

**DIVERSITY  
IN RACING**  
STEERING GROUP



**SPORTS MEDIA**

LGBT+



**RACING  
WITH PRIDE**

# RAINBOW READY

Resources for Communicating  
LGBT+ Inclusion in British Horseracing

*Strategy and media guidelines*

*September 2020*



# Introduction



British racing is for everyone. It is a diverse and inclusive sport in which people from all communities should feel welcome, able to be themselves, and achieve their potential.

Racing should provide a supportive environment for everyone who identifies as lesbian, gay, bi, trans and other sexual orientations and gender identities (LGBT+) so they feel able to be their true selves without fear of discrimination - echoing leading LGBT+ rights charity, [Stonewall](#)'s mission of **acceptance without exception**.

## How do we talk about LGBT+ inclusion in racing with our colleagues and participants, racegoers and our digital audiences, and the wider community in which we operate?

The [Diversity in Racing Steering Group](#)'s (DiRSG) dedicated LGBT+ sub-group has teamed up with Sports Media LGBT+ to produce these guidelines to help you create and communicate content relating to LGBT+ inclusion.

Alongside the development of the [LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion e-learning](#) and [Racing With Pride](#), horseracing's official LGBT+ network, our envisioned impact is to create a welcoming industry for everyone, where all participants feel confident and free to be open about their sexuality, if they wish to do so.

We would love racing to be a community where **every** person feels comfortable, supported and heard. Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that there is zero tolerance towards discrimination within the sport and that our people feel informed and empowered to challenge inappropriate behaviours and practices when they encounter these.

### *Jon Holmes, Founder and Network Lead, Sports Media LGBT+*

**Every day, conversations about sport are playing out – face-to-face, at a local level, and on national and international platforms with power and influence.**

It's not just press officers, journalists and PR professionals who are leading this discourse. In racing, fans and administrators, as well as jockeys and trainers themselves, are among those frequently communicating in the public space.

Conversations about LGBT+ inclusion in sport often present challenges, but the importance of addressing the topic continues to grow. Highlighting inclusion initiatives is a way to attract new audiences, while providing space for LGBT+ people and allies to tell their stories can have significant impact, inviting empathy and understanding.

[Sports Media LGBT+](#) is a network, advocacy and consultancy group. By amplifying LGBT+ voices in the media, championing authenticity, and sharing examples of good practice, we're working to assist our industry and other sectors on communicating inclusion with the goal of making sport more welcoming of all.

These 'Rainbow Ready' resources, specifically adapted for the horseracing industry, will advise you on a strategy that will not only engage people who are lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT+), but also help in making your content resonate with people who aren't LGBT+ too.

Whether you work for a stakeholder body or a local racecourse; alongside well-known trainers or jockeys or those at grassroots; as an editor or reporter; or in an entirely different role that involves communications and racing, these guidelines are for everyone.

We also deliver these resources in workshops, using case studies and scenarios for illustration. If you are a relative beginner to discussions on sexual orientation and gender identity in sport, the information on page 14 will serve as an introductory primer.

*If you'd like to learn more, please get in touch by emailing [info@sportsmedialgbt.com](mailto:info@sportsmedialgbt.com). 'Rainbow Ready' is designed to be a living document, and we welcome your feedback too.*



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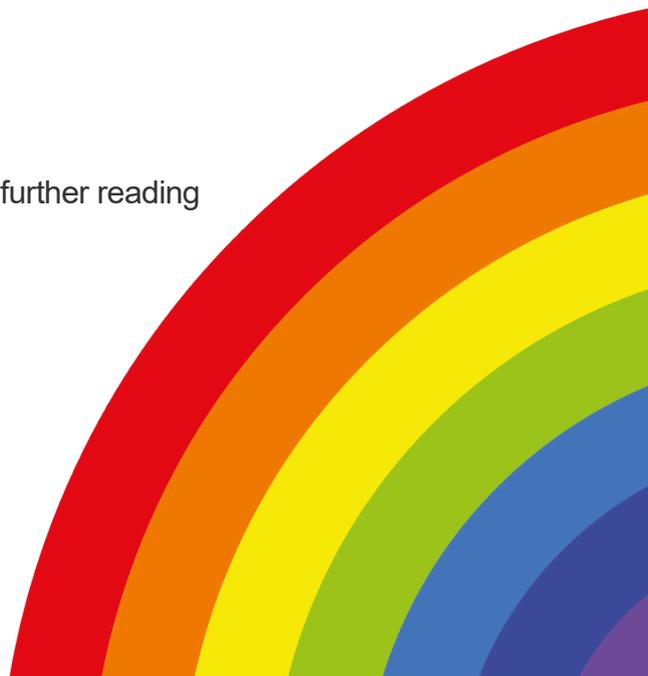
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# Questions and Answers



## What's been the activity to date regarding LGBT+ experiences in racing?

In recent years, several of racing's participants who are out in the sport have spoken publicly, for example former professional [jockey Jack Duern](#), [trainer Mick Appleby](#) and retired [jockey Victoria Smith, who was the first jockey to ride as both a man and a woman](#). Allies in racing have also shown their support.

