

OUT IN LONDON

fighting for LGBT+ equality & justice



THE LONG ARC OF JUSTICE: Celebrating LGBT+ History Month

LGBT+ History Month, observed in February each year, is a chance to increase visibility and celebrate the lives and achievements of our diverse LGBT+ community. Sometimes it can feel like one step forward, two steps back.

UNISON General Secretary Christina McAnea, speaking at the first in-person LGBT+ Conference since the pandemic began, remarked:

"We have to make sure that our workplaces - your workplaces - are free from discrimination, from harassment. Free from the threat of violence." People might think that the battle has been won, but Ms McAnea warned that right could either "disappear overnight or be chipped away over time".

Ms McAnea praised the union's commitment to equality, saying it had been in the rule book since UNISON was formed.

"Proportionality," she said: "Quite a dry word for something that is really beautiful".





CONFERENCE PLEDGES FIGHTBACK AGAINST RISE IN TRANSPHOBIA

"Gender-critical" movement condemned

LGBT+ Conference was held in Brighton in November last year - the first opportunity for conference to meet in person since the pandemic began. Delegates from Greater London Region were well-represented on the floor.

Conference debated and passed several important motions condemning the "gender-critical" movement, reaffirming UNISON's commitment to trans inclusion and its support for Stonewall, the UK's largest LGBTQ+ charity. *Supporting Stonewall and Our Trans Community, Next Steps in the Campaign for Trans+ and Non-Binary Rights, Condemn the Gender Critical Movement, Trans Equality - Louder and Prouder!* were all motions that passed.

This follows a rise in anti-trans rhetoric in the media, and sustained attacks on the integrity of Stonewall and its workplace equality index which benchmarks employer efforts on LGBT+ inclusion. The motions passed at conference called on branches to urge employers to join Stonewall's schemes, and to promote trans inclusive policies through negotiation and bargaining.

In line with motions passed at conference, UNISON Greater London is offering Trans Ally training for the first time - if you are interested please speak to your Branch Secretary or email Michael Etheridge, Secretary to the Regional LGBT+ Committee m.etheridge2@unison.co.uk. Please also check out the tips on how to be a good ally in the following pages, which could be printed as a poster for branch noticeboards!

Other vital motions were passed at conference on bi+ inclusion, conversion therapy, the UK policing bill, adult social care for LGBT+ people, racism and LGBT+ phobia in mental health services and the plight of LGBT+ people in Afghanistan.

You can find a full list of Conference decisions at:

www.unison.org.uk/events/2021-national-lgbt-conference

**"TRANSGENDER RIGHTS ARE
SOMETHING I TAKE VERY
SERIOUSLY. TOXIC DEBATES
ON GENDER ARE NOT
WELCOME IN OUR UNION.
I HAVE NEVER FELT, AS A
WOMAN, THAT MY RIGHTS
WERE THREATENED BY
GIVING RIGHTS TO
TRANSGENDER WOMEN."**

**UNISON GENERAL SECRETARY
CHRISTINA MCANEA**

UNISON

working for Trans equality

unison.org.uk/out



Tips on how to be a good ally to trans people - at work and beyond

Every non-trans person can be an ally for trans equality, but not everyone feels confident doing this. It's not complicated, so here are some tips on how to be a good trans ally. It really comes down to three things:

- Listen to trans people
- Challenge transphobia
- Be a good person

In general:

- Speak up for trans people and trans equality and against transphobia.
- Speak up when there are trans people present. Don't leave it to trans people to defend trans equality.
- Speak up when there are no trans people present. Transphobia is always wrong and shouldn't be ignored. Do this in meetings, on social media, with family and friends.
- Don't assume you know who is trans or who is affected by anti-trans discrimination. There may be people with a trans history in your branch or workplace who are now just living their lives. Other colleagues may have trans family members.
- Transphobia is no laughing matter. It's just as important to challenge it when it is presented in a jokey way.

In your union:

- Raise trans equality in your union branch.
- Check your employer's policies – do they have a trans equality policy? If not, propose UNISON's model policy. If yes, compare it to UNISON's model policy and seek improvements.
- Don't think you have to be an 'expert'. But do inform yourself. UNISON has some excellent and accessible resources at unison.org.uk/out
- Publicise UNISON's work for trans equality and our national trans network.

A part of every community

"Transgender people are a part of every community not apart from society. We are not seeking additional rights. We want to live in a society of equals where each is treated with dignity and respect and recognised for the unique contribution they make. We are your children, your siblings,

your parents, your grandparents, your work colleagues, your neighbours and hopefully, your friends. I don't want to be merely "tolerated"; I expect my trans allies to speak out against every instance of transphobia, in all its guises, to help me and every transgender individual achieve the acceptance and respect we deserve!"

