

**LGBT Groups Tackling Inequality and Discrimination**  
**A Research Project by**



**consortium**  
of lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender  
voluntary and community organisations

**Funded by**

The  
Legal  
Education  
Foundation



## Foreword

LGBT Consortium, as the umbrella body for the LGBT Sector, has a 300+ Strong Membership of LGBT groups, projects and networks across the UK. For several years, through our direct engagement work with Members and our involvement with sector strategic bodies, we have identified a gap between LGBT groups knowledge of the law and its practical application.

Our original approach to tackle the gaps was to explore a project in partnership with legal professionals and approached The Legal Education Foundation with a view to this. As is the often the case with sectors working with marginalised communities lack of hard evidence to prove our anecdotal knowledge held us back. The Legal Education Foundation were keen to support us to find out more and we welcomed the opportunity to use this project as an opportunity to create more evidence for the sector.

This research project aimed to gather information directly from LGBT groups about what legal knowledge they had, how they used it and what gaps existed within that to develop a greater understanding of how we could support them more effectively.

LGBT Consortium already had some ideas around how groups were using their knowledge of the law though our direct engagement work but they weren't all in line with the findings of this project. This is pleasing in some areas—knowledge levels are high—and concerning in others—the number of groups offering 'advice' around the law is a lot higher than expected. At the same time groups are expressing general confusing as to what 'advice' is. We have made a set of recommendations around all the key findings for each of the following sections.

Our hope is this data and evidence will further support the sector in proving the need for a wide range of future work in this area, so our Members are able to better support those LGBT people most in need, and in the best possible ways.



## Key Findings

### Tackling Discrimination and Challenging Inequality

LGBT groups undertake a wide range of work to tackle discrimination and challenging inequality. This project paints a picture of larger organisations being quite focussed in their work whilst smaller groups seem to have broader remits. We found the more focused the work of a group the greater their level of knowledge and confidence but that there is more work to do to ensure that groups are working together more effectively.

The research shows that LGBT community groups often undervalue the importance of their own work in tackling discrimination and inequality. Respondents initially questioned the relevance of the survey to their work, with many reporting that they do not engage with work that challenges discrimination and inequality. However, follow-up questions revealed the myriad ways in which even those groups with very small budgets support individuals to challenge discrimination and inequality e.g. safe spaces as a way of reducing isolation and informal networks as a way of filtering information which helps people to identify discrimination. This indicates that there is some work to be done around how groups understand and communicate their own impact.

### Knowledge Management

Many groups spoke about knowledge as their greatest (and often only) asset. Many felt that it was undervalued and often taken advantage of by mainstream services and public bodies who constantly called upon that knowledge for free.

A staggering 66% of groups taking part say their groups are at risk of losing knowledge internal around law and legislation relating to LGBT people and communities.

New ways of managing knowledge within the sector are needed both in terms of developing, increasing, sharing and retaining it. Many small groups want to share knowledge with one another and to work with the larger groups to see knowledge filtered down through the sector but do not know how. There is some resistance to this, with groups wanting to protect their asset due to the highly competitive funding environment and so groups would need to be financially compensated for their involvement. We recommend the development and facilitation of Knowledge Networks as way of managing and increasing knowledge in the sector.

### Providing Advice and Information

A lot more groups give 'advice' than we expected. We also saw groups expressing some confusion around what constitutes 'advice' and how it differs from giving information. This could explain the number of smaller groups indicating that they give advice as they might in fact be simply sharing information, or it could be an indication that advice is being given out in an unstructured way that could present risk for service users and for groups themselves. There is a real need to send out clear messaging about what 'advice' is and isn't and what needs to be



considered on a group level if it is offered. This is particularly pertinent given the potential legal ramifications of giving ‘advice’.

## Signposting

As one participant noted, ‘good signposting is the corner stone of good advice’ and with such a range of specialist LGBT groups in the sector, there is potential for LGBT people’s needs to be met more effectively. Effective signposting can only happen when the sector has a clear understanding of the services and scope of specialist services and support offered. In our recommendations we propose working with specialist LGBT Groups through a series of events to share knowledge as a way to enable groups to recognise when to signpost to them and how.

*“We always signpost to our regional LGBT organisation. Are we always sure we are signposting correctly, honestly no but with limited capacity and no feedback from those we signpost to, what can we do?”*

*LGBT Group*

## Sourcing information

Groups cited a series of barriers that make it difficult for them to source information about the laws affecting LGBT people. Having the capacity was by far the largest barrier, followed closely by not knowing where to look in the first place and keeping up with an increasing range of issues from people. In a sector where knowledge is one of the largest assets, there is a real lack of value placed on signposting as a ‘tool’ or resource, both within and outside of the sector. There is a need for a central place that signposts and links to relevant information and services that is easily accessible for LGBT groups.

## Training and Support for the Sector

Whereas our initial project concept sought to partner with legal professionals to work with Members to improve and enhance their knowledge this research has drawn a different picture of need, which lays in how LGBT groups access information, share knowledge and signpost to one another.

What is clear from this research is that not all LGBT groups need or want to have more than a basic working knowledge of the laws protecting LGBT people. We would recommend a series of training events run in partnership with a range of our specialist Members—not with a view to training groups to be experts in all areas of LGBT rights but to build their signposting skills and knowledge as suggested in our recommendations.



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*All the LGBT Groups that took part in the survey, the round table discussion events and interviews.*

*Dr Nigel J Balmer, Reader in Law and Social Statistics at the Faculty of Laws, University College London, for supporting the design of the survey*

*The Legal Education Foundation for funding this important research*



## Project Brief

LGBT Consortium, funded by The Legal Education Foundation, have conducted a research project to explore the extent of which LGBT groups are able to engage with, and frame their work within, the legislation and laws that concern LGBT people and communities.

The project sought to explore the following:

- The level of legal knowledge among LGBT groups
- How LGBT groups engage with the law and the legal process.
- The key barriers that LGBT group face when engaging with the law
- How LGBT organisations currently receive information on the law, and any legal profession links already built
- The most practical solutions for increasing skills, knowledge and capacity for LGBT organisations to engage with the law

Until now the sector's knowledge has predominantly come from LGBT Consortium's direct engagement work with Members and from data that we collect through our annual Members Insight Survey.

The following report provides brand new data on LGBT groups in relation to their use of law and the legal process from the work carried out against this brief, together with a series of recommendations.



## Methodology

### Survey

A survey was designed to find out more about the strategies, knowledge, skills and networks that LGBT groups use in their work. There were 115 complete responses submitted and 143 submissions that we could not use. Disqualified responses were mainly blank but did include 5 duplicate responses. Where more than one complete response was submitted by a different representative of the same group we have still included some of their free text comments, but they are not represented in the figures.

The survey was disseminated to all Members of LGBT Consortium by direct email, it was promoted in Member communications such as the monthly ebulletin and it was promoted heavily via social media.

*“This survey has been really useful to acknowledge that we are a valuable resource for our community and to reflect on our purpose and ensure our boundaries are maintained.”*

### Round Table Discussion Events

A series of round table discussion events were held, one in Northern Ireland for LGBT organisations alongside equality professionals, one in Manchester for local LGBT groups, and one in Manchester attended by groups from across the UK.

### Interviews

Interviews were conducted after groups had completed the survey and focused on collecting specific information around training needs. Interviews also sought to draw more information than was offered through the survey response. The information gathered from interviews is interwoven with the data collected from the survey and round table events.

### Language

Making the project relevant to as wide a range of groups as possible was imperative to the success of this work. Initial project feedback from smaller Members showed us small groups do not always see the work they do in the context of the law or legislation, but much more informally as ‘giving support and information’.

*‘...this wouldn’t be relevant to us, we just run a support group’*

Throughout the project we ensured the messaging was clear and relatable. Instead of using the word law or legislation we used phrases such as tackling discrimination and challenging inequality because we knew groups would relate more to that work. We used scenarios in our communications to put the survey into context:



*All LGBT Groups from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are invited to take part in this survey. Whether you are part of a small LGBT youth group informally signposting young people to services, a small trans group sharing information about legal rights over a cup of tea or a larger staffed LGBT group offering legal advice to LGBT asylum seekers, it's all relevant and your answers are crucial to the success of this project.*

## Personal Experience of Group Representatives

Although each survey response was completed on behalf of a group it is important to acknowledge that each one was completed by an individual. We understand each group is made up of individuals and whilst we have asked questions in relations to the 'group' it is unavoidable the personal experience of the individual submitting the response will influence the results.

This is evident in the 5 incidences where groups have submitted two responses from two separate representatives. The results never differed too drastically but there was a slight difference around level of knowledge and confidence around the rights of LGBT people which we assume is related to the representative's personal level of knowledge and confidence.

## Data Analysis

Whilst LGBT groups all have one thing in common—their work benefits LGBT people, communities, their friends, families and allies—it is vital that we acknowledge they are all doing very different work.

After initial exploration of the data we realised using the type of work a group does as a framework for analysis would not be as useful as it first might have appeared. Except for a few very specialist groups most LGBT groups offer a range of services and support. While two groups might both choose Information and Support as their core work, one might offer legal advice alongside this whilst the other might not. It might seem like they would have a lot in common but there are too many conflicting factors. Using the beneficiary type wasn't a useful framework either as again, with the exception of a few specialist groups, most LGBT groups work was accessed by all LGBT people.

