Perth & Kinross currently have a club accreditation scheme in place, (PACES). She believes these schemes are important. However, like other professional interviewees she accepted that current accreditation regimes might not favour LGBT participants or recognise LGBT issues.

“We do have levers so we should be asking what can we do to reinforce the messages about equality. People need to feel it’s worth their while to get accreditation so we give them support and look at issues like preferential access to facilities. Child protection is a really important component of what we do around coach and club development through club accreditation. I realise there can be perceptions around LGBT people in relation to children so it’s crucial that people think about it in terms of risk assessment. It’s not about perceptions or attitudes. It should be evidence based so we need to make sure we have a strategy which it’s structured and evidence based.”

A face to face interview was also held with the Director of Culture and Sport at the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC). She was impressed with the innovative work Edinburgh Leisure had done with the LGBT Centre around trans swimming but felt that this was the sort of service that EL should provide from the £9million budget they receive from CEC annually rather than relying on charities to pay for the service.

CEC have been conforming to the Equality Act and taking into account particular needs through Equality Impact Assessments when they’ve been assessing services both within CEC and EL. Approaches to equality legislation and equalities generally is built into Edinburgh Leisure’s funding agreement with the council.

She also accepted that sometimes LGBT clubs might get left out, for example in terms of sports grants, because people within local authorities didn't know they were there and that there was a need for better communication and connections. She confirmed that CEC would be happy to fund LGBT clubs and initiatives.

CEC had recently undertaken an EIA around the refresh of their Sports and Physical recreation Strategy for Edinburgh. They had consulted with LGB people however, when the Out for Sport researcher examined the EIA it was clear that transgender issues around changing room provision had been overlooked. They had also completed a piece of work on access to facilities within which the Director accepted there was nothing about transgender issues. She accepted that was a gap and said she was keen to see that addressed.

City of Edinburgh will be one of the local authorities which will be home to Community Sports Hubs. The Director outlined what that meant:

"As a local authority we will be monitoring all the people that use the community sports hubs. From memory I don't think it goes into sexual orientation. It covers age, gender, ethnic minorities, and disability. The one I'm closest to is the Meggetland Corridor and all the clubs that are using Meggetland. That means us going into Boroughmuir Rugby Club and asking this question. It should be us and **sportscotland** doing it, backed up by the SGBs. We're already gathering stats about the clubs, number of people in the clubs and then tracking that as we build the hubs up to see if we're increasing participation but I don't think sexual orientation is covered. Generally Edinburgh Leisure monitor participation across age and gender, disability and race and that's where it would stop. There wouldn't be a box for trans."

She also felt there was little or nothing happening in terms of Equality related training, including around the Equality Act, either through the Council or through local authority networks.

While acknowledging that there was input from only 6 of Scotland's 32 local authorities, the councils' responses raise a number of causes for concern. Firstly, despite acknowledging the lack of data in respect of LGBT participation, few, if any, councils are taking action to address this gap in baseline statistics, even when new opportunities for new approaches, such as Community hubs, are available.

Despite the recommendations of the Accounts Commission 2010 report, local authorities aren't monitoring the effectiveness of their participation strategies. Local authority response, to date, to the Equality Act appears to be patchy. The needs of the transgender community appear to be, with the exception of some work in Glasgow, overlooked even when Equality Impact Assessments have been carried out.

If local authorities are to take forward their new duties under the public sector duty they are going to have to become more pro-active in building links to their LGBT residents and local organisations.

By setting up club accreditation schemes which focus almost solely or solely on clubs with junior sections, local authorities are inadvertently discriminating against LGBT sports clubs. Finally, only one local authority who responded was taking steps to properly monitor for Hate Crimes within their sports facilities.

A few LGBT teams had established links with their local authorities and with other relevant organisations such as Local Sports Councils.

"We contacted the sports development officer at Edinburgh Council when we were setting up for some advice and that was certainly helpful. He was also a reference on our Awards for All funding application. Through Club Sport Edinburgh we've also had first aid and coaching training and that's been useful. We've also got good contacts in Edinburgh Leisure and we're working with them on a new local LGBT Sports Forum bringing together all the local LGBT sports groups. Collaboration is a good thing, sharing information's a good thing. There's a number of times we could have done things jointly before if we'd just spoken to each other." (Chair. Hotscots)

section 5

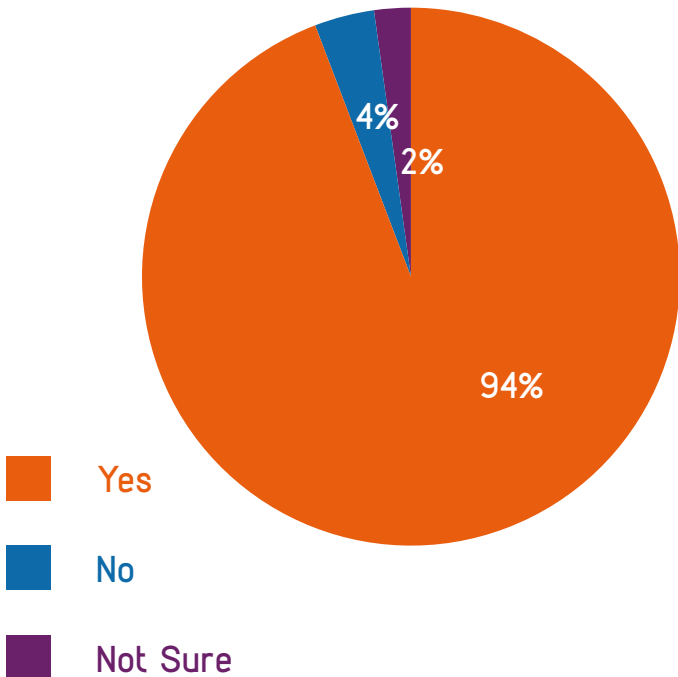
why tackle homophobia & transphobia in sport?



Within all the face to face interviews with sports leaders, sector bodies, players and club members and through the survey there has been clear support for the need to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport. This support is very much welcome and clearly recognises there are benefits for all in tackling this issue. In this section we lay out the benefits of taking positive action to ensure the full participation in sport of LGBT people.

Figure 14

Do you think sport would be better off without homophobia and transphobia?



