

National Ambulance
LGBT+ Network

Back to LGBT Basics - Icons



Celebrating the sexual orientations
and gender identities of all our
patients, staff and communities

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We celebrate LGBT+ History
Month with a look at our
icons and landmark events

The National Committee, February 2023

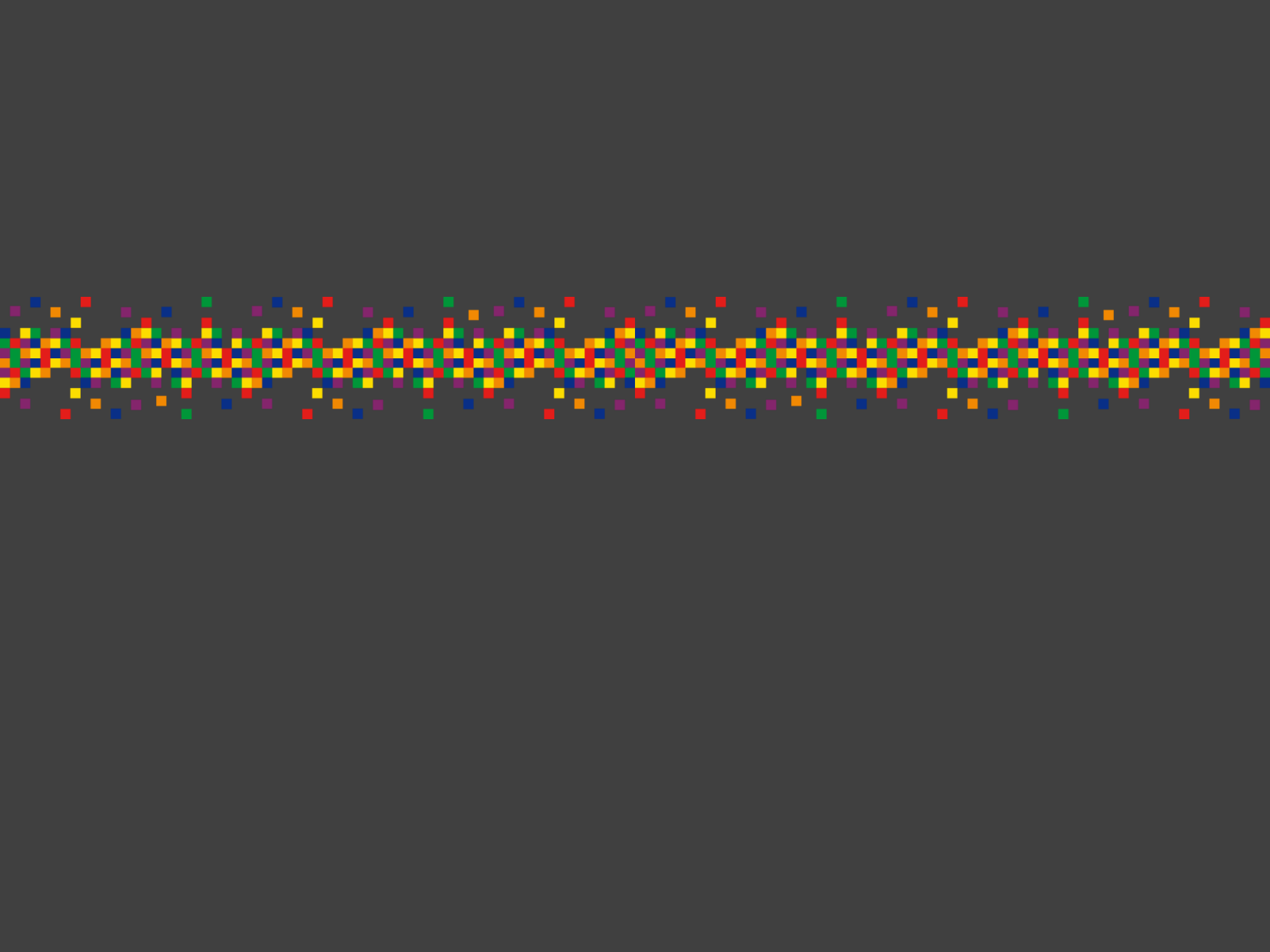
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National Ambulance
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Introduction

In this resource we will look at some of the iconic events and people that have shaped our lives today. Some of them are people who have been successful in their chosen occupation and others are people who have actively campaigned for the freedoms we now enjoy.

To put this resource together we asked members of our LGBT+ networks to put pen to paper and write about their chosen icons. This booklet therefore developed quite organically and we need to reinforce that the views are those of the writers and may not be representative of the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network or ambulance service in general. We hope these short articles will inspire some activities and discussions in your networks.

Back in 2019 the BBC produced a series looking at icons of the Twentieth Century. In the last episode the public got to vote for the most iconic person and the winner was mathematician Alan

Turing. This makes an ideal starting point, and indeed several of the people responding to the call for articles chose Turing as their icon.



*The National Ambulance
LGBT+ Network Committee.*

We hope you enjoy this resource and find out a few things of which you were not aware. Towards the end of the resource we have included a section of suggested activities which you are free to use however you want.

The National Committee

BBC Icon of the Century



In 2019 the BBC produced a programme which explored iconic figures from the Twentieth Century. Eight episodes aired in January covering seven themes, each presented by a celebrity advocate. The seven themes explored in the series were:

- Leaders
- Explorers
- Scientists
- Entertainers
- Activists
- Sports stars
- Artists and writers

A category winner for each was chosen and in the eighth episode the finalists were presented for a second time after which the public were invited to vote for the overall winner.

Alan Turing was selected as the winner after television naturalist and conservationist Chris Packham gave a powerful speech stating Turing was the hero of our time yet betrayed by the country he served, simply because he was gay.



The case for Alan Turing

- Lived: 1912 to 1954
- Born: London
- Considered the father of the computer and World War Two code-breaker. Alan Turing's calculations made computers possible and helped win a war.

