
Local groups

Huddersfield Gay Group (HuGG)

Phone

07773 588628

Email

info@hugg.org.uk

Meeting Times

Every Tuesday 19:30 - 21:00

Happy Valley Pride

Phone

01422 400406

Email

info@happyvalleypride.com

Meeting Times

Varies depending on event

LGBT yOUTH Service

Phone

01484 469691

Email

info@thebrunswickcentre.org.uk

Age UK Calderdale and Kirklees,
4-6 Square, Woolshops, Halifax HX1
1RJ Tel :01422 252040
Email: enquiries@ageukck.org.uk

Yorkshire MESMAC

Phone

0113 244 4209

Email

admin@mesmac.co.uk

Wakefield Pride

Phone

07516 036770

Email

info@wakefieldlgbtpride.org

Social media

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter or
head to our website

Website [www.ageuk.org.uk/
calderdaleandkirklees](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/calderdaleandkirklees)

 [facebook.com/
AgeUKCalderdaleandKirklees](https://facebook.com/AgeUKCalderdaleandKirklees)

 [@AgeUKCK](https://twitter.com/AgeUKCK)

Donate at:

 [justgiving.com/ageukcalderdale-
kirklees](https://justgiving.com/ageukcalderdale-kirklees)



Age UK Calderdale and Kirklees

Overall rating for this service **Good**



LGBT+

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT+)
We'll help you understand your rights and
make sure they're always respected.



LGBT+ rights

Most of the issues, advice and policies relating to later life apply to everyone equally, but for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT+) people, some matters may need specific consideration.

Relationships

You and your partner can choose to marry or register a civil partnership. This can be a great way to publicly celebrate your love for one another.

Marriage

You can choose to have either a civil or religious marriage ceremony. But it's worth noting that not all faith organisations will marry same-sex couples, and they're not legally obliged to. If you and your partner are already in a civil partnership, you can convert this into a marriage if you want to.

Civil partnerships

In practical terms, civil partnerships grant almost all the same rights and responsibilities as marriage. They're created when two people sign the civil partnership document in the presence of a registrar and witnesses. The ceremony can take place in a registry office or other registered premises such as a hotel. It can also be conducted in a religious building such as a church or synagogue, if they agree to it, but the ceremony itself can't have religious content. Once you've registered a civil partnership, you and your partner will be referred to as 'civil partners'.

Health

Healthcare services have a duty to provide care that is fair and equal. But if you've faced discrimination or poor treatment in the past, it's understandable to worry it could happen again.

Remember everyone deserves good quality care and to be treated with respect by staff they can trust

NHS Services

Every doctor's surgery should have a policy on equality and diversity, which you can ask to see when registering as a patient or at any time afterwards.

You should feel confident that any information you share with NHS staff is confidential and there are strict laws to ensure the security of health records.

If you've been treated unfairly by a health service because of your sexual orientation or gender identity, you can make a complaint.

Housing

If you're finding it harder to manage at home, you may want to think about your housing options. Your home could be adapted to suit your needs, or there are other options such as sheltered housing, extra-care housing, domiciliary care or care homes.

There are currently no specialist housing options specifically for older LGBT+ people in the UK. Many care homes are going through the 'Pride In Care' quality standard process to make their services more inclusive.

However you are entitled to ask questions of the managers and staff working in supported housing or residential care to find out more about their attitudes. All staff should be properly trained and aware of the issues affecting LGBT+ people. You could also ask how the home accommodates relationships and whether there is a code of practice on privacy.

Money

Can I claim my spouse or civil partner's pension?

State Pension

The State Pension is based on your own National Insurance contributions and, in general, you won't be able to claim on your spouse or civil partner's contributions at retirement or if you're widowed or divorced.

If you reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016 and don't have enough National Insurance contributions in your own right, you may qualify for a basic State Pension based on your spouse or civil partner's National Insurance contributions.

Private pensions

You're entitled to a survivor's pension from your spouse or civil partner's occupational pension if they die. However, occupational pension schemes are only required by law to grant survivor's benefits to same-sex couples based on the partner's contributions from 2005 onwards. Private pension schemes aren't legally required to extend survivor benefits to unmarried/unregistered partners, but you can nominate someone to benefit from your pension if you die.

How are my benefits affected if I have a partner?

For certain benefits, same-sex couples who live together are treated as a couple, whether or not they're married or in a civil partnership.

This may reduce the amount of means-tested benefits such as

Pension Credit, Universal Credit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support, because your partner's income is included as part of the assessment. However it won't reduce non-means-tested benefits such as a State Pension or a disability benefit such as Attendance Allowance or Personal Independent Payment which are calculated on the basis of your individual circumstances.