For the main part we used group's income and staffing level as a framework for comparing the data because income is often an indicator of size and resource and this is where the differences seemed to emerge.

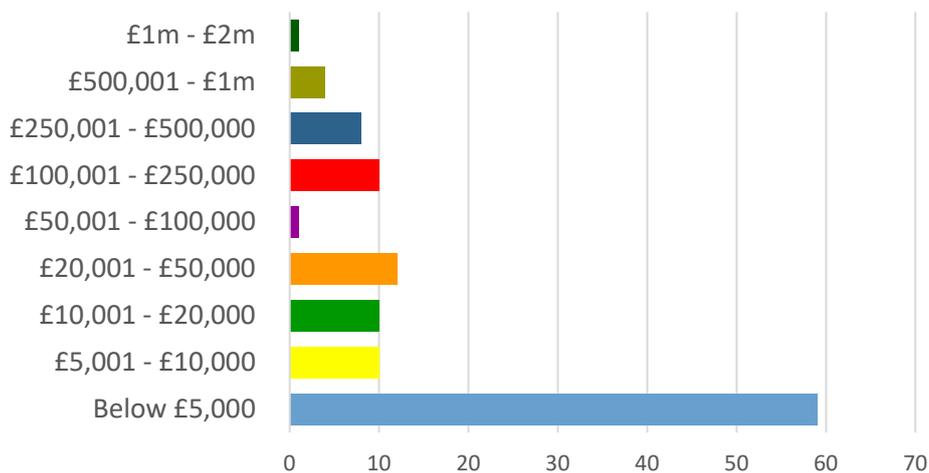
Historically LGBT Consortium has counted groups who earn under £5000 within the income bracket £0 - £10,000. Through this work however we have found a distinct difference in the needs and approach of groups with incomes of under £5,000 from those with an income of £5,000 – £10,000 and as such have categorised them separately. This will have an impact on how we collect and analyse data from now on, which we view as a positive outcome from this work. In addition to this, we will build some questions from this study into our annual Members Insight Survey which will help us to capture year on year data and to explore ideas around how decreasing income might be impacting on the knowledge and expertise of the sector.



### Make up of groups responding

The survey was open to any LGBT group from the UK although the clear majority (66%) of the groups operated in England. LGBT Groups did not have to be LGBT Consortium Members to respond to the survey but only 7 LGBT groups who submitted completed responses were not.

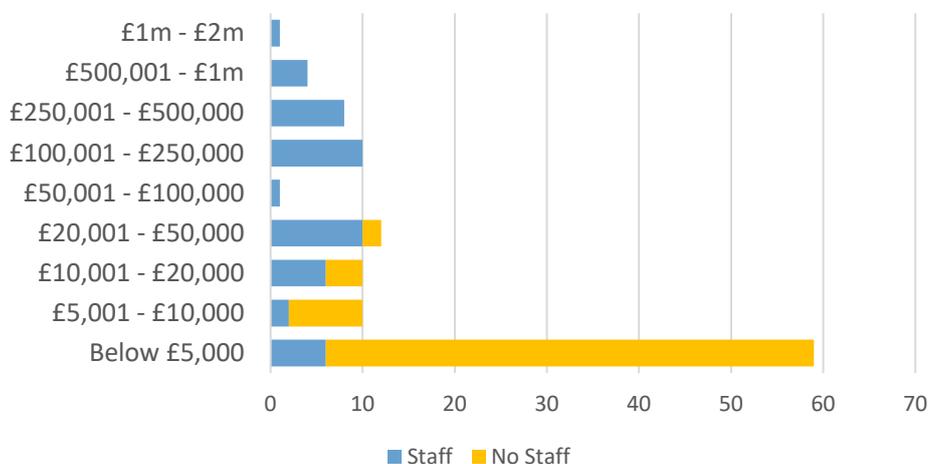
Groups by their annual income



One of the potential risks identified in this project was that small groups would not feel the survey was relevant to their work, so it was very reassuring to see that 51% of respondents were from small groups with an income of under £5,000. This is reflective of our Membership which sees 57% of Members with an income of under £5,000 per annum.

As outlined above, we categorised groups by staffing levels because we are interested in how capacity (often linked to having paid staff) would impact on a group’s work, knowledge and confidence. We are recording a year on year decrease in paid positions within the LGBT sector, and an increase in volunteers, and we are keen to explore how this has an effect on knowledge levels and knowledge retention.

Groups who employ staff by income





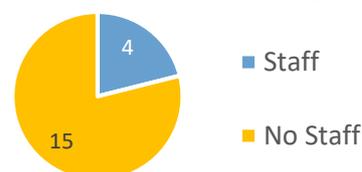
Of the 115 groups who submitted complete responses to the survey, 42% employ staff. This is not reflective of our Membership as a whole which sees only 33% of Members employing staff.

Only 10% of groups with an income of under £5,000 employ staff which, using our Membership data to correlate the information, we know is made up of very part time sessional staff who may work a few hours a month running a social group or service. Over half (56%) of groups with an income of between £5,000 and £50,000 employ staff, many of whom will also be sessional. All groups with an income of above £50,000 employ staff which is as expected.

### Working with specific parts of the LGBT Communities

Trans groups are less likely to have paid staff compared to groups who serve broader LGBT Communities but groups who specialise in an area of work e.g. housing or health (rather than a section of LGBT Communities) are more likely to be staffed than not.

Trans Groups Employing Staff

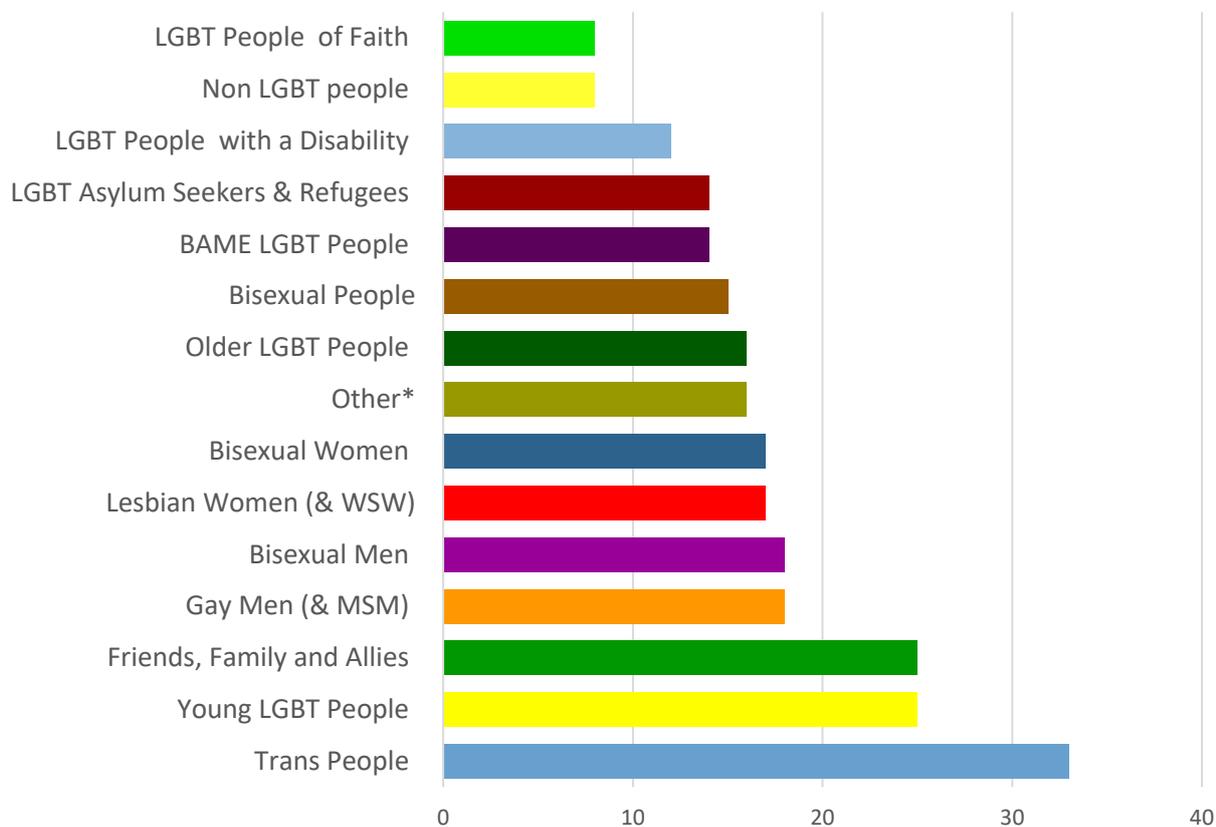


We asked groups who they work with or provided services for. 45% of groups work with, or provide services which can be access by, all LGBT people and communities. 15% (19) of groups focused solely on trans people, their friends, family and allies with a further 11% (13) of groups running projects or services specifically for trans people and communities.

Of the 55% of groups that work with or provide projects for specific communities Trans people and communities were by far the most catered for (27%), followed jointly by Friends, Family and Allies and then Young LGBT People (groups could select multiple options, see table below for a full list).



