

Navigating the Criminal Justice System & Support Services

as an LGBT+ Survivor
of Sexual Violence

Galop 2022

the LGBT+ anti-abuse charity



Contents



1	Foreword	3
2	The study	4
3	Key findings	5
4	Recommendations	6
5	Not reporting to the police	7
6	Experiences of reporting to police	11
7	Experience of the court case process	16
8	Alternative models of responses to sexual violence	20
9	Experiences of mainstream support services	21
10	LGBT+ specialist support	26
11	Responses survivors need	32
12	Methodology	33

1 Foreword



LGBT+ people are too often invisible in the public narrative around sexual violence. Galop has been working with LGBT+ victims and survivors of sexual assault for over a decade, and has seen the many barriers our community faces in navigating the criminal justice system. This research seeks to explore LGBT+ survivors' experiences and perceptions of the criminal justice system and mainstream statutory services.

We're grateful to the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, whose support has enabled us to delve into the experiences of over 1,000 LGBT+ people for this report in order to bring this issue into the light.

Alongside the powerful story being told by the data in this report — with only 12% reporting to the police, almost half feeling to blame for what has happened, the four fifths who felt the police did not understand their identity, the very low rate of convictions — I encourage you to take in what survivors had to say, laid out as they are here, in their own words.

As a community which has had to reclaim our pride over the decades, it must be acknowledged how many of us feel shamed for being victims of sexual assault, and how much that is often reinforced by the attitudes of the police and other services we turn to for help.

There is much work to do to improve the experiences of sexual violence survivors in this country, and it is vital that LGBT+ people are given the same level of support as everyone else.

We must provide specialist LGBT+ services nationally, where survivors are supported in ways that feel right for them and which understand our identities and experiences. Police and other services must be trained to not only understand LGBT+ identities, but to treat LGBT+ survivors with respect and care.

A huge thank you to the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation who funded this important project, and the incredible LGBT+ survivors who believed in this research, engaged with it, shared and contributed so generously with their time and experiences. I'm also grateful to Sarah West, Catherine Bewley, Lou Withers Green and Honor Gray for producing this important and timely report, as well as the whole team at Galop who work tirelessly to improve the lives of LGBT+ people in the UK every day.

Leni Morris, Chief Executive Officer



Galop undertook an online survey and 25 semi-structured interviews asking over 1,000 LGBT+ people in the UK about their experiences of sexual violence.

The survey was not designed to indicate prevalence in the UK LGBT+ population. This report is part of a series based on that research, which explores LGBT+ sexual violence survivors' experiences of support services and the criminal justice system, including the police.

Further reports in this series will focus on perpetrators of sexual violence and child sexual abuse.

3 Key findings

- **The vast majority of LGBT+ sexual violence survivors surveyed did not report to the police — only 12% had reported their most significant experience of sexual violence.**
 - There were multiple factors that deterred them from doing so, including being worried that the police would discriminate against them because of their LGBT+ identity (25%), fearing that they would not be taken seriously (51%) and thinking that the police would not be able to do anything (56%).
- **LGBT+ survivors who did report their experiences to the police generally described poor experiences.**
 - Of those surveyed who reported to the police, 45% were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the service they received compared to 22% who were satisfied or very satisfied. Only 22% were satisfied or very satisfied with the police's understanding of their LGBT+ identity.
- **Only a small number of participants had their sexual violence cases progressed all the way through the criminal justice system.**
 - Of 119 respondents who had made a police report, just 3 said their perpetrator had been convicted. Interview participants whose case progressed through the criminal justice system generally had negative experiences and would not advise it to other LGBT+ people.
- **The non-specialist support services available to participants frequently did not understand LGBT+ identities which often contributed to poor experiences of these services.**
- **Many participants could not find specialist support despite looking for it — this was particularly notable in areas outside London; no interview participants from outside of London had accessed any specialist sexual violence support service.**

4 Recommendations



- **The findings underline the need for increased understanding of LGBT+ identities and experiences within the police and other statutory services.** These services should be required to have mandatory training on LGBT+ identities, experiences of sexual violence and appropriate referral pathways. The government should include this training requirement in the forthcoming 'Victims Bill'.
- Actions in the 'end-to-end rape review report' should be implemented in order to improve the experiences of all sexual violence survivors, and improve victim confidence in the police and criminal justice system for LGBT+ victims¹.
- **These findings evidence a need for specialist LGBT+ sexual violence services to provide appropriate support for LGBT+ victims and survivors of sexual violence as outlined in the 'Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan'².** These specialist services need to include advocacy, ISVAs, formal advice services and therapeutic services. The government should include a mandate for the creation of all these services in the forthcoming 'Victims Bill'.

