

# LGBT+ INCLUSION TIMELINE

A journey of courage, activism and change – towards a more equal and inclusive society for all.



## KEY MOMENTS IN THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY IN THE UK

<b>BEFORE 1900</b> Criminalisation & Control 	<b>1533</b>   The <b>Buggery Act</b> under Henry VIII makes sex between men illegal, punishable by death. <b>1885</b>   The <b>Criminal Law Amendment Act</b> introduces “gross indecency”, used to prosecute gay men even without proof of sexual activity (famously used against <b>Oscar Wilde</b> ).
<b>EARLY 20TH CENTURY</b> Silence & Suppression 	<b>1921</b>   Attempt to criminalise lesbian relationships fails – not out of kindness; lawmakers feared it would “encourage” women by mentioning it.
<b>1930s–1950s</b> Criminalised Lives 	<b>1930s–1950s</b>   Being gay remains illegal; punishments include imprisonment and chemical castration. Government review begins to question whether criminalisation is justified – early cracks in the system.
<b>1960s</b> The First Legal Shift 	<b>1967</b>   <b>Sexual Offences Act</b> partially decriminalises sex between men in England and Wales (private, over 21, and with conditions). <b>1960s CULTURE NOTE</b> Public figures like <b>April Ashley</b> bring trans identities into public awareness.
<b>1970s</b> Activism Begins 	<b>1970</b>   The <b>Gay Liberation Front</b> is founded in London, pushing for visibility and rights.
<b>1980s</b> Stigma & Resistance 	<b>1980</b>   Scotland decriminalises homosexuality (13 years later than in England and Wales). <b>Early–Mid 1980s</b>   <b>HIV/AIDS</b> crisis fuels stigma but also activism and community organisation. <b>1988</b>   <b>Section 28 (Local Government Act 1988)</b> Prohibited local authorities from “promoting” homosexuality or teaching the “acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship”. It caused widespread self-censorship, forced the closure of LGBTQ+ support groups, and fuelled stigma.
<b>1990s</b> Attitudes Start Shifting 	<b>1992</b>   World Health Organization removes homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses. <b>1994</b>   Age of consent for gay men lowered (but still unequal). <b>1998</b>   Human Rights Act strengthens protections. <b>Late 1990s</b>   Cultural visibility increases; LGBT+ venues and communities grow more openly.
<b>2000s</b> Legal Equality Gains Pace 	<b>2000</b>   Ban on LGBT+ people serving in the military lifted. <b>2000</b>   Age of consent equalised. Section 28 was repealed earlier in Scotland in 2000. <b>2002</b>   Same-sex couples gain adoption rights. <b>2003</b>   Section 28 repealed in England and Wales. <b>2004</b>   Gender Recognition Act allows legal gender change. <b>2004</b>   Civil Partnership Act gives same-sex couples legal recognition.
<b>2010s</b> Full Legal Recognition 	<b>2010</b>   Equality Act protects against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. <b>2013</b>   Same-sex marriage legalised in England and Wales. <b>2017</b>   “Alan Turing law” pardons men convicted under historic anti-gay laws. <b>LGBT+ refugees</b> begin receiving protection in the UK. Increased global visibility – but tragedies like the Pulse nightclub shooting (2016 Orlando attack) remind us progress isn’t linear.
<b>2020s</b> Ongoing Change 	<b>2020</b>   Same-sex marriage expands globally, including Northern Ireland. <b>2021</b>   The UK census includes questions on gender identity and sexual orientation for the first time, meaning that data can be gathered on the numbers of LGBT people across the country. <b>2025</b>   UK Supreme Court rules that “sex” for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 means biological sex assigned at birth. This is seen as a regressive step by many – with fears that it will lead to discrimination and exclusion.

### THE BIG PICTURE



Proud of the past. Committed to the future.