Working with, or providing services for, specific people and communities within LGBT communities



*\*Other: free text submissions were slight deviations of the above categories.  
MSM: Men who have sex with Men, WSW: Women who have sex with Women*

We know from our annual Insight\* data that groups (69% of a sample of one third of the Membership) are seeing an increase in the following categories of people seeking support and services from them;

1. Trans people
2. Non-Binary People
3. Young LGBT People
4. Refugee & Asylum Seekers
5. Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic LGBT people
6. LGBT people of Faith

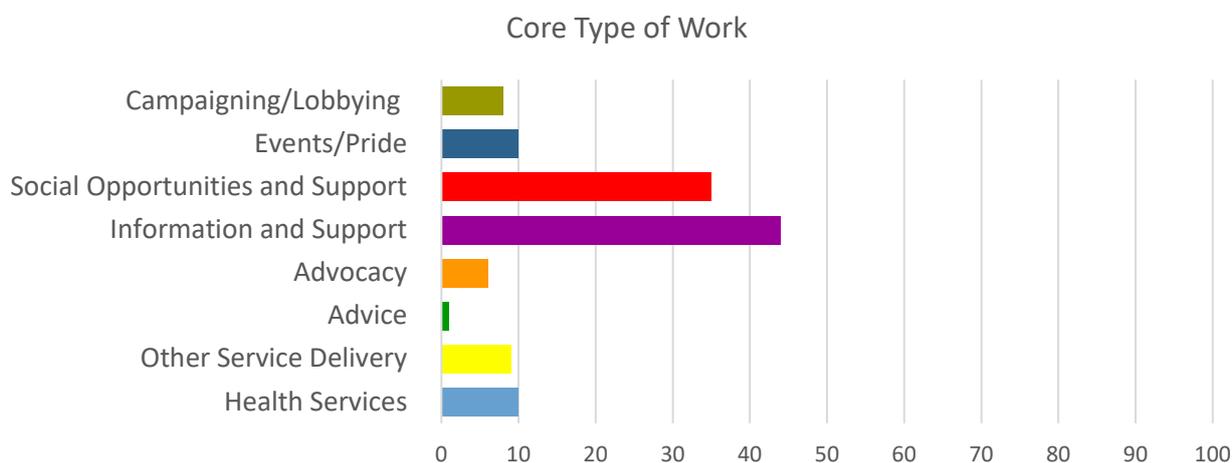
*\*[LGBT Consortium Annual Insight Report 2017](#)*

For many groups an increase in beneficiaries means they are dealing with fresh challenges and many are struggling to support people whose issues are new to them.



## Types of Work

Groups were asked to identify their core type of work so that we could gain a picture of which type of work relies on a knowledge of law and legislation. We know the vast majority of groups often carry out multiple types of work so we gave them the opportunity to add more in a follow up question.



The most frequently selected type of core work was ‘Information and Support’. Of the 44 groups that selected this 40% are groups who employ staff. Half of this type of work is delivered by groups with an income of under £5,000. This is in line with what we know about our Members, that most of them offer information and support through informal groups, websites, online groups and events.

‘Social Opportunities and Support’ is the second most frequent type of core work. 62% of those groups selecting this core work are unstaffed and have an income of under £5,000. Again, this is in line with what we know about our Members work and would include social meet ups, events and clubs.

*“We are a peer support group, we have no funding (and are lucky to have free use of a space in which to meet) and we crowdfund for our online resources. We don't therefore give "formal" advice but are able to help each other out and point people toward relevant support and advice networks beyond us”*

*LGBT Group choosing: Social Opportunities and Support category*



We gave groups the opportunity to tell us about other types of work they carried out on top of their core work:

Groups were invited to select multiple options as we recognise there are very few groups who carry out one type of work exclusively. Whereas ‘Advice’ was selected by only one group as a core type of work 60% of all groups indicated they offer it as part of their work.

Information and Support	80	65.00%
Advice	74	60.20%
Events/Pride	65	52.80%
Social Opportunities and Support	59	48.00%
Advocacy	48	39.00%
Campaigning/Lobbying	48	39.00%
Other Service Delivery	35	28.50%
Health Services	32	26.00%

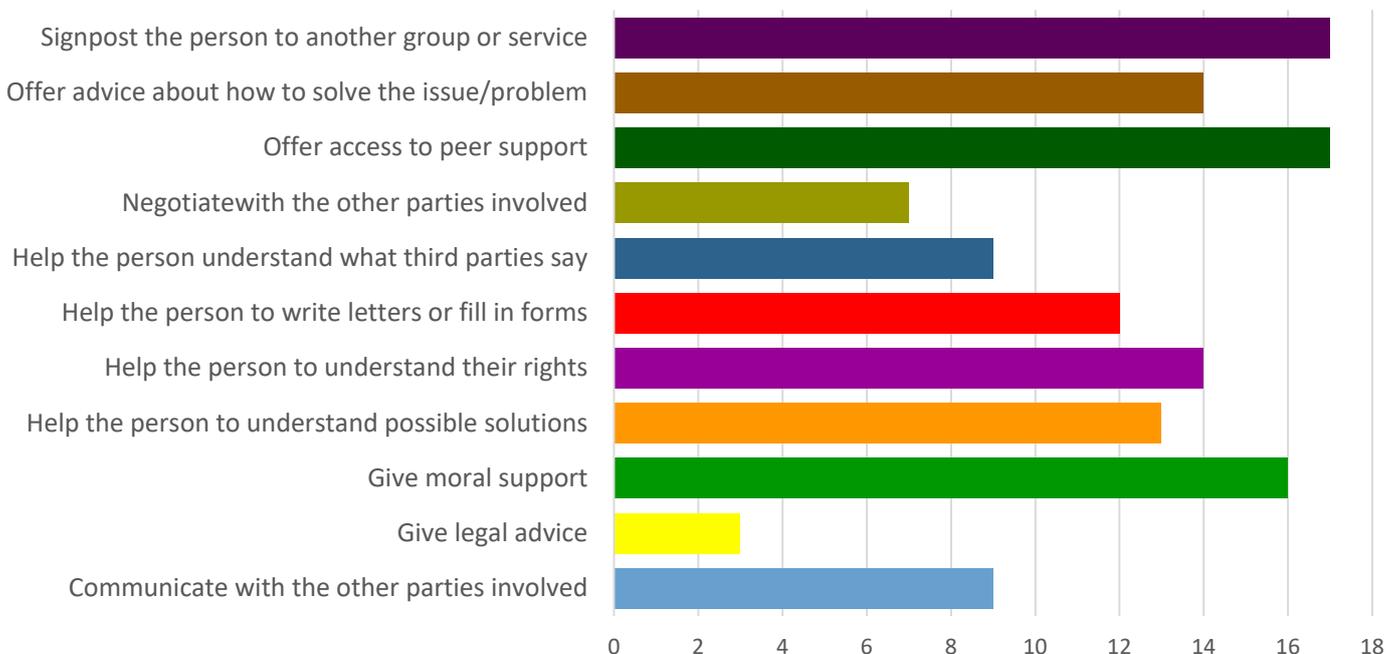
Many groups noted they aren’t always sure as to what constituted ‘advice’ and they often weren’t clear about the difference between ‘giving information’ and ‘giving advice’. Others noted they would never overtly say they offer advice as they would have concerns about the consequences or implications of inaccurate advice. We explore this information in the section on ‘Providing Advice and Information’ later in this report.

*‘We do not offer advice, which would involve the charity in legal liabilities’  
Trans Group*



## Tackling Discrimination and Challenging Inequality

Groups were asked how they support people who are experiencing or facing discrimination because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity



There was not a huge amount of difference between the type of support being offered by groups who employed staff and those who did not. Groups with staff are slightly more likely to help a person to understand their right and to offer legal or financial advice or assistance.

It is worth noting that groups with larger incomes (above £50,000) responding to this survey tend to be more focused in what they offer, while groups with smaller incomes indicated that they offer a broader range of support.

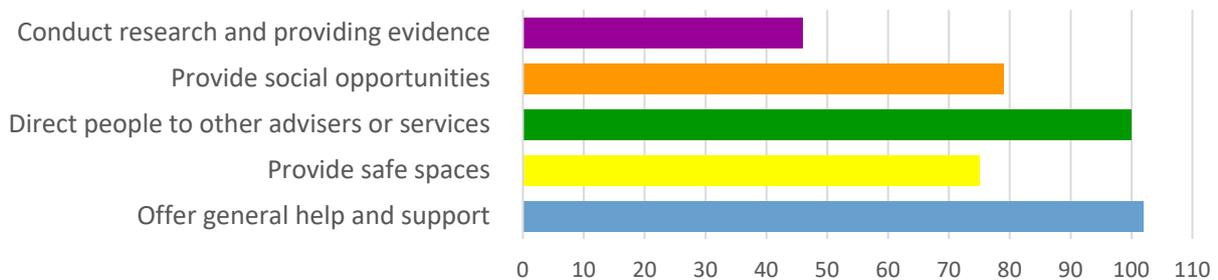
Those who selected 'We don't support people facing discrimination' were asked why this was the case. Some cited a lack of resources and capacity, others were clear that this was not their group's purpose. Others (over half) described different ways in which they work which would fall under the category of supporting people experiencing discrimination. This raises questions around whether groups always recognise their work in this context.

Groups attending one of the round table events discussed the gap between legislation and its practical application. While many groups have a good understanding of what the legal rights of LGBT people are many are unsure how to help people who have had their rights breached in a practical sense. One representative from an LGBT Youth Group spoke honestly about how, if a young person came to them with a case of discrimination, they would be able to recognise that they have been a victim of discrimination but would be unable to tell them what to do about it. In Northern Ireland groups seem to have a very clear understanding of what



legislation exists and of its practical application but the laws protecting LGBT were weaker than in other parts of the UK. It was highlighted that much of the UK lacks awareness of how legislation and policy differ in Northern Ireland and this can be challenging for groups wanting to do joined up work.