In 2019, [David Letts carried out industry-wide research examining the prevalence of sexual minorities](#) within the sport and attitudes relating to the subject. The research indicated many individuals who identified as a sexual minority did not feel comfortable 'coming out' at work, despite largely positive attitudes towards sexual minority individuals throughout the sport.

In response, the sport's DiRSG has been working to drive change for the LGBT+ community and has developed a [free LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion e-learning](#) and [Racing With Pride](#), a free and fully inclusive national network for British horseracing.

“

I'm proud to be a visible role model within the sport because there's nobody out there to turn to if you feel like you're on your own regarding your sexuality and I want people to know that they are not on their own. It's important to have visible role models within the sport because it makes you feel comfortable to be who you are and not worry that you're the only one, which could ultimately affect your self confidence and career progression.

”

**Jack Duern**  
Jockey and LGBTQ+ role model



♥ #RacingWithPride

## What is Sports Media LGBT+?

Sports Media LGBT+ was founded in 2017 as a network group for those in the sports media industry who are LGBT+ and also for the allies of LGBT+ people.

In addition to networking, the group advocates for and consults on LGBT+ inclusion at all levels of support, by amplifying voices, sharing content, and championing storytelling and other forms of media that reflects people's lived experiences and / or supports representation.

Through sport's worldwide power to unite people and promote equality, and by harnessing the media's ability to inform and educate, we are helping to create an environment where authenticity is valued and celebrated - a community of LGBT+ people and allies in sport.

“

The Clarehaven team are a fantastically diverse group of people that come from different backgrounds and all have different characteristics. Creating an inclusive environment to enable them to be themselves and be the best they can be is so important to our success. Racing should be a sport where everyone feels welcome.

”

**John Gosden**  
Trainer



♥ #RacingWithPride



## Who is 'Rainbow Ready' for?

Primarily, these resources have been collated to aid press, media, PR and comms professionals, or diversity champions, working in racing, such as for stakeholders, racecourses and other racing organisations. They will also be useful to editors, journalists and broadcasters who create and present content that relates to LGBT+ inclusion.

Anyone in racing who may be active in various forms of comms or on social media - such as administrators, trainers, owners, jockeys - should find the information helpful too.

## Why are these resources needed?

LGBT+ visibility in racing is increasing, such as through people in the sport being more open about their experiences, the formation of the Racing With Pride LGBT+ network, and stakeholders and racecourses supporting Pride initiatives and campaigns. However, many in media and comms receive no formal education or training on inclusion, and the topic often seems complex.



That can result in a lack of confidence to discuss these themes, particularly if a person is not LGBT+ themselves. They may worry about 'saying the wrong thing', or that their reasons for doing so will be misinterpreted. Others may question the relevance of such communications to a broader racing audience.

Through our work, we know the impact that successfully communicating LGBT+ inclusion in sport can have – an empowering sense of belonging and recognition, and a message of respect that reaches everyone.

## What's the content in 'Rainbow Ready'?

Our resources offer accessible, practical information to aid busy media and comms professionals. We've drawn upon our own experiences as LGBT+ people working in sports media; and taken insight gleaned from others working in the wider inclusion space.

This document is primarily a strategy guide, with additional comms advice and media guidelines. We've also included an introductory glossary of terminology and provided links to other resources which can further your understanding.

## When will 'Rainbow Ready' be most useful?

These resources are not time specific but may be most useful at certain touchpoints in the calendar, such as LGBT+ awareness and visibility days.

These include, but are not limited to, [LGBT History Month](#); the [International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia](#) on May 17; [Pride season](#) and the related events in the summer months; [National Coming Out Day](#) in October; and the annual activation of [Stonewall's Rainbow Laces campaign](#) in late November / early December.

This document aims to complement any and all resources associated with these initiatives and will help anyone engaging in LGBT+ inclusion in sport – to whatever degree – to communicate confidently about their activities.

In recent years, racing has come together to mark Pride on social media and also aims to join the Rainbow Laces campaign - look out for how you can be part of it.