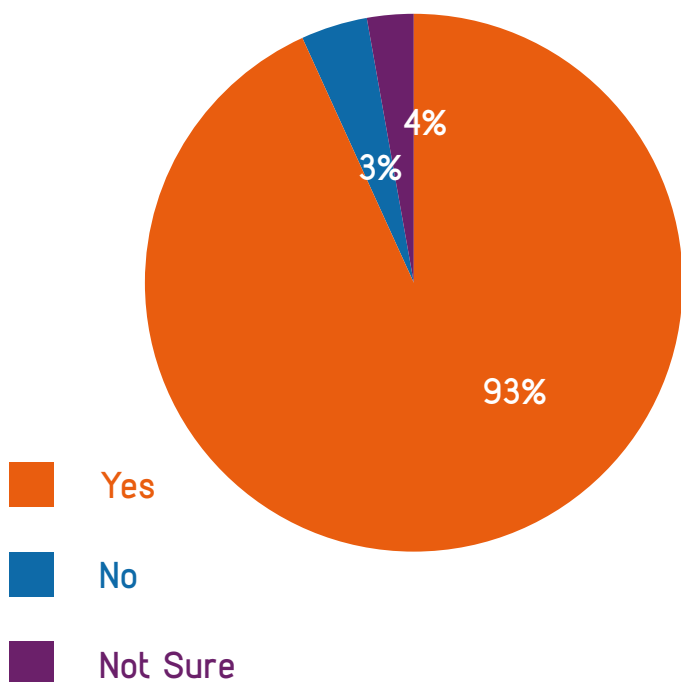
5.1 The need to take action

In both the face to face interviews and the survey the importance of taking action on homophobia and transphobia in sport was made clear. We asked survey participants if they thought sport would be better off without homophobia and transphobia.

A substantial majority, 94%, of survey respondents believed that it would, only 4% disagreed. Asked about how homophobia and transphobia impacts on Scottish society in general a similar substantial majority, 93% thought Scottish society would be better off without homophobia and transphobia in sport.

Figure 15

Do you think Scottish society would be better off without homophobia and transphobia in sport?



Clearly very few people believe there are any negative aspects for both sport and Scottish society of tackling homophobia and transphobia. This view was echoed through comments made in our survey.

“Because sport should act as a way that brings sections of society together.”

“Across the board, sport makes a huge difference to our lives, and whilst any discrimination exists it will put up barriers to people getting involved, and have a negative effect on people’s physical health and emotional wellbeing.”

“Scottish society would be better off without homophobia and transphobia, full stop.”

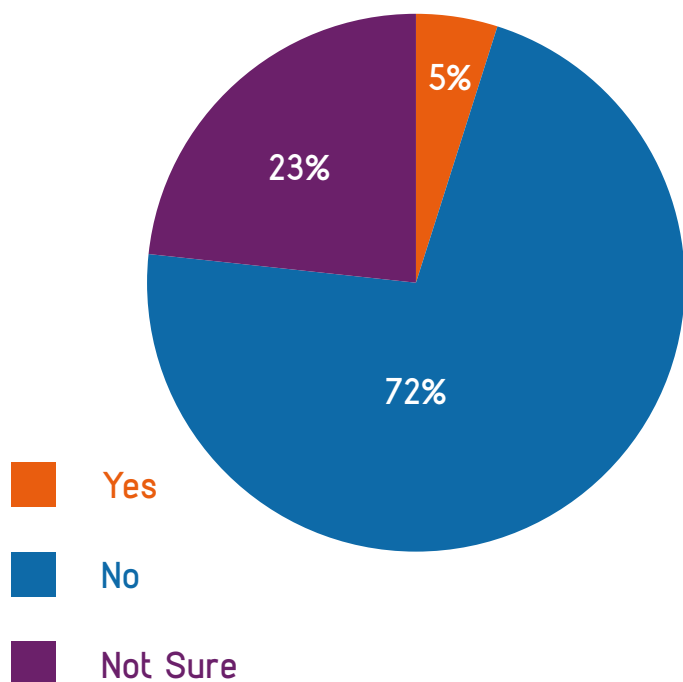
“Obviously all of society would be better without these prejudices, however I think if sport pushed for this it would make a difference.”

“Sport is a reflection of wider society and while homophobia is becoming less socially acceptable, sport is lagging behind.”

“Professional sportsmen and women are role models for young people and if young people look up to members of the LGBT community they will be less prejudiced themselves!”

Figure 16

Do you think enough is being done to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport?



Respondents were then asked if they thought enough was being done to tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport.

72% thought not enough was being done with only 5% of people believing enough action was being taken. Among LGBT respondents the figures were starker with 80% believing that not enough was being done. However, the comments again flag up confusion of current legislation and of initiatives that have been undertaken by some organisations. Not surprisingly, there are also calls for any campaigns to be better publicised.

Survey Comments

"Totally inadequate. 'Not a problem here' is the usual response. Did they ever ask any LGBT person? I think it's a problem with all bullying, but particularly homophobia."

"Nothing is being done in Scotland as far as I'm aware. If something is being done it needs to be better publicised to be effective."

"I'm sure leaders like football and rugby managers and politicians could speak out more about this as they do with racism."

"I think there are various initiatives but that on an individual club level there hasn't been much progress."

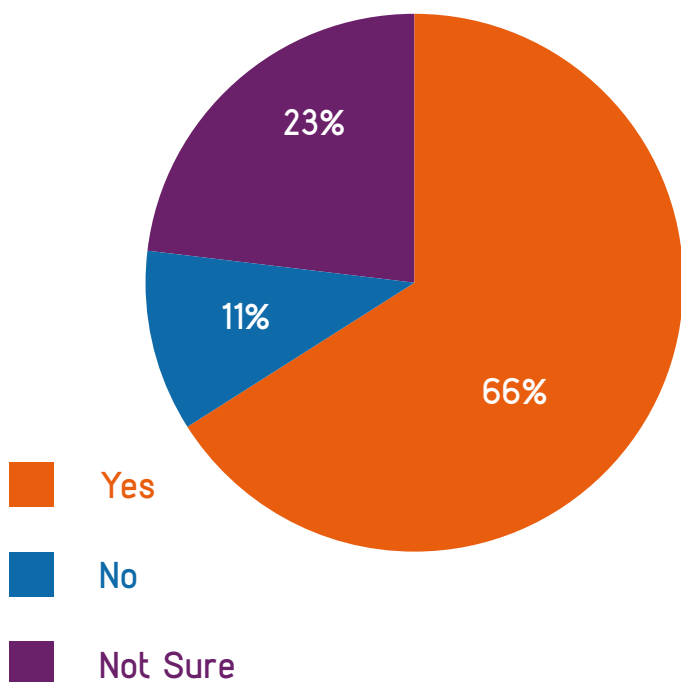
"Some sports have made a good start, others are ignoring the issue."

"Think more needs to be done by individual sports governing bodies."

"I haven't seen the same public signals from anyone in public life to suggest they accept the problem and something should be done about it."

Figure 17

Should action be taken to increase the numbers of LGBT people participating in sport?



A further question was asked in the survey about whether or not action should be taken to increase the numbers of LGBT people taking part in sport.