### Indirectly Challenging Inequality



49% of indirect work is done by groups with an income of below £5000 with the smaller groups being more likely than larger ones to offer social opportunities. Nearly all groups signpost as a way of challenging inequality and offer general help and support.

*“A lot of our work recently has been challenging professionals on their legal duties under the Equality Act”*  
LGBT Group

### Directly Challenging Inequality



The survey showed that 56% of work that directly challenges inequality is being carried out by groups with an income of above £5,000.

Whether a group employs staff or not does not seem to influence the type of work they do to challenge inequality apart from ‘delivering equality based training’ which is delivered by 77% of groups with staff compared to only 44% of group with no staff and ‘using legal knowledge to challenge decision makers’ which was carried out by 43% of groups with staff compared to 26% of unstaffed groups.

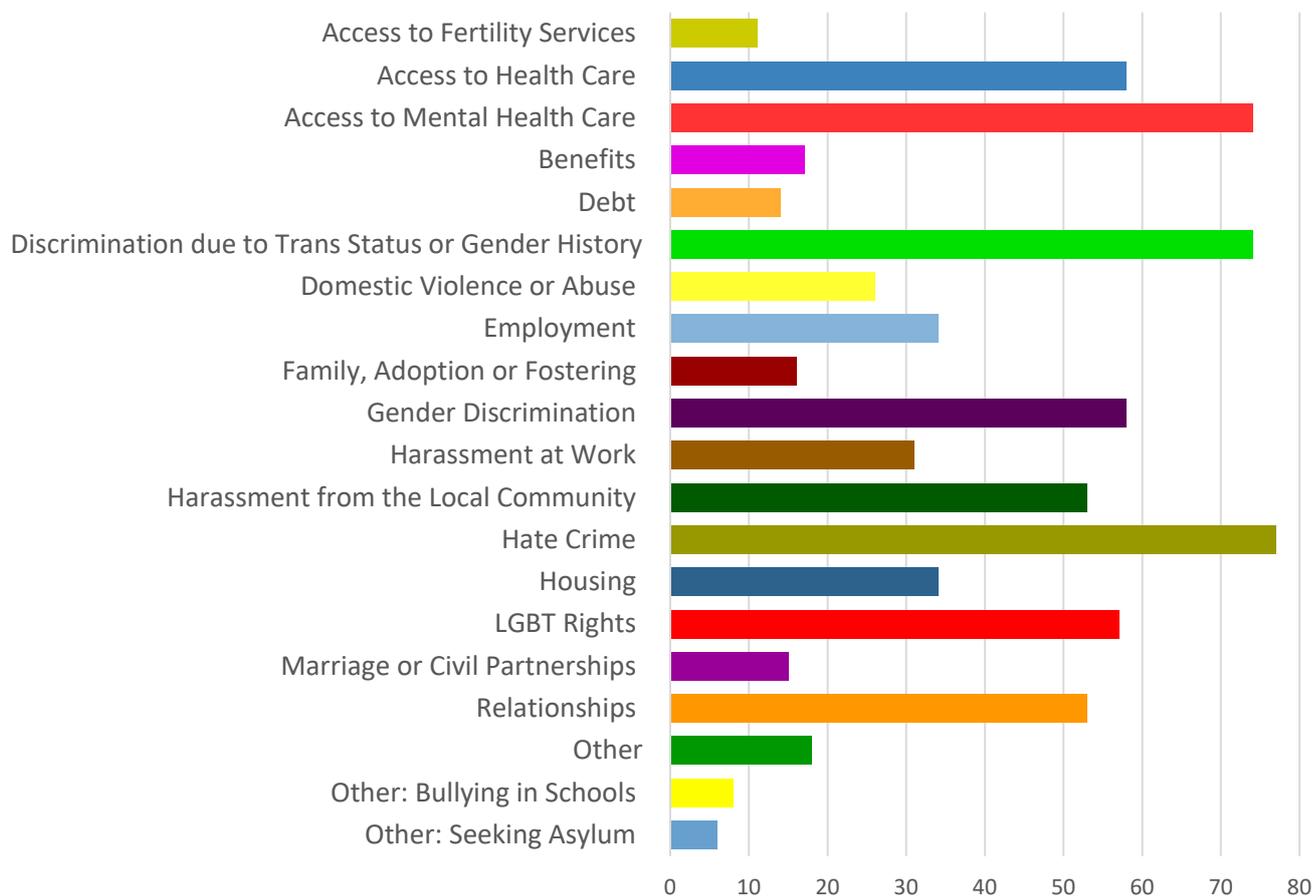
88% of all groups indicated they offer ‘General Help and Support’ as a way of challenging inequality. 87% of **all** respondents selected ‘directing people to other advisors or services’



(often referred to as signposting) as the second most common way in which they challenge inequality.

We asked groups to tell us about what themes or issues they are seeing in their work.

Most Common Themes or Issues Reported/Experienced



*(groups could select multiple options)*

*“Working with the LGBT community is very complex; most people have multiple complex issues from mental health to substance misuse so supporting them can be seriously difficult and time consuming”*  
*LGBT Group*

This table provides us with a picture of the intersectional and varied range of needs of LGBT people and communities. Many LGBT people will present with more than one issue e.g. many trans people may be struggling with multiple discrimination at any one time.

The three key issues that were selected most often and by all groups were ‘Access to Mental Health Care’, ‘Discrimination Due to Trans Status’ and ‘Hate Crime’. These topics were also



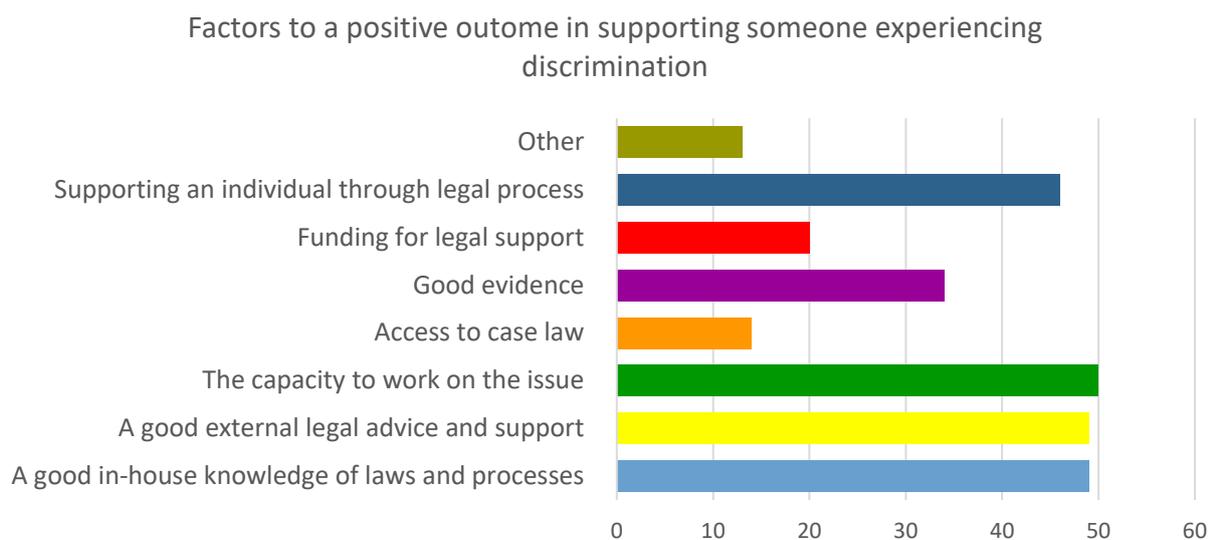
identified through two of the round table discussions events and several interviews. One group reported feeling at a loss as to how to help many people who come to them having had bad experiences from mainstream services when all they could really do was refer people back to them. In many instances there is nowhere else local to refer people locally but there are many LGBT groups across the UK who specialise in these areas of work. Some of the small groups we spoke to said they didn't know they could refer to some groups if they weren't in their area. This suggests that there is a lack of understanding among LGBT groups (small ones in particular) about how the wider sector operates and whose expertise they can utilise.

*“We get such a range of issues every week. LGBT Young people have such varied needs there is no way we could know how to address each issue they presented us with. We cannot be an expert in all things, so we signpost.”*

LGBT Group

### Getting Positive Outcomes

We asked groups what factors they felt were most important in getting a positive outcome for someone who is facing or experiencing discrimination.



Smaller groups with an income of under £5000 were less likely to identify a 'good in-house knowledge' as a factor for them and were more likely to identify 'supporting people through the legal process' as a factor to a positive outcome. Having the capacity to work with someone who is experiencing discrimination was chosen as the key factor to a positive outcome by all.