## What reactions am I likely to get to my comms?

'Rainbow Ready' has been compiled with a variety of sports roles in mind. On social media, for example, trainers, jockeys, racecourses and the comms professionals they work with are often communicating with audiences of thousands. Within that number, there are people who rarely if ever hear talk of LGBT+ equality. They may even be opposed to it.

Whatever the platform, it's important to be prepared. For those in sport who are LGBT+ and for allies, an opportunity to either share a truth or speak up in support could present itself unexpectedly – and the ongoing ramifications of such a decision may be unexpected too. Following the guidelines in this document will ensure everyone stays on the message.



# Listening and Learning



## What helps to connect racing with LGBT+ people?

That might be a question you've never really thought about before.

Perhaps you work alongside people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans, and are also out; or maybe you don't know if anyone in your racing organisation or wider network is LGBT+ or not.

It's important to recognise the role communications can play in creating an inclusive environment. Are there strong, visible statements that say all are welcome? Or is there a prevailing mood that this messaging "goes without saying"?

Maybe there's been a feeling of disconnect with LGBT+ people in the past, due to one or more incidents. Your comms could play a key role in helping everyone move forward.

**In all cases, before communicating anything, it's vital to 'take the temperature' of your organisation and listen to what people are saying - or not saying - on LGBT+ inclusion.**

## Actions you can take...

- You can start by undertaking the sport's [LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion e-learning](#) module on Racing2Learn. This short and informative course will provide the foundations to understanding more about LGBT+ inclusion in racing. Encourage your friends and colleagues to enrol, too.
- Is there someone responsible for diversity and inclusion (D&I) in your organisation? This could be the responsibility of the HR or People department. If not, you could put yourself forward as a Diversity Champion. Ask what information is available to you on LGBT+ inclusion and identify where more detail is needed.
- If you don't have internal data that indicates the number of LGBT+ people involved in your organisation, there are ways that you can obtain this that comply with GDPR and privacy regulations. For example, your HR team or equivalent can help to instigate an anonymous survey in which everyone is invited to volunteer information. This will produce a useful snapshot of your organisation, despite not being compulsory.
- Attend an event related to LGBT+ inclusion, and invite colleagues to join you, look out for Racing With Pride's upcoming event information on social media. There are also lots of virtual events and webinars which you can participate in.
- Everyday signs of inclusion – such as rainbow lanyards and pin badges, which staff can choose to wear – can have a big impact. Offer to assist with introducing these. There is also a range of flags which represent different orientations and identities.



***Pursuing these simple actions is likely to present you with opportunities to work with LGBT+ individuals and groups, both internally and externally. It's a great way to get started.***



## There may be LGBT+ people within your workplace or racing environment...



Every LGBT+ person makes a series of decisions each day that determines how visible they are. Some aren't out to anyone; some will be out only to their closest friends and family; others are more open about who they are. It should always be left to the individual to decide who they are out to, and in what situations.

Being out in racing can be particularly complicated and setting aside time for constructive conversations to explore this is recommended. Initially, your comms work may be a more internal exercise which informs people of the opportunities available to them to talk to the right person for advice and guidance, in confidence when necessary, or just to connect. Racing With Pride and Racing Welfare are good places to start and will be able to direct more specific queries accordingly.

You won't necessarily 'see' the impact of this inclusion work, particularly in the early stages. Don't let that discourage you. By listening and learning, you're building trust with people, many of whom will let you know in time that they appreciate your efforts.

Having out LGBT+ people within racing doesn't necessarily indicate that the sport's environment is fully inclusive (for example, trans and non-binary people will face challenges that LGB people don't). An internal network for LGBT+ people and allies can help to explore this, even if it's just a small group of people talking. Otherwise, you can show your support by engaging with the sport's Racing With Pride network.

Be clear about your intentions and be patient. Those who are more reluctant to contribute may prefer to take a watching brief and wait to see what messages are being conveyed.

## Grow your understanding of racing's environment...

- Check your personal communications - emails, social media posts, and other messaging. Ensure you are using gender neutral language, and don't enforce stereotypes. For example, *racing is a unique sport in which all genders compete on equal terms*
- Respond positively to other people's comms that reflect this approach. Demonstrate that you are an LGBT+ ally.
- When you see examples of comms that LGBT+ people might find offensive, seek to challenge these in a positive manner. This could be through a constructive, one-on-one conversation with the individual responsible, or via anonymous feedback. Take advice where necessary on the best approach; the individual may have had good intentions but has made a mis-step.

