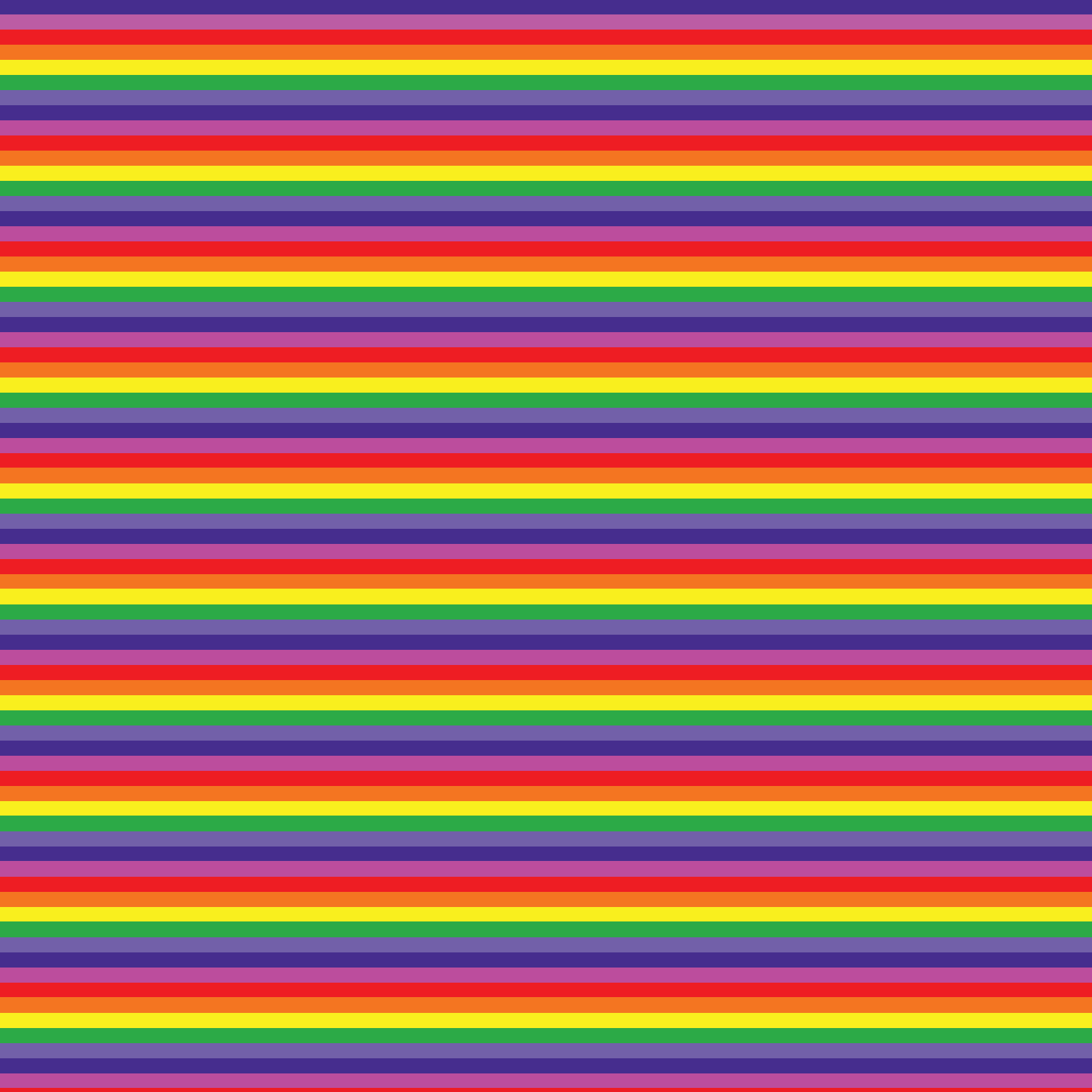# ▼sportallies

Homophobia, Gender and Sporting Culture

A report by
Adam Lowe MSc and Professor Brendon Gough

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LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

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Sport Allies is proud to have commissioned this report, to create both an authoritative basis for the future work of the organisation, and a document that can in its own right help to achieve our goals.

▼*Foreword*
By Angus Malcolm - Founder and Chair of Sport Allies

Sport Allies is a registered charity with a mission to promote sport - especially team sport - as an inclusive and supportive route to personal growth for everyone. It also has a wider brief to use sport as a mechanism for promoting greater inclusion generally, with a specific focus on addressing bias towards non-binary genders and non-heteronormative sexuality. Our vision is a world where sport leads the way in promoting diversity.

On behalf of everyone involved in Sport Allies, including the tens of thousands of supporters around the world who have contributed to its foundation, I would like to thank the team at Leeds Beckett University – particularly Adam Lowe and Professor Brendan Gough – for the enthusiasm, dedication and collaborative spirit which they have brought to producing a report that not only offers a detailed insight into the underlying causes of homophobia in sport but also sets out a series of recommendations and solutions that we can all help to realize.

Sport Allies is proud to have commissioned this report. We are at a relatively early stage in our development, and our aim in funding and contributing to this study was to create both an authoritative basis for the future work of the organisation, and a document that could in its own right help to achieve our goals. We are confident that this report will achieve both of those objectives.

I would like to take this opportunity to share a brief history of how Sport Allies came into being, and why its work matters so much to all of us involved.

In 2009, I began working with the men's rowing team at Warwick University to create a fundraising calendar that would help them to pay for much-needed boat repairs. Little did we know at the time that we were laying the foundations for a gay/straight alliance that would become known around the world and would raise hundreds of thousands of pounds for good causes, including funding the establishment of Sport Allies.

I was apprehensive on our very first calendar shoot in 2009. As a young boy, I had never conformed to prescribed masculine ideals and was duly harassed throughout my time at school and even university by the "sports" crowd. So I did not at first know what to make of the group of boisterous and privileged varsity athletes I would meet that day. And to be fair, I don't think the rowers had encountered an LGBT activist before!

It could all have gone horribly wrong, and there were moments on that first shoot when I thought it might. But I was mistaken. What we began that day has had a powerful and I believe wholly positive effect on the lives of those immediately involved, myself included, and has delivered a message of hope and solidarity to many people around the world. It has also delivered an object lesson in the value and importance of diversity within all walks of life.

The pivotal moment came early on. After a fairly unremarkable first year's sales to friends and family of the rowers, I suggested that it might be worth looking a little further afield for support. The boys could not believe that anyone else would be interested in a calendar with a bunch of unknown students, but I was pretty confident they were wrong. We promoted our second calendar on a few LGBT blogs and forums, and word spread. The calendar quickly went from selling a few hundred copies on campus to developing an international fan base in the gay community. What impressed me as much as the support of the LGBT community was how swiftly and publicly the boys embraced it.

"Many also felt Warwick Rowers' work had had a 'healing' effect"

The rowing team soon began to receive expressions of gratitude from gay men, predominantly in the English-speaking countries of North America and the British Commonwealth, for their candour in embracing their gay fans. They saw it as a message of solidarity in the fight against homophobia, and it was particularly significant for these correspondents that the men delivering the message were mainly 'straight jocks' – a group from whom many, like me, had experienced homophobic abuse in their youth.

All of us working on the project were incredibly moved by these very personal messages and the result was that we decided to dedicate the calendar to challenging homophobia. It was a decision that would transform the calendar, and cement our partnership as a true gay/straight alliance.

Many of the correspondents cited their experiences of systematic abuse, both from teachers and other students, during mandatory sport at school. Conversely, many also felt that the Warwick Rowers' work had had a 'healing' effect, offering a counter-balance to their experiences at school. We therefore decided to focus our attention on tackling homophobia in school sport, with a secondary ambition of supporting people who had had negative experiences.

Within this report, one of the rowers talks about what it has meant to him and his teammates to become allies of the LGBT community, and I would like to share my experience of working with these athletes at first hand as a gay man.

Our basic instinct is to distrust anything strange or different. When learned prejudices are added to this instinct, it easily turns into the tribalism so prevalent in our society, whether based on ethnicity, sexuality, gender, politics, lifestyle or belief.

I'm as guilty of this as anyone. Until I got to know the rowers, my perception of sportsmen was almost entirely negative – I saw them as a tribe united by characteristics that included arrogance, machismo and insensitivity. This was, I suppose, my response to being branded a "sissy" by the sport boys at school, and it meant that for most of my life I felt nothing but contempt for anyone involved in sport, and for sport itself.

It took the rowers to show me how wrong I was. Working with these charismatic, passionate, sensitive and courageous young men over the last seven years has enabled me to see beyond the cliché of the "jock". I have been able to recognise the enormous benefits of participation in team sport, the depth of the bonds that are formed between team-mates, the way that they learn to work together and the support they are able to give each other as a result. This is not a culture to be dismissed – rather, I believe that participation in team sport is an opportunity for personal growth that needs to be promoted more widely, and that it is only sport's role in perpetuating patriarchal values that must change.

This cultural shift will benefit those who currently feel excluded, as well as helping to make sport a place where young people can learn how to work and play together in an environment that promotes inclusion and better reflects the wider world we live in.