A clear majority of respondents agreed that action should be taken to increase the number of LGBT people taking part in sport (66%). There was, however, a significant difference between the views of LGBT and non-LGBT people on this issue with 72% of LGBT in agreement while only 56% of non-LGBT people agreed. A number of comments focussed on people's anxieties about potential positive discrimination in favour of LGBT people, however, again the majority felt that action was required to encourage more LGBT people to take part.

One of the main reasons given by those who thought that action was not required was the issue of lack of participation data. Some people again expressed the view that LGBT people were already participating and the big challenge was to change the culture so they could feel confident enough to be open about their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Survey Comments

"We need positive messages from Government and leaders of sport and possible positive action. (Not Positive Discrimination)"

"I'm not sure overall numbers will change – the proportion of 'out' players might."

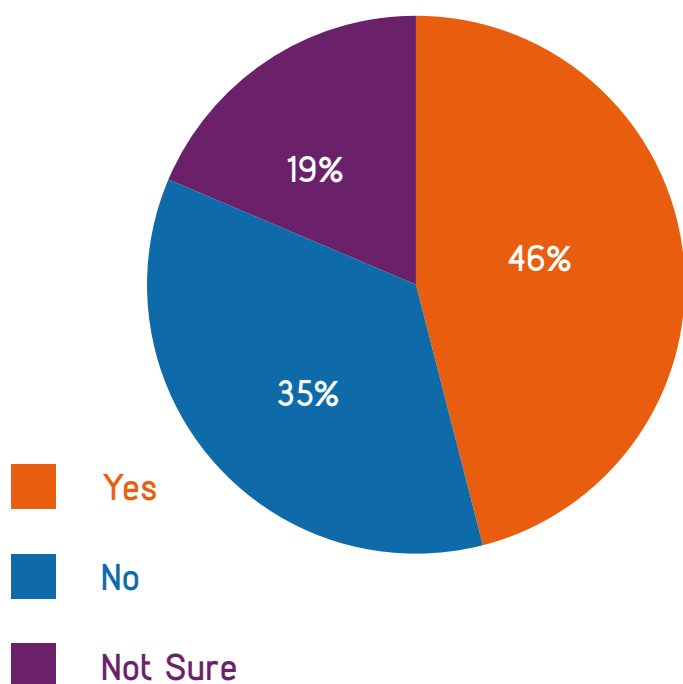
"I'm not a big fan of positive discrimination in anything but I can see the argument for it."

"Action needs to be taken to increase the number of LGBT people who participate at an elite level."

"This shouldn't need to be an 'invite a token gay' campaign. Simply providing training and education to those that run and organise sport will make the environment easier for more LGBT people to participate."

Figure 18

Would you be more likely to participate in sport if sport was more LGBT-friendly?



“Safeguards MUST be put in place first and ACTUALLY be effective. Box-ticking lip service won’t help any young people when they’re on the brink of having their teeth kicked in.”

One of the main aims of the research is to identify ways in which LGBT participation in sport might be increased. One survey question asked people if they would be more likely to take part if sport was seen as being more LGBT friendly.

When asked if respondents would be more likely to participate in sport if it were more LGBT friendly 46% agreed.

Within the LGBT respondents the figure that said they would be more likely to participate rose to a significant 57% and amongst LGBT people who had stated they weren’t currently taking part it was an encouraging 47%.

Significantly amongst non-LGBT respondents 26% said they would be more likely to take part, signifying that sports which are welcoming to all can have an impact on all sections of society.

Survey Comments

“I was so badly burned by the experiences in sport that I would have to have a great deal of support and encouragement to even consider getting back into any sport, as the abuse I received dehumanised me: I could never court that feeling again.”

“I’d not participate but I would be more inclined to watch football matches. I find the homophobic comments and general language puts me off.”

“To be honest no, as if I really wanted to compete then I’d hide my sexuality if necessary.”

“I don’t currently play team sports but maybe I would have done so from an early age if it wasn’t such an alpha male homophobic environment.”

“I participate in different sporting events regardless but it would make them a lot more enjoyable if you didn’t have to be surrounded by ignorant and offensive views.”

why tackle homophobia & transphobia in sport?

"As a gay man my personal experiences at school within sport were not positive. I think it might be a little late for me as my experiences mean that I will not participate in sport in the future."

"I participate in a sport which is more LGBT friendly (cycling)."

"My age and health goes against me for participative sports. But I would happily support by doing backroom admin and such like if it were a less Alpha atmosphere."

"I have stopped playing team sports because I didn't feel comfortable coming out to my club and team mates, while I also didn't want this to be the only area in which I was still in the closet. So yes, if (team) sport was more LGBT-friendly, I would still be playing."

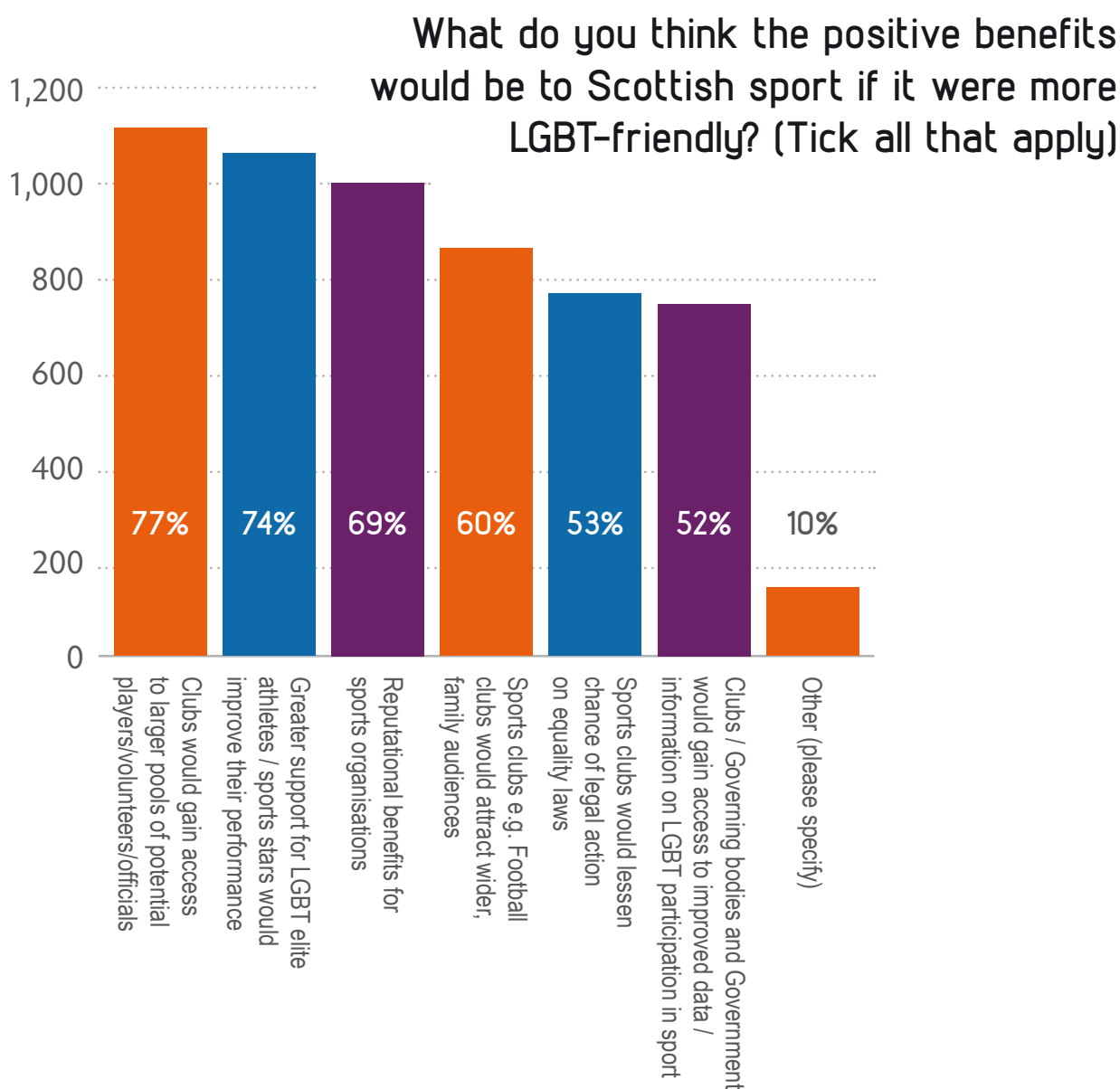
"I participated all my life but wasn't out during that time which was a shame but felt it was necessary."

