

Learning opportunities for lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Derbyshire

Research report for Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council



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C2987 / March 2006

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Acknowledgements

We would like to express our thanks to the following people who have given us invaluable help and advice throughout the life of this research innovative and challenging research project:

The team of community researchers who approached this research with diligence, sincerity and enthusiasm; without their help and insight this would not have been possible.

Adrian Piggott, of Derbyshire Friend (now of Greater and Central Derbyshire Primary Care Trust) who provided invaluable advice at all stages, access to meeting rooms and to the Derby Friend website and to numerous colleagues who aided us in this research.

Phil Meadows, Louise Meadows and Melanie Alsop at Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council for having the foresight to provide funding for this research and providing access to LSC facilities throughout the project.

Thanks also to the members of Derbyshire's lesbian, gay and bisexual community who participated in the research and for the readiness and frankness with which they expressed their views.

Thanks to you all,

Carolyn Hay, Project Director
Paul Teedon, Project Manager
Nicki Hall, Project Researcher

ECOTEC Research and Consulting
April 2006



Executive Summary

In August 2005, Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) commissioned ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd to undertake a piece of community based research to assess the learning opportunities for lesbian, gay and bi-sexual people in Derbyshire. The project, funded through European Social Fund funding was conducted between June 2005 and March 2006 and in total over 130 individuals were interviewed during the primary research. The research project aimed to provide countywide mapping of the learning opportunities and support services open to and/or accessed by lesbian, gay and bi-sexual individuals. The project adopted an innovative community research methodology involving members of the community as researchers. This summary presents the key findings of the research.

Aims and objectives

Overall the research aims and objectives were to:

- provide countywide mapping of the learning opportunities and support services open to and / or accessed by lesbian, gay and bi-sexual (LGB) individuals;
- explore whether LGB individuals across Derbyshire were having positive and / or negative experiences of education, learning and training;
- determine whether sexuality was a factor in determining educational attainment, achievement and retention; and to
- identify effective support mechanisms, interventions, and actions to encourage and support LGB individuals in achieving their learning and training needs and aspirations.

Key questions

The study aimed to answer the following questions with relation to the learning experiences of lesbian, gay and bi-sexual individuals and communities.

- 1 *Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected individuals' experiences of school, college and / or work?*
- 2 *Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected individuals' ability to achieve at school, college and / or work?*
- 3 *Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected levels of retention in terms of individuals' desire and access to remain and pursue goals at school, college and / or work?*
- 4 *Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected the choices individuals have made with regards to education, training and career?*
- 5 *How could experiences of education, learning and training be improved to improve the experiences, achievement, retention and quality of choices and options for LGB individuals?*

Community research methodology

The LGB community is 'hard to reach' through standard research, and ECOTEC considered that individuals within the community would be best reached through peer research. For this reason, the project adopted a community research model which ensured that the LGB community participated in the study as *community researchers*, working alongside research staff from ECOTEC¹. A full interview process was carried out in summer 2005 to select seven community researchers with appropriate qualities. Equality of opportunity was built into the process, and a diverse pool of researchers was recruited.

A training and induction day for the Community Researchers took place in July to provide volunteers with the necessary skills and briefing. Community researchers were involved in research tool design, including developing topic guides and the focus group briefings, enabling their experience to shape the research issues.

Sample

The Community Researchers conducted 87 depth interviews and nine focus groups with members of the LGB community between July and December 2005. Quotas were set to ensure a representative sample were included in the research. The sample of interviewees included respondents aged between 16 and 55 from across the county including urban and rural areas as well as people from black and minority ethnic groups and people with a disability.

Mentoring and support was provided to the community researchers by ECOTEC throughout the fieldwork period. Following the fieldwork a debrief meeting was held to discuss the key issues arising from the research and for the community researchers to reflect on the research process. Researchers were paid for their time and efforts. An online version of the survey was also available through the Derbyshire Friend website, designed and remotely hosted by ECOTEC.

All depth interviews and focus groups were written up by the community researchers into a primary analysis grid. ECOTEC conducted secondary thematic analysis, to draw out the key themes and issues arising in the research.

¹ The research also involved a desk review and data analysis, the results of which are presented in the full research report.

Key findings

Below is a summary of the key findings from the research.

Experiences of education and training

Interview findings suggest that being LGB had most effect on experiences at school, as opposed to college or in the workplace. A number of respondents who had realised they were LGB whilst at school reported negative experiences in relation to their sexuality. This most often took the form of verbal bullying, which commonly focused on ways in which the LGB individual challenged traditional gender roles. There were also some isolated instances of more extreme forms of bullying, which tended to have more severe impact.

A clear impression emerged from these interviews that alternatives to the heterosexual lifestyle are not clearly visible in the school curriculum or environment. Teachers and school staff tend to avoid discussion of issues related to sexual orientation. The dubious status of giving positive messages about diverse sexualities, stemming from the recently repealed law Section 28, has led to schools not being seen as an ideal place to come out. Pressure from peers and the tough atmosphere amongst many adolescents also plays a part in shaping the overall school experience.

Those that had come out at school were more likely to have had negative experiences related to their sexuality and developed negative feelings towards learning. The research seems to point to the situation now improving, however – the more extreme negative views are concentrated in older age groups and the most extreme experience was that of a male over the age of 50.

This said, across the interviews generally, a number of specific positive memories of school were cited. Most often these related to supportive friends or the existence of role models. In contrast to school, positive experiences in relation to being LGB were fairly common at college, in particular as a result of access to networks of LGB people. Experiences in the workplace varied, with some interviewees citing isolated instances of negative or hostile behaviour from colleagues. Overall, however, the majority of respondents did not appear to feel that their sexuality had hampered or affected their career.

Retention and achievement

School was the context in which respondents were most likely to feel that their sexuality – and others' behaviour as a result – had impacted on achievement. Most commonly, it was reported that achievement had suffered due to playing truant or losing concentration

following homophobic bullying. Several said they were eager to leave educational settings as soon as possible and did not wish to continue into Further Education.

There were, however, many interviewees who felt that their sexuality had not really affected achievement, even at school. In the absence of formal support channels, access to informal support in the form of friends, families and teachers was central to this. Broadly speaking, most interviewees did not feel that their sexuality had affected access to training or progression post-school.

Accessing learning

Significant concerns were raised surrounding inadequate support in relation to issues unrelated to sexuality, such as bereavement or dyslexia. Interviewees for this project did not appear to feel that being LGB had created any additional barriers to accessing this generalised support. However, it is possible that negative experiences arising as a result of being LGB could have discouraged some students from finding or using services on offer.

Making choices

There was significant variation regarding the extent to which being LGB had influenced choices surrounding education training and careers. Some interviewees asserted that their sexuality had never been a significant factor, saying they did what they wanted to do and this was not determined by being LGB. However, others clearly felt that there had been some influence, either consciously or subconsciously. This was most common in relation to choosing subjects at school, with respondents commonly saying that they chose, or avoided, particular subjects on the basis of gender stereotypes. In post school years, only a relatively small number of respondents believed that being LGB directly influenced choices surrounding employers or careers. A more common sentiment was that respondents had been inclined towards certain jobs or professions on the basis of LGB friendly policies or because they thought they might meet other LGB people.

Suggestions for improvement

Respondents clearly identified encouraging a more supportive and open environment throughout educational establishments as the change that would have the most impact on experiences of education, learning and training for LGB individuals. This was thought to be far more important than introducing specific support services, which could serve to alienate and stigmatise individuals. Moreover, if a culture of informed acceptance and tolerance was successfully implemented, it is likely that the need for any specific LGB support services would be greatly reduced. Raising awareness and provision of information – for

both LGB individuals and the wider student population - appeared to be at the crux of suggestions to achieve a more supportive environment.

This said it appears that some the availability of specific support could be helpful for some individuals if implemented correctly. In particular, those participants that had attended LGB support groups and societies had found them very useful. Outside of educational and learning establishments, the presence of supportive friends and families was widely regarded as very important for a lot of individuals. It was suggested that classes teaching counselling type skills to parents could be helpful.

Key actions to address the issues raised in the report were developed though a focus group of teachers/lecturers and a seminar of key stakeholders. Actions include:

- Inclusion of LGB issues in curriculum subjects such as PSHE and other core subjects such as looking at writers who are LGB in English Literature, artists who are LGB in Art, and historical figures who were LGB and treatment of LGB people throughout different periods in History.
- Encouraging and facilitating sharing of good practice such as materials, posters, leaflets, and policies between learning providers.
- Establishment of a 'think tank' or interest group which brings together educationalists with LGB community groups for sharing and learning across the county.
- Research to understand and training to support teachers and build confidence in dealing with LGB issues.
- Communication of the findings to the schools sector.
- Closer co-working with agencies such as Connexions and local community organisations who are already experienced in this area.
- Development of a triage system to enable effective signposting and referral of learners having difficulties.
- Zero tolerance of homophobic bullying explicitly stated in anti-bullying policies and enforced.
- The LSC to develop core standards for providers on their policies and ways of enabling equality of opportunity for LGB learners.
- Sharing existing good practice between providers and key stakeholders.

Chapter 7 presents the full action plan stemming from these findings.

This report is accompanied by an Evaluation Report which presents the evaluation of the research. The Evaluation Report is available under separate cover, on request from ECOTEC.

1.0 Introduction

In August 2005, Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) commissioned ECOTEC Research & Consulting Ltd to undertake a piece of community based research to assess the learning opportunities for lesbian, gay and bi-sexual people in Derbyshire. The project, funded through European Social Fund funding was conducted between June 2005 and March 2006 and over 130 individuals were interviewed in the primary research. This report contains the findings of the research and is based on an analysis of the qualitative interviews and focus groups. This chapter outlines the aims and objectives of the research (section 1.1) then provides the context and an overview of the background literature (section 1.2). A description of population statistics relating to the LGB population in Derbyshire is provided (section 1.3) followed by a description of the community research methodology.

1.1 Aims and objectives

Overall the research aimed to provide countywide mapping of the learning opportunities and support services open to and / or accessed by lesbian, gay and bi-sexual (LGB) individuals. The study aimed to explore whether LGB individuals across Derbyshire were having positive and / or negative experiences of education, learning and training and whether sexuality was a factor in determining educational attainment, achievement and retention. The research was action focussed, specifically aiming to identify effective support mechanisms, interventions, and actions to encourage and support LGB individuals in achieving their learning and training needs and aspirations.

Specifically the research objectives were to:

- provide population estimates of the LGB community across the county;
- identify the barriers and opportunities in education and training in Derbyshire; and
- develop an action plan for learning providers.

The LGB community is 'hard to reach' through standard research, and for this study we believed that individuals within the community would be best reached through 'peer' or 'community' research. For this reason, the adopted methodology involves the LGB community in the research as researchers.

This innovative research approach aimed to:

- elicit high quality information and be professionally led but with the benefit of community involvement;
- develop trust between the LSC and the community; and
- build capacity within the LGB community by building a pool of trained researchers.

1.1.1 Key questions

The study aims to answer the following questions with relation to the learning experiences of lesbian, gay and bi-sexual individuals and communities.

Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected individuals' experiences of school, college and / or work?

Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected individuals' ability to achieve at school, college and / or work?

Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected levels of retention in terms of individuals' desire and access to remain and pursue goals at school, college and / or work?

Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected the choices individuals have made with regards to education, training and career?

How could experiences of education, learning and training be improved to improve the experiences, achievement, retention and quality of choices and options for LGB individuals?

1.2 Context and background literature

Much of the literature concerning lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) experiences of education focuses on the issue of homophobic bullying, serving to hide the more positive experiences of school. Nonetheless, the issue is an important one as it is known to affect a significant proportion of LGB young people.

What has been dubbed 'the heavily heterosexualised institution of school'¹ can be an uncomfortable environment for young people who are, or think they may be, LGB. Alternatives to the heterosexual lifestyle tend to be invisible in schools, leading to feelings

¹ Casey, M (2002) 'Young Gay Males Experiences of Coming Out in the Context of School' Youth and Policy 75

of isolation, and, at a time when there is an overwhelming pressure to 'fit in', a feeling of being 'different.'

Rivers (2000)ⁱ surveyed 190 LGB men and women and found a high proportion had experienced some kind of homophobic bullying whilst at school. For example, 85% of the men sampled had experienced name calling and 68% had been hit or kicked. For women, 69% had been called names and 67% had been the subject of rumour-mongering. Other forms of homophobic bullying experienced by significant numbers of the LGB people surveyed included:

- public ridicule;
- teasing;
- intimidating looks/stares;
- having belongings taken;
- social isolation; and
- less commonly, sexual assault.