Not long before I began working with the rowers, I made a film for the UK's National Health Service about the important role of diversity in creating effective teams and organisations. It is an important principle, but one that still gets ignored too frequently. The Warwick Rowers project is just one example of what can be achieved when people from two apparently incongruent communities decide to work in tandem.

The power of diversity is the greatest of many lessons that I have drawn from the experience of the Warwick Rowers project, and it is the foundation stone of the work of Sport Allies. For more information on how you can support this work, please visit sportallies.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Angus Malcolm - Chair, Sport Allies

The persistence of homophobia and heterosexism must be addressed. Sport holds a prestigious position within UK and Western society, influencing much of our social and national culture. Therefore addressing homophobia in sport could be a key way of fostering a more inclusive, egalitarian society.

▼Executive Summary

Key Findings:

Sport - A microcosm of the problem:

• Homophobia or the acceptance of heterosexism within society has a persistent traumatic impact on LGBT people, profoundly affecting their ability and confidence to navigate a world in which messaging and social "norms" tell them that to be LGBT is to be abnormal, deviant and different in a profoundly negative way.

• For many people in Western society, and especially those who identify as LGBT, the sporting world is a hostile and exclusive environment. Team sports, enshrined as they are in the school/student experience, lie at the heart of the problem. From the ubiquitous threat of violence, to the routine use of homophobic language, the perceived "weakness" of being anything less than the traditional masculine ideal is actively and aggressively policed and excluded.

• In the report we connect homophobia and heterosexism to 'hegemonic masculinity' - conventional gendered values, practices and ways of relating which prioritise toughness, competitiveness and success within a heterosexual matrix. This configuration produces a double standard whereby men who do not excel at sport are often deemed unmasculine (or 'gay') while women may be viewed as unfeminine (or 'lesbian') if they are successful.

Sport - A solution to the problem:

• Sport, especially team sport, is crucial to the physical and mental health of society as a whole as well as to the individual participant. People who participate in sport during secondary and higher education are more likely to experience improved physical and mental health throughout their lives. The projected savings to the UK's National Health Service (NHS) of engaging in sport is over £900million in reduced use of NHS resources: as an estimated 5-7% of the UK's population is LGBT, it is vital to ensure sport is inclusive and life enhancing for this significant minority.

• Sport is both a means of social unification and also a unique vehicle for movement towards a more genuinely inclusive and non-discriminatory society. Participation in sport at any level is hugely beneficial to the individual and to communities, but even non-participants will benefit from changed social attitudes engendered by a more welcoming and diverse sporting culture.

• Encouragingly, governments and sporting authorities are increasingly funding research and development to tackle homophobia in sports and encourage wider public participation; this report outlines some of the key initiatives from around the world and highlights positive approaches to challenging destructive hegemonic behaviour and encouraging all-inclusive attitudes, language and behaviour within sports.

Conclusion - The importance of Sport Allies:

• The pivotal role of allies within the sporting world is highlighted. The most effective way to minimise overtly hegemonic masculine behaviour, to turn around the un-thinking acceptance of out-dated and factually incorrect assumptions about gender and sexual "norms", is through alliance and allies.

• The report identifies best practice for establishing inclusive, welcoming sporting environments, especially for team sports. Whilst team sports can demonstrate the ugliest face of sport, they are also the ground where the most opportunity for changing attitudes and behaviour is available.

• Team sports provide valuable experience for young people - experience which can benefit LGBT people in particular. As Tristan, a member of the Warwick Rowers Club and a Straight Ally explains in the report:

"There's a reason employers highly regard participation in team sports when recruiting university graduates. Team sport is a platform to develop and demonstrate skills in commitment, time management, teamwork and resilience. Sporty LGBT people attending university are far less likely to engage in team sport than their heterosexual counterparts, which not only harms LGBT people but also heterosexual people who may struggle to build healthy relationships with members of the LGBT community – something required in modern society."

• The report endorses the aim of Sport Allies to bring greater inclusion and tolerance to the culture of sport and, by extension, wider society. Everyone has a role to play as an ally; whether as a member of a team who challenges "locker room banter" which denigrates LGBT people, or the captain who demonstrates fairness when picking a team, a coach who encourages rather than humiliates, or even a spectator or parent who appreciates watching their team or their child do their best and, most of all, enjoy themselves no matter how they identify.

Sport Allies' mission is to promote sport as a route to personal growth for everyone; a vehicle of social change, leading the way in the promotion and celebration of diversity.

▼ 1. *Introduction*

Sport Allies emerged as a result of the tremendously positive response of the gay community to the work of Angus Malcolm and his world popular Warwick Rowers calendar, in which a team of mostly heterosexual competitive rowers are shown having fun together while naked, promoted alongside a message of acceptance and appreciation towards their gay fans and LGBT people in general. This report was commissioned by Sport Allies in order to inform both the development of their strategic objectives in challenging homophobia in sport and the formulation of their content - and in so doing demonstrate their investment in learning about and understanding the true nature of the problems they intend to tackle. The thrust of their work is to promote sport as a route to personal growth for everyone; a vehicle of social change, leading the way in the promotion and celebration of diversity. Towards this end, they recognise that what is needed isn't only support for LGBT people, but to recruit straight allies to bridge the gap and lead from the front.

The global conversation regarding homophobia is complex to say the least. Considering the progress made in Europe, the US and many other countries, including the advent of same sex marriage and the ability for same sex couples to adopt children, there has also been a substantial 'pushback' within certain other countries where new laws and legislation have been introduced, designed to stem such progress (Beyrer, 2014). Sport Allies rightly identifies sport as the site of considerable tension, where homophobia is observable in a great number of forms, while also demonstrating a great deal of potential for stimulating acceptance and inclusion of LGBT identities.

The popular press is awash with high profile examples where homophobia is played out and resisted. Indeed, while this report was in progress the 2016 Olympics took place in Rio, during which an ongoing debate was reignited, centred around the women's 800m gold medallist, Caster Semenya, a South African female runner with hyperandrogenism, a condition which means her testosterone levels are higher than those found in the average female. Much of the conversation following her win was concerned with the injustice felt by her competitors and how legitimate her claim to competing in a 'women's event' actually was. The more liberal news outlets argued that the problem wasn't "…that she's intersex – it's that her femininity doesn't look how we want it to."

(The independent, http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/caster-semenya-rio-2016-gold-800m-intersex-gender-femininity-doesnt-look-the-way-we-want-a7203506.html).

The persistence of homophobic discourses such as this in contemporary Western culture, along with developments such as the new anti-homosexuality laws mentioned earlier, are a reminder that without understanding and continual efforts to educate and make visible non-traditional identities, the positive social gains of recent years could stagnate or worse, be lost entirely. Simultaneously, the potential for positive change has never been more evident. Cases of apparent progress,

such as the wide acceptance and celebration of British Olympic medallist diver Tom Daley and Sports presenter Clare Balding who won the Bafta for 2013's 'Most Important Personal Contribution on Screen in Factual Television', point to a change in the nature of sporting culture. The British government have also recently launched an inquiry into the persistence of homophobia in sport, pointing towards renewed commitments to improve inclusivity in the institution of sport.

Organisations like Sport Allies are essential to maintaining and improving the open dialogue which has brought society so far forward in recent decades. However, it is their ambition to cultivate new channels for development through nurturing and supporting straight allies within sport that presents genuine potential for real, lasting progress. In order to provide a robust academic basis to inform Sport Allies' efforts, this report will review the existing research on the continuing issue of homophobia and its intersections with sport and sporting culture.

The report will present a snapshot of homophobia in contemporary Western society, how it operates and to what end, in order to highlight where change is needed and how this could be possible.

Acts of homophobia are seen to be perpetrated by individuals and experienced by individuals, which obscures the systemic nature of homophobia within Western society.

▼ 2. *Homophobia*

2.1. *The Term 'Homophobia'*

The term 'homophobia' itself can be a contentious one. It was first used in 1972 referring to "the irrational condemnation of homosexual individuals which results in violence, deprivation, and separation" (Weinberg, 1972, In Dreyer, 2007, p.5). However, as understandings of the nature of this type of prejudice have progressed away from the psychological towards the social, so too has the terminology. To this end, some would argue that the term 'heterosexism' more accurately reflects how homosexual stigma is socially constructed and practiced in order to produce inequalities in status, privileging some while oppressing others (Herek, 2004; Dreyer, 2007).

In addition, the term 'homophobia' has become almost entirely synonymous with practices including derogatory remarks, harassment, bullying and violence. This is problematic because acts of homophobia are seen to be perpetrated by individuals and experienced by individuals, which obscures the systemic nature of homophobia within Western society and absolves society from the collective responsibility of working against it. Furthermore, it can be difficult for LGBT individuals to recognise or accurately frame instances of systemic, institutionalised prejudice and inequality within the limitations of the language currently available (Einarsdóttir, Hoel & Lewis 2015). However, as Dreyer (2007) points out, the term has become so embedded in its usage that it would be detrimental to efforts towards equality and inclusivity to attempt to supplant it with something more linguistically accurate; nonetheless, it is important that these issues with the terminology are acknowledged from the outset.