"I already participate fully and don't out myself in sport, and would never intend to."

5.2 Positive benefits to Scottish sport community

The vast majority of LGBT sports groups as well as those who completed the survey felt there would be a number of positive benefits to Scottish sport if it was more LGBT inclusive. Large numbers felt that the main benefit, given the cultural importance of sport to Scotland overall, would be that there would be greater understanding of LGBT people and greater equality. However, there was a general feeling that clubs would gain access to larger pools of potential players, volunteers and officials. In the survey 77% of people felt that would be the biggest benefit to Scottish sport while 74% felt that there would be greater support for elite athletes as a result of Scottish sport becoming more LGBT friendly. 70% felt there would be reputational benefits for sports organisations in embracing this approach while 60% felt that sports clubs would be more likely to attract wider, family audiences.

Figure 19



why tackle homophobia & transphobia in sport?

In the absence of current participation figures that could show whether or not LGBT people are underrepresented in terms of participation in sport and physical activity it is likely LGBT organisations may have to find other arguments and levers to bring about positive action.

However, a large number of the respondents to the survey felt there was no need to prove that support for LGBT participation delivered any positive benefits specifically for sport when the important issues were about tackling inequality and improving people's health.

Survey comments

"It would make Scottish sports a role model for other countries around the world."

"Sport would less rigidly enforce very traditional conceptions of masculinity and femininity, so children would feel able to participate in sport according to what they are interested in, rather than what they think they are supposed to be doing."

"I think clubs would attract more LGBT people as fans/spectators"

"The issue is really about delivering healthier, fitter, inclusive populations"

"Professional LGBT sportsmen and women would be supported and respected in their workplace, as is their right."

"Not only Scottish sports would be better off, it's a matter of justice and social decency."

"The athletes/stars would feel more comfortable and perhaps perform better as their off field life wouldn't be under scrutiny."

"If more people participated, more people would be in better shape, thus eliminating a drain on our health service!"

"I know the racist, sectarian and homophobic chanting at football games discourages families from taking their children to watch. I think if there was an active zero tolerance for this, more people would take their kids."

Community comments

"It would be a benefit throughout Scottish society. If you have participants accepting LGBT participation in sport that will be reflected in their lives, their connections, networks. If LGBT people can be themselves in a sporting arena then that gives them confidence to be themselves elsewhere. If a mainstream sports organisation like a football club signs up to this it's saying they respect LGBT fans. It sends a clear message."
(Gay man. 25-34. Squash)

“It would be good for football if LGBT fans could go to watch football knowing they won’t feel alienated. I think it would be a good business decision as well for clubs.”
(Gay man. 35-44. Football)

“Through increased LGBT participation Scotland’s health might improve in the same way that getting increased sports participation generally would be a positive thing for our health record.” (Gay man. 25-34. GFR)

“We might have a better chance of winning something. ...Scotland’s been starved of trophies for so long if any team brought back a trophy or medals from the Olympics I don’t think it should matter if they were black, white, gay, straight or transgender. It would just be a victory for Scotland. We all win. Scotland wins.”
(Gay man. 16-24. Snooker)

“We could have the next Usain Bolt, the fastest man on the planet but he just so happens to be gay, he just so happens to be bullied at school and he just so happens to turn his back on sport, to not represent Britain at the Olympics and to not win a Gold Medal. That for me encompasses what it could do for sport. Homophobia, racism, sexism – these are cancers at the heart of sport that need to be eradicated.”
(Gay man 25-34. GFR)

5.3 **Benefits for LGBT People of Physical Activity and Sport**

It is likely that participation in sport would give LGBT people greater access to a social model of health which the World Health Organisation defines as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

The Scottish Government’s Physical Activity Champion, Dr Andrew Murray believes physical activity brings with it a number of positive benefits

“There’s clear and compelling evidence of physical health benefits, mental health benefits, quality of life and financial benefits of people taking part in physical activity. More than 20 diseases are positively affected by physical activity including cardio vascular disease, diabetes and some cancers²⁶.”

²⁶ Murray A, Sport and Physical Activity – and investments in health, Shared Investment in Sport and Physical Activity Conference, Edinburgh, 22 Feb 2012

Scotland's LGBT population experience a range of health problems and inequalities. For example 44% of gay and bisexual men have taken illegal drugs in the last year compared to 11% of men generally²⁷. Some are linked to biological variations for example in terms of the prevalence of certain cancers in lesbian women due to lack of pregnancies²⁸.

There are also a number of significant research findings which suggest a direct link between the discrimination experienced by LGBT people and a range of health problems and health inequalities. I.e. differences in health status or in the distribution of health determinants between different population groups. Research suggests that, as a result of homophobia and transphobia, LGBT people are more likely to suffer from mental health difficulties than the general population with anxiety and depression being common experiences for many. Difficulties accepting one's sexual orientation or gender identity and dealing with discrimination can lead to internalised negative feelings, alcohol and substance abuse, low self-esteem and isolation. LGBT people are at increased risk of self-harm, addictions, eating disorders and suicide²⁹.