**BHA** BRITISH HORSE RACING AUTHORITY

Racing is everyone's sport. Disrespectful and discriminatory behaviour or unequal treatment is not tolerated.

Some comments or behaviour can be hurtful and offensive.

However big, small or insignificant you may feel the incident is, we all have a responsibility to call out and report inappropriate behaviour to ensure everyone feels welcome in our sport. You can remain anonymous throughout.

If you have concerns about the integrity of British racing or the wellbeing of the sport's participants, human or equine, please contact RaceWISE.

Anonymous reporting.

Call 08000 852 580 (free 24 hours a day)  
Visit [britishhorseracing.com/RaceWISE](http://britishhorseracing.com/RaceWISE)

Powered by **CrimeStoppers.**



## Remember

**Discrimination against one or more protected characteristics is against the law and should always be reported.**

**Disrespectful and discriminatory behaviour or unequal treatment can be reported confidentially to RaceWISE on 08000 852 580 or at [britishhorseracing.com](http://britishhorseracing.com).**

# Getting The Message Right



Having learned more about racing's LGBT+ inclusion, both within your own organisation and beyond, you'll now feel more confident in creating comms around the topic and finding the best way to deliver that to your audience.

What are the limitations? Even if you've identified that there is a lack of LGBT+ voices available to reflect their experiences in your sport, there are ways to address that.

Discuss the situation internally; invite external speakers in to talk about how inclusive environments benefit everyone, whether they are LGBT+ or not; and ask senior leaders to show visible support.

These actions will encourage others in your sport to step up and be allies alongside you.

When you do get the opportunity to work with LGBT+ people on inclusion – and it may take time for those people to make themselves known to you – the ground work you have laid will demonstrate that you have taken a proactive approach.

If you're working on comms for a smaller organisation, it may be easier to reach out directly to people and ask them to contribute. The Racing With Pride network will help make these conversations easier and encourage an ongoing dialogue between racing's participants regarding LGBT+ issues. In all instances, just be open and accessible.

## What's the message?

There are various topics and themes which LGBT+ people in racing might talk about, in order to raise wider awareness, help others, or just to discuss their own experiences. These include...

- How being closeted affects an LGBT+ person's mental health
- How being your 'authentic self' can boost performance
- How anti-LGBT+ language or behaviour makes people feel excluded, whether those people are LGBT+ or not
- News of a relationship, engagement, marriage, birth, or other life event
- Their support for a campaign, an awareness day, Pride month, etc
- The prospect of sharing personal news in order to inform people more widely, e.g. a person who is transitioning, or has transitioned
- The establishment of an LGBT+ network, event, or similar venture



***Someone's motivation for discussing these topics - or others - will be personal and may be linked directly or indirectly to the role sport plays in their life.***

***Allow the person time to explain how being LGBT+ has shaped their individual journey.***



## Media and comms guidelines

**For those in racing who are LGBT+, their sexuality or gender identity is only one part of who they are.**

Primarily, an individual's focus will be on attaining excellence in their field, and unnecessary and excessive focus on anything else risks overshadowing their objectives and achievements. Even if the person is vocal on LGBT+ inclusion, they will want to be recognised for their role in racing, as well as respected for who they are.

**Try to allow LGBT+ people to tell their personal stories in their own words, as much as possible.** Avoid generalisations and sweeping statements - focus on the individual's lived experience. For the stories of trans, intersex / DSD and non-binary people, be prepared for more complex narratives, and seek advice on how to best explain these.

**When speaking to or interviewing LGBT+ people who are out, don't ask questions about other LGBT+ people who aren't.** It should always be an individual's personal decision to come out, whether they are sharing their truth with one person, a small group, or with the general public. Don't encourage someone to potentially risk breaking such a confidence.

**Headlines and positioning can significantly alter the impact of a story.**

Stories must be summarised, but editing can affect interpretation. Referring to a participant in a headline as 'gay...' or 'lesbian...' may not be well received, while use of a pun here would be crass and insensitive. Meanwhile, a front or back-page splash (or digital equivalent) about an LGBT+ person in racing could lead to accusations of sensationalism. Does the story merit such placement? How might presentation of this story impact on fans who are LGBT+?



**Media coverage that results in speculation about which people in sport may or may not be LGBT+ is unhelpful.** Could your article or broadcast package, or the way in which that content is presented, lead to a 'guessing game'? Speculation puts added pressure on LGBT+ people and could even be a factor in them being outed against their will.