Blumenfeld (1992) posits four levels upon which homophobia operates:
1. Personal homophobia – personal prejudice towards gay people presenting as pity, disgust or hatred.
2. Interpersonal homophobia – between two or more people, expressed through name calling, physical assault and discrimination. Homophobic bullying is an example.
3. Institutional homophobia - systemic discrimination and inequality found in the structuring and practices of professional, clerical or governmental institutions.
4. Cultural homophobia – Could alternatively be termed 'heterosexism'. It serves to erase LGBT minorities and deny the legitimacy of their experiences in order to suppress them.

(Based on Blumenfeld, 1992, pp.3-8)

2.2 *Homophobia: Progress and Persistence*

In 2015 the Equality and Human Rights Commission produced a report titled Is Britain Fairer? The State of Equality and Human Rights 2015, intended to uphold the laws that safeguard all UK citizen's rights to fairness, dignity and respect. Amongst the broader topics discussed in the document, many related to the current conditions experienced by the UK

LGBT community. Encouragingly, citing the British Social Attitudes Survey (NatCen, 2013), the report claimed that the percentage of people who agreed with the statement 'same-sex relations are always wrong' dropped from 64% in 1987 to 22% in 2012.

In addition, the report also noted that the number of openly LGB MPs elected to the UK Parliament in 2015 was the highest number ever - 32 or roughly 5% (Reynolds, 2015). Additionally, under the Equality Act (2010), people who identify as either LGB or T in the UK are now protected by the law from discrimination or abuse. 2004 saw the creation of the Civil Partnership Act, followed by the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act (2013) (although it should be noted that same-sex marriage is by no means 'equal' marriage - www.newstatesman.com/uk-politics/2013/07/why-our-new-same-sex-marriage-not-yet-equal-marriage). Positive progress towards a more inclusive society is undoubtedly being made.

These positive steps notwithstanding, a 2012 survey of LGBT people across the EU found that:

…half of respondents (47%) in Britain had felt personally discriminated against or harassed because of their sexual orientation in the 12 months prior to the survey…Two-thirds of transgender people (65%) in the British sample also reported discrimination or harassment, the highest proportion out of all the countries included in the survey...

(Is Britain Fairer, 2015, p.89).

Other studies have demonstrated similarities in patterns of homophobic violence in Europe, the Americas and Australia (see Plummer, 2001). LGB people are also disproportionately affected by domestic violence and hate crimes, while also being the least inclined group to report incidents to the police (Is Britain Fairer, 2015). Transgender people were found to be particularly at risk:

… 73% of respondents had experienced harassment in public spaces (including comments, threatening behaviour, physical abuse, verbal abuse or sexual abuse) with 10% having been victims of threatening behaviour in public spaces…

(Is Britain Fairer, 2015, p.70).

In the workplace, LGBT employees also continue to have problematic experiences, with 10% of gay men, 9% of lesbians and 6% of bisexuals surveyed in one study reporting instances of homophobic bullying or harassment at work (Hoel, Lewis, Einarsdóttir & Notelates, 2012). Furthermore, a survey of 1000+ LGBT people commissioned by Pride in London (2016) reported the following figures:

"…74% still felt the need to lie about their sexuality/gender, 77% of LGBT+ respondents felt uncomfortable 'being their true self' in public; 75% of LGBT+ respondents were out to all their friends, but only 50% were out to all their colleagues; 59% of LGBT+ respondents had felt threatened by other people's attitudes and behaviours towards them, compared with

16% of the wider population; and while only 5% of people think twice about holding a partner's hand in public, 30% of LGBT+ respondents were uncomfortable with this, rising to 41% of gay men…"

(Pride in London, et al., 2016; Summary of findings sourced from:
http://prideinlondon.org/British-LGBT-people-still-feel-the-need-to-lie-about-their-sexuality-research-reveals).

2.3 *Homophobia in Education*

Schools are clearly central to the development of young people's identities, peer relationships and engagement with the wider world. It is particularly concerning then that these environments which are intended to nurture can be detrimental and even damaging, particularly for young LGBT students. The Is Britain Fairer, 2015 report had the following to say about the severity of the situation:

…Surveys by organisations (for example, Ditch the Label (2015) and Stonewall (Guasp, 2012; Jones and Guasp, 2014)) and longitudinal studies (for example, the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (Baker et al., 2014)) indicated that LGBT people were among those most likely to experience bullying in school … Stonewall Scotland (2014) survey results showed that close to nine in ten secondary school teachers said that pupils at their school were bullied, harassed or called names for being (or being suspected of being) LGB … The survey data on Scottish pupils indicated that just over half of LGB young people experienced bullying in school (Stonewall Scotland, 2012).

(Is Britain Fairer, 2015, p.30)

The Stonewall Teacher's Report (Guasp, Ellison & Satara, 2014) highlighted the most common types of homophobic bullying:

Blumenfeld (1992) posits four levels upon which homophobia operates:
• 'Verbal Abuse' (reported by 35% of secondary school teachers)
• 'Malicious Gossip' (reported by 32% of secondary school teachers)
• Cyberbullying (reported by 21% of secondary school teachers)
• Being Ignored or Isolated (reported by 18% of secondary school teachers)
• Being Subjected to Intimidating Looks (reported by 14% of secondary school teachers).

It is interesting to note here that the use of homophobic language does differ between the sexes. Poteat and Rivers (2010) reported that:

For both boys and girls, the use of homophobic language is significantly associated with bullying behaviour across several roles. For girls, but not for boys, we also found that less involvement during bullying episodes was associated with less frequent use of homophobic language.

(Poteat & Rivers, 2010, p.170).

The Is Britain Fairer report (2015) stated that "…bullying can act as an impediment to accessing education and have negative effects on the private life of the victim" (p.30). The report goes on to cite the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2008) which "expressed concern that bullying was a widespread problem in the UK and could hinder children's attendance at school and their potential for successful learning" (p.30).

The Human Rights Campaign's (2012) study Growing Up LGBT in America asked school-age students what their main concerns in life were. For heterosexual students, the 'Big 3' areas were exam grades, finances and career. In contrast, LGBT students worried about non-acceptance by their family (26%), bullying (21%) and fear of being out/open (18%) (The Human Rights Campaign, 2012).

Peer victimisation and peer rejection impact negatively on self-esteem and self-evaluation. Even the perception of being rejected by one's peers can have deleterious effects on emotional, behavioural and academic performance and it is this perception that many young LGBT people live with day to day, whether they are open about their identities or not. This combination of perceived rejection coupled with lower self-esteem and lower self-evaluation is what some may term 'internalised homophobia' (Dreyer, 2007), an issue which will be discussed in more detail later in the report.

In Stonewall's The Teacher's Report (Guasp, Ellison & Satara, 2014), secondary school male pupils displaying 'unmasculine' attributes or being associated with others perceived to be LGBT could be subjected to homophobia. A remarkable finding of this report demonstrated that 53% of secondary school teachers observed that pupils suspected of being lesbian, gay or bi experienced homophobic bullying and 45% reported the bullying of boys 'who act like girls' (Guasp, Ellison & Satara, 2014), whereas only 30% had observed the bullying of openly lesbian, gay or bi pupils. This supports a commonly held theory that the actual sexuality of those bullied is in reality less of an issue than the pupil's expression of gender. This seems to be confirmed by some of the study's other findings, with boys who demonstrate other traditionally 'unmasculine' qualities such as not liking sports (reported by 22% of secondary school teachers) or performing well academically (reported by 18% of secondary school teachers), respectively receiving more bullying than pupils who were either known to have LGBT friends or family (10%) or pupils with LGBT parents or carers (9%) (Guasp, Ellison & Satara, 2014).

Figures like these highlight why homophobia persists - the issue is not (primarily) one of sexuality and is not solely the concern of the LGBT community. Homophobia is chiefly an issue of gender and the ways in which masculinity and femininity are socially constructed and enforced. A common misconception is that homophobia is only experienced by LGBT people; whereas in actuality, homophobia can be experienced by anyone, even straight people, if their gender expression sufficiently diverges from established gender norms (Connell, 2005; New, 2001). Indeed, several authors highlight that homophobia is central to hetero-masculinity (e.g. Kimmel, 2012) and for this reason we now focus on understanding this link between masculinity and homophobia.

Marginalisation is the ultimate consequence of the gender policing which everyone experiences. If an individual cannot or will not acquiesce to the gendered expectations placed upon them, they may well be censured by society.

▼ 3. *Understanding Homophobia*

3.1. *Hegemonic Masculinity*

As noted above, homophobia has not so much to do with sexual attraction or orientation; rather, sexual orientation is a divisive factor in relation to gender norms. In Western culture, there exists a hierarchy of gender norms which permeates all of our interactions. Since the mid 1990's there has been a prominent theory on this topic known as Hegemonic Masculinity (Connell, 1995; 2005). Hegemonic Masculinity describes a framework of differing configurations of masculinity dominated by a range of traditional norms which work to privilege certain groups of men (typically white, middle-class, heterosexual - although all men are subject to these conventional gendered pressures, expectations and constraints), suppress other men (e.g. gay men, minority ethnic men) and oppress women.