Capacity will not increase unless LGBT groups can secure funding. Whilst LGBT Consortium is working hard to encourage LGBT groups to explore income diversification, we know through our annual Insight Data collection that most of our Membership is grant dependent for their core income. Funding is harder to secure, some funders report although they get a high volume of applications from LGBT groups their standards are not as high as they would like to see. Some funders no longer see LGBT communities as a priority for funding and in an interview one



LGBT group highlighted one such funder who traditionally funded LGBT issues had removed it from their priorities:

‘In its most recent review, the Trustees have taken the decision that after twenty years directly supporting the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender community, it will no longer retain it as one of its specific priorities. In that time there has been a positive increase in society’s acceptance and attitude towards LGBT people and greater awareness of the issues that LGBT people face’

*The Allen Lane Foundation website*

There is a common perception that now LGBT people have near legal equality (e.g. equal marriage) there is less need. Groups and the sector report a huge gap between legislation and societal acceptant as we see LGBT hate crime statistics rise and trans people in particular being targeted by the media.

## Recommendations

- Resources that marry up legislation and its practical application should be produced for the benefit of LGBT groups. These would be best understood through scenarios and case studies.
- The evidence suggests that small LGBT groups don’t always recognise their own knowledge as an asset. Direct work and training with groups can build confidence so that they can apply that knowledge and recognise when it’s appropriate to charge third parties for their expertise. An effective signposting tool needs to be created to ensure capacity of groups is used efficiently and effectively by utilising the expertise of specialist LGBT groups.
- Where there are gaps in support, smaller groups should be supported to work with specialist non-LGBT services to ensure that LGBT people are included and catered for in a way that is appropriate. This could be done through a collective of LGBT groups who could develop and sell training to those services e.g. a collaborative training partnership which is nationally led and locally delivered.
- More direct work with funders needs to take place to communicate the vital nature of work being carried out by LGBT groups of all sizes.
- Training with small groups to support them in developing compelling, evidence-based cases to funders about how there is a considerable gap between legislation and societal acceptance.
- Further support for groups to access evidence and create successful applications for funding.



## Knowledge Management



During interviews and round table discussions the concept of groups sharing knowledge was widely discussed. It was acknowledged knowledge is the biggest asset of most groups and therefore can often be 'guarded' by some.

There is an expectation this knowledge is always free and this can be a source of

frustration for many groups. One group added that the emphasis is always on LGBT people and groups to speak up and provide advice about how they should be included or treated, rather than the people and organisations who design the services in the first place.

### In which ways do LGBT Group's use their knowledge

It informs information or signposting	65	61.90%
It informs day to day work/core work	56	53.30%
It informs advice	34	32.40%
It informs training	32	30.50%
It informs campaigns and/or lobbying	29	27.60%
It's useful but not formally used	25	23.80%
Other	1	1.00%

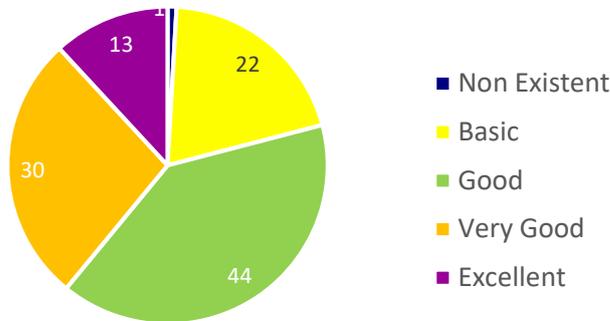
*"We do have concerns over how to share and collaborate without losing integrity"*  
LGBT Group

Many smaller and non-specialist groups felt the way in which they supported people was very much shaped by the volunteers and trustees that came and went. One LGBT Youth Group we interviewed stressed the importance of making decisions about which staff to invest in when staff and volunteer turnover is high.

*"Volunteers come with their own skills and networks. When a volunteer leaves the group the project shape-shifts to reflect the current volunteer base"*  
LGBT Group

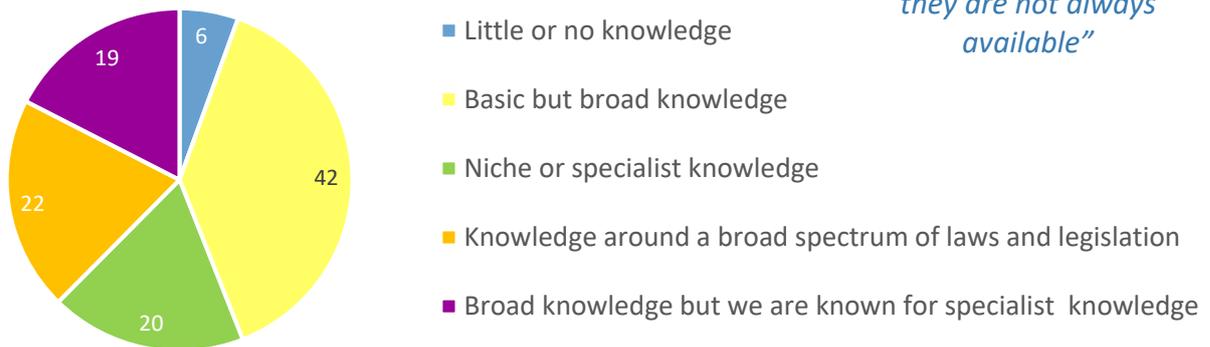


### Groups Rating their Knowledge of LGBT people’s Legal Rights



*“I can only answer for myself as I have had experience and run training, but if I wasn't there I really have no idea how other people's knowledge is within the group”*

### Groups Rating their breadth/type of knowledge



*“We have one of two members who are confident to speak but unfortunately they are not always available”*

Overall, we saw many groups rate their knowledge as ‘good’ to ‘very good’. Only 1 group rated their knowledge of LGBT people’s rights as nonexistent. The groups who rated their knowledge as ‘Excellent’ tended to be groups with staff of groups with specialist focus.

Groups who deliver services and support to a range of LGBT people and communities rate their *range* of knowledge higher than those who deliver niche work or cater for a specific parts of LGBT communities as would be expected. 46% of groups said a knowledge of the rights of LGBT people is vital to their core work, a further 36% said it was important to their day to day work. The remaining groups said they didn’t need that knowledge to carry out their work (although 88% of those said it would be useful if they did), all of whom had an income of under £50,000.

Groups working in Northern Ireland reported that due to the laws around LGBT people’s rights being weaker than those of the rest of the UK they often rely on other laws to back up the work they do. This means those groups need to have an even wider and more general knowledge than their counterparts in the rest of the UK.



We also asked groups to rate their confidence levels in their knowledge and it's worth noting they don't always match knowledge levels. While 20% of groups rated their knowledge as basic, 27% rated their confidence levels as basic. 12% of groups rated their knowledge as excellent but confidence levels didn't always match.

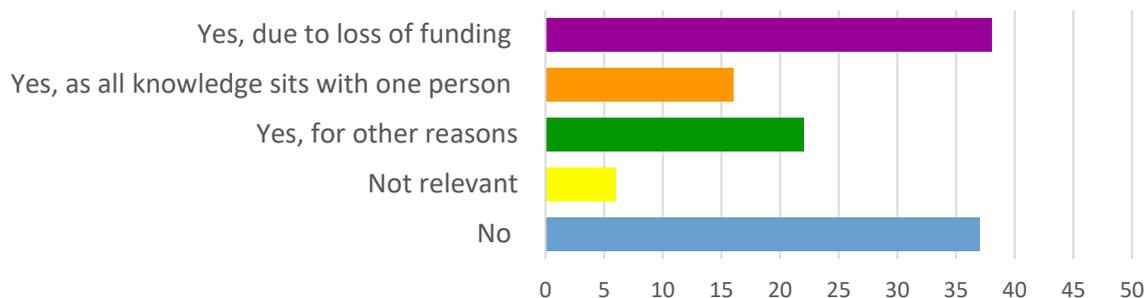
As expected it is the groups who deliver niche work, or cater for specific parts of LGBT communities, that report have greater confidence in the knowledge they do have.

There was a big call from groups we spoke to for more vehicles or points through which they can share and gain knowledge from one another on a peer level. We believe this would also improve confidence levels.

### Retaining Knowledge

We asked groups across the survey, interviews and round table discussions if there was a risk of losing skills, experience and expertise that allows them to offer advice, information and/or support. 32% of groups felt there was no risk but 66% felt their groups were at risk of losing such assets for a range of reasons. We expected to see higher proportion of groups with no staff indicating they were at risk of losing knowledge.

Is there a risk of you losing the skills, experience or expertise that allows your groups to offer advice, information and/or support?



67% of all non-staffed groups are at risk of losing knowledge and 64% of groups with staff are at risk. This is very high and could certainly affect confidence levels of groups who want to secure their future and undertake work.

Of Groups that felt they are risk of losing skills, experience or expertise 35% felt the cause of that loss would be due to a loss of funding.

*“Lack of capacity and funds to training other team members”  
LGBT Group*

Groups in Northern Ireland noted that they felt that the sector (in NI) is reliant on one or two individuals when it comes to legal rights, which is totally unsustainable. Some groups suggested pooling resources in some way to limit the loss to the sector.



Of the 76 groups that indicated they risk a loss in this area, 59% were non-staffed groups and 41% were staffed. Groups who offer Information and support are the most like to be at risk of losing skills experience or experience.