**A shortage of 'bravery' will not be the sole reason for there being few out gay or bi people in racing.** The consequences of coming out publicly can be far-reaching - family and friends, at home and abroad, may be approached for comment; and those relationships will inevitably be scrutinised. For a person in the public eye, or in a small community, deliberating whether to share their truth, a sense of responsibility for the impact that could have on others will be a concern. When discussing the lack of LGBT+ visibility in racing, it's crucial to consider factors beyond an individual's courage.



# Potential pitfalls



**Beware! These pitfalls could weaken the impact of your message...**

## Terminology trouble

- Use 'sexual orientation' instead of 'sexual preference'. Appreciate that when conducting interviews, the person you're speaking to may still be searching for the best words to use.
- For coming out stories, don't say that someone has 'admitted' that they are gay. Also, try to avoid the phrase 'openly gay' – it's now rather dated. Look to use the word 'out' instead.
- Avoid using the word 'homosexual' when you could say 'gay man' or 'lesbian' instead. The word 'homosexual' has a long clinical and medical history that makes it problematic in modern parlance. 'Gay' is commonly used - it's fine to say gay.
- Some LGBT+ people identify as 'queer'; others in the community - particularly in the UK - may find the word 'queer' offensive, due to its historical usage. This identity is included in the '+' in the acronym LGBT+. In North America, LGBTQ is the commonly used acronym.
- The word 'trans' is an umbrella term. It's more inclusive than 'transsexual' which shouldn't be used unless a person says that is specifically how they describe themselves.
- To 'deadname' someone who is trans means to refer to them by a previous name. It's hurtful and unnecessary. Misgendering, such as using the wrong pronouns, also causes distress. If this happens in error, it's best to apologise quickly and move on.
- If you're unfamiliar with LGBT+ terminology, it's important to read up and ask for advice. You can learn more in racing's [LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion e-learning](#) on Racing2Learn.

## Impact of imagery

- Silhouettes to indicate mystery individuals or similar image choices (such as the image on the right, taken from a newspaper website) suggest there is something sinister or even wrong about LGBT+ people. Find an alternative way to illustrate the story – use pictures that convey inclusion, such as rainbow laces or flags.



## Words and 'labels'

- Whatever a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, it's precious to them in a way that may not be apparent to others at first. Some people consider certain words within the LGBT+ acronym to be 'labels' that they don't ascribe to or prefer to avoid. Be sensitive to this; listen carefully to how each person navigates language and reflect this with their help.

## Unintentional erasure

- Don't refer only to 'gay' and/or 'lesbian' when speaking in general terms about sexual orientation - remember that a lot of people are bi.



# Handling Reactions



Negative responses to coverage of LGBT+ people in sport, particularly on social media, are usually expressed by way of written comments. Positivity - whether that's 'likes' or other indicators of approval - can be less obvious. Those arguing that such content is "not news" or "irrelevant" may even be reacting without having read or viewed the content itself. If you're getting constructive feedback, look to acknowledge it.

Consider the following when you receive one of these reactions...

## 'Who cares?'

An expression of not caring whether someone is LGBT+ or not might be intended as a positive sentiment, if it's expressed with sensitivity. However, this reaction is often expressed in a negative context. Be sure that many more people do care than not - not only those from the LGBT+ community, but also their friends, family and other allies.

## 'Keep politics out of racing!'

It's estimated that over 4 million people in the UK are LGBT+, and many of those people will have experienced instances of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in sport, and some in racing. Discrimination hurts us all, not just those who are LGBT+, so it's important to call it out. Racing and sport don't exist independently from society. In fact, it can be a powerful force for change.

## 'Why come out? Straight people don't'

Many LGBT+ people in the public eye who decide to be more visible do so in order to provide representation, particularly for younger people who may be struggling with their sexual orientation or gender identity. As society - and sport - is predominantly heteronormative, people are already 'presumed' to be straight.

## Whataboutery

There should be time and space to represent everybody. A focus on raising awareness of LGBT+ inclusion should not imply a lack of commitment to tackling discrimination in other areas, such as gender, disability or race.



## Discussions on intersectionality

In anticipation of reactions of whataboutery, it's important to be mindful of intersectionality, and how this impacts on individuals. For example, the experiences of a cisgender, able-bodied, gay man who is white will be different to that of a cis, able-bodied, gay man who is black. This interconnection of social identities may form a discussion point in or around your comms. There should be no hierarchy on inclusion.

## 'Virtue signalling' / 'pinkwashing'

Provided your content accurately reflects the lived experiences of LGBT+ people in racing, any accusations of 'virtue signalling' - the claim that you're only covering a topic in order to gain approval, or to enhance your moral standing - are wide of the mark. Be confident in your intentions, and the positive outcomes your comms can help to achieve.