Here is the full case presented for Turing.



BBC Icon of the Century

1. He invented the computer – and stops you getting spammed

Turing's mathematical genius allowed him to foresee the possibility and function of computer-like machines before the existence of the necessary technology. Laying out the theory for such devices in an essay in 1936, his revolutionary work provided the foundation for modern computers. He later came up with the 'Turing test' to determine whether a machine is intelligent – or not. The principles of it are reversed online today; when a computer sets you a CAPTCHA test (like distorted letters) to prove you're a human and not a rogue bot!

2. His machines helped win a war

At the start of World War Two Turing, along with other mathematicians, was recruited to break enemy codes. Working at Bletchley Park, Turing built a machine called a Bombe. It sped up

code-cracking efforts from weeks to hours by trying multiple permutations. The information gleaned helped the Allies gain an upper hand in the war.

3. His legacy has helped change social attitudes in Britain

Turing was a gay man at a time when homosexuality was illegal. Despite his wartime contribution he was arrested for gross indecency in 1952 and given a stark choice between prison and chemical castration (opting for the latter). The arrest also lost him his security clearance and two years later Turing died of cyanide poisoning – whether it was suicide or not is still debated. A campaign to grant him a pardon, fittingly started by e-petition, resulted in him being granted one posthumously in 2013. A subsequent legal amendment, dubbed 'Turing's Law', pardoned 65,000 other people convicted of the same 'crimes'.

Alan Turing



By Tony Faraway

Considered the father of theoretical computer science and artificial intelligence, Alan Turing was instrumental in codebreaking intercepted messages at Bletchley Park during World War II and undoubtedly shortened the length of the war.



Admitting he'd had sex with 19 year old Arnold Murray in 1952, he was charged with gross indecency and forced to choose between imprisonment or chemical castration. He chose the latter.

Turing was found dead aged 41 by his landlady. He had died from cyanide poisoning, a half-eaten apple beside him. His death was recorded as suicide. The apple, however, was never tested - one aspect that led to some doubting this verdict.

But Turing's legacy lives on throughout the world. As Time magazine put it: 'The fact remains that everyone who taps at a keyboard, opening a spreadsheet or a word-processing program, is working on an incarnation of a Turing machine.'

We will never know what Alan Turing might have gone on to achieve had his life not ended so tragically early.



Symbolically, Turing is commemorated in Sackville Park, Manchester, sitting between the University on one side, and Canal Street, at the heart of the Gay Village, on the other. When there, I like to spend some time with him contemplating how life has changed, in terms of both technology and equality.



Alan Turing

By Adam Williams

Being a proud Mancunian there is no greater LGBT+ hero in my eyes than the legendary Alan Turing. Turing's life is one of remarkable achievement and great sorrow.

Often referred to as the father of modern computing, Alan was a renowned mathematician and codebreaker. One of his most notable achievements was his work to break the infamous Enigma Code during World War II which contributed to victory for the Allies in 1945. Many historians disagree as to the exact number but it is estimated that his work shortened the war by up to four years, saving millions of lives.

If we fast forward to today we can see the influence his work continues to have. Computers are a major part of modern life and the original 'Turing Machines' were his creation. He gave the world one of the greatest tools to maintain peace

and prosperity: communication. Whilst we celebrate his outstanding achievements we must also remember the great tragedy he endured. As a gay man of the time Alan had to constantly hide who he really was for fear of punishment from the country he served.

When he was found out he was punished by the state. Given the choice of prison or chemical castration he chose the latter so he could continue to work on his research. What courage he showed, enduring an archaic barbaric procedure in order to continue developing what we take for granted today.

It's a fitting tribute that 52 years after his conviction, and 54 years after his death, Turing was granted a posthumous pardon by the Queen. This act in itself paved the way for conversations and debate about archaic laws and the fact that LGBT+ people have just as much to contribute to society.

Why LGBT+ History Month?



One thing identified back in 2005 by the group *Schools Out* was how little history has been recorded about LGBT+ people. Just over fifty years ago homosexual acts between men were illegal and at a similar time the Stonewall riots in New York were taking place.

Being illegal and on the wrong side of rioting did not lend itself to positive depictions of LGBT+ people. There is, however, a rich tapestry of history which has been denied until relatively recently.

Alistair Gunn, Network Chair



Two of the stars of Adam Williams' writing (next two pages) are Ian McKellen (above) and Paul O'Grady with his alter ego Lily Savage (below).





Paul O'Grady MBE

By Adam Williams

Paul O'Grady is quite simply a cross-generational icon. My first recollection of Paul was as Lily Savage, a very straight-talking and funny drag queen personality. She was also one of the first mainstream drag queens to be embraced by the British public. Indeed many have stated that Savage was a pioneering character for her time and paved the way for many others.

In 1995 Paul O'Grady announced the retirement of Savage and the British public soon took Paul to their hearts. Through his heart-warming television shows he defends animal rights and continues to fight for the rights of LGBT+ people. Over the years Paul has been a passionate advocate of equality, in particular marriage equality not only in the United Kingdom but across the world.

Paul's health problems over the years have been no secret, indeed he has been very public about his

health troubles due to smoking and his admiration for the NHS in not only providing him with lifesaving treatment but for helping him to turn his health around.

But rather than retire from public life Paul has used his second chance and high profile to highlight important causes, particularly regarding the NHS, LGBT+ rights and animal rights. Examples of this are his involvement in the NHS Heroes Awards and his documentaries at Great Ormond St Hospital *Little Heroes*. His argument for the protection, preservation and development of the NHS is made all the more convincing by the fact that he, as he states in his own words, has been the recipient of the best healthcare in the world.

Paul to me is a modern icon. Whatever age you are, he will always find a way to connect to you and to touch your life and inspire you to contribute to the community in your own special way.

Sir Ian McKellen



By Adam Williams

Sir Ian is quite simply one of the greatest acting talents this country has ever known. Over his career he has performed Shakespeare in the West End and latterly on the big screen.