Frances



Trans ally tips continued...

- When you talk to a trans person, listen. Listen to how they talk about themselves and follow their lead.
- It is important to make every effort to use people's correct name and pronoun (she, he or they) when you are talking to them and when you are talking about them.
- Misgendering someone or using their previous name (sometimes called 'deadnaming') is hurtful and may be unlawful harassment.
- If you are speaking briefly with someone and are unsure how they wish to be addressed, avoid gendered terms (such as 'sir' or 'madam').
- Remember that while most people transition to live solely and permanently as women or men, not everyone has a binary gender
- Some trans people identify as non-binary – as both female and male, as neither, or as something entirely different.
- If you do make a mistake, apologise and move on. Don't make a big thing of it.
- Never 'out' someone as trans unless they agree – never talk about someone's gender identity or gender history unless they have given you permission to do so. They may have told you in confidence.
- Remember, they may be out in some circles, such as in an LGBT+ group, or with close colleagues, but not others.
- Be aware of the wide spectrum of issues that affect trans people.
- If you want information, there's plenty on the internet.
- Don't tell trans people that they're 'brave' or that they made a 'difficult decision' instead, ask them if they need support and what support they need.
- Recognise that trans people can be used to being excluded – make an effort to include them.
- Try not to make assumptions. Although there aren't many trans people (which is why allies are so important) they are all individual. There is no one way of being trans.
- Don't ask personal questions that are more intimate than you would ask someone who is not trans. It is certainly inappropriate to quiz people about their bodies.
- Trans people have rights, but it's fine for you to have questions and try and understand the issues around gender identity. In fact, you have a responsibility to get yourself informed! There's lots of information around for you to do that, without having to quiz trans people in an intrusive way.

And finally...

- Remember that being trans is just one part of trans people's identity – talk to them about other stuff!

It can be very lonely

It can be very lonely being a trans person; be that in work, at home or in wider society. To have trans allies is so important, especially right now as we face hurtful negativity in the press and other media. Whenever I am down or struggling to cope, receiving support from those outside our community is a tremendous help.

Jenny

Not special or different

For me good trans allies have proven to be people who never question my gender identity. They treat me according to how I identify. Not special, different or vulnerable, just as me, a woman. They publicly support my right to be the person I am and that solidarity gives me strength.

Jennifer

Allies empower us

When trans people challenge transphobia they become a target. Every time an ally stands up for us it can empower us to stand up to the shaming and stigma – and to viscerally feel the solidarity that is the cornerstone value that our trade union, socialist and feminist movements grew out of.

Sam

UNISON **EQUALITY**



The Personal is Political

Remembering Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat



Keith Haring | Haring was an American pop artist who advocated for safe sex and AIDS awareness through his images.

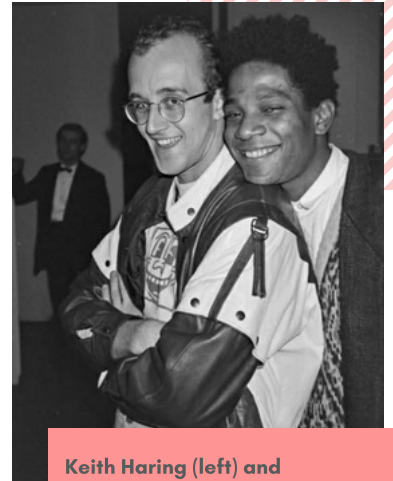
He created colourful murals on public buildings, notably on the New York subway where commuters soon became familiar with his distinct style and signature figures.

Although his work was very accessible, it was also deeply political, covering topics from apartheid, drug abuse and the gay rights movement.

Haring died of AIDS-related complications in February 1990, aged 31.

The theme for LGBT+ History Month 2022 is art, because "the personal is political". Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat are two of the queer artists being showcased. Haring's dancing figures became a social commentary on the AIDS crisis, while Basquiat's neo-impressionist paintings critiqued colonialism and inequality.

Also being showcased as part of #LGBTHM22 are **Doris Brabham Hatt** and **Fiore de Henriquez** - two lesbian pioneers who fought against fascism in the 1930s.