¹ HM Government (2021) The end-to-end rape review report on findings and actions [Link](#)

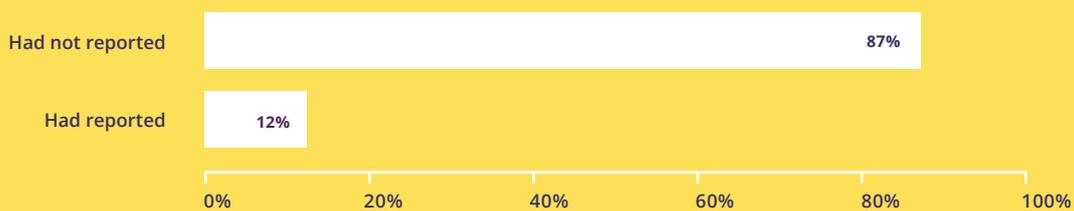
² Home Office (2022) Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan [Link](#)

5 Not reporting to the police

Sexual violence experienced by LGBT+ people remains hidden as the majority of survivors feel that reporting to police will result in more negative impacts than positive outcomes.

Respondents who had experienced sexual violence were asked whether they had reported their most significant experience to the police. Only 12% of 973 respondents had reported it to the police while 87% had not.

Figure 1. Reporting to the police (n=973)



Percentages are rounded.

Respondents who had not reported to the police were asked their reasons for not doing so.

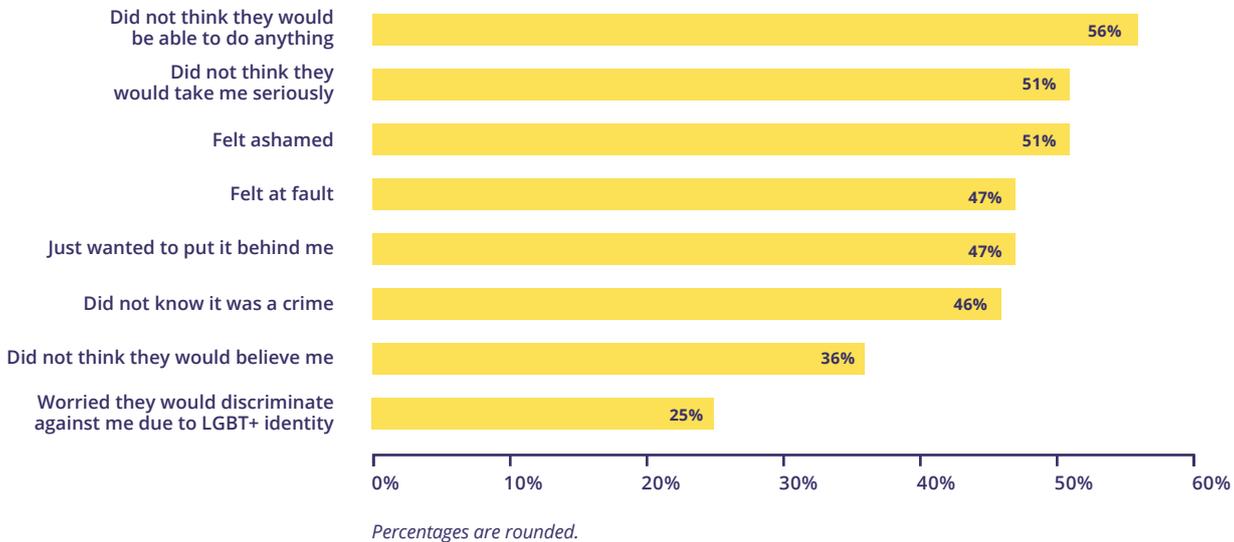
- 51% felt they would not be taken seriously
- 56% felt the police would not be able to do anything
- 25% said they worried that the police would discriminate against them because of their LGBT+ identity
- 39% thought they would make things worse
- 36% of respondents felt they would not be believed

5 Not reporting to the police

Other reasons included feeling at fault (47%) or ashamed (51%), not realising the sexual violence would be classified as a crime (46%), or wanting to put the incident behind them and move on with life (47%).

Trans respondents were particularly likely to say they had been put off from reporting to the police due to worries of being discriminated against because of their LGBT+ identity (34% of 337 trans respondents).

Figure 2. Reasons for not reporting their most significant experience to police ($n=762$)



In interviews, LGBT+ participants similarly described barriers to reporting the sexual violence to the police.

Participants described fears of not being believed by the police and wider society because of their LGBT+ identity. Some participants explained that their fears of being discriminated against based on their ethnicity also acted as a barrier to reporting to the police.

“

Police don't look at Black men, or trans people, and see someone who needs protecting, they see a threat.