Aside from McKellen's acting career, his sexuality has inadvertently been a big deal, too. While his sexuality was known amongst his fellow actors, McKellen did not publicly disclose this until 1988 when he came out to the public on a BBC radio programme. Sir Ian's motivation to make his sexuality public was the controversial Section 28. He said at the time that although there could be negative effects on his career he could not sit back and allow this blatant violation of LGBT+ rights go unchallenged. In fact it was during a debate with a Conservative journalist over Section 28 on the BBC radio programme that he declared he was gay.

As well as being patron of many LGBT+ focussed

charities McKellen is a co-founder of Stonewall, an LGBT+ rights lobby group in the United Kingdom, named after the Stonewall riots. Stonewall today continues to be a strong fighting force for LGBT+ rights around the world.

In 2015 Sir Ian led the 25th Manchester Pride parade. As Grand Marshal, he was at the head of the parade leading it through Manchester's streets viewed by thousands of people.

I had the privilege of watching that parade and he certainly loved every minute of it. What was more poignant for myself was his reaction to the protestors present. In a true testament of his class he simply blew them kisses. Showing that there was no room for hate in the city of Manchester.

Sir Ian is simply a legend and at the youthful age of 80 he certainly shows no signs of slowing down and we wouldn't have it any other way!

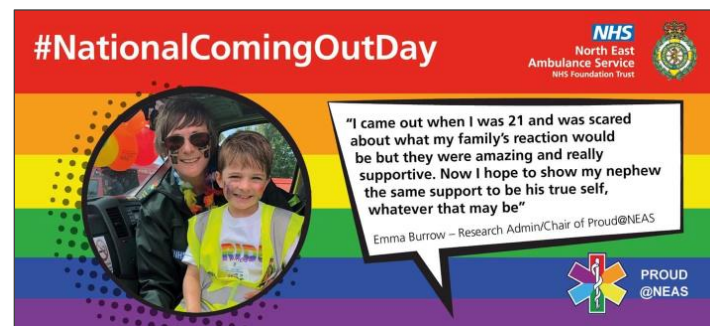


National Coming Out Day

By Emma Burrow

I still remember the overwhelming feeling of anxiety and worry that I had before I came out aged 21. I'd known for a long time that I was gay but didn't have the courage to tell anyone. I started seeing my first girlfriend and once we decided to move in together I thought then was the right time to come out. I was dreading the reaction from people but my family and friends were amazing. They were so supportive and continue to be so. However, I worked in elderly care for many years and it wasn't an environment in which I felt I could be openly LGBT+.

I started working at North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) in 2018 and quickly became involved in the LGBT staff network, Proud@NEAS. I finally feel like I work in a truly inclusive workplace where I can be my 'real self'. Last year I attended Newcastle Pride and I was immensely proud that my five year old nephew, Oliver, was there and



marched with NEAS in the parade.

My sister Sarah, Oliver's mum, is passionate about Oliver growing up in a world where he can be whoever he wants to be, which is why she brought him to Pride. He knows his Auntie Emma has a girlfriend and that's normal to him.

For National Coming Out Day 2019 I shared a photo of Oliver and me attending Pride. Oliver now has this photo printed out and pinned to his wardrobe. He knows that if he is LGBT+ or straight, either way he will have the same reaction, complete acceptance and support.

Madonna



By **Anthony Sinclair**

When it comes to gay icons, there is no denying that Madonna ranks highly among them all. From speaking out against AIDS and being an advocate for gay rights in an era when many other celebrities of her fame were remaining tight-lipped on their platforms, to inspiring another big-name, Ellen DeGeneres to come out as gay, Madonna has contributed massively to the LGBT+ community.

While most people alive today will remember the recent Covid-19 pandemic, there was a different kind of 'pandemic' in history that was first clinically reported on 5 June 1981 in the United States, where five people showed symptoms of a rare infection known to occur in people with very compromised immune systems.

By 1987, AIDS was classified as a worldwide epidemic with cases on every continent, prompting the UK Government to launch a major information

campaign 'AIDS: Don't Die of Ignorance'.



Madonna has always been a campaigner supporting HIV / AIDS causes.

Madonna's dance instructor, Christopher Flynn, had been diagnosed with AIDS. In 1989, she turned up at a charity dance marathon in Los Angeles to benefit people suffering from AIDS. Flynn, who later died from the illness, opened up that Madonna was a trusted confidante who understood him.

There are numerous other examples of how Madonna earned her rightful place as a gay icon, such as:



Madonna



- Bringing 'voguing', an audaciously, unapologetically queer art form, into the mainstream culture.
- Providing drag queens with an international platform at the 1999 VMAs, on stage declaring: 'All I have to say is it takes a real man to fill my shoes.'
- She denounced homophobia while performing in Russia back in 2012 for which, she claimed, the Russian government fined her \$1 million. Her response: 'I never paid.'

I want to leave you with Madonna's acceptance speech from the 2019 GLAAD Media Advocate for Change Award:

'As soon as you understand what it means to love, you understand what it takes to become a human being and it is every human's duty to fight, to advocate, to do whatever we can.'

Nicola Adams OBE



By Alistair Gunn

Like myself, Nicola Adams was born and raised in Yorkshire. On the face of it that's where the similarity stops and you could say she's just about my polar opposite. She's black, she identifies as bisexual and she's a successful sportswoman.

Her unblemished record in flyweight boxing is enviable. In competitions she has never lost a fight. She also became the first openly LGBT+ person to win an Olympic boxing Gold medal after her win at the 2012 Summer Olympics.

As well as being a 'Yorkshire lass' one thing that really endears her to me is just how humble and lovely she seems to be. I have seen her interviews on a number of occasions and the gratitude she expresses to the people who have supported her is something to commend. What's more, she has an infectious smile that appears to touch both ears!