Half of lesbian or bisexual women under the age of 20 have self-harmed compared to one in fifteen of teenagers generally³⁰. 16% per cent of them have attempted to take their own life compared to ChildLine estimates that 0.12 per cent of people under 18 generally have attempted suicide³¹. One in five young lesbian or bisexual women say they have an eating disorder, compared to one in 20 of the general population³². Lesbian and bisexual women are 5 times more likely to have taken drugs³³.

LGBT people taking part in LGBT sports clubs highlighted the serious existing health issues within the LGBT community:

"My personal alcohol consumption level has dropped. Sport makes me feel better as an individual. It's not just about getting fit it's about personal development. It enriches my life."
(Lesbian. 45-54. Cycling)

²⁷ Guasp A, Gay and Bisexual Men's Health Survey Scotland, Stonewall Scotland, 2012 at page 4

²⁸ Hunt R, Fish J, Stonewall. Prescription for Change: Lesbian & Bisexual women's health check, 2008, at page 10

²⁹ Coia N, John S, Dobbie F, Bruce S, McGranachan M, Simons L Something to Tell You. A Health Needs Assessment of Young Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual people in Glasgow, Greater Glasgow NHS Board, 2002

^{30, 31} See footnote 29, at page 11

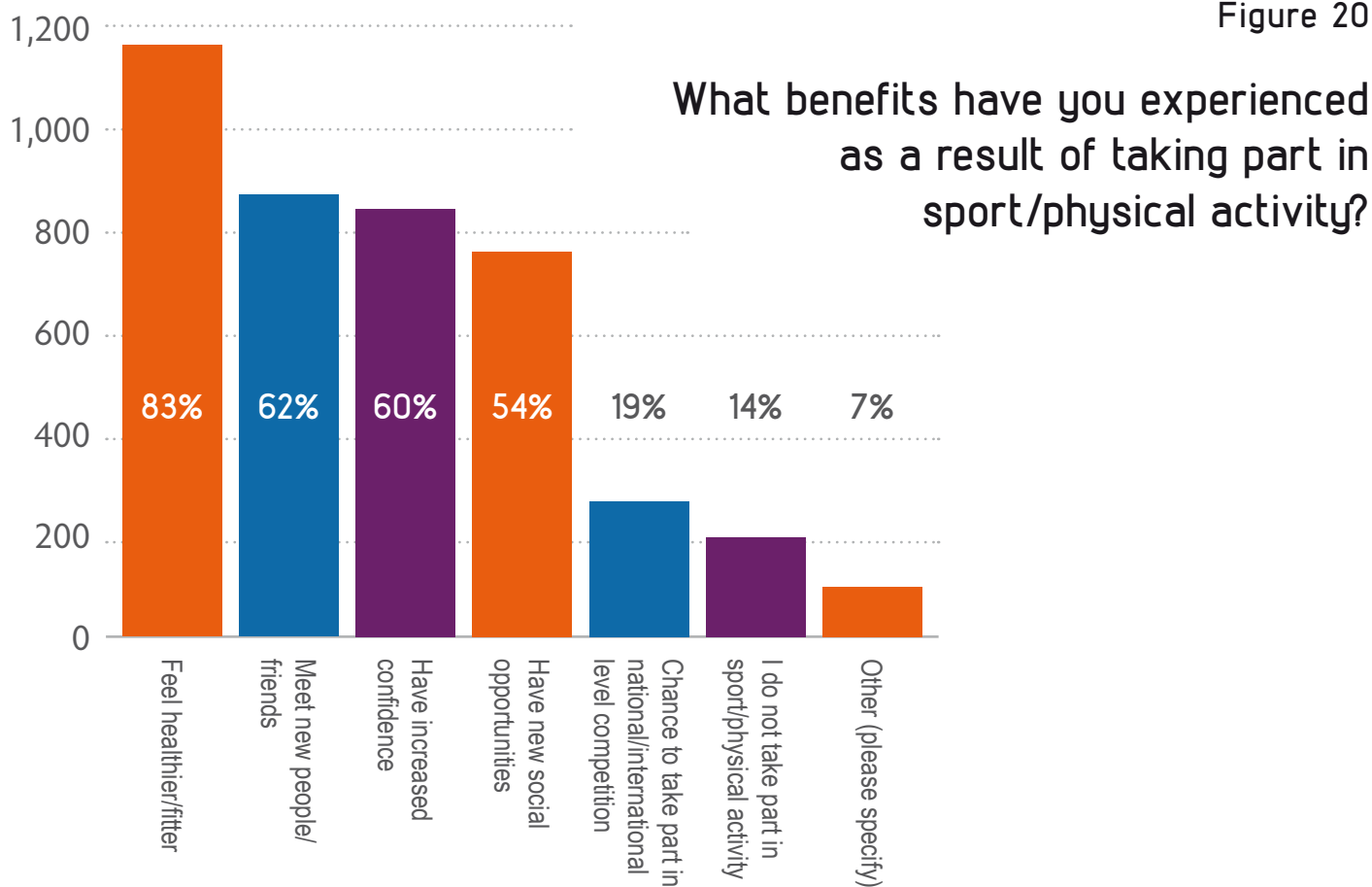
³² See footnote 29 ³³ See footnote 29, at page 4

“I definitely feel healthier. Lots of LGBT people have mental health difficulties and I think if you’re physically active there can be a huge benefit in terms of your mental health. It can help tackle issues like isolation that lead to depression so it’s hugely important. It affects not only your physical health but your general emotional wellbeing.” (Gay man. 25-34. Glasgow Front Runners)

“I know because of my professional work that there’s evidence of higher prevalence of smoking and drug taking in the LGBT community, so I think increasing the number of people taking part in sport is a good way to tackle that.” (Gay man. 35-44. Hotscots. Football)

The vast majority of the Out for Sport survey participants agreed that taking part in sport was a benefit to their health and wellbeing. When asked “What benefits have you experienced as a result of taking part in sport/physical activity?” 83% of those who took part in sport said they felt healthier and fitter as a result. 62% said they’d met new friend, 60% said they had increased confidence and 54% said they had new social opportunities.

LGBT Community interviewees were unanimous that participation in sport and physical activity was a positive activity for LGBT people. A large number had taken part in sport in mainstream environments and found this to be a generally positive experience. All had taken part in LGBT clubs and found these to be very positive experiences.



The benefits they felt they had received mirrored those identified by respondents to the Out for Sport survey. These included improvements to physical and mental health, better overall fitness, a greater sense of wellbeing, a sense of belonging from being part of a team and enjoyment of building new skills and achieving goals.

"I'm constantly being reminded of where I come from – working class, West Coast. I'm going to die at an early age and I keep thinking to myself 'I need to do stuff to make sure I'm not going to be that stereotype', so I joined a badminton club and the gym because I want to break that. I don't want to fall into being that person."