”

5 Not reporting to the police

Participants expressed distrust in the police's understanding or belief in LGBT+ experiences. Some feared people would not believe they were a victim due to their gender identity, or because the perpetrator's gender misaligns with heteronormative stereotypes of sexual violence.

“

Society would side with my rapist's story of me being the one to rape her seeing how the law makes it 'impossible' for women to be able to rape.

”

“

Society often interprets me as the sexual risk to others, due to transphobia and queerphobia which interpret my existence as a risk to cis women. I doubt the police would take my experiences of sexual abuse seriously as I am not their ideal victim.

”

Some respondents who had experienced sexual violence while engaging in chemsex, BDSM, or at sex parties felt that the police would have little understanding of this and that it would negatively impact the case.

“

Because of the BDSM nature I feel it could be easy to argue it was wanted.

”

Interview participants expressed distrust in the likelihood of a sexual violence case progressing through the criminal justice system (CJS). Survey participants said they had been put off reporting by the *“appalling statistics on convictions for rape and sexual abuse”*. The majority of survivors who left free text responses said they did not think anything positive would result from reporting to the police.

5 Not reporting to the police

Some interview participants felt deterred from reporting because they knew other LGBT+ people who had bad experiences of reporting, or whose cases had not had a successful outcome.

“

I've heard so many horror stories about people actually going to court [...] and just being on the witness stand and like, no, I don't want to do that. I feel like I was the victim and [...] I shouldn't have to go through more suffering.

”

Interview participants identified that a negative perception of the CJS within the LGBT+ community leads to significant underreporting of LGBT+ experiences of sexual violence. This then results in the issue being invisible within mainstream society, so authorities do not recognise the need for specialist affirming support.

“

I don't think trans people are even approaching the police [...] so there's so much unreported, unresolved shit going on in our community, and then the numbers don't show us being affected so there's no support available, but that just puts people off reporting even more.

(trans man)

”

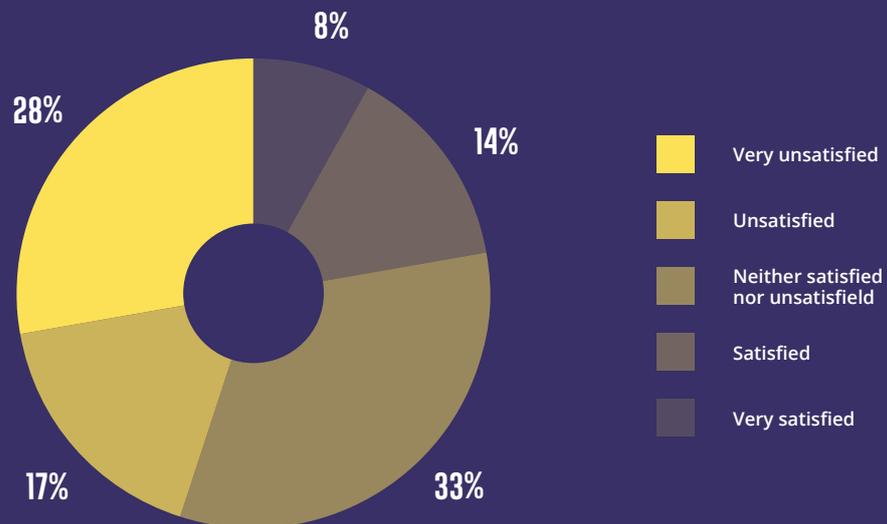
6 Experiences of reporting to the police

The small number of LGBT+ survivors who reported their experiences to police did not generally have a satisfactory experience. They felt their LGBT+ identity was often erased or not understood.

Respondents who had reported their experiences to the police were asked whether the police were aware that they were LGBT+, whether the police understood their LGBT+ identity, and how satisfied they were with the service they received.

Out of 115 survey respondents who reported to the police, 45% were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the service they received compared to 22% who were satisfied or very satisfied.

Figure 3. Satisfaction with service received from police (n=115)