Those who know me well enough know I'm a lover not a fighter and I can think of few things I'd rather do less than go boxing. My sporting prowess is limited to bashing out 60 lengths in a swimming pool. We can all admire those whose passion is something different to our own and contemplate what we would talk about if we ever really get to meet.



In 2012 Nicola was named the most influential LGBT+ person by *The Independent*. Now that's something I would definitely like to talk to her about over a cup of tea... Yorkshire tea of course!



Goronwy Rees

By Gareth Thomas

As one of the Welsh Ambulance Service representatives of the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network, I thought I'd make sure a Welsh icon from history is included here.

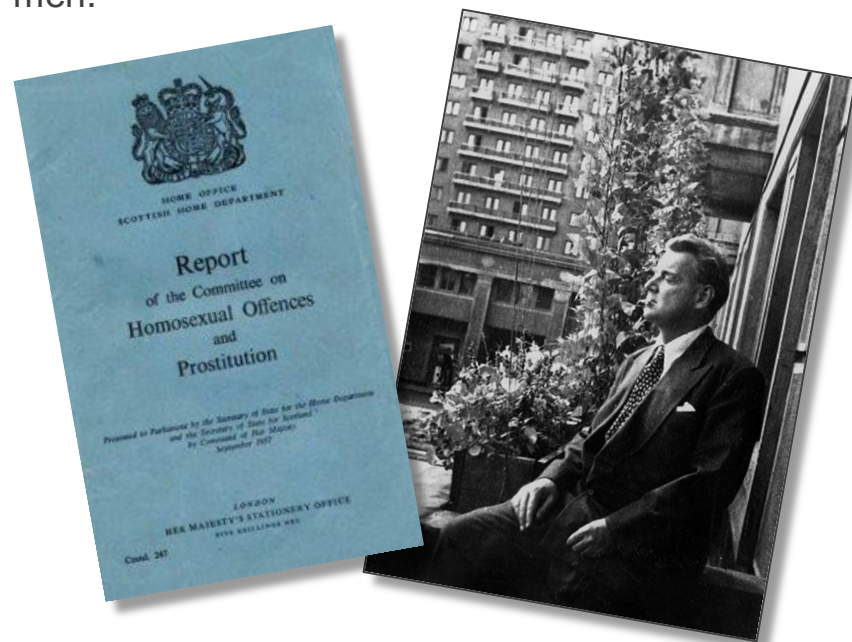
Goronwy Rees is a little-known name, but the part he played in LGBT+ history is significant. Born in Aberystwyth, Goronwy began his career as a journalist and went on to work for MI6 for a while and was closely involved with the 1950s' spy scandals.

He eventually went on to become Principal of Aberystwyth University and was asked to join the Government's Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution in 1954.

The resulting (and highly controversial) Wolfenden Report laid the foundations for the later 1967 Sexual Offences Act. This partially decriminalised

male homosexuality for the first time in England and Wales.

Goronwy was described as 'by far the most lateral thinking and perceptive member of the committee'. He argued successfully that they should take evidence directly from homosexual men.



Fighting Section 28



By Joanne Sugden

My most significant event in history is the North West Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Equality's 'Never Going Underground' campaign against Section 28 in 1988. Set against the backdrop of Thatcher's Britain, this Local Government Act was designed to ban the 'promotion' of homosexuality including its teaching in any school setting. Never Going Underground used the iconic London Underground logo as a symbol of defiance and solidarity amongst the lesbian and gay community. What is unique about this campaign is that it saw the coming together of 20,000 LGBT+ people and their supporters in one of the biggest ever marches and demonstrations ever to take place outside of London.

Manchester in the 1980s was not only evolving as a gay social scene but politically it had had its fair share of protest marches against pit closures and

'reclaim the night' demonstrations to name a couple. It also had a politically active and empathetic council which supported lesbian and gay equality. It's little wonder it became the centre point for this event to take place.

The campaign was supported by, and attracted the attention of, many famous people who were guest speakers as well as leaders of the demonstration on 20 February 1988. Celebrities included Michael Cashman of *Eastenders* and the legendary Ian McKellen who would go on to become the patron of Manchester Pride.

On the day of the march there was a great buzz around Manchester, meeting at All Saints near the Polytechnic. As people gathered you knew it was going to be something special. To see so many people united against the Act was amazing and to be part of it was incredible.

Continued...



Fighting Section 28

The march culminated with everyone gathering in Albert Square listening to guest speakers vociferously speaking out against the Act.

As the day went on crowds dispersed with many staying on and going out in the Village. Friendships, memories and more were made that day. It certainly made people stand up and listen to a united voice and question why there was such an outdated Act being pushed through Government. Section 28 was a real step backwards but it didn't thwart the LGBT+ community who were more determined than ever to be visible and stand against Conservative oppression.

The response was immense and was followed in March with a concert featuring Jimmy Somerville and Andy Bell amongst other great names in support of the Never Going Underground campaign. It was an honour to be part of this campaign, a piece of LGBT+ history. Whilst change

was not effected and the Act not repealed until 2003 it certainly made our voices heard in an unprecedented show of unity.



Ian McKellen and Michael Cashman were the high-profile supporters of the Never Going Underground campaign.



Lady Gaga



By Caroline Scott

Lady Gaga exploded on to the scene in 2008 and has always been an advocate for LGBT+ rights. She came out as bisexual in 2009 and stated her song *Poker Face* was about another woman. In 2011, along with her mother, Lady Gaga founded the Born This Way Foundation which is a fantastic initiative to support young people to be able to live in a kinder and braver world. The foundation has to date supported thousands of young LGBT+ people by supporting mental health and suicide reduction.

During her Super Bowl half-time show she stated 'I believe in the spirit of equality, and that the spirit of this country is one of love and compassion and kindness. My performance will uphold those philosophies'. She sang the LGBT+ anthem *Born this Way* to over 111 million viewers.