In this hierarchy, most men find themselves positioned as either subordinate to or marginalised by the hegemonic ideal. Whether or not a person occupies a subordinate or marginalised position is determined by how closely their attributes and behaviours map onto masculinity ideals. Aligning with valued masculinity ideals is easier for those men with access to relevant resources, opportunities and networks. Nonetheless, the precise form assumed by masculinity ideals will vary by time and place so that even the most outwardly privileged men will not measure up in particular communities and situations (De Visser & McDonnell, 2013; Gough, 2013).

To describe this in simpler terms, another concept, Masculine Capital (De Visser, Smith & McDonnell, 2009; De Visser & McDonnell, 2013), can be used to illustrate the mechanics of hegemonic masculinity. Briefly, men negotiate their masculine shortcomings in one area by compensating for them in others. In everyday discourse, this concept is commonly referred to as 'Man Points' (De Visser & McDonnell, 2013), describing a transactional system whereby individuals increase or decrease their masculinity 'score' by being awarded points for 'masculine' behaviours or penalised for 'feminine' behaviours (De Visser & McDonnell, 2013). For example, eating meat is widely associated with masculinity, so vegetarianism is often considered feminine (Rothgerber, 2012). By abstaining from eating meat, vegetarian men could be considered to lose man points, decreasing their masculine capital. However, such men may augment their masculine capital (gain man points) by drinking alcohol or for athleticism (De Visser, Smith & McDonnell, 2009; De Visser & McDonnell, 2013). This dynamic also operates on a less overt level, as with the avoidance of or subscription to certain behaviours or attributes so as not to lose points in the first place, e.g. certain sports being socially acceptable for some men and others not (and likewise for women).

However, there are also those who do not or cannot observe some of the basic requirements of hegemonic masculinity and are at risk of becoming marginalised. Marginalisation is the ultimate consequence of the gender policing which everyone experiences. If an individual cannot or will not acquiesce to the gendered expectations placed upon them, they may well be censured by society.

Their marginalisation serves two purposes: firstly as a punishment for having 'let the side down' and secondly, in meting out this punishment subordinate men can gain further man points. These consequences can be seen in findings such as those of the 'boys who behave like girls' or 'don't like sports' in the Stonewall Teacher's Report (Guasp, Ellison & Satara, 2014).

The ultimate alternative to masculine ideals of course is femininity and, consequently, women and femininity are positioned beyond and outside of the hierarchy of hegemonic masculinity. Gendered behaviours are stratified within Western society and hegemonic masculine exemplars are situated at the upper end of this hierarchical scale, symbolically occupying positions of supreme dominance, whereas women and femininity are situated at the very bottom. Between these two positions are all other men, operating at varying levels of complicity with the hierarchy, gaining legitimacy depending upon their apparent distance from the feminine (Connell, 2005). This organising of gender status is referred to as the patriarchy. From this perspective we are able to see how patriarchy determines the rules of femininity. As explained above, it is highly detrimental for males to demonstrate attributes or behaviours which could be deemed feminine. However, the inverse is also true for females, with masculinity and its associated attributes and behaviours similarly forbidden to women and girls, although this is perhaps less harshly policed. This is possibly due to masculinity being generally viewed in favourable terms, so that should a woman demonstrate masculinity she benefits to some degree from the benefits of masculine capital. In this context, qualities that are traditionally associated with masculinity, such as aggression, violence, sexual preoccupation, economic and athletic prowess, self-reliance, etc (Levant, 2011) can be seen, not as inherent attributes, but as terrain to be negotiated in efforts to increase the individual's proximity to hegemonic masculine ideals (Connell 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

It is vitally important to appreciate that such negotiations go on within masculinities, as this lends weight to the social constructionist stance that hegemonic masculinity is collectively, dynamically created. It is not merely an assortment of traits and activities inherent to the male sex; rather, these behaviours can be understood to be a dynamic system of tactical manoeuvres, designed to institute and uphold male-centric hierarchies (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) and as such, can be altered, manipulated or potentially, completely disregarded.

Heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity can therefore be appreciated as being at the root of homophobia and it is the policing of this system of privilege which 'others' gender transgressors through systemic means, such as institutional oppression, as well as overt, systematic homophobia, such as bulling, harassment and assault.

3.2 *Heteronormativity and Heterosexism*

Heteronormativity arises from the assumption that biological sex is absolutely dichotomous, that the masculine-feminine binary naturally maps on to biological men and women and that sexual attraction is naturally organised heterosexually.

These assumptions form normative conventions which shape how society decides not just how things are but how it believes things 'should' be. It is the persistence of these assumptions and their associated normative diktats which, despite the wealth of data which stands to the contrary, illustrate society's investment in heteronormative culture. Part of the privilege associated with heterosexuality is that it allows those with negative views towards non-heterosexuals to believe that this too is a natural response to differences of sexuality and gender expression. Heterosexism denies LGBT people their identity by framing them as 'less than' or abnormal (Herek, 1992), serving to deny validity to the negative experiences of these communities as the fault is seen to lie with them and not their persecutors or heteronormative society generally (Herek, 1992).

3.3 *Homophobic Language - The Discursive Construction of Gender*

As with homophobia in general, homophobic language has less to do with sexuality and more to do with the discursive construction of privilege. Homophobic language is contrastive (Thurlow, 2001), it delineates the boundaries of the privileged 'normal' ingroup and the subordinated 'abnormal' outgroup. As the Stonewall Teachers' report (Guasp, Ellison & Satara, 2014) highlights, homophobic labels such as 'faggot' begin to be used by children as early as primary school age, before they have much, if any, sexual awareness, especially regarding the actual nature of homosexuality. Plummer (2001) explains why, despite this lack of context, homophobic language gains such currency so early and why it has such lasting, damaging effects:

… far from being indiscriminate terms of abuse, these terms tap a complex array of meanings that are precisely mapped in peer cultures, and boys quickly learn to avoid appearing 'gay' and to use homophobia decisively and with great impact against others … An effect of this sequence is that early homophobic experiences may well provide a key reference point for comprehending forthcoming adult sexual identity formation (gay or not) because powerful homophobic codes are learned first.

(Plummer, 2001, p.15)

However, homophobic language is not merely used aggressively. In line with masculine capital theory, it can be used less overtly to socially construct and reinforce their own sense of masculinity and demarcate the boundaries of acceptable masculinity for others. As Poteat and Rivers (2010) put it:

…although the use of homophobic language is strongly associated with aggressive behavior, it might also be used in other contexts and circumstances … homophobic language is used by boys to emphasize their heterosexuality or to enforce gender-normative behaviors without an antagonistic intent.

(Poteat & Rivers, 2010, p.170)

Effectively, men are ensnared in their own trap. The norms which serve to privilege men also serve to stifle them. From this perspective, it could be argued that in a sense men are also oppressed by patriarchy.

▼ 4. *The Lasting Implications of Homophobia and Heterosexism for LGBT Adults and Society in General*

4.1. *The Paradoxes of Patriarchy*

As discussed previously, Western gender hierarchy/patriarchy places (heterosexual) men in positions of privilege. Homophobia and misogyny serve to maintain this privilege by oppressing women and LGBT people. This system is ingrained in our culture, so much so that it convincingly passes as 'normal', even natural. However, the business of gender policing is ceaseless; the maintenance of this privilege unrelenting. This begs the question: if the power of hetero-masculinity is so absolute, why must it be demonstrated so incessantly? It is precisely this point which reveals the fragility and precarious nature of masculine privilege (Vandello, Bosson, Cohen, Burnaford & Weaver, 2008). The hegemony of masculinity is never safe, never secure, never certain and therefore it requires constant social reinforcement (Vandello, et. al., 2008).

The anxiety of living under these circumstances is often compounded by the very systemic limitations masculine normativity imposes upon men and women. The restricted range of options men are presented with when faced with adversity can instigate personally and socially damaging behaviours such as violence (e.g. McCarry, 2010), a reluctance to seek medical treatment (e.g. Jeffries & Grogan 2012) risk taking (e.g. Laurendeau, 2008), poor diet (e.g. Gough & Conner, 2006) and maladaptive coping strategies (e.g. Duarte & Thompson, 1999). Collectively, traditional masculine dictates conspire to impact negatively on men's life expectancies; as the data indicates, men die younger in general while also being at particular risk of committing suicide (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2015).

Effectively, men are ensnared in their own trap. The norms which serve to privilege men also serve to stifle them. From this perspective, it could be argued that in a sense men are also oppressed by patriarchy. That is not to say that men should be viewed as victims in this situation, as New (2001) explains:

"While men are positioned to act as systematic agents of the oppression of women, women are not in such a relation to men. Yet unsurprisingly, given the inescapably relational character of gender, the two oppressions are complementary in their functioning - the practices of each contribute to the reproduction of the other. In particular, the very practices which construct men's capacity to oppress women and interest in doing so, work by systematically harming men."