*“People with knowledge leave and they take that knowledge with them”*

## Recommendations

- Establish, and support the use of, Knowledge Networks where groups can exchange and trade specialist knowledge and skills.
- Enable LGBT Groups to better communicate with one another where their expertise lay in order to address gaps in knowledge. Further development of LGBT Consortium’s Directory could include another layer which allows groups to shop for knowledge from others.
- Develop ways of capturing and utilising tacit knowledge from groups who are at risk of losing workers or volunteers with specialist skills and experience.
- Ensure that all resources are live and future proofed for change (address capacity issues).
- Much of the specialist knowledge needed already sits within pockets of the sector. Develop a training programme which allows peers to share their knowledge and to educate about their work.
- Reduce risk of losing knowledge by supporting groups to appropriately induct and train new volunteers and trustees so that knowledge is passed on as a group asset rather than it being relied on from one person.

*“We need greater collaboration, easier referral pathways and joined up working with other LGBT specialist groups”*

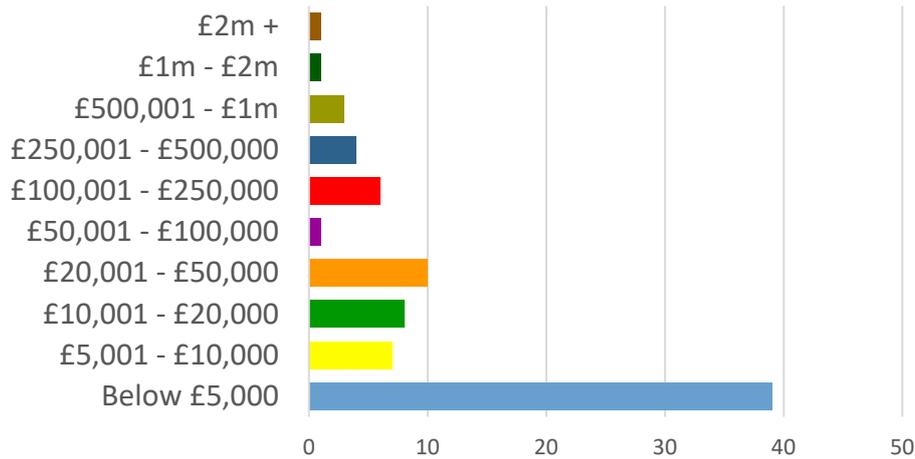
LGBT Group



## Providing Advice and Information

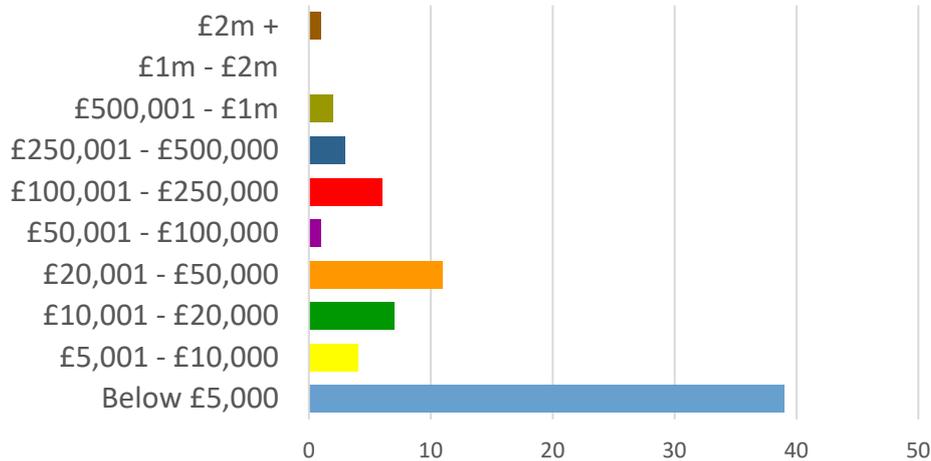
Offering Information and Support was by far the most frequent type of work carried out outside of groups core work, with 80% of groups selecting that option. 77% of this work is carried out by groups with staff who offer Information and Support.

Other Work: Information and Support



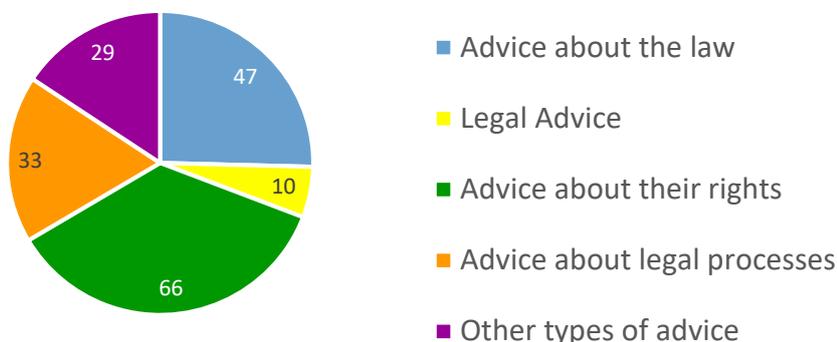
While only 1 respondent chose Advice as their core type of work, 60% (74 groups) indicated that they offer Advice as part of their work.

Other Work: Giving Advice





### What kind of advice do you offer people?



Of groups that indicated that they offer some kind of advice, groups with staff were proportionately more likely to offer advice than those without staff. Only 9% of groups that give advice give Legal Advice and it is the larger groups with an income of over £50,000 who are more likely to offer that, as well as advice about the legal process.

*“It is too expensive to access advice or training around the law”  
Bi Group*

17% of ‘Other types of Advice’ were trans specific, and the remaining responses were variations of the themes above.

*“It would be great to gain clarity around the term ‘advice’ and how different it is to ‘information’. It would also be useful to know if and how giving advice to members impacts on insurance etc.”  
LGBT Group*

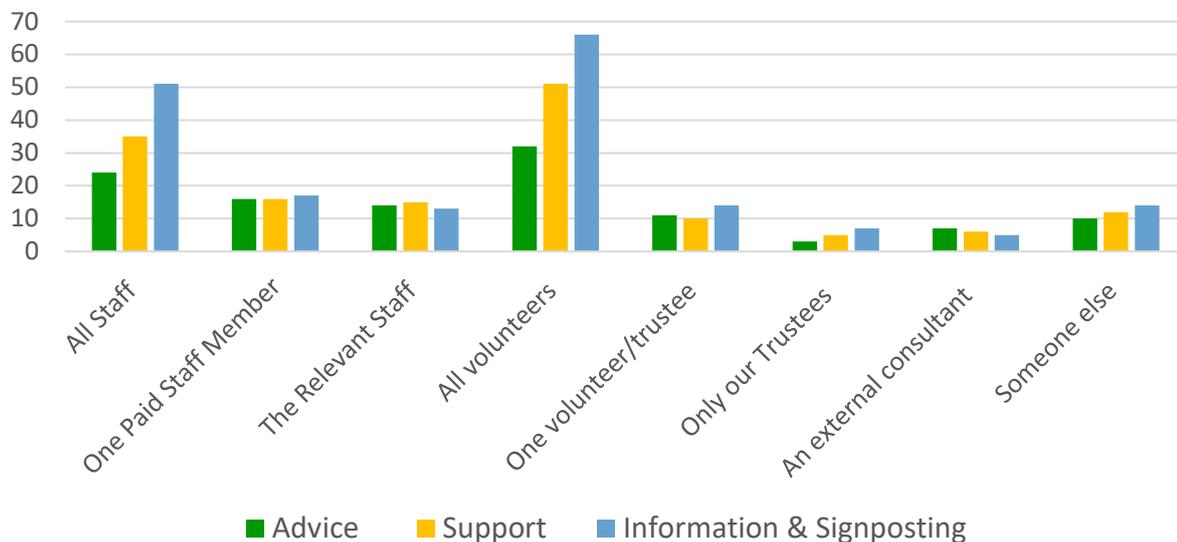
There seems to be some confusion from groups of all sizes over what constitutes advice and how that is different to giving Information.

Before we embarked on collecting this data anecdotal evidence painted a picture of many groups steering clear of claiming to offer advice. Groups cited the fact they weren’t insured appropriately, or they were unsure of what the consequence of giving advice might be. The fact that 60% of groups completing this survey claim to offer advice as an element of their work raises concerns about how this advice is being bench marked and validated appropriately. The high percentage of groups giving advice could be an indication of further confusion about what advice is, but it certainly warrants further investigation.

Groups need to be supported to operate within best practice and as the sector umbrella body we are well placed to ensure that as well as serving LGBT Communities effectively, our Members are protecting their own staff and volunteers against risk.



Who gives Advice, Support and Information and Signposting in Groups



Only 10% of groups that have staff use volunteers to provide advice. A higher number of groups with staff use volunteers to do support work (37%) or signposting (45%).

The risks of losing knowledge and skills to give advice is at higher risk of being lost if it sits with just one person, particularly if that one person is a volunteer.