*How cool are those boots?
Lady Gaga has performed
at many Pride events.*

One reporter believes Gaga has done for this generation what Bowie did twenty years ago. She has made being different and non-mainstream acceptable again. This enabled people to find themselves, to realise that 'normal' is subjective and that being atypical is absolutely acceptable and vital to finding your own identity and living an authentic happy life. It is something that the world needs to accept.



Lady Gaga



She constantly and consistently speaks up for LGBT+ rights and has said she is inspired by a younger generation that is fighting for equality for all. She challenges the American notion of being 'the land of the free' when so many LGBT+ people are oppressed and do not have the same rights as other people.

At a recent interview Lady Gaga was asked if she feels there is a need for greater LGBT+ representation in the movie industry. She replied: 'I feel that it is right and true to say this: I am a supporter of the LGBT+ community but I do not speak for them. They do not need me to speak for them.'

'I am here to cheer on radical love and a radical joy that I had the privilege of witnessing since I was a very young girl. And without the LGBT+ community, I would not be who I am.'

RuPaul Charles



By Alex Ewings

RuPaul Charles was born on 17 November 1960 in San Diego. Now, in 2023, this icon of modern LGBT+ history and pop culture is undisputedly the queen of drag.

RuPaul has brought the 'Drag Race' brand to the masses. It started in the US in 2009 where the first of *America's Drag Superstars* were crowned.

Starting in the New York club scene in the late 1980s, RuPaul quickly gained a following and popularity. His 1993 album release, *Supermodel of the World*, was a surprise success, and that kick started RuPaul appearing in several films including *The Brady Bunch Movie* in 1995. This year also gave him another major breakthrough, as he became the first drag queen to become majorly involved with a cosmetics company as a spokesmodel – MAC Cosmetics.

RuPaul continued to work in the entertainment industry which included more music releases as well as appearing in film and television. He hosted *The RuPaul Show* from 1997 to 1998 and was a frequent guest on other mainstream US talk shows.

Finally, after his career began to slow, *RuPaul's Drag Race* saw him win an Emmy Award in 2016 for Outstanding Host, with a batch of other wins and nominations for the show itself, since being nominated as far back as 2011.

This recognition of an LGBT+ icon in the mainstream media, as a drag queen, and who is also a person of colour, has been a big deal in modern LGBT+ history. All hail Queen RuPaul. As RuPaul says: 'If you can't love yourself, how in the hell are you gonna love someone else?'





Baroness Ruth Hunt

By Kirsten Willis BEM

Ruth Hunt was appointed to a life peerage as a Crossbench member of the House of Lords in the 2019 Prime Minister's Resignation Honours, making her Baroness Hunt of Bethnal Green. She was formerly the Chief Executive of Stonewall from 2014 to 2019.

Born and raised in Cardiff, Baroness Hunt was educated in Wales, before reading English Language and Literature at St Hilda's College at the University of Oxford. Having held numerous posts within Stonewall, she was instrumental in research into lesbian, gay and bisexual health needs and inequalities, religion and beliefs and its impact on sexual orientation equality, and older peoples' experiences in Britain.

I was lucky enough to see Baroness Hunt speak at the University of Reading, where she gave a keynote address at the inaugural Wolfenden

Lecture in May 2017.

Her speech entitled *LGBT+ Equality: Past, Present and Future*, held on the 60th Anniversary of the Report of the Departmental Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution (the *Wolfenden Report*) was one of the most animated, positive and engaging speeches I've heard.

She encouraged us to remain conscious and mindful of the challenges that we experience within the LGBT+ community and to learn from these, so that we can be influencers for change.



Such an incredible role model, Baroness Hunt continues to be one of my true LGBT+ inspirational leaders, whom I am sure will be a huge driver for change within Government with her work in the House of Lords.

Tom Daley OBE



By Alistair Gunn

Tom Daley needs little introduction. For many of us, we've followed his success in many sporting events over the years, usually flinging himself off a ten-metre-high diving board in nothing more than a skimpy pair of swimming trunks. In a recent episode of *Celebrity Gogglebox*, in which Tom was not parted from a pair of knitting needles, he admitted he wore trunks two sizes too small to ensure they didn't come off as he plunged into the water. I'm going to leave all the clichés in this paragraph and suggest, in that respect, we've probably already seen enough of him.

I have to admit to having a bit of love-hate relationship with Tom. As many of us watched him growing up you couldn't help but be moved by the tragic loss of his father when Tom was just 17. Despite that, and probably spurred on to honour his father, he has enjoyed a catalogue of success

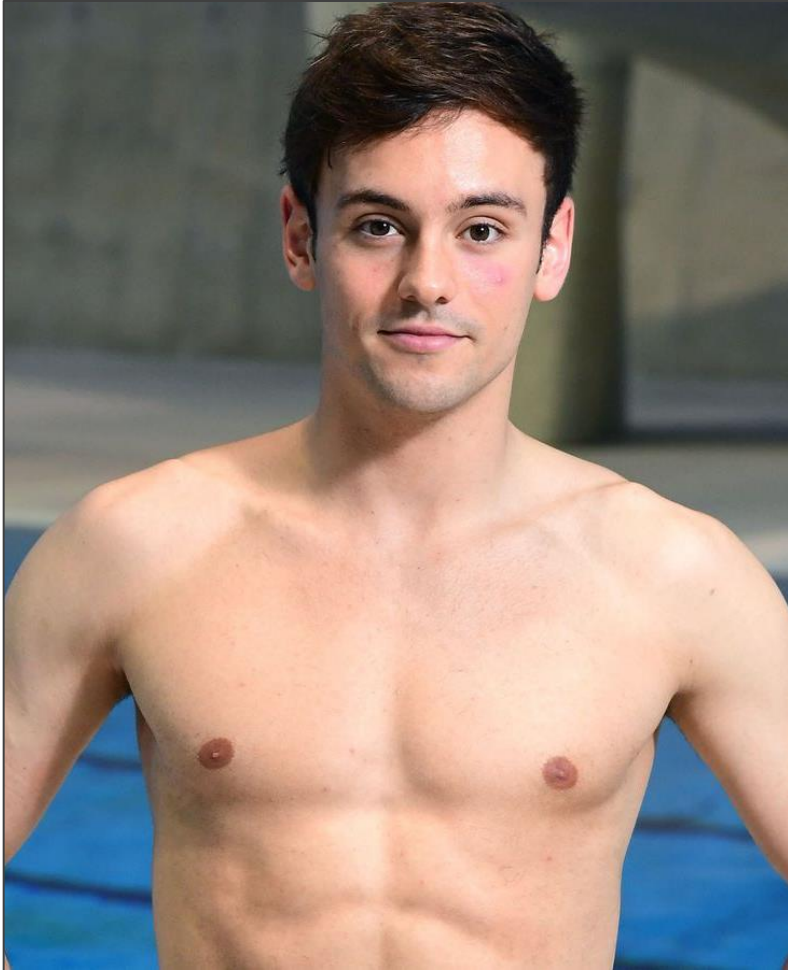
although I always felt his level of arrogance seemed to increase in line with the pile of medals. Thinking this through though, maybe being a multi-medal winning Olympian does excuse someone a certain level of arrogance.