(New, 2001, p.729 – 730)

The harm being discussed here is the type highlighted earlier in this report: the boys who are bullied for 'acting like girls' or suspected of being gay and the ubiquitous threat of violence that comes with transgressing gender norms; these are just some of the tools used by society to enforce patriarchy. Of course, the policing of masculinity goes further than this, as discussed in the section on masculine capital; men and women also learn to police themselves and avoid certain activities, behaviours, environments etc. which they come to think of as 'out of bounds' according to their gender. These limitations are a type of 'systematic mistreatment' (New, 2001) that men (and women) carry out against themselves. This self-inflicted regime, intended to generate inequalities amongst men (e.g. the marginalisation of gay or bi men), serves to deprive all men of the opportunity to live full, happy, healthy lives (New, 2001).

Women, of course, are the group worst affected by patriarchy. Female identities are socially constructed to embody femininity, to provide an antithesis to masculinity. Patriarchal masculinity is consequently manufactured through oppressive practices towards women, such as various forms of misogyny (e.g. Muir & Seitz, 2004) and violence (e.g. Boonzaier & de La Rey, 2003; Catlett, Toews & Walilko, 2010; McCarry, 2010). However, due to the 'naturalising' effect of masculine normativity and its ubiquity throughout Western culture, rather than perceiving themselves as subject to patriarchy, most women as with most men, become subordinated to it and even complicit with its machinations. In so doing, women can benefit from a degree of privilege for their compliance. Complicit or subordinated women extend the reach of patriarchy by taking up the work of policing gender themselves. As New (2001) explains:

"The group of women, oppressed within the gender order, includes women who are privileged on other dimensions and in an oppressor role in relation to other, relatively disadvantaged groups of women … in terms of class, ethnicity and so on."

(New, 2001, p.729 – 730)

The final irony of patriarchy is that for some time, academics and activists have been concerned by the paradoxical intolerance that can be observed within LGBT environments, particularly amongst gay men, as they still to some degree benefit from the 'dividend' (Connell, 1995, 2005) awarded them simply for being men. Misogyny (e.g. Johnson, & Samdahl, 2005), racism (e.g Nast, 2002), heterosexism (e.g. Taywaditep, 2002) and even what could perhaps be termed 'homosexism' in the form of 'biphobia' (Welzer-Lang, 2008) are common in LGBT communities. However, in LGBT people, some of these issues are more complex than simple compliance with the patriarchy, as the following section will discuss.

4.2 *Internalised Homophobia and its Repercussions*

There is a wealth of data on the health and social problems experienced by the LGBT community, ranging from alcohol or drug use and their related problems (e.g. Stall et al., 2001), to mental health issues (e.g. Mays & Cochran, 2001) and risky sexual behaviour (e.g. Hamilton & Mahalik, 2009). Although detractors have often posited these issues as further

evidence of the mental and moral instability of LGBT people, scholars have shown that these types of problems are characteristic of what is often termed 'Internalised Homophobia'. The systemic and systematic stigma and prejudice young LGBT people are subjected to before being 'out' and then afterwards can leave a lasting mark. One relatively recent research example is Rivers' (2004) study regarding the welfare of people who were the target of homophobic bullying while in education, either due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation. The study demonstrated that individuals who experienced frequent and prolonged homophobic bullying would often go on to experience symptoms associated with posttraumatic stress in adulthood:

"Over one quarter of participants in this study reported continuing to experience psychological distress when they recalled their school days and one in ten reported regularly experiencing flashbacks. Regular use of alcohol, prescription and nonprescription drugs was found to affect approximately one in twenty participants."

(Rivers, 2004, p.174)

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study (Felitti, et al., 1998), an ongoing US study that has been underway since 1995 and involving 17,421 participants, has produced a sizable body of data which the researchers claim demonstrates "extraordinarily strong relationships" (Felitti in interview - Szalavitz, M. (2011)) between experiencing one or more types of childhood trauma (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical neglect, emotional neglect, mother treated violently, household substance abuse, household mental illness, parental separation or divorce, incarcerated household member) and health/social problems in adulthood. The severity of the impact of these experiences increases directly in accordance with the number of types experienced. Participants having experienced four or more have been shown to be at considerably higher risk of suffering from a variety of diseases, social difficulties and behavioural aberrations. A particularly striking finding was that despite the researcher's expectations that some traumas would be more harmful than others, the impact of each type of trauma appeared to be equally weighted, with only one exception: "The one with the slight edge, by 15% over the others, was chronic recurrent humiliation, what we termed as emotional abuse" (Felitti in interview - Szalavitz (2011)).

Growing up in the heterosexist culture of the UK and other Western societies, LGBT individuals could be considered to have experienced prolonged humiliation and emotional trauma. Families, peers, media and wider society, knowingly or unknowingly but unremittingly transmit negative messages about non-heterosexuality or gender transgression, framing LGBT identities as deviant and LGBT individuals as somehow damaged. Roughton (In Moss, 2003; In Dreyer, 2007) encapsulates the effects of this experience:

"My concept of internalized homophobia is that it is not just about sex, but about self-concept. It starts before awareness of sexuality. It begins much earlier with a feeling that you are different, and that this difference is bad and must be kept a secret…The typical gay child does not fit the expectations of his family, realizes that he doesn't have the right kind of feelings and interests, and feels the ill-defined shame of inadequacy in his very being, without understanding why or what he has done wrong."

(Roughton, In Moss 2003:201-202, In Dreyer, 2007, p.12)

Be it as a product of regular bullying or merely prolonged exposure to the often banal but relentlessly negative messages about LGBT lifestyles, coupled with the knowledge that in certain circumstances being identified as LGB or T can in fact be dangerous, young LGBT people are taught to believe that there is something 'wrong' about them. Consequently, the adult lives of LGBT people are often marred or even cut short by this psychological trauma.

Before moving on it is important to emphasise here that despite the severity of the health and wellbeing implications of those who experience homophobia/heterosexism, research data shows that LGBT people are in general terms as well adjusted mentally and physically healthy as heterosexuals. As Smith and Ingram (2004) point out:

"… a body of literature exists that refutes the illness model of homosexuality (see Gonsiorek, 1991, for a review). Researchers tend to agree that it is not a person's sexual orientation, per se, that causes psychological distress. Rather, being a member of a sexual minority may make one vulnerable to psychological distress - not because of any deficit inherent in being lesbian, gay, or bisexual, but as a result of belonging to a stigmatized group. This stigmatization can act as a chronic stressor in the lives of LGB individuals. The stress of living within a stigmatizing environment has been labelled minority stress."

(Smith & Ingram, 2004, pp.57)

Clearly, the persistence of homophobia/heterosexism must be addressed. It is not simply an issue of challenging or supporting individuals, society as a whole suffers from its effects and so we must therefore look towards societal solutions. Sport holds a considerably prestigious position within UK and Western society, influencing much of our social and national culture. Therefore, addressing homophobia in sport could be a key way of fostering a more inclusive, egalitarian society.

"School pupils who engaged with sports and physical fitness demonstrated improved mathematical, reading, verbal, numeric, concentration, memory and reasoning abilities, resulting in increased attendance and better grades, leading to greater aspirations, attendance and performance in higher education."

DCMS Review, 2015

▼ 5. *Sports Clubs and Sporting Culture*

Governments around the world have long appreciated the value of sport regarding the wellbeing and development of their citizens, recognising sport as a basic right in the United Nations' Declaration of the Rights of the Child 1959. Sport has since been shown to be hugely effective as a vehicle of change in diverse settings (see Beutler, 2008). Accordingly this section will consider how sport can enhance and hinder the lives of LGBT people, towards an appreciation of how and where a positive difference can be made.

5.1 *The Benefits of Sport*

A recent review of existing research on the benefits of engagement with sport and culture on health and education commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport highlighted that school pupils who engaged with sports and physical fitness demonstrated improved mathematical, reading, verbal, numeric, concentration, memory and reasoning abilities, resulting in increased attendance and better grades, leading to greater aspirations, attendance and performance in higher education (Fujiwara, Kudrna, Cornwall, Laffan & Dolan, 2015). In terms of the benefits of sports regarding mental health, physical activity can be a protective factor against certain mental health issues, such as clinical depression (Harris, Crokite & Moos, 2006; Leadbetter and O'Connor, 2013), while also being effective in helping ongoing conditions (Galper, Trivedi, Barlow, Dunn & Kampert, 2006) and can even have a positive impact on the psychiatric symptoms of schizophrenia (Soundy, Roskell, Stubbs, Probst & Vancampfort, 2015). Research has also shown that physical activity is linked to greater life satisfaction (Dohle & Wansink, 2013).

Although the benefits of participation in sports to good health are well established (for recent examples see Bailey, 2006 or Khan, et al., 2012), the wider benefits of this bear particular consideration. A longitudinal study published recently demonstrated that men involved in sports during high school tend to go on to remain physically active and spend less time in healthcare (Dohle & Wansink, 2013). The implications of improved mental and physical health across the lifetime and the resultant reductions in General Practitioner (GP) appointments and time in health care, when considered in terms of potential savings to the UK's National Health System, is calculated in the region of £903.7M per year (Fujiwara, et al., 2015). It is clear then that the benefits of being involved in sports, particularly during adolescence, are considerable. Not only does the individual benefit from improved health, prospects and life satisfaction, but society as a whole benefits as well. It is all the more tragic then that access to sports and sporting culture is limited for LGBT people, who, according to the LGBT Foundation (drawing upon the Government's impact assessment of the Civil Partnership Act, 2004), make up 5-7% of the UK population by conservative estimates. The positive effects that sports involvement can have (e.g. on mental health, life satisfaction, self-esteem and sense of community) could be all the more meaningful in countering the trauma of homophobia experienced by LGBT people in other social environments.