(Gay man. 25-34)

"For a lot of sports or physical activity you're getting out in nature, out in the fresh air and I think that's good for you as well. You're also meeting other folk. It's a social thing that gets you out the house." (Trans woman)

Sport and physical activity play a significant part in the lives of many of those taking part in LGBT community sports groups with a number of people playing sport in more than one LGBT sports club, in mainstream groups and individually. Amongst those interviewed people were taking part in sport on average three times a week across a range of activities.

While several LGBT community sportspeople said they'd had positive experiences at mainstream clubs some answers reflected the particular need for sporting environments where people could feel comfortable to be themselves and to be open about their sexuality. This highlighted the crucial importance of the social aspect of sport and physical activity.

"It's definitely a positive experience for people taking part. I think in our football team the camaraderie is fantastic so the opportunity for social interaction, meeting other LGBT people is tremendous. We play teams all over the country so we travel together and that's a great experience. It expands beyond football now because if any of us are going to the cinema we tend to go with friends from the team. I've seen people grow in confidence since getting involved with Hotscots." (Chair. Hotscots. Football)

The Out for Sport research shows that there are many LGBT Scots accessing the positive benefits of sport and physical activity on a regular basis. However, for others, there remain barriers to participation, fear of homophobia and practical difficulties. While some actions have been taken by governments and sports bodies to focus on equality within sport in a more general sense, a range of factors contribute to the continued lack of specific action being taken on LGBT issues and on tackling homophobia and transphobia.

This Out for Sport research and the support for action shown by LGBT and non LGBT people alike should act as a catalyst for change and must be used as a starting point for targeted, positive action to be taken on these important issues.

section 6

recommendations

We all want a Scotland free from prejudice and discrimination, and we recognise the significant role and influence sport has in achieving that aim. We also want a healthy Scotland where, again, sport plays a vital role, and the barriers to the full and active participation in sport should therefore be examined and removed.

Overall, the recommendations in this report seek to achieve three key objectives:

- » Leadership to ensure the elimination of homophobia and transphobia in Scottish sport.
- » Practical action to lift barriers to LGBT inclusion and to encourage greater LGBT participation in sport at all levels.
- » A better understanding of the issues relating to homophobia and transphobia in Scottish sport and what should be done to tackle the problem.

These recommendations are designed to be carried forward by a range of stakeholders and action on these recommendations should reflect a level of proportionality and capability for the different stakeholders involved.

1. **Visible Leadership**

The Scottish Government and the sports sector, which includes Scottish Governing Bodies (SGBs), Local Authorities, Clubs, Local Sports Councils, Leisure Trusts and Sport facility providers, should demonstrate visible leadership on the issue of homophobia and transphobia in Scottish sport, in order to tackle prejudice and encourage greater inclusion and participation of LGBT people.

- » A Scottish LGBT Sports Charter should be created to facilitate the full inclusion of LGBT people in Scottish sport.
- » SGBs of sport should visibly display support for LGBT participation in their sport (e.g. on official websites, social media, annual reports and through other publications).

- » There should be visible support from the sports sector and the Government for initiatives that tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport.

2. National Coordinating Group

There should be a coordinating group established to bring together the stakeholders working for better inclusion of LGBT people and to combat homophobia and transphobia in sport, and to act as an information distribution point. Membership should include the key stakeholders in this work, for example LGBT sector organisations, local authorities, SGBs, **sportscotland** and others. The aims of the coordinating group would be:

- » To develop an Action Plan taking into account the recommendations of the Out for Sport research.
- » To discuss strategies and monitor progress.
- » To facilitate a partnership approach and share information.
- » A means to facilitate discussion with the Government.
- » A vehicle to provide practical and policy guidance.

3. Action Plan

The coordinating group should develop an Action Plan to tackle prejudice, and increase LGBT inclusion and participation in sport, including:

- » A clear strategy with deliverable and measurable outcomes to tackle prejudice, and encourage inclusion and participation.
- » Actions would be informed by the Out for Sport recommendations. They would be prioritised against deadlines, with allocated responsibilities.
- » This action plan should be monitored and evaluated periodically.

4. Policies

Scottish Governing Bodies of sport, and those delivering sport, should have clear, embedded and proportionate equality policies which make a positive difference for LGBT participants at all levels.

- » Scottish local authorities, universities and other public sector sports bodies should be supported to comply with the general and specific duties of the Equality Act 2010. This includes proactively considering equality when carrying out their work, and paying due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across the range of protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender identity.
- » Leisure trusts, SGBs and clubs that are in receipt of public money should be supported by **sportscotland** and/or local authorities, where appropriate, to work to the principles of the Equality Act 2010 in terms of all protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender identity.
- » Scottish public authorities should make sure that they collect data from, and consult with, all sectors of the LGBT community as effectively as possible, to meet their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 as well as providing better, more LGBT accessible services.
- » Scottish public authorities should be encouraged to set new equality outcomes based upon these Out for Sport recommendations.
- » SGBs should be encouraged to work with **sportscotland** towards the achievement of the Equality Standard for Sport at a level which is proportionate to the size and investment of the governing body.
- » **sportscotland** should make sure that all SGBs know that they are able to take specific and targeted action to address homophobia and transphobia.

5. Education

Diversity training should be rolled out to ensure a greater understanding of the needs and issues of LGBT people, and to develop a more inclusive approach.

- » LGBT organisations should build long-term, sustainable relationships with **sportscotland** and Sports Coach UK to develop coaching, training provision and CPD.

- » Mainstreamed equality training which includes awareness of sexual orientation and gender identity issues should be developed for basic level coach education for level 1 and/or 2 coaches as part of their UKCC qualification.
- » Training should be developed for teachers and staff working in schools, clubs and elsewhere, on sexual orientation and gender identity issues including the identification, prevention and challenging of homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- » Local authorities and leisure trusts should make sure leisure centre staff have basic equality training so they can fulfil their requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

6. Changing Attitudes

There should be a public awareness campaign to tackle homophobic and transphobic prejudice, and encourage greater inclusion and participation of LGBT people in Scottish sport.

- » The campaign should be supported by relevant departments within the Scottish Government, local authorities, and SGBs.
- » The campaign should be rolled out in clubs, schools, leisure centres and other key areas.
- » The campaign should actively involve SGBs, local authorities and clubs and include sport personalities in order to maximise impact.

7. Tackling abuse

Homophobic and transphobic behaviour in Scottish sport should be actively and effectively challenged.

- » SGBs and clubs should visibly challenge homophobic and transphobic behaviour by participants and spectators.
- » Coaches, PE teachers, sports club welfare officers, SGB community development officers, and other key role models and influencers should exercise zero tolerance of homophobic and transphobic abuse.
- » Homophobic and transphobic abuse in all sports should be dealt with by the Police and prosecutors robustly, where appropriate, as a prejudice aggravated breach of the peace or threatening behaviour.