If you receive any means-tested benefits, let the office that pays your benefits know that you have a civil partner or spouse, or that you're living with a partner. If you don't tell them, it may be seen as fraudulent and you may have to pay back any money you've been overpaid.

Discrimination

No one should ever treat you badly because of your sexual orientation or gender identity but sadly it's something many LGBT+ people will experience. There are now laws in place to protect you, and lots of organisations that can offer support.



The law on discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 makes it illegal to discriminate against people with 'protected characteristics'. These characteristics include age, sex, disability, gender reassignment and sexual orientation. The Act covers you at work, and when accessing goods and services. It includes, for example:

- care homes
- healthcare providers
- shops
- Hotels

The Act means an organisation can't refuse you services or treat you worse than others because of your sexual orientation or your gender reassignment.

If you have a complaint, you must first go through the organisation's standard complaints process. This could mean, for example, writing to the manager. If you're unhappy with the response, you might need to seek further advice about how to take your case forward, depending on the organisation.

What can I do if I've been discriminated against?

It's important to know the law is on your side. If a crime is motivated by homophobia or transphobia, the police can take this into account and it can be used in sentencing.

If you have a complaint, you must first go through the organisation's standard complaints process. This could mean, for example, writing to the manager. If you're unhappy with the response, you might need to seek further advice about how to take your

case forward, depending on the organisation.

Sexual health

If you have a new sexual partner, or more than one sexual partner, unprotected sex could put you at risk of a sexually transmitted infection (STI). STIs among older people have risen in the past 10 years. There has also been a rise in the transmission of HIV among older adults across the UK.

The best way to prevent STIs is to practise safer sex, which includes using some form of protection, like, condoms.

Not all STIs have symptoms so it's important to have regular sexual health checks. If you'd prefer not to see your usual doctor, you can make an appointment at a sexual health or genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinic. Some of these are drop-in centres where you don't need an appointment.

Mental wellbeing

You might find it difficult to talk about, but there's nothing to be ashamed of if you find yourself dealing with a mental health problem such as anxiety or depression. Mental disorders affect 1 in 6 people in the UK, so they're probably more common than you think. Although mental health problems aren't an inevitable part of ageing, research has shown that older LGBT+ people's mental wellbeing can be affected if they've experienced years of prejudice.

Mixed anxiety and depression is the most common mental health problem in the UK.

The symptoms are complex and vary widely, but may include feeling sad or hopeless and losing interest in activities you previously enjoyed. There can also be physical symptoms such as sleeping too much or too little, a change in appetite and various aches and pains.

Talking to someone about how you're feeling may seem daunting, even scary, but you don't need to deal with it on your own. There are lots of people who can help. Speaking to your doctor is a great place to start. If you don't want to go on your own, is there someone who could go with you to offer support? After listening to your symptoms your doctor will discuss your treatment options with you. These can include self-help, lifestyle changes, prescribed medication or talking treatments. If you would prefer to speak to someone anonymously over the phone or online, there are organisations such as the Samaritans that can help.

Living with dementia as an LGBT+ person

Living with dementia as an LGBT+ person can present certain challenges. Some of the symptoms of dementia can mean daily decisions, memories and changes you've experienced in the past have certain implications.

You could find it harder to remember who you've told about your sexual orientation or gender identity, or you may find it more difficult to access support. For more specific information as an LGBT+ person living with dementia, see Alzheimer's Society's guide on their website.

Becoming trans in later life

You might think you're too old to

transition, or that there's little point after spending so long living in your assigned gender, but really it's never too late. Transitioning can make you feel more 'yourself' and bring feelings of relief and self-acceptance at any age.

Older people can successfully transition and start living part-time or permanently in their affirmed gender in just the same way that younger people can. If you're healthy and receive proper care the treatments involved, including hormone therapy and surgery, carry a low risk. However, if you're older you need to be aware of the limits and potential impact of treatment. If you'd like to know more, speak to your doctor, who may refer you to a Gender Identity Clinic (GIC).

Where can I find social groups?

It's easy to slip into a pattern of staying at home and spending a lot of time alone, but getting out and about is one of the best things you can do to stay happy and healthy.

Enjoying hobbies and getting involved in the local community can improve self-confidence and keep you active. There are groups for everything from cooking to photography. Your local community centre, leisure centre, faith group or library are great places to find out what's happening in your local area.

There are also lots of social groups for older people, including plenty that are specifically for older LGBT+ people, as well as activity-based groups for LGBT+ people of all ages.

Local groups in Calderdale and Kirklees are on the back of this leaflet with contact information.