In December 2013, Tom confirmed many people's suspicions and came out by releasing a YouTube message sharing the fact he was in a relationship with another man. It doesn't matter who you are, coming out often comes along with a high level of anxiety and internal conflict. The difference I quickly spotted was that most people don't receive as much positivity or as much praise. Although some people drew parallels with their own experience, I felt Tom's coming out really didn't resonate with my life. I doubt I'll meet many film producers, for example, never mind enter into a relationship with one.

One thing that Tom has done though, is use his platform to raise the issue of LGBT+ rights. This



Tom Daley OBE



culminated in his extraordinary entrance into the opening of the Commonwealth Games in 2022, running alongside LGBT+ athletes from Commonwealth countries where people can be punished or imprisoned for being gay. The athletes entered the stadium carrying the LGBT+ 'Progress Flag', and all six were part of the documentary Tom had put together highlighting the difficulties each had faced in their home countries.

Although I sometimes question if celebrities really can represent the experiences of the wider population, I have to respect those who challenge the injustices that are still so prevalent around the world. So, whilst I will certainly not be paying much attention to the *Tom Daley Knitwear Collection* when it goes live in Primark, I do feel we all owe him a big thank you for keeping the visibility of our rights in the limelight.

Activities



There are a number of ways you could use this resource in network group meetings, and it is especially relevant in, or ready for, LGBT+ History Month. Some suggestions are:

Who is your icon?

If it's good enough for the BBC, it's good enough for us! Try to establish who, as a group, you feel is the most iconic LGBT+ person or ally. You could concentrate on the Twenty-First Century as an alternative so the people will be more familiar.

Debate the most iconic person

You could also make things more interesting by making some cards with names on, or use the posters like the North East ones, and get people to be an advocate for that person. Provide a short time for people to research the person and each should be presented before the final vote.

What events have shaped our history?

This is an interesting question because each of us are shaped by the experiences we have. Therefore a discussion on this question could lead to some interesting generational perspectives.

Some events to think about, if people are struggling, are:

- First attendance at a Pride event, either in London or in a local area depending on someone's age.
- The first Pride events in local areas.
- The introduction or repeal of Section 28.
- The introduction of civil partnerships, and later marriage, for same-sex couples.
- The removal of the ban on gays in the military.
- The creation of the LGBT+ Network, in your local Trust or nationally.



Activities

Research the people on the posters

Find some people who are not well known and print off photos or name cards. You could use the images on the following pages as an alternative. Get individuals or groups to find out more about them and what their contribution to the LGBT+ cause has been.

Make your own display of icons for your region

A great group task is to select a small number of icons from your region. As well as researching people, it will involve some debate especially if you factor in making your group representative in as many ways as you can. This includes the gender mix, inclusion of trans people and people of colour.

This information will quickly shape up into a display for your Trust. Maybe your communications team or graphic designer can help you with this part too.

In 2021, North East Ambulance Service released a set of ten posters (shown on the next two pages) featuring famous LGBT+ people. The ten posters were used in a planned campaign for LGBT+ History Month, with posters released on different dates with corresponding biographies.

These ten posters can be used to generate discussion in several ways. Not everyone may be aware of who each person is, or what their LGBT+ history is. Some of the stories, such as the untimely death of footballer Justin Fashanu, aged just 37, to suicide after coming out may shock people.

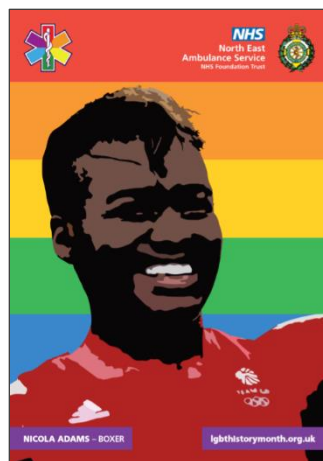
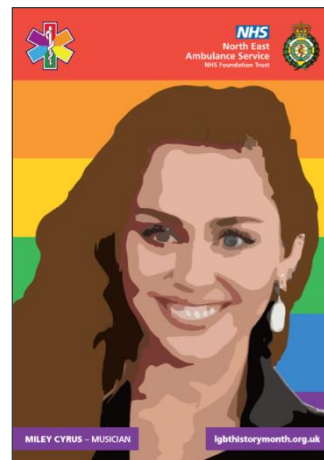
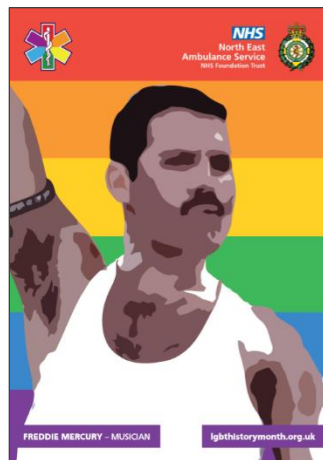
As well as discussing iconic people and events it is worth thinking about the changes that have happened and how these changes came to be. Many gay and trans rights have changed because of campaigners and high-profile people pushing the issues. A number of the ten people shown here have been active LGBT+ campaigners.