5.2 *Sporting Culture and Homophobia*

It is well documented that sports can be a hostile environment for LGBT people, young and older (e.g. Barber & Krane, 2007). Sporting culture is widely considered to be 'one of the last bastions of heterosexism and homophobia' (Lenskyj, 2013, p.145). The exclusion or erasure of LGBT people in sports starts with heteronormative/heterosexist bias in representations of athletes, teams and institutions, principally in the media. For example, sporting institutions often prescribe certain clothing or hairstyles for men and women dependant on the sport. The media also often will focus on these features, especially in the case of female athletes, whereas men tend to be judged according to their ability. Sporting institutions also set regulations on personal conduct. The media will often report on a variety of types of information about athlete's private lives and even encourage them to discuss their relationships during interviews, although rarely is this the case with LGBT athletes (Lenskyj, 2013).

When interrogating the persistence of this culture despite legislative and social action to challenge homophobia, it would be reasonable to question those who sit atop sporting hierarchies, such as coaches or team managers. A study into the challenges faced and presented by sports coaches of LGBT athletes (Viel & Demers, 2013) revealed that coaches concerns about dealing with LGBT athletes included the potential damage that the presence of an openly LGBT athlete could have on team cohesion, the awkwardness presented by the potential of couples forming within the team and discomfort around showing affection. However, some expressed a desire to do well by the athletes themselves, describing concerns about using 'inappropriate' (i.e. homophobic) language accidentally or the athletes becoming the target of harm from other coaches and athletes (Viel & Demers, 2013). In reporting what they perceived of as their own limitations coaches revealed a reluctance to intervene or pry into athletes' private lives, unease in witnessing homosexual affection or disclosures of same-sex attraction and uncertainty about whether or not to talk to athletes who aren't 'out' about their sexuality (Viel & Demers, 2013).

5.3 *'All the Men are Straight and all the Women are Gay'*

Sport, as any other societal institution, reproduces and reveals the inequities of power and the hierarchies which exist between all societal intersections such as gender, race, socioeconomic status, physical ability and sexual orientation, to name only a few (Connell, 1995; Sartore & Cunningham, 2009). Consequently sports and sporting culture tends to represent heterosexist values, which firmly establish sports as the domain of men. In order to gain or maintain acceptance in this environment, both men and women can become 'hyper-masculine,' 'hyper-feminine' or 'hyper-heterosexual' and not doing so runs the risk of being stigmatised (Sartore & Cunningham, 2009). However, women in sport face a catch-22. Perhaps due to sport being so imbued with masculine capital, women who participate in sports accrue masculine capital also (demonstrated as possible by De Visser & McDonnell, 2013), so despite any efforts they may make to emphasise

their heterosexual femininity, women in sports tend to attract a degree of homophobic stigma regardless. Accordingly, there is a commonly held notion in sport that 'all the men are straight and all the women are gay' (Lenskyj, 2013).

The assumption that all men in sports are straight serves to both privilege perceived heterosexuality and stigmatise attributes and behaviours that are perceived to betray homosexuality. The competitive nature of sports encourages those involved to seek out advantages over their opponents. The fear of homosexual stigma serves as a powerful tool with which sporting opponents attempt to undermine each other's psychological stability or identify 'weak' links in team dynamics. To transgress the heteronormative expectations fostered by this type of culture is intuited as a failing both as a person and as an athlete. The implication of weakness that being (or being perceived as) LGBT is considered to make the team vulnerable or somehow damage the cohesion of the team. Accordingly, the implications of being and not being perceived as non-heterosexual in sports are that this will either be used against you tactically and/or result in exclusion as a means of preventing 'weak' players from entering the fold.

High contact sports like rugby are understood to foster heightened forms of masculinity, often referred to as machismo (example - Muir & Seitz, 2004). Machismo is a performative exaggeration of hegemonic masculinity which amplifies the pursuance of the hegemonic ideal to extreme levels. Muir and Seitz (2004) discussed this issue in their study of US collage rugby players and how machismo in sporting culture can foster criminal deviancy due to an idealisation of physical violence and injury, scorn of sympathy of any kind, tolerance of dehumanising discourses (particularly in reference to women and gay men) and heightened sexuality accompanied by stark misogyny. In these conditions commonplace homophobic attitudes can be intensified to a degree where bullying and harassment can tip over into extreme victimisation and even violent assault (Muir & Seitz, 2004), the threat of which is implied throughout sporting culture, as was reflected earlier in the comments of sports coaches concerns about rival coaches and athletes causing actual harm to their trainees.

For women, the problem is inverted. The hierarchical dominance of masculinity which subordinates women and girls and privileges heterosexuality is replicated and reinforced by sporting culture (Sartore & Cunningham, 2009). Because of the predominance of masculinity in sports, both institutionally and in media representations, women who are involved in sports are perceived to be more masculine and therefore lesbian. The stigma of being assumed to be lesbian, whether or not this is the case, can lead to female athletes experiencing 'excessive burden, [resulting in] negative psychological, physical, and professional outcomes' (Sartore & Cunningham, 2009, p.299) which may ultimately reinforce the heter-onormative assumption that women are less capable in sports than men (Sartore & Cunningham, 2009).

5.4 *Is the situation improving?*

There are signs that this culture in sports media is changing, with increased visibility of openly gay athletes such as Tom Daley, a household name who is regarded positively in general. A recent analysis of the US media coverage of the coming out of basketball player Jason Collins concluded that overall reporting of the news story tended to be inclusive and tolerant (Kian, Anderson, Shipka, 2015). This type of research is part of an emergent body of work exploring the theory of Inclusive Masculinity, which suggests the possibility that attitudes towards LGBT people have become so inclusive that it has now become possible for men to relate horizontally (Anderson, 2009; De Visser & McDonnell, 2013). Encouraging as this research is in highlighting more inclusive attitudes in certain sporting contexts, the claim that (young) straight men are now totally comfortable with and accepting of LGBT people has received only limited support and a fair degree of critique (e.g. de Boise, 2015). The statistics such as those discussed earlier in this report demonstrate that homophobia in the UK and the West in general is still very much a problem and that the battle for true inclusivity and respect for LGBT communities is far from over.

The UN has considered sports a human right for several decades and has more recently come to view it as a vital component of their efforts.

▼ 6. *Important Initiatives Targeting Homophobia*

Confronting homophobic and/or heterosexist behaviour has been shown to be one of the most effective ways of combatting it (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003). However, all too often individuals fail to step up to challenge prejudice and discrimination when they witness it (Dickter, 2012), so it largely falls to dedicated initiatives to make these issues visible by addressing them on a number of fronts. The following section lists an assortment of charters and initiatives from the UK and other parts of the world aimed at challenging homophobia and improving the lives of LGBT people. The list is by no means exhaustive, but is intended to highlight just some of the effective work under way to draw attention to LGBT directed prejudice and find ways to address it.

The UK

Fight Against Homophobia and Transphobia in Sport 2011, a government charter supported by the main UK sporting bodies: "The Football Association, the England and Wales Cricket Board, the Rugby Football League, the Rugby Football Union and the Lawn Tennis Association, joined the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) in becoming the first signatories of the 'Charter for Action'."
(https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fight-against-homophobia-and-transphobia-in-sport)

The charter is part of a new cross-government LGBT+ action plan, with four statements of intent:
• Everyone should be able to participate in and enjoy sport
• Sport is about fairness and equality, respect and dignity
• We will work together to rid sport of homophobia and transphobia
• We will make sport a welcome place for everyone

View the charter at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85484/sports-charter.pdf

2016 also saw the launch of a House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport committee inquiry into homophobia in sport, which will look at the experiences of gay sportsmen and sportswomen, the approach of governance bodies throughout sport and how homophobia is being tackled at school. The inquiry will also attempt to discern if football has a particular problem with homophobia compared to other popular sports. Details regarding the inquiry can be found at:
http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/culture-media-and-sport-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/homophobia-in-sport-15-16/

Europe

Along with the EU wide decriminalisation of same-sex sexual activity and a raft of treaties and laws protecting LGBT people from discrimination, particularly in employment, a number of initiatives are also in motion towards growing LGBT inclusion and protection. In June 2013, the Council of the European Union adopted a set of binding guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons. These guidelines can be viewed at:
https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137584.pdf

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights recently updated its report on Homophobia and Discrimination on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the EU Member States (2015), including both legal and social analyses. The reports highlight relevant judicial data, such as court decisions and case law and identify 'good practice' in terms of measures and initiatives to overcome underreporting of discrimination, promote inclusion and to protect rights. This report can be found at:
http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/protection_against_discrimination_legal_update_2015.pdf