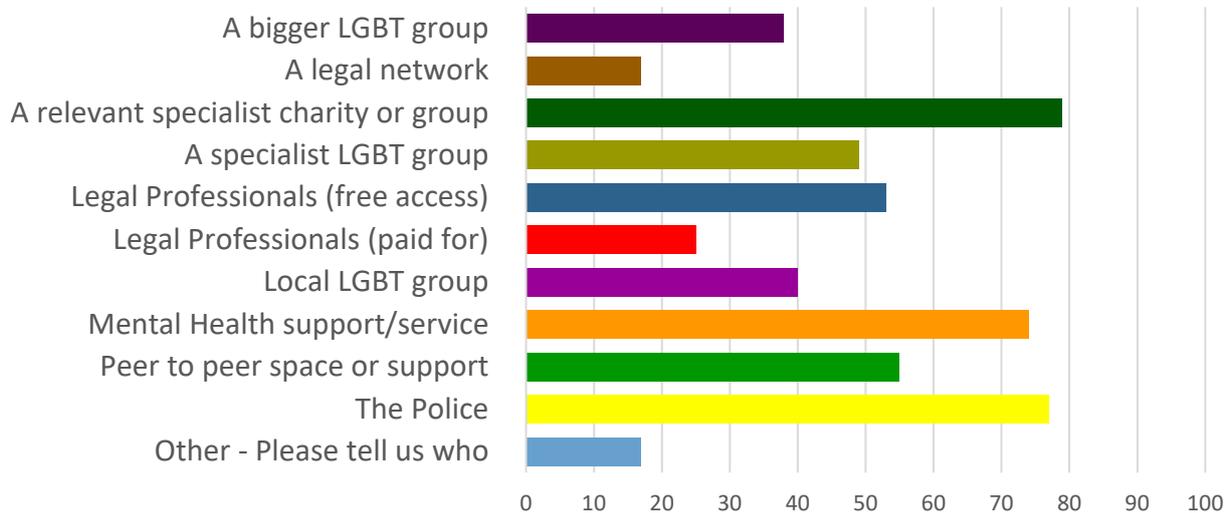
### Recommendations

- Guidance around giving advice is needed for LGBT groups. This could be an online guide around what constitutes as advice and what the implication of giving advice can be. We suggest using scenario based examples which are practical and understandable.
- Further exploration is needed re: how 'advice' (if that is indeed what is being given) is being validated amongst groups.
- More awareness needs to be raised amongst groups re: policy, procedure and insurance and good practice around giving advice is needed.
- Better signposting tools are needed so that groups, regardless of their size, are able to effectively signpost to organisations and groups who can and should give advice.



## Signposting

Who does your LGBT Group signpost people who are experiencing or facing discrimination to?



For groups who selected they would not give advice, signposting was identified as the course of action they would take. Signposting was a topic that was discussed at length during two of the discussion events. A need for good ‘scenario’ signposting tools where a professional or service user can work through a series of questions about their needs and be led to the appropriate route was identified.

68% of groups signpost to specialist LGBT groups, nearly half of whom are groups with an income of under £5000. Round table discussions attendees agreed giving groups access to accurate signposting can be as good as upskilling them, especially where capacity and funding is tight. It was acknowledged that signposting can put pressure onto specialist services who we know have seen their own funding cuts. This must be considered if measures are taken to increase referrals to them.

33% of groups will signpost to a bigger LGBT group and 34% signpost to another local LGBT group.

*“We always signpost to our regional LGBT organisation. Are we always sure we are signposting correctly, honestly no! But with limited capacity and no feedback from those we signpost to, what can we do?”*

*LGBT Group*

Several groups said that a lot of their time was spent helping professionals from outside of the LGBT Sector to find the right organisations or service for their clients, but this drained capacity. In a sector where knowledge is seen as one of the largest assets, there is a lack of value placed on signposting as a ‘tool’ or resource.

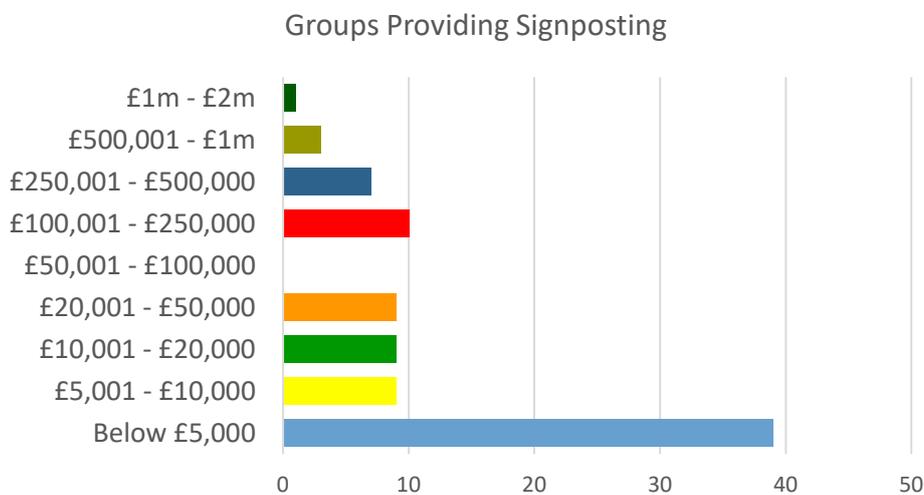


Our own daily phone call enquiries are information requests from professionals from both inside and outside of the LGBT Sector, so we know that good signposting takes time and can be drain on capacity.

*“If a person comes to us with an issue of discrimination we can tell them that it’s discrimination, we can support with them to recognise discrimination when it happens and to understand that they do not have to accept it. We wouldn’t know how to help them in practical terms though, we are just volunteers”.*

*LGBT Group*

Nearly all groups offer information and signposting. Smaller groups (less than £5000 income) are far less likely to offer information specifically about the law than larger staffed groups are.



Attendees of a round table discussion felt it was vital for larger groups to share and filter information down to the smaller ones and throughout this project the message from groups has been clear around signposting—a central signposting tool that is maintained regularly is needed and would save time and money for groups.

*“We need greater collaboration, easier referral pathways and jopined up working with other LGBT specialist groups”*

*LGBT Group*

Although 46% of groups indicated they signpost to Legal Professionals (with free access) in the free text and in round table discussions, groups noted they find it hard to signpost to legal professionals unless staff or volunteers have personal connections.

One group reported even though they work with the Police and Victim Support they find the feedback from LGBT people using those services is not great. It was noted too at a round table discussion it is hard for groups who are aspiring to best practice to continue to signpost to services who they know will not always meet the specific needs of LGBT people. It was agreed



that by having access to effective signposting and by increasing capacity they could all improve the support they offer.

*“We are a peer support group, we have no funding (and are lucky to have free use of a space in which to meet, and we crowdfund for our online resources). We don't therefore give "formal" advice but are able to help each other out and point people toward relevant support and advice networks beyond us.”*

*LGBT Group*

## Recommendations

- A simple and effective signpost tool that can be used by professionals and service users is needed. LGBT Consortium is well placed to deliver this as it could be integrated with the current Directory which is regularly updated as part of our core work.
- A guide on signposting and when it is appropriate to signpost would be of use.
- Groups don't need a wide range of knowledge in all areas but a basic knowledge will enable them to signpost effectively, without it they may not recognise certain need. A training resource that allows specialist LGBT groups to share their knowledge to enable this is needed.
- Small specialist groups can become easily overwhelmed. Part of developing effective sector signposting ensures the sector has appropriate capacity to deal effectively with cases. Where this is not possible, specialists from outside of the sector should be guided as to how to work with LGBT people appropriately.

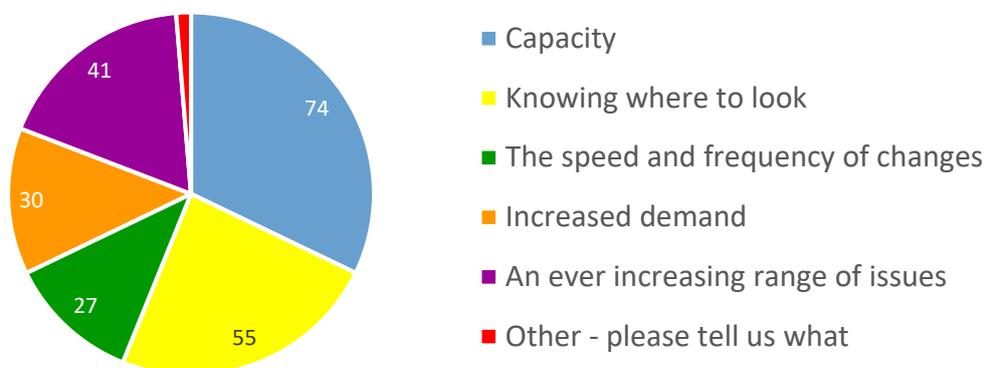


## Sourcing Information

32% of groups report they struggle to keep up to date with information and developments around the laws affecting LGBT people.

47% of groups that have staff report they are signed up to relevant news and information sources. This was a much higher percentage than groups without staff at only 35%. Groups with staff are more likely to work with legal professionals who, through regular access, keep them up to date with information.

Biggest barriers for groups to stay up to date with relevant information about the law effecting LGBT people

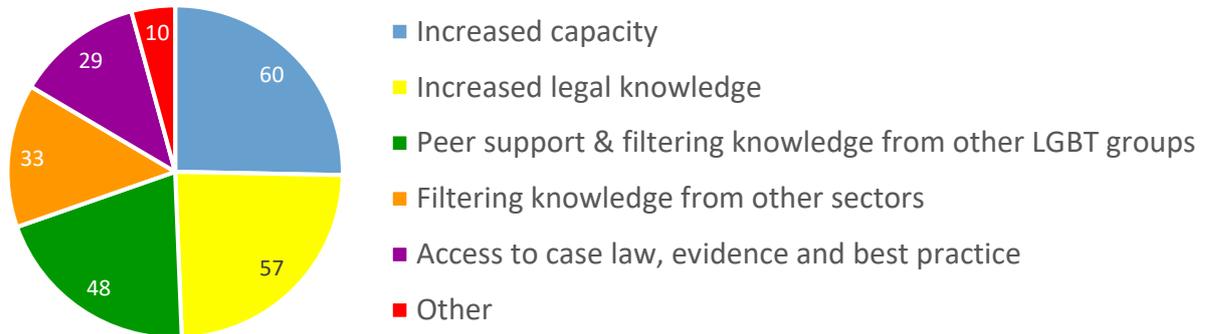


Capacity was the main barrier identified by all groups, with 71% of groups with staff and 56% of unstaffed groups selecting it. It's worth noting we have found that groups run entirely by volunteers are less likely to think in terms of capacity as something that can be exceeded because they do not have set hours.