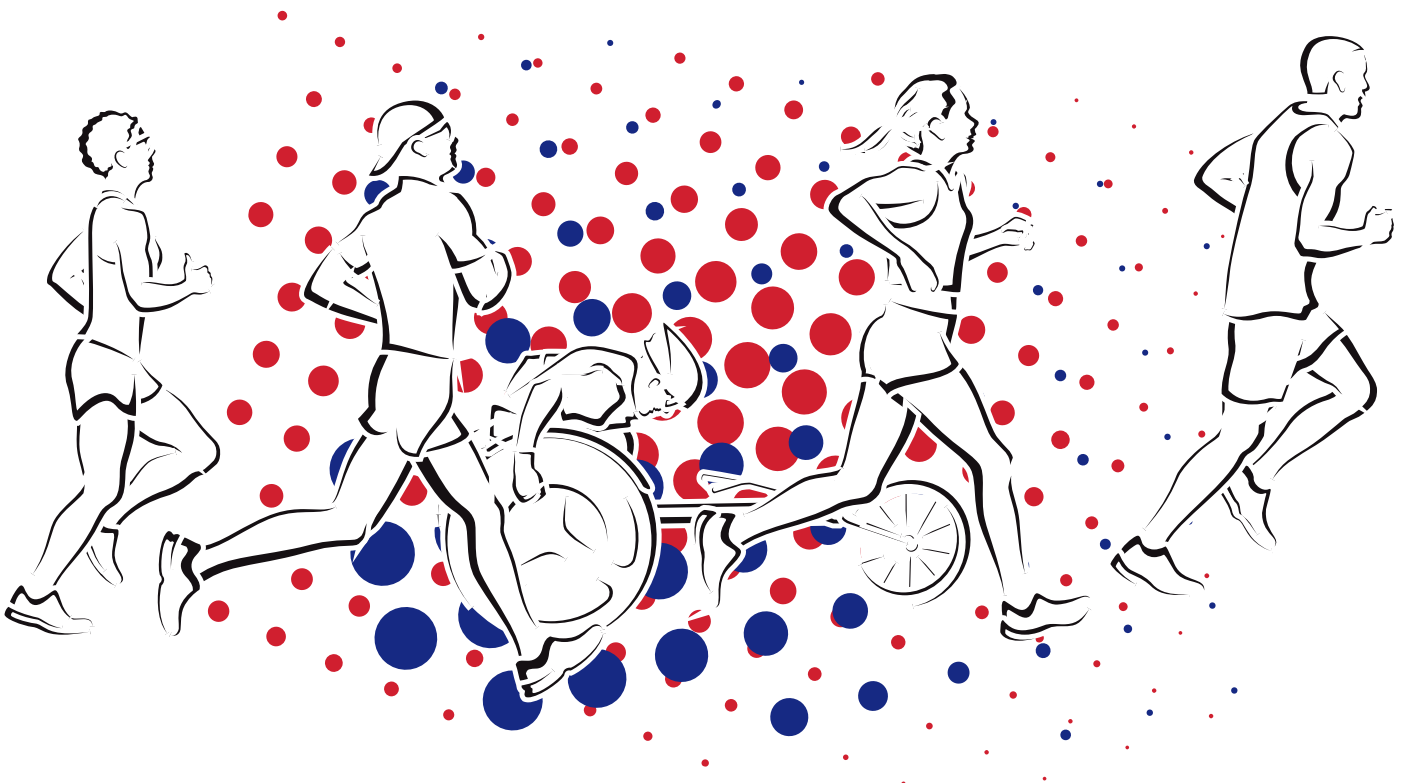
- » The Scottish Government should take steps to educate the public, SGBs, local authorities and clubs that the Hate Crime and Offensive Behaviour at Football legislation also covers homophobia and transphobia as well as racism and sectarianism.
- » The Offensive Behaviour at Football Act should be implemented robustly to challenge and eradicate homophobia and transphobia.
- » The law on threatening communications should be reviewed to ensure that homophobic and transphobic abuse on the internet can be dealt with appropriately.

8. Supporting LGBT Participation

Sports bodies should provide support to encourage LGBT participation in sport.

- » The LGBT sector should offer ongoing assistance to SGBs as they develop actions around LGBT participation and homo/bi/transphobia. This could include working with the SFA on the Football Supporters Charter to tackle issues around spectator behaviour and make football a more welcoming place for everyone.
- » There should be an early and sustained focus from the Government on the issues faced by LGBT young people participating in sport and physical activity, to help reduce the teenage drop off in sports participation by LGBT people. This could include looking at homophobic bullying in sports contexts, the equality agenda in PE teacher training and the the range of sports offered in schools.
- » The Equality and Human Rights Commission and the LGBT sector should encourage and assist local authorities, arm's length leisure providers, SGBs, and tertiary education sports facility providers, to gather diversity data in line with best practice on LGBT participation. Too often, diversity monitoring only covers some protected characteristics such as gender but not sexual orientation or gender identity.
- » Exceptional work to increase LGBT sports participation and tackle homophobia and transphobia in sport should be showcased, by local authorities and SGBs, recognised and encouraged.
- » Local Authorities, which deliver 90% of Scotland's sports spend, should be encouraged to share and showcase good practice.
- » The Scottish Government, **sportscotland**, SGBs and local authority partners should work with equality organisations, including LGBT organisations, to make sure sports clubs and community sports hubs are LGBT friendly.

- » Local authorities, local Sports Councils (where appropriate) and SGBs should be encouraged, through consultation and relationships with LGBT sports groups, to identify and remove any barriers to the full and active participation of such groups in club accreditation schemes and in local club sport generally.
- » Sports facility providers should be encouraged to publish or display information about the changing facilities within particular leisure facilities on their websites. This would include whether they have private cubicles or gender specific changing areas. Particular types of changing arrangements can be a barrier to transgender participation as well as to ethnic groups and others.
- » The Commonwealth Games should champion the positive nature and fellowship of sport and should re-iterate that sport is for everyone, regardless of their background. The Organising Committee should ensure that equality issues including the treatment of LGBT participants and spectators are captured within relevant codes of conduct.
- » Policies around the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) including children should be inclusive of the needs of LGBT young people, protecting them from discrimination as well as from abuse but allowing them to play sport in safe environments where they feel comfortable.
- » LGBT people should be risk assessed and dealt with within PVG systems on the same basis as anyone else, that is, on evidence and not on the basis of prejudice and stereotypes.



9. Capacity Building

LGBT sports clubs should be developed and supported to deliver access to sport and sports programmes across Scotland.