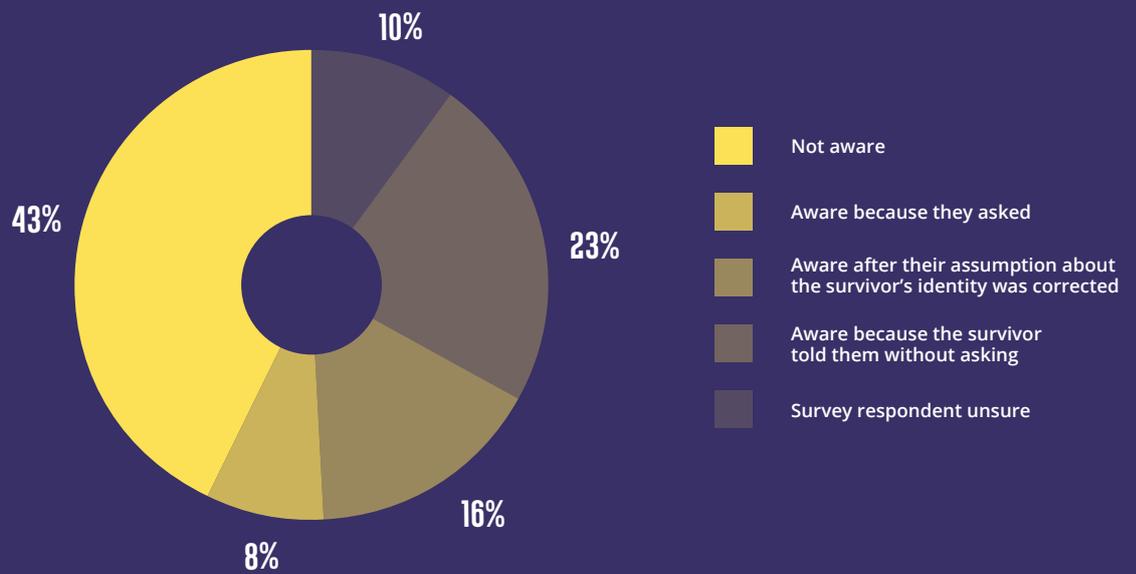


Percentages are rounded.

6 Experiences of reporting to the police

Of 119 respondents, 43% said the police were unaware of their LGBT+ identity. Only 8% had been asked their identity, 16% had to correct an erroneous assumption made about their identity and 23% told the police about their LGBT+ identity without being asked.

Figure 4. Police awareness of LGBT+ identities (n=119)



Percentages are rounded.

Less than a quarter (22%) of 106 respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the police's understanding of their LGBT+ identity.

The majority of interview participants who had reported sexual violence to the police described the experience as negative. Reasons they gave for their dissatisfaction included the officers' lack of knowledge about LGBT+ related issues which impacted the response received, and the lengthy and invasive reporting process.

6 Experiences of reporting to the police

The majority of interview participants who had reported sexual violence to the police described the experience as negative. Reasons they gave for their dissatisfaction included the officers' lack of knowledge about LGBT+ related issues which impacted the response received, and the lengthy and invasive reporting process.

“

The reporting process is always invasive and humiliating, lots and lots of staying up for hours during the night waiting to be seen, recounting events and experiencing flashbacks, leaving me feeling more traumatised and awful than I did going into it.

”

“

When I first went to the police [...] having to talk about sexuality and relationships and my history, it felt like I was having to speak a different language to them. It felt like they needed a translator to understand.

”

“

I did go to the police concerning a few incidents that happened around the chemsex scene but they weren't interested. This was about 6 or 7 years ago, however a couple of years ago they came back to me [...] so once they actually knew what it was, they came back to me for my help.

”

6 Experiences of reporting to the police

Interview participants also spoke about the police's lack of awareness surrounding their identity and how this negatively affected their reporting experience.

“

When I was reporting to the police, they took my report as a woman and it was really weird to me, the whole experience, because of that. I was like this is odd [...] I couldn't really explain, like anyone I spoke to I didn't feel I could be honest about the impact it had on me because the impact it had on me was so linked to me being visibly gender-nonconforming.

(Trans man)

”

Most negative experiences with other professionals appeared to stem from a lack of knowledge rather than being intentional, however a number of interview participants felt that the police had been overtly prejudiced against them due to their LGBT+ identity.

“

The police switched off emotionally when they heard what happened and my sexuality and were disinterested. They were unhelpful and judgemental, they didn't care at all.

”

“

The police said that they found it normal that this had happened since I'm gay and that was part of our community.

”

6 Experiences of reporting to the police

“

When I had to disclose my medical records I said I wasn't happy as it would mean anyone who saw them would know I'm intersex and I explained this. Then in front of me, one officer said to the other that they could use the fact the rapist had unknowingly raped 'a man' as leverage.

”

“

I told the police I was a lesbian because I thought it would make it clearer that I hadn't consented to what he did, but they minimised my experiences and made me feel even worse.

”

However, some survey participants received a positive response after sharing their LGBT+ identity with police.

“

I outed myself to [the police] in order to provide evidence that required it for context. Overall, they have been very understanding and supportive so far and I am very grateful that my case has been taken seriously.