Or for a condensed summary:
http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/1659-FRA-homophobia-synthesis-report-2011_EN.pdf

Australia

Bingham Cup (2014): Anti-homophobia and inclusion framework for Australian Sport.
Supported by Australia's main 5 sporting bodies (Australian Football League, Australia Rugby Union, National Rugby League, Football Federation of Australia and Cricket Australia), this framework sets out an inclusion policy for all sports and clubs. The CEOs from the above bodies signed an agreement stating their commitment "… to create encouraging and welcoming sporting environments for gay, lesbian and bisexual people, whether they participate as players, officials or supporters." - Andrew Purchas, President of Bingham Cup Sydney 2014 and Founder of the Sydney Convicts Rugby Club – from:
http://gaynewsnetwork.com.au/news/national/australia-s-major-sports-unite-to-sign-landmark-anti-homophobia-policy-13522.html

Details of the framework can be found at:
http://www.binghamcup.com.au/about/anti-homophobia-and-inclusion-framework/

Since 2010 the Safe Schools Coalition Australia, a national network of organisations working with schools, has assisted hundreds of schools across the country in their efforts to create safer and more inclusive environments for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, staff, families and the school community as a whole. The initiative receives government funding and to date has attracted 545 member schools. Details about the coalition initiative can be found at: http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/

Play by the Rules is another Australian initiative dedicated to transforming sport into a more inclusive, supportive environment by providing free online courses, toolkits, guidelines and templates to help sports leaders and organisers to nurture inclusive environments. They also produce free articles, media campaigns, promotional material, videos, educational resources, reports and infographics. Details can be found at: http://www.playbytherules.net.au

USA

The Gay-Straight Alliance Network was founded in 1998 to empower youth activists in the San Francisco Bay Area to start clubs to fight homophobia and transphobia in schools. By 2005 the GSAN began operating programs nationally and now boasts over 900 clubs. Among the GSAN's achievements, they played a leadership role in grassroots organizing for the passage of ground-breaking, state-wide legislation, AB 537: The California Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act of 2000, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and also helped to pass 11 key laws to protect LGBT youth and create safer schools. There are now GSA clubs in other countries including several in the UK.
Details about the GSAN can be found at: https://gsanetwork.org/

Peer Education Initiatives

Peer education is one approach to tackling homophobia in sport and while there may not be many actual initiatives within sport itself yet, there are some excellent examples of how young people can support and educate each other. Advocates for Youth is a US based organisation which works to address homophobia/transphobia within organizations and communities, sensitize youth-serving professionals to the needs of LGBTQ youth and encourage LGBTQ youth to become powerful advocates for themselves and other youth by encouraging LGBTQ youth to work to promote the sexual health of their peers. Details at: http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/about-us/programs-and-initiatives/740?task=view

The Scottish Peer Education Network is a group of peer education charities and other organisations who work with young people and adults, providing members with toolkits, resources, training, free consultations and advice as well as organising educational events and networking meetings. Details at: http://www.spen.org.uk/

The UN

The UN has considered sports a human right for several decades and has more recently come to view it as a vital component of their efforts. Most recently, the UN have identified sport as a vital means of spreading their Sustainable Development Goals, which they have described as their most important endeavour, promoting 17 peace and sustainable development targets by the year 2030. In announcing these goals they stated:

"Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives."

(From 'Declaration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', p.10/35)
http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1
https://www.un.org/sport/content/why-sport/sport-and-sustainable-development-goals

I became a straight ally through my involvement with the Warwick Rowers Calendar project. We like to think that there's a healthy cyclical relationship between the club and our LGBT supporters.

▼ 7. *Allies, Sporting Culture and Homophobia*

7.1. *What to look for or Nurture in Potential Allies*

A recent study by Poteat and Vecho (2016) identified the following qualities in students who feel compelled to intervene when witnessing homophobic bullying and recommended that ally programs should cultivate these 'active bystanders' attributes. In terms of demographics, girls reported more defending behaviour than boys, which the researchers suggest may be linked to "…girls and adult women report lower sexual prejudice than boys and adult men … Thus, girls may more strongly disapprove of this bias-based behaviour, which often reflects prejudice" (Poteat & Vecho, 2016, p.8). However, Poteat and Vecho (2016) go on to point out that "boys and young men are socialized to uphold and enforce masculinity norms that are homophobic…" meaning that some "…might desire to counter homophobic behaviour, but they may fear retaliation or being ostracized for challenging behaviours connected to these masculinity norms" (Poteat & Vecho, 2016, p.8). Therefore, ally programmes should not assume that all boys and men are unreachable, but recognise that the consequences of transgressing hegemonic masculine norms are a real concern for many. It is also widely appreciated by researchers and theorists that privilege renders itself invisible (Kimmel, 1993), which is why men and boys often consider 'gender' to be a feminine issue which doesn't actually apply to them. Consequently, efforts to cultivate active bystander qualities in boys should focus on ways to counter these issues.

Poteat and Vecho (2016) also saliently highlight that students who are themselves LGBT are amongst those more likely to intervene. However, the findings suggest that this may happen with more frequency when such students feel supported by existing gay-straight alliances in their schools and/or openly 'affirming' faculty members. The individual attributes which the study suggests should be nurtured to encourage more active bystander behaviour included the following:

- **Altruism**

"Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives."

- **Courage**

"It may have required particular courage on the part of students to intervene in these specific instances while risking potential retaliation … [also] it may have required higher levels of courage for youth to counter entrenched social norms that condone homophobic behaviour"(Poteata & Vechob, 2016, p.8).

• **Having LGBT friends**

"Students with more LGBT friends may have been more aware of the harmful effects of homophobic behaviour … Also, because of their connection to sexual minorities through these friendships, students with LGBT friends might have viewed homophobic behaviour as more personally offensive … [and may be] more likely to intervene when bullying is directed toward their friends" (Poteata & Vechob, 2016, p.8-9).

• **Leadership**

"Because of their higher status, these students may have felt less fear than others of potential retaliation … Although some students may use their status in a way to counter homophobic behaviour, other studies show that homophobic behaviour is used as part of hierarchy promotion among peers" (Poteata & Vechob, 2016, p.8-9).

• **Justice sensitivity**

"…was associated with engaging in more defending behaviour. Moral sensitivity underlies active bystander engagement … Students high on justice sensitivity may have been more likely to view homophobic behaviour as unfair or unjust rather than socially normative. Also, individuals high on justice sensitivity feel more personally affected by wrongs experienced by others" (Poteata & Vechob, 2016, p.9).

Poteata and Vechob (2016) suggest school-based social-emotional learning programs are a good starting point in terms of nurturing active bystanders. They also recommend a meta-analysis of these types of intervention programmes conducted by Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor and Schellinger (2011), which they argue provides robust evidence in support of such an approach.

7.2 *What Allies can do to Improve Sport*

The Canadian Olympic Committee's One Team project, working with Prof. Pat Griffin of the Social Justice Education Program, University of Massachusetts and the former director of It Takes a Team! education campaign for LGBT Issues in Sport, suggest five ways in which to create a welcoming, safer school and sport environments:

1. Use inclusive language. Do not assume that all your athletes are heterosexual.
2. Take the time to read up on and learn about homophobia and homosexuality in general. The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity provides an excellent resource:
http://www.caaws-homophobiainsport.ca/e/index.cfm

3. Enlist the team captains' assistance in monitoring team reactions and helping to set a positive tone of acceptance and respect for all.

4. Reinforce the belief that being respectful does not necessarily mean approving of homosexuality or bisexuality. Every team member has a right to his or her personal beliefs, but each is responsible for treating everyone on the team with respect.

5. Be straightforward and open about addressing the possibility of a same-sex relationship. This is not something to be secretive about; it happens in sport as in other aspects of life.

(Source: http://olympic.ca/education/one-team/)

Coaches

Be it in education or at professional level, the responsibility of setting the tone within any sporting culture begins with coaches (Viel & Demers, 2013). In their article 'Coaching LGBT Athletes', Viel and Demers (2013) identified coaches as being ideally positioned to positively affect the experiences of their LGBT athletes:

"In creating an environment that promotes optimal personal development and sporting excellence, the coach is in direct contact with the athletes. Since coaches lead the activities and are responsible for creating conditions that ensure as many participants as possible have the opportunity for a positive experience, they can undoubtedly prevent a heterosexist, homophobic, and hostile environment from developing. The coach's actions, language, and attitude go a long way towards making the athletes feel safe and able to be themselves…"

(Viel & Demers, 2013, p.37).

Team Captains

Team captains are often chosen for the role because they stand out as skilled and inspiring leaders. Put these skills to good use and inspire inclusivity in the team.

Anyone Involved in Sport – Teammates and Individual Athletes

You don't have to be a team leader to lead the way on inclusivity. You don't have to be straight. One person can make all the difference.

Fans

You might not be able to take on the whole stadium, but you can choose not to join in with homophobic or sexist behaviour and you can help your friends to appreciate the damage it can do when they join in. Many people don't even consider that what they think of as harmless 'banter' can have a seriously negative impact on the wellbeing of the LGBT people around them.