- » SGBs should build links with, and provide support for, LGBT friendly teams/clubs and groups within their sport.
- » LGBT national organisations working in partnership with Scottish Student Sport could assist in developing projects and better links between university and college sports clubs /facilities and LGBT societies.
- » LGBT organisations should assist in the establishment and development of new LGBT and LGBT-friendly sports clubs in order to increase the participation of LGBT people within sport, outdoor activity and physical activity across Scotland.
- » LGBT organisations should develop training and networking opportunities for new and established LGBT sports clubs.

10. Employment

SGBs should work with LGBT sector organisations to improve LGBT-friendly employment practices. This work should be supported by **sportscotland** and could be carried out in a proportional way aligned to the work that SGBs do through the Equality Standard for Sport.

- » SGBs and other stakeholders should work to widen the diversity of SGB Board members.
- » SGBs with significant numbers of staff should be encouraged to set up workplace LGBT networks.
- » SGBs should work with LGBT sector organisations to ensure LGBT-friendly employment practices.

Whilst improving employment practices for staff will not solve the issue of homophobia and transphobia in sport on its own, we believe strongly that diverse workplaces better reflect the needs of LGBT people, and such efforts would benefit the wider agenda of LGBT inclusion.

background reading

Scottish Government. 2007. Reaching Higher: Building on the Success of Sport 21. A National Strategy for Sport.

Scottish Government. 2003. Let's Make Scotland more Active: A Strategy for Physical Activity.

Children 1st. 2012. Sideline Bad Behavior Survey Report.

Scottish Transgender Alliance. 2007. Gender Identity – An information Booklet for Transgender People in Scotland.

Equality Challenge Unit. 2011. Include and inspire: Sport and fitness services in higher education.

EHRC. 2009. Sexual orientation explored: a study of identity, attraction, behaviour and attitudes in 2009.

Stonewall UK. 2009. Challenging homophobic language.

Gordon DS, Graham L, Robinson M, Taulbut M, NHS Health Scotland. 2010. Dimensions of Diversity : Population Differences and Health Improvement Opportunities, Glasgow.

Stonewall UK. 2009. Leagues Behind.

RG Morrow and DL Gill, University of N Carolina. 2003. Perceptions of homophobia and heterosexism in physical education.

EHRC Scotland. April 2011. Meeting the public sector equality duty in Scotland-Interim guidance for Scottish public authorities: assessing impact on meeting the general duty.

The Football Association. 2012. Action Plan for Including LGBT People in Football 2012-16. www.thefa.com

Scottish Centre for Social Research. 2010. The Scottish Social Attitudes Study.

helpful websites

Government and Agencies

www.scotland.gov.uk
www.sportscotland.org.uk
www.equalityhumanrights.com
www.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.disclosurescotland.co.uk

LGBT and Equality organisations

www.equality-network.org
www.lgbtyouth.org.uk
www.lgbthealth.org.uk
www.leapsports.org
www.pridesports.org
www.lgbthistoryuk.org
www.thejustincampaign.com
www.kickitout.org

Sports sector organisations

www.sportscoachuk.org
www.salsc.org.uk
www.scottishstudentsport.com
www.scottishsportsassociation.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Organisations

www.respectme.org.uk
www.samh.org.uk
www.children1st.org.uk
www.standupfoundation.com
www.positivecoachingscotland.com

appendix

LGBT clubs interviewed

The list below shows the LGBT sports clubs interviewed and the number of members interviewed.

Trans Swimming Group – Different Strokes – Edinburgh	1
Amazin Gracies – Women’s Football – Edinburgh	2
LGBT Squash Group – Edinburgh	1
Shuttlescots – Badminton – Edinburgh	5
First Steps – Fitness – Edinburgh	1
Basketball Group – Edinburgh	2
Womens Cycling Group – Edinburgh	1
Go Active – Womens Outdoor Sports/Climbing– Edinburgh	2
GLC Badminton – LGBT Badminton – Glasgow	1
Team Scotland – LGBT Badminton – Glasgow	1
Caledonian Thebans – Male Rugby Team – Edinburgh	2
Cuestars – LGBT Cue Sports – Edinburgh	1
Hotscots – LGBT Football Team – Edinburgh	5
Sunday Strollers – Walking Group – Edinburgh	2
Racqueteers – LGBT Badminton-Edinburgh	4
Gay Urban Running League – LGBT Running Group – Edinburgh	4
Glasgow Front Runners – LGBT Running Group – Glasgow	5
Saltire Thistle- LGBT Football Team – Glasgow	2
Walk and Talk Group – Dingwall	1
Inverness LGBT Running Group – Inverness	1

glossary

LGBT is a common shorthand term for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

LESBIAN refers to a woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other women.

GAY refers to someone who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of the same gender. Some women prefer to refer to themselves as gay women, but lesbian is the word more often preferred by women, and the word gay is sometimes used just to refer to men.

BISEXUAL this is the term that is used to describe people who are emotionally and physically attracted to more than one gender.

TRANSGENDER this is an umbrella term used to describe a whole range of gender identities and expressions, including transsexual, intersex and cross-dresser. Gender identity is about the gender you actually are – not necessarily the gender you were assigned at birth. Transgender people can be heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual.

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. A female to male (FTM) transsexual man (trans man) is someone who was labelled female at birth but has a male gender identity and therefore transitions to live completely and permanently as a man. A male to female (MTF) transsexual woman (trans woman) is someone who was labelled male at birth but has a female gender identity and therefore transitions to live completely and permanently as a woman. When people complete their transition they may no longer regard themselves as part of the transgender umbrella and would simply describe themselves as men or as women.

HETEROSEXUAL is the term used to describe people who are emotionally and physically attracted to people of the opposite gender.

TRANSPHOBIA means prejudice or discrimination on grounds of transgender identity.

HOMOPHOBIA means prejudice or discrimination on grounds of gay or lesbian sexual orientation.

BIPHOBIA means prejudice or discrimination on grounds of bisexuality.

HETERO-NORMATIVE An attitude which views heterosexuality as the “normal” sexual orientation.

NGBs National Governing Bodies are typically independent, self-appointed organisations that govern their sports through the common consent of their sport. SGBs refer to Scottish National Governing Bodies.

SPORT The Council of Europe's European Sports Charter 1993 defines sport as "all forms of physical activity which through casual or organised participation aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels".



30 Bernard Street, Edinburgh, EH6 6PR

t 0131 467 6039

w www.equality-network.org

e en@equality-network.org

f [equality-network](https://www.facebook.com/equality-network)

t [@LGBTScotland](https://twitter.com/LGBTScotland)

The **Equality Network** is a charity that works for equality and human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland.

www.equality-network.org



www.outforsport.co.uk

The Equality Network is a registered Scottish charity, SCO37852,
and a company limited by guarantee, SC220213

© Equality Network