A survey by DfES (2002) found that 82% of teachers were aware of verbal incidents of homophobic bullying and 26% were aware of physical incidents. Not all teachers make concerted efforts to challenge homophobia, and may (intentionally or otherwise), use inappropriate and homophobic language to humiliate young people in the classroom or on the playing fieldsⁱⁱ. Prior to the scrapping of Section 28, which prohibited the 'promotion' of homosexuality, inactivity of teachers could be blamed in part on the confusion caused by the legislation. Teachers were unsure whether challenging homophobia could be interpreted as 'promoting' homosexuality.ⁱⁱⁱ More recently, a survey of teachers on homophobic bullying found that many still found intervention difficult – 'their desire to help in this situation was hindered by a desire to be sensitive to the victim and a fear of a possible negative reaction from parents, other staff and pupils if they are seen to act to protect the pupil who is perceived to be lesbian or gay.'^{iv} The situation is not aided by the fact that gay teachers tend to be reluctant to 'come out' or offer support for lesbian and gay pupils for fear of the consequences for their own careers. Role models or mentors for LGB pupils are therefore rare in educational contexts.^v

ⁱ Rivers, I (2000) 'Social exclusion, absenteeism and sexual minority youth' Support for Learning 15 (1)

ⁱⁱ Rivers, I (2003) 'Getting in early: reducing homophobic bullying in schools' cited in DfES 'Stand up for us: challenging homophobia in schools – Online Resource 1: Research and facts.'

ⁱⁱⁱ Valentine, G, Skelton, T and Butler, R (2003) 'Towards inclusive youth policies and practices: lessons from young lesbians, gay men and D/deaf people.'

^{iv} Norman, J (2004) 'A Survey of Teachers on Homophobic Bullying in Irish Second-Level Schools'

^v Valentine, G, Skelton, T and Butler, R (2003) 'Towards inclusive youth policies and practices: lessons from young lesbians, gay men and D/deaf people.'

Homophobic bullying has short and long term effects, including:

- increased absenteeism and truancy – a study of LGB adults found that 72% reported a regular history of absenteeism.ⁱ Research by Stonewall found that 3 in 4 bullied lesbian and gay young people say they feign illness or truant to escape bullying.ⁱⁱ
- decreased likelihood compared to peers of entering Further/Higher Education – research has found that young people who experienced this kind of bullying were more likely to leave school at 16 years old despite having the equivalent of 6 GCSEs at grade C.ⁱⁱⁱ
- increased likelihood of contemplating self-harm suicide – one study found that over 50% of LGB people bullied at school had these thoughts^{iv} another found over 20% had attempted suicide.^v

It is important to note that the effects above could come about as a result of a range or combination of factors, sexual orientation not necessarily being the most dominant influence. For example, a study looking at the experiences of working class gay men found that 'for most men, their emerging homosexuality had little to do with their early termination of education'.^{vi} Many of the men surveyed came from backgrounds where education was not held in high esteem and it was expected and natural to leave school at 16. Therefore, other factors, such as upbringing and culture, may be more influential on destinations of young people. It is important not to be too deterministic in analysing the paths LGB young people find themselves on and the educational/occupational choices they make. In the same study of working class gay men, the researchers found that gay identity affected choice of job for only a small minority of men. Many of these men 'worked to live rather than lived to work', employment often being seen as merely a means of earning a living. Again, this shows that life trajectories are influenced by a diversity of factors, sexuality being just one. Nonetheless, the study did conclude that although other factors led to the men leaving school early, emerging sexuality did affect the quality of their education as bullying and lack of support put them at a disadvantage compared to other boys – 'being gay remains a major liability for working class boys and men.'

ⁱ Rivers, I (2000) 'Social exclusion, absenteeism and sexual minority youth' Support for Learning 15(1)

ⁱⁱ Stonewall (2005) 'Tackling homophobia in schools – Education for All'

ⁱⁱⁱ Rivers, I (2000) 'Social exclusion, absenteeism and sexual minority youth' Support for Learning 15(1)

^{iv} Rivers, I (2001) 'The bullying of sexual minorities at school: its nature and correlates.' Education and Child Psychology 18 (1)

^v Mullen, A (1999) 'Social inclusion: reaching out to bisexual, gay and lesbian youth.'

^{vi} Keogh, P, Dodds, C and Henderson, L (2004) 'Working Class Gay Men – Redefining community, restoring identity'

Despite the harmful effects and the commonplace nature of homophobic bullying (most often in 'throwaway' use of words such as 'gay' used in a derogatory context), only 6% of British schools have fully inclusive anti-bullying policies which address homophobic bullying.ⁱ This is exacerbated where members of staff do not have the information necessary to support young people – according to research carried out in 1997, some 57% of schools reported that they did not have access to information to help signpost LGB young people to appropriate support.ⁱⁱ

Given the above findings, it is perhaps not surprising that 'for gay adolescents the culture of the school is not one that permits the coming out of the gay self, due to the associated stigmas, dangers, social penalties and lack of support within the school, for doing so. It is the freedom of the post-school years that offers the potential and space to the gay male to come out and explore his sexuality.'ⁱⁱⁱ For those who do 'come out' at school the process is a daunting, but also influential, one. Throughout their lives, people who are LGB have to make decisions about when it is appropriate to reveal their sexual orientation – 'coming out' is not a one off experience. Schools can play a key role in trying to ensure that a young person's first experience of 'coming out' is as positive as possible because 'their first experiences can be highly significant in determining how well they handle these questions in the future.'^{iv} In light of this, what can be and has been done to ensure that LGB young people have a positive experience of education?

Valentine, Skelton and Butler (2003)^v outline a number of factors that enable LGB young people to counter marginalisation including:

- close personal friendships, offering support and validation;
- positive adult role models and mentors;
- validation of sexual identity – not being made to feel as though their sexual orientation is 'wrong';
- on and off-line support groups; and
- achieving success in one aspect of their lives (e.g. school work, hobbies) that can bolster their confidence in other areas.

ⁱ Stonewall (2005) 'Tackling homophobia in schools – Education for All'

ⁱⁱ Research cited in Stonewall (2005) 'Equal at school'

ⁱⁱⁱ Casey, M. (2002) 'Young Gay Males Experiences of Coming Out in the Context of School'

^{iv} DfES, DOH 'Stand up for us: Challenging Homophobia in Schools'

^v Valentine, G, Skelton, T and Butler, R. (2003) 'Towards inclusive youth policies and practices: lessons from young lesbians, gay men and D/deaf people'

1.2.1 Context over time

We should not, however, assume that it is inevitable that LGB young people will be marginalised – it is important to create supportive and inclusive environments and relationships that make everyone feel welcome and included no matter what their sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, gender is or whether they have disabilities.

There have been some important legislative developments in relation to this in recent years. In particular, the 2003 repeal of Section 28 should help to remove any real or perceived barriers to open discussions and provision of information surrounding being LGB within learning providers. Section 28 was a controversial amendment to the 1998 Local Government Act that said a local authority 'shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality,' or 'promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship'.

The Civil Partnership Act in 2004 further promoted the rights of LGB individuals. This Act creates a new legal relationship of civil partnership, which two people of the same sex can form by signing a registration document. Broadly speaking, these developments reflect gradual shifts in governmental and wider public attitudes to being LGB. In general, LGB-related issues are addressed and discussed much more openly than two decades ago when Section 28 was introduced, and the 1960's when being LGB was illegal. This is an important point in relation to this research and the different experiences of interviewees, who ranged in age from 16 to 60.

1.2.2 Guidance and literature

A number of organisations have published guidelines and advice on tackling homophobia in education and creating inclusive learning environments, notably:

Connexions have published a document for Personal Advisers called 'Information and Guidance on Engaging Young Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People'. It lists ten steps to ensure LGB people feel comfortable:

- make no assumptions about sexual orientation;
- have something gay-related visible in your office or environment to demonstrate you are a safe person to talk to;
- support and validate a young person's feelings about their sexual orientation;
- do not advise young people to come out – this needs to be done at the young person's own pace;

- guarantee confidentiality;
- challenge homophobia;
- combat heterosexism – include visible lesbian and gay role models in your environment – do not use stereotypical images;
- learn about local LGB organisations and projects;
- ensure your organisations equal opportunities policy includes sexual orientation; and
- provide role models.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department of Health (DH) published 'Stand up for us: Challenging Homophobia in Schools'. This document offers extensive guidance on taking a whole school approach to tackling homophobia and creating an inclusive environment.

Stonewall publish many guidance documents as part of their mission to achieve equality and justice for LGB people. One of their major campaigns is 'Education for All' aimed at tackling homophobia in education. Like the Connexions guidance, the campaign's cornerstone document 'Tackling homophobia in schools – Education for All' lists ten points for action towards creating an inclusive school environment:

- acknowledge and identify the problem of bullying;
- develop policies that recognise the existence of homophobic bullying;
- promote a positive social environment;
- address staff training needs;
- provide information and support for pupils;
- integrate sexual orientation into curriculum planning;
- use outside experience (e.g. individuals from external LGB agencies);
- encourage role models;
- don't make assumptions; and
- celebrate achievements.

With so much guidance now available, as well as the scrapping of Section 28, there really is no reason for the education sector not to be proactive and responsive to the needs of LGB young people. So what exactly are the needs of LGB young people? What do they think would improve the experiences of LGB young people at school? Like all young people, they need to feel safe, supported and confident. The website of Avert, an international HIV and AIDs charity contains a section called 'Young gay men talking –

School experiences¹ – it includes a list of things that could have improved the experience, these were:

- open discussion of homosexuality in class (not addressed as a problem);
- open discussion of the discrimination against gays and lesbians;
- role models;
- talks by ex-students;
- plays;
- books;
- teachers standing up for you; and
- being taken seriously.

A study by Blake² also asked young gay men for their ideas for change – their suggestions included:

- more gay/gay friendly events to increase visibility and promote understanding;
- training for everyone in contact with young people;
- make sexual diversity an integral part of sex education;
- teach children at school that being gay is okay; and
- produce leaflets that focus on stress, prejudice and homophobia.

1.3 Available data and statistics

According to data from NATSAL, in 1990 5.3 per cent of men reported having a sexual experience (not necessarily genital contact) with another man. By 2000 this proportion had risen to 8.4 per cent. The same trend can be observed for women. Here there is a sharper rise – from 2.8 per cent of women in 1990, to 9.7 per cent in 2000. For younger women (under 24), the proportions were higher (3 per cent in 1990 rising to 10.1 per cent in 2000). For young men just 4.3 per cent had had a sexual experience (not necessarily genital contact) in 1990 - a percentage that rose by just 0.5 percent in 2000.

Again, using data from NATSAL, it can be seen that the proportion of men who have had sex with another man has risen from 3.7 per cent in 1990 to 6.3% in 2000. An upward trend can also be observed for women – from 1.9 per cent in 1990 to 5.7 per cent in 2000, representing a three fold increase in 10 years.

¹ www.avert.org.ygmt3.htm

² Blake, S (2004) 'Section 28 gone at last! Meeting the needs of young gay men' Working with Young Men 3 (1)

NATSAL data shows that in 1990, 1.4 per cent of men had had a same sex partner in the last 5 years compared to 2.6 per cent in 2000. The proportion of women who had had a female partner in the last 5 years was lower than that for men in 1990 at 0.6 per cent. By 2000, however the proportions of men and women were equal at 2.6 per cent.

If the same proportions and trends found in NATSAL were found in the Derbyshire population as a whole, it could be estimated that in 2000:

- 8.6 per cent of the population had had a sexual experience (not necessarily genital contact) with someone of the same sex.
- 5.4 per cent had had sex with a same sex partner.
- 1.8 percent of the population had had a same sex partner in the last 5 years.
- In each case, the proportions would be slightly higher for women and slightly lower for men.

The above figures are estimates – NATSAL is a national survey and is cannot be broken down by regions. The actual figures for Derbyshire may be lower than those nationally. Furthermore, the statistics do not tell us whether the respondents actually identify themselves as LGB – the experiences above could be ‘one-offs’. No national census of LGB people is carried out so we can never be sure of exact proportions. According to government estimates however, between 5 and 7 per cent of the population are LGB.

Upward trends are partially explained by a more tolerant climate, where being open about sexual experiences and sexuality is more widely accepted. In the past, more people were inclined to hide same sex experiences and relationships. We can also speculate that there is an actual increase in the number of sexual experiences between the same sex, based on the level of tolerance increasing regarding different expressions of sexuality.

1.4 Methodology

The research adopted a community research model which ensured that the LGB community participated in the study as *community researchers*, working alongside research staff from ECOTEC. This section provides an overview of the process of recruiting and training the community researchers, and includes a description of the sampling. In total 138 individuals were interviewed during the primary research for the project.

1.4.1 Recruitment of community researchers

Seven community researchers were selected to participate in the study. Community researchers were recruited through university LGB groups, community and health organisations, and other community organisations, with particular help and advice from Derbyshire Friend.

A full interview process was carried out in summer 2005 to select community researchers with appropriate qualities. Equality of opportunity was built into the process, and a diverse pool of researchers was recruited.

