



## Game Changer: The Legacy of the Commonwealth Games 2014 for LGBT Young People in Scotland

In the summer of 2014, Scotland aims to 'host a successful, safe and secure XX Commonwealth Games that delivers a lasting legacy for the whole of Scotland and maximises the opportunities before, during and after the Games in 2014'.

LGBT Youth Scotland welcomes the opportunity to be involved in discussions about what a lasting legacy for LGBT young people in Scotland should look like and how this can be realised in a meaningful way.



*I would like the games to inspire people to take part in sport.  
(Consultation Response)*

### 1. BACKGROUND

With Glasgow set to host the Commonwealth Games in 2014, the time for challenging homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in sport has never been more important, the opportunity for encouraging lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) inclusion and participation never more relevant.

However, there is very limited research into LGBT adults' sports participation, and less still into LGBT young people's experiences of and attitudes towards sport and sports participation.<sup>i</sup> Of the available evidence, key findings suggest:

- 79% of respondents to the Equality Network's survey 'Out for Sport' felt that "there is a problem with **homophobia in sport**"; 66% felt that "there is a problem with **transphobia in sport**".<sup>ii</sup>
- 66% of LGBT people surveyed for 'Out for Sport' feel that **homophobia and transphobia are barriers to participation** in sport.<sup>iii</sup>
- Transgender people face additional barriers in relation to **communal and / or gender-specific changing rooms**; their **ability to 'pass'** as their gender identity; and **issues of body scarring and body image**.<sup>iv</sup>

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- Those who identify their sexual orientation as ‘other’ are **less likely to meet national physical activity recommendations** (29% compared to a national average of 38%).<sup>v</sup>

The Equality Network’s *Out for Sport* report observes that the fear of possible abuse might be a bigger barrier to participation in sport than actual abuse; such reluctance may be



*Sports clubs should be more LGBT-friendly – include those who are usually left out.*  
(Consultation Response)

attributed to LGBT people’s past experiences, which are generally associated with bullying in school:

*“The use of the word ‘gay’ to mean something that is negative is endemic within school sports environments, [and] often goes unchallenged by teachers or coaches”.*

The report goes on to note that:

*“LGBT young people remain a group with very particular needs. Present arrangements around club accreditation and the protection of vulnerable groups can leave teenage LGBT people in positions where it is difficult to access specific LGBT sporting opportunities.”*

## 2. OUR WORK SO FAR

LGBT Youth Scotland has been working closely with LEAP Sports Scotland to identify how we can input into the Commonwealth Games and use the momentum from Commonwealth 2014 to create a lasting legacy for LGBT young people. Nationally, we are representing the interests of young people on a number of external steering groups, including the LGBT Sports Coordinating Group and the Scottish Government’s 2014 LGBT Stakeholders Group.

More broadly, LGBT Youth Scotland takes the national lead on the planning and delivery of LGBT History Month. This annual event is an opportunity to celebrate LGBT lives and culture by exploring our own and others’ histories in an LGBT context. It is also an opportunity for learning, discussion and debate around LGBT equality.

In anticipation of LGBT History Month 2014, we will use the benefits and opportunities created by the Commonwealth Games to promote the theme of sport both within the LGBT community and to wider audiences. Again, we are working closely with a range of stakeholders to support this, including LEAP Sports Scotland, LGBT sports clubs, and South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture.

### 3. GAME CHANGERS – OVERVIEW OF THE CONSULTATION RESPONSES

#### Methodology

As part of our funded work with the Scottish Government Equality Unit, LGBT Youth Scotland consulted with more than 100 LGBT young people from across Scotland to find out their attitudes towards the Commonwealth Games and sport in general (see Appendix 1).

We wanted to know how LGBT Youth Scotland and others can use the momentum from the Games to create a lasting legacy for LGBT young people by:

- empowering and encouraging young people in sport
- challenging homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in sport, and
- overcoming some of the sports participation barriers LGBT young people experience.

We asked LGBT young people:

- what they think about the Commonwealth Games
- what they would like the legacy of the Commonwealth Games to be for them, and
- how LGBT young people might be encouraged to take part in sport more generally.

Their responses can be grouped into four main areas.

#### 1. Access to the Commonwealth Games

- Young people identified volunteering with Commonwealth 2014 as a valuable opportunity.
- However, they raised concerns about LGBT safety and also the extent to which staff and volunteers at the Games would have an understanding and awareness of LGBT people.