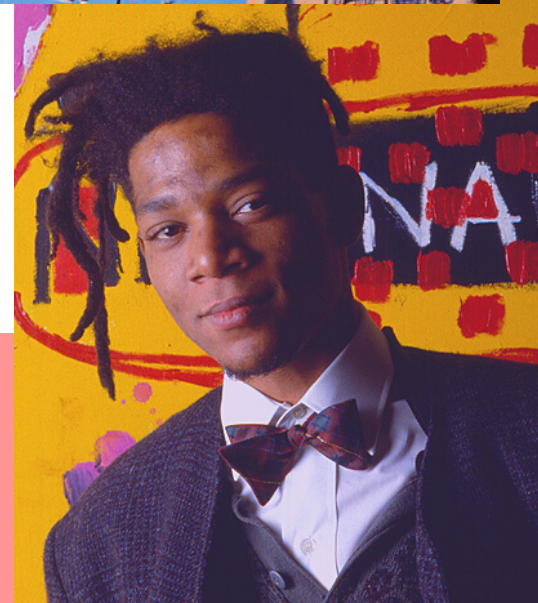
Keith Haring (left) and Jean-Michel Basquiat (right), pictured in 1984 by Andy Warhol

Untitled, Jean-Michel Basquiat, 1982



Jean-Michel Basquiat | Basquiat began spray-painting buildings in Lower Manhattan in the late 1970s. His work depicted prominent black figures with crowns and halos and dealt with issues of race, class, mortality, religion, self-identity and discovery. Basquiat died aged 27 from a heroin overdose in 1988.

Basquiat's *Untitled* (pictured, right) depicting a black skull was sold at a Sotheby's auction in 2017 for \$110.5 million - one of the most expensive paintings ever purchased.





LGBT+ History Month Webinar:

A History of HIV/AIDS Activism | 13.00 - 14.00 Friday 25 February on MS Teams

How can activists respond during a pandemic? Join UNISON Regional Organiser Mark Everden for a webinar on the history of HIV/AIDS activism. This webinar is aimed at all UNISON members, activists and staff.

[Click here to register for the webinar](#)

Organising For Equality

UNISON is committed to achieving equality in our workplaces, in our union and across society. Equality is a priority in our negotiating and campaigning work. People have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at work, to do their job to the best of their ability, free from discrimination and harassment. UNISON has a wealth of resources for organising around LGBT+ equality. Below is a list of useful factsheets, leaflets and guides available to download from the UNISON website:

Resources

unison.org.uk/about/what-we-do/fairness-equality/lgbt

- How to be a good ally to Bi+ people at work
- Bisexuality - a trade union issue
- Workforce monitoring for sexual orientation and gender identity
- Reforming the Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Gender identity - an introductory guide for trade union reps
- Transgender workers rights
- How to be a good ally to trans people at work
- Model trans equality policy
- Gender equality - non binary inclusion
- LGBT+ workers abroad
- LGB workers rights
- Setting up a Branch LGBT+ group
- Becoming a Branch LGBT+ Officer
- LGBT+ members - how to get involved
- LGBT+ Retired Members
- Tackling hate crime - a workplace issue



LGBT+ MEMBERS IN UNISON



Getting Involved

UNISON fights discrimination and prejudice in the workplace on behalf of its lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) members. We work together in local, regional and national groups of LGBT+ members to campaign and provide support for our members.

UNISON's work on LGBT+ equality in London is led by the Regional LGBT+ Committee, made up of lay LGBT+ activists. This year's co-chairs are Anu Prashar and Terry Eastham (pictured top right, with Area Organiser Mel Russel). To find out more about the work of the Regional LGBT+ committee, or to get more involved, please email outinlondon@unison.co.uk.



@unisonldnlgbt



@outinlondon



outinlondon@unison.co.uk

Three simple ways to join UNISON today:



Join online at
joinunison.org



Call us on
0800 171 2193



Ask your
UNISON rep for an
application form

UPCOMING EVENTS

25 FEBRUARY 2022

**LGBT+ HISTORY MONTH
WEBINAR: A HISTORY OF
HIV/AIDS ACTIVISM**

13.00 - 14.00 MS TEAMS

17 MARCH 2022

**HOW TO BE A GOOD TRANS
ALLY | VIRTUAL WORKSHOP**
14.00 - 16.30 MS TEAMS

What does it mean to be a good ally to trans people? Please note there are limited spaces on this workshop (contact below).

26 MARCH 2022

**REGIONAL LGBT+ OPEN
GROUP MEETING**

12:00 - 13:30 MS TEAMS

Open to all Greater London UNISON members who identify as LGBT+ and are interested in contributing to the Region's work on LGBT+ equality.

**FOR INFO ON REGISTRATION FOR
ANY OF THE ABOVE, PLS EMAIL
M.ETHERIDGE2@UNISON.CO.UK**