”

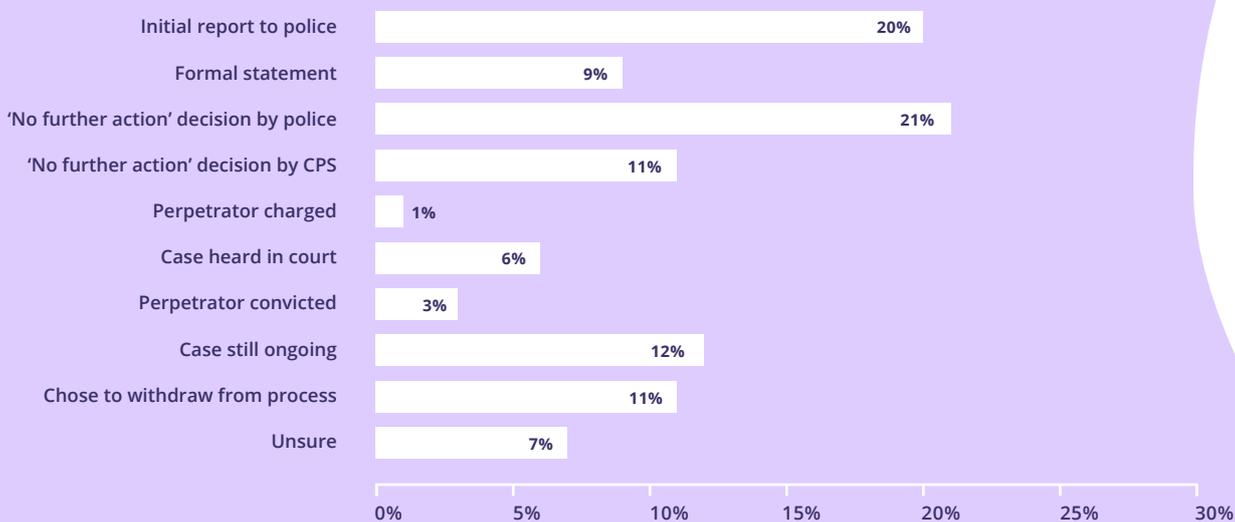
One interview participant also described feeling *“really respected in terms of my identity”* while speaking to the police, and recounted that the police had also recommended an organisation that was helpful for their trauma and understanding of their experiences.

Only a small number of participants had their cases progressed all the way through the criminal justice system.

Interview participants whose case progressed through the criminal justice system reported negative experiences and generally would not advise it to other LGBT+ people.

Of respondents who reported to the police, half had their case closed before reaching the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). For 20% of survivors, the furthest stage they reached when reporting was an initial police report, for 9%, it was a formal statement and for 21%, it was a 'no further action' decision taken by the police. 72% of the 60 respondents whose cases ended at these stages were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with how far their case had progressed.

Figure 5. Final stage in the criminal justice system (n=119)



Percentages are rounded.

7 Experience of the court case process

Out of 119 respondents who had made a police report, 13 decided to withdraw from the criminal justice process, 10 said their case had reached court and just 3 said their perpetrator had been convicted.

Interview participants generally described negative experiences with the criminal justice system, which included contact with many different professionals and a lack of continuity among the people involved in their case or providing support.

“

I had people explain a lot of the process to me, but I never had one person who was there throughout, it was always different people each time informing me of different things. It would have been nice if there was one person who was there with me throughout that whole time.

”

Interview participants who had experienced the process of the criminal justice system said it was long and traumatic.

A number of interview participants told us that the police had not spoken to the perpetrator before closing the case.

“

You try and seek justice and you have to go through this long process which is upsetting and traumatic and difficult [...] it makes you stay in a victim place.

”

“

I knew from the start that it was really unlikely to go to court but I thought at least if the police interviews this person, that will frighten them and I thought good but the police didn't even interview them [...] I was like wow, I've been through all this for absolutely nothing. It was just awful.

”

7 Experience of the court case process

The small number of interview participants whose cases had reached court talked about the impact this had on their ability to access mental health support, due to the rules around pre-trial therapy. For those also processing aspects of their identity, this delay was a further barrier to accessing affirming mental health support.

“

At first it was because of the ongoing court case that I couldn't have this stuff [therapeutic services] as they would consider it tampering with evidence. My mental health is evidence, I try not to think about that too often because it has this slightly dehumanising aspect to it.

”

“

I just felt like a name on piece of paper that got handed around, not a whole person. I didn't get given any space to talk about that for a long time cos of the time the case took to get to court and I do think that's got a lot to do with why it took me a long time to explore my identity and go through all the stages of who am I, until I get to where I am now.

”

7 Experience of the court case process

Trans interview participants felt their cases had been impacted by their identity and experienced transphobia in the courtroom.

“

I was misgendered in court and I believe my trans identity may have led to the not guilty verdict. I feel the court system should not have allowed transphobia and misgendering to take place in the courtroom. The defence barrister should have been made to stop the first time she misgendered me.

”

Interview participants frequently stated they would not advise another LGBT+ person to report their experiences to police or to go through the CJS in a similar situation.

“

I would also be quite hesitant to say to someone to go to the police, because it will just make things worse.