55% of groups with no staff identified knowing where to look for information as a barrier to staying up to date, while only 29% of groups with staff felt this was a barrier.

Groups taking part in the round table discussion event in Northern Ireland reported struggling to keep on top of legal developments and engagements due to stretched capacity. They reported there is an expectation they (the LGBT Sector) can always take on more for no more money but there are real concerns over how unsustainable this way of working is.

An ever increasing range of new issues was a barrier for 33% of groups with staff and for 37% of groups with no staff. In the free text sections, the round table discussions and interviews, when asked how they might be better supported in staying up to date with the information about the laws that effect LGBT people, groups gave us a range of tools including:



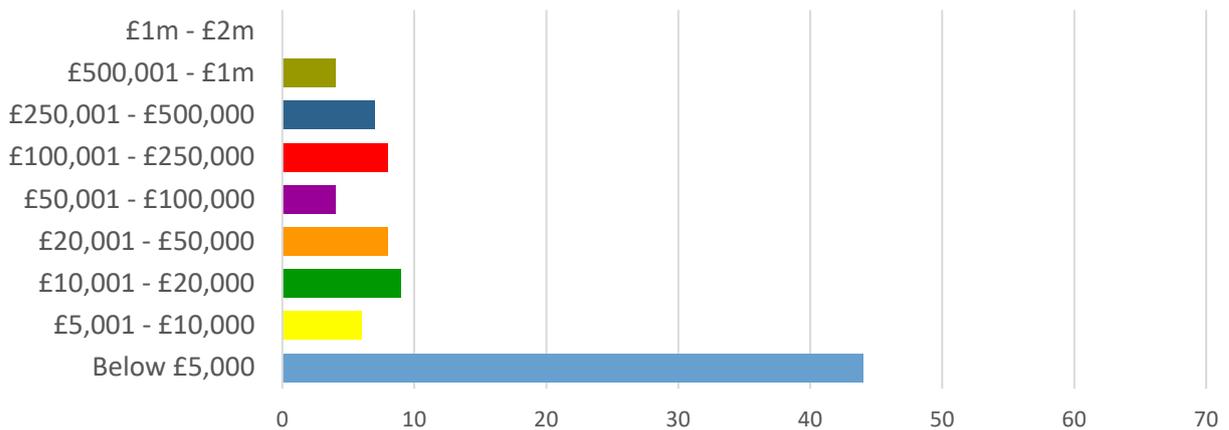
## Recommendations

- Groups need time to be able to keep up to date. Where it is not possible to increase capacity, it is essential that there be an accessible e-digest or mailing that summarises changes or developments around legislation and policy.
- Connecting groups with more legal professionals and networks would ensure not only that groups have direct access to knowledge, but they can also be kept up to date with changes.
- Working together to share information is essential. Larger organisations with staff seem much more confident in knowing where to look for information, so peer support and filtering knowledge as part of a Knowledge Network would be useful.
- A central place where case law, evidence and best practice can be accessed would be useful to many groups. The LGBT Foundation already has an evidence exchange containing a good selection of research and there is potential for integrating more if this is deemed the best approach.



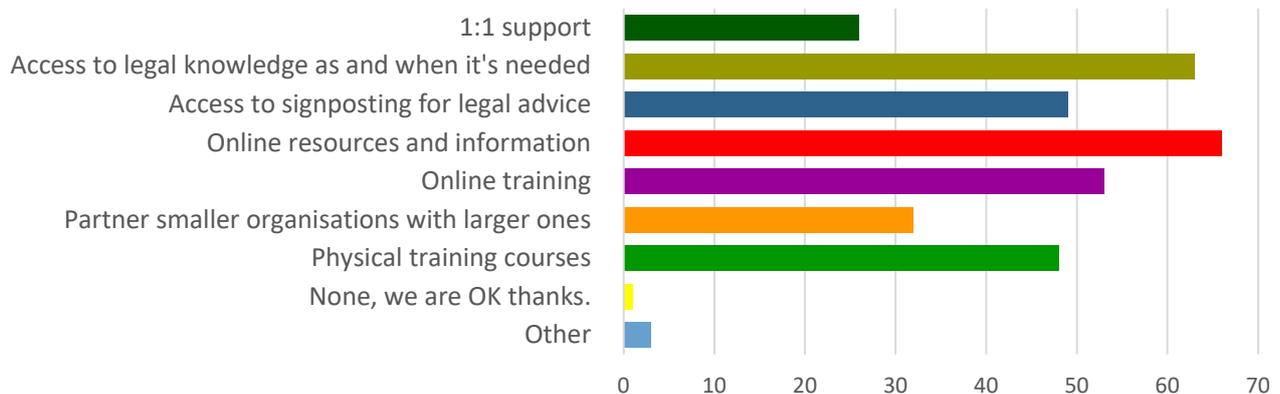
## Training and Support

Groups who 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that improving their general knowledge around the legal rights of LGBT people would benefit our service users/group members by income



72% of all groups agree (51%) or strongly agree (32%) their LGBT Group would be able to challenge inequality more effectively with more knowledge of the laws protecting LGBT people's rights. 9% neither agree nor disagree and only 4% disagree.

What kind of support or training would increasing groups knowledge around the law?



We also asked groups what would help them to support people who are experiencing discrimination groups, with smaller incomes (under £50,000) identifying 'Peer support and filtering knowledge from other groups' as a key factor that would help them.

Larger groups identified 'Increasing capacity' and filtering knowledge from other sectors as key areas that would support them to more effective.



*“It may be better to target investment to specific legal advice on certain issues...our communities know they can refer to an organisation with the expertise, but all organisations need basic training on legal rights and guidance.”*

*LGBT Specialist Group*

## Recommendations

- Plan, develop and deliver a training programme in collaboration with specialist LGBT groups to ensure that knowledge is used as a sector asset.
- Create an online training suite made up of webinars, live chats with experts and resources to enable LGBT groups to know when to offer support and when to signpost or seek additional support.
- Continue to deliver infrastructure support to LGBT groups to ensure groups have an improved awareness of the how to build capacity and ensure they can continue to improve and deliver the work they are doing.
- Support specialist groups to ensure they are best placed to retain knowledge as a group asset and they are financial sustainable, exploring business and income opportunities to secure their futures.

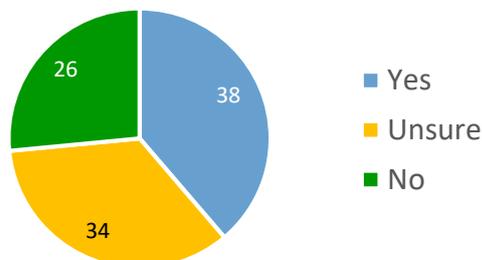
*“We would be more effective in staying up to date with knowledge sharing between LGBT groups & legal professionals, in language that is practical and understandable.”*

*LGBT Group*



## Leaving the EU

Has the decision to leave the European Union and subsequent Brexit proceedings impacted on your LGBT Group?



Of the 98 groups who answered this section, 32% reported that their group had already been impacted by the decision to leave the European Union and a further 30% are unsure.

The impact that groups are seeing includes following:

- 58% report LGBT people are concerned for their residential status
- 73% report seeing a rise in homophobic, biphobic and transphobic motivated hate crime and incidences.
- 6% report that EU Networks or Partnerships have ended or being disbanded, and another 9 groups fear their EU funding is in question.

*“There is an Increased uncertainty in regard application of international and EU Law”  
LGBT Group*

It is important LGBT Consortium, as the LGBT Sector’s umbrella body, continues to work closely with Members and decision makers to ensure LGBT groups feel represented, informed and included. LGBT Consortium will endeavour to continue to support all its Members in this way.



## Full List of Recommendations

### Tackling Discrimination and Challenging Inequality

- Resources that marry up legislation and its practical application should be produced for the benefit of LGBT groups. Our recommendation is that they would be best understanding through scenarios and case studies.
- More support for smaller groups is needed to ensure that see their knowledge as an asset that can be paid for and to explore this as part of their income.
- An effective signposting tool needs to be created to ensure capacity of groups is used efficiently and effectively by utilising the expertise of specialist LGBT groups.
- Where there are gaps in support, smaller groups should be supported to work with specialist non-LGBT services to ensure LGBT people are included and catered for in a way that is appropriate. This could be done through a collective of LGBT groups which could develop and sell training to those services e.g. a collaborative training partnership which is nationally led and locally delivered.
- More work directly with funders to communicate the vital nature of services carried out in by LGBT groups of all sizes.
- Support groups to make a compelling case to funders about how there is a considerable gap between legislation and societal acceptance.
- Support groups to access evidence and create successful applications for funding.

### Knowledge Management

- Establish, and support the use of, Knowledge Networks where groups can exchange, and trade specialist knowledge and skills.
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