North East Posters





North East Posters



Yorkshire Banners

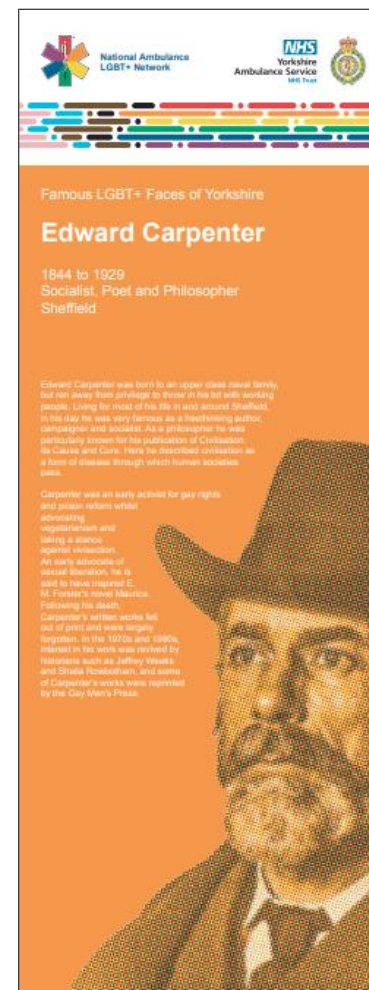


In 2022, the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network produced a series of six pop-up banners for its relaunch event in Sheffield. This inspired some research into famous LGBT+ faces from Yorkshire and there were quite a few to choose from.

The real challenge is to think of representation from periods of history, gender, sphere of influence and even race. Narrowing the field of candidates down to six wasn't an easy task.

Researching people's history is reasonably easy to do with the mass of information that exists online. Be careful about sources though. Whilst things like *Wikipedia* are great starting points, and usually provide other leads to follow, not everything you read might be as accurate as it should be. A simple way of checking is to view multiple sources and see if they verify each other.

Putting these banners together was fun to do and you might like to do the same for your region.





Yorkshire Banners



Famous LGBT+ Faces of Yorkshire

Alan Bennett



Born 1934
Writer and playwright
Leeds

Alan Bennett is a British playwright who was best known for *The Madness of George III* (1991) and *The History Boys* (2004). His work scrutinises the British class system, propriety, and England's north-south cultural divide with results that were simultaneously chilling and hilarious. Bennett's special talent was his translation of the mundane into tragicomic dramas. His gift for creating an authentic dialogue for the 'ordinary' people of his own background sat curiously beside his ability to portray the manners of middle and upper classes.

Bennett's award-winning play *The History Boys* is set in Yorkshire in the 1980s. The play featured a clash of values between two teachers coaching a class of state-school boys through their university entrance examinations.

On his 80th birthday Bennett refused to be labelled 'gay' despite having a preference to relationships with men. 'My objection about people knowing more about one's private life was that I didn't want to be put in a pigeonhole,' he told director Sir Nicholas Hytner.






Famous LGBT+ Faces of Yorkshire

David Hockney

Born 1937
Artist
Bradford

Born in Yorkshire, David Hockney is one of Britain's most celebrated artists. He became seen as a leading figure of the pop art movement – though it was a title he was not keen on. Hockney's art is striking for its colourfulness and simplicity. He drew still lifes, landscapes and people. He experimented with different mediums such as photography and was a constant reinventor.

Hockney is gay and has lived his life as openly homosexual at a time when homosexual acts were still illegal in the UK. Hockney depicts homosexual themes in some paintings and sought to celebrate the uniqueness, difference and possibility of gay life. In an interview with the *Telegraph*, he talks about the pride in being different to the majority. From an early age, his hearing started to deteriorate and in 1978 he got a hearing aid.





Famous LGBT+ Faces of Yorkshire

Nicola Adams



Born 1982
Boxer and Olympian
Leeds

Nicola Adams OBE is a British former professional boxer who competed from 2017 to 2019. She retired with an undefeated record and held the WBO female flyweight title in 2019. As an amateur, she became the first female boxer to become an Olympic champion after winning gold at London 2012, and the first female Olympic champion following a second gold medal at Rio 2016, both in the flyweight division.

In November 2012, Adams topped the list of *The Independent's* 101 most influential LGBT people in Britain and in 2016 she was named Number One in the *Q&A Power List* of the UK's most eminent lesbian and bisexual women.

In September 2020, it was announced that Adams would be a contestant on the eighteenth series of *Strictly Come Dancing* and that she would feature in the competition's first same-sex couple alongside professional partner James. *Strictly* her competition was cut short after testing positive for Covid-19 in November.





Famous LGBT+ Faces of Yorkshire


Olly Alexander

Born 1990
Musician and Actor
Harrogate

Olly Alexander was born in Harrogate and has had a vibrant career in the musical and performing. Alexander was the singer in the pop group Years and Years. The group split in 2021 with Alexander carrying on with Years and Years as a solo project. He has collaborated with a wide range of performers and in 2019 released the song *Dreamland* with the *Fun Shop Boys*.

His acting career is equally as varied and most recently he played the role of Ritchie in the award-winning Channel 4 series *It's a Sin*, set in the midst of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in London.

During a stage performance at Glasham in 2016 Alexander gave a lengthy speech, just after the killing of 49 gay people in an Orlando nightclub, stating that everyone should be kind to each other and celebrate difference.



Back to LGBT Basics Packs



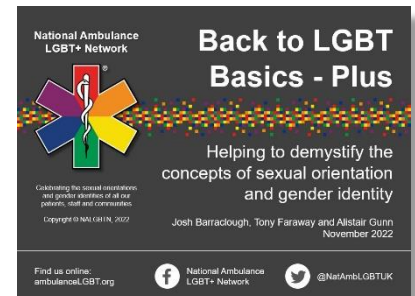
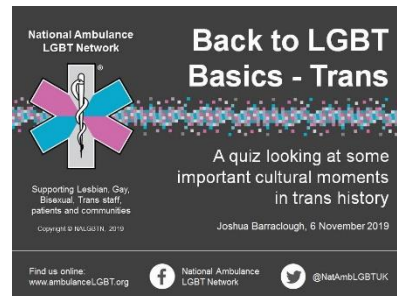
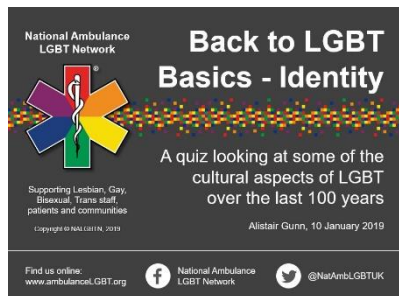
Our Back to LGBT Basics packs are designed to be interactive resources for LGBT+ networks to use in meetings. The idea is to provoke discussion and activities in a range of different ways. Some use a fun quiz format whilst others look at people's experiences and challenge people to review their own.

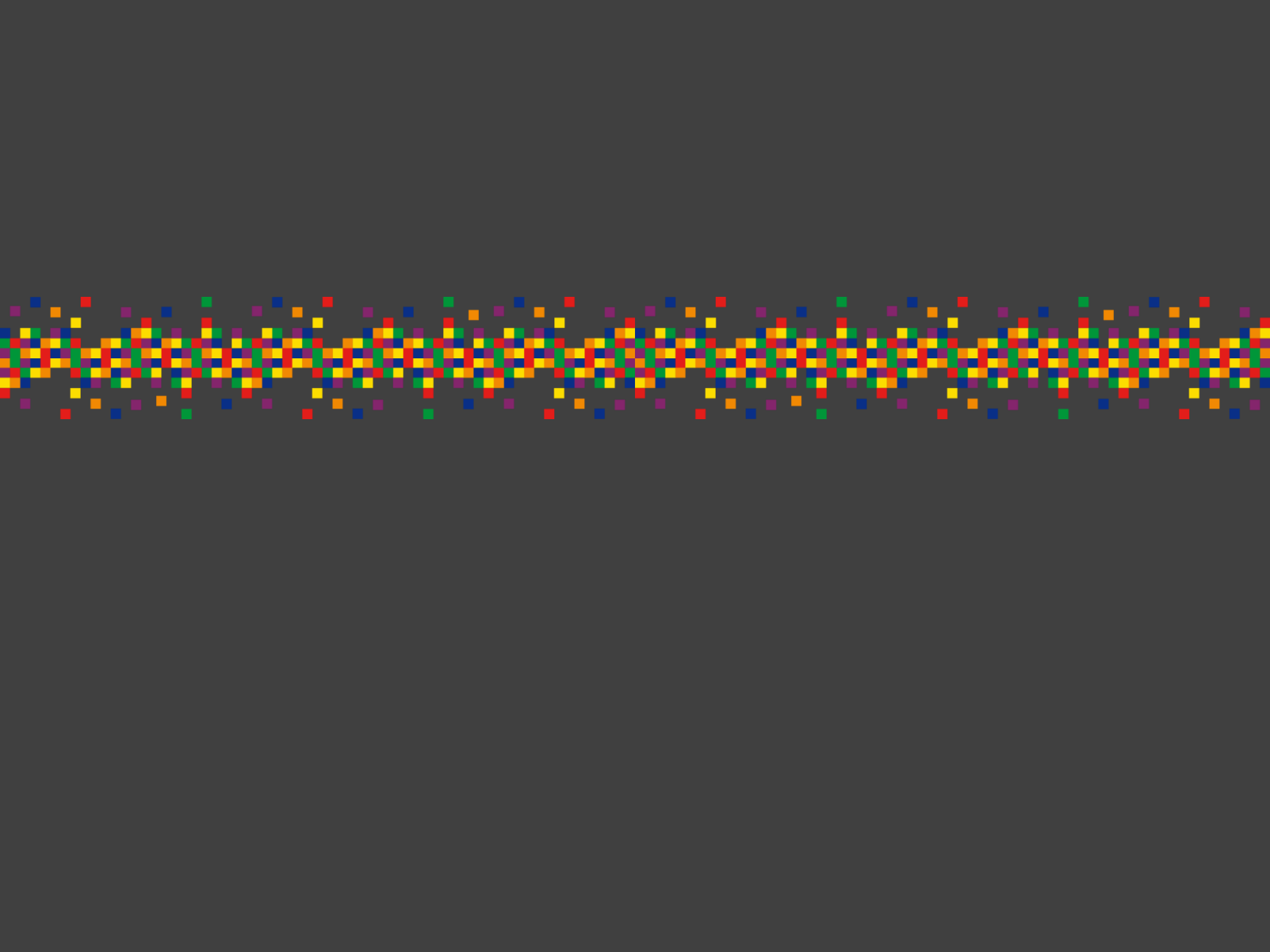
You might also like to read the content by yourself and learn something new. Our 2022 pack, titled *Plus*, provides an opportunity to learn more about the different identities in the LGBTTTQQIAAP acronym. For many people this may seem quite daunting, but the pack has been designed to

provide an inciteful overview and demystify the terms and how we can support people who identify in different ways. From this pack you can gain a professional development credit by completing a set of online confirmation questions.

If you have any ideas for future resources, or there is a subject you would like to be covered, get in touch and let us know your ideas. You can speak to your Trust's committee members or contact the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network directly using our online contact form.

ambulanceLGBT.org







For more information about the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network visit:

ambulanceLGBT.org



National Ambulance LGBT+ Network



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