”

“

I still wouldn't wish that experience on anyone else. I wouldn't say 'oh you've got to report because of this' it's a huge thing, a secondary trauma to go through.

”

8 Alternative models of responses to sexual violence

Many interview participants explained that the current systems did not change how they felt about their experiences, and were unlikely to result in change from the perpetrator, which were the key things they wanted to happen.

3 Feminist Pedagogy: Building Community Accountability by Laurie Fuller and Ann Russo [Link](#)

Some interview participants talked about wishing for alternatives to criminal justice responses to sexual violence. These included community accountability³ processes and transformative justice⁴.

4 An Overview of the History and Theory of Transformative Justice by Anthony J. Nocella: "a new [criminal justice] system void of punitive punishment and repressive forms of social control and discipline" [Link](#)

Alternative responses to sexual violence was something survivors had researched, or become involved in activism around, following their experiences of the criminal justice system.

“

Realising that my healing actually cannot be linked to what happens to this person.

”

“

I think that there shouldn't be such a focus on carceral [criminal justice focused] projects [...] the kind of idea that you can cause somebody as much harm as possible. It doesn't undo what was done to you. The only thing that undoes what happened is care, and that's not something that is provided by the criminal justice system.

”

Interview participants often had poor experiences of non-specialist external support services that were available to them, which was often linked to their lack of understanding of LGBT+ identities.

Non-specialist services

‘Non-specialist services’ refer to services that are not LGBT+ specialist services, although they may be specialist in another regard.

Interview participants frequently described interactions with professionals who did not have knowledge or expertise in working with LGBT+ people. Many survivors had been assumed cis and/or heterosexual. Some described having to educate professionals in order for them to understand certain aspects of their experiences, or having professionals make harmful suggestions.

“

People do assume you're straight unless you tell them otherwise or you look a certain way, people have always assumed I'm straight until I tell them otherwise.

”

9 Experiences of mainstream support services

“

When I told a GP I was trans and had dysphoria she told me my being trans and my dysphoria could have been a result of the trauma of the sexual assault and she was reluctant to refer me to a GIC. Telling me so didn't get rid of the dysphoria or stop me from being trans, but it made me feel not valid.

”

Interview participants who were people of colour often felt professionals, who were overwhelmingly white, did not understand their identity and culture.

“

There were a few times I felt like I was speaking a foreign language and had to explain some really basic stuff.

”

“

A lot of support services still do not understand the impact of religion and culture and how this manifests in survivors of sexual abuse.

”

Participants with additional access needs found services difficult to access.

“

Services are not accessible, because you can't just do it all online. Even though there is more online stuff now [...] it still often requires talking on video or a phone call to get a referral.

”

9 Experiences of mainstream support services

Perceptions and experiences of sexual violence services integrated as part of the criminal justice system, rather than as standalone, independent services, appeared to cause distrust for some respondents.

“

My anti-cop politics often clashed with support services and therapists who got actively defensive about police, which made it impossible for me to trust them.

”

Several interview participants discussed their perceptions that sexual violence services were not welcoming to trans people.

“

I have since come out as genderqueer & then agender, and I am hesitant of seeking support from rape crisis organisations as I know many can be quite transphobic and I don't want to hear anyone blaming my gender identity (which I am happy and comfortable with) on my experiences of sexual violence.

”

9 Experiences of mainstream support services

Mental health support services

Many interview participants felt mental health services were not understanding of LGBT+ experiences, leading to them not opening up about issues they were dealing with.

“

I was trying to talk to this counsellor, first of all [the] counsellor's straight obviously, a straight cis woman, like hello we have nothing in common I don't know what to say to you [...] I don't trust you, I don't trust that you're going to get it.

”

Other interview participants described opening up and experiencing a response, which felt judgemental or misunderstood.

“

[My therapist] described these people, abusers and rapists as quote 'promiscuous' [...] Being a rapist is bad, I think most people would agree. Being promiscuous in the chemsex scene isn't considered bad and there's no victims in promiscuity, that's how I viewed it. When the therapist viewed it differently, I started reviewing everything I had done, where now I was in the same basket and I did experience quite a lot of self-hate as a consequence.

”

“

After that judgemental response I never went back and haven't accessed any support since then.

”

9 Experiences of mainstream support services

Mental health support provided by the NHS was overwhelmingly felt to be ineffective by interview participants, who stated that a small, limited number of sessions of counselling were not enough to address trauma and complex health needs that arose after sexual violence. Participants experienced long waiting lists and professionals making errors with referrals, which further prolonged their waiting time.

“

There is very little support for complex mental health and trauma related conditions. I was told to avoid group therapy but I have been on an NHS waiting list for therapy for five years and have only been given 6 sessions in that time.