Meanwhile, 'pinkwashing' in this context would be the suggestion that you are only communicating a positive LGBT+ message in sport in order to divert attention away from something negative. As discussed previously, both the timing and context are crucial to how effectively you will land your message. There may be good reason to pause your inclusion comms, if so, look to revisit this area of your work at a later date.



## Policy discussion

If you anticipate discourse being sparked as a result of your comms work, consider carefully in advance what those reactions might be, and the impact they could have on individuals who are connected to the policies being discussed.

Accuracy and clear explanations are of paramount importance. This will lessen the chance of misinformation being spread, or quotes being taken out of context. Comparisons with individuals or groups in different sports should be discouraged unless clearly relevant, as each sport requires different skills and attributes.

The US website and consultancy service [Transathlete](#) has links to the policies of various sports bodies and organisations, including several from the UK and Europe.

## TRANSATHLETE

### Trolling

If you or people you know are being trolled online following your comms, e.g. other users on social media are trying to provoke you into an argument, the first course of action should be to try and ignore the trolls. If they persist, use the tools provided by the platform itself - you can mute the accounts or block them. Abuse should always be reported.

If the difficulties continue, it's best to disengage and seek advice from social media experts.



*You may also see positive reactions, such as the following...*

### Increased interest

When someone who is LGBT+ comes out publicly for the first time - particularly if that person is already well known - there is likely to be considerable support from well-wishers. Even if the person in question is not famous, there may still be an enthusiastic and widespread reception. By coming out publicly, the person may be providing visible LGBT+ representation in a part of racing where there has previously been none.

The prospect of generating attention can be intimidating for LGBT+ people; other media outlets may report on the news, while social media users will comment and follow developments. Strong support may also be expressed by users who are reacting to negative comments made by others.

If you are working on comms relating to an LGBT+ person in racing and such an eventuality arises, or you think it may arise, be prepared. Specific media training with the individual is recommended so that they can anticipate likely questions and navigate social media.



## *Jumping to conclusions*

Occasionally, there can be positive reactions which are well meant but somewhat confused. Wording or presentation might suggest that an individual is LGBT+ - even that they are coming out publicly for the first time - and readers, listeners or viewers react to show their support. This can escalate quickly and can be picked up on and reported by media outlets.

If it transpires that a person is the subject of such reactions and is not in fact LGBT+, it's advisable to clarify the matter with sensitivity and as quickly as possible. For example, an individual explaining that they are in fact an ally to the LGBT+ community, and not LGBT+ themselves, will be able to communicate a positive message of inclusion of their own.

If your comms work encourages more people in racing who are not LGBT+ to say publicly that they are allies, that's a hugely positive outcome.

## *Other LGBT+ people taking inspiration*

One effect of new representation in a sphere such as sport and indeed racing, is the confidence it gives to others who relate to the LGBT+ person who is sharing their truth. These reactions may occur much later, but whenever they happen, they will add to the sense of positivity.

## *Effects of enthusiasm and engagement*

The 'feelgood factor' generated by your comms may have several other effects, such as a stronger team spirit; high-profile commendations, both internal and external; new partnerships; or even a commercial impact, such as increased ticket sales.



# Tips for Pride Month



## Conversation Starters

Pride month in June is a fantastic opportunity to show your support for LGBT+ inclusion in racing, but sometimes knowing where to start can be the challenge. The below mock conversations may help you feel a little more equipped.

### “I think we should talk more about LGBT+ inclusion.”

- **The response you might get...** ‘It doesn’t bother us’ or ‘it doesn’t matter if someone’s LGBT+ or not’.
- **What you can say...** ‘It’s a part of someone’s identity that’s very important to them, and we mustn’t shrug it off. There could be a situation that’s affecting someone that we ourselves haven’t sensed.’

### “Would someone feel comfortable to come out as lesbian, gay or bi in our sport?”

- **The response you might get...** ‘People shouldn’t have to come out any more these days’.
- **What you can say...** Try using the UHT mnemonic - ‘I understand from what you said that you want there to be less pressure on someone who’s LGB - that’s good. However, saying this could come across as discouragement - people often come out because it helps to build their self-confidence, and it’s also a positive statement about the people around them. Therefore, a different response would not only be more encouraging, but would also reflect well on us.’

### “Have we thought about why this conversation is relevant in a sports environment such as ours?”

- **The response you might get...** ‘Sport has nothing to do with sexuality.’
- **What you can say...** ‘Actually, there are lots of examples of LGB athletes whose performances have improved considerably when they’ve been able to be their authentic selves. We know performance is linked to mental wellbeing and naturally we want everyone to be the best they can be.’



