

## PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

Members' Business – [S6M-03631](#) Emma Roddick:  
LGBTQ+ People's Experience of Alcohol Services in Scotland  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**LGBT Youth Scotland's vision is that Scotland is the best place to grow up for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people. We play a leading role in the provision of quality youth work to LGBTI young people that promotes their health and wellbeing, and we are a valued and influential partner in LGBTI equality and human rights.**

Our research [Life in Scotland for LGBT Young People](#) was released last month, and covers a range of issues such as school, bullying, hate crime and experiences of being a young LGBT person in Scotland.

Dry or alcohol-free spaces where young LGBTI people can be themselves are highly valued where they exist. Many young people do not feel where alcohol is in the mix that it remains a safe space. One participant responded:

'A queer space without the pressure to drink alcohol would be very valuable for me and my other queer friends because as much as queer club nights can be a great experience, a sober space would better to reduce loneliness I think. This is because it would remove the expectation to be hyper-social or intoxicated with alcohol or drugs. I have some transgender and queer friends who don't feel comfortable going to club nights sober and who are underage. There are very few accessible spaces for them to meet and make other friends, or even just to have supportive space and community away from the pressures of home or school.'

Reflecting on alcohol free but LGBT safe spaces, young people said:

'I attend a weekly LGBTQ+ badminton group – it's great to have community and sport together (but in an accessible way, i.e. you don't need to be good to join). It's had a twofold impact on my mental health – doing regular exercise and having a community space.'

'LGBT Youth Scotland groups have consistently made me feel welcome and provided me with opportunities to meet people, make connections and otherwise build confidence.'

'LGBT Youth Group was for a very long time my only queer space and the only place I could be myself uncritically. This may have, unexaggeratedly, saved my life and I am eternally grateful.'

## LGBT Charter

The motion recommends organisations undertake the LGBT Charter, which is programme managed by LGBT Youth Scotland for both schools and organisations.

It is a straightforward programme that enables organisations to proactively include LGBT people in every aspect of their work, protecting staff and providing high quality service to customers or service users.

The programme has been developed to support organisations to undertake training and review policies, practice and resources to make sure they not only meeting legislative needs but are as inclusive as possible.

Organisations are guided through the programme with the help of our expert facilitators, step by step LGBT Charter workbook and a dedicated Charter Manager.

Being awarded our LGBT Charter enables organisations to send a positive message, with confidence, that organisation's can be a champion of LGBT inclusion where LGBT employees, customers, or service users will be safe, supported and included. The LGBT Charter makes a clear statement that equality and diversity are at the heart of the organisation.

[Find out more here.](#)

## Other key findings from the research

The research shows that over the last 15 years experiences across most areas have got worse, for example:

- Only 10% of participants, rated the experience of school for LGBT people as "good"
- 70% of gay/lesbian participants report experiencing bullying due to their sexual orientation at school
- There has been a big drop in the number of young people who think Scotland is a good place to be LGBTI (81% to 65%)
- Just 28% rural-based participants rated their local area as a good place to be LGBTI as compared to 62% of urban-based participants
- The vast majority of participants believe that homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are a problem, both across Scotland as a whole, and in their local area.

- Just 17% of young people surveyed reported that they would feel confident reporting a hate crime to the police if they experienced one

**For further information, please contact [info@lgbtyouth.org.uk](mailto:info@lgbtyouth.org.uk)**

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