A training and induction day for the Community Researchers took place in July. The full day training event covered:

- training in basic research methods (interviewing and focus groups);
- ethics, confidentiality and professional boundaries;
- approaching a research subject and closing an interview; and
- recording, writing up and storing data.

Community researchers were involved in research tool design, including topic guides and focus group briefing, enabling their experience to shape the research issues. ECOTEC also provided mentoring and support throughout the fieldwork period. Following the fieldwork a debrief meeting was held to discuss the key issues arising from the researchers and reflect on the research process. Researchers were paid for their time and efforts.

An online version of the survey was also available through the Derbyshire Friend website, designed and remotely hosted by ECOTEC.

1.4.2 Sampling and depth interviews

In advance of fieldwork, a sample frame was developed based on a review of existing research about the make up of LGB communities as presented in section 1.2 and the known population of Derbyshire from census statistics (see section 1.3). The sample was designed on the basis of achieving 100 interviews, and was designed to be reflective of the gender, age and level of educational achievement.

Community researchers each carried out up to 20 interviews on a one-to-one basis with members of the LGB population, recruited through community and personal networks and through attending community events and on the scene. A total of 82 depth interviews were conducted between August and November 2005. A further three responses were also received from the online version of the survey. Table 1.1 below illustrates the sample profile for the interviews and the actual achieved numbers of interviews in each part of the sample¹. Overall, on a pro-rata basis, the sample quotas were met, with one or two exceptions.

Table 1.1 Original and achieved sample profile

Sample profile: original	Suggested numbers	Sample profile: achieved
Degree educated	Maximum 10 interviews	19
Disabled	Maximum 15 interviews	3
Age 14-18	At least 15 interviews	3
Age under 25	At least 50 interviews	28
Age under 35	At least 75 interviews	56
Age over 50	Maximum 10 interviews	6
Men	50-60 interviews	47
Women	40-50 interviews	35
BME (ethnic group)	10-15 interviews	10
Rural (not in a town)	At least 25 interviews	15

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A full breakdown of the achieved sample profile is available in annex two.

¹ Please note totals do not sum to 82 since some categories are not mutually exclusive, for example a respondent could be female, aged under 25 and live in a rural area.

1.4.3 Focus groups

Between November 2005 and February 2006 a series of nine focus groups were conducted with a total of 53 individuals from specific groups as follows:

Table 1.2 Focus group profile

Focus group number	Group description	Organised through	Number of attendees
1	Men's group	Derbyshire Friend	12
2	Women's group	Derbyshire Friend	7
3	Lesbian group	University LGB Society	4
4	Gay group	University LGB Society	7
5	Bisexual group	University LGB Society	5
6	Black and minority ethnic group	Privately organised	3
7	Mixed group	ARC	3
8	Teachers and training providers group	By invitation	9
9	Young people (aged 18 and under)	Derbyshire Friend	3

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Focus groups were conducted by community researchers with the exception of the teachers group which was conducted by ECOTEC. The purpose of the focus groups were to explore some of the issues arising from the depth interviews in more detail and develop ideas to build into an action plan for the LSC.

1.4.4 Analysis and dissemination

All depth interviews and focus groups were written up by the community researchers into a template primary analysis grid, provided by ECOTEC. ECOTEC collated all these primary analysis grids and conducted secondary, thematic analysis, drawing out the key themes and issues arising in the research. This report presents the findings of this analysis.

The findings from this research were presented at a dissemination event hosted by Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council in March 2006. Feedback from the event is included in chapter 7 of this report. Annex three contains documents relating to the dissemination event including the invitation and flyer.

1.5 Structure of this report

The remainder of the report presents the key findings of the research and chapters two to five explore key themes revealed during the analysis. The chapters are structured as follows:

- *Chapter 2* explores issues around identification and awareness;
- *Chapter 3* looks at experiences in school, college and work;
- *Chapter 4* looks at achievement, retention and access to learning;
- *Chapter 5* looks at making choices;
- *Chapter 6* presents the actions for improvement recommended in the focus groups; and
- *Chapter 7* presents the action plan stemming from the findings and the dissemination event.

The annexes contain the following items:

Annex One contains the topic guides for the depth interviews and focus groups, used for the research.

Annex Two contains a full breakdown of the sample profile.

Annex Three contains documentation relating to the dissemination event, including invitations, flyer and delegate list.

This report is accompanied by an Evaluation Report which addresses issues around the method and its effectiveness and impacts. The Evaluation Report is available under separate cover, on request from ECOTEC.

2.0 Identification and awareness

2.1 Awareness of sexuality

Most respondents identified themselves as 'gay'. This was true for both gender groups, with slightly more women describing themselves as 'gay' than 'lesbian'. Nobody was 'unsure'.

An awareness of their own sexuality typically emerged in respondents' mid teenage years - typically 15 to 16 - although some were 10 or younger. In relation to an awareness of others' sexuality at school, interviewees commonly talked in terms of 'out' pupils being bullied or accusations aimed at (assumed) LGB teachers.

'My friend came out at school and he was bullied.'

(Male, under 25, gay)

'There was one teacher we suspected who was gay. A supply teacher. He had to work twice as hard to get any respect from the students. If anyone would ask him for help, they would get called a queer.'

(Male, over 35, gay)

However, many respondents had not been aware of other LGB pupils or teachers at school, whilst others had had suspicions about certain people, but not been sure. Such suspicions were generally based either on the behaviour of the suspected LGB individual, or the behaviour of other pupils towards that individual.

'I was never aware of other gay people. Because I felt different I kept myself to myself.'

(Male, under 35, gay)

'I used to spend time with a guy who I think could have been [gay] – he was camp and got teased for his campness. He never came out to me so I don't know if he was.'

(Female, over 50, lesbian)

2.2 Identification to others

A common theme was that respondents had not come out at school even if they realised they were gay, or felt in some way 'different', or even if other pupils made assumptions about their sexuality. It is likely that this was influenced by the bullying of other 'out' pupils, mentioned above and discussed at length in the literature review. The overall impression that emerged from these interviews, therefore, is that school was not considered a positive environment in which to come out.

'Although I was aware I had homosexual feelings I was never open about my sexuality. But children have a unique way of picking on people and I was called gay even though I had girlfriends. It had an impact on me leaving school.'

(Male, under 35, gay)

'When I was at school, if they found out I liked women I'd have got my head kicked in. It was seen as abnormal.'

(Female, under 35, identifies herself as 'woman who loves women')

Compared to school, college was generally regarded as a more accepting environment. Whether 'out' themselves or not, individuals were more likely to come into contact with other openly LGB people. This was cited as a positive experience.

'I found in time the college to be very positive to someone who was bisexual like myself. The tutors were very understanding and friendly. I also got to know others and it was nice to have a common ground.'

(Male, over 40, gay)

Respondents varied with reference to being 'out' at work, with some interviewees saying they had been 'out' in some jobs but not others. Broadly speaking, the main variable appeared to be the attitudes and atmosphere in a particular workplace. If the respondent perceived the environment to be positive and supportive, then they were more likely to come out. In contrast, some respondents reported a temptation to 'fit in' if an atmosphere appeared negative or hostile towards LGB people.

'I have always been out in my jobs and it has never affected them. My current employers have always had a positive attitude to gay people – it's written in the contract. I never got a negative response from anyone.'

(Male, under 35, gay)

'I haven't been out in all my jobs, one job was working in a factory. They were all blokes and only spoke about 'man' things. I know I dropped the gay act and tried to pretend I was straight just to fit in.'

(Male, under 35, gay)

Some respondents chose not to disclose their sexuality at work because they did not feel it was relevant. This view was generally based on a belief that sexuality has no impact on an individual's ability to do a job and so should not, therefore, be an issue.

'I have had the same job since leaving college and I'm not out, only my close friends and family know about me. I keep my private life separate to my work...maybe one day I will tell them but at the end of the day it has nothing to do with anyone else about my sexuality.'

(Male, under 35, gay)

Table 2.1 Case Study: Josh¹, aged over 35, gay

Josh knew he was somehow 'different' at school but with no contact with, or knowledge of other LGB people he had no reference for how he should behave and no one to turn to for advice. He grew up feeling self-conscious and alone and began truanting from school. Josh's life changed when he left school and entered employment. Once outside of school, he began to meet other gay people and came out at the age of 21.

'my friends knew I was gay, and so did the people at work but they weren't bothered about it. So I felt very comfortable with it. A far cry from my school days when I couldn't look at anyone.' (Josh, 44)

A supportive work environment meant he was happier and ended up remaining with the same employer for around 20 years.

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¹ All names have been changed.

3.0 Experiences in school, college and work

Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected individuals' experiences of school, college and / or work?

This chapter considers whether being LGB has affected individual's experiences of school, college and work. It reports first on positive and then negative experiences identified by respondents. A third section looks at responses from respondents who believe that being LGB had no specific impact.

3.1 Overall experience

Overall, negative experiences associated with being LGB were much more likely to have occurred at school than during learning elsewhere. Most respondents had clearly not considered school an LGB-friendly environment. In line with the literature review, alternatives to the heterosexual environment were not generally visible or openly discussed, and as such school was not seen as an ideal environment to come out. As discussed in detail in section 3.2 below, negative experiences were common at school, while positive encounters tended to focus on specific occasions or relationships with particular people.

This is not to say that being LGB meant school could not be a positive experience. Some, particularly but not exclusively those who did not realise they were LGB until after finishing school, said that their sexuality had not affected their experience at all. A few clearly articulated that they enjoyed going to school. However, clear positive memories associated with being LGB whilst at school were rare. In contrast, a number of respondents asserted that being LGB at college was a positive experience. This was usually in terms of college being a more open environment, where respondents were more likely to meet other LGB individuals and felt more comfortable 'being themselves'.

3.2 Negative experiences

Some respondents appeared to view the whole experience of being LGB whilst at school in a generalised negative light. Confusion, a feeling of 'being different' and frustration at not feeling able to come out were common complaints identified. A lack of support and information exacerbated these feelings.

'Definitely [my experience of school was affected by my sexuality]. People noticed I was different. I was very feminine.'

(Male, under 25)

'Yeah, I had to pretend to like blokes, so that I'd blend in and be normal. I had to put on a pretence to make my life simpler, even though I wanted to tell them.'

(Female, under 35)

Specific bad experiences at school described centred on verbal bullying. In general, this focused on the perceived non-conformity of LGB individuals to traditional gender stereotypes. For instance, males report being persistently called 'camp', while girls were described by fellow pupils as 'butch'. Some respondents said they became immune to such name calling, letting it wash over them. However, others suffered consequences, including loss of confidence, withdrawal and even self-harm. Some interviewees said they could not wait to leave school.

'I wanted to leave ASAP. Straight out of the door after my final exam was over and never going back again. I had the results posted to me. I've lost contact with so many people since. I just associated that school with bullying.'

(Male, under 30)

The case study below is a typical example of persistent verbal bullying.

Table 3.1 Case Study: Tom¹, gay, under 35

'I knew I was gay at school from the age of 12. I was very effeminate and got picked on a lot. Not so much as someone hitting me but verbal abuse, which was more hurtful. It had a serious impact on my school life because it made me withdrawn.'

Tom reacted to the bullying by *'trying to be good at most things. I did rugby and got on the school team...it made me more determined to leave and do what I wanted...my sexuality was a factor in leaving school. I was sick and tired of all the jokes.'*

The following quote also suggests that some individuals did not like to admit to the bullying, which may have compounded the negative feelings, such as loss of confidence, cited above.

¹ All names have been changed.

'I knew I was different and I was a bit effeminate, and my voice didn't break until I left school. With these I got bullied on a regular basis... On a few occasions I got thumped either at school or on my way home. I used to tell my parents I'd fallen.'

(Male, gay, under 35)

Examples of more severe bullying were cited by a handful of respondents. For instance, one interviewee described being 'bullied and beaten a lot by other pupils', saying this was never addressed by teachers, who he believed were scared of the bullies. He continued to assert that he believed the school would have been more likely to address the bullying if, for instance, it had been racially motivated. In addition, the school apparently discouraged this respondent from reporting instances to the police, saying that it would be in the papers and his parents would find out. It appears in this case that bullying and a lack of support, both in and out of school, combined to create deeply negative experiences associated with being LGB whilst at school. The case study below is another of the more extreme examples given.

Table 3.2 Case study: Fred¹, under 35, gay

Fred knew he was different from the age of about 12, but wasn't sure why. He was bullied by other boys, who called him a cissy, and it got so much that when he was 14 he began self-harming. *'It became a regular thing, like thumping my nose to make it bleed, taking tablets, drinking beer, inhaling glue.'* In addition to this, he was also the subject of unwelcome sexual advances when he was 13 from a boy three years older. This individual was later prosecuted for molesting a young boy.