### “If someone was questioning their gender identity within our sport, would they feel sure of being supported?”

- **The response you might get...** ‘There’s nothing to suggest someone wouldn’t be welcome.’
- **What you can say...** ‘This could be seen as us saying that we have nothing to suggest they would be welcome either - it looks like we’re side-stepping, or worse, that we’re complacent - a ‘goes without saying’ approach. Let’s send a message so there’s no doubt.’

### “How can we make a positive impact in Pride Month?”

- **The response you might get...** ‘We’ll look like we’re ‘virtue signalling’.’
- **What you can say...** ‘Let’s start with one or more internal activations that LGBT+ people and allies can show support for. These will help us to create a message that’s reinforced by our own inclusion work.’



## Practical internal steps for Pride Month

- Gather whatever information is available to you on LGBT+ inclusion and representation in your environment; identify where more detail is needed
- Be a part of an event related to LGBT+ inclusion, and invite colleagues to join you
- Invite someone in to speak – try to set up a special Zoom drop-in with a Stonewall Sport Champion, for example
- Use everyday signs of inclusion - email signatures, a mention of Pride in the internal newsletter, rainbow lanyards or pins, put up a 'Racing is everyone's sport' poster in your tack room, staff canteen, weighing room.



## Involving LGBT+ people

- If someone comes forward with an initiative, help them present it to a wider group and work with them to amplify the message
- Keep an eye on other LGBT+ inclusion work being undertaken in racing, seize the opportunity - be proactive, welcome the learnings, channel in a positive approach
- Ask for feedback and suggestions from LGBT+ people on what you've done so far
- Don't over-reach – be respectful of the different levels of visibility that LGBT+ people navigate
- Collective responsibility reduces pressure – try to form a working group
- Always keep in mind what successful inclusion would look like in your environment

## Getting the message right

### Personal stories / 'coming out' stories

- Power of the narrative means the person doesn't have to be 'a big name' to make a big impact
- Make it a collaborative process so that when the story is published, the support is immediate and clear



- Reach out and ask LGBT+ people who are out within a smaller sporting environment if they are interested in getting involved
- Write a draft story in the first person - address any potential issues constructively, and consider involving a friend, colleague or senior leader
- Offer some media training to the person sharing their story; look around for examples

## ***Supporting campaigns and network groups***

- [This Wasps / Premiership Rugby video](#) is a great example of an effective short campaign film including someone who's LGBT+ and an ally, backed up by further storytelling online
- Make your media widely accessible – share it with sports publishers; stream events live on social and make them discoverable afterwards
- Support and show your commitment to Racing With Pride, racing's LGBT+ Network, promote and share their campaign messages
- Recognise the diverse experiences within that group and reflect those in your comms

## ***Practical external tips for Pride Month***

- 'Happy Pride' posts on social - try to back these up with a blog, Q&A, or article with an LGBT+ voice
- Representation means not showing only one 'type' of LGBT+ person - for example, try to make people of colour feel welcome
- Be open to different interpretations of Pride - these might include celebration, protest, or self-expression
- Don't repeat your standard comms tactics - do things differently, and ask for amplification of your message
- When reaching out for media coverage, provide good quality imagery that supports visibility - both portrait and landscape

Remember that racing's LGBT+ community can be recognised and celebrated throughout the year, not just in Pride month. There are several other key dates throughout the year which you can engage with and, of course, you may have personal stories and/or events at other times.

By following LGBT+ social media accounts you will be able to keep track of current events in the community and respond accordingly.



# Glossary and Links



**Ally / allies** - broadly speaking, an ally is a person who is not LGBT+ themselves but who actively supports and speaks up for LGBT+ equality. The term can be employed more specifically too, such as when referring to 'trans allies'.

**Intersex / DSD** - pertaining to variations in sex characteristics that do not fit typical definitions for male or female bodies. 'DSD' stands for Differences in Sex Development.

**LGBT+** - an acronym that encompasses all people who are lesbian, gay, bi and / or trans, and is inclusive of all sexual orientations and / or gender identities. The LGBTQ acronym performs the same function (it's more commonly used in the US and Canada; the Q stands for 'queer'). When referring to sexual orientation only, the acronym 'LGB' may be used.

**Non binary** – pertaining to people whose gender identity cannot be simply defined by binary terms 'man' or 'women'.

**Trans / Transgender** - pertaining to gender identity or gender expression that differs from the sex assigned at birth. The word 'trans' is an umbrella term and is more inclusive. The opposite word is 'cisgender' or 'cis'.