7.3 *Being a Straight Ally: Tristan's Experience*

I became a straight ally through my involvement with the Warwick Rowers Calendar project. Initially selling only to friends and relatives, the project started gaining momentum after it attracted the attention and very positive support of the gay community. We welcomed this attention and embraced the ability to bring a certain level of joy and support to a mass audience. It felt fitting that as the gay community were supporting us, we should do our bit to support them. The supporters of the calendar were facilitating what it was that we loved and by returning the favour with our message and donations to Sport Allies, we like to think that there's now a healthy cyclical relationship between the club and our supporters.

Over time our message has been heavily influenced by what we've learnt from our supporters and the experiences they've told us about playing team sports growing up. Participating in a sport as inaccessible as rowing, we can strongly relate to the idea of having a barrier to participation. The messages of thanks we've subsequently received from our supporters explaining the difference our message has made to them range from giving people the confidence to go to the gym, to joining a rowing team, or simply feeling more comfortable in themselves. It's always humbling to hear that you've given someone the confidence to try out a sport or even be open about their sexuality.

There's a reason employers highly regard participation in team sports when recruiting university graduates. Team sport is a platform to develop and demonstrate skills in commitment, time management, teamwork, and resilience. Sporty LGBT+ people attending university are far less likely to engage in team sport than their heterosexual counterparts, which not only harms LGBT+ people, but also heterosexual people who may struggle to build healthy relationships with members of the LGBT+ community, something required in modern society.

I think it's fair to say that none of the calendar boys would've been aware of what being an ally entailed before they came to university. My experience of being an ally has been an incredibly enjoyable and enlightening process, and has taught me more about myself than I would've expected. I've seen the way I interact with my teammates change for the better throughout the process as we become more comfortable in ourselves and our relationships to one another. The lessons we've learnt throughout the calendar project about masculine culture throughout sport and society have helped me gain a greater understanding of the person I am today and helped me develop an appreciation for the challenges others face.

As a straight man I've never had to deal with those barriers, and that's something about which I've grown increasingly conscious.

Having been diversity and inclusion officer for the rowing club, my advice to other clubs looking to become 'Sport Allies' would be that barriers to participation are often larger than you would expect. We've taken a zero tolerance policy to any sort of discriminatory behaviour, with any action deemed as non-inclusive being actively dealt with. However, we understand a lot of the time these incidents may be unintentional, the result of being brought up in a world not tuned into inclusive behaviour, which is why open discussion and communication is key. Above all else I'd say that having discussed these issues with various university sports teams, our views aren't unique. So make sure that your voice is heard by the people who need to hear it, and overtime the stigma will be broken.

The opportunity to mix with people with different sexualities helps break down preconceptions of both parties, something which the rowers have been shown first hand working with the calendar's creator, openly gay photographer/producer Angus Malcolm. By embracing the attention of our LGBT+ supporters, we have fostered healthy relationships with that community, which we now pass to newer generations of club members. You don't have to be a world leading sportsperson to be able to set an example and make a difference. Your ability shouldn't be a hindrance on your opportunity to make a large impact, just as your sexuality shouldn't have an impact on your chance to participate and succeed. So whilst we wait for the professional sporting world to catch up with the likes of the arts in providing LGBT+ role models, we can set the stage for those making up the teams of the future to be comfortable in themselves and deliver that change.

Sport transcends gender, race, class and sexuality and can be used to connect disparate communities through a common purpose. Nurturing positive, inclusive behaviours and practices within sporting cultures is key to making sport more relevant to all of us and more effective in meeting our needs, both individually and as a society.

▼ **8.** *Conclusions*

As the report highlights, excluding people from sport can have highly deleterious effects for the individual and society. This is not only because of the precedent it sets for society in general, but also because sport has such potential to improve our physical and mental wellbeing that it presents a greatly effective and inexpensive way of improving living standards. The UN views sport as a potential vehicle of social change towards a more inclusive society (Beutler, 2008). Sport transcends gender, race, class and even sexuality and as such can be used to connect disparate communities, providing a common purpose through which they can bond.

The task then is to alter the ideals of sport and demonstrate that sports people and teams can be both diverse and competitively strong. Rather than promoting exclusion, sport must celebrate inclusion. Leaders, managers, owners, coaches and team captains have a responsibility to defend the recognised right to sport which everyone has (Beutler, 2008), by transmitting an ideology which reflects this attitude. Those involved in sport, both at professional and educational levels can begin to change the culture by fostering an atmosphere of acceptance of diversity. Homophobic, sexist and heterosexist language should not be tolerated; commonly held misapprehensions based on gender should be challenged both by bystanders but also by providing an environment where those who challenge these misconceptions can flourish and have their achievements recognised.

The purpose of this report was to inform the formulation and implementation of Sport Allies' efforts in their mission to bring greater tolerance and inclusion to the culture of sport and by extension society. To that end, as a society we in the West must collectively accept responsibility for the way our culture instills and promotes damaging ideals about masculinity and gender in general. Affecting this level of change requires a holistic approach, necessitating efforts within all of our major institutions. Sport is one of the best placed institutions to foster such change owing to its ubiquity and prestige. Nurturing positive, inclusive behaviours and practices within sporting cultures and producing effective approaches for promoting alternative strategies for masculinity is key to making sport more relevant to all of us and more effective in meeting our needs, both individually and as a society.

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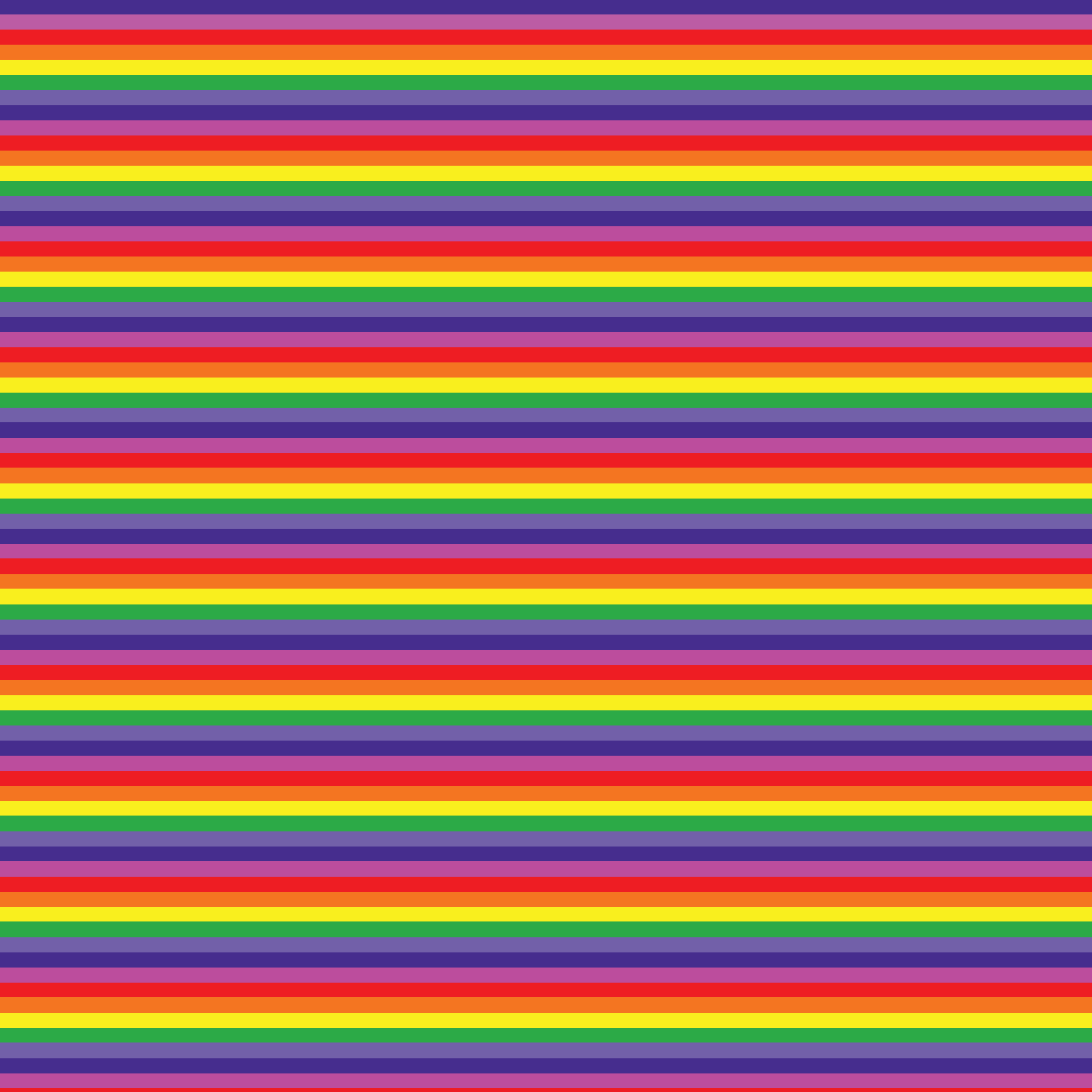
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to challenge homophobia and promote gender equality.*

*To find out more about our work, and how you can support us,
please go to sportallies.org*

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