'It got to a point where I was missing lessons and was eventually suspended from school for 2 weeks.' It was at this point that his parents found out. They were very understanding and caring. He *'was put under a shrink for a while, to overcome my problems. I was eventually taken out of that school and given a second chance.'*

As stated above, specific negative experiences related to being LGB were much less common at college or work than at school. Any examples of the latter tended to be isolated instances and were generally described as name-calling, 'banter' or 'horse-play'. However, there were a small number of more extreme incidents, such as the example below where the respondent felt forced to leave their job as a result of colleagues' negative attitudes. Overall, however, the majority of respondents did not feel that their sexuality had influenced or hampered their post-school career.

¹ All names have been changed.

'I left my job at X because I was picked on for being gay and publicly humiliated on the shop-floor in front of customers. If it was a one-off I could have coped but it happened a lot. I did complain to my boss but nothing was ever done about it.'

(Male, gay, over 35)

3.2.1 Experiences of black and minority ethnic communities

Only a small number of interviewees were people from BME groups and so it is difficult to judge whether this typically raises any additional issues. In reality, it is likely to vary considerably between individuals and circumstances. Certainly some of the interviewees from BME groups did not articulate any specific issues relating to their ethnicity, or report particularly severe negative experiences. However, there were a small number of cases where culturally specific circumstances appeared to create particularly heightened negative experiences. This is illustrated in the case study below.

Table 3.3 Case study: Anita¹, over 35, lesbian

Anita did not enjoy school, saying that *'I don't think the struggle was just because I was Asian. I think it was also because I was lesbian'*. She did not tell anyone at school about her sexuality and did not realise that anyone else was like her. She felt very isolated and got suspended after she hit someone, which she thinks was not fair treatment. *'Other children hit people but they never got moved to another class. I was the only Asian girl there so I don't know what to think now, if it was my sexuality or not'*.

She went on to university for a year, but did not enjoy that either because *'I was married by then. I had to pretend and be the good little Asian wife'*. She never knew that there were groups for gay, lesbian and bisexual people until after she left and says that *'if I had known about the groups I would never have married.'*

3.3 Positive experiences

Specific positive experiences in relation to being LGB at school mainly centred on the presence of supportive friends and teachers. In some cases this referred specifically to acceptance amongst friends – whether LGB themselves or not – on coming out. Other respondents, however, talked in more general terms about close friendships or teachers who were there to listen.

'I came out towards the end of school. My close friends were accepting and teachers were cool with it.'

(Female, under 35, lesbian)

¹ All names have been changed.

'The only positive experience was the closeness with my friends. Spent time with 5 gay friends, we bonded in the last 3 years of school.'

(Female, under 25, bisexual)

'A tutor tried to talk to me about a 'crush' I had on another teacher. She made an impression on me by which I mean she let me know she was there for me if I needed to talk and that she was ok with it.'

(Female, under 25, bisexual)

Some respondents also pointed to positive role models, most commonly teachers but also celebrities or fictional characters on TV programmes. Personal strength and self belief were the main reasons cited for admiring particular individuals. Particularly in the case of teachers, these personal qualities appeared to be more important than the role model being LGB themselves. This may be because, according to the literature reviewed, LGB role models and mentors are rare within the educational context. In general, respondents believed that role models were important for developing self confidence and a conviction in their own beliefs.

'Two female teachers I really admired, which was PE [physical education] and Art teacher, always seemed to be strong women who took no messing and knew what they wanted.'

(Female, lesbian, under 35, rural area)

'I liked Ellen Degeneres, and she came out at about the same time as me. She was really my role model, as well as Whoopi Goldberg. These role models affected me in that it made me more confident in myself.'

(Female, bisexual, under 25)

'It [Queer as Folk] was a big affirmation that it is ok to be gay...it really helped with the whole coming out thing too.'

(Male, gay, under 25)

Isolated positive experiences were also identified by some of the respondents that had generally struggled with being LGB at school and suffered the negative experiences cited above. Many of these centred on occasions or behaviour that confronted the LGB stereotype, thus making the individual feel more 'normal' and 'accepted'. For males in particular, achieving at sport was a particularly common example.

'I didn't like PE, I thought it was a negative subject. The teacher used to discriminate between cissies and men. Proved them wrong in the 5th year I joined the rugby team and was a keen swimmer.'

(Male, over 55)

I avoided things like PE and other physical sports but I did get on the athletics team because I was good at running.

(Male, under 35)

However, many could not really recall any positive experiences relating to being LGB during these years. This is illustrated clearly through the first quote below. However, it is possible that a complete lack of any positive experiences was more common among people aged 50+ since. As stated, being gay was illegal when this was respondent was at school and opportunities for open discussions about sexuality would probably have been even more limited than in recent years. The second quote below supports this and it should also be noted that all the quotes describing positive experiences given above are from people under the age of 35.

'I had no positive experience of being at school. There was no support or counselling as being gay wasn't talked about and it was illegal.'

(Male, over 50, gay)

'It was frowned upon in those days. I tried to keep it to myself. Many friends hadn't experienced a same sex love so it was difficult for them to understand. I felt guilty for having those feelings.'

(Male, over 50, gay)

In contrast to school, college was frequently described in more positive terms, in particular as a result of access to networks of LGB people. As noted above, experiences in the workplace varied, mainly depending on the respondent's perception of the atmosphere and colleagues' attitudes. Although it was commonly asserted that employer attitudes were not a main consideration when applying for a job, a supportive environment once in post could significantly influence the employment experience in a positive way.

Table 3.4 Case study: Helen^I, under 25, lesbian

Helen had good experiences at her last employer '*The last job didn't see us as different people. They were quite positive*'. Her employer asked her to set up an LGB society within the company as well as an LGB night. Despite this experience, Helen does not expect that all employers will be as supportive; '*I've found it harder to get a job since then as I've put this on my CV. I'm not sure if this is preventing me from getting a job.*'

3.4 No impact

Some respondents felt that their sexuality had had no impact on experiences at school. In a lot of instances, this was either due to individuals being unaware they were gay or not having 'come out' yet. There were some, however, who reported no impact even though they were out or assumed to be gay by others and may have been subjected to some name calling. Broadly speaking, these tended to be people who were strong, either physically or in character and continued to not see being LGB as an issue through college and work. Alternatively, some suggested that they were unaffected because they did not conform to the LGB stereotype, which is identified above as a common cause of homophobic bullying. For instance, the respondent in the case study below appears to clearly associate the fact he wasn't bullied with the fact he did judo.

Table 3.5 Case Study: Michael^{II}, gay, over 35

Michael enjoyed school very much and was popular:

'I've always been an outspoken person, very outgoing and I think fun to be around. I was always making jokes so I fitted in quite well at school. I also did well in my subjects. I got called a nancy boy a few times because I was a bit effeminate. But I could look after myself. My parents paid for me to go to judo lessons...All the lads thought it was cool, so I got in a gang...The fact I was gay didn't worry anyone. I think they were all frightened of me with doing judo.'

He went on to college because he '*didn't want school to end*'. Once at college he was initially worried that it would not be the same atmosphere at school but '*had no problems whatsoever. I was very popular with everyone. I treated it as an extension from school.*'

Now at work Michael tries to keep his sexuality separate whilst never denying being gay; '*I get called the odd name but I can cope with that.*'

^I All names have been changed.

^{II} All names have been changed.

3.5 Conclusion

Interview findings suggest that being LGB had most effect on experiences at school, as opposed to college or in the workplace. A number of respondents who had realised they were LGB whilst at school reported negative experiences in relation to their sexuality. Most commonly this took the form of verbal bullying, although a minority of respondents experienced more extreme forms of bullying, which tended to have a more severe impact. Bullying generally focused on ways in which the LGB individual challenged traditional gender stereotypes.

This is not to suggest that all respondents had a negative view of school. Many asserted that either that they enjoyed their school years, or that their sexuality had had no impact on the experience. For some, this was because they had not realised they were gay, but some simply believed that their sexuality had not been an issue. In addition, the most extreme negative experiences tended to be concentrated in the older age groups, who would have been at school at a time when being LGB was illegal. However, the level of negative experiences reported and the apparent lack of support or mechanisms to address them was widespread enough to be of some concern.

This said, across the interviews generally, a number of specific positive memories of school were cited. Most often, these related to supportive friends or the existence of role models. In contrast to school, positive experiences in relation to being LGB were fairly common at College, in particular as a result of access to networks of LGB people. Experiences in the workplace varied, with some interviewees citing isolated instances of negative or hostile behaviour from colleagues. Overall, however, the majority of respondents did not appear to feel that their sexuality had hampered or affected their career.

4.0 Achievement, retention and access to learning

Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected individuals' ability to achieve at school, college and / or work and has it affected levels of retention in terms of individuals' desire and access to remain and pursue goals at school, college and / or work?

This chapter considers whether interviewees felt that being LGB affected their achievement and retention in relation to learning at school, college or work. It starts by considering experiences described by respondents relating to achievement and then retention, focusing in particular on decisions to stay on in education following school. Following this, issues around access, both to provision and also to support, are then discussed. A short conclusion section then summarises findings.

4.1 Achievement

There was clear variation in the extent to which respondents believed that experiences surrounding sexuality had affected their achievement at school. A small number clearly identified a negative impact as a result of homophobic bullying. Most commonly this impact manifest in playing truant or loss in concentration.

'I was bullied quite a lot. Took days off school. Missed exams. Lacked concentration as there was other stuff going on.'

(Male, under 25, gay).

Conversely, other interviewees stated that verbal bullying or name calling had made them more determined to succeed. Some, as illustrated by the quote below, felt that this had been at the root of them becoming overachievers.

'I retaliated by trying to be good at most things. I did rugby and got on the school team, it made me more determined to leave and do what I wanted.'

(Male, under 35, gay).

4.2 Retention

For a minority of interviewees, such negative experiences directly influenced a decision to leave education. These individuals generally said they wanted to get away from the bullying experienced at school, preferring to get out into the wider world and meet other LGB people. Some, such as in the case study example below, had, or were planning to, return to continue education later in life.

Table 4.1 Case study: Gary¹, over 35, gay

At school Gary was bullied both verbally and physically, drawing him into drugs and drink. Despite being a promising student Gary left school because he wanted *'to get into the big wide world and find lots of men. Although I wish now that I hadn't rushed into things and had gone to college.'* Instead Gary took a series of bar jobs.

With his drink and drugs problems under control, he now hopes to go to college to study social sciences and wishes to use his experiences to *'make a difference to someone's life and help them.'*

'I have made the decision to go to college and better myself and to get a qualification. I know it's going to be hard but I have got this far in life.'

Overall, these examples were in the minority, however, with most interviewees believing that their sexuality had not significantly influenced the decision to continue – or not - with post-school education. For some, this was clearly linked to the fact that they were either unaware they were LGB or had not yet come out at the point of leaving school but others specifically stated that their sexuality had simply not been an issue.

'My education and my sexuality were two different things. They didn't cross over, maybe they would have done if I had come out. My only reason for not wanting to stay at the sixth form was that they didn't have the subjects I wanted to do.'

(Female, over 50, lesbian)

'I left school to go to work, it had nothing to do with my sexuality'.

(Male, under 45, gay)

'It has never been a part of my thinking. Before going to college or taking a job I didn't find out if they are gay friendly.'

¹ All names have been changed.

(Male, under 25, gay)

Broadly speaking, therefore, there does not seem to be a strong pattern suggesting that negative experiences at school necessarily put people off going to college. In fact, a few interviewees that suffered definite negative experiences at school asserted that they were looking forward to college. There appeared to be an assumption that college would be a different environment, where they could 'start again' and escape from bullying.

'I didn't want to be associated with that school. I wanted a clean break so I chose a college that was few miles away. New face, new start.'

(Male, under 30, gay)

'Yeah I wanted to leave [school] as soon as I finished my GCSEs. I wanted to also go somewhere and experience another atmosphere..... I chose the college because it was the only college that did the course I wanted. Plus I knew that not many people from my secondary school would go there (it was on the other side of Derby).'

(Male, under 25, gay)

Moreover, there were examples of respondents who had enjoyed school not going to college. In the majority of cases, factors other than sexuality appeared to have a greater influence on this decision, with personal aspiration and parental expectation probably the most common.

4.3 Access to education and training

Most of the barriers to education and training identified by interviewees were not directly related to sexuality. Some said that they couldn't do particular subjects at school, but this was generally due to a restricted choice on offer, or, occasionally other specific reasons. For instance, one respondent reported not being allowed to take child development because he was male. However, there were a small number of isolated examples of respondents not being able to – or feeling as if they were unable to – participate in particular courses or activities when at school.

A fairly extreme case was a (male, 35 year old) respondent's report of how other boys refused to share changing rooms with him once they realised he was gay. As a result, he was prevented from taking P.E. (Physical Education), which had been one of his favourite subjects. He apparently received no support from the school surrounding this issue. More commonly, respondents felt that their sexuality had influenced their own decisions to choose – or avoid – specific subjects. This is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Most respondents had not had access to any specific LGB related support when at school. In particular, there was a perceived lack of openness around gay life styles, which were apparently simply not discussed in sex education lessons. Many respondents felt this lack of support had played a big part in perpetuating the negative experiences described in the previous chapter. For most, the situation could have been greatly improved through open discussions surrounding sexuality and better support from teachers, although a small number of people asserted that an LGB support group or society might have been helpful.