[For a more comprehensive list, we recommend Stonewall's 'Glossary of terms'.](#)

## Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

**Sexual orientation** is one of the inherent qualities that makes us human and, in all walks of life, individuals may reference that, e.g. by mentioning their partner in conversation, or by explaining why they support LGBT+ inclusion. Some stigmas and myths surrounding sexual orientation persist, particularly in sport, and they often make lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people cautious when faced with the prospect of being more open about who they are.

Those working in comms should always be sensitive to such situations; we all possess a natural curiosity or 'news sense' but it's important to always be respectful. While many LGB people in racing will feel comfortable discussing sexual orientation, perhaps because authenticity has helped to boost their performance or for altruistic reasons, it may be essential for some to build greater trust over time before they feel comfortable discussing the topic.

**Gender identity**, our individual self-awareness of being male, female, both, or neither, is intrinsic to who we are. Gender identity may be suggested by a person's gender expression, e.g. aspects of their behaviour and appearance, but this is not always the case. For example, in racing, the wearing of unisex breeches, body protectors and helmets can make gender identity hard to determine.

In racing all genders can compete on equal terms, so unlike many other sports, it does not have the challenges of setting gender eligibility rules. Nonetheless people who identify as trans may be, or may feel, excluded.



## Recommended further action and learning



### [LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion E-Learning on Racing2Learn \(2020\)](#)

Developed by Diversity in Racing Steering Group's dedicated LGBT+ sub-group, learners will gain a greater understanding and knowledge of LGBT+ issues, LGBT+ language, LGBT+ history and Pride, and creating inclusive environments through this free interactive learning tool. With practical advice, it aims to empower individuals to expand their thinking and take their next steps to enacting change.

### [Racing With Pride](#)

Launched in September 2020, Racing With Pride is a national LGBT+ network for British horseracing's participants, workforce and fans. It is responsible for:

- **Support:** To provide a safe space for LGBT+ people and allies to connect in person and online, enabling them to share experiences, voice concerns and receive support.
- **Awareness:** To promote a better understanding of LGBT+ inclusion and make LGBT+ experiences more visible; this can empower all to step up as allies and improve the culture for everyone within the sport.
- **Engagement:** To provide a platform for the sport's LGBT+ community to have a collective voice in shaping the industry's future strategy and activity regarding LGBT+ inclusion.

### [ETHOS Project: Media reporting and reference guide on LGBT issues \(2019\)](#)

ETHOS stands for Eliminating Transphobic, Homophobic and biphobic Stereotypes, and the project is funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizen Programme. This offers explainers on basic LGBT terminology; anti-LGBT hate crime, hate speech and discrimination; use of appropriate terms and language for media professionals; common stereotypes, prejudices and myths; and guidelines for media professionals, along with case studies from Croatia, Greece, and Lithuania.

### [GLAAD Media Reference Guide \(2019 – 10th Edition\)](#)

GLAAD is an American non-governmental media monitoring organisation. GLAAD fights for better representation in media for all LGBT+ people and its Media Reference Guide is regularly updated. It also contains a detailed section titled 'LGBTQ people in sports'.

### [All About Trans – Resources for the media \(2019\)](#)

All About Trans is a project from the charity On Road, which seeks to improve media coverage of misrepresented groups and social issues. Resources include tips for writing and editing news stories about transgender people; a style guide; and links to other guidelines on trans matters. [Trans Media Watch \(2019\)](#) also provides its own range of useful media resources, including a style guide and a list of 'Approaches to Avoid'.

## Thank you

We appreciate your support for 'Rainbow Ready'. If you've found this document useful, please share it among your colleagues and networks.

Both Racing With Pride and Sports Media LGBT+ exist to assist on inclusion and to help create a community of LGBT+ people and allies in sport. Special thanks to Pride Sports UK, LEAP Sports Scotland, LGBT Sport Cymru, BCOMS, InterMediaUK and Racing Pride for endorsing these resources.

Sports Media LGBT+ can help you connect the dots! Reach out to us - [jon@sportsmedialgbt.com](mailto:jon@sportsmedialgbt.com).

The Diversity in Racing Steering Group always welcome feedback and we'd love to hear what you are doing to create more inclusive environments, get in touch at [diversity@britishhorseracing.com](mailto:diversity@britishhorseracing.com), or contact Racing With Pride at [info@racingwithpride.co.uk](mailto:info@racingwithpride.co.uk).