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*I would like LGBT people to be encouraged and promoted at the Commonwealth Games.*

#### 2. Opportunities to engage with other Commonwealth countries

- Young people see the Games as a valuable opportunity to engage with LGBT young people in other Commonwealth countries.
- They also see the Games as an opportunity to highlight the human rights agenda for LGBT people in other Commonwealth countries, such as Uganda and Nigeria, and to raise the human rights record of countries outside the Commonwealth, such as Russia and Greece.

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*I would like to help put a stop to the hate towards LGBT people in other countries.*

*(Consultation Response)*

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### 3. LGBT visibility

- Young people want LGBT people to be visible within the Commonwealth Games and the cultural programme.
- Young people highlighted the lack of LGBT sporting role models. They felt that the Commonwealth Games provided a valuable opportunity for the sporting achievements of 'out' LGBT competitors to be acknowledged, publicised and celebrated.

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*I would like greater visibility of LGBT sportspeople to provide a positive role models for LGBT youth.*

*(Consultation Response)*

### 4. Access to sport

- Being LGB or T and participating in sport is not incompatible: straight and LGBT athletes alike should be encouraged to act as role models, creating positive associations with sport and encouraging more LGBT young people to take part.
- Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in sport – whether real or perceived – are a major barrier to participation. Ways to identify and challenge this should be explored and acted upon.
- Some young people said experience of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in PE at school made them less likely to participate in sport. Again, ways to identify and challenge this should be explored and acted upon.
- The consultation also highlighted additional practical barriers for transgender young people, including gendered sports teams and changing rooms.

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*I would like to feel there is less homophobia in sports.*

*(Consultation Response)*

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## 4. GAME CHANGERS – OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

# 1

### Access to the Commonwealth Games

- The Commonwealth Games is promoted as open and inclusive, an event that anybody can attend without fear of prejudice or discrimination.
- LGBT young people are actively encouraged to attend and participate in the Games and the associated wider cultural programme of events and activities, particularly:
  - the opening and closing ceremonies
  - the Queen's Baton Relay, and
  - the Culture 2014 programme.

# 2

### Opportunities to engage with other Commonwealth countries

- While the Commonwealth Games is a time for focussing on and celebrating diversity it also provides an opportunity for highlighting the human rights record of other Commonwealth countries.
- Links should be made with LGBT young people in other Commonwealth countries.

# 3

### LGBT visibility

- Initiatives such as Pride House and an LGBT reception for young people should be used to promote LGBT engagement and inclusion.
- Opportunities for supporting 'out' LGBT athletes participating in the Games to connect with LGBT young people should be explored and exploited.

# 4

### Access to sport

- Physical education teachers and sports coaches are trained to challenge homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in sport.
- Inclusive policies across sports governing bodies must be harmonised and consistent to ensure that LGBT young people are not disadvantaged, discriminated against or excluded as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

## Appendix 1 – Consultation events

Consultation took place at two national events:

### 1. The Transgender Education Awareness (T.E.A.) Party



The T.E.A Party was a consultation event on the LGBT National Youth Council's Time for T.E.A campaign. The event was attended by 42 young people from LGBT youth groups from across the West of Scotland, aged between 14 and 26. Groups represented at the event were:

Allsorts, Dundee;

Beyond Gender, Edinburgh;

Vada, Edinburgh;

CLD, East Ayrshire;

Rainbow Sisters, Glasgow;

Trans\* Youth Glasgow, Glasgow;

Open Ayrshire, North Ayrshire;

RYV, Renfrewshire; and

Skittlz, South Lanarkshire.

Young people who attended the event were issued a survey to gather their feelings about the Commonwealth Games and what they might be able to achieve for LGBT young people.

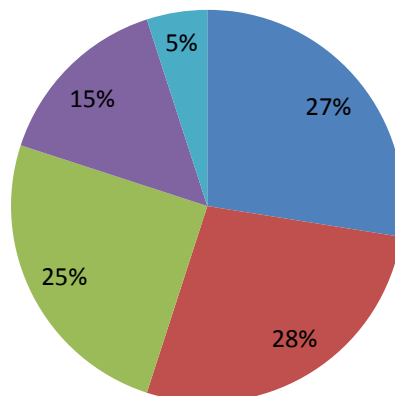
40 young people completed the survey.

### What do you think about the Commonwealth Games?



## How do you feel about the Commonwealth Games coming to Scotland?

- Not interested/boring (11)
- Hmm, I'm not sure (11)
- I'm quite looking forward to it (10)
- I'm excited (6)
- What's the Commonwealth Games? (2)



## What should the Commonwealth Games achieve for LGBT young people?

Young people's key priorities were:

- Volunteer opportunities for LGBT young people as part of the Commonwealth Games (17)
- LGBT young people feel more included in mainstream sports/clubs/groups (14)
- Improve rights for LGBT young people in Commonwealth countries (12)
- Specific trans work to ensure young trans people are supported to be more included in PE in schools (12)



## 2. The Gathering Games



The Gathering Games were held at the beginning of LGBT Youth Scotland's National Gathering in August 2013.