'If the school had openly discussed or even mentioned homosexuality and said that it existed... Just acknowledged the fact that everyone is equal regardless. That would have had a big impact. When I was at school there was no one that I could look to for support. If there was support that said it was OK to be gay then it would have made a big difference.'

(Male, gay, over 35)

'I was bullied and the teachers turned a blind eye to it...Some more support from teachers would help, maybe better counselling. I would have liked to have been told the importance of good schooling.'

(Male under 35, gay).

In general, however, respondents did not link this lack of support for LGB people specifically to achievement. Moreover, it was sometimes discussed in the context of a lack of a support at school in general. Specific areas in which respondents felt greater support might have impacted on achievement were un-related to sexuality, examples being dealing with bereavement or dyslexia. Some existing literature suggests that LGB people can experience greater barriers to accessing such generalised support. Interview data collected here does not explicitly support this finding, although it may be implicit. Certainly a tendency to play truant and possibly a loss of confidence could reduce opportunities to access available support.

In the absence of formal support, access to informal support in the form of families, friends and particular teachers was considered an important influence on both experiences and achievement.

'I don't think it affected me or had an impact at school...My family have been very influential and supportive to encourage me to do what I want in education.'

(Male, under 25, gay)

'At school I had some very relaxed and calm teachers. They gave me a positive outlook on life...They helped me figure out what I wanted to do...Family has influenced me a lot...I was the first one to do A-levels and Uni...Friends were always there for support.'

(Female, under 25, lesbian)

'My mum encouraged me most with education. I went to college for her...my friends have been really good too.'

(Male, under 25, gay)

Broadly speaking, issues surrounding access to learning and training in post school years appeared to be linked to sexuality to a lesser degree than those during school. The main barriers identified were associated with funding and time constraints.

4.4 Conclusions

In line with findings presented in the first chapter, school was the context in which respondents were most likely to feel that their sexuality – and others' behaviour as a result – had impacted on achievement. Most commonly, it was reported that achievement had suffered due to playing truant or losing concentration following homophobic bullying. In a minority of cases, respondents stated that negative experiences at school had put them off progressing to college. However, this did not seem to be the case in general, with some appearing to make a clear distinction between experiences at school and expectations at college.

Most interviewees agreed that there had not really been any proper support for LGB people at school. Whilst clearly believing that improved support could greatly improve the school experience for LGB people, only a minority of respondents directly related it to under-achievement. Interviewees for this project did not appear to feel that being LGB had created any additional barriers to accessing this generalised support. However, it is possible that negative experiences arising as a result of being LGB could have discouraged some students from finding or using services on offer.

There were, however, many interviewees who felt that their sexuality had not really affected achievement, even at school. In the absence of formal support channels, access to informal support in the form of friends, families and teachers was central to this. Broadly speaking, most interviewees did not feel that their sexuality had affected access to training or progression post-school.

5.0 Making choices

Has being gay, lesbian or bi-sexual affected the choices individuals have made with regards to education, training and career?

This chapter looks at whether being LGB affects individual's choices with regard to education, training and career. It begins by considering whether there is evidence to suggest whether respondents actively selected or avoided particular subjects, both at school and College (section 5.1). Section 5.2 then focuses on choices surrounding where to study and work, whilst section 5.3 looks at whether being LGB has influenced careers. Finally, a conclusion section provides a summary and pulls out main findings.

5.1 Choosing subjects

The interview data suggests that some respondents felt their sexuality had influenced choice of subject at school. The most common example was respondents choosing or avoiding particular subjects because of associated gender stereotypes, held either by the respondent themselves or others around them. For instance, many male respondents reported taking cookery or home economics, either to avoid the 'lads' or because they thought it was the kind of thing gay people did. Conversely, some said that they avoided subjects considered overtly 'masculine', such as woodwork and metal work.

The quotes below illustrate this point. The fact that the first three are all from respondents over the age of 35 could indicate that gender stereotypes associated with particular subjects have become more blurred in recent years. It is also clear from the third that, at least some, interviewees did not hold onto such stereotypes in adult life.

'I didn't like PE, I thought it was a negative subject. The teacher used to discriminate between cissies and men.'

(Male, gay, over 50)

'I chose home economics at school. One of the reasons being was the lads did metalwork and technical drawing. That way I could avoid them.'

(Male, gay, over 35)

'I chose cookery because I thought that was what gay people did. Which now I think is silly.'

(Male, gay, over 35)

'I avoided PE [physical education] because I felt left out...I didn't want to be tormented. I think the male PE teacher encouraged my tormentors to bully and tease me. I don't think he liked people who didn't enjoy his lessons and he knew I didn't.'

(Male, gay, under 25)

In general, respondents felt that sexuality had been less important in selecting college courses than factors such as: enjoyment of the subject; career plans; what friends were doing; and choices available at colleges close to home.

5.2 Choosing where to study or work

Generally speaking, being LGB did not appear to significantly influence the choice of college or university. For most respondents, this decision had been based on other factors, including: distance from home; where friends were going; natural progression into a 6th form college; choice of subject; academic reputation; and offer of a place. Some did point to the presence of a 'gay' scene as an attraction, but usually this as one in a list of positive factors.

'I knew nothing. It didn't really enter my head, you know, "I hope they're gay friendly".'

(Male, under 25, gay)

'I knew there was a gay scene in Derby and I already had a lot of friends here too. Derby Uni was doing a course I wanted to do too.'

(Male, under 25, gay)

'I chose to go to Uni at Brighton as this was the gay capital.'

(Female, under 25, lesbian)

As mentioned in chapter one, responses were mixed in relation to whether decisions to apply and accept jobs were influenced by being LGB. A fairly large number believed that sexuality was not an important consideration; with some saying it had never been a factor. Some of these interviewees said they had not come out at some – or all – of their jobs if they felt it hadn't been appropriate.

'It has never really been a factor, for me it is something I deal with after I get the job.'

(Female, over 35, gay)

In contrast, a small number reported that they would only apply to employers that they thought had positive attitudes towards LGB people.

'I've applied for all my jobs because I thought they might have a positive attitude towards gay people otherwise I wouldn't have applied.'

(Male, under 25, gay)

A more common sentiment, however, was that sexuality had not explicitly influenced respondents' employment choices but, on the other hand, they might be more inclined to apply to a place if they believed it had positive attitudes towards LGB people. Specific employers mentioned in this context ranged from gay bars to the police and the NHS, which one respondent believed they 'could trust wouldn't be homophobic'. Some respondents also said they would be encouraged by a commitment to equal opportunities.

'I was more inclined to apply for xxxx cos I knew three gay girls who worked there. It made me feel comfortable and they'd been there years and had no grief.'

(Female, under 25, bisexual)

'Not primarily because of that. Obviously it has a influence, but isn't the main factor in my application/acceptance.'

(Female, over 30, lesbian)

'[I've] not applied for one [on the basis of employer positive attitudes to LGB] but I found it encouraging to read an equal opportunities policy which included homosexual people on a recent job application form.'

(Female, under 25, gay)

5.3 Choosing a career

In a similar vain as above, most interviewees felt that their sexuality was not the major factor in choosing a career. Some asserted that it had not been a factor at all.

'I have always done what I wanted to do and being gay hasn't affected my choices.'

(Male, under 35, gay)

However, as stated above, some people did highlight LGB friendly policies in some professions as an attraction; the police force was identified by a number of respondents. Even if this was not cited as the main reason for choosing a career, it appeared to be viewed as a definite benefit. Other respondents reflected that they might have been swayed towards certain careers on the basis of 'gay' stereotypes. For some this was

explicitly related to meeting – and mixing with – other gay people, whereas others believed it was more of a subconscious decision. This reflects, and is probably linked, to choosing or avoiding particular subjects at school.

Table 5.1 Case study: Steve¹, under 35, gay

For Steve, sexuality was a factor in his leaving school – he wanted to get away from the bullying he had experienced. At school he was not aware that there were any other gay students or teachers *'I wanted to join cabin crew, I thought I would meet people like me.'* Working in the travel industry he has found that his employers *'have always had a positive attitude to gay people'*. Steve is currently signed off work due to non-work related stresses in his life but is looking forward to the time when he can *'get back on track to return to the job I love.'*

'I guess I always went for more stereotypical things like bank, cooking etc. I never did anything to do with things like woodwork.'

(Male, over 45, gay)

'[my] partner suggested xxxx because other gay people work there. I was able to be out and talk about things and it was accepted as normal. The thought of working on a building site was a definite no-no.'

(Male, under 35, gay)

'I'd like to start a course...in car maintenance, I'd like to be a mechanic...It's something I've always wanted to do. I've had skilled manual jobs, and I like taking things apart and getting hands on...It's not a feminine job is it? Must be the lesbian in me!'

(Female, under 25, bisexual)

In a small number of cases, respondents asserted that they were looking to change careers because they felt their original choice had been too heavily influenced by their sexuality. In these instances, it seems that as respondents became more comfortable with their own sexuality, they widened their career choices beyond those seen as typically LGB-friendly.

¹ All names have been changed.

Table 5.2 Case study: Matthew^I, over 35, gay

Whilst at school, Matthew was not prepared to deal with his sexuality. He chose subjects '*that appeared as being less gay*'. Mark subsequently pursued a career in the military, where, at the time homosexuality was illegal.

'I chose certain employment and life choices...all aimed at not being gay. But since coming out and dealing with my sexuality, I've not chosen with that aspect again. It's now more my strengths and skills. My communication qualities. Education wise now, I have chosen a subject that I really wanted to do.'

Matthew is now at University studying theatre and hoping to fulfil his lifelong dream of qualifying as a teacher.

Table 5.3 Case study: Graham^{II}, under 35, gay

Graham chose to be a hairdresser because of his sexuality '*I'm not saying all hairdressers are gay out there but...*' Having studied hair and beauty at college, Graham went into the profession where he found '*a good atmosphere. Very pro-gay.*' He now would like a change of career and to earn more money. With this in mind, he wants to train as an estate agent and do a business and computer course.

5.4 Conclusions

Overall, there was significant variation regarding the extent to which being LGB had influenced choices surrounding education and careers. Some interviewees asserted that their sexuality had never been a significant factor, saying they did what they wanted to do and this was not determined by being LGB. However, others clearly felt that there had been some influence, either consciously or subconsciously. This was true with regard to choosing subjects at school, with respondents commonly saying that they chose, or avoided, particular subjects on the basis of gender stereotypes. A significant finding is that organisations with a clear policy of non-discrimination is favoured by LGB people – both in education and at work.

In post school years, only a relatively small number of respondents believed that being LGB directly influenced choices surrounding employers or careers. However, some did feel that they may have been inclined or swayed towards certain careers or professions considered to be typically LGB friendly. Another common sentiment was that were attracted to jobs with LGB friendly policies or where they thought they might meet other LGB people.

^I All names have been changed.

^{II} All names have been changed.

6.0 Actions for improvement

How could experiences of education, learning and training be improved to improve the experiences, achievement, retention and quality of choices and options for LGB individuals?

This chapter draws on information collected through depth interviews and focus groups to identify possible actions for improvement. Focus group discussions centred on possible changes that could improve experiences of education, learning and training for LGB individuals. The chapter begins by focusing on potential changes in educational and learning settings (section 6.1). Section 6.2 then considers work settings, while section 6.3 looks at the general and public context. A conclusion section summarises findings.

6.1 In educational and learning settings

Overall, a clear impression emerged that a more supportive and accepting environment should be encouraged throughout educational establishments. Cultivating a tolerant atmosphere was generally regarded as more important than introducing specific support services for LGB people, which could serve to alienate individuals by singling them out as 'different'. It was asserted that all school staff should have diversity training and that a clear zero tolerance policy towards homophobic bullying should be adopted and enforced.

Teachers were seen as key to implementing a more supportive environment since they interact with pupils on a day-to-day basis. Broadly speaking, this role was seen more in terms of awareness and acceptance of diversity rather than offering explicit guidance to LGB individuals. However, it was also suggested that teachers could provide more information relating to being LGB, making efforts to integrate some of the issues into lessons. For example, respondents suggested that LGB issues could be covered in PSHE lessons but because the curriculum is so 'pushed for space' it is easier not to cover more difficult issues such as sexuality and allow them to drop off the agenda. It was felt that covering these topics more openly might encourage pupils to feel more comfortable about approaching teachers if they did want advice on LGB issues. In general, these points back findings presented in earlier chapters that supportive teachers were a major source of positive experiences for LGB people at school.

'My teachers were very hard to talk to at school. I did approach my Biology teacher about my feelings towards other boys. He told me it was part of growing up and that I would grow out of it. I believed him.'

(Male, over 35, gay)

'The teachers were nice, but I didn't want to talk to them because I thought they'd laugh at me. I think teachers need to be gay friendly and aware, so that they're equipped for help.'

(Female, under 25, lesbian)

Table 6.1 Case study: Learning provider, teacher's focus group

One participant in the teacher's focus group said that their college had a variety of measures in place to help support staff in addressing needs of LGB learners. This includes a system of policies and a staff development programme, which supports the staff in implementing and adhering to policies. He added that there were three transsexuals on a hairdressing course at the college and the staff had no problems with this. However, clients often refused treatment from these individuals. *'This is a cultural thing. People don't like anyone that is different.'* He believed that the college had great intentions about diversity issues, but *'it is society that gets in the way. Boundaries need pushing forward more'*.

Proper training was identified as crucial for teachers to provide helpful advice in both the LGB and teacher focus groups. Comments in the latter suggested that some teachers have offered signposting, such as helpful telephone numbers, to LGB students in the past, but did not necessarily feel qualified to offer advice.

'It is up to the student if they want to identify themselves, if that's the case we try and help them...they are offered help in the form of a phone number of a body which can help'

(Teacher's focus group).

Furthermore, teachers in the focus groups told us that young LGB people prefer to approach a trusted teacher whether or not that teacher has a specified pastoral role, simply because they trust that individual. It might therefore be beneficial to provide support and training to all teachers to raise awareness of LGB issues and provide guidance in dealing with LGB issues.

Improved sex education was identified as the main way in which better information surrounding LGB issues could be provided in schools. Virtually all focus group participants, and many interview respondents, felt that current sex education was inadequate in its coverage of same sex couples. It was commonly suggested that if pupils in general were better informed about LGB issues they might be more accepting, with less homophobic bullying as a result. Some providers gave examples of a local organisation that they had contracted with to come in and deliver sex education using language and imagery

appropriate and accessible for young people. This allowed qualified and experienced staff to deliver training which was aimed at the right level for the age group.

The case study below is an example of a learning provider that attempts to provide support to LGB individuals who want it, without singling out or alienating those that don't.

Table 6.2 Case study: Learning provider, teacher's focus group

'We sure that their policies and legislations surrounding diversity are up to date and keep in touch with their external partners who are experienced in the issues.' However, this learning provider does not directly ask learners or teachers about their sexuality. *'Although we do have girls in construction and boys in beauty therapy etc, but they either make it or don't and are treated like any other student.'* It is up to the student if they want to identify themselves as LGB and if that is the case, then we try to help them. If a student does have a problem taking particular classes, they are offered help in the form of a phone number or contact with a relevant organisation. In addition, *'we have a college counsellor who can help with LGB/diversity issues and put them individuals in touch with other organisations.'*

Some other suggestions of how LGB issues could be integrated into specific curriculum areas are as follows:

- Looking at writers who are LGB in English Literature.
- Looking at ways of speaking about LGB people and issues in English Language.
- Looking at artists who are LGB in Art.
- Looking at historical figures who were LGB and treatment of LGB people throughout different periods in History.
- Using same sex couples in phrasing of maths questions, suggested in one focus group as illustrated below.

“Fred and Barry lived together” – not so much making it an issue but promoting it as a positive normal lifestyle.’

(Focus group, 3 males, gay)

Focus group discussions also covered the benefits of specific support LGB people. As stated above, there was a clear concern that these mechanisms could serve to alienate individuals. For this reason, school nurses were not generally regarded as a suitable source of support, with some people suggesting that this could encourage an idea that being LGB is a medical problem. Likewise, it was thought that a dedicated LGB counsellor could lead people to think 'there is something wrong' with LGB people, leading to and name calling and verbal bullying along the lines of the quote below. It was thought that

counsellors should be for anyone who wants them, although it was recognised that they should have training in LGB issues and be able to offer support, advice and signposting.

'You're gay, you have a problem, get some counselling' was highlighted by one focus group participant as an example of the verbal bullying that dedicated counselling could encourage.

(Group of 7 gay males, mid-20's).

There was a mixed response to mentoring, with focus group participants typically suggesting their success would be dependent on the individuals involved. There were some examples where individuals reported good experiences of mentoring. LGB societies and support groups were not brought up very often in focus groups, and many individuals who had been to college or university said they had not experienced sufficient problems to need them.

People who had attended such groups, however generally found them very positive. Participants of a young person's focus group identified an LGB youth group as the single most useful source of support. Meeting other people and confirming that they weren't alone were the specific benefits most commonly cited. Some people thought any such groups should be held outside of the school or college environment in order to avoid individuals being stigmatised. Having more posters up to advertise support for LGB learners and signposting of where to go, or support groups would also prove helpful. Overall, these findings suggest that while LGB support groups and societies should not be seen as an alternative to encouraging a more accepting and tolerant environment in educational establishments, they could be an extremely useful source of support for some individuals.

'It [college LGB group] was very useful. It helped me to come to terms with my sexuality more. I met new people and was more confident with myself.'

(Male, under 35, gay).

Table 6.3 Case study: University, teacher's focus group

'Our university has a section that deals with LGB issues that is very successful.' He also said that the students union had a venue where students could "come out". *'LGB students feel comfortable there. They are able to meet fellow students of the same persuasion.'* The University also has a group that collects feedback on what more could be done to support students in relation to LGB issues. The respondent wasn't sure if other universities had similar systems in place.

Other ideas of ways to improve experiences of education, learning and training for LGB individuals that were raised in focus groups were:

- An in-school helpline or confidential e-mail advice service.
- A 'kite mark' to show that a school is positive about LGBT people.
- Providing information in libraries so that young people can do their own research into LGB.
- Holding discussion forums to explore what pupils think they know. Gay role models and celebrities could be brought in, as well as outside speakers to talk about diversity (teachers group also suggested this).

6.2 In work settings

As discussed in earlier chapters, some interviewees identified positive attitudes towards LGB people as central to positive experiences at work. Focus group participants felt that employers should have zero tolerance to homophobia and bullying, dealing with any incidents very firmly. Diversity training for staff was also highlighted as useful. Points raised in relation to counselling and mentoring were generally the same as those discussed under education and learning settings, mainly that they could be helpful for some individuals but should avoid singling out or labelling LGB individuals.

6.3 In general or public settings

In line with interview findings, focus group participants generally felt that supportive family and friends could play a big role in encouraging positive experiences, particularly when young. It was felt that parents should be supportive, understanding and clearly recognise that their child is still their child on coming out. A couple of groups suggested that classes to teach parents 'counselling' type skills, specifically how to listen and respond to LGB issues in a positive way.

'My Mum was my role model. Because she was always there for me at the end of a tortuous day.'
(Female, under 25, lesbian)

In terms of more general support, libraries were seen as potentially useful, allowing people to access information on LGB issues and do their own research. However, one focus group participant who worked in a library noted that individuals cannot get access to LGB sites as they are classed as pornography.

6.4 Conclusions

Respondents clearly identified encouraging a more supportive and open environment throughout educational establishments as the change that would have the most impact on experiences of education, learning and training for LGB individuals. This was thought to be far more important than introducing specific support services, which could serve to alienate and stigmatise individuals. Moreover, if a culture of informed acceptance and tolerance was successfully implemented, it is likely that the need for any specific LGB support services would be greatly reduced. Raising awareness and provision of information – for both LGB individuals and the wider student population - appeared to be at the crux of suggestions to achieve a more supportive environment.

This said, it appears that some the availability of specific support could be helpful for some individuals if implemented correctly. In particular, those participants that had attended LGB support groups and societies had found them very useful. Outside of educational and learning establishments, the presence of supportive friends and families was widely regarded as very important for a lot of individuals. It was suggested that classes teaching counselling type skills to parents could be helpful. In a similar vain, diversity training for staff in the workplace was suggested.

7.0 Action Plan

This chapter presents the action plan based on the key findings stemming from this research. This action plan has been developed from the key findings expressed in chapters two to five and the suggestions made by respondents in chapter 6. In addition the action plan draws on discussions at the dissemination event hosted in March 2006. The action plan is divided into three sections – actions to support learning providers, schools and colleges, actions directly to support learners and actions regarding the wider dissemination of this report.

Table 7.1 Action plan: support for learning providers

Action	Rationale	Responsibility
Cultivating an open and tolerant atmosphere in schools and colleges.	To allow pupils and learners to have equality of opportunity to learn and achieve whatever their personal lifestyle choices.	The whole sector
Incorporation of LGB examples into curriculum materials, text books, resources.	LGB examples to be included in PSHE, Citizenship and core curriculum subjects such as Maths, Science, and English Literature. - To acknowledge and raise awareness and understanding of LGB life choices. - To 'normalise' the gay lifestyle as a choice.	Nationally: DfES, LSCs Locally: Head teachers and college principals Teachers and learning providers.
Existing materials and resources for schools/training providers to be more widely disseminated.	Wider sharing of materials for school/teachers (e.g. Stand Up for Us, produced by DfES, Connexions guide for PAs). Raise awareness of existing materials, sharing of good practice, ensures equality of access and service across providers, avoids re-inventing the wheel.	Nationally: DfES, LSCs, Connexions Locally: Derby LSC, local learning providers.
Closer collaboration with Connexions on this issue.	Utilise existing experience in Connexions Derbyshire in working with LGB issues. Utilise and share existing materials and good practice (e.g. Connexions guide for PAs).	Connexions LSC Schools, Colleges and training providers.
Creation of online repository of good practice for Derbyshire.	To enable easy sharing of resources and facilitate dissemination, online repository must make all documentation downloadable, or available to order online. Repository could include materials, lesson plans, work books, examples of equality and diversity statements.	Nationally: DfES, National LSC Locally: Derby LSC to explore feasibility.
Think tank – creation of	The 'think tank' would meet monthly, or quarterly to	Derby LSC with

Action	Rationale	Responsibility
local network / forum / interest group, or thematic working group.	discuss and share learning and good practice around LGB learning issues. The think-tank would bring together representatives from education, learners, LGB community organisations and policy makers. The group could be hosted by the LSC.	co-operation and interest from local stakeholders.
Research with staff to understand their concerns and issues around effectively working with and supporting LGB learners.	This research focussed almost entirely on learners. There is clearly a need for research to understand the experiences of front line staff delivering learning and learner support for LGB learners. Based on the model of staff focus groups being conducted at Derbyshire College to understand what concerns and issues staff have around effectively supporting LGB learners. Use the research to develop support and advice for teachers, and provide teachers with information and resources to support LGB learners more effectively.	Nationally: DfES and LSC Locally: Derby LSC and local learning providers, schools and colleges
Identification of staff with experience and interest in helping LGB learners.	Identify staff within organisations/training providers who are equipped and experienced at working with LGB learners, and who are willing to act as referral points. For example pastoral staff, or child protection workers. Provide relevant support to these contact points and facilitate networking between them and other relevant services such as Connexions, CAHMS, health services and social services.	All organisations and named individuals
Triage or referral system for LGB learners with difficulties.	Development of an effective triage system or referral mechanism for learners who are having difficulty or need to access support. Agree a referral route such as a named individual, or group that can provide qualified and experienced support. Ensure the triage system does not make learners feel they are being 'fobbed off'. Communicate effective use of the triage system to all staff and to learners who access it.	LSC and local learning providers, schools and colleges
Training and support for frontline staff.	Development of training sessions for all staff working directly with learners focussing on LGB as a key equality and diversity issue. Training would: - raise awareness of LGB learners needs and experiences - recognising and identifying LGB learners with issues or difficulties - explore ways of providing practical and emotional support - build staff confidence in dealing with LGB - explain how to use the triage or referral system for	Providers already doing this to share good practice. LSC to aid sharing of good practice. All training providers to provide this.

Action	Rationale	Responsibility
	handling any LGB learners' problems - provide contact details for external agencies that can provide support.	
Simple guide to the existing legislation.	Provision of a basic overview and interpretation of what the legislation means for colleges and training providers.	Work could be commissioned by the LSC
Develop and issue common core standards for providing equality of opportunity for LGB learners.	Government legislation means all schools and learning providers should be dealing with LGB issues, but clearly many are not. Development of core standards would create a basic minimum standard that all providers should reach. Might include: - being explicit about LGB issues in all equality and diversity statements - statement of zero tolerance on homophobic bullying - establishing support for teachers and learners - publicising LGB support via posters etc.	DfES – for schools LSC – for learning providers Quality Improvement Agency – to disseminate standards and ensure standards are met
Include LGB issues in initial teacher training at universities, teacher training colleges etc.	Ensure LGB issues are explicitly addressed in initial equality and diversity training to ensure all new teacher cohorts are made aware of the issues and how to deal with them.	DfES National LSC
Extending the school and learning environment commitment to equality and diversity to parents, carers and communities	Promoting equality of opportunity in the wider community in and around learning providers, and during contact with parents and carers. Making a visual and verbal commitment to LGB equality.	LSC and local learning providers, schools and colleges.
Management buy-in and support for all of the above	Buy in at the most senior levels of learning organisations is essential. Senior managers, principals, board of governors and directors should demonstrate commitment to equality of opportunity for LGB learners and make a commitment to some or all of the above actions.	All senior management of learning organisations The LSC should continue to demonstrate its commitment.

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Table 7.2 Action plan: support for learners

Action	Rationale	Responsibility
Existing materials and resources for learners/pupils to be more widely disseminated	Wider sharing of posters, leaflets, newspapers, events, resources, DVDs and links to advice and support agencies. To ensure all students have equality of opportunity to learn and achieve.	Local schools, colleges, training providers. Local stakeholder and community organisations.
Explicit statement of zero tolerance of homophobic bullying in anti-bullying policy, and acting upon that statement	To clearly and explicitly state zero tolerance on this issue. To demonstrate support for this issue to learners, parents, carers and the community. To demonstrate action to enforce zero tolerance when required. Actions to focus on bully (appropriate punishment) as well as on the person being bullied (support and advice).	All schools, colleges and learning providers Endorsement by the LSC
Inclusion of a specific / dedicated session, or part of, on LGB issues during course induction or PSHE classes	Include specific content covering LGB issues and places to access support and advice in course inductions, induction packs and / or in PSHE classes.	All schools, colleges and learning providers Endorsed by LSC
Development of magazine for LGB learners – produced by learners, for learners	Support for and development of resources within schools and colleges for LGB learners, with LGB content. Magazine or newspaper covering personal experiences, what it is to be gay, games and crosswords. Magazine would support LGB learners and be an educational resource for all learners. Could be incorporated into curriculum work or externally. Could be disseminated electronically.	Schools, colleges and learning providers, with support from / collaboration with LGB community groups.

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Table 7.3 Action plan: wider dissemination of this report

Action	Rationale	Responsibility
Dissemination of this report to all training and learning providers across Derbyshire	To ensure the experiences of learning – positive and negative – and the good practice identified is shared widely among the learning community in the county.	Derby LSC ECOTEC
Dissemination of the findings of the report to schools and the schools sector	Recognition that young people make lifestyle choices and decisions about their sexuality while at school, at a younger age than many expect or are adequately equipped to deal with. Clear need to disseminate the findings if experiences at schools to the sector and engage them in a debate about these issues.	DfES The National LSC Derby LSC ECOTEC Stonewall
Dissemination of the findings of the report to employers	Employers need to be aware and endorse the support required for the LGB community. Employers providing training placements for LGB learners need to be aware of the requirements.	The National LSC Derby LSC ECOTEC Stonewall
Dissemination of the report to wider stakeholders	To ensure the experiences of learning – positive and negative – and the good practice identified is shared widely among the learning community and stakeholder organisations nationally.	LSC ECOTEC Stonewall Local stakeholders to disseminate through their networks.

ECOTEC

Annex One

Topic guides

MELOS – LGB learning opportunities for Derbyshire LSC Community research ESF project

ECOTEC Research & Consulting

Topic Guide for focus groups

Funded by ESF and Derbyshire LSC.

ECOTEC contract code C2987

Please use this topic guide as a guide to the questions you will need to cover during the focus groups.

Anything written in [square brackets] is directions or instructions for the interviewer / moderator.

If you have any queries on its content please contact Nicki or Paul at ECOTEC, on 0121 616 3652.

The Experience of Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual people of training and education in Derbyshire

Preliminaries - interviewer

Remember at all times be polite and respectful of your interviewee's feelings and sensitivities. Ensure you have read the more detailed notes on interviewing in the manual before undertaking your first interviews. Particularly remember not to use the phrase 'LGB', but gay or lesbian as appropriate to the person being interviewed.

Introduction for the interviewee

We are undertaking this work for Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) who have asked us to find out whether people who are gay, lesbian or bi-sexual have particular needs for training or education and whether this has been affected by their experiences of education in the past.

We would be really grateful if you could help us with this work.

The aim, at the end of the process, is to produce an action plan for the LSC so that it

Interview Details

Interviewee:

Interviewer name and
code (A-G):

Date of interview:

Time of interview:

Interview Code Number
(e.g. A1, B5, G7)

Interview location:

Checking Questions and identification

- I. First of all I need to establish that you are gay/lesbian or bi-sexual. *[If the interviewee identifies themselves as transgender they should not be interviewed for this piece of work. They should be thanked but not interviewed]*
- II. Are you currently living, working or training (including education) in Derbyshire?
(only progress interview if answer to any of these is yes)
- III. Interviewee is Male Female *(please tick)*
- IV. Could you just tell me your age?
- V. Where do you live?
- VI. What is your ethnic group?

White

British

Irish

Any other White background, please write in

Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed background, please write in

Asian or Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Any other Asian background, please write in

Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Any other Black background, please write in

Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese

Any other, please write in

VII. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes No

VIII. Can I just check what level did you reach in your education background e.g. finished after completing GCSEs/BTEC etc? [I am asking this because we are primarily interested in people who do not have a degree and just want to check that this fits your experience].

Self identification

IX. How would you identify yourself (to yourself or to others you trust)?

X. (If a term is offered:) Is that the term you would like me to use today, if I need to use any?

Interview

We can now begin with the main part of the interview.

When would you say that you first became aware that you were LGB or, if you prefer, 'different'?

ask and tick all those that apply, Interviewee is currently:

- Working full time
- Working part time
- Unemployed
- In full time education – school (up to age 16)
- In full or part time education – college (above age 16)
- In work-based training/learning
- Receiving training at work

Could you tell me about your education and work background (working forwards from primary school) – what schools and jobs have you had: where were these located, for example were they in a town or countryside? [Interviewer – record each in correct sequence from primary onwards, record any periods of unemployment and at key stages record the age e.g. left school, first job etc.]

[Please note: THIS SURVEY ASSUMES NO ONE INTERVIEWED IS STILL AT SCHOOL]

ASK ALL

Educational history in general

I wonder if you could tell us something about your educational experience to date?

1. If you were aware of your 'difference' being LGB at school do you think this had particular impacts on your experience in school? Can you identify what these were?
2. Do you think you had a 'different' experience to your contemporaries because of your sexuality? If so, in what ways - can you describe some of those for me?
3. Did you have other friends who you knew, or thought were, LGB? Do you think their experience of education was similar to yours – in what ways?
4. Were you aware of any gay teachers - what kind of treatment did they get? Did they do anything to make your life easier – assuming, of course, you were facing any problems?
5. How did you find the subjects at school? Were there subjects, for example, which you actively chose or avoided, because of the way you thought they were taught or the way you might be treated?
6. Did you have any positive images to draw on whilst you were at school, for example were there any role models at the time either at school, at home or in the public eye? If there were how do you think these affected your own thinking or behaviour?
7. Was your sexuality at all a factor in you leaving school then (assuming you had had any thoughts about this)? If so, in what ways did it affect your decision to leave?
8. Generally speaking do you think you could have had more help or support whilst you were at school? What kind of thing would have helped?

ASK ALL

Difficulties or barriers in school

9. Did you have to face any difficulties whilst you were at school that you think were related to your sexuality? Could you tell me about these? Did they happen often?
10. How did you respond to these? For example did it make you reach different decisions about your time in education (what to study, when to leave etc)?
11. Could you identify any ways in which your experience of school as a gay teenager affected your choices since then – at least with regard to later education or work choices? For example

did you choose a college, type of training or job because of the way you thought they treated gay people or has this never been part of your thinking?

Positive experiences (of being gay) at school

12. Did you have any positive experiences of school that you associate with your sexuality?

ASK ALL WHO HAVE BEEN TO COLLEGE OR ARE AT COLLEGE

College Experience

IF IN COLLEGE/FE/HE OR OTHER TRAINING/EDUCATION [OR HAVE BEEN] ANSWER Q22 TO Q34. [*For those who have attended college and have now moved on please formulate in the past tense*].

13. What are you studying – subject and qualification (where applicable)?

14. Why did you choose this college?

15. What did you know about its 'attitude' towards LGB people before you came? Was this a factor in your choice of the college?

16. How have you found the college (as an LGB person) since you started?

17. Have there been any issues that have arisen, and caused you problems (as LGB), since you have been there?

18. Were they serious enough for you to need help or support? Did you get this or try to find any?

[FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SOUGHT HELP ANSWER Q20 – Q25 OTHERWISE GO TO Q26]

19. How useful was it? What did those helping (try to) do?

20. Could more have been done to resolve the problem(s)?

21. Was the help within the college or somewhere else?

22. How did you find the help within the college?
(eg through a friend, helpline etc?)

outside the college?

23. If it were to happen again would you go back there for help again?

24. Are you aware of anyone else who sought help – what were their experiences like?

ASK ALL WHO ARE IN (OR WENT TO) COLLEGE NOT SEEKING HELP

25. Did you have particular positive experiences of life at college from the perspective of an LGB person? Were there particular reasons for this?

ASK ALL

Your work experience

26. What have your work experiences been like as a LGB person? To what extent do you think your sexuality has had an impact upon this experience (whether positive or negative)? Are there particular experiences or examples you would like to share, which indicate this?

27. As an LGB person how would you describe the atmosphere in your current/most recent job with regard to the general attitude to gay people?

28. Have you been 'out' in your jobs (and to what extent has this varied between jobs)? If you have, did this have any particular impact?

29. Have you ever accepted a job, or applied for one, because you thought they might have a positive attitude to you as a LGB person? If you did, is that how it worked out for you? For example have you ever left a job because of the way you were treated as LGB? Could you tell us something about the circumstances around this? [*Interviewer – this might be sensitive territory so handle this carefully*]

ASK ALL

Training at Work

30. Have you undertaken any substantial periods of training as part of your job(s)?

31. If so how were these for you as an LGB person? Have you ever faced any problems being LGB in any of this training? What were the issues for you?

32. Did you get the support you needed? Did you get any specific LGB support? If you did what form did this take? How were they resolved (if at all)? What more could have been done?

33. Have you had positive experiences in any of your training? If so in what ways do you feel it was a good experience?

FOR THOSE NOT CURRENTLY IN TRAINING, EDUCATION OR WORK [ONLY]

34. Why did you leave your last job?

ASK ALL

Future education or training hopes

35. Do you have any current (or likely future) education or training hopes (or needs)? Are these related to work, for interest, or some other reason? What is it you would like to do/study/learn?

36. If they are for work: is it for a specific job you are currently doing or for your career more generally? How do you think this would help you with your work or career?

37. Have you faced any recent difficulties getting access to this training (etc)? If you have to what extent have these difficulties been related to your sexuality?

38. If they have why do you say that? For example, have you had any specific experience that tells you they are connected?

ASK ALL

Friends and family and jobs/training

39. To what extent would you say that you have been influenced by your family and friends when thinking about your education, training or jobs (about your choices etc)? In what ways has this happened?

40. To what extent, would you say, they have encouraged you with your education or training development?

41. Is having a good education important to you? Why? What do you think a 'good education' is?

42. Would you say that anyone else has been influential in developing your attitudes to education and training? If so in what ways?

Topic guide for focus groups

Introduction

[Interviewer read out]

Thank you for coming along today. We are doing a piece of research for the Learning and Skills Council in Derbyshire looking at learning opportunities for lesbian, gay and bisexual people. The LSC is responsible for post 16 learning and training (except universities).

[Interviewer – things to mention at the start of the group]:

- We're tape recording this discussion, obtain informed consent
- No names are attached to any report, all anonymous
- My role as moderator is to guide the discussion
- Feel free to talk to each other
- We'll be done by(scheduled ending time)
- We're on a first name basis
- There are no wrong answers, only differing points of view
- You don't need to agree with others, but you must listen respectfully as others share their views
- Rules for turning off or silencing mobile phones and pagers (if applicable)
- We can buy them all one drink (non-alcoholic) to say thank you for attending [keep the receipts to claim this back]
- The report will be produced in December 2005 and will go to the LSC first of all. It will help them to create an action plan for tackling some of the issues we talk about today.
- Talk about the definition of LGB (we will not use the term 'LGB' in the focus groups but check with them before you start how they would like to be identified)

Please can you start by going round the group and introducing your self to everyone. Tell us something about yourself, such as where you live, what you do for a living what you are studying etc.

Experiences

Have any of you had any positive experiences while at school or college or work, of things that made studying or learning easier for you, bearing in mind that you were 'LGB' or different in some way?

What would help make life easier for LGB people having difficulties in school/college?

Interventions

Thinking about people at school / college / work / university..... what types of things do you think would be useful to help LGB people who are experiencing problems...

[Interviewer – go through each one in the list in turn]

- in schools
- in colleges
- in work based learning
- in universities

[Interviewer: If they cannot list any, prompt with this list of possible interventions]:

What about...