”

“

There are no services for trauma, and health & social care treat my mental & physical health needs separately.

”

Experiences of LGBT+ specialist services were mostly positive, but for many, they were difficult or impossible to find.

Some searched privately for specialist mental health services that met their needs and many turned to informal networks for support they were unable to get elsewhere.

Specialist LGBT+ mental health services

Some interview participants had invested significant time and money into finding LGBT+ affirming support.

“

I didn't have anywhere to get help with for a long, long time, and really that didn't properly get processed until I saw a private therapist and dug down into it all. It was definitely easier to talk to someone who was queer informed, there was that unspoken understanding there.

”

Specialist LGBT+ sexual violence services

Some participants described being unaware of, or having difficulty finding, specialist LGBT+ support services and being wary of accessing generic services.

“

I was also unaware of any type of support available to LGBT victims of abuse, and am still unaware of any that can offer specific support on domestic abuse in LGBT relationships between minors.

”

“

Except for Galop, I don't know of any other organisation who does what you do [...] and I only came to know of you when I came to London.

”

“

[I'd] hesitate to tell anyone to go to an organisation that isn't for queer people only [...] So many people say 'we're a women's charity' but does that include trans people as well? I do think that services need to make that more visible on their websites and literature and that sort of thing.

”

“

[I'd] hesitate to tell anyone to go to an organisation that isn't for queer people only.

”

“

I was also unaware of any type of support available to LGBT victims of abuse.

”

No interview participants from outside of London had accessed any specialist sexual violence support service.

A number of those living in London had received support from London-based specialist services including Galop. These interactions were viewed much more positively, and survivors spoke of the benefits of working with someone who was LGBT+ informed.

“

There was no shock or stigma or judgement or ‘ooh I don’t know, sorry I can’t help you with that kind of stuff’, it was really normalised and that was really good as well because I think there’s lots of people who have a range of different sexual experiences and being able to talk about that openly [...] it felt really normalised and accepted, that was really helpful.

”

LGBT+ organisations

(that are not also specialist sexual violence services)

Interview participants generally described positive experiences of accessing services from LGBT+ charities and community organisations.

Some interview participants who are people of colour expressed that LGBT+ organisations had not met their needs either due to a lack of understanding about a survivor's cultural and religious background and how this impacted on their identity and experiences.

“

I contacted [LGBT+ charity] and the person on the end of the phone was really nice, however couldn't really relate to my cultural upbringing and my religious upbringing. So that meant it was challenging and didn't leave me satisfied that I'd received the help that I had needed.

”

Disabled interview participants sometimes did not feel safe in LGBT+ spaces and services.

“

I do not feel safe outside of the queer community, but I also do not feel safe in it. My identities as a survivor, as a disabled person, as an ace and bi and non-binary person are all reasons for my community to push me out.

”

Informal support networks

Because of the lack of LGBT+ informed professional support, it was extremely common for interview participants to state that their main or most effective source of support had been other survivors, particularly those with shared LGBT+ and/or other intersecting identities.

Some interview participants felt that a shared identity was vital to understanding the impacts of their experiences, particularly in relation to impacts on their sense of self and identity.

“

Speaking to queer friends of mine who have also experienced sexual violence has just been really empowering and important, there's a shorthand there where we can just see each other and hear each other in a way that's really comforting.

”

“

It's good to identify with other men who have experienced sexual violence of some sort, their stories mirror your own and then you realise that the thoughts and feelings you have aren't alien.

”

10 LGBT+ specialist support

Interview participants who were people of colour spoke about the importance of a shared cultural understanding.

“

What I enjoyed about it was I could walk into a group of people I didn't know and not have to explain my culture [...] There were guys from a whole range of cultural backgrounds, a real mix, and none of us had to explain to the other ones 'this is the reason culturally why I do this or this' it was just an underlying understanding.

”

“

With [organisation for LGBT+ Muslims] it's been great, because I've spoken to people who have had similar experiences; it's allowed me to accept myself for who I am.

”

Some interview participants talked about the knock-on effects of providing support within the LGBT+ community. They explained that they were aware of many people within their community who had experienced sexual violence, and who provide each other with mutual support, however this meant the community itself held a high level of trauma.

“

It impacts us indirectly as well, we pick up each other's broken pieces and because it's widespread, often taboo, it can be draining. We don't acknowledge the impact it has for years and lifetimes.

”

The majority of survivors need responses that are kind, supportive, respectful and understanding.

Survey respondents who had told someone about experiencing sexual violence were asked what response they were hoping for when they told them.

Of 670 respondents:

75% wanted someone to be kind & listen

68% wanted emotional support

62% wanted respect & understanding

32% wanted help to keep them safe

23% wanted practical support

The research comprised of an online survey and 25 semi-structured interviews which were informed by a desk-based review of the existing evidence.