The Gathering Games were an opportunity to engage LGBT young people in a discussion about the Commonwealth Games and sport in general in a fun, informal way.

Based on the number of consultation responses, approximately 50 young people took part.




### What would you like the Commonwealth Games to achieve for LGBT young people?

Key priorities for LGBT young people include:

- Access to the Games
- Increased participation in sport
- Awareness and visibility
- Role models
- Engaging with other countries in the Commonwealth





Written responses included:

‘I would like... more chances for LGBT youth to get involved’

‘I would like... recognition that not all [LGBT people] avoid sports and not all are the stereotypes you see on TV’

‘I would like... to lessen stereotypes around LGBT and sport, e.g. but gay men don’t like sport, girls who play football are all lesbians’

‘I would like... LGBT people to take part’

‘I would like the games to... inspire people to take part in sport’

‘I would like... LGBT people to be encouraged and promoted at the Commonwealth Games’

‘I would like... to help put a stop to the hate towards LGBT people in other countries’

‘I would like... greater visibility of LGBT sportspeople to provide positive role models for LGBT youth’

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‘I would like... role models to stand up and promote LGBT acceptance’

### **What do you think might encourage LGBT young people to get involved in sports?**

Key priorities for LGBT young people include:

- ‘Out’ LGBT athletes
- Challenging homophobia in sport
- LGBT awareness

Written responses included:

‘Sports clubs should be... more LGBT-friendly – include those who are usually left out – we are all equal!’

‘Sports clubs should... make us feel included and make us feel more comfortable’

‘I would like... more sports people to come out’

‘I would like... more LGBT support in the sport world’

‘I would like... more LGBT role models in sport’

### **What or who encourages/discourages you from taking part in sport or exercise?**

Identified barriers include:

- Homophobia
- Bullying at school
- 'Access to facilities for transgender people'

Written responses included:

'Being overweight... discourages me from taking part in sport'

'Judgemental people... discourage me from taking part in sport'

'I would like... to feel there is less homophobia in sports'

Things which encouraged LGBT young people to take part in sport included:

- Charity events
- Taking part with friends
- LGBT role models

### **3. Renfrewshire Focus Group**

LGBT Youth Scotland is currently working with a group of young people from Renfrewshire to build capacity, establish an LGBT youth group and improve life for LGBT young people in the area.

The focus group helped to analyse the data LGBT Youth Scotland had collected throughout the consultation, and to shape the recommendations we made.

The group consisted of 9 LGBT young people: 7 male, 2 female.

Their responses to the priority areas included:

#### **Access to the Commonwealth Games**

- 'Volunteers should have LGBT training – especially for toilets'
- 'LGBT Youth Scotland could hold events to encourage us to actually do sports without homophobia'
- 'LGBT Youth Scotland could take us to the Commonwealth Games!'

#### **Opportunities to engage with other Commonwealth countries**

- 'We could do a workshop on LGBT rights in other Commonwealth countries'
- 'We could be twinned with another LGBT group from somewhere in the Commonwealth'

#### **LGBT visibility**

- 'LGBT banners at the opening ceremony'
- 'Include Scottish LGBT people in the opening ceremony'

- 'Have an LGBT stall at the Commonwealth village'
- 'Create a leaflet about LGBT rights in Scotland'
- 'Advertise the different services available for LGBT people'
- 'Have 'out' LGBT athletes deliver workshops at LGBT Youth'

### Access to sport

- 'Training for PE and support staff in schools'
- 'Re-educate PE teachers'
- 'Break down gender barriers in sports – i.e. football for boys, netball for girls'
- 'Have LGBT ambassadors in schools for sports'
- 'Have LGBT sports days at local sports centres'

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<sup>i</sup> Scottish Government (2013) Scottish Government equality outcomes: lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) evidence review, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00420922.pdf> Accessed 19/10/2013

<sup>ii</sup> Equality Network (2012) Out for sport <http://outforsport.org.uk/> Accessed 19/10/2013

<sup>iii</sup> Equality Network (2012) Out for sport <http://outforsport.org.uk/> Accessed 19/10/2013

<sup>iv</sup> Equality Network (2012) Out for sport <http://outforsport.org.uk/> Accessed 19/10/2013

<sup>v</sup> Scottish Government (2012) 'Topic report: equality groups', in Scottish Health Survey, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/10/8988/downloads> Accessed 19/10/2013