- counselling
- mentoring
- curriculum topic coverage of LGB issues
- teachers' attitudes
- handling verbal, mental and physical incidents and bullying
- awareness raising of LGB issues
- publicity to raise awareness of LGB issues
- a specific LGB officer / member of staff
- an 'out' member of staff

What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of offering each of these in schools / colleges / work places / universities ?

What types of information should be made available to LG B people in schools / colleges etc? Where should this come from, who should provide it?

Source of support

Who should offer support to young people in schools / colleges ?

[Interviewer if they cannot suggest any, prompt with]:

- teacher
- counsellor
- societies / groups / support groups
- nurse
- other suggestions?

Do you think any special training is required? If so, what?

What support should this person / organisation be offering?

[Interviewer: If they cannot list any, prompt with this list of possible interventions]:

What about...

- counselling
- mentoring
- advice and support
- listening
- curriculum topic coverage of LGB issues
- teachers' attitudes
- handling verbal, mental and physical incidents and bullying
- awareness raising of LGB issues
- publicity to raise awareness of LGB issues
- a specific LGB officer / member of staff
- an 'out' member of staff

Role models, parental support and mentoring

How important, or not, is it to have good role models?

How important, or not, is it to have parental support?

What support should parents be encouraged to provide?

How useful, or not, would it be to have mentoring in place?

Curriculum subjects

What subjects or areas of the curriculum do you think LGB issues could or should be incorporated into for young people?

At what age should LGB issues be addressed in curriculum in schools/colleges?

Good practice

Are you aware of any good examples of things being done or good practice examples to support people who are LGB in learning or training?

Section to ask teachers / trainee teachers only

Were equality and diversity issues covered in any aspect of your training?

What specific issues were covered?

Were LGB issues covered? What was covered specifically?

Did you feel comfortable dealing with LGB issues?

Was the coverage adequate to help you in your job?

Now you are teaching / working in the learning sector, have you experienced any students having difficulties relating to LGB issues?

What support or advice do you provide for students with issues relating to LGB?

What support or advice is available to students dealing with issues relating to LGB in your school / college ?

What support or advice is given to you on supporting students with issues relating to LGB?

What support or advice do you need to help you better support students with issues relating to LGB?

What support or training or advice do you think should be available to staff working across the learning and training sector?

At the end of the focus group

What do you think are the three most important issues we have covered today and why?

Does anyone have any questions before we finish?

Thank everyone for coming.

Close.

Annex Two: Sample breakdown

Sample profile

Below is a table which contains a full breakdown of the sample of people interviewed for this study.

Respondent code	Degree educated	Disabled	Age in years	Age bracket	Gender	BME	Town, city, rural	Rural Y/N	Self identification
Insert number which corresponds with list of names in other spreadsheet	Degree educated? Insert Y or N	Disabled? Insert Yes or No?	e.g. 24	e.g. 14-18 under 25 under 35 over 50	Male/ Female	E.g. Indian, Pakistani, Black Caribbean, Black African, Asian, etc.	Insert city, town, village or hamlet	Insert Y for yes and N for no	Gay/Bi-sexual/lesbian etc
A1	N	N	44	35-40	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
A10	N	N	30	Under 35	Male	Irish	LITTLEOVER	N	GAY
A11	N	N	57	OVER 50	Male	White British	OAKWOOD	N	GAY
A12	N	N	41	OVER 40	Male	White British	SPONDON	N	GAY
A13	N	N	33	Under 35	Male	White British	DERBY	N	GAY
A14	N	Yes	35	Under 35	Male	White British	DERBY	N	GAY
A15	N	N	31	Under 35	Male	White British	CHADDESDE	N	GAY
A16	N	N	32	Under 35	Male	White British	BORROWASH	N	BI-SEXUAL
A17	N	N	39	OVER 35	Male	White British	SPONDON	Y	GAY
A2	N	N	32	Under 35	Male	White British	LITTLEOVER	N	Gay
A3	N	N	30	Under 35	Male	White British	SPONDON	N	Gay
A4	N	N	41	Over 35	Male	White British	SPONDON	N	Gay
A5	N	N	36	Over 35	Male	White British	CHADDESDE	N	Gay
A6	N	N	45	Over 40	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
A7	N	N	36	Over 35	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
A8	N	N	57	Over 50	Male	White British	OAKWOOD	N	Gay
A9	N	N	27	Under 35	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
B1	n	N	28	Under 35	male	White British	Town	y	bisexual
B2	n	N	60	over 50	female	White British	City	N	bisexual

Respondent code	Degree educated	Disabled	Age in years	Age bracket	Gender	BME	Town, city, rural	Rural Y/N	Self identification
B3	Y	N	21	under 25	female	Black British	City	N	bisexual
B4	n	N	24	under 25	male	White British	City	N	Gay
B5	n	N	37		male	White British	city	N	Gay
B6(J)	n	N	25	under 35	male	White British	City	N	Gay
B6a(L)	n	N	24	under 25	male	White British	City	N	Gay
B7	n	N	20	under 25	female	White British	city	N	lesbian
B8	Y	N	24	under 25	female	White British	City	N	lesbian
B9	n	N	22	Under 25	male	White British	City	N	Gay
C1	N	N	28	Under 35	Male,	White and Black Caribbean	City	N	Gay
C2	N	N	18	14-18	Female	White British	City	N	Bisexual
C3	N	N	18	14-18	Male	White Irish	City	N	Gay
C4	N	N	19	Under 25	Male	White British	Town	Y	Gay
C5	Y	N	35	under 50	Male	White Irish	City	N	Gay
C6	N	N	18	14-18	Male	White British	Town	Y	Gay
D1	N	N	23	Under 25	Female	Indian	City	N	Bisexual
D10	Y	N	54	Over 50	Female	White British	Village	Y	Lesbian
D11	N	N	25	Under 25	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
D12	N	N	24	Under 25	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
D13	Y	N	29	Under 35	Female	White British	Town	N	Lesbian
D14	N	N	31	Under 35	Female	White British	City	N	Lesbian
D15	N	N	18	Under 25	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
D16	N	Yes	20	Under 25	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
D17	N	N	21	Under 25	Male	White British	Lived in Derby	N	Gay

Respondent code	Degree educated	Disabled	Age in years	Age bracket	Gender	BME	Town, city, rural	Rural Y/N	Self identification
							until recently, now in Manchester		
D18	N	Yes	33	Under 35	Female	Other White: Part Brit, Part Irish	City	N	A woman who loves women
D19	N	N	20	Under 25	Female	White British	City	N	A woman who loves women
D2	N	N	32	Under 35	Female	Mixed race	City	N	Lesbian
D20	Y	N	28	Under 35	Female	White British	Village	Y	Gay Woman
D3	N	N	22	Under 25	Male	Mixed race	City	N	Gay
D4	N	N	25	Under 25	Female	White British	City	N	Lesbian
D5	N	N	22	Under 25	Female	White British	City	N	Lesbian
D6	Y	N	27	Under 35	Female	White British	Town	N	Bisexual
D7	Y	N	25	Under 25	Female	White British	Town	N	Bisexual
D8	Y	N	23	Under 25	Female	White British	City	N	Bisexual
D9	N	N	20	Under 25	Female	White British	Town	N	Lesbian
E1	N	N	34	Under 35	Male	White British	Derby	N	Gay
E2	N	N	21	Under 25	Female	White British	Derby	N	Lesbian
E3	N	N	26	Under 35	Male	White British	Derby	N	Gay
E4	N	N	20	Under 25	Male	White British	Derby	N	Gay
E5	Y	N	36	Under 50	Male	White British	Derby	N	Gay
E6	Y	N	28	Under 35	Female	White British	Derby	N	Lesbian
E7	Y	N	24	Under 25	Female	White British	Derby	N	Lesbian
E8	Y	N	28	Under 35	Male	White British	Derby	Y	Gay
E9	N	N	30	Under 35	Male	White British	Derby	N	Gay

Respondent code	Degree educated	Disabled	Age in years	Age bracket	Gender	BME	Town, city, rural	Rural Y/N	Self identification
F1	Y	N	22	Under 25	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
F2	N	N	22	Under 25	Male	White British	City	N	Gay
F3	N	N	50	50+	Female	White British	Village	Y	Gay
F4	Y	N	39	Not given	Female	White British	Village	Y	Gay
F5	Y	N	23	Under 25	Female	Mixed White and Afro Caribbean	City	N	Bi-sexual
F6	Y	N	22	Under 25	Female	White British	Town	N	Gay
G1	N	N	22	Under 25	Male	White British	Ilkeston	N	Gay
G10	N	N	27	Under 35	Male	White British	Hilton	Y	Gay
G11	N	N	37	35-50	Male	White British	Derby	N	Gay
G12	N	N	29	Under 35	Male	White British	Derby	N	Gay
G13	N	N	36	35-50	Female	White British	Derby	N	Gay
G14	N	N	41	35-50	Female	White British	Derby	N	Lesbian
G2	N	N	29	Under 35	Female	White British	Alverston	Y	Lesbian
G3	N	N	32	Under 35	Female	White British	Chaddeston	N	Gay
G4	Y	N	38	35-50	Female	Pakistani	Burton	Y	Lesbian
G5	y	N	34	Under 35	Female	White British	Ashbourne	Y	Bi-sexual
G6	n	N	35	35- 50	Female	White British	Kilburn	Y	gay
G7	n	N	32	Under 35	Female	White British	Kilburn	Y	Lesbian
G8	N	N	37	35-50	Female	White British	Chaddeston	N	Lesbian
G9	N	N	50	over 50	Male	White British	Derby	N	Gay

Annex Three

Learning experiences of LGB people in Derbyshire

**The Gateway Centre, Grandstand Road, Derby, DE21 6DA
Wednesday 22nd March**

Agenda

1.00 Lunch will be available

1.30 Opening comments from the Chair

Louise Meadows Head of Equality and Diversity, Derby Learning and Skills Council

1.35 Keynote speech

Brammall Acting Executive Director, Learning and Skills Council, Derbyshire

1.50 Learning opportunities for LGB people in Derbyshire - Key findings and recommendations from the research

Carolyn Hay and Nicky Hall ECOTEC Research and Consulting

2.20 Questions

2.30 Break

3.00 The experience of being a community researcher

Satbir Moore, Community Researcher

3.15 Break out action planning sessions

4.00 Groups report back to main plenary

4.25 Closing comments from Chair

4.30 Close

Collecting Good Practice

A good practice board will be available though the afternoon to record your examples of good practice in the Learning and Skills sector. Please be prepared to bring examples of good practice or make a quick record of what you do on our boards – thanks!

Delegate list for dissemination event

Below is a list of confirmed delegates for the dissemination event on learning opportunities for lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Derbyshire.

Event date and timings: Time: 1.30pm on 22nd March 2006.

Confirmed delegates are listed below.

Table 1 Confirmed delegates

Name	Job title	Organisation
Carolyn Hay	Research Project Director	ECOTEC
Nicki Hall	Project Researcher	ECOTEC
Lisa Hancox	Project Assistant	ECOTEC
Peter Brammall	Acting Executive director	Derby LSC
Louise Meadows	Equality and Diversity Manager	Derby LSC
Melanie Alsop	ESF Project Manager	Derby LSC
Brenda Anderson	Equality and Diversity Manager	Derby College
Sue Axbey	European Project Manager	Learning & Skills Council Derbyshire
Barbara Birch	Director	Training Services 2000 Ltd
Tom Boereboom	ESF Contract Manager	LSC Derbyshire
Mark Bowyer	Trustee of DPS	
Sarah Insley	ESF Contract Manager	LSC Derbyshire
Alan Jeffery		Department for Education & Skills
Deborah Johnson	Researcher	LSC Lincolnshire
Linnia Khemdoudi	Deputy Principle (Teaching & Learning)	South East Derbyshire College
Becky Leam	Head of Students Services	South East Derbyshire College
Julie Marsden	ESF Contract Manager	LSC Derbyshire
Gerard McLister	Youth Officer	Derbyshire Youth Service
Phil Meadows	Data Analyst	LSC Derbyshire
Toni Montinaro	Service Co-ordinator	Derbyshire Friend

Name	Job title	Organisation
Satbir Moore	Community researcher	Community researcher
Lucy Morgan	Diversity Manager	EMDA
Becky Morris		Youth Forum
Jayne Muir	Programme Performance Manager	Government Office for the East Midlands
Rosie Mychajlow		Derby Skillbuild
Lorraine Otton	ESF Contract Manager	LSC Derbyshire
Susan Parker	Senior Manager Learning Policy & Development	LSC Leicestershire
Robert Phillips-Forsyth	Group leader	Reach Out
Bernadette Pietruszewska		Rathbone Training
Mark Piper	Business Development Manager	Access Training
Liz Reeve	Centre Manager	TBG
Juliet Sims	Community Researcher	
Pauline Stewart	Equality and Diversity Officer	LSC Nottingham
Alicia Vernon	ESF Project Manager	LSC Derbyshire
James Williams	European Manager	LSC Derbyshire

ECOTEC