Online survey

An anonymous online survey for LGBT+ individuals aged 16+ living anywhere in the UK was carried out using a convenience sampling strategy. Due to the sampling strategy and the current difficulty in accurately calculating the size of the UK LGBT+ population, the sample must be considered a non-random community sample and therefore cannot be used to calculate the prevalence of sexual violence within the LGBT+ community in the UK.

The survey was live for 15 weeks between February and May 2020. It was advertised as a survey on sexual violence and was promoted via social media and email networking including sponsored social media posts.

Respondents were informed in advance about the nature of the questions, and how the survey would be presented.

In total, 1,468 survey responses were received, of which 1,020 were included in the final sample. Responses were removed on the basis that: the respondent did not identify as LGBT+; lived outside the UK; did not progress sufficiently far through the survey; stated they were aged under 16. Under 16s were disqualified from progressing past the page of demographic questions and redirected to a page of support resources for young people.

The questions used in the survey were designed in collaboration with a reference group of LGBT+ survivors.



Semi-structured interviews

Throughout the report the use of 'participants' refers to participants that were interviewed.

25 semi-structured interviews were undertaken. Participants were selected through survey respondents who had identified themselves as survivors and who had expressed an interest in taking part. They were additionally selected to include a wide range of ethnicities, genders and orientations. An overview of the questions was also shared in advance of the interview, so that those who wished to had the opportunity to think about their answers.

All interviews were conducted remotely. 22 of the 25 interview participants chose to complete their interview over a video call

and three interviewees preferred to participate using a real-time messaging application.

Manual thematic analysis was used to analyse the interview transcripts. Following initial analysis by the primary researcher, a group of survivors contributed to the analysis phase through various activities, replicating the Participatory Theme Elicitation approach. The themes identified by survivors were amalgamated into the coding framework used by the research team during further analysis.

Interview participants and members of the survivor reference group received gift vouchers as a token of thanks for their contributions to the project.

Ethical considerations included:

- Participants consented to being recorded and provided written consent prior to the interview.
- Audio files and messages from the interviews were deleted after transcription to ensure confidentiality.
- Information sheets and recruitment emails provided full details to what was involved in the interview process in a simple and non-pressured way.
- Participants were signposted to support resources before and during their interviews, and offered a debrief session with a caseworker from the sexual violence team.
- Questions were only mandatory when linked to eligibility criteria (e.g. age), or routing through the survey (e.g., being routed to different questions based on a previous answer).
- Links to sources of support were signposted throughout the survey.

The full sample was 1,020.

Age

1020 responses

16-17	12.5%
18-24	32.0%
25-34	28.4%
35-44	13.0%
45-54	7.9%
55-64	4.2%
65+	1.9%

Trans

1018 responses

Has a trans history	43.5%
Does not have a trans history	54.4%
Unsure	1.9%

Intersex

253 responses

Intersex	7.9%
Not intersex	85.4%
Unsure	6.7%

Gender

1020 responses

Woman inc trans femme	44.5%
Man or boy inc trans masc	22.0%
Non-Binary	29.6%
Questioning	3.8%
Other	0.1%

Orientation

1275 responses

Ace	22.6%
Polysexual	47.1%
Monosexual	29.2%
Lesbian	13.7%
Gay	11.3%
Heterosexual	0.9%
Other	0.2%

Respondents could select multiple categories.

Disability

1020 responses

Disabled	62.5%
Not disabled	35.5%
Unsure	1.4%
Prefer not to say	0.6%

The full sample was 1,020.

Religion

1000 responses

No religion	59.8%
Buddhism	2.1%
Christianity	11.5%
Islam	1.2%
Judaism	2.3%
Paganism	7.5%
Personal spirituality	12.3%
Other faith	3.3%

Ethnicity

1019 responses

Asian	2.6%
Black	2.1%
Mixed	4.2%
Other	2.7%
White	88.3%

Region

1020 responses

Scotland	8.6%
Northern Ireland	1.3%
Wales	8.0%
England	82.1%

Get help

If you are LGBT+ and experiencing violence or abuse, such as hate crime, domestic abuse or sexual violence, you can contact Galop directly.

galop.org.uk

National Conversion Therapy Helpline

0800 130 3335
cthelp@galop.org.uk

LGBT+ Hate Crime Helpline

020 7704 2040
hatecrime@galop.org.uk

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 999 5428
help@galop.org.uk

Galop

info@galop.org.uk
galop.org.uk

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Anti-Violence and Policing Group, operating as Galop, is a charity registered in England and Wales under number 1077384, whose registered office is 8-9 Talbot Court, London, EC3V 0BP. Galop is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales under number 2969307.

