



**A MANIFESTO FOR LONDON LGBTIQA+ COMMUNITY HOUSING
MAYORAL ELECTION 2021 CAMPAIGN**



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This manifesto recommends actions for the prospective next Mayor of London to commit to that will make a significant difference to the lives of the most disadvantaged LGBTIQ+ people in the Capital. It will show an understanding and commitment to LGBTIQ+ citizens that goes far beyond the City Hall Pride reception.

WHY A MANIFESTO FOR LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY HOUSING?

There is a chronic lack of provision of LGBTIQ+ community housing in London reflecting an absence of understanding the specific issues, needs and disadvantages facing many LGBTIQ+ citizens. This historic deficiency of awareness and investment must be rectified through the creation of a London-wide pathway which is distinct from mainstream services (current services that are not identity specific) and is based on the expertise of all parts of the LGBTIQ+ community.

We have used the latest available statistics in this manifesto to highlight the issues but we acknowledge that these often do not include many members of our communities as they can be limited to what has been collected by government agencies. Therefore throughout this manifesto you will see varying use of the acronym LGBTIQ+ related to the research referenced. This demonstrates the gaps in research and data collection for our community.

- London has the highest proportion of people who openly identify as LGB in the UK, estimated to be at least 450,000 citizens (5.1% percent of the population in 2017).¹
- Nearly one in five LGBT people (18%) including 25% of trans people and 28% of LGBT disabled people, have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.²

- Almost one quarter (24%) of young people facing or experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ+. ³
- A quarter (25%) of older LGBT+ Londoners have a disability or health issue that required specific housing; 57% of whom had no care or support provision and 64% of whom said their housing did not meet their needs.⁴
- There are only 77 LGBTIQ+ specific community housing bed spaces in the Capital. LGBTIQ+ community housing organisations support over 1300 people in London each year.⁵

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the LGBTQ+ community and further evidences the need for urgent action. 61% of LGBT+ service providers and community groups have seen an increase in demand for their services and the need for organisational support.

The main impacts of COVID-19 on LGBT+ voluntary services for the next twelve months include reduced funding for core services, keeping up with increased demand and having to change the services delivered⁶.

The pandemic has also accelerated the drivers of LGBTQ+ youth homelessness, with akt seeing a 118 % increase in new referrals to their

¹. Public Health England (2017) *Producing modelled estimates of the size of the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) population of England* ². Stonewall and YouGov (2018) *LGBT in Britain: Home and Communities* ³. akt (2015) *LGBT Youth Homelessness: A UK National Scoping of cause, prevalence, response and outcome* ⁴. Stonewall Housing, Tonic Housing, Opening Doors London (2020). *Building Safe Choices 2020 'Our voices: LGBT+ later life housing demand in London* ⁵. excluding Micro Rainbow



services from April-August 2020 compared to the same time period in 2019. 50% of LGBT+ older Londoners reported a negative impact on their psychological well being and almost three out of ten (27 %) said they hardly ever or never had someone to talk to⁶.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

We ask the next prospective Mayor of London to:

- 1. Produce an LGBTIQ+ Housing Strategy for London**
- 2. Work with local councils to build a London-wide support pathway of accommodation and support services for LGBTIQ+ people**
- 3. Create a Greater London Authority portfolio role for LGBTIQ+ housing**
- 4. Fund LGBTIQ+ awareness training for commissioners and delivery staff**
- 5. Establish a coordinated approach to data collection to evidence need and impact**
- 6. Embed community-led principles in all of these actions to ensure there is 'Nothing about us without us' with appropriate funding to facilitate this.**
- 7. Ensure that LGBTIQ+ housing and community organisations are meaningfully involved in the design and implementation of the London Recovery Programme.**

⁶. Consortium Insight Report ⁷. Opening Doors London Report (2020); 'Only Connect - The Impact of Covid-19 on Older LGBT+ People'



1. AN LGBTIQ+ HOUSING STRATEGY FOR LONDON

This will provide a policy context of understanding the specific issues LGBTIQ+ people face and the required housing related interventions to address disadvantage. Placing clear information and evidence in a policy document will start to address the requirement for improved awareness of the needs of all our communities and why we become homeless, experience isolation and multiple disadvantages.

An LGBTIQ+ Housing Strategy and adequate investment in LGBTIQ+ service provision will minimise the impact of COVID on our communities and further the aims of the Recovery Programme missions. It will also show that the housing policy focus must be deeper than just delivering housing numbers

and tenures. In order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, it must look at the equality of impact of access to services on LGBTIQ+ people, and seek to remedy disadvantage.

The Strategy would look in detail at the needs and experiences of all LGBTIQ+ Londoner's in particular that of young people, older people, refugees and asylum seekers and those most hard-hit by central government's welfare reform policy (e.g. those under 35). The strategy must demonstrate a clear understanding of the issues surrounding LGBTIQ+ homelessness and related issues such as mental health and the need for LGBTIQ+ community support networks. The Strategy should also consider why LGBTIQ+ community spaces are essential as many people will not access services through the mainstream routes and/or mainstream services may lack awareness.

2. A LONDON-WIDE HOUSING AND SUPPORT PATHWAY FOR LGBTIQ+ PEOPLE

Individual Borough requirements for a local connection has a significant impact on the poor access to housing services for LGBTIQ+ people. Mayoral leadership should be pivotal in influencing local authorities to enable a London-wide approach to LGBTIQ+ access to housing services, raising awareness of the issues of 'LGBTIQ+ Beacon Cities' and that a local connection is not always legally required. An understanding of the issues involved and need for specialist housing support options that are not available in all Boroughs must underpin this approach, with the outcomes for LGBTIQ+ people critical in measuring its success.

'LGBT service provision is largely underfunded or unavailable within many London boroughs or regions. As a result, the majority of respondents were unable to access LGBT-specific services within their locality, whilst a majority of respondents stated they would prefer to access LGBT-specific services if they were available to them.'

Trust for London, Still Out There (2016)

3. A GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY PORTFOLIO ROLE FOR LGBTIQ+ HOUSING

This role would be crucial to ensure the practical delivery of the LGBTIQ+ Housing Strategy for London. The role would be the link between the different departments of the Greater London Authority, the London Boroughs and the LGBTIQ+ community housing groups. The Greater London

Authority portfolio role would ensure regular meetings with the community housing groups in order to ensure progress against targets and to use their expertise.

4. LGBTIQ+ AWARENESS TRAINING FOR COMMISSIONERS AND DELIVERY STAFF

To complement the community organisations working in housing and other fields, commissioners and front line delivery staff should be trained in LGBTIQ+ awareness to support people in housing need and be resourced to ensure services are high quality. This training should be commissioned and funded by the Greater London Authority.

5. A COORDINATED APPROACH TO DATA COLLECTION TO EVIDENCE IMPACT

There is very little data available on the housing outcomes of LGBTIQ+ people. There needs to be better information about the housing needs and aspirations of LGBTIQ+ people. The GLA should require local authorities to monitor sexual orientation and gender identity within housing and homeless services, to ensure LGBTIQ+ people and their specific needs are counted. It is recognised that often mainstream organisations are not able to obtain this information because some people may not be prepared to come out to them. Therefore, the Mayor should also support the LGBTIQ+ community housing sector to gather robust data that will inform delivery and strategy. This should include the provision of a data recording system across LGBTIQ+ networks and

“The Mayor should recognise the crucial role that LGBTIQA+ community housing organisations play in supporting individuals and in the prevention of homelessness, that is specific and different to mainstream providers. An LGBTIQA+ Housing Strategy should be developed in coalition with our organisations and the housing solutions should be delivered by LGBTIQA+ community housing organisations.”

a revision of LGBTIQA+ data recording within mainstream services and the Greater London Authority system CHAIN. Local Authority data collected in relation to sexuality and gender identity in the context of housing and homelessness services should be published on the London Datastore to better inform commissioners and providers.

6. ‘NOTHING ABOUT US’ - COMMUNITY-LED PRINCIPLES WITH FUNDING TO FACILITATE

The absence of understanding of the specific issues, needs and disadvantages facing LGBTIQA+ citizens by mainstream organisations is at the root of many of the housing and support issues our communities face. An LGBTIQA+ community led approach is essential to ensure that this disadvantage is addressed appropriately and sensitively. With funding we can ensure that consultation and services are accessible to all LGBTIQA+ people in London with an active bias towards those who are more marginalised within our community including trans, BAME, people with addiction, mental health and physical health needs, people seeking asylum and those with multiple and complex needs.

7. LONDON RECOVERY PROGRAMME- ENSURING THAT LGBTIQ HOUSING AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS ARE CONSULTED

LGBTIQ Housing and community organisations should be meaningfully involved at all levels of the design and implementation of the London Recovery Programme, in particular “Robust Safety Net”, “Strong Communities” and “High street for all” missions.

akt akt.org.uk

akt (formerly the Albert Kennedy Trust) is a charity that supports LGBTQ+ young people aged 16-25 who are facing or experiencing homelessness or living in hostile environments to find safe homes, employment, education or training and to celebrate their identities in order to improve their life outcomes. akt helps young people: stay safe in a crisis; find emergency accommodation; access specialist support; develop skills, identify and achieve life goals. It does this by offering: access to advice from housing specialists, connections to mentors for one-to-one support; access to emergency support packs or tenancy starter packs; accommodation with specially trained akt



hosts; a place to stay in its Purple Door safe house or a safe place with one of our many housing provider partners.

akt provides 6 bed spaces in London in its Purple Door safe house and on average support around 300 young people per year in London.

MICRO RAINBOW microrainbow.org

Micro Rainbow's vision is to create a world where LGBTIQ+ people are free from discrimination, persecution and have equal opportunities in life, including in accessing employment, training, education, financial services, healthcare, housing, places of faith, and public services. Micro Rainbow opened the first safe house in the United Kingdom dedicated solely to LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees. Our houses provide a safe and temporary shelter for LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers and refugees.

Micro Rainbow currently has no bed spaces in London Boroughs (but has 16 beds in the wider London area).

STONEWALL HOUSING

stonewallhousing.org

Stonewall Housing works to ensure lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people

live in safer homes, free from fear, and where we can celebrate our identity and support each other to achieve our full potential. Stonewall Housing provides supported housing to over 40 young LGBTQ+ people; delivers a free, confidential housing advice helpline to LGBTQ+ people of all ages; holds drop-in housing advice surgeries for LGBTQ+ people; delivers specialist and awareness training for social housing staff and tenants; provides consultancy and information to other agencies about LGBTQ+ housing issues; provides support services to individuals and other agencies on a subcontract basis; lobbies and campaigns for the housing rights of LGBTQ+ people.

Stonewall Housing provides 48 bed spaces in London for young LGBTQ+ people and on average support around 1000 LGBTQ+ people per year in London.

THE OUTSIDE PROJECT

lgbtqioutside.org

Since 2017 we have delivered innovative, pioneering services as a collective of LGBTIQ+ community members and housing professionals with lived experience of homelessness. Our services respond to people in crisis through provision of London's only emergency shelter for



LGBTIQ+ rough sleepers and London's only LGBTIQ+ domestic abuse refuge. Our LGBTIQ+ Community Centre provides prevention and crisis intervention services. Our Community Centre also incubates grassroots organisations such as Book 28 Library and Queer Youth Art Collective who are now both registered as CIC's and receiving funding independently.

The Outside Project currently provides 20 bedspaces in London (referrals included in Stonewall Housing figures) 9 bed spaces are COVID specific.

TONIC tonichousing.org.uk

Tonic is a community led not for profit business creating vibrant and inclusive urban LGBT+ affirmative retirement communities where people can share common experiences, find mutual support and enjoy their later life. Working through partnership arrangements with housing and care providers, we will provide accommodation and safe social spaces where older LGBT+ people are supported, gain life affirming social connections and access culturally appropriate services. There is currently no housing with care provision for LGBT+ people anywhere in the UK; Tonic is focusing on London

initially for its first scheme as the capital has the highest older LGBT+ population.

Tonic will be providing its first 19 housing with care apartments in London in 2021.

OUR CAMPAIGN TEAM INCLUDES STONEWALL AND THE LGBT CONSORTIUM

STONEWALL stonewall.org.uk

Stonewall was founded in 1989 by a small group of people who had been active in the struggle against Section 28 of the Local Government Act. Stonewall is renowned for its campaigning and lobbying. Some major successes include helping achieve the equalisation of the age of consent, lifting the ban on LGB people serving in the military, securing legislation which allowed same-sex couples to adopt and the repeal of Section 28.

CONSORTIUM consortium.lgbt

A national specialist infrastructure and Membership organisation working to strengthen and support LGBT+ groups, organisations and projects so they can deliver direct services and campaign for individual rights.

FURTHER INFORMATION

We collectively use the term LGBTIQ+ in our manifesto to express our commitment to include all members of our communities, although our individual organisations may use a variation of this acronym in their own work.

We have used the latest available statistics in this manifesto to highlight issues, but we acknowledge that these often do not include many members of our communities as they are limited to what has been collected by government agencies.

Other key evidence sources on LGBTIQ+ housing issues include:

- In the 2018 National LGBT+ Survey one third of the 108,000 respondents said that there had been a serious incident in the home within the previous year.⁸
- Recent research by akt found that less than half (44 per cent) of LGBTIQ+ young people surveyed were aware of housing support services the last time they experienced homelessness.

Moreover, only 35% of LGBTIQ+ young people who accessed a service whilst homeless recall being asked by service providers to provide information about their gender identity and sexual orientation. Just one third (33 %) felt safe to disclose this information.⁹

- In the 2017 No Place Like Home study of LGBTIQ+ social housing residents 32% felt their neighbourhood was not a safe place to live as an LGBTIQ+ person; this was 60% amongst trans respondents.¹⁰
- In 2011 Stonewall found that 45% of older LGB people experience discrimination while using social care services and that 73% of older LGB people express discomfort in disclosing their sexuality to care home staff.¹¹
- In 2020 Tonic Housing found that 79% of LGBT+ older Londoners surveyed would prefer an LGBT+ affirming or accredited retirement community with only 1% stating that they would prefer a general retirement community. Of those who said that their current housing does not meet their needs 31% cited accessibility issues and 12 % cited ASB and LGBT+ related abuse.¹²

⁸. Government Equalities Office (2018) National LGBT Survey report. ⁹. akt (2021) *The LGBTIQ+ Youth Homelessness Report*. ¹⁰. University of Surrey (2017) *No Place Like Home? Exploring the concerns, preferences and experiences of LGBT*Q social housing residents*. ¹¹. Stonewall (2011) *Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People in Later Life*. ¹². Tonic Housing (2020) *Building Safe Choices 'Our Voices: LGBT+ later life